

**REQUEST AND POLITENESS STRATEGIES
IN BURMESE**

AMPIKA RATTANAPITAK

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Ampika Rattanapitak

Miss Ampika Rattanapitak
Candidate

Sujaritlak Deepadung

Assoc. Prof. Sujaritlak Deepadung,
Ph.D.
Major advisor

Sumittra Suraratdecha

Lect. Sumittra Suraratdecha, Ph.D.
Co-advisor

Mathias Jenny

Lect. Mathias Jenny, Ph.D.
Co-advisor

B. Mahasavariya

Prof. Banchong Mahaisavariya,
M.D., Dip Thai Board of Orthopedics
Dean
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Mahidol University

Sumittra Suraratdecha

Lect. Sumittra Suraratdecha, Ph.D.
Program Director
Doctor of Philosophy Program in
Linguistics
Research Institute for Languages and
Cultures of Asia
Mahidol University

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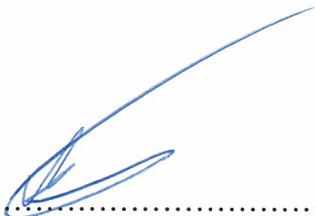
Miss Ampika Rattana Pitak
Candidate



Assoc. Prof. Cholticha Bamroongraks,
Ph.D.
Chair



Assoc. Prof. Sujaritlak Deepadung,
Ph.D.
Member



Lect. Mathias Jenny, Ph.D.
Member



Lect. Sumittra Suraratdecha, Ph.D.
Member



Prof. Banchong Mahaisavariya,
M.D., Dip Thai Board of Orthopedics
Dean
Faculty of Graduate Studies
Mahidol University



Assoc. Prof. Duangporn Kamnoonwatana,
M.A.
Director
Research Institute for Languages and
Cultures of Asia
Mahidol University

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Ampika Rattanapitak

REQUEST AND POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN BURMESE**AMPIKA RATTANAPITAK 4837497 LCLG/D****Ph.D. (LINGUISTICS)****THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE : SUJARITLAK DEEPADUNG, Ph.D.
(LINGUISTICS), SUMITTRA SURARATDECHA, Ph.D. (LINGUISTICS),
MATHIAS JENNY, Ph.D. (LINGUISTICS)****ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the speech act of request in Burmese in terms of forms, patterns, strategies, and politeness. The main data were collected by questionnaires supplemented by data from observations. Burmese requests were analyzed based on the model of Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) and the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987).

The results show that Burmese requests can be formed with four linguistic constructions: imperative, interrogative, negative, and declarative constructions. The common form of Burmese request is the verb plus politeness marker ၵ်း /pà/ which can be used in every situation regardless of any social factors. Request utterances consist of four components: head-act, alert, supportive move, and request indicator. The first three components are also in common with other languages, while the last one emerged in this study. As for the request strategies used by Burmese people, there are three main strategies: direct, conventional indirect, and nonconventional indirect strategies. In terms of the preference strategy, both direct and conventional indirect requests are preferred in Burmese requests. This does not support the universal request phenomena proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. Additionally, in order to make an appropriate request in different contexts, request utterances were redressed by both external and internal modifications either to decrease or increase the force of the request. As an intrinsic face threatening act, requests can be made by using different politeness strategies. There are five politeness strategies found: bald on record, on record with redressive action by positive politeness, on record with redressive action by negative politeness, off record, and don't do FTA. These politeness strategies are the same as those proposed by Brown and Levinson, however, there are some sub-strategies which reflect the characteristic of Burmese.

**KEY WORDS: SPEECH ACT / REQUEST / POLITENESS / BURMESE /
TIBETO-BURMAN****219 pages**

กลวิธีการขอเรื่องและความสุภาพในภาษาพม่า

REQUEST AND POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN BURMESE

อัมพิกา รัตนพิทักษ์ 4837497 LCLG/D

ปร.ด. (ภาษาศาสตร์)

คณะกรรมการที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์: สุจิตต์ลักษณ์ ดีผดุง, Ph.D. (LINGUISTICS),

สุมิตรา สุวรรณ์เดชา, Ph.D. (LINGUISTICS), MATHIAS JENNY, Ph.D. (LINGUISTICS)

บทคัดย่อ

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้ ศึกษาเกี่ยวกับโครงสร้างทางภาษา รูปแบบ กลวิธีและความสุภาพในวัจนกรรมการขอเรื่องภาษาพม่า โดยใช้ข้อมูลที่ได้จากแบบสอบถามประกอบกับการสังเกตการใช้ภาษาในชีวิตประจำวันของชาวพม่า การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลใช้แนวการวิเคราะห์ตามแบบของ บลูม-กัลกา เฮาส์และแคสเปอร์ (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989) และทฤษฎีความสุภาพของบราวน์และ เลวินสัน (Brown & Levinson, 1987)

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า โครงสร้างทางภาษาของถ้อยคำแสดงการขอเรื่องภาษาพม่ามี 4 แบบ คือ ประโยคคำสั่ง คำถาม ปฏิเสธ และบอกเล่า โครงสร้างที่ประกอบด้วยกริยาลักษณะกับคำแสดงความสุภาพ *o/pà/* สามารถใช้ได้ในทุกบริบทโดยไม่ต้องคำนึงถึงปัจจัยทางสังคมใดๆ ถ้อยคำขอเรื่องภาษาพม่าประกอบด้วยองค์ประกอบ 4 ส่วน ได้แก่ หน่วยหลัก หน่วยแสดงการเรียกร้องความสนใจ หน่วยเสริมการขอเรื่องและหน่วยบ่งชี้การขอเรื่อง โดย 3 องค์ประกอบแรกพบในการศึกษาภาษาอื่นด้วย แต่องค์ประกอบสุดท้ายพบในการศึกษานี้ ส่วนกลวิธีการขอเรื่องนั้น ชาวพม่าใช้กลวิธีการขอเรื่อง 3 กลวิธี คือ การขอเรื่องแบบตรง แบบอ้อมอย่างมีแบบแผน และแบบอ้อมอย่างไม่มีแบบแผน ชาวพม่านิยมใช้ทั้งกลวิธีการขอเรื่องแบบตรงและแบบอ้อมอย่างมีแบบแผน ซึ่งไม่เป็นไปตามข้อเสนอเรื่องสากลลักษณะของการขอเรื่อง และยังมีการตกแต่งถ้อยคำขอเรื่องให้เหมาะสมกับบริบทที่ต่างกันด้วยการเพิ่มหรือลดน้ำหนักรการขอเรื่อง การขอเรื่องยังทำได้โดยใช้กลวิธีความสุภาพ 5 กลวิธี คือ กลวิธีแบบตรง กลวิธีแบบตรงที่มีการตกแต่งข้อความด้วยความสุภาพเชิงบวก กลวิธีแบบตรงที่มีการตกแต่งข้อความด้วยความสุภาพเชิงลบ กลวิธีแบบอ้อม และกลวิธีไม่ทำการคุกคามหน้า แม้ว่ากลวิธีความสุภาพหลักที่พบจะเป็นไปตามทฤษฎีของบราวน์กับเลวินสัน แต่ยังพบว่ามีความสุภาพย่อยที่สะท้อนลักษณะเฉพาะของภาษาพม่าด้วย

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	1 st person
2	2 nd person
ANA	anaphora
APP	appealer
BEN	benefactive
CLF	classifier
CTR	contrastive
DES	desire
DIM	diminutive
DSPL	displacement
F	feminine
FN	final particle
FOC	focus
FUT	future
HON	honorific
IMP	imperative
LOC	locative
M	masculine
NEG	negative
NFUT	non-future
NOM	nominalization
NTAG	negative tag
OBJ	object
PART	particle
PER	performative
PL	plural
POL	politeness

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (cont.)

PTAG	POLITE TAG
Q	QUESTION WORD
RDPL	REDUPLICATION
SBJ	SUBJECT
SG	SINGULAR
SUB	SUB-ORDINATE
TOP	TOPIC

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a background of the study, including its objectives, research questions, study benefits, and data presentation. The final part of this chapter includes a brief sketch of Burmese grammar, which is intended to provide a basic understanding of the Burmese language.

1.1 Background of the study

Burmese, the national language of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, belongs to the Burmish sub-branch of the Lolo-Burmese branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family (Wheatley, 1987). The Tibeto-Burman languages, such as Karen, Akha, Jingphaw, Tibetan, and especially Burmese are interesting for linguists from different parts of the world. Studies on Tibeto-Burman languages have mostly focused on three aspects: 1) Phonology: how languages acquire tone, 2) Morphology: how languages acquire complex affixation, and 3) Theory of linguistic comparison: how to determine the degree of genetic relation (Hale, 1982). In Charney's bibliography of Burmese (Myanmar) research (2004), studies of the Burmese language and linguistics also concentrate on the three aspects mentioned above.

Currently, Burmese language studies are being carried out on a variety of aspects, such as syntactic study (Artnonla, 2003), discourse markers (San San Hnin Tun, 2005), topicalization (Hopple, 2005), and language contact (Jenny, 2011). It seems that at present studies on Burmese have widened in focus to include more issues than in the past. However, these studies still tend to focus on the language itself. That is, there is no study being conducted on the pragmatic use of the language. Since Pragmatics is becoming more attractive to many linguists, there are a number of studies on different issues in Pragmatics, such as speech acts, conversational implicature, deixis, conversational structure, politeness, etc.

Among these, speech acts are among the most interesting issues in Pragmatics, especially the speech act of request. It is interesting for three reasons; first, although the speech act of request is a face threatening act, it affects the participants' face wants in different ways (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper: 1989). Second, studying a request in a particular language reveals the relationships between linguistic form, meaning, pragmatic prerequisites and social factors involved in linguistic options used in making a request. Third, studying requests helps us to know culturally how people make requests and to understand the culture of that people because people make their requests in different patterns and use different strategies to achieve their goals. The request is usually concerned with social factors or depends on different conditions (Blum-Kulka, Danet & Gerson, 1985: 114 cited in Fukushima, 1996: 686).

There are many studies on request carried out in various languages such as English (Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989), French (Mulken, 1996), Japanese (Fukushima, 1996; Rinnert & Kobayashi, 1999; Aoyama, 2002), Chinese (Kong, 1998; Hong, 1999; Dong, 2008), Thai (Wiroonhachaipong, 2000; Wiriya, 2001; Sungkaman, 2001; Khahua, 2003; Deepadung & Khamhiran, 2005), Korean (Rue & Zhang, 2008; Byon, 2004) and so on. However, there is no study of request done in Burmese. Therefore, the speech act of request is the subject of this study in order to investigate how Burmese people make requests in different social situations.

And since the request is an intrinsically face-threatening act and threatens the addressee's negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987), the modifications are used to soften its impact but still maintain the conversational goal. In this point, politeness plays an important role in choosing the linguistic options of language usage. However, the standard of politeness in each culture may differ depending on the norms or traditions of each society. From my observations as a foreign student during three years in Myanmar, for example, Burmese students have to stand with their folded arms across their chest while talking to teachers, as a sign of respect. In Thai society, this behavior is considered impolite. Not only is politeness reflected in actions, but also in the ways of talking or using language. Linguistic politeness can be shown by utilizing a polite form of language, and it also deals with language use in terms of appropriate context, that is, using language which is appropriate with the form of language, context, speech event, and the relationship between the interlocutors (Deepadung,

2006). Linguistic politeness functions to reduce the risk of hurting other people's feelings when someone wants to say something that he or she thinks may be abrupt or rude, and it also amplifies the effect of making others feel good when someone wants to say something nice (Pan, 2000: 5).

Additionally, in Burmese society, especially within a family context, gender and power have a great effect on social activities, as revealed in some Burmese sayings. For example, သားကို သခင်၊ လင်ကို ဘုရား /θá kò θək^hlín lín kò p^hájá/ 'Son is master, husband is god'. This saying expresses that son and husband are considered as master and god, or that they are precious family members. In addition, another similar expression is ကြိတ်မ တွန့် မိုးမလင်း /tɕɛʔmə tùn mó mə = lín/ 'When a hen crows, there is no sunrise'. A hen in this saying refers to women, and it implies that crowing in the morning is the responsibility of a cock, which refers to men. In the morning, when the cock crows, there will be sunrise. This saying means that some work only a man can do, especially important work, like the sunrise, which happens every morning. At the meal, the food will be served first to the father, then to the mother, and finally to the children elderly. If a child wants to eat, s/he has to serve some food from every dish on the parent's and elder siblings' plates first. This reflects the culture's respect for older people.

Moreover, in the context of requesting someone to do something, Burmese people make it in either a direct or indirect way. As to our general knowledge about directness, directness does not necessarily correspond with politeness, i.e. directness does not concern with impoliteness; indirectness also does not concern with politeness. From my experience with Burmese people, some direct requests were made to a respectful person, and it was not considered impolite. In situations where I had a chance to talk with a professor, a teacher, and a student at the university, I realized that the professor used the polite form when asking his student to make a photocopy of a book for him. As a person with higher status, it is unnecessary for the professor to use the polite form when talking with a person in lower status. And when a teacher took biscuits for us, she told me to eat with the normal sentence စားပါ /sá pà/ 'please eat', after that she turned to the professor and said more politely, သုံးဆောင်ပါ /θóŋs^hàun pà/ 'please have it'. These cases tell us that there are differences in language use when talking to different people. With these social characteristics, it is interesting to find out how Burmese people use language in different contexts. Studying Burmese language in a particular aspect, such as speech acts of request in various contexts, not only help

us gain a better understanding of Burmese language usage, but it also helps us gain more understanding of the Burmese culture. The results of this study will serve as a guideline for Burmese instructors in teaching students how to make appropriate requests and to be polite in Burmese communication.

1.2 Objectives

- 1.2.2 To study the patterns and strategies of Burmese requests.
- 1.2.3 To study politeness strategies used in Burmese requests.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1.3.1 What are the patterns and strategies of Burmese requests?
- 1.3.2 How do Burmese people use politeness in the speech act of request?

