PREFACE

0.1. RESEARCH PURPOSES

0.1.1. In an increasingly global world, public communication through the mass media plays a more and more important role. Communication in press (journalistic) interview has many characteristics of public communication, and is the study subject of many branches of science, e.g. sociology, linguistics… This thesis "*Politeness in journalistic interview*" follows that direction.

0.0.2. Studies of politeness in Vietnam mostly based on data from literature or everyday interaction. Politeness in public media, including press interviews are not systematically studied.

0.1.3. Study of politeness in press interviews is an addition to the field of politeness theories, it shows the dynamic nature of languages in real life communication.

0.2. RESEARCH SUBJECTS AND PURPOSES

0.2.1. Subjects of the thesis

The subject of the thesis are speech acts and verbal devices used to express politeness in press interviews.

0.2.2. Scope

Data used in the thesis is from 850 interviews from three Vietnamese newspapers: Tien phong (1/2011 to 12/2011), Dan tri (7/2011 to 7/2014) and VnExpress (1/2012 to 12/2014).

0.3. RESEARCH GOALS AND AND TASKS

0.3.1. Goal

The goal of the thesis is to study the politeness aspect of utterances and verbal devices, in the special environment of press interviews.

0.3.2. Research tasks

The thesis serves following tasks:

- Study the theories of interviews from two angles: press (journalistic) and conversational. The thesis also studies prevailing Western, Eastern and Vietnamese theories of politeness and uses these to extract data from the interviews.
- Collects and analyzes the common speech acts in the questions and answers, especially initiatives in relation with politeness, and categorizes them according to politeness scale.
- Collects and categorizes common classes of words and phrases that affect the politeness of the utterance.
- Finds conclusions about the expression of politeness in interviews, in both speech acts level and verbal devices level.

0.4. METHODOLOGIES AND TECHNIQUES

To perform above tasks, we made use of following methodologies and techniques: Discourse analysis; Analyze and describe; Statistical analysis.

0.5. CONTRIBUTION OF THE THESIS

0.5.1. Theoretical contributions

The thesis contributes to the concretization and expansion of some issues in the politeness theories in pragmatics.

0.5.2. Potential applications

The conclusion of the thesis can be used in the teaching of communication skill, interview skill, or be used in the teaching and studying of pragmatics and sociolinguistics in universities.

0.6. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Preface, Conclusion, References and three chapters:

Chapter 1: Overview and theoretical background

Chapter 2: Politeness of speech acts in interview exchanges

Chapter 3: Pronouns and modal verbs and phrases to moderate politeness in press interviews

Chapter 1
OVERVIEW AND THEORENTICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. OVERVIEW

1.1.1. Current status of politeness study in the world

1.1.1.1. Traditional approach

In traditional approach, politeness is studied in four main views: (1) *The social-norm view*: Politeness is to act along social norms. (2) *The conversation maxim view*: Politeness based on Grice's Cooperative Principle – CP. (3) *The face – saving view:* Centered around face, politeness is a system of strategies to minimize face-threatening acts. The pioneers of this view are Brown and Levinson. (4) *The conversation contract view* regards politeness as "getting on with the task at hand in light of the terms and conditions of the CC". Among these views, Brown and Levinson's (3) is considered most influential.

1.1.1.2. New approaches in politeness studies

In last ten years, there are many new approaches. They can be classified into: (1) *Post-modern approach*: emphasizes on harmony of relationship, on intention of speaker and what listener perceive. This approach rejects speech acts theory (Mills 2003), the authors proposed that politeness must be considered in longer discourse. (2) *The relational approach*: Locher and Watts wrote: "Relational work is defined as the work people invest in negotiating their relationships in interaction".[1] (4) *The*

[1] Locher, M. A. and Richard J. Watts R. J (2008), Relational work and impoliteness: Negotiating norms of linguistic behaviour. In: Derek Bousfield and Miriam A. Locher (eds) *Impoliteness in Language:*

frame-based view is data-driven, in which everything has to have data. (5) There also are *The interactional approach* and *The genre approach*.

The thesis uses Brown' and Levinson's theory. This is the most influential theory in politeness study.

1.1.2. State of politeness study in Vietnam

In recent years, there are many Vietnamese studies on politeness, both theoretically and empirically. Pragmatics textbooks such as: Đỗ Hữu Châu's, Nguyễn Đức Dân's, Nguyễn Thiện Giáp's; researches into sociolinguistics by Vũ Thị Thanh Hương, Nguyễn Văn Khang,… all mention politeness as the controlling element in interpersonal communication.

Politeness also studied in context of speech acts (Chử Thị Bích, Nguyễn Đức Hoạt, Vũ Thị Thanh Hương, Nguyễn Văn Quang, Phạm Thị Thành, Hoàng Thị Hải Yến;...). Almost all researches into politeness include politeness language devices, but not systematically, such as in Vũ Tiến Dũng's, Nguyễn Thị Lương's, Vũ Thị Nga's… Other than that, polite also viewed in relation with other factors: gender, age, occupation, power… Most notable is the connection between politeness and gender. This connection appears in researches from Vũ Tiến Dũng, Vũ Thị Thanh Hương, Phan Thị Phương Dung. As an integral part of real life communication activities, politeness is studied from inter-cultural pragmatics such as studies by Lê Thị Thúy, Trần Lan Phương, Nguyễn Văn Quang, Siriwong Hongsawan, Hoàng Anh Thi ... Some researches into interviews (Trần Phúc Trung, Phạm Thị Mai Hương) include elements of politeness.

Politeness in press interview has not studied systematically as the primary subject. In choosing online and printed newspapers as data source, we hope to come up with a more complete picture of politeness in press interviews.

1.2. THEORENTICAL BACKGROUND

1.2.1. Overview of communication in interview

1.2.1.1. Interview as a subgenre of news

a. Concept and characteristics of the interview category

Interview is a subgenre of news. "Press interview is a subgenre of news, which publish the conversation between a journalist and a person or a group of people talk about a topic that the public is interested in"[2].

Interview can be easily recognized due to some signature characteristics such as the picture of the interviewee, title, chapeau (short introductory paragraph), series of questions and answers, and the interviewees often are people in power, well-known scholars, or celebrities.

b. Form of interviews

Studies on its Interplay with Power in Theory and Practice. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 77−99

[2] Đao Thanh Huyen (translated) (2002), *Phỏng vấn trong báo viết*, Hội Nhà báo Việt Nam, Trung tâm Bồi dưỡng nghiệp vụ báo chí, H, p 57.

We use the classification system based on interview purpose from the book *Interview techniques* by Maria Lukia: (i) Informational; (ii) Ad-hoc; (iii) Investigative; (iv) Portraiture.

1.2.1.2. Interview view from conversational perspective

a. Actors in interview

In interview, the actors are the interviewer who ask and the interviewee who mostly answer questions. There is a third actor, who not participate directly in the interview but plays a very important role in shaping up the interview: the intended audience (readers, listeners, or viewers):

Figure 1.2: Actors in interview communication

b. Role of communication and interpersonal relationship between participants of an interview

Unlike other form of conversation, there is no change of role in interviews, it's always expected that interviewer ask and interviewee answer. And the topic of the conversation is strongly under interviewer control, the interviewee cannot change it.

Interpersonal relationship between interviewer and interviewee is measured in two axes: Power and Distance. The direct participating interviewees has different social role, and interview is official, so the relationship between the journalists and the interviewee is a far on the Distance axis.

The journalist has a more powerful footing as he/she has the right to ask and to control the direction of the conversation. The purpose of the interview is to get more information, so the interviewer has the right to force the questions upon the interviewee, including the questions that might embarrass the interviewee.

c. Purposes of the communication

In interviews, especially investigative interviews, respecting the face of the interviewee is not the utmost issue. Finding the truth is the most important purpose.

d. Environment of the communication

Interview settings might be open or closed. This circumstance of the interview has implication on the judgement whether an utterance is polite or not. It also affect the use of politeness strategies and instruments to convey politeness.

e. Structure of interview conversations

To analyze interview conversation, we developed the thesis based on the view point of French-Swiss school. According to this school, conversation can be divided into (top-down): conversation or interaction, sequences, exchanges, intervention and speech acts.

Interviews often comprise of three sections: opening, expansion (or body), and closing. Opening is mostly ceremonial with greetings and introduction of topic and participants. Body section comprises of a series of exchanges to explore the topic. The closing often includes summary and ceremonial acts such as thanking, wish-giving, and bidding goodbye.

1.2.2. Pragmatic view of politeness

1.2.2.1. Western linguists views of politeness

a. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory

With face as central reference concept, Brown and Levinson introduce the concepts of negative politeness and positive politeness, face-threatening acts and face-enhancing acts.

a1. Face, negative face and positive face

Face, according to Brown and Levinson is "the image of self – group that the person want to be part of"[3]. It the union of two facets: positive – the desire to be respected, or even to be complimented; and negative – the desire to not be imposed by others.

a2. Negative politeness and positive politeness

The acts that are showing positive politeness are the ones that show the caring toward (such as thanking or praising), or complimenting others. Negative politeness strategies are aimed to reduce level of threat toward others' face by tone down the potential face-threatening acts.

In communication, positive politeness are realized by strategies such as showing attention, displaying sympathy, exaggerate the appreciation or agreement… toward SP2; use of in-group identity markers; seeks agreement not disagreement; state common facts that widely agreed; light-hearted joking; pay attention to SP2 preferences; be inviting; be positive; state the reasoning clearly; reciprocate; showing the affection between SP1 and SP2.

Examples of negative politeness strategies are: statements of general rules; uses of hedges or modalization; be pessimistic; avoid or limit imposing other; showing respects; be apologetic; depersonalizing both SP1 and SP2; use nominalizations; Bald on record state that SP1 indebted to SP2 or SP2 is not indebted to SP1.

a3. Levels of politeness

Brown and Levinson use Power (P), Distance (D) and Ranking of

[3] Đỗ Hữu Châu (2006), Đại cương ngôn ngữ học – Vol. 2, NXB Giáo dục, H, 2006, p 264.

impostion (R) to measure degree of politeness with following formula:

$W_X = P_{(H,S)} + D_{(S,H)} + R_{(X)}$

b. Impoliteness as per Culpepper

b1. Culpeper's impoliteness concept

In "*Impoliteness – using language to cause offence*" (2011), Culpeper provides his complete definition of impoliteness:

"Impoliteness is a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and /or beliefs about social organisation, including, in particular, how one person's or a group's identities are mediated by others in interaction. Situated behaviours are viewed negatively – considered 'impolite' – when they conflict with how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be and/or how one thinks they ought to be. Such behaviours always have or are presumed to have emotional consequences for at least one participant, that is, they cause or are presumed to cause offence. Various factors can exacerbate how offensive an impolite behaviour is taken to be, including for example whether one understands a behaviour to be strongly intentional or not."[4]

b2. Impoliteness strategies

Culpeper's impoliteness model is based on Brown and Levinson's politeness model. Culpeper see impoliteness as the "parasite" of politeness. Based on Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies, Culpeper describes five impoliteness superstrategies. (i) *Bald on record impoliteness*: FTAs are displayed directly, clearly, and cannot be mistaken for anything else. (ii) *Positive impoliteness*: deny the desire for positive face. (iii) *Negative impoliteness*: deny the desire for negative face. (iv) *Sarcasm or mock politeness*: use mock or non-genuine politeness devices as FTAs are easily inferred. (v) *Withhold politeness*: do not use politeness devices at situations where they are expected.

Culpeper also define positive and negative impoliteness strategies:

Positive impoliteness strategies: Look down; separate one from activities; keeping distance; showing none of caring or sympathy; use of impropriate markers; intentional use of vague or non-clear language; seeking disagreement; make others feel uncomfortable; use of "prohibited" language; distort people's name,...

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[4]Culpeper, J. (2011b), *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp 23.

Negative impoliteness strategies: induce fear; showing superiority, Condescend, scorn or ridicule; invade other's personal space; explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect; put the other's indebtedness on record …

1.2.2.2. Oriental linguists views of politeness

Normative or social – norm politeness is showing respect toward interacting partner's social identity: position, power, age, gender… Advocates of this school include Ide (1989), Hill Etal (1986), Matsumoto (1988), Gu (1990).

1.2.2.3. Vietnamese view of politeness

Vũ Thị Thanh Hương đã đưa ra quan niệm về lịch sự của người Việt Nam: "Most of participants agree that politeness has two components: follow accepted customs and protocols and be subtle". As such, Vietnamese concept of politeness has elements from both Western and Eastern.

1.2.2.4. Thesis' view about politeness and impoliteness in interviews

Politeness in interview carries the same common characteristics of general politeness, but it also has its special aspects. The differences arise from the public nature of the interview, personalities of participants, and the purpose (topic) of the interview. The conversation is not in private, it has an audience. The interviewee and the journalist is not merely keeping face toward each other, they are protecting their face before the public.

Due to the information gathering and the confrontational nature of the interview genre, the journalist while must try to keep the interpersonal relation friendly and harmony, but sometime have confront with an inflammation or face-threatening question.

Should utterances that violate politeness principles in interview considered impolite? As per Culpeper and some others, an act is impolite if the speaker threatens other's face intentionally. However it is difficult to judge people intention or the lack of it just from what they said. And, because of the confrontational nature of the context, in interviews there are many questions or utterances that potentially face-threatening but this is not the purpose of the act. Because of that, in the thesis we do not call the face-threatening utterances "impolite" but "non-conforming (polite principle) utterance" (or "-LS utterance").

1.2.2.5. Overview of language devices to display politeness

At word level, politeness is conveyed via address forms and modalities; at higher lever, it is expressed via speech acts.

1.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

From pragmatics perspective, interview is a special kind of conversation with specific characteristics in participants' relationship, participants standing, purpose and environment of communication… These characteristics result in differences in the expression of politeness in interview. Politeness in interview is affected by not only the personal communication strategies, but also the nature of interview which is to seek and clarify information. In interview, the

journalist must be skillfully and flexibly build good interpersonal relationship, but sometimes has to violate politeness principles in order to dig deeper to unearth more information.

Chapter 2:
EXPRESSION OF POLITENESS IN SPEECH ACTS OF INTERVIEW EXCHANGES

2.1. OVERVIEW OF EXCHANGE AND INTERVIEW EXCHANGE

2.1.1. Structure of exchange in interview

Interview exchanges mostly have the form of question and answer, in which the journalist ask a question (initiative) and the interviewee trying to answer the question (reaction).

The interventions in an exchange comprise of head (primary) acts and dependent acts (pre-head, post-head). In interview conversations, the interviewer is the one to put forth questions, so in initiatives, head actions are usually asking speech acts, dependent acts are mostly representative, compliment, and criticism. In the reaction, representative act is often primary one.

2.1.2. Relationship in interview exchange

Relationship in interview exchange is the relationship between journalist's initiatives and interviewee's reactions. There are two kinds: positive exchanges and negative exchanges.

2.2. OVERVIEW OF SPEECH ACTS IN RELATION WITH POLITENESS IN INTERVIEW EXCHANGES

2.2.1. Identify common groups of speech acts in interview question

Based on Searle's classification, we counted number of speech acts from questions in 6281 exchanges, and their distribution in the three groups are in following table:

No.	Speech acts	F1	F2	F3	F1+F2+ F3
I. Representatives					
1	Representative	1126	630	166	1922
2	Describe	20	5	3	28
	Total I	**1146**	**635**	**169**	**1950**
II. Directives					
3	Asking	3445	1676	569	5690
4	Request	72	21	21	114
	Total II	**3517**	**1697**	**590**	**5804**
III. Expressive					
5	Compliment	93	1	5	99
6	Denunciation	546	73	58	677
7	Wishes	5	1	0	6
8	Apologies	2	0	0	2
9	Thanks	73	100	32	205

	Total III	**719**	**175**	**95**	**989**
IV. Commissives		0	0	0	0
V. Declarations		0	0	0	0

Table 2.1: Speech acts by group

This table show the unequal between groups of speech acts:

No.	**Speech acts**	**Count**	**Percentage of group / total (%)**
1	Representatives	1950	22.31
2	Directives	5804	66.38
3	Expressives	989	11.31
4	Commissives	0	0
5	Declarations	0	0
Total		**8743**	**100**

Table 2.2: Count of speech acts groups

The control group is the most numerous at 66.38%, in which the acts mostly are asking acts. Recalling is the second most numerous group at 22.31%, it contains asserting, describing. The least numerous group is emotional expression at 11.32%, and comprises of mostly compliment and criticism, and ceremonial acts such as thanking, apologising, congratulating…

2.2.2. Criterion to measure degree of politeness in interview conversation

Based on the reaction and level of imposition of utterances (as per Vietnamese politeness norms) we classified the common speech acts that have politeness implication in interview into two groups. First speech acts group, (+LS), are: acts that bring the sense of being face-respected at listener, which will be received as a compliment; and ceremonial acts such as greetings, thanking, good will wishes. The other group, (-LS), are acts that potentially threaten other's face such as asking, criticism. The level of politeness of the speech acts is shown in following figure:

Figure 2.2: Politeness level of speech acts

2.3. EXCHANGE'S SPEECH ACTS VIEW FROM POLITENESS

2.3.1. Speech acts in opening exchanges view from politeness

Initiatives often comprise of greetings and a speech act of representative type to establish the topic of the interview or to introduce the interviewee. In opening exchanges, the greetings acts are not to serve informational purpose but to establish or strengthen interpersonal relationship, they display the politeness of the interviewer toward the interviewee. In printed press, the editors often omit this opening acts and go directly to the main body of the interview. Because of this, there is very little of greeting acts in the dataset, only 03/850 interviews have them. All of them are centered on "chào" verb. In interview, there is no indirect greeting, such as the common Vietnamese way of greeting "Have you have lunch yet?"

2.3.2. Speech acts in expansionary exchange in view of politeness

2.3.2.1. Head acts – asking acts

a. Speech acts group by function and degree of face-threatening

The intensity of imposition of the asking act groups are different. It depends of the pragmatic function of the act. To make clear the intensity of imposition of acts toward different groups of interviewee, we sorted the asking acts into three groups based on their pragmatic function:

(1)Ask for information

(2)Ask for confirmation

(3)For other purposes (such as rebuke, confront, disparage…)

The asking acts often realized by utterances with interrogative structure. The following table show the distribution of the groups:

No.	Asking acts' function	Count	Pc (%)
1	Ask for information	4172	73.32
2	Ask for confirmation	1186	20.84
3	Ask for other purposes	332	5.84
Total		**5690**	**100**

Table 2.3: Speech acts groups, by function

a1. The asking for information group

This group employs primarily the interrogative pronouns such as: *who, why, what, how…* These sentences also considered having "open" structure as it is up to the interviewee to come up with an answer, and the interviewer will have to encourage interviewee or change the question to get more information. For example, interviewer asked Mỹ Linh (singer):

Chị nghĩ sao trước nhận định cho rằng, giọng hát của Mỹ Linh đã đạt tới trình độ tuyệt hảo về kỹ thuật nhưng lại đang dần mất đi cảm xúc? (Dân trí 05/10/2011)

a2. The asking for confirmation group

This group mostly employs alternative words *hay/hoặc*, question markers such as *đã…chưa, có …không, liệu…không…;* modalities to indicate question: *sao, à, ư*, The question is said "closed" as the interviewee can only choose one of the limited, closed list of possible answers given in the question. This closed list put pressure on the interviewee, as they have to give a definitive confirmation or outright rejection of the allegation, and stood by it. One example where, when confronted with such a highly imposing question, Mỹ Linh chose not to answer it but had to admit she was "*embarrassed*":

Q*: Nguyên nhân đám cưới vì* ***tình yêu quá lớn*** *hay vì Mỹ Linh khi đó đã* ***trót mang bầu*** *- như họa sĩ Thành Chương vui miệng kể trong liveshow "Và em sẽ hát…" ở Hà Nội?*

A: *Tất nhiên,* ***tôi không muốn khán giả biết tới những chuyện này****. Lúc anh Thành Chương nói,* ***tôi có hơi xấu hổ*** *nhưng đó chỉ là thứ bên lề, kết quả cuộc sống của chúng tôi mới là câu trả lời cho các thắc mắc.*

(Vnexpress 27/04/2012)

a3. For other purpose

In data, indirect asking acts often serve other functions such as to rebuke, to assert, to criticize, to challenge, to request… The threat to face of participants depends on the strength of the question. For example:

Là chủ một website văn chương đắt khách; có vẻ như tình yêu và tâm huyết chị dồn vào nó khá lớn? (Tiền phong 22/05/2011)

b. Some face-threatening topics

Based on Brown & Levinson' theory, Vietnamese communication norms, and the reaction of the interviewee, we collect some topics that have face-threatening potential. These topics can be categorized into negative and positive groups (i.e. threatening to negative/positive face). The classification is not absolute, as there are topics that can be put in both groups.

The thesis' data can be divided into three kinds of interview: portraiture, investigative, and informational. In portraiture interviews, interviewer often give questions about many aspect of the interviewee' personality in search for a full picture of the interviewees. In investigative interview, the interviewer acts as an investigator, a policeman, trying to go deep into even minute details of the issue at hand, including personal issues, thing that interviewee does not like to talk about such as mistake, wrong doing, illegal affairs,… even when the interviewee is the head of an organization, powerful or not. These are the interviews where face-threatening utterances most prevalent. The asking acts of informational interviews and ad-hoc interviews are mostly neutral. Following table show the count and percentage of utterances that violates polite principles:

	F1	**F2**	**F3**
−LS utterances	571	70	26
Number of speech acts	5382	2507	854
Percentage	10.6	2.79	3.04

Table 2.4: −LS utterances

b1. Topics that potentially threaten negative face of interviewee

This group comprises of private life and sensitive topics such as love, marriage, family life, income, sexuality, vices, health… in which love and family life are two most common topics in portraiture interviews. One example is, in the interview with Phi Thanh Vân, a model, the journalist continuously sought to explore the crack in her marriage with her French husband, or the problems in her family life, even when she clearly stated that "*I will never told you about that*":

Q1*: Có tin đồn hôn nhân của chị rạn nứt từ 6 tháng trước, nhưng chị vẫn chưa lần nào khẳng định hay phủ nhận. Vì sao vậy?*

A1: *Có những mâu thuẫn giữa hai vợ chồng mà tôi không thể kể ra. Mọi thứ dây dưa rất khó để người ngoài cuộc hiểu được. Kể ra chỉ khiến khán giả mệt và cũng mệt luôn bản thân, gia đình mình nên* ***tôi sẽ không kể và mãi mãi không bao giờ kể****.*

(Vnexpress 10/06/2012)

b2. Topics that potentially threaten positive face of interviewee

Some topics that often pose threat to positive face of interviewee are about interviewee's capability, scandals, events that give bad publicity, or interviewee's failure to fulfill his/her responsibilities. Example:

Q*: Sau vụ việc xảy ra, là người đứng đầu cơ quan tư vấn, giám sát của dự án, ông nhận trách nhiệm như thế nào?*

A: *Chúng tôi xin Bộ Giao thông vận tải được kiểm điểm tập thể và cá nhân, xin rút kinh nghiệm. Sự cố này chưa gây thiệt hại thất thoát gì, vẫn trong quá trình bảo hành nên nhà thầu sẽ sửa chữa. Tất nhiên là các vết vá sẽ không thể tạo được bề mặt đường như cũ.*

(Vnexpress 24/03/2010)

c. Methods of topic expansion and threats to face

In interview conversation, the threats to face are not only stem from the nature of the topic, but also emerge from the way interviewee directs the conversation, or the way interviewer handle negative responses from interviewee. When feeling threatened, interviewee might give answer that is not pertaining to the question or outright refuse to answer the question. In this situation, the interview has two option to continue the conversation: i) changes topic by stop trying to issue the question again; and ii) keeps pursue the topic (continuously or returns to the topic after some times). When the interviewer uses the latter option, he/she does so in full awareness that this approach heightens the threat level to the interviewee.

2.3.2.2. Pre- and post-head acts – compliment and criticism

a. Compliment

Complimenting is a positive politeness strategy. By focus on interviewee' positive face, the interviewer tries to build a friendly environment so that the interviewee feels relaxed and hopefully does not react too badly to face-threatening situation. In our data, there are not a lot of complimenting acts, only 99 out of 8743, or 1.13%, and in the three participant groups, there are discrepancies: in the celebrity interviews, the rate is 1.72%; in the official interviews, 0.19%; and in the miscellaneous group it is 0.11%. As indicated, the complimenting acts concentrated in celebrity interviews, and the common topics of the praises are appearance, talent, notoriety, personality… in which the most common are appearance, talent, and affection from the public. Example:

Góp phần tôn nhan sắc Hồng Nhung là gu ăn mặc chỉn chu và tinh tế*. Chị nhờ tới sự tư vấn của chuyên gia hay tự mình tìm hiểu qua sách báo?* (Vnexpress 2/10/2012)

b. Criticism

The rate of question that include criticism acts are not very large in all three interviewee groups: 10.14%, 2.91%, and 6.79% respectively. Similar to the praising acts, interviews of groups 1 and 3 has more criticism acts than the second (official) group. The criticism in interview is not personal, it is mostly to explore, to help to understand the stance or feeling of, or to trigger an explanation from the interviewee regarding some public issue related to the interview. Whatever the purpose of the act is, criticism is always a threat to interviewee face, and sometime also to the journalist's. To avoid straining the session, journalists often state the criticism on behalf of the public, or avoid indicating the originator of the criticism by using a passive sentence:

Năm nào phim anh làm dịp Tết đều bị gọi là hài "nhảm" và thảm họa*. Cảm giác của anh ra sao khi nghe những nhận xét này?*(Vnexpress 4/1/2013)

2.3.3. Speech acts in closing exchange and politeness

In closing exchange, other than the end-of-interview indicators, interviewers often express thanks or good will wishes, and are ceremonial. Compare to the opening greetings, closing acts appears with much higher frequency. At 221 counts, they comprised of 98.6% of ceremonial speech acts. Like greetings, thanks and wishes in interview do not serve any information purpose and are limited in variety, unlike their counterpart in everyday communication. Examle:

Xin cảm ơn anh, chúc anh luôn thành công trong công việc và hạnh phúc trong cuộc sống. (Dân trí 03/02/2012)

2.4. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The second chapter deal with speech acts in light of politeness, from opening exchange to closing exchange with focus on question acts. Pragmatically, purpose of question acts and topic of the question has implication on the level of face-threat of the question. Questioner can employs additional pre- or post-head acts that can positively or negatively affect the politeness of the question. The use of these devices is most common in celebrity interviews.

Chapter 3:
PRONOUNS AND MODAL VERBS AND PHRASES TO MODERATE POLITENESS IN PRESS INTERVIEWS

3.1. ADDRESSING TERMS AND POLITENESS IN PRESS INTERVIEWS

3.1.1. Overview of addressing terms used in press interviews

The common addressing forms in interviews are listed in the table below:

No.	Addressing forms category	Example
1	Personal pronoun	*Tôi, chúng tôi*
2	Kindship pronoun	*Ông, bà, anh, chị, cô*
3	Professional pronoun	*Bác sĩ, nhà văn, kĩ sư, ...*
4	Official's position	*Bộ trưởng, Thứ trưởng, Giáo sư, ...*
5	Name or nick name	*X*
6	Professional pronoun + name	*Đạo diễn X, nhạc sĩ X, ...*
7	Combined personal pronoun + name	*Chị X*
8	Combined title + name	*Hoa hậu X*

Table 3.1: Pronouns used in interviews

3.1.2. Addressing forms and the expression of polite in interviews

* Group 1:

No	Address forms (second person)	Count	Percentage
1	Anh/chị	259	70
2	Combined Anh/chị +Name	33	8.9
3	Ông/bà	28	7.6
4	Name	21	5.7
5	Combined: Professional pronoun + name	18	4.9
6	Title	6	1.6
7	Combined Name+ Nick name	3	0.8
8	Bạn	2	0.5
9	Official's position	0	0
Total		**370**	**100%**

Table 3.2: Percentages of pronoun groups as appear in group 1 interviews

* Group 2 and 3

Following table shows the data of pronouns in group 2 and 3 interviews:

No.	Pronoun (second person)	F 2	Pc %	F 3	Pc %
1	Ông/bà	275	81.6	81	74
2	Position	43	12.6	16	14.7
3	Office name	10	3	0	0
4	Anh/chị	8	2.4	6	5.5
5	Profession	1	0.3	1	1
6	Bạn	0	0	3	2.8
7	Name	0	0	2	1.8
Total		**337**	**100**	**109**	**100**

Bảng 3.3: Percentages of pronoun groups as appear in group 2 and 3 interviews

Generally, interviewers' usage of pronouns in a neutral way which is appropriate and not impolite. Most common pronouns are *anh/chị/name* or *ông/bà/position*. The former make the participants close, the later show interviewer's respect toward interviewee.

However, in 850 interviews, there are 71 cases where there is no pronoun. The breakdown by group of these is given in following table:

Group	**Question without pronoun**	**Number of interview**	**Rate (%)**
F1	58	387	14.98
F2	9	345	2.61
F3	4	118	3.38

Table 3.4: Interviewer utterance missing pronoun

The table shows that most of the cases (14.98%) are in group 1, and very little of them are in group 2 or 3 (2.61% and 3.38%). Even though in the second and third groups, there are not much of them, but the existence of them shows that sometimes the interviewer is not careful enough. Group 1 is interview of celebrities who often are young and wild, and protocol is not as important to them as to the other groups. Because of that interviewer has more flexibility in using pronoun and in the way question being presented.

3.2. MODAL VERBS AND PHRASES TO MODERATE POLITENESS IN PRESS INTERVIEW

3.2.1. Modal verbs at the end of the question and politeness

3.2.1.1. Overview of common modal verbs used in interviews

Table 3.5 show the count of modal verbs in interviews.

Group	**F1**	**F2**	**F3**
Modal verbs	76	4	2
Number of speech acts	5382	2507	854
Percentage	1.42	0.15	0.23

Table 3.5: Rate of modal verbs in speech acts

From the table, we can see modal verbs are more common in celebrity interviews. In the two other groups, they are negligible.

In the scope of this thesis, we only focus on modal verbs that have politeness implication, such as *chứ, sao, chăng, nhỉ, mà/cơ mà...*

3.2.1.2. Some common modal verbs in press interview

a. "chứ"

Chứ can be used for several purposes:

- *Chứ* used in questioning the interviewee about an issue again, or rebuke the previous answer:

Nhưng mà ông Nghiên sau nghỉ hưu thì phải trả nhà ***chứ****?*

(Tien phong 25/09/2011)

- *Chứ* used in light hearted confirmative questions between interviewer and interviewee that close in both age and social standing. This is an example:

*Một phim tôi thấy tiếc là phim Tâm hồn mẹ, đó là một phim đã khá thành công đấy **chứ**.* (Dân trí 23/12/2011)

b. "nhỉ"

Nhỉ appear in questions mostly and often if omitted would cause no change to the question:

*Sao chị không có bạn trong giới **nhỉ**, khó quá chăng?*

(Dan tri 29/08/2012)

Only when SP1 and SP2 are close and equal, can then be added *nhỉ* at the end of the question to increase the sense of closeness. With older people, or unequal social standing, the use of *nhỉ* becomes impolite.

Nhỉ also appear in affirmative questions:

*Vụ "bờ vai ấm" này nghe chừng không ổn **nhỉ**?* (Dan tri 10/07/2012)

Using *nhỉ* in this case does not require much about the relationship and social standing between SP1 và SP2. The affirmative-question like this often serve to make the participant closer, persuasive but not too imposing

c. "chăng"

Chăng is always at the end of the question to indicate the question is a guess or probing one. *Chăng* make the question softer and not as imposing as *phải không*

*Sách thể thao thì anh bán, vậy anh đang đọc gì, "Vết sẹo và cái đầu hói" **chăng**?*

(Tien phong 6/6/06)

With ability to indicate wide range of emotions, modal words are one of the language devices to modify the degree of politeness in Vietnamese conversation. Because of the limitation of the data source which is from printed and electronics newspapers, modal words in thesis data are not as varied as in TV interview.

3.2.2. Hedge devices used to express politeness in interviews

3.2.2.1. Overview of common hedge devices

Hedge devices used in interviews are quite varied, they can be categorized into three groups:

No.	Hedge devices group	Count	Percentage (%)
1	To reduce the reliability of information	1004	68.4
2	To enhance the reliability of information	255	17.4
3	To reduce the interviewee' sense of being imposed	209	14.2
Total		**1468**	**100**

Table 3.7: Statistics of hedge device groups

3.2.2.2. Hedge devices to reduce the reliability of information

This group is employed when the speaker does not have proof for what he's saying. This is interviewer's "favorite" method and has a very high frequency of appearing in the data. Some commonly seen hedge devices:

a. *Nghe nói, nghe đâu, nghe đồn, nghe rằng,…*; *Một số + noun (người, chuyên gia, khán giả,...) + verb (cho rằng, gợi ý, lo ngại,…)*; *Người ta + verb (đồn, nghĩ, bàn tán,..)*; *Thông tin rằng, tin đồn*; *Dư luận + verb (nghi ngờ, cho rằng, bàn tán,…)*; *Ai đó nói*; *Có người (nói, bình phẩm, nhận xét,…)*; *Có nguồn tin, có đồn đoán, có giai thoại,…*

The presence of hedges reduce the responsibility of the interviewer by letting the interviewee know that the information is from someone else, the interviewer is just restating it, so the interviewer don't have to back up for the information. The interviewee will not feel offended because it's clear this is not the opinion of the interviewer.

b. Another hedge form is to weaken the reliability of the information so that interviewee will not reacted to the allegation too strongly. The method is to include some specific phó từ or adverbs: *có lẽ, có vẻ, hình như, dường như, phải chăng, hình như, dường như, gần như, có khi, biết đâu, chắc gì*... These words appear 476 times in the thesis data. They all indicate that the interviewer is just having some guess, not stating a firm belief.

c. Somewhat similar to the second group, interviewer often seeks to tone down the strength of the accusation by adding a word similar to *hơi, khá*.... These words appeared 225 times, and often in interviewer's remarks or judgements.

3.2.2.3. Hedge devices to enhance the reliability of information

As the originator of a speech act, the speaker has responsibility to back it up. It especially high for a journalist. If an utterance is perceived as not truthful, the positive face of the speaker is affected tremendously. As such, hedge devices to make the information appears stronger are used. In data, we found 255 such expressions, mostly in two forms: (1) *Chắc chắn, rõ ràng, sự thật là, căn cứ vào… and* (2) *Nhiều người cho rằng, rất nhiều người muốn…, không ít người cho rằng, mọi người nói (cho rằng, đánh giá…), khán giả (công chúng) cho rằng, ai cũng nói…*

Vietnamese, living in a strongly communal society, often consider what widely accepted as true, to be true. The mass must be correct. As such, it's a strategy of the journalist to protect his positive face by associating himself with the mass.

3.2.2.4. Hedge devices to reduce the imposition on interviewee

These devices, also called "softeners" by Brown and Levinson, or "mitigators' (House & Kasper), seek to reduce the perception of being imposed upon by employing modal verb such as *có thể* or words like *một chút*, *một ít*, *một vài*… Modal words *có thể* in *có thể… (không)* change a question to a request, which make the act more subtle and increase the chance of it being accommodated. They appears 158 times in thesis's data.

Other than these, in interviews, there are hedge devices using fixed phrases such as *tò mò một chút*, *một câu hỏi tế nhị*, *hỏi khí không phải*… These phrases serves as a warning to interviewee that the speech acts is a potential face-threatening one and the interviewer is aware of that.

3.2.3. Attitude and emotion expression and politeness in press interviews

3.2.3.1. Positive-sounding words and phrases

The positive phrases and words are used to enhance positive face of the interviewee. They often appears in remark or evaluation utterances. The use of face-enhancing words and phrases shows in two ways: denomination phrase and positive word. Example of denomination phrase are using the awards, title associated with the interviewee. The positive words comprise of words on the top part of the positive-negative continuum. In the data the topic of positive words almost invariably are: appearance, personality, capability, creativity…

No	Topic	Examples
1	Appearance, costume	xinh, đẹp trai, giản dị, phong độ, (đôi mắt) sáng rực, rạng rỡ, (đầy) sức sống, (tóc) bồng bềnh, trẻ trung, thanh lịch, nhẹ nhàng, phá cách, (thiết kế) cá tính, trẻ đẹp, rạng rỡ, (vóc dáng) đẹp, (da) trắng ngần (ko tì vết), (khuôn mặt) xinh xắn, thon thả, (gu ăn mặc) chỉn chu, tinh tế, (vẻ) mã thượng, ngạo tình, (nụ cười) tươi, (ánh mắt) hút hồn, (gương mặt) trẻ trung, hào hoa, tươi trẻ, sang trọng, dịu dàng, (đầy) tự tin, nữ tính,…
2	State of mind	(đầy ắp) hạnh phúc, ngập tràn niềm vui,…
3	Personality	thông minh, hóm hỉnh, chững chạc, đằm thắm, dịu dàng, năng động, đam mê (cháy bỏng), vui vẻ, thân thiện, dễ gần, mạnh mẽ, đằm thắm, chăm chỉ, hiền, (rất) Việt Nam, gần gũi, cởi mở, …
4	Capability	(đầu óc) sáng tạo, (biên độ phím) vô biên, cao tay, tinh tế (xử lý yếu tố sex), (cách hát) tinh tế, sâu, (trình độ) tuyệt hảo…
	Creative activities	lột xác, hồi xuân (trong sự nghiệp), đam mê, bứt phá (óc tưởng tượng), chưng cất (chữ nghĩa), nỗ lực, (hóa thân) đa dạng, (vào vai) ngọt, lột xác, (cách diễn) trưởng thành,…
5	Works	độc đáo, có dấu ấn, (triển lãm) ấn tượng, công phu, thành công, trau chuốt, (được làm) kĩ lưỡng, (tiết mục) đột phá, (có) sức sống (vượt ra ngoài lãnh thổ),…
6	Family	ổn định, viên mãn, suôn sẻ, tròn vẹn, đầy đủ, (đầy ắp) hạnh phúc, …

Table 3.8: Positive phrases and words

Make use of suitable positive words and phrases, ones which is geared toward the listener and not sounding exaggerated is a very effective way to

enhance interviewers' face. With this strategy, interviewer can close the interpersonal distance with the interviewee and keeps the interview friendly.

3.2.3.2. Negative words and phrases

Negative words often used in criticism or representative utterances with the purpose of painting the target in bad light. Sometime, to dig deeper into the topic, interviewer intentionally attacks interviewee's face. They do so by using negative words or phrases. The following table list the groups of negative words and phrases we found in the dataset:

No	Topic	Example
1	Appearance, costume	(sắc mặt) nhợt nhạt, tiều tuy, (áo dài) rườm rà, tiêu điều, hở hang, (ăn mặc) phản cảm, (giải phẫu thẩm mỹ) lộ liễu, (vóc dáng) mini, (dáng) hạt mít, (ăn mặc) kì quái, lả lơi, (bề ngoài) xù xì, …
2	Personalities	yếu đuối, yếu bóng vía, đanh đá, yếm thế, cứng nhắc, kiêu, kiêu ngạo, kiêu căng, ngỗ ngược, háo sắc, khắt khe, khó gần, chảnh choẹ, chảnh, lười, thiếu chí tiến thủ, dễ sa ngã, đanh đá, khó nắm bắt, thiếu nam tính, thiếu mạnh mẽ, cay nghiệt, già, chậm, bốc đồng, quá hiền lành, khắc khổ, nhàu nhĩ, dễ bị lãng quên, bon chen, cô độc, vô trách nhiệm, bảo thủ, lạc hậu, tham vọng, cực đoan, phô trương, tàn ác, cứng nhắc, (tính) tiểu thư, kín kẽ đến cực đoan, lạnh …
3	Works, artistic activities	Nhàm chán, dung tục, sống sượng, bạo liệt, (giọng) phô, (chấm điểm) ngặt nghèo, tàn ác, (giọng hát) mất cảm xúc, nghiệp dư hoá, cứng nhắc, nhạt, kém duyên, lộ chất diễn, (nói năng) nhạt nhẽo, ì, bốp chat, thiếu đột phá, (kết hợp) nhàm chán, (trình độ chuyên môn) khập khiễng, (diễn xuất) hời hợt, non, (phong độ) thất thường, (nói) kém duyên, …
4	Private life	Đảo lộn, rối ren, đổ vỡ, ồn ào, cay đắng, thua lỗ, túng quẫn, sóng gió, rắc rối, nợ nần, rạn nứt, …
5	Products	Khó gây sốt, (format) cũ kĩ, (gameshow) nặng tính giải trí, thương mại, (phim giải trí) đơn thuần, (kịch bản) nhàn nhạt, (sản phẩm nghệ thuật) bình dân, (cảnh nóng) phản cảm, (cảnh sex) trần trụi, thô tục, chưa đến tầm, (phim) nhạt, hời hợt, lấy mỹ nhân câu khách, (phim giải trí) thảm hoạ, xấu, non, hài nhảm, (tình tiết) phi lý, dàn trải, mờ nhạt, …
6	Competency	Chưa rõ, mờ nhạt, nhũng nhiễu, vô cảm, né trách nhiệm, chưa khách quan, chưa hợp lý, gây lãng phí, chưa hiệu quả, buông lỏng,
7	Public feed back	Bức xúc, không hài lòng, không đánh giá cao, phản đối nặng nề, thất vọng, nhàm chán, lo ngại (khả năng quản lý), gây khó chịu, phản bác, nản, phản đối, (ý kiến) trái chiều, than phiền (chất lượng phục vụ), ….
8	Current state	(thủ tục) rườm rà, (phối hợp) chưa ăn ý, lùng nhùng, không lối thoát, chưa minh bạch, bị xem nhẹ, thả nổi, yếu kém, nhiều kẽ hở, lừa đảo, bệ rạc, phát triển èo uột, chưa hợp lý, nguy hiểm, không cải thiện, ...

Table 3.9: Negative words and phrases

This strategy mostly used in celebrity interviews, and the topics to attack, by decreasing prevalence, are personality, creativity, then appearance and artistic product of the interviewee. Perhaps these are most sensitive topic for the celebrities.

In this group, there is a subset that when used, can alter the level of threat generated by the utterance. They are slangs. Slang in data set mostly to use for referring things and events in celebrity worlds. Some common slangs are:

Slang	**Meaning**
chảnh, sao	Arrogance
nổ	Excessive bragging
nhai	Lack of creative
trò câu khách	Attention-seeking
tung hoa	Positive feedback
ném đá	Negative feedback
đút tiền lấy giải	Pay to buy prizes
dìm hàng	Embarrass other before an audience
một màu	(art style) lacking creativity
xuất xưởng	Publish an production
mò mặt	To appear (in TV or a TV programme)
mát mẻ	Too sexy, revealing clothes
tắc kè hoa	Wear too colourful clothes
kín cổng cao tường	Too conservative in choosing clothes
kỹ nghệ của dao kéo	Use of cosmetics surgery
(bị) tuýt còi	Stopped/fined by authority
sạn	Mistakes
bình hoa di động	Beautiful but has no talent
hư bột hư đường	Breakup in relationship (marriage, love affair)
lái máy bay	Married to an older woman
làm màu	Acts that purely for display of talent or wealth
sến	Too dramatic
(đóng cặp) mùi	Intense public display of affection
chuyện ngoài luồng	Extramarital affair
sân khấu chuồng gà	Badly prepared stage
dựa hơi	Borrow other's fame
chết vai	Can only play one role in multiple films

Table 3.10: Negative-sounding slang

3.3. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

These are some language elements that when used it change the politeness level of utterance. The classification of them is for making their roles and functions clear. Actually, one utterance can make use of all these elements, and in interview, one face threatening element often accompanied by a softener element to avoid straining the interview and affect the participants' interpersonal relationship.

CONCLUSION

The thesis reaches following results:

1. Base on theoretical works of Brown and Levinson on politeness and view of Culpeper about impoliteness, the thesis collected and analyzed the use of politeness principles and the language devices used in a special communication setting: press interview. To extract information, conflict and disaccord between interviewer and interviewee is inevitable. So the observance and violation of politeness principles are sure to happen in interviews. The thesis analyzed the language devices to express politeness at utterances (speech acts) level and word level (pronouns and modalities), and analyzed these devices to see if it enhance or threaten interviewee face, and the combined use of them to have effective communication strategies.

2. Interview has a rigid structure with strictly followed exchanges and participant is expected to take turn to speak. This structure followed by almost all articles in the data set. The opening and closing often comprise of protocol acts such as greeting, thanking and wish giving to establish a friendly interpersonal connection between interviewer and interviewee. The main part comprises of many exchanges, in which the interviewer has total control of the direction of the interview. In the interviewer's initiative, asking acts are most numerous and is a head acts. Other are some pre- and post-head acts to retell the story or express interviewer emotions, to serve to strengthen interpersonal relationship or part of interviewer strategy.

3. The thesis analyze the common speech acts in interviews utterances, the thesis shows that there is a difference in language devices that has politeness implication grouped by social standing of interviewees. The three groups are celebrity, officials, and others. The thesis focus on asking acts because this act is the main, driving act of the interview. The analysis showed clear relation between pragmatics function of asking acts and the interview topic with the level of politeness of the utterance. The most imposing act is when the interviewer ask the interviewee to confirm something using closed question; or include private life issue in the question; or threaten the social standing of the interviewee.

4. At phrase and word level, the thesis analyzes the element that increase or decrease the level of politeness, including pronoun, modalities (hedges, modal verbs, positive and negative words). The result is pronoun in interview are mostly appropriate. There still are inappropriate use such as the omission of pronoun, but this is uncommon. The use of positive or negative modalities can affect the degree of face-threatening of the utterance.

The politeness level of utterance has very close connection to the words and phrase interviewer used. When interviewing official (F1) neutral words and phrases often used. On the other hand, for celebrity (F2) and the other group (F3), the use of word is freer, less formulated and more flexible. The interviewer sometime even use informal, spoken language in the interview despite the public and formal nature of the interview. Sometime the utterance becomes impolite because of the overuse of that language.

5. Even though the thesis is in linguistics field, we hope that the thesis will contribute to the prevention of bad interaction between journalists and interviewees, and improve interview skills of the interviewers.

6. Data source of the thesis is limited to interviews published by newspapers and online newspapers. The body language element of interview that can affect its politeness are not available. We hope that in the future this aspect of politeness in interview will be addressed by other researches.