

Gender Differences in Politeness Strategies in Negotiations in Sharktank America and Sharktank Vietnam: A Contrastive Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

contrastive analysis,
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Brown and
Levinson,
negotiations

Gender and language have long been an interesting field in sociolinguistics and pragmatics. In the current study, politeness - one of the core issues of modern pragmatics, is adapted to hopefully shed great light on the issue in Vietnamese and American contexts to explore the gender differences in negotiations. Employing descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative methods, the data recorded from 10 conversations in Shark Tank Vietnam Season 3 TV program and 1 tenconversations in Shark Tank America were transcribed and analyzed to reveal the different strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory (1987) used by gender group of Sharks (investors). The gender linguistic differences under the contrastive analysis theory feature the prominent politeness strategies used by investors in American and Vietnamese negotiations. Those are very significant to support the evaluation of language and gender in the current society and in a cross-culture context.

Introduction

Gender and politeness have been an unlimited theme for research in phonetics, semantics, pragmatics, as well as sociolinguistics and applied linguistics for more than 40 years, which has proved a certain number of scientific facts about gender differences in interactions. There is quite a little research showing the differences in voices, sounds, even learning styles or speaking performance (Mahmood, A. S., Saad, N. S. M., & Nur, N. M., 2023; Nguyen, H. N., 2023; Candilas, K. S., Diane, X. M., Gaid, J. K., & Kolog, P. J., 2023). However, the issue has been concerned much more in pragmatics and sociolinguistics recently. Sociolinguistic research reveals that women are more polite than men in certain cases, proved by the number of polite signs in their speech. For example, women tend to compliment more than men and create close and friendly social relationships in same-sex dyads, while men in similar situations do not, and women have more tendencies to apologize, soften criticism, or express thanks than men do.

In Vietnam, several studies showing variations in politeness by gender have been conducted on the relationship between context and language use, such as gender and politeness in family conversations in Hanoi (Vu, T. T. H., 1999), (Chew, G. C. L., 2011), (Ton, T. N., 2022); Vietnamese greetings in Mekong Delta (Nguyen, D. T., & Le Khac, C., 2021), politeness in request emails written by Vietnamese students in Pham, T. M. T., & Yeh, A. (2020). However, research on gender and politeness in negotiations and in real TV programs, especially in contrastive analysis between the American and Vietnamese languages, has not been found.

One of the prominent motivations for conducting the research is the attractiveness of the Sharktank program, which is about real negotiations and the ground for start-ups to try their business ideas. Also, the negotiation conversations from Sharktank are surely reliable and natural data for social linguistics study, as well as for revealing the new changes in gender language in the modern time and business context.

This article will examine some gender differences in using the politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson in the context of business negotiations on a real TV program, as well as contrast those differences between the American version and the Vietnamese one.

Literature review

Many researchers confirm that "*politeness is not something to be born but something which is acquired through a process of socialization.*" In everyday conversations, it is common knowledge that "politeness" refers to proper social conduct and tactful consideration of others. Yule, G (1996) defined "politeness" to be an interaction and social sense, including "emotion" used to illustrate the "self-image" of a person. Goffman, E. (1967), Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1978) concluded that politeness theory is related to the concept of the face, which is a picture of self-image in the social attributes, w then is set to be a universal framework for politeness the rough fac.

Lakoff R (1975) investigated politeness from the theory from a new socio-pragmatic perspective. Based on the cooperative principle, she investigated politeness in the pragmatic rule structure to find out whether it is a pragmatically well-formed utterance or not. According to Lakoff, R (1975), politeness is defined to be a various system of interpersonal relations adapted to keep a minimum of conflict and confrontation in human interactions.

Being different from Lakoff R's approach, Leech G (1983) used the concept of "indirectness," in which politeness is clarified as a group of social performance to create respect and appreciation or harmony and coordination. Thus, 6 Leech, G's maxim concepts named "Tact, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, Sympathy" were built to minimize rudeness degree and to maximize politeness.

Until recently, Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C's model (1987) was considered the most influential one in politeness. However, it has been criticized. In this model, the notion of "face," including positive and negative faces, is defined as follows: "*negative face is the design of every competent adult member for his actions to be unimpeded by others. Positive face is the desire of every member for his wants to be desirable to, at least, some others.*" (Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C, 1987). In ordinary conversations, face-threatening speech acts used with high frequency are not beneficial to the speakers' and/ or the addressee's facial desire. As a result, speakers have to adopt a variety of polite techniques to minimize face-threatening acts for both speakers and hearers.

Politeness is a wide scope to be investigated, so there have been previous studies concerning politeness and gender. Sociolinguistic research's prominent findings are that women tend to use more politeness strategies than men in their speech (Hobbs, P., 2003). Research about politeness is often conducted in the theory of speech acts which could intrinsically threaten the face of a hearer by a speaker as requests (Tanaka, N., 1988; Kitao, K., 1990; Takahashi, S., 1996); complaints (Olshtain, E., & Weinbach, L., 1993); apologies (Trosborg, A., 1987; Sienes, M. J. V., & Catan, J. E. C., 2021); refusals (Litvinova, A. V., & Larina, T. V., 2023). Among these acts, requesting seems to be the most favored act for Japanese researchers to investigate native/ non-native differences in politeness strategies. Interestingly, Kitao K.'s extensive study on 3 groups, including Americans, Japanese studying in the United States, and Japanese living in

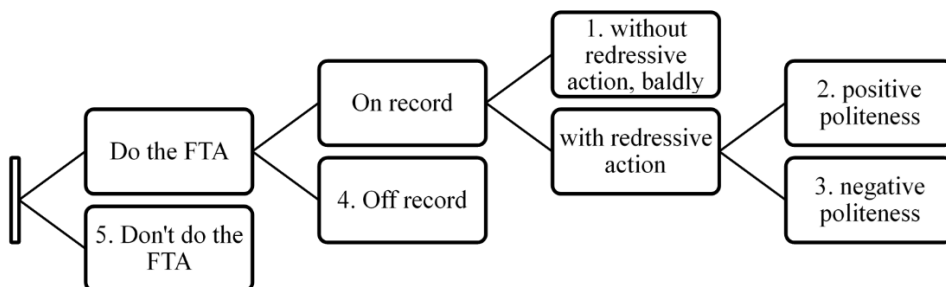
Japan, showed that "the higher the hearer's power in relation to the speaker, the higher the level of politeness used" and "The Japanese perceive negative politeness as less polite than Americans." However, the results failed to support the hypothesis that "the Japanese use fewer strategies than American do." (1990)

Besides studies related to politeness used in face threatening acts, researchers have conducted numerous investigations into face-flattering acts such as complimenting, which was reported that women pay more compliments than men (Herbert, R. K., 1990; Holmes, J., 1986; Johnson, D. M., & Roen, D. H., 1992), that women in same-sex peer conversations use a lot of positive-politeness strategies while men in similar situations do not (Pilkington, J., 1998), and that women tend to apologize, soften criticism or express thanks more than men (Tannen, D., 1994: 56-57).

The Brown and Levinson model as the theoretical framework

From the concept of face and threatening acts, it is impossible for people to communicate successfully without FTAs. Politeness, defined by Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987), consists of "a set of strategies that serve to minimize the risks to face or self-esteem whenever a speaker commits a face-threatening act." In particular, to implement an FTA, a speaker may choose at least one of four following strategies, which are arranged from the most to the least threatening.

Figure 1: Possible strategies for doing FTAs (Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C., 1978))



1. *Bald on-record*: Whenever speakers tend to do FTAs with maximum efficiency, they will choose the strategy "bald-record." In this case, the communicative purpose that led a certain actor to do a certain act is clear.

2. *Positive politeness strategies*:

| Positive Politeness Strategies | |
|--|---|
| P1- Notice, attend to H (his/ her interests, wants, needs and goods) | P9 – Joke |
| P2 – Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H) | P10 – Assert or presuppose S’s knowledge of and concern for H’s wants |
| P3 – Intensify interest to H | P11 – Be optimistic |
| P4 – Use in-group identity markers | P12 – Include both S and H in the activity |
| P5 – Seek agreement | P13 – Give or ask for reasons |
| P6 – Avoid disagreement | P14 – Assume or assert reciprocity |
| P7 – Presuppose S’s knowledge of and concern for H’s wants | P15 – Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation) |
| P8 – offer, promise | |

3. *Negative politeness strategies*:

| Negative Politeness Strategies | |
|---|---|
| N1 – Be direct/ conventionally indirect | N6 – Apologize |
| N2 – Question, hedge | N7 – Impersonalize S and H: avoid pronouns “I” and “you” |
| N3 – Be pessimistic | N8 – State the FTA as a general rule |
| N4 – Minimize the size of imposition on H | N9 – Nominalize |
| N5 – Give deference | N10 – Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H |

4. *Off-record*: – record utterances are indirect uses of language; speakers say something that is not explicitly relevant and sometimes use metaphors, irony, vague, or ambiguity.

Research Questions

The study investigated the gender-based differences in politeness strategies in negotiating conversations in the genre of Shark Tank Vietnam program and tried to explore the answer to these questions:

- (1) *What politeness strategies in Brown and Levinson did male and female Sharks (investors) use in the negotiations in Shark Tank America and Shark Tank Vietnam?*
- (2) *What are the similarities and differences in politeness strategies used by Sharks (investors) in negotiations in Shark Tank America and Shark Tank Vietnam?*
- (3) *What can be discussed from the findings related to the issue?*

Methods

The study adopted the qualitative method, contrastive analysis, and descriptive method to investigate politeness strategies in Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C model (1987) in Shark Tank America and Shark Tank Vietnam. In addition, SPSS software, particularly the Pearson Chi-square test, was adapted to find out the correlation between politeness strategies and gender; similarly, the analysis methods in Candilas, K. S., Diane, X. M., Gaid, J. K., & Kolog, P. J. (2023). In order to implement the study, the data from 10 pitch conversations from Episodes 1 to 5 in Shark Tank Vietnam Season 3 program and 10 pitches from Episodes 1 to 7 in Shark Tank America Season 9 were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. In the pitches in Shark Tank programs, there are 5 investors (2 females and 3 males). In the genre of Shark Tank program as a genre of negotiation (Van Eemeren, F. H., & Grootendorst, R., 2003), there are 3 main parts of negation including the opening offer (presenting offer), confrontation stage (exchanging information), bargaining – argumentative stage. In each stage, speech acts in the Sharks' utterances are classified, then politeness strategies are identified in all FTAs.

Table 1. Number of politeness strategies used by Sharks in Shark Tank America

| Shark Tank America | Female Shark | Male Shark |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Bald on-record (BOR) | 13 | 39 |
| Positive Politeness (PP) | 138 | 266 |
| Negative politeness (NP) | 40 | 83 |
| Off-record (OR) | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 192 | 390 |

Table 2. Number of politeness strategies used by Sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam

| Shark Tank Vietnam | Female Shark | Male Shark |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Bald on-record (BOR) | 21 | 95 |
| Positive Politeness (PP) | 36 | 136 |
| Negative politeness (NP) | 44 | 168 |
| Off-record (OR) | 2 | 8 |
| Total | 103 | 407 |

Findings and discussion

Politeness strategies used by male and female Sharks in Shark Tank America

Figure 2. Politeness strategies used by sharharks in Shark Tank America

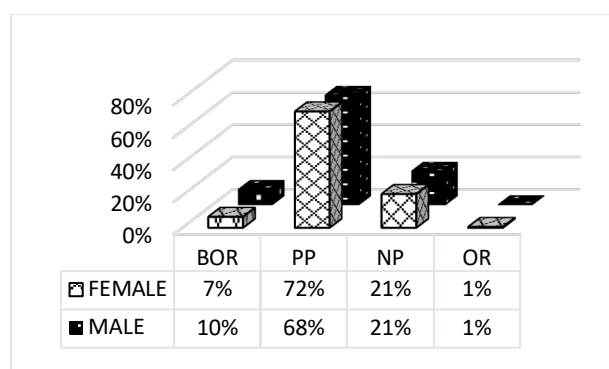


Figure 2 reveals the percentage of politeness strategies in Sharks' utterances in the negotiations in Shark Tank America, which reveals that American investors mostly adopted positive politeness (above 65%), just 21% of negative politeness, rarely used bald on - record and off-record. In gender, positive politeness is more favorably used by female than male Sharks by 4%, while male Sharks tended to talk more directly (10% of bald on - record) compared to female ones. Both negative politeness and off-record strategies were adopted at equal rates.

Investigating more specifically into sub-strategies of positive and negative politeness, the results are illustrated to generate the main linguistic features of male and female Sharks/ investors in the negotiation genre in terms of politeness.

Positive politeness

Figure 2.1. Politeness strategies used by Sharks in Shark Tank America

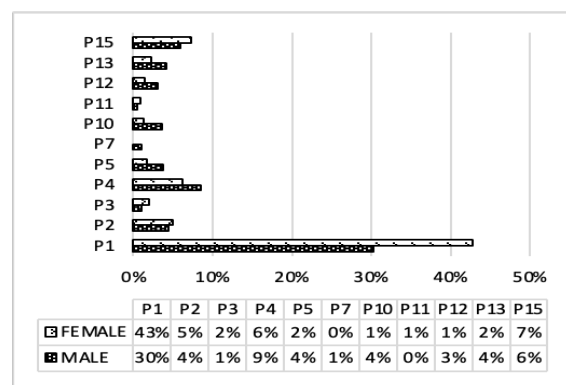


Figure 2.1 compares the frequency of sub-positive politeness strategies in male and female Sharks' utterances in negotiations in Shark Tank America. In detail, P1 is the main sub-strategy for both male and female Sharks; however, females (43%) showed more interest in hearer than males (30%) in the program. Besides, female Sharks in Shark Tank America preferred P2 and P15 to males, while male Sharks tended to adopt more P4, P10, P12, and P13 than females. The below examples are illustrated to see what polite language Sharks used.

P1 – Notice, attend to Hearer

This strategy is the most used in the negotiations in order to create harmony, understanding, or solidarity in the negotiations. Sharks use compliments like *"That's great!"*, and suggestions like *"Let's have it!"* to show their interest in the project/ presentation.

Example 1:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Makenzie | <i>".... So, Sharks, who's ready to dip in and be delighted by a sweet deal?"</i> |
| Female Shark | <i>"Totally"</i> |
| Female Shark | <i>"Bring it on. Let's have it."</i> |
| Makenzie | <i>"You are welcome."</i> |
| Male Shark | <i>"That's great."</i> |
| Female Shark | <i>"Wow, weird."</i> |
| Male Shark | <i>"Oh, my goodness. This is good."</i> |

P2 – Exaggerate (interests, wants, needs, goods)

Sharks exaggerate their interests by showing their preference and impression of the project so that the players agree to choose their offer. In example 2, a male shark named Alex Rodriguez persuaded a player to choose him to be an investor for his project. Shark used P2 as an intimate way of communication to make effect on the player's decision.

Example 2:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Shark Alex Rodriguez | <i>"First of all, let me just tell you, as someone who both of his parents are Dominican, I lived in Dominican from age five to about nine. And I just love your passion. I love what you're doing. And I cannot tell you how proud I am. Everything that you've done resonates with me. It's just an amazing story. So, you had me at hello."</i> |
|-------------------------|---|

P4- Use in-group identity markers

Using in-group markers, especially using names to create a close relationship with the hearers, is one of the popular tools of American Sharks in negotiations. In example 3, before asking a question as a threatening act, Shark Mark added "Makenzie" – the name of the player to show the closeness and show a marker that they are in a group.

Example 3:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Shark Mark | <i>"Makenzie, how'd you come up with the idea?"</i> |
| Makenzie (Player) | <i>"You know, we launched to shelves 13 months ago, and we actually just hit our million-dollar mark in gross sales."</i> |

P15 – Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)

P15 is used quite often in the negotiations, especially in the third period when both players and Sharks decide to accept or refuse the offers. Speakers tend to use wishes, sympathy speeches, congratulation, etc., as P15 sub-strategies in Brown and Levinson.

Example 4:

Player *"We would love to take that deal, Richard Branson."*
 Shark 1 *"Right. Well done."*
 Player1 *"Thank you so much."*
 Player2 *"Good luck."*
 Player1 *"Excited. Excited."*
 Shark 2 *"Good luck."*
 Player1 *"Pleasure."*
 Player2 *"Thank you."*
 Shark 3 *"Congratulations, guys."*
 Player1 *"Who! That's what we wanted."*
 Player2 *"That's who we wanted!"*

Negative politeness

Figure 2.2 Negative politeness used by Sharks in Shark Tank America

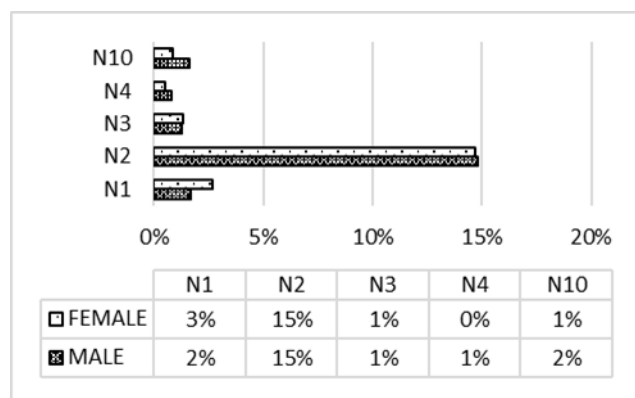


Figure 2.2 indicates that both male and female Sharks in Shark Tank America mostly used N2 as the main negative politeness strategy to avoid threatening the hearer's face when they made directive acts such as questioning, requesting, offering, etc. Not many significant differences were found in the utterances showing negative politeness sub-strategies between male and female Sharks. Some examples below are described:

N2 – Question, Hedge

N2 is the most commonly used strategy in both male and female American Sharks, which are known as hedges in questions as well as a way to soften threatening acts.

Example 5:

Shark Barbara Corcoran *"Oh, I was wondering. What are your sales?"*
 Shark Sarah *"So... So do you want two Sharks for \$225,000, 20% of your business, or do you want..."*
 Nate Lawrie *"Would you guys be willing to match Daymond's offer? \$225,000 for 15%?"*

Bald on-record

In Shark Tank America, male Sharks used more direct ways of utterances than females (by 3%). This way shows their directness in a speech in negotiations. To some extent, this also shows their strong effect on the speaking style of males.

Example 6:

Shark John "**Whoa. Wait a minute, here.**"

Off-record

Off-record is the least strategy in negotiations which may result from the genre of negotiations demanding clearness in the speeches of negotiators. Therefore, implications or vague are not favorable. In example 7, the negative sentence "but you've hired no one yet." implies that Corcoran is not interested in the offer and the information provided in the negotiation without directly stating how she does not like it, but just giving a comment instead.

Example 7:

Shark Kevin O'Leary "*Would you use this to hire one?*"

Makenzie "*Yes.*"

Shark Barbara Corcoran "***But you've hired no one yet.***"

Results of frequency in using 4 politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson model point out several values on gender differences in linguistic politeness in certain genres.

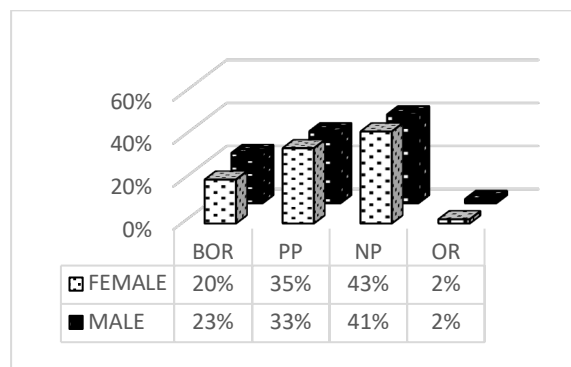
| In the genre of Shark Tank America | |
|---|---|
| Male Sharks | Female Sharks |
| Speak more directly (higher rate of BOR) | Speak less directly (lower rate of BOR) |
| Use fewer positive politeness strategies | Use more positive politeness strategies |
| Use the same rate of negative politeness strategies | |
| Use the same rate of implicatures/ vague utterance (OR) | |

From quantitative analysis, gender differences in using politeness strategies in American negotiations are clearly defined as follows:

- Male Sharks talk more directly. This finding is quite coincident with Holmes J. s' points (1986), which proved that men are direct, aggressive, and decisive in communication.
- Female Sharks remain in solidarity and friendliness in negotiations rather than male ones. They use mostly strategies of noticing or attending to the H, then giving gifts to the H, or exaggerating in their speech.
- Male and female Sharks protect Hearer's negative face by using hedges as the most common negotiation sub-strategy.

Politeness strategies used by male and female Sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam

Figure 3. Politeness strategies used by Sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam



From figure 3, male and female Sharks in the Vietnamese program share the same tendency to adopt politeness strategies in communication. They both used mainly negative politeness (more than 40%), then positive politeness (above 30%); comparing the strategies used by male and female Sharks, the findings partly reveal that more negative and positive politeness is in female Sharks' utterances than in male ones; whereas males used more bald on - record, which means male's talking is more direct than female's one. There is no difference in adopting off-record between male and female Sharks.

Studying, more specifically, sub-strategies of positive and negative politeness, the results are generated into a number of main linguistic features of male and female Sharks/ investors in the negotiation genre in terms of politeness.

Positive politeness

Figure 3.1 Positive politeness used by Sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam

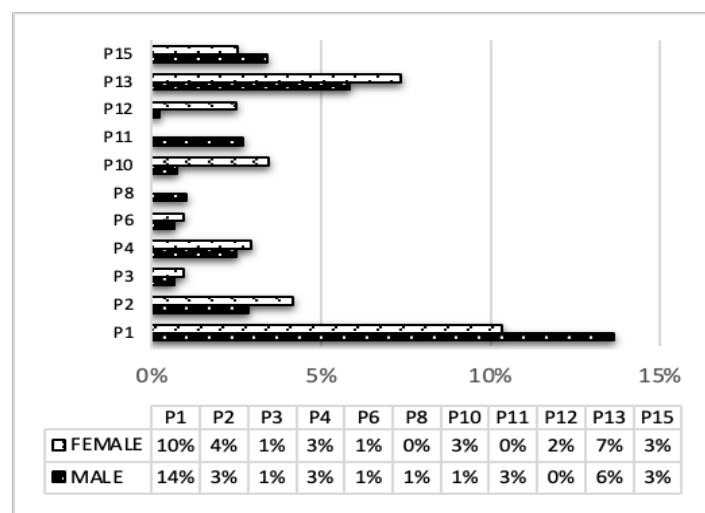


Figure 3.1 proved that P1 is the mostly used sub-politeness strategy, then P13, P2, P4, and P15 are at the second, third, and fourth rank of the frequency in use of the sub-positive politeness strategies by both male and female Sharks. Besides, the results indicate the differences in applying the sub-strategies by male and female Sharks. Specifically, male Sharks tended to attend to H (P1), use jokes (P8), and be more optimistic (P11) than females. In contrast, female Sharks preferred intensifying interest to H (P2), offering and promising (P10), including both a speaker and a hearer in the activity (P12), and giving or asking for reasons (P13) rather than male Sharks.

P1 – Notice, attend to Hearer

P1 is also the most used strategy by both male and female Vietnamese Sharks. It may be in the form of asking for personal information or noticing new things from the hearers. Interestingly, male Sharks used more P1 than female Sharks in the Vietnamese version. In example 8, shark Viet asked about the place to work, which is considered a way of noticing and showing interest in the player's project.

Example 8:

Shark Viet: **“Em đang làm việc ở đâu? (Where are you working?)”**

Ngọc: **“Em đang làm việc ở Hà Nội. (I am working in Hanoi.)”**

P2 – Exaggerate (interests, wants, needs, goods)

In Shark Tank Vietnam, P2 in the form of complementing, showing interest, and needs are the third most used positive politeness sub-strategy by both male and female Sharks. Female Sharks used more P2 than male ones. In example 9, the shark evaluates the value of the project positively before refusing to invest in the player's project, which is considered to be a tool to save the speaker's and hearer's faces.

Example 9:

Shark Dung: **“...và đây là điều mà mình thấy những cái bạn đang làm rất chi là giá trị. Tuy nhiên thì lĩnh vực này không phải là lĩnh vực mà tôi sẽ định dành nhiều thời gian thế nên tôi quyết định rút khỏi thương vụ này, tôi không đầu tư với bạn.”** (and this is what I think you are doing is valuable. However,)

P13 – Give (or ask for) reasons

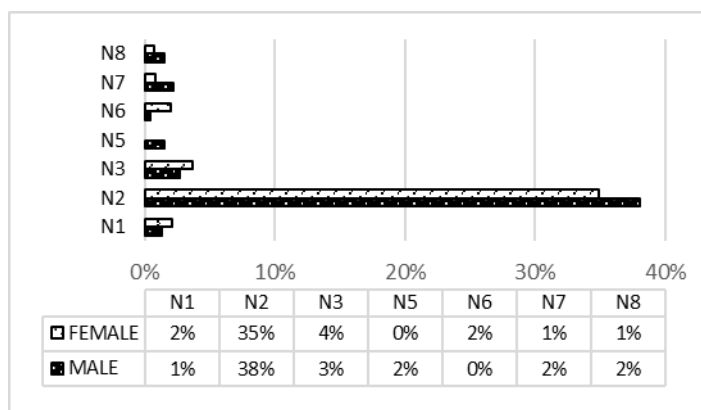
Giving reasons is shown to be the second most used politeness sub-strategy in Shark Tank by both male and female Sharks, with a tiny difference of 1 % between 2 genders in frequency. In example 10, Shark gave a reason for his incapability of investment to the project.

Example 10:

Shark Hung **“Mua tức là tiền đền bù...còn tiền thuế đất là nhà nước không thu cho nên anh không thể thế chấp vay vốn được..”** (That means the compensate..the land tax, the state doesn't ask to pay so you cannot mortgage.)

Negative politeness

Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of sub-negative politeness strategies in male and female Sharks' utterances in Shark Tank Vietnam. As shown, N2 – hedges were the most prominent linguistic feature showing politeness in Vietnamese Sharks with more than 35% of frequency. Comparing the differences in using the sub-strategies between male and female Sharks, it can be concluded that male Sharks used more hedges (N2), gave more deference (N5), more impersonalized S and H, and stated the FTA as a general rule rather than females, while female Sharks preferred being conventionally indirect, showing more pessimistic, apologizing more than males.

Figure 3.2 Negative politeness used by Sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam

N2 – Question, Hedge

For Vietnamese Sharks, hedging is the most favorably – used negative strategy, and males prefer using it rather than females.

Example 11:

Shark Thuy: “**Anh có 1 thắc mắc ấy** ví dụ bây giờ em ghi đây là 300 năm trước là nước mắm tìn đúng không, sang năm thì ghi nhãn hiệu là 301 năm à..”
(I am wondering that you labeled it 300 years ago, is this fish sauce Tin? Next year, will it last 301 years?)

Example 12:

Shark Dung “**Em đang có mấy cái business cùng một lúc** thì nguồn thu nào là chủ yếu?”
(You are managing some business at the same time, so where is your main income?)

Bald on-record

Bald on – record is used more by male Sharks than females in Shark Tank Vietnam. This feature is quite similar to that in the American version. Males still show their directness and strength in speech. In example 13, Sharks used direct questions to ask for the information with no polite linguistic markers. Example 14 shows how females directly criticized the player's project.

Example 13:

Shark Việt “**Doanh số có mấy năm rồi?**” (*How long does your sales last?*)
Shark Hưng “**Phân phối bằng cách nào?**” (*How do you distribute?*)
Shark Liên “**Ai cấp phép** cho câu chuyện chơi này?” (*Who issued this games?*)

Example 14:

Shark Liên “**Tôi cực ghét** chơi game, nướng thời gian trên màn hình là **tôi không thích**. Bất kể là ai tôi nhìn thấy là **tôi khó chịu** rồi.”
(I really hate playing games; kill the time in front of the screen. Whenever I see that, I feel very annoyed.)

Off-record

Off-record is the least popular strategy, with a frequency use of 2%. There are no differences in using off-record in male and female Sharks' utterances. Vietnamese Sharks tend to use idioms, and proverbs to imply the meaning of utterances.

Example 15:

Shark Viet **“Ngày xưa em như chim sáo mà sống lâu năm em thành đại bàng, đến lúc em thành đại bàng rồi thì anh làm sao đi theo em được? Thế nên ta cứ rõ ràng... tỉ lệ anh sẽ thấp hơn...”**

(once upon a time, you were a bird that lived for a long time and would become an eagle. Until you become an eagle, how can I follow you? So, let's be clear; my rate is lower.)

Results of frequency in using 4 politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson model point out several values of gender differences in linguistic politeness in certain genres.

| In the genre of Shark Tank Vietnam | |
|---|---|
| Male Sharks | Female Sharks |
| Speak more directly | Speak less directly |
| Use fewer positive politeness strategies | Use more positive politeness strategies |
| Use fewer negative politeness strategies | Use more negative politeness strategies |
| Rarely use off-record and at the same rate of frequency | |

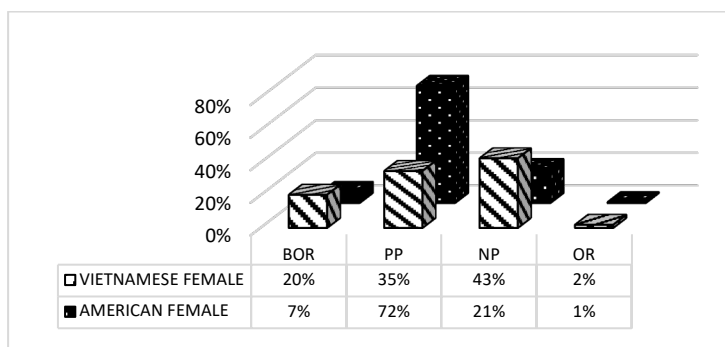
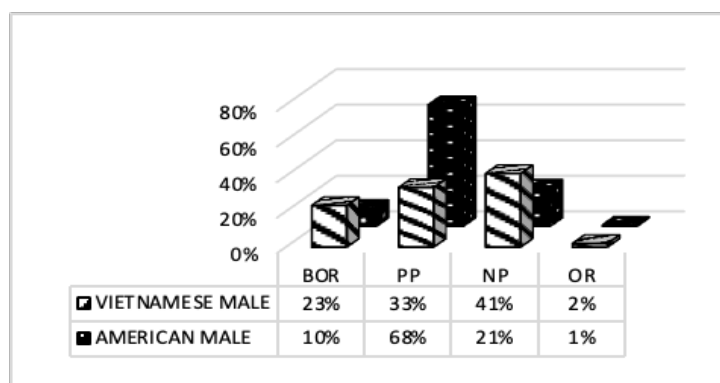
From quantitative analysis, gender differences in using politeness strategies in American negotiations are clearly defined as follows:

- Male Sharks talk more directly than female ones.
- Female Sharks use various politeness strategies in negotiations rather than males.
- Both male and female Sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam preferred negative politeness strategies, especially using hedges as the most popular sub-strategy. Whereas they rarely use implicatures or vague information in their speech.

Similarities and differences of linguistic politeness strategies used by male and female Sharks in Shark Tank America and Shark Tank Vietnam

From the politeness strategy aspect, the study proved gender differences in communication style, especially in negotiations between males and females at high social status as businessmen (CEOs, founders, etc.), as well as those in different cultures of America and Vietnam.

The results in Figures 4 and 5 reveal significant differences in adopting politeness strategies by male and female Sharks in Shark Tank America and Vietnam.

Figure 4. Politeness strategies used by female Sharks in Shark Tank America and Shark Tank Vietnam**Figure 5.** Politeness strategies used by male Sharks in Shark Tank America and Shark Tank Vietnam

Clearly, both male and female Vietnamese Sharks used more negative politeness and bald on record and off-record than American Sharks. In contrast, male and female American Sharks applied more positive politeness than Vietnamese Sharks. Interestingly, P1 (attending to H) and N1 (being indirect) are the most popular sub-positive and negative politeness strategies of female and male Sharks in the 2 programs.

From the findings, gender features in using politeness strategies in 2 programs show significant contributions of the research to sociolinguistic studies, in which the similarities and the new results are identified in the scope of the study.

The investigation assures that Vietnamese negotiators prefer negative politeness strategies while Americans favor politeness. Moreover, Vietnamese people keep their distance in communication and use more implicatures but show more power in speech rather than Americans in negotiations when they are in higher positions or in the active status of making decisions. These findings are quite similar to those in the Japanese or Chinese research context, which is considered to be in the same Eastern culture region as Vietnam. However, it was supposed by Kitao, K. (1990) that Japanese people are too accustomed to negative politeness, and it seems a norm to show this type of politeness, especially in conversations between lower to higher positions. On the contrary, American investors/ Sharks tend to use more positive strategies to show their closeness, and harmony in conversation, which are also found in several previous studies about American communication styles and politeness in low-context cultures, such as Holmes, J. (1986), Herbert, R.K. (1990), Tannen, D. (1994), Pilkington, J. (1998). Hopefully, the findings reveal several further research approaches in the field in various contexts.

Conclusion

The study has been conducted to investigate the similarities and differences in using politeness strategy by male and female Sharks/ investors in Shark Tank America and Shark Tank Vietnam under the shade of Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. model (1978). The research has shown certain proofs for ideologies in gender speech as well as for the changes in gender communication style in the specific contexts of negotiation on television. Furthermore, the results confirm the same communication style between males and females in the same culture. In brief, male and female Sharks in Shark Tank America show their friendliness, solidarity, and closeness in interaction by using more positive politeness, while male and female Sharks in Shark Tank Vietnam show directness but deference as well as less pressure on hearers by using more negative politeness. The findings have provided significant contributions to gender language research, pragmatics as well as sociolinguistics. Due to time and space constraints, the research has remained several limitations in clarifying the cultural contexts and needs further studying.

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Biodata

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