1.4 Benefits of the study

It is hoped that this study will achieve the following results:

- 1.4.1 An understanding of the use of request patterns and politeness strategies in Burmese to apply appropriately to conversations,
- 1.4.2 An increased knowledge of Burmese with regard to different issues from previous studies,
- 1.4.3 Serve as a reference for anyone, especially Burmese instructors, interested in Burmese.

1.5 Data presentation

In order to provide complete information to the reader, the data of requests are presented in four lines. The first line is the Burmese script. The second line is the phonemic transcription of the Burmese request. The third line is a word-by-word translation. And the last line is the meaning of the whole utterance. For example,

(1.1)

လ	ဝါ။
là	pà
come	POL
'Please come.'	

Small caps are used to indicate functions of grammatical words. As for some Burmese words, which cover different meanings in English, the main meaning will be used in word-by-word translations, while the meaning in a whole translation will be considered according to the context. For example, the verb လာ: /lǎ/ in Burmese covers different meanings in English: 'to borrow', 'to lend', 'to hire', 'to rent'. In this study, a word-by-word translation of the verb လာ: /lǎ/ will be 'borrow' throughout the study, but in a free translation line its meaning can be 'borrow', 'lend', or others depending on the context. In each example, the part of the utterance that is relevant to the mentioned topic is in bold.

The Burmese transcription used throughout this study follows the system from the book *Studies in Burmese Linguistics* edited by Justin Watkins (2005) because this system is based on International Phonetic Association (IPA) conventions. I added the first two columns in order to illustrate it more clearly. The phonemic transcriptions and the Burmese characteristics shown in these columns are drawn from the examples given by Watkins (2005: xii-xiii). The Burmese transcriptions presented here are divided into 3 parts: consonants, tones, and vowels.

(a) Consonants: there are 33 consonant phonemes in Burmese that can occur in the syllable initial position. Table 1.1 shows the transcriptions of Burmese initial phonemes.

Table 1.1 Transcriptions of Burmese initials

Transcriptions	Burmese	IPA	Examples		
			Burmese	Transcription	Gloss
p	ပ	[p]	ပါ	pà	include
p ^h	ဖ	[p ^h]	ဖာ	p ^h à	patch
b	ဘ, ဗ	[b]	ဘာ	bà	what
m	မ	[m]	မာ	mà	hard
m̥	မှ	[m̥m]	မှာ	m̥à	order
w	ဝ	[w]	ဝါ	wà	yellow
w̥	ှ	[ʍ]	ှာ	w̥è?	hide
t	တ	[t]	တာ	tà	measure
t ^h	ထ	[t ^h]	ထာ	t ^h ù	thick
d	ဒ, ဓ	[d]	ဒါ	dà	that
s	စ	[s]	စာ	sà	writing
s ^h	ဆ	[s ^h]	ဆာ	s ^h à	hungry
z	ဇ, ဈ	[z]	ဇာ	zà	lace
n	န	[n]	နာ	nà	ill
n̥	န့	[n̥n]	န့ာ	n̥à	nose
j	ယ, ရ	[j]	ယာ	jà	farmland
ʃ	ရှ, ဇျ	[ʃ]	ရှာ	ʃà	look for
l	လ	[l]	လာ	là	come
l̥	လှ	[l̥]	လှာ	l̥è	boat
r	ရ	[r]	ပါရမီ	pàrəmì	aptitude
k	က	[k]	ကာ	kà	block
k ^h	ခ	[k ^h]	ခါ	k ^h à	partridge
g	ဂ, ဃ	[g]	ဂါ	gù	cave
tɕ	ကြ, ကျ	[tɕ]	ကြာ	tɕà	lotus
tɕ ^h	ခြ, ချ	[tɕ ^h]	ခြာ	tɕ ^h è	foot
ʈʂ	ဂျ, ငြ	[ʈʂ]	ဂျာနယ်	ʈʂànè	journal
ŋ	င	[ŋ]	ငါ	ŋò	cry
ŋ̥	ငှ	[ŋ̥ŋ]	ငှာ	ŋ̥è?	bird
ɲ	ည	[ɲ]	ညာ	ɲà	right-hand
ɲ̥	ည့	[ɲ̥ɲ]	ည့ာ	ɲ̥i?	squeeze
ʔ	အ	[ʔ]	အာ	ʔà	gape
h	ဟ	[h]	ဟာ	hà	thing
θ	သ	[θ]	သား	θá	son

From 33 phonemes presented in Table 1.1, there are two phonemes which can occur as clusters in Burmese as shown in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 Transcriptions of Burmese clusters

transcriptions	Burmese	IPA	examples		
			Burmese	transcriptions	gloss
-j-	င , ည	[j]	ပြော	pjɔ̌	speak
-w-	ဝ	[w]	သွား	θwá	go

(b) Vowels: according to Watkins (2005), Burmese vowels are categorized into two groups. The first group includes the vowels in phonological open syllables. The second group contains vowels in syllables spelled with final stops (realized as glottal stops) or final nasals (realized as nasal vowels). The transcriptions of these two groups of vowels are presented in Table 1.3 and 1.4 respectively.

Table 1.3 Transcriptions of vowels in open syllables

Transcriptions	Burmese	IPA	Examples		
			Burmese	Transcriptions	Gloss
i	ိ , ိ	[i]	နီ	nĩ	red
e	ေ	[e]	လေ	lè	wind
ɛ	ေ , ြ	[ɛ]	ဝေ	wè	buy
a	ာ	[a]	လာ	là	come
ɔ	ော	[ɔ]	မော	mò	look up
u	ု , ိ	[u]	ဟူ	pù	hot
o	ု	[o]	တူ	tò	short

Table 1.4 Transcriptions of vowels in syllables spelt with final stops or final nasals

Transcriptions	Burmese	IPA	examples		
			Burmese	transcriptions	gloss
iʔ	–ိ	[iʔ]	သိ	θiʔ	new
ɛʔ	–က်	[ɛʔ]	လက်	lɛʔ	hand
aʔ	–ဝ် , –တ်	[aʔ]	ဟပ်	haʔ	reflect
uʔ	–ွတ် , –ပ်	[uʔ]	လွတ်	l̥uʔ	release
eiʔ	–ိတ် , –ိတ်	[eiʔ]	အိပ်	ʔeiʔ	sleep
aiʔ	–ိတ်	[aiʔ]	ကိုက်	kaiʔ	bite
auʔ	–ောက်	[auʔ]	ရောက်	jauʔ	arrive
ouʔ	–တ် , –တ်	[ouʔ]	လုပ်	louʔ	do
iN	–င်	[ĩ]	သင်	θiN	teach
aN	–န်, –မ်, –ံ	[ã]	ဟန်	hàN	style
uN	–န် , –မ်	[ũ]	ယွန်	jùN	lacquer
eiN	–ိန် , –ိမ်	[eĩ]	အိမ်	ʔèiN	house
aiN	–ိင်	[aĩ]	ကိုင်	kàin	hold
aun	–ောင်	[aũ]	တောင်	tàun	mountain
oun	–န် , –မ်	[oũ]	ကုန်	kòun	run out

As for reduced or toneless vowels in minor syllables, they are transcribed with /ə/, for example, the vowel in the first syllable of the word စားပွဲ /səbwé/ 'table'.

(c) Tones: there are four tones in Burmese. The transcriptions of tones used in this study are shown in Table 1.5 below.

Table 1.5 Transcriptions of Burmese tones

Tones	Transcriptions	Examples		
		Burmese	Transcriptions	Gloss
Low	`	ခါ	k ^h à	shake
High	´	ခါး	k ^h á	be bitter
Creaky	~	ခ	k ^h ǎ	fee
Checked	?	ခဝ်	k ^h a?	draw off

1.6 A grammatical sketch of Burmese

In this section, a brief sketch of Burmese grammar is provided as a background to understanding Burmese in general. As for the characteristics of Burmese related to request, the focus issue of my study, it will be provided in the literature review, Chapter II.

According to Okell (1994a), there are two different styles of Burmese: ‘Colloquial,’ which is used for informal talking and ‘Literary’ which is used for formal writing. The most significant difference between these two styles of Burmese is the use of vocabulary, especially the particles attached to nouns and verbs. Table 1.6 shows some examples of colloquial and literary Burmese.

Table 1.6 Examples of colloquial and literary Burmese words

Colloquial Burmese		Literary Burmese		Meaning
လို့	lɔ	သောကြောင့်	θɔ́tɕaun	because
နဲ့	nɛ	နှင့်, ဖြင့်	n̥ɪ́N , p ^h íN	with, by
ဒါပေမဲ့	dàpèmɛ	သို့သော်	θɔ̀θɔ̀	but
တယ်	dè	သည်	θi	sentence final

Since the data of this study are in the colloquial style, the description of Burmese grammar presented here will mainly focus on colloquial style.

1.6.1 Morphemes

Okell (1969) divided Burmese analyzable units of meaning or morpheme into two main classes: words, and particles. Words are the lexical morphemes consisting of verbs, nouns, and interjections, while particles are the grammatical morphemes used to convey grammatical relations between words in the sentence.

1.6.1.1 Words

There are three word structures: simple, compound, and derived word. Compound words made up of verbs are compound verbs, while those made up of nouns are compound nouns. When verb/noun is formed by the formatives or by the linguistic processes, the result is the derived noun.

(1.2)	simple noun:	ရေ			
		jè			
		water			
	simple verb:	စား			
		sá			
		eat			
	compound noun:	မြစ်ရေ	<	မြစ် + ရေ	
		mji?jè		mji? jè	
		river.water		river water	
	compound verb:	တိုးတက်	<	တိုး + တက်	
		tó.te?		tó te?	
		make a progress		advance ascend	
	derived noun:	အပြော	<	အ + ပြော	
		?əpjó		?ə pjó	
		speaking		prefix speak	

Burmese verbs can be classified semantically into two: *functive* and *stative* verbs. *Functive verbs* are the verbs that denote actions or functions such as သွား /θwá/ ‘go’, သောက် /θau?/ ‘drink’, while *stative verbs* are the verbs denoting qualities or status such as သစ် /θi?/ ‘new’, ကြမ်း /tɕán/ ‘rough’.

According to Okell (1969), interjections are words that stand apart from other unit constructions such as phrases, clauses, and sentences. There are three groups of interjection: (1) *Ejaculations*: they are the words expressing the speaker’s emotion. They are neither words that imitate noise nor words that are used to address someone. They may be words like ကဲ /kɛ/ ‘well’, ဟေ့ /hɛ/ ‘hey’, or nouns like ဘုရား /pʰəjá/ ‘God’, ဒုက္ခ /dou?kʰə/ ‘how terrible’, or some verbs such as ကန်တော့ /kədɔ/ ‘sorry’, မှန်ပါ။ /mànbà/ ‘It is true.’ (2) *Onomatopoeic words*: they are the words which imitate a noise such as ဒိုင်း /dáiN/ ‘bang!’, ပုတ် /pʰou?/ ‘pop’. (3) *Appellatives*: they are the terms of addressing someone, such as ချို, ချို /bjɔ, bjó/ ‘I say!, hey! You there!’. Some nouns are used as appellatives, such as ဆရာ /sʰəjə/ ‘teacher, master’, and မိတ်ဆွေ /mei?sʰwè/ ‘friend’. Additionally, there are some particles called appellative suffixes. This kind of particle occurs as a suffix to appellatives. For example, ရေ /jè/, ရယ် /jè/, ရဲ့ /jɛ/, ရာ /jà /. They are used with nouns or address terms in order to address someone at the beginning of the utterance or to be sympathized when it occurs at the end of the sentence.

(1.3)

အဖေ	ရာ၊	သွား	ရ	လာ	ရ	တာ	အဆင်မပြေ	ပါ	ဘူး။
father	APP,	go	GET	come	GET	NFUT.NOM	inconvenient	POL	NEG
လိုင်းကား	တွေ	က	လည်း	ကြပ်	လိုက်	တာ	လွန်း	ရော။	
láinká	dwè	ka	lé	tɕa?	lai?	tà	lún	jɔ	
bus	PL	SBJ	INC	crowded	FOLLOW	NFUT.NOM	very	NFINAL	

ကား	အသစ်	တစ်=စီး	လောက်	ဝယ်	ပေး	ပါ	လား	အဖေ	ရာ။	...
ká	ʔəθiʔ	tə=sí	lauʔ	wè	pé	pà	lá	ʔəp ^h è	jà	...
car	new	one=CL	as.much.as	buy	BEN	POL	Q	father	APP	...

'Daddy, the transportation is inconvenient. The buses are also very crowded.

Could you please buy me a new car, **daddy**?' [2/M74/SEA]

In example (1.3), the appellative suffix ရာ /jà/ is attached to the kinship term အဖေ /ʔəp^hè/ 'father' and used to address the hearer at the beginning of the first sentence, and used at the final position of the third sentence in order to make the hearer feel sympathy for the speaker.

1.6.1.2 Particles

Particles in Burmese can be simply divided into three groups: nominal particles, verbal particles, and sentence particles.

(a) **Nominal particles**: the particles that are attached to a noun or pronoun to convey different functions or meanings. For example, က /kə/ indicates the subject of the sentence, နဲ့ /nɛ/ indicates instrumental and comitative meanings, and ကြောင့် /tɕəuɴ/ indicates reason.

(1.4)

အမေ	က	သား	ကို	ချစ်	တယ်။
ʔəmè	kə	θá	kò	tɕ ^h iʔ	dè
mother	SBJ	son	OBJ	love	NFUT

'Mother loves son.'

From example (1.4), က /kə/ can be attached to the noun အမေ /ʔəmè/ 'mother,' and it conveys the subject of the sentence. ကို /kò/ can be attached to the noun သား /θá/ 'son' and conveys the object of the sentence.

Some nominal particles are used to co-ordinate two or more expressions of similar class and relation (Okell, 1969: 188). Examples of co-ordinate markers in Burmese are နဲ့ /nɛ/ which conveys the comitative meaning, and ဝါ /pà/ which conveys the inclusive meaning.

(1.5)

ကျွန်တော်	နဲ့	ဗိုလ်ကြီး	ကို	ဝါ	ခေါ်	တယ်။
tɕənò	nɛ	bòtɕí	kò	pà	kʰò	dè
1SG.M	COMT	captain	OBJ	INC	fetch	NFUT

'(Someone) fetches both me and the captain'

Example (1.5) illustrates the use of the nominal particle နဲ့ /nɛ/, which conveys comitative sense and ဝါ /pà/ which conveys inclusive sense. The first one is attached to the first person pronoun ကျွန်တော် /tɕənò/ while the second one is followed the nominal group ဗိုလ်ကြီးကို /bòtɕí kò/ 'captain (OBJ)'. This sentence conveys that both ကျွန်တော် /tɕənò/ 'I (M)' and ဗိုလ်ကြီးကို /bòtɕí kò/ 'captain' are included in the action.

(b) Verbal particles: these particles are attached to the verb in the sentence. Since Burmese is an SOV language, most sentences end with the verb attached by verbal particles. Therefore, some verbal particles are sentence final particles. Examples of verbal particles in Burmese include: တယ် /dè/ which indicates 'non-future, certain', မယ် /mè/ which indicates 'future', ဝီ /pì/ which indicates 'achievement by a certain time'. Example (1.6) illustrates the use of verbal particles တယ် /dè/, and example (1.7) illustrates the use of မယ် /mè/.

(1.6)

ကျွန်တော်	စာအုပ်	လို	တယ်။
tɕənò	sàʔouʔ	ló	dè
1SG.M	book	want	NFUT

'I want a book.'

(1.7)

ကျွန်တော်	စာအုပ်	ဝယ်	မယ်။
təənə	sà?ou?	ló	mè
1SG.M	book	buy	FUT

'I will buy a book.'

(c) **Sentence particles:** there are two groups of sentence particles: sentence final particles and subordinate particles. Sentence final particles are the particles that appear at the end of the sentence. Some of them are the same as verbal particles, while some are followed verbal particles. Examples of the sentence final particles in Burmese are: လေ /lə/ 'emphatic', နေ် /nə/ 'agreement', လာ /lá/, လဲ /lé/ 'question'.

(1.9)

လှ်	ပး	ဝါ	နေ်။
lou?	pé	pà	nə
do	BEN	POL	AGR

'Please do it (for me), OK?'

Example (1.9) is a request utterance. The particle နေ် /nə/ at the end of the sentence conveys that the speaker is seeking an agreement with the hearer.

Subordinate particles are the particles that function to connect two or more clauses into a sentence. Some of subordinate particles mark nouns, while some mark the verbs of the sentence. Examples of subordinate particles in Burmese are: လို့ /lɔ/ 'because of', ရင် /jìn/ 'condition', မှ /mə/ 'counter-expectative'. Example (1.10) shows the use of the subordinate particle လို့ /lɔ/ in the connection of two sentences: 'Lend me a pen.' and 'Can you?'

(1.10)

ကျွန်တော်	ကို	ဘောပင်	ငှား	ပေး	လို့	ရ	မလား။
tɕənò	kò	bópìn	ŋá	pé	lɔ̌	ja	mè = lá
1SG.M	OBJ	pen	lend	give	SUB	GET	FUT=Q
'Lend me a pen.'					SUB	'Can you?'	
'Can you lend me a pen?'					[8/M28/WBMI]		

1.6.2 Word order

Burmese is an SOV language and almost perfectly displays the implicational universals proposed by Greenberg (1996) for the SOV language group, such as postpositions, relative clause precedes noun, all adverbial modifiers of the verb precede the verb, no alternative basic order (only OSV). However, some adjectives in Burmese precede modified nouns. Simpson and Watkins (2005: 32) proposed the neutral surface word order in Burmese as follows:

Subject, Adverb/Postposition (time/place), Indirect Object, Direct Object, Verb

All arguments and adjuncts in Burmese sentences occur in the position before the verb. The most focused element is placed immediately before the verb (Simpson & Watkins, 2005; Hopple, 2005). The examples below show the position of the focal element in Burmese.

(1.11) The focal element in the answer of the question 'What did John buy?'

ချွန်	DVD	ကို	ဝယ်	တာ။
ḥùN	dìbìdì	kò	wè	dà
John	DVD	OBJ	buy	NFUT. NOM
'John bought the DVD.'				[from Simpson & Watkins, 2005: 36]

(1.12) The focus element in the answer of the question 'Who helped you?'

ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	ချွန်	က	ကူညီ	တာ	ပါ။
təɔŋ	kò	ḥùN	kə	kùjì	dà	pà
1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	John	SBJ	help	NFUT. NOM	POL
'John helped me.'				[from Simpson & Watkins, 2005: 37]		

Example (1.11) is the answer of the question 'What did John buy?' The focal element of this sentence is 'DVD', object focus, which is the thing John bought. It is placed in the pre-verbal position immediately. As for example (1.12), it is the answer of the question 'Who helped you?' The focus of this sentence is the subject, who is 'John', the subject focus. It is in the place immediately before the verb.

1.6.3 Clauses and Sentences

According to Okell (1969: 170), a clause may be a 'verb clause' or a 'noun clause'. In natural conversation, a noun phrase or a verb phrase can function as a clause, for example, the answer to the question ဒါဘာလဲ။ /dà bà lé/ 'What is this?' can be a noun phrase စာအုပ်ပါ။ /sà?ou? pà/ 'The book'. A clause that can stand alone is called an "independent clause", while one which cannot is called a "dependent clause". The distinctive characteristics between independent clauses and dependent clauses in Burmese include the following: the independent clause can end with the verbal particles တယ် /dè/, မယ် /mè/, ဖြီ /pì/, ဘူး/bú/, or nominal particles ပါ /pà/, အဲ /bè/. These particles cannot occur at the end of the dependent clause.

(1.13) Independent clause:

စာအုပ်	တွေ	က	မ=ကောင်း	ပါ	ဘူး။
sà?ou?	dwè	kə	mə=káun	pà	bú
book	PL	SBJ	NEG=good	POL	NEG
'The books are not good.'					

(1.14) Dependent clause:

ဆရာ	နဲ့	ကျောင်း	မှာ	မ=တွေ့	တော့
s ^h əjà	nɛ	tɕáun	mà	mə=twe	dɔ
teacher	COMT	school	LOC	NEG=meet	CTR
'as (he) didn't find the teacher at school'					

A sentence consists of one independent clause. It can be either a single independent clause or an independent clause combined with a dependent clause. When they are combined, the dependent clause precedes the independent clause. A comparison between English and Burmese can be seen in the following example.

(1.15)

1. English

- a) I did not go to school (Independent clause)
b) **because** I was sick. (Dependent clause)

2. Burmese

- | | | | | | |
|----|----------------------------|----------|-----------|------|-------------------------|
| a) | ကျွန်မ | နေ | မ=ကောင်း | *ဘူး | လို့ (Dependent clause) |
| | tɕəma | nè | mə = káun | *bú | lɔ |
| | 1SG.F | stay | NEG=good | *NEG | SUB |
| | 'because I was sick' | | | | |
| b) | ကျောင်း | မ=သွား | ပါ။ | | (Independent clause) |
| | tɕáun | mə = θwá | pà | | |
| | school | NEG=go | POL | | |
| | '(I) did not go to school' | | | | |

Both clause 1 and 2 in example (1.15) are the combination of two clauses; '*I did not go to school*' and '*I was sick*' connected by a conjunction 'because'. Clause 2 a) shows that ခဉ်း /lo/ 'because' was attached at the end of the dependent clause ကျွန်မ နေမကောင်း: /tɕ↔mā nè mā=káun/ 'I was sick', while in sentence 1 b), it was put at the beginning of the dependent clause 'I was sick'.

1.6.4 Sentence types

Three basic types of sentences can be expressed in Burmese: declarative, imperative, and interrogative.

1.6.4.1 Declarative sentence

A declarative sentence, generally, is a statement the speaker makes to express an opinion, fact, or information in modal judgment.

(1.16)

ကျွန်တော်	မြန်မာ	လူမျိုး	ဖြစ်	ပါ	တယ်။
təʊnə	mjànmà	lùmjó	p ^h ji?	pà	dè
1SG.M	Myanmar	nationality	be	POL	NFUT

'I'm Myanmar.'

1.6.4.2 Imperative sentence

The imperative normally is in the form of a bare verb without any verbal marker. It usually has a final particle that expresses command or politeness. Table 1.7 shows examples of suffixes used in imperative to convey different meanings (adapted from Taw Sein Ko, 1891: 37).

Table 1.7 Examples of particles which can be used in Burmese imperative

Markers	Transcriptions	Functions/Meanings
ဦး	ʔóuN	signifies repetition, additional action (entreaty form)
ချေ/ တော့/ လေ/လော့	tɕ ^h è/ dɔ̌/ lè/ lɔ̌	command
ပါ	pà	an entreaty or command couched in polite language
စေ	sè	causation (official order)
လိုက်/ခဲ့/ တော့	laiʔ/k ^h ɛ̌/dɔ̌	colloquially in imperative sense
နဲ့	nɛ̌	prohibition or priority

The suffix ပါ /pà/ in example (1.17) is attached at the end of the imperative. It is normally used as a politeness marker in other cases, but in this sentence it turns the imperative, which sounds like an order into the polite request.

(1.17)

သား	ရေ	ဆရာ	ကို	ဘောပင်	တစ်=ချောင်း	ခဏ	ငှား	ပါ။
θá	jè	s ^h əjà	kò	bópǐN	tə = tɕ ^h áun	k ^h əŋə	ŋá	pà
son	APP	teacher.DEP	OBJ	pen	one=CL	moment	borrow	POL

'Son, lend me a pen for a moment please.'

[3/M4/UFL]

Example (1.18) shows the use of another suffix in the imperative sentence. In this example, the suffix ဦး /ʔóun/, which indicates additional action, is used at the end of imperative in order to request the hearer.

(1.18)

ကျွန်တော်	ကို	တစ်=ဆိတ်	လောက်	ကူညီ	ပါ	ဦး။
tɕənò	kò	tə = s ^h eiʔ	lauʔ	kùjì	pà	ʔóun
1SG.M	OBJ	one=piece	as.much.as	help	POL	ADD

'Please help me a little.'

[12/M83/SEA]

1.6.4.3 Interrogative sentence

Interrogative sentences can be divided broadly into content questions, yes/no questions, and alternation questions (Artnonla, 2003).

(a) **Content question:** there is one question word ဘယ် /bè/ 'which' (and the variant form ဘာ /bà/ 'what' which derived from ဘယ် /bè/ + ဟာ /hà/ 'which one?'). Question words occur initially (example 19a) or medially (example 19b) in the sentence and end with the content question markers လဲ /lé/.

(1.19a)

ဘယ်	က	လာ	လဲ။
bè	kə	là	lé
INTER	LOC	come	Q

'Where do you come from?'

(1.19b)

ဒီ	စာအုပ်	ဘယ်	လောက်	လဲ။
dí	sá?ou?	bè	lau?	lé
this	book	INTER	as.much.as	Q

'How much is this book?'

(b) Yes/no question: yes/no questions are derived from declaratives by attaching the word လာ: /lá/ at the end of the sentence as shown in example (1.20). In example (1.20a), a question word is attached at the end of the declarative sentence, while in example (1.20b) a question word replaces the verbal particle.

(1.20a)

နေ့လယ်	စာ	စား	ပြီး	ပြီ	လာ:။
ne:lè	sà	sá	pí	bì	lá
afternoon	meal	eat	finish	NSIT	Q

'Did you have lunch?'

(1.20b)

ဒီ	ရှပ်.အင်္ကျီ	လှ	လာ:။
dì	ʃaʔ.ʔìɴt͡ʂì	l̥a	lá
this	shirt	beautiful	Q

'Is this shirt beautiful?'

(c) Alternative question: this is the question that provides alternative actions for the hearer to choose. It is the co-occurrence of two yes/no questions.

(1.21)

သွား	မ=လာ:၊	နေ	မ=လာ:။
θwá	mə = lá,	nè	mə = lá
go	FUT=Q,	stay	FUT=Q

'Do you want to go (or) do you want to stay?'

An additional characteristic of Burmese is the tendency to omit the subject or other arguments in an utterance, similar to other Southeast Asian languages, such as Thai. When the subject of the sentence is also the subject of a number of the following sentences, it is generally mentioned only in the first sentence and omitted in the following sentences (Pe Maung Tin, 1956: 198). In the case where the clauses are linked by subordinate markers (or conjunction in broad sense), the object of the preceding clause is picked as the subject of the following clause. Then this subject can be omitted. However, the context will help in interpreting the meaning of the clause as shown in example (1.22).

(1.22)

အခါတပါး	မောရိယ	ပြည်	ကို	ရန်သူ	တ=ပါး	နှိပ်စက်
?ək ^h ətəpá	mórijá	pjì	kò	jànθú	tə = pá	neiʔseʔ
past.time	<i>Maurya</i>	<i>state</i>	<i>OBJ</i>	enemy	one=CLF	torture

လတုံ	၍	Ø	ပျက်	ခဲ့	၏။
lātòun	jwɛ		pjɛʔ	k ^h ɛ	?i
EMP	SEQ	<i>(Maurya.state)</i>	destroyed	DSPL	NFUT

'Sometime in the past, the enemy tortured **Maurya state**, then (Ø = *Morija state*) was destroyed.'

[adapted from Pe Maung Tin, 1961]

After providing background information and some characteristics of Burmese, the next chapter will review the literature used in this study of request and politeness. Previous studies will also be presented and discussed.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter serves as a literature survey on issues related to this study, which consists of three parts: speech act of requests, linguistic politeness, and the previous works related to request and politeness in Burmese.

2.1 Speech act of requests

This section will provide information on the notion of the speech act of requests and also report on studies on requests from the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), which has been used as a model in many previous studies, including the present study. Moreover, studies on request in various languages, especially non-Western languages, are reviewed respectively.

2.1.1 The notion of speech act of request

The concept of speech act began with J. L. Austin's book *How to do Things with Words* (1962), a published version of lectures given at Harvard in 1955. According to Austin, utterances are grouped as *constatives* and *performatives*. The former are utterances that are employed to say something, while the latter are utterances that are designed to do something; the word performative indicates that the utterance is being used to perform an action (Austin, 1962). Therefore, speech act means the utterance that performs an act at the time it is uttered. As Yule (1996: 47) states, "Actions performed via utterances are generally called **speech acts**".

Searle (1979: 12-17), one of Austin's students, regroups Austin's speech acts and proposes five different categories of speech acts that can be performed in speaking as follows:

1) *Assertives (or representatives)*: functioning to describe states or events such as asserting, boasting, or claiming.

2) *Directives*: functioning to direct the hearer to perform or not perform an act such as ordering, or requesting.

3) *Commissives*: functioning to commit the speaker to a future course of action such as promising, or threatening.

4) *Expressives*: functioning to express the speaker's attitudes and feelings about something such as thanking, apologizing, or congratulating.

5) *Declarations*: functioning to change the status of the person or object referred to by performing the act successfully such as christening or sentencing.

Within these five categories, request falls into the group of directives and can be broadly divided into two categories: requests for information and requests for action. Requests for action can be subcategorized into requests for goods, requests for help and so on. Requests can be performed with a variety of constructions, such as imperatives, interrogatives, negatives, declaratives, or elliptical constructions (Sifianou, 1992). Brown and Levinson (1987) describe a request as an intrinsically face-threatening act, as it threatens the addressee's negative face. Therefore, in making a request, there are some modifications used to mitigate or soften the impact on the participants, such as downgraders, upgraders, or hedges.

2.1.2 Studies on requests

A number of request studies have been conducted in various languages, especially in Western languages such as Dutch, French (Mulken, 1996), Turkish (Pair, 1996), German (Hong, 1998), and some varieties of English (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989; Yeung, 1997; Heineman, 2006). There are also some studies on request in non-Western languages, such as Japanese (Fukushima, 1996; Rinnert & Kobayashi, 1999; Aoyama, 2002), Chinese (Dong, 2008; Lee, 2005; Hong, 1999; Kong, 1998), Korean (Rue & Zhang, 2008; Byon, 2004), and Thai (Deepadung & Khamhiran, 2005; Khahua, 2003; Sungkaman, 2001; Wiriya, 2001; Wiroonhachaipong, 2000). As for the languages that belong to the Tibeto-Burman language family, only Kinnauri language, which is spoken in India, has been studied for requests (Saxena, 2002). This

study focused on examining request and command strategies in Kinnauri and compared them with English in order to contribute to translations from English to Kinnauri and vice versa.

The most influential study of request is the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP), which investigated the speech act of requests and apologies across three varieties of English (Australian, American and British English), Canadian French, Danish, German and Hebrew by using the same set of questionnaires and the same coding scheme for analysis variations in both speech acts (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). The aims of CCSARP were: 1) to investigate the similarities and differences in the realization patterns of the two speech acts across different languages and different cultures, 2) to investigate the effect of social variables on the realization patterns of the given speech acts within the specific speech communities, and 3) to investigate the similarities and differences in the realization pattern of request and apology between native and nonnative speakers. The Discourse-Completion Test (DCT) was the main instrument used in this project.

The results of CCSARP, which will be summarized here, are limited to the speech act of requests. They can be divided into two issues: a) the constituents of request utterances and b) strategy types in making requests.

(a) The components of request utterances: the request utterances may consist of the following components (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989: 17-19, 275-289):

1) *Alerters*: the part serves as attention-getter such as address terms, appellations.

2) *Supportive moves*: the constituents function to support the request or persuade the hearer to do X such as checking on the availability of the hearer, giving the reason, or promising.

3) *Head-acts*: the part that serves to realize request independently.

4) *Internal modifications*: the element that is not essential for the utterance to be understood as the request functions to modify the request within the utterance. Such modifiers can function in two ways: as an indicating devices and functions in sociopragmatic role as either a downgrader or upgrader. Internal modification can be one of the following features or a combination of them.

Syntactic downgraders refer to the use of interrogative, negation, subjunctive, conditional, aspect, tense (past tense), conditional clause, or any combinations of these.

Lexical and phrasal downgraders include the use of a politeness marker, understater, hedge, subjunctivizer, downgrader, cajoler, or appealer (tag).

Upgraders include intensifier, commitment indicator, expletive, time intensifier, lexical uptoner, determination marker, repetition of request, orthographic/ suprasegmental emphasis, emphatic addition, or pejorative determiner.

Blum-Kulka et al. (1989: 276) also provide the possible structures of the head-act and supportive move of the request as follow:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>Minimal unit only</i> | : | head-act only |
| 2. <i>Post-posed</i> | : | head-act + supportive move |
| <i>Pre-posed</i> | : | supportive move + head-act |
| 3. <i>Multiple Head</i> | : | more than one minimal unit |

(b) Strategy types in making requests: to achieve the goal of requesting, people choose different ways of speaking, such as uttering what they want directly or referring to a related thing in order to imply what they want etc., as strategies in making requests. According to Blum-Kulka et al., the following are strategies used in request head-acts, and strategies used in supportive moves.

1) *Strategies of head-act:* head-act varies in two dimensions: strategies and perspectives.

Strategy types: the requests will be classified into nine strategy types on a scale of indirectness (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989) as summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Strategies of request head-act

Directness	Strategy types	Examples
Direct strategies	1. Mood derivable	Leave me alone.
	2. Performatives	I'm asking you to clean up the mess.
	3. Hedged performatives	I would like to ask you to.....
	4. Obligation statements	You'll have to....
	5. Want statements	I really wish you
Conventionally indirect strategies	6. Suggestory formulae	How about cleaning up?
	7. Query preparatory	Could you please....?
Non-conventionally indirect strategies	8. Strong hints	You have left the kitchen in a right mess.
	9. Mild hints	It's hot.

Three types of request strategies in the CCSARP, i.e. direct strategy, conventional indirect strategy, and non-conventional indirect strategy, are claimed to be universal and the conventionally indirect request strategy is the most preferred in making a request in most languages.

Perspective refers to orientation in the utterances of request. A request can emphasize the role of the agent, the recipient, both, or neither. Table 2.2 shows request perspectives including examples which were drawn from Blum-Kulka et al. (1989: 19).

Table 2.2 Request Perspectives

Perspectives	Examples
Speaker oriented	Can I have it?
Hearer oriented	Can you do it?
Inclusive	Can we start cleaning now?
Impersonal	It needs to be cleaned.

In using a conventional indirect request, there are sub-strategies which vary with language. While ability questions are used by speakers in all languages and all situations, other sub-strategies used are limited by language and situation. Sub-strategies in conventional indirect requests (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989: 52-58) are summarized in Table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3 Sub-strategies in Conventional indirect requests

Sub-strategies	Example
1. Reference to hearer's ability	Could you please clean up a little?
2. Reference to hearer's willingness	Would you mind giving a lift?
3. Predicting hearer's doing the act	Would it be possible to travel to town with you?
4. Formulaic suggestion	Perhaps, you'll clean the kitchen. (literally translated from Hebrew)
5. Questioning reason	How about doing a bit of cleaning up around here?

Within each language, sub-strategies vary in at least two aspects: the level of standardization (conventionality of form) and the level of requestiveness (illocutionary transparency). The more standard, formulaic, the request's form, the higher its relative level of illocutionary is transparency.

2) *Strategies of supportive move*: supportive moves are external modifications of request occurring either before or after head-act. They are categorized into two groups: mitigating supportive moves and aggravative supportive moves. Mitigating supporting moves are preparatory, getting a precommitment, grounder, disarmer, promise of reward, and imposition minimize. Aggravative supportive moves are insult, threat, moralizing, and combinations of the above.

Since the CCSARP studied requests across seven languages, the results reflect the shared phenomena in making requests that are claimed to be universal. Consequently, there were many studies on requests in more languages done using this

project as a model. However, while some studies confirm the findings of the project, others do not support its findings. The following section will present some studies on requests in various languages, particularly non-Western languages.

2.1.3 Studies on requests in non-Western languages

Besides Western languages, requests have been studied in several non-Western languages: Thai, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Kinnuari. This section will summarize the results of these studies in each language as a background to give more information on requests in different language families and different cultures.

2.1.3.1 Requests in Thai

There have been five studies on Thai requests that examine the structure or pattern and strategies of requests used by Thai people. Two of them studied only the speech act of request (Wiriya, 2001; Khahua, 2003). Another two studies examined requests tangent with other speech acts, such as refusing and disagreeing (Sungkaman, 2001), and refusing requests (Deepadung & Khamhiran, 2005). One of the studies on requests in Thai is a comparison of the structures and strategies between Thai and American English (Wiroonhachaipong, 2000). The data collections in the studies mentioned above are different, namely, three of them used data from questionnaires (Wiroonhachaipong, 2000; Wiriya, 2001; Sungkaman, 2001), while the rest used natural data that occurred in everyday life (Khahua, 2003; Deepadung & Khamhiran, 2005). Therefore, these generalized results may be representative of request structures in Thai. There are three main categories: single head-act, multiple head-acts and ellipsed head-act.

1) *Single head-act*: this structure may be head-act only or head-act accompanied by supportive move. Supportive move may precede or follow the head-act of request and there can be one or more supportive moves within an utterance.

2) *Multiple head-acts*: the structure that consists of more than one head-act.

3) *Ellipsed head-act*: the structure that only supportive move functions as a request depending on the context of the utterance.

As for the strategies used in requesting in Thai, the results confirm the universal strategies proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). That is, there are three main strategies used in requesting: direct, conventional indirect, and non-conventional indirect requests.

Direct strategies used to make a request may be in the form of imperative, want statement, explicit performative, or hedged performative. Wiriya (2001) divided direct request into two categories: direct without decorative components and direct with decorative components.

Conventionally indirect requests in Thai can be made by employing conditional utterance, preparatory possibility, wondering utterance, or suggestory formula. Thai people usually use yes/no question word *dâ:j māj* 'Can...?' attached to a statement in making a request. This structure could be considered as a conventional indirect request in Thai (Khahua, 2003; Deepadung & Khamhiran, 2005).

A nonconventionally indirect strategy can be made by giving strong or mild hints. A request can be made by partially referring to an object or element related to the act of request. The head of the request is ellipsed. It would be considered as a request or not depending on its context and the interpretation of the hearer.

As for the preference of strategy used in making a request in Thai, there are different results from these studies. Wiroonhachaipong (2000) points out that an unconventionally indirect request is preferred in making a request, while Wiriya (2001) reports that the direct request with decorative components is the most commonly used strategy for Thai people. Sungkhaman (2001) analyzes request strategies based on the degree of risk of face-loss of the addressee and reports that positive politeness strategy, which is an on-record with redressive action, is the most frequently used. Other studies by Khahua (2003) and Deepadung and Khamhiran (2005) do not analyze their data statistically to determine the frequency of the request strategy used since the data were collected from natural everyday conversations.

2.1.3.2 Requests in Japanese

The characteristics of Japanese requests are summarized in three studies: Fukushima (1996), Rinnert and Kobayashi (1999), and Aoyama (2002).

Saeko Fukushima (1996) examined request structures and strategies used by Japanese and compared them with English. She also investigated the relationship between degree of imposition and politeness. Japanese requests consist of two components: head-act and supportive move. They can be ordered differently in making the request.

Supportive moves can precede or follow head of request. Sometimes they appear both before and after the head-act. There also can be only one supportive move in making a request. Japanese usually makes a request by giving a supportive move before a head-act. The numbers of supportive moves increase in situations with a high degree of imposition.

As for the strategies of request found in Fukushima's study, there are four: direct, conventional indirect, non-conventional indirect, and a combination of these three strategies. The first three strategies are the same as the strategies proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. and also in common with the study of Aoyama (2002). Japanese people prefer direct and conventional indirect strategies equally (Fukushima, 1996; Aoyama, 2002).

Interestingly, in specific contexts, such as in coffee shops, among workers, the speaker commonly uses the hint to let the other workers know when to go to the cash register or to clean the table. This kind of hint is called *routine hint*, e.g., *Arigatoogo zaimashita* 'Thank you.' (Aoyama, 2002). In the coffee shop context, when someone uses such an utterance, it means the customers are going out and the table they have just used needs to be cleaned. While Aoyama considers hint as an indirect strategy, Rinnert and Kobayashi (1999) classify it as a direct strategy or on-record. In both studies, the contexts of request are specified: the former studied requests used in a coffee shop, the latter studied requests in a university setting. In each context, the people knew their status and role. If the request is a familiar one for the requestee, the requester could request by partially referring to a component of the request such as giving a hint. Since the hearer is familiar with the context and knows their duty, they can easily interpret the hint as a request. Rinnert and Kobayashi (1999) view this kind of context as '*standard situation*' and consider the hinted request to one who commonly has responsibility for it as the direct request.

To my mind, the 'routine hint' of Aoyama and 'hint in standard situation' of Rinnert and Kobayashi are the same thing because both kinds of hint occur in specific contexts. They are simply viewed differently. Rinnert and Kobayashi considered hints according to meaning, while Aoyama emphasized the structure of the hints.

Moreover, group identity is very important in Japanese society. In-group/out-group distinction is reflected in language choices. Consequently, when requests are made to out-group members, the speaker may be careful of face-threatening acts because distance is highly valued. Therefore, the speaker may choose negative politeness, or off-record politeness with mitigating devices (Fukushima, 1996; 687). Among in-group members, direct requests are frequently used because solidarity is highly valued. Other social factors related to the request strategies are age and status: older people and those of higher status favor the direct strategy (Aoyama, 2002).

2.1.3.3 Requests in Chinese

In this section, three studies on Mandarin Chinese requests and one on Cantonese are chosen as representative of requests in Chinese. Dong (2008) and Hong (1999) studied the structures and strategies used in requesting, while Kong (1998) examined business request letters and compared them with English.

Dong reports two structures of request in Chinese: core request and request with external modification. Modifications of request can be prior modification, subsequent modification or both prior and subsequent modification. Modifications can be viewed as semantically oriented and lexically oriented. From different orientations, different strategies used in making a request are identified. There are seven strategies of semantic orientation: grounder, preparatory, compliment, promises of reward, imposition minimizers, avoiding consequences, and favor. As for lexical orientation, there are five strategies of request: appreciation, causing inconvenience, embarrassment, apology, and "would you help".

The strategies used in core requests are categorized into eight types depending on the situation: 1) command, 2) possibility (conventional indirect request), 3) plea strategy (please+imperative), 4) inquiry, 5) desire, 6) hint, 7) consultation, and 8) need.

However, Hong (1999) argues that the most distinctive feature of realization in Chinese requests is the application of a basic action verb indicating desired action directly using an imperative structure. The word *qing* 'please' indicates politeness, which does not fit into the universal request strategy proposed by Blum-Kulka et al.

Kong (1999) studied requests in business letters and compared them among Chinese, English, and non-native English by using two discourse analysis frameworks: Swales' move structure analysis (1990) and Mann and Thompson's rhetorical structure theory (1986). Since business letters used in the study aimed to request something from the readers, all components of the text are considered as requests. Each request consists of different components called "*Moves*". Each move functions in a different way, such as making a request, giving the background of the company, justifying the request, stating the conditions and concluding politely. The results reveal that Chinese business people tend to put the request after its justification. In the move of making a request, the writer tends to specify exactly what s/he is requesting. This part usually appears in the middle or near the end of the letter but sometimes at the beginning. Linguistic expression used in making a request in Chinese business letters is very limited. Imperative structure is usually used. Additionally, there is no face-threatening move appearing in Chinese request letters.

As for a study of Cantonese requests by Cynthia Lee (2005), a comparison between requests in Cantonese and English, especially in an academic context, was done by using the model of CCSARP. Lee focused on the linguistic form of the request in each language as well as the hierarchical social and power relationship of the interactants. From this study, it appears that, in both English and Cantonese, requests are made directly without any primary explanation. Lee explains that, since the data were collected by questionnaires which provided only one line of space for the respondents to write their answers, perhaps the respondents were forced to write too briefly. Chinese people prefer to use lexical devices to decrease directness rather than syntactic devices. They also apply interrogative patterns and conditional sentences to mitigate the degree of imposition.

2.1.3.4 Requests in Korean

Korean is another non-Western language that has been studied in terms of the speech act of request. The characteristics of request in Korean have been summarized in two studies: Byon (2004) and Rue and Zhang (2008). Byon investigated sociopragmatic features of American Korean as used by Foreign Language learners in the act of request and compared them to those used by Korean native speakers, in order to identify deviations and problems they confronted when trying to make a request. The data were collected using a discourse completion test (DCT). The result of Byon's study shows that there are five semantic formulae for request head-acts used in Korean: 1) preparatory, 2) strong hint, 3) polite direct request, 4) want statement, and 5) mood derivable. Each formula is divided into two sub-categories: the presence of the politeness marker and the absence of the politeness marker. From Byon's study, Korean speakers use preparatory strategy with politeness marker and mood derivable strategy without politeness marker with almost the same frequency. There are also request supportive moves used by Korean speakers such as opener, grounder, disarmer, preparatory, and so on. The most popular request supportive move is grounder, which appears before the request.

Rue and Zhang (2008) used different methods of data collection: role-play and natural conversation. Rue and Zhang compared requests in Mandarin Chinese to Korean. They also considered the interaction of requests with power and social distance.

In terms of in/directness in making request, from these two studies, Korean preferred a direct strategy compared with English and Chinese. However, direct request in Korean does not correlate with impoliteness because of the rich honorific systems in Korean. Every Korean utterance contains various social meanings. Using different sentence final suffixes attached to verbs can express degrees of formality, directness, and politeness from the speaker's perspective toward the hearer. Direct request will be used especially when the benefit of the act is on the hearer's part or when the speaker is in a position of authority or power and in a situation in which the interlocutors are intimate (Byon, 2004) or with an equal acquaintance. Indirect request will be utilized when dealing with equal either familiar or unfamiliar (Rue & Zhang, 2008). Korean request interacts with hierarchical differences in Korean society. Even

though direct request is preferred, linguistic phenomena in Korean, such as address terms system, honorific system, and sentence final markers play an important role in making request appropriately in different contexts.

2.1.3.5 Requests in Kinnuari

As mentioned above, Kinnuari is a language spoken in India and belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family, which is the same language family to which Burmese belongs. It is the only language in the family on which requests has been studied, notably, the study by Saxena (2002) *Request and Command in Kinnuari: The Pragmatics of Translating Politeness*. Even though the main purpose of this study was to search for contributions to translation, it still provides valuable information about requests in this language. Kinnuari predominantly uses the imperative construction to encode both requests and command. In Kinnuari, the speech act of request cannot be considered separately from command as Saxena suggests, "...command/directive and request are not two separate discrete speech act, rather they are continuum, with their extreme forms occurring on opposite ends of the continuum" (Saxena, 2002: 186). Verb inflectional morphology reflects a range of semantic and pragmatic factors. The variable choices of imperative markers function to indicate whether the utterance should be viewed as instruction, suggestion, advising, or urging. Saxena also suggests that, although the use of imperative construction in Kinnuari is distributed, it cannot be considered as a direct language because "...a language like Kinnuari may display degrees of politeness, even within the imperative construction" (Saxena, 2002: 186).

Request structures and strategy types found in non-Western languages are almost the same as those proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. But the preferred strategies used in making requests in most languages reviewed here are both direct and conventional indirect strategies, as in Thai, Japanese, and Korean. And the results from other languages also show that people in non-Western cultures prefer to use the direct strategy and imperative structure, such as Chinese and Kinnuari. These do not confirm the universal claims of Blum-Kulka et al which is that conventionally indirect strategies are preferred (except a study on Thai request by Wiroonhachaipong (2000)

which presents that conventional indirect strategy is preferred in Thai). Besides these, lexical devices are used to show politeness. In addition, some social factors are suggested to be considered in making a request, such as group identity, and the particular situation confronting the interlocutors.

It is interesting to find out in Burmese culture the preferred strategies in making a request. It may be a direct strategy like Chinese or Kinnuari, which belong to the same language family, or both conventional and direct strategies like other languages in the same area, such as Thai, Japanese, or Korean. Therefore, a request in Burmese is chosen to be the subject of the present study by using the same model with the reviewed studies.

The model proposed by Blum-Kulka et al is based on the scale of indirectness, and the notions of indirectness and politeness are often viewed as relative. Even so, a re-examination of these notions by Blum-Kulka (1987) reveals that indirectness and politeness do not represent parallel dimensions or, in other words, indirectness does not necessarily imply politeness. Indirectness and politeness are perceived differently. The most indirect request is not necessarily perceived as the most polite. Therefore, in order to examine Burmese politeness, this study will apply the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) as the framework for the study.

2.2 Linguistic Politeness

Politeness is one of the most interesting issues in Pragmatics. Robin Lakoff was the first scholar to apply the notion of politeness to the study of linguistics (Intachakra, 2007). Lakoff (1973 cited in Intachakra, 2001) proposes rules of pragmatic competence consisting of two components: clarity and politeness. She explains that if the aim of speech is communication, one should be clear so that there is no misunderstanding and, to avoid offense in conversation, one should be polite. Additionally, she extends the rules of pragmatic competence by proposing three rules of politeness: don't interrupt, give options and make A feel good (be friendly).

Songthama Intachakra (2001) reviewed different points of view towards politeness in the literature review chapter of his dissertation. Besides showing the notion of speech act theory and co-operative principles in conversation, he provided

details about linguistic politeness from different scholars: Robin Lakoff (1973) who views politeness as a set of rules, Geoffrey Leech (1983) who views politeness as principles of cost and benefit and proposes maxims of politeness, Fraser and Nolen (1981) who view politeness as appropriateness in speech, Sperber and Wilson (1995) who propose a relevance theory for politeness, and Brown and Levinson (1978) who propose a politeness theory based on face work and provide universals of politeness.

In 1978, "Politeness" became more attractive after Brown and Levinson proposed universals of politeness in their book title *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. After that, many researches on politeness were undertaken in different languages both Western, e.g., English, French, Dutch (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Mulken, 1996) and non-Western, e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Thai (Gu, 1990; Ide, 1983; Intachakra, 2001). Consequently, in applying Brown and Levinson's model of politeness to the study of various languages, some studies confirm, while others disagree with this model. For example, analyzing politeness in Japanese using this model, Masumoto (1988) and Ide (1989 cited in Fukada & Asato, 2004) point out that Brown and Levinson's theory is a Western-oriented approach and that it is not suitable for use in analyzing non-Western cultures such as Japanese, while Fukada and Asato (2004) confirm that the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson is still an effective instrument in studying Japanese politeness. However, the present study intends to employ the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson as a framework for analyzing politeness in Burmese requests in order to examine whether it is applicable to Burmese culture because this framework is based on the notion of 'face,' which is also found in Burmese culture. 'Face' is regarded as the precious thing that Burmese people want to have for themselves and can give to the other, and it can be destroyed or lost as reflected in the language use. There are amount of words in Burmese which illustrate the concept of face, e.g. မျက်နှာကြီး /mye?nà tɕi/ 'big face' refers to a powerful person, မျက်နှာရှိ /mye?nà ʃi/ 'have face' indicates that the person is respectful in society, and so on. Therefore, this study will apply the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson to analyze Burmese request in order to find out how Burmese people use their language when they have to do something that threatens another person's face.

2.2.1 Politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1978)

Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson proposed the Politeness theory in their book titled *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (1978, reprinted version 1987). There are two main aspects discussed in their book: the notion of face, and politeness strategies that are claimed to be universal.

2.2.1.1 The notion of face

The central issue of their model is the notion of 'face', derived from Goffman (1967) and the English folk term (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 61). Brown and Levinson define 'face' as a public self image that every member of a society wants to claim for himself. It can be lost, maintained or enhanced and must be consistently attended to in the interaction. Face or public self-image consists of two related aspects: negative and positive face.

- (a) negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction - i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition
- (b) positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants

(Brown & Levinson, 1987: 61)

They treat the aspects of face as basic wants that every member knows every other member desires, and which, in general, is in the interests of every member to partially satisfy (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 62). In communication, some acts intrinsically threaten the face of either the speaker or the hearer. Such acts are in conflict with the 'face wants' of the interlocutors and are referred to as 'face threatening acts' (henceforth FTAs). Brown and Levinson classify FTAs into two according to whether the speaker's face or hearer's face is threatened, and whether it is threatening mainly positive or negative face. As for the request, which is the main speech act examined in my study, they first mention it as an act which threatens negative face want of the hearer, but later, they note that there is an overlap in

classifying FTAs in terms of which type of face is threatened because "some FTAs intrinsically threaten both negative and positive face (e.g. complaints, interruptions, threats, strong expressions of emotion, *requests for personal information*)" (Brown & Levinson: 67, italic is added).

2.2.1.2 The politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson

When a speaker realizes that his/her act or speech may cause a loss of face for either the speaker or the hearer, s/he tends to use a politeness strategy in order to minimize the risk of face loss. There are two types of face: positive and negative. Positive face is the want to be desirable to others, whereas negative face is the want to be unimpeded by others. Brown and Levinson also claim that the notion of face is universal and also the politeness strategies they proposed.

In a context that involves FTAs, the interactant tends to avoid FTAs by employing certain strategies to minimize the risk of losing face. Brown and Levinson state that the speaker will consider the weightings of at least three wants: a) the desire to communicate the content of FTAs, b) the desire to be efficient or urgent, and c) the speaker's wish to minimize the threat of his FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 68).

They then propose possible strategies for dealing with FTAs as shown in Figure 2.1 below.

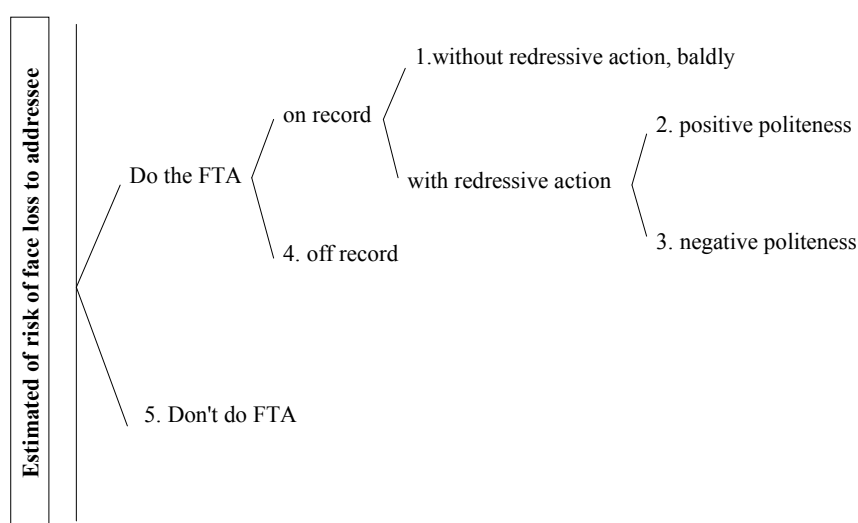


Figure 2.1 Politeness strategies (adapted from Brown & Levinson, 1987; 60)

From Figure 2.1, there are five politeness strategies which can be used in conversation.

1. Doing the FTA on-record **without redressive action, baldly**: when the speaker decides to commit an FTA, s/he might indicate intention directly without other supportive utterances. For example, one might say "Open the window!" when one wants the hearer to open the window.

2. Doing the FTA on-record with redressive action by using **positive politeness**: positive politeness relates to positive face want, which is the want to be appreciated or approved by the others. In doing an FTA, the speaker can show intention directly accompanying other supportive utterances, which indicates positive politeness, such as to claim common ground, to convey that the hearer and the speaker are cooperators, or to fulfill the hearer's want. Sub-strategies of positive politeness are presented in Figure 2.2.

3. Doing the FTA on-record with redressive action by using **negative politeness**: negative politeness relates to negative face want, which is the want of freedom from the acts or impositions. By regarding negative politeness, the speaker might indicate what s/he wants directly with supportive utterances, such as giving deference, apologizing, questioning, etc. Sub-strategies of negative politeness are shown in Figure 2.3.

4. Doing the FTA **off-record**: the speaker may state his/her desire indirectly by referring to something related to it, such as hints, being ambiguous, using metaphors, etc. Some off-record strategies are presented in Figure 2.4.

5. **Don't do FTA**: in the situation in which the speaker realizes that doing FTA may cause a conflict, s/he might say nothing. This strategy is considered the most polite and is used when the risk of face loss is high.

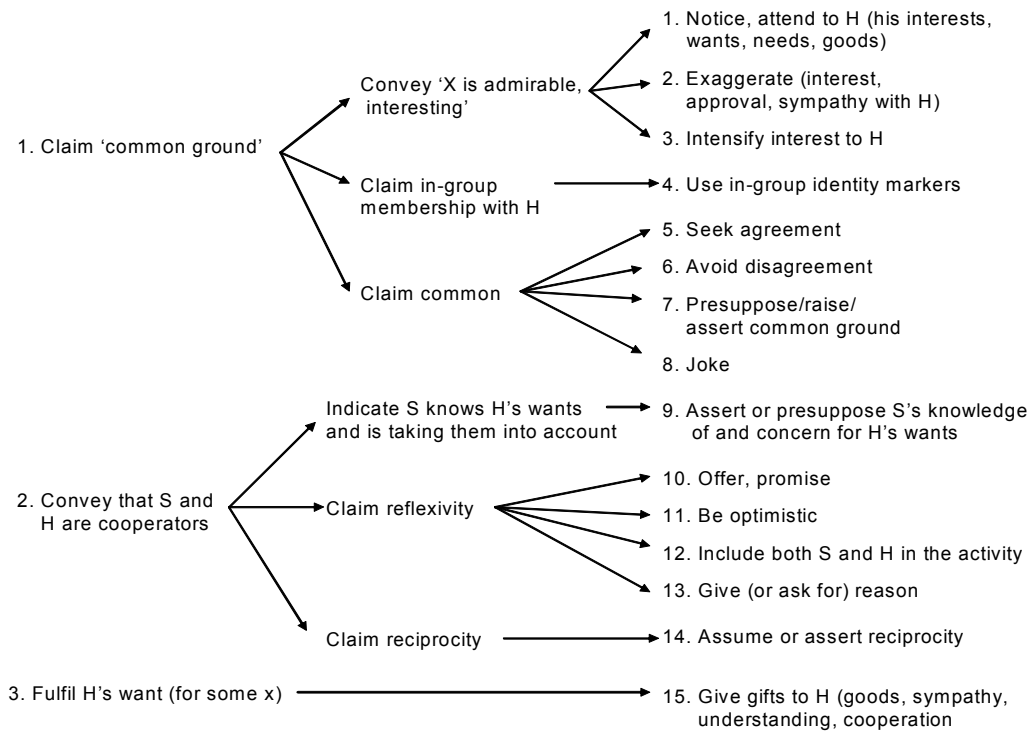


Figure 2.2 Positive politeness strategies (adapted from Brown & Levinson, 1987: 102)

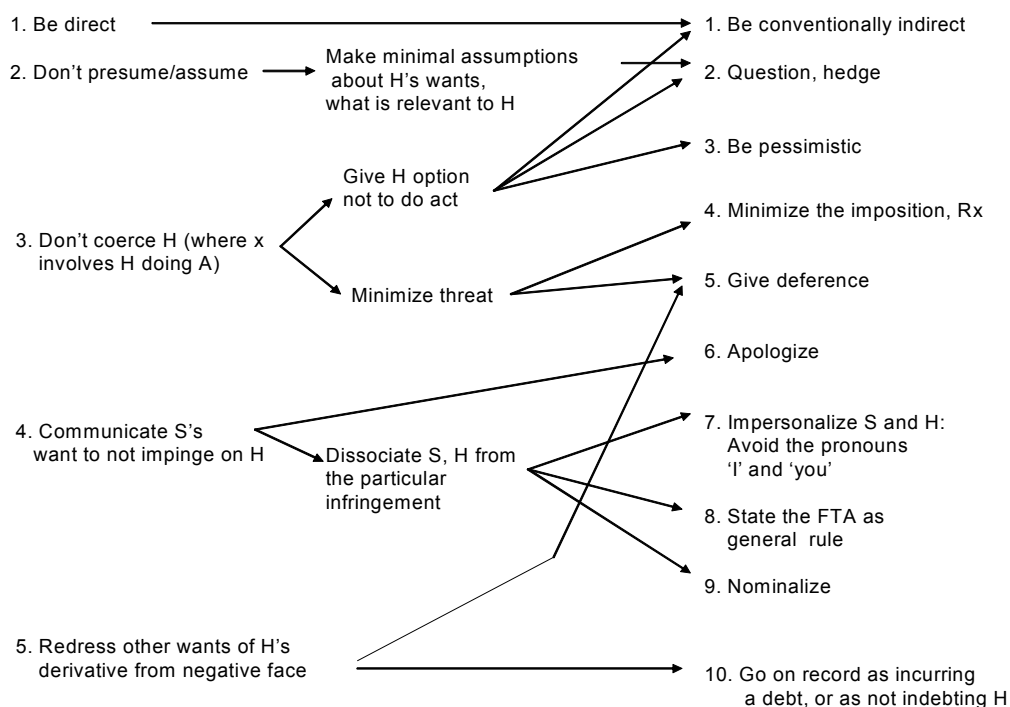


Figure 2.3 Negative politeness strategies (adapted from Brown & Levinson, 1987: 131)

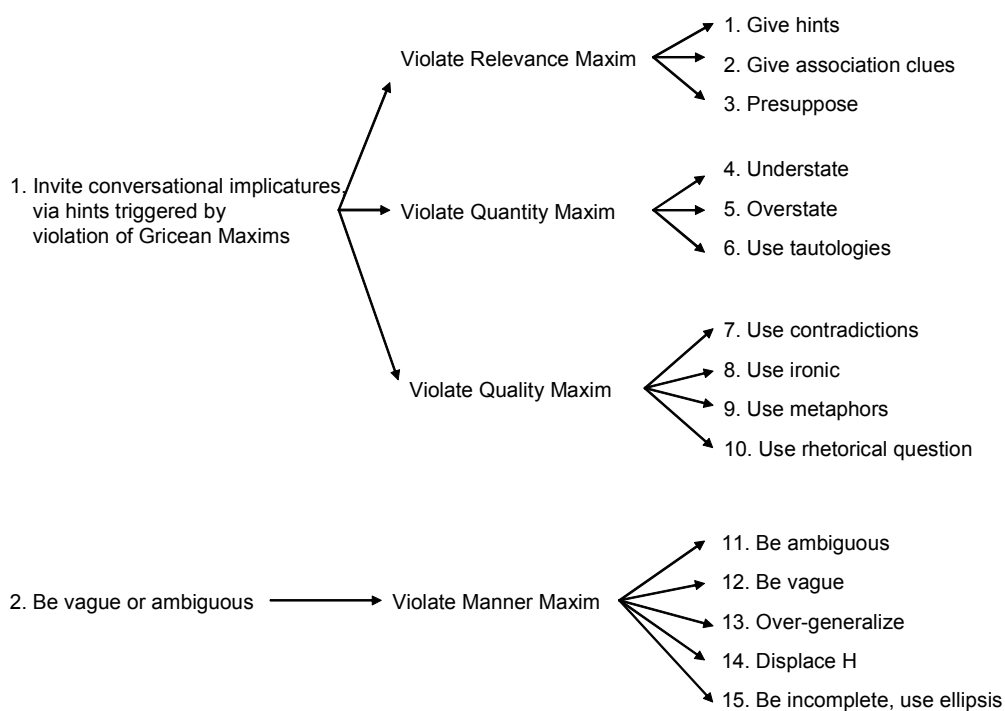


Figure 2.4 Off-record strategies (adapted from Brown & Levinson, 1987: 214)

Additionally, in doing an FTA, the speaker will determine the level of politeness strategy depending on three social factors: relative power (P) of the hearer over the speaker, the social distance (D) between the interlocutors, and the rank of imposition (R) in doing the FTA (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 15). However, in their book they refer to various studies that both support and refute their claim about these three factors. Some studies support the importance of P and R factors, whereas some oppose the D factor. Other factors are proposed such as 'liking', 'the presence of the hearer'. Brown and Levinson insist that, "In our point of view, P, D, and R can be seen to subsume most of the culturally specific social determinants of FTA expression, but we must concede that there may be a residue of other factors which are not captured within the P, D, and R dimensions" (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 16).

The politeness theory of Brown and Levinson seems to be problematic in non-Western cultures. Janney and Arndt suggest that, "like other theories of language universals, Brown and Levinson's theory lacks a culturally unbiased conceptual framework for objectively and empirically evaluating their politeness universals" (Janney & Arndt, 1993 cited in Mao, 1994: 452). Several studies on politeness applied Brown and Levinson's model to non-Western languages, however, the results show both support and reject the model as shown in the next section.

2.2.2 Studies on politeness

Since the publication of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, many studies have focused on this model, particularly their universalities: the notion of face, the social variables, and the set of politeness strategies.

Adapting this model to different languages has raised some difficulties for scholars from different cultures, especially those from Eastern cultures. Leech (2005: 4-5) highlights criticisms of Brown and Levinson's theory in different studies. He argues four inconsistencies in their theory:

- 1) It is a Western bias that focuses on individual wants; and this is inappropriate for group oriented Eastern cultures,
- 2) Brown and Levinson's concept of face is not the same as the concept of face in Chinese culture, and does not cover the concept of discernment that is one of the two politeness types in Japanese culture,

- 3) They too over emphasize FTAs. Some acts are not considered FTAs,
- 4) There are differences in interpretation of the three social factors (P, D, R) in different cultures.

Previous studies that disagree with Brown and Levinson's theory mostly involve two main Eastern languages: Chinese and Japanese.

In Chinese culture, according to Mao (1994: 454), even though Brown and Levinson say that their notion of face is derived from Goffman's 'face' and the English folk term, there is a difference between the 'face' of Goffman and that of Brown and Levinson. Goffman's face is a public, interpersonal image, while the face of Brown and Levinson is an individualistic, self-oriented image. In fact, the origin of the notion of face seems to be a literal translation of the Chinese characters 'miànzi' and 'liǎn' (Ho, 1975 cited in Mao, 1994: 454). He also argues that the notion of face based on Brown and Levinson is not the same as the concept of face in Chinese culture as he states that "Chinese face emphasizes not the accommodation of individual 'wants' or 'desires' but the harmony of individual conduct with the views and judgment of community" (Mao, 1994: 460). Gu (1990: 241-242) also found that Brown and Levinson's model is unsuitable to explain Chinese politeness, explaining that "the Chinese notion of negative face seems to differ from that defined by Brown and Levinson", and "in interaction politeness is not just instrumental. It is also normative."

Moreover, Chinese people have various ways of being polite. It depends on the situation and the social relationship among the participants. In other words, in different social settings, they will adjust their roles and choose strategies to fit the social expectation (Pan, 2000: 140). For example, in a family setting, gender is more significant than rank; that is, a man is of higher status than a woman, whereas in the business setting, rank or power is more significant than gender. Where the superior is female, she has more power than her subordinates regardless of whether they are male or female. But in the family, male members take most turns in conversation, and always disagree with the topic raised by female speakers regardless of age. As for service encounters, the relationship between the participants is the primary factor. The interaction between out-group members does not reflect politeness. There are no politeness expressions used in outside relations and face is not a major concern

because the participants cannot define the hierarchical order of each other (Pan, 2000: 36). In interactions among in-group members, consideration of face is shown through small talk, claiming connections, code switching, rendering opinions, etc. Politeness markers however, are not much used in Chinese conversation.

However, Pranee Chokkajitsumpun (2000) examined politeness strategies used in Chinese greetings. The results show that Chinese people use three politeness strategies that follow the strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson: positive, negative, and off-record politeness strategies. The degree of intimacy between the interactants is a significant factor in choosing form and politeness strategies in equal status, whereas location and time are the most significant factors when greeting superiors or a person of higher status.

Matsumoto (1988) and Ide (1989 cited in Fukuda and Asato, 2004) are two scholars who work on politeness in Japanese culture and disagree with the concept of politeness as proposed by Brown and Levinson. Matsumoto's concept of politeness conflicts with Brown and Levinson's notion of face, especially negative face want which is *alien* to Japanese culture. The conventionalized expressions or honorifics that function to show deference in Japanese should be considered as positive politeness rather than negative politeness, as Brown and Levinson have proposed. Matsumoto views the giving deference strategy as enhancing the good self-image of the addressee, and as a social expectation that every member of the society should recognize. Japanese honorifics are used even in non-FTAs.

On the other hand, Ide (1989 cited in Fukuda and Asato, 2004) goes further to propose two types of linguistic politeness in Japanese: volitional politeness and discernment politeness. Volitional politeness is the same as the politeness of Brown and Levinson, which is the use of language to show politeness in appropriate situations and to save the face of the hearer, whereas discernment politeness is the use of the appropriate linguistic form, which depends on social conventions and is not used for saving face. She states that Brown and Levinson's politeness does not cover this discernment politeness. However, Fukuda and Asato (2004) argue against Ide and Matsumoto on the use of honorifics. According to them, the uses of honorifics in Japanese concern face preservation because they need to be used in appropriate situations. If there is no use of honorifics in the expected situation, the speaker would be seen as impolite and the act s/he is doing is considered an FTA.

In addition, Noriko Kitamura (2000) disagrees with Brown and Levinson's theory in terms of interaction type, i.e., it does not cover non-goal-oriented interaction, such as casual conversation. Furthermore, this theory ignores the fact that most single utterances are part of a conversational exchange between interactants. She points out that some discourse strategies that occur across conversation, such as back channeling and turn taking, also convey politeness. While arguing for such a point, she, nevertheless still concludes that "Brown and Levinson's 'politeness' theory can be a powerful tool to analyze 'politeness' phenomena, not only in goal-oriented interaction, but also in non-goal-oriented interaction of this nature" (Kitamura, 2000: 7). Another study in Japanese politeness focused on silence related to face work (Nakane, 2006). It is performed as Don't do FTA when Japanese students want to show disagreement, and as an off-record strategies when they are not sure or do not know the answer to a teacher's question in order to save their own face.

Thai is one of the Eastern languages that has been studied in terms of politeness. Various Thai speech acts have been studied, e.g., speech act of expressives (Intachakra, 2001), speech act of refusing and disagreeing (Deepheungton, 1992), requests and refusal (Lerlertyuttitham, (2006).

Intachakra (2001) compared politeness in Thai and British culture. He found that British culture is based on the notion of negative politeness, whereas Thai culture is based on positive politeness. Deepheungton's study also shows that, in the case of refusing and disagreeing in Thai society, the three kinds of politeness strategy proposed by Brown and Levinson include employed: positive, negative, and off-record politeness strategies. Thai people convey politeness by using formulaic expressions (conventional indirect), particles (politeness markers, emphatic particles, question particles, final particles), and a combination of tones, intonations and vowel lengthening (Deepheungton, 1992: 101-111). Additionally, address terms, pronouns, and particles are used to minimize FTAs and to reduce the degree of imposition in Thai, especially in requests and refusals (Deepadung & Khamhiran, 2005). The study of Lerlertyuttitham (2006) indicates that in Business context, power and social distance play an important role both in requests and refusal. The less power the writer has, the more complicated strategy is used.

From the studies on politeness in non-Western languages mentioned above, while the Thai studies follow the theory of Brown and Levinson, the studies on Chinese and Japanese appear to both agree and disagree. It may be said that language usage in Thai society reflects the social hierarchy, whereas in both Chinese and Japanese cultures, relationships among the members of society (in-group/out-group) are more salient.

Since there are studies that both confirm and refute the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson, it raises the question as to whether there is a distinction between Eastern and Western politeness. Further, as an Eastern culture and language, what kind of politeness is reflected in Burmese? Is it possible that there is no difference between Eastern and Western politeness as Leech claims?

...there is no absolute divide between East and West in politeness. Consider the concepts of 'collective, group culture' (East) and 'individualist, egalitarian culture' (West). These are not absolutes: they are positions on a scale. All polite communication implies that the speaker is taking account of both individual and group values. In the East, the group values are more powerful, whereas in the west, individual values are.

(Leech, 2005: 3-4)

2.3 Previous works related to Burmese request and politeness

Even though there have been many studies conducted on the Burmese language, research relating to requests and politeness in Burmese is very rare.

According to Okell (1994a: 162), the standard form for making a request in Burmese is the verb followed by the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/, which can be translated as 'Please *Verb*'. For example,

(2.1)

ဆိုင်	ဝါ။
t ^h àiN	pà
sit	POL
'Please sit.'	

This form can be used to request as well as to command. The politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ is used to convey politeness. Making a request without ဝါ /pà/ can be seen as forcing the hearer to do something. As Okell (1994a: 162) states, "...the verb alone sounds peremptory, and should only be used when you are sure it would not cause offence (or when you are determined to cause offence), ...". Additionally, Okell (1994b: 245) lists the formulae used in requests, commands, and suggestions under the same group. Within this group, there are five sub-groups: positive, negative, suggestions for joint action, requests for permission, assent, and softened requests.

1) *Positive form* ('Please...'): consisting of four types of sentences, that is, imperative, yes-no question, wants statement, and conditional sentence.

2) *Negative form* ('Don't...'): using negative construction which comprises of မ [verb]-နဲ့, ဘူး /mə [verb] nɛ́, bú/ or refusing a verb by stating that doing that is not good.

3) *Suggestions for joint action* ('Let's...'): using a verb followed by particle ရအောင် /jə ʔàun/ or ရဲ့ /sɔ́/.

4) *Requests for permission, assent* ('May I...?'): using a verb followed by a particle ဝါရစေ /bà jə sè/ 'Please let me...' or making a sentence which indicates future action.

5) *Softened requests* (You don't mind..., do you?): using a final particle နေနဲ့ /nè/ in both positive and negative form but not in a question. Artnonla (2003:158) also says that this final particle is used to convey the sense of making a polite request, seeking approval, or emphasizing some point.

As mentioned above, ဝါ /pà/ is a politeness marker that all Burmese conversation textbooks suggest be used in every statement. However, Burmese people do not always use it in conversation. Not using it at all conveys the idea that the speaker treats his/her hearer as a person of lower status such as an employer talking to employee, or parent to child, etc. In such cases, using no ဝါ /pà/ is appropriate and correct. But talking to strangers without ဝါ /pà/ is inappropriate, and sounds unfriendly (Okell, 1994a: 37). Okell (1994a: 193) also describes two words he calls polite tags:

ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/ and ရှင် /ʃɪn/. The use of each polite tag depends on the gender of the speaker, i.e., the former is always used by male speakers, while the latter is always used by female speakers. ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/ and ရှင် /ʃɪn/ are placed at the end of the utterance, except in questions. They are used to indicate a degree of deference and reflect the different statuses of the interactants. They are used by speakers of equal age and status or by a person of lower status to a person of higher status. They can be used when talking to a stranger, shopkeeper, friend, acquaintance, a general audience, and listeners on a radio or TV show. The example (2.2) shows the use of ရှင် /ʃɪn/ and ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/ as polite tags.

(2.2)

Female:	ကျေးဇူး	တင်	ဝါ	တယ်	ရှင်။
	ɕʒézú	tìn	pà	dè	ʃɪn
	gratitude	place	POL	NFUT	PTAG.F
	'Thank you.'				
Male:	ရ	ဝါ	တယ်	ခင်ဗျာ။	
	ja	pà	dè	k^həmjà	
	get	POL	NFUT	PTAG.M	
	'That's all right.'				

(Adapted from Okell, 1994a: 192)

Apart from functioning as a polite tag, ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/ and ရှင် /ʃɪn/ can function as a second person pronoun in conversation (for ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/, when it is used to be second person pronoun for male, its tone is changed to high tone— ခင်ဗျာ: /k^həmjà/). They are used when talking to persons of the same age, rank or to juniors. Okell (1994a: 133) says about these two pronouns that, "...their application is restricted: it would be disrespectful to use them to address people older than yourself, or people who should be treated with respect."

When a senior is talking to a junior, s/he will use ခင်ဗျား /kʰəmjà/ or ရှင် /ʃɪn/ as a second person pronoun, but not as a polite tag. On the other hand, a junior will use these two words as polite tags to show respect, but will not use them as a second person pronoun to a senior. The reason is these two pronouns sometimes are used when the speaker is angry at the hearer. For example, my friend used ခင်ဗျား /kʰəmjà/ as a second pronoun when he was angry with a woman who he usually addresses by her name. Details about Burmese pronouns are provided in Cook's study (1968).

According to Cook (1968: 72-98), there are three pronominal forms in Burmese: personal pronouns, kinship terms, and personal names. The use of Burmese pronominal references reflects interpersonal relationships involving status and intimacy. Status is defined in terms of age and rank or position. Persons of lower status or a younger age will use personal pronouns, kinship terms, and personal names to convey deference and respect to those with higher ranks or older people. As Cook states, "Respect is due, then, to both age and rank. It is also due to strangers, and one can in certain situations show respect even to inferiors by using /tyunvdov/ (/tɕənð/ 'I', male speaker) and /khinvbyax/ (/kʰəmjà/ 'You', male speaker) in speaking to them" (Cook, 1968: 99, parentheses are added).

The degree of intimacy is one of the social factors reflected by pronominal reference use. For example, kin terms are more intimate than title+name; nicknames are more intimate than given name; reduplicated forms of nickname or kin term are more intimate than unreduplicated forms; and nonrestraint pronouns indicate intimacy when used with equals but not when used with inferiors. Additionally, kin terms imply a degree of intimacy, whether they are used with kin or non-kin (Cook, 1968:99).

Another linguistic feature related to request and politeness in Burmese is the use of final particles. Monthira Tamuang (2003) studied Burmese final particles and classified them into four groups based on their communicative function: statement, question, command or warning, and request or persuasion. According to her study, there are 10 final particles that function in making a request or persuasion (Tamuang, 2003: 104-108). The use of final particles is influenced by social factors, i.e., gender, status, intimacy between the interactants, and also the degree of politeness the speaker wants to convey. For example, ဝမ်း /sán/ (the transcription from the

original source is [sâñ]), a final particle which occurs in command sentences, can be used by an adult when speaking to children or younger people. But it is extremely impolite if younger people use it when speaking to older people (Tamuang, 2003:105).

Moreover, a variety of expressions can be chosen to denote the same act done by the person of different social or official rank (Taw Sein Ko, 1891: 41). The following example (2.3) illustrates the variety of the expression for the verb 'to eat' in Burmese.

(2.3)

Informal/general situation:	စား				
	sá				
	eat				
Formal situation:	သုံး	ဆောင်			
	θóuN	s ^h àuN			
	use	carry			
Speaking of royalty:	ပွဲ	တော်	တည်	တော်	မူ
	pwé	dò	tì	dò	mù
	feast	ROY	build	ROY	V
Speaking of monk:	ဆွမ်း	ဘုန်း	ပေး		
	s ^h úN	p ^h óuN	pé		
	rice	merit	give		

In the present chapter, studies on request and studies on politeness were reviewed as a background for my study. As for Burmese language, there are only a few studies related to requests and politeness; therefore, my study on Burmese requests and politeness will provide more knowledge and a better understanding of the Burmese language. The methodology for my study will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methodologies used in this study. These consist of data collections, research instruments, respondents, theoretical frameworks, and data analysis.

3.1 Data collections

The data analyzed in this study were collected using two methods: through questionnaires and by observing natural conversations between Burmese people. Each will be stated in turn:

3.1.1 Method of data collection using questionnaires

Questionnaires were the main instrument used in collecting data for this study. This was due to the need to control factors, such as degree of imposition, distance and power of interlocutors. This was necessary in order to investigate which factors play an important role in making requests in Burmese.

Due to Burmese government policy during the year of data collection (2009-2010), no outsider, whether Burmese or foreign, was allowed to enter government places, including schools and universities. This made it impossible to distribute the questionnaires to respondents in person. Also, I had no chance to explain details about my study to the respondents. I had to ask my Burmese friends who work at target places to do this for me. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed to students at the University of Foreign Language (UFL), with the help of a teacher there. Another 50 questionnaires were distributed to students at the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for History and Tradition (SEAMEO CHAT) by an officer who works there. In these two places, students were allowed to take the questionnaires home, and were asked to return them within one

week. I received 110 questionnaires back from UFL students, and 40 copies from SEAMEO CHAT students. From these two places, 64 questionnaires were completed by Burmese native speakers. The rest of the returned questionnaires were completed by other nationalities, such as Kayin, Kaya, Chin, Mon, Shan, and so on, while some questionnaires were not completed.

After that, another 200 questionnaires were distributed to students at the World Buddhist Meditation Institute (WBMI). At this place, I had an opportunity to introduce myself and explain what I was going to do. The teacher here allowed students to answer the questionnaires during his course. Therefore, all questionnaires were returned. But some of them were not finished because of time limitations. One hundred thirty questionnaires were answered by Burmese native speakers, and the rest were answered by non-native speakers of Burmese. Since WBMI is a free-school open to anyone who wants to study foreign languages (including English, Japanese, and Thai), many people, including monks, come to study here. Therefore, almost half of the questionnaires were answered by non-native speakers of Burmese.

Since the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is a 'Multi-national state', the population features a variety of ethnic groups, officially recorded by the government as 135 groups of national races. Beside Burman, a major nationality, there are seven other main groups who live in the states around Myanmar's border areas: Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, Shan, Kayah (or Karenni), Kayin (or Karen), and Mon. These minorities have their own languages used in family and daily life. They use Burmese in school or with authorities (Watkins, 2007; Wheatley, 1987). Even though almost all minorities are fully skilled in Burmese, in order to avoid the first-language interference at any level, only the questionnaires completed by Burmese native speakers were chosen for the present study.

In total, 194 questionnaires were completed by Burmese native speakers. With my own experience living in Myanmar for three years and as a Burmese lecturer, I found that some of the answers in the questionnaires were not answers to the actual questions. For example, some respondents joked around with the situations in the questionnaire. These kinds of questionnaires were excluded from my study.

In Burmese society, it seems that males have more power than females, especially within a family context. The father and eldest brother hold the most

responsibility in taking care of the family. In families whose youngest child is a boy, other children sometimes quit school to save money for the youngest son's school fee (especially when the family's economic situation is problematic). However, if the wife comes from a well-off family, she will sometimes have more power than her husband. In addition, in the work place, females with high positions tend to have more power than their male juniors. In order to investigate whether different genders illustrate the different patterns or strategies used in making requests, only 60 questionnaires from each gender were chosen as representative of Burmese request utterances. Therefore, 120 questionnaires (120 copies of questionnaires \times 12 situations in each questionnaire = 1,440 utterances) were analyzed in this study.

3.1.2 Data observation

Data from observations were used to confirm the validity of the questionnaire results. Natural conversation observations were taken over two periods of time. The first time was from August to September 2009. The second time was from January to February 2010. During these two periods of time in Myanmar, the conversations between Burmese people in daily life were observed; for example, conversations among family members, among close friends, between a hotel owner and his manager, a professor and his/her students, flight attendants and their customers, university lecturers and students, between unfamiliar people, and so on. Notes were taken as often as possible, especially for request utterances.

3.2 Research instruments

There were two research instruments used in this study: questionnaires and audio recorder.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of two parts: Part I consists of questions about the respondents' personal data (i.e. age, sex, nationality, education, mother language and other languages spoken by the respondents), and Part II consists of a short description of the situation, specifying the setting and the social distance between the

participants and their status relative to each other. The respondents were asked to be participants. They were asked to read carefully and imagine themselves as described in each situation and write down what s/he would have said in the space provided.

The situations provided in the questionnaire had been discussed with Burmese native speakers to ensure that they were in accordance with culture, norms, lifestyle and everyday usage by Burmese people, so the data from the questionnaires can be seen as natural as real conversations. This follows Wolfson's notes concerning the notion of natural/casual speech, "...there is no single, absolute entity answering the notion of natural/casual speech. If speech is felt to be appropriate to a situation and the goal, then it is natural in that context." (Wolfson, 1976 cited in Intachakra, 2001: 77).

After that, the first-draft questionnaires were tested by sending them to Burmese people who were living in different parts of Thailand (e.g. students at Mahidol University, Chiang Mai University, Chulalongkorn University) and Burmese people working at organizations in Chiang Mai province. Some of these people kindly gave the questionnaires to their relatives and friends. Sixty questionnaires were sent out but only 29 copies were returned. Ten of these were chosen as representative data for a preliminary analysis because some of them were not completed; others were answered by non-native speakers of Burmese (e.g. Kaya, Kayin, Mon, Shan). All the answers in the questionnaires were written in colloquial Burmese, as revealed by the fact that most elements of spoken Burmese, such as final particles, address terms, and suffixes, were written in spoken form. It can be said that the spoken form in questionnaires led them to consider their answers in a spoken style.

In order to analyze the data, a number of request utterances taken from novels and short magazine stories were added because the data obtained from the questionnaires in the pilot study were very small. Altogether, there were 110 request utterances for the pilot study. The result shows that internal modifications, such as final particles and lexical usages play an important role in Burmese request utterances. As for the relation between the social factors involved in the situation and the degree of request imposition, it appears that they are not clearly related. Therefore, the questionnaire was revised due to the three factors identified by Brown and Levinson (1987), i.e., distance, power, and rank of imposition. The distance variables are treated as familiar (–Distance) and unfamiliar (+Distance). Family members and closed

friends are considered as having no social distance. In the work place, the social distance of the participants depends on how long they have known each other or the length of time they have worked together. Power refers to the social status of the speaker. Power of the participants varied in three values as higher status (+Power), lower status (–Power), and equal status (=Power). Higher status speakers include, for example, a teacher who requests something from a student, or a boss who requests something from his/her staffs. Equal status speakers are, for example, friends and colleagues. Lower status speakers are, for example, a child who requests something from his parents, or a student who requests something from a teacher. As for the rank of imposition, there are two relative degrees of imposition involved in the situations, that is, high (+Rank) and low (–Rank) degree of imposition. The rank of request imposition in each situation is based on the consulting with a native speaker. For example, when borrowing a large amount of money, even between close friends, the rank of imposition is considered high. Another example of a high rank is a child asking his/her father to buy a new car. These factors were considered based on subjective feelings after consulting with Burmese native speakers in creating the situations for the questionnaire. Therefore, the final draft of the questionnaire consists of 12 situations (both the Burmese questionnaire and the English version are provided in an appendix). Table 3.1 shows the dimension of three social factors involved in each situation.

Table 3.1 Request situations and values of three social factors

Speech act situations	Factor values		
	Distance	Power	Rank
1. A student borrows money from close friend to pay school fee	–	=	+
2. Children asks father to buy a new car	–	–	+
3. A teacher borrows a pen from an unfamiliar student	+	+	–
4. A student borrows a lecture note from close friend	–	=	–

Table 3.1 Request situations and values of three social factors (cont.)

Speech act situations	Factor values		
	Distance	Power	Rank
5. Young brother/sister asks an elder brother for a ride	–	–	–
6. A student borrows a book from unfamiliar teacher	+	–	–
7. A company employee asks an unfamiliar colleague to do work that is not his/her responsibility	+	=	+
8. A student borrows a pen from an unfamiliar classmate	+	=	–
9. A hostel's warden asks a familiar officer to pick up his/her daughter	–	+	+
10. A teacher asks a familiar student to carry a book home after school	–	+	–
11. A worker asks for his/her salary in advance from the boss after working for only one week	+	–	+
12. A lecture asks a new tutor to write a report	+	+	+

Table 3.1 consists of 12 request situations provided in the questionnaires for this study.

Situation 1: a student borrows money from a close friend to pay for his/her school fee. The participants are on familiar terms and of equal status. Borrowing money for school fees is considered high imposition.

Situation 2: a child asks his/her father to buy a new car. The participants are family members, so they have no social distance between them. The father is in the highest position and generally has the highest authority in the Burmese family. Therefore, the speaker is in lower social status than the hearer. The imposition of the request is considered high because buying a new car requires a lot of money.

Situation 3: a teacher borrows a pen from an unfamiliar student. In this situation, the teacher teaches this class for the first time, so s/he has never met the

students in the class before. As a teacher, the requester has more power than the requestee. Borrowing a pen is considered as having low imposition because the pen is something that every student should have.

Situation 4: a student wants to borrow lecture notes from his/her close friend. Borrowing lecture notes from a close friend is considered as having a low rank of request imposition because of the familiarity and equality in social status.

Situation 5: a younger sibling asks for a ride from his/her elder brother. The participants are on familiar terms because they are from the same family. The speaker is from a lower social status than the hearer. Asking for a ride is considered as having a low rank of imposition because it is a family concern and it is the responsibility for the elder to take care of the younger.

Situation 6: a student borrows a book from an unfamiliar teacher. The task of this situation is considered as having high rank request imposition because the participants are not on familiar terms and the speaker is from a lower social status than the hearer.

Situation 7: a company employee wants to ask his/her colleague to do extra work. The participants are from an equal social status but they are not on familiar terms because the hearer is a new employee of the company. The requested action is considered as having a high rank of request imposition because it is not the responsibility of the hearer and there is a high value of social distance.

Situation 8: a student borrows a pen from a student who s/he first meets in a class. As students in the same class, the participants are from an equal social status but they are not on familiar terms because it is the first time they have met. Borrowing a pen is considered as having a low rank of request imposition.

Situation 9: the speaker is a hostel's warden and wants to ask a familiar officer to pick up his/her daughter. There is no social distance between the participants. The speaker has more social status or power than the hearer. Since the hearer is asked to do something that is not his/her responsibility, the rank of request imposition of this situation is of a high value.

Situation 10: a teacher requests his/her student to help carry a book from the office to the house. Since the participants are on familiar terms and the situation took place after school hours, the rank of imposition is considered low.

Situation 11: a worker has to ask for his/her salary in advance from the boss after working for only one week. Since the speaker has been working for a short time, the participants are not on familiar terms. As a worker, the speaker is from a lower status than the hearer. Based on the distance and power of the participants, asking for a salary in advance is considered as having high rank of request imposition.

Situation 12: a lecturer asks a new tutor to write a report. A lecturer in the university has a higher power than the tutor. Since the tutor is new to the work, the participants are unfamiliar to each other. Asking an unfamiliar person to do work that is not his/her duty has a high value of request imposition.

At the end of the questionnaire, additional space was provided for suggestions from the respondents. Besides common comments related to Burmese requests, many of them gave me encouragement for doing this research, and also indicated their appreciation for a foreigner who is interested in their language.

3.2.2 An audio recorder

Besides questionnaires, an audio recorder was used to record conversations among Burmese people in different situations. In situations where many people were involved, the recorder was turned on all the time while the conversations were occurring. In situations where the request speech act occurred unexpectedly, a note about the data and the social factors involved were taken instead of recording.

3.3 The respondents

Since the questionnaire is the main research instrument for this study, respondents with competency in writing and reading were required. Therefore, university students were chosen as respondents for the present study. They are students at three places in Yangon Division, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

- 1) The University of Foreign Language (UFL), University Road, Kamayut Township,
- 2) The World Buddhist Meditation Institute (WBMI), Naga Hlaingu East Pagoda Road, Mayangone Township,

3) The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for History and Tradition (SEAMEO CHAT, henceforth SEA), Thiri Hall, Pyay Road, (at the time of this dissertation writing, SEAMEO CHAT office was moved to the Yangon University compound).

3.4 Theoretical framework

The data from the questionnaires were analyzed using the model used in the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) of Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) in order to get the patterns and strategies used in making requests in Burmese. Then, to investigate politeness in Burmese, Brown & Levinson's politeness theory (1987) was used (see details in chapter II). These two approaches are influential theories for studying the speech act of request and linguistic politeness and have been used to investigate many languages. Even though some studies do not support their claims, there are still other studies that approved of them. In order to investigate the speech act of request and politeness in the language that had never been studied, these two approaches still serve as the influential tools.

3.5 Data analysis

After data collection, the completed questionnaires were chosen as the main data for the study. The steps of data analysis included, as follows:

1) Copy request utterances from the questionnaires to cards, one utterance for one card. The answer for each situation in the questionnaire is considered as one request utterance. Note source of each utterance for rechecking.

2) Analyze the constituents of the request utterance in order to get the request components and request patterns based on the model of Blum-Kulka et al (1989).

3) Only request head-act, which is the core unit of request utterance, was analyzed in order to understand the linguistic constructions of Burmese request.

4) Analyze request strategies by considering the head-act of request within the assigned framework. The preferences of each strategy tested whether the universal strategy proposed by Blum-Kulka et al is also preferred in Burmese.

5) Analyze politeness strategies used in requests within the assigned framework by considering the whole utterance.

6) Make conclusions on the use of request patterns and strategies, and also the politeness strategies regarding the social factors involved.

7) Discuss the results of the study on the related issues and provide suggestions for further studies.

The present chapter gave the detailed methodologies used in this study (i.e. how the questionnaires were created, how the data were collected in a country like Myanmar, and how the data obtained were analyzed). However, based on my own experiences, it is worthy to note that in order to do research in Myanmar, a connection with local people is helpful. In addition, the respects of the norms and culture are also important.

The results of the study will be presented in the next three chapters. Chapter IV will be about the linguistic form and speech act patterns of request utterances made by Burmese people; Chapter V will be about the request strategies and request modifications used in Burmese; and Chapter VI will present politeness strategies used in Burmese. The conclusion and discussion of the findings are presented in Chapter VII and the suggestions for further study are also provided.

CHAPTER IV

FORMS AND PATTERNS OF BURMESE REQUEST

This chapter presents the results of the study, which looks at the forms and patterns of Burmese requests. Form is the syntactic structure of the core unit of the request utterance. It illustrates how Burmese people form a sentence to make a request. The request patterns reveal the components that appear in the request utterances. Each component functions differently in requests. The combination of such components in different ways makes up different patterns of requests.

4.1 Request forms in Burmese

Request forms refer to the linguistic constructions of the request head-act, which is the core unit of the request. From my data, in Burmese the request head-act can be performed with four constructions: imperative, interrogative, declarative, and negative constructions.

4.1.1 Imperative constructions

In Burmese, an imperative sentence consisting of the verb alone, unaccompanied by any particle, is the simplest form of command or request, and expresses an abrupt imperative (Cornyn & Roop, 1968; Stewart, 1955). From the data, an imperative without any particle is mostly used when a request is made to someone who is in the same or lower status as shown in example (4.1).

(4.1)

စည်သူ၊	ငါ့	ကို	စာအုပ်	ခဏ	ငှား၊
siθù,	ŋə	kò	sà?ou?	kʰəŋə	ŋá
Si.Thu,	1SG.DEP	OBJ	book	moment	borrow

စာ	ကူး	ချင်	လို့။
sà	kú	tɕ ^h IN	lɔ
text	copy	DES	SUB

'Si Thu, **lend me the book for a moment** because I want to copy it.' [4/F47/UFL]

In example (4.1), the participants are close friends and the imposition of request is low. Normally, a politeness marker is not necessary in this context because the participants are familiar with each other and they are of the same social status. The form like (4.1) would be appropriate in Burmese culture in this particular context. However, in this example, the requester uses the word *ခဏ* /k^həŋə/ 'moment' to mitigate the force of the request and also gives the reason of her request.

In a few cases, the imperative without any particle is used with a person of higher status, but the participants of the case are familiar with each other. In this context the social distance between the participants is concerned.

(4.2)

ဖေ	ကြီး၊	သား	ကို	ကား	တစ်စီး	ဝယ်	လေး။
p ^h è	tɕí,	θá	kò	ká	tə=sí	wè	pé
father	big,	son	OBJ	car	one=CL	buy	BEN

သင်တန်း	သွား	ရ	တာ	အဆင်မပြေ	လို့။
θindán	θwá	ja	tà	ʔəs ^h IN.mə.pjè	lɔ
class	go	GET	NOM	inconvenient	SUB

'**Father, buy me a car** because it is inconvenient to go to class.' [2/M83/SEA]

Example (4.2) is a request made by a son to his father; the son wants his father to buy him a car. In Burmese families, the father typically has the highest authority and highest position in the house. Every family member has to pay respect to the father in every aspect. However, in families in which members have close relationships, children may act or speak directly, as illustrated in example (4.2). In this case, even though the requester is of a lower status than the hearer and the imposition of the request is high, the intimacy between the two participants is significant. The

speaker starts the request with a kinship term ခေ /p^hè/ 'father' plus ကြီး /tɕí/ 'big' to get the hearer's attention. The word ကြီး /tɕí/ 'big' is used to indicate respect of the speaker to the hearer; it is an honorific marker.

Request utterances in imperative form can be modified to be made more polite by adding the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ to the verb because the imperative form without a politeness marker tends to be an order instead of a request. Cornyn and Roop (1968:162) said the following about the imperative unaccompanied by a particle: "A beginner should not use such forms, as they are often impolite; he should use expressions with the politeness particle –pa". According to the Myanmar-English dictionary (Department of the Myanmar Language Commission, 2001: 254), ဝါ /pà/ is a "particle suffixed to a verb to affect politeness". According to Okell and Allott (2001: 113) ဝါ /pà/ is a "sentence or verb suffix indicates politeness, respect, deference, or (when correcting a mistaken idea) emphasis, insistence". Example (4.3) shows the use of a politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ at the end of the imperative as a way to make a request utterance.

(4.3)

စည်သူ	ငါ့	ကို	မှတ်စုစာအုပ်	ခဏ	ငှား	ဝါ။
sìθù	ŋá	kò	máʔsɯsàʔouʔ	k ^h əŋá	ŋá	pà
Si.Thu	1SG.DEP	OBJ	notebook	moment	borrow	POL

‘Si Thu, please lend me the notebook for a moment.’ [4/F52/UFL]

The context of this example is the same as in example (4.1). While there is no ဝါ /pà/ in (4.1), it is used in (4.3). This form, verb + ဝါ /pà/, is found in every situation in my study. It may be said that a politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ not only functions to indicate politeness but also functions to indicate a request or as a request marker. It is used to soften an order/command to make it a request (and to emphasize a request).

Moreover, concerning request utterances in Burmese, especially when one wants to borrow something from other someone else, besides omitting the subject, which is understood as the second person in the conversation, it is also found that sometimes the requested verb in the imperative form is implicit. The requester usually

utters only the object and temporal downgrader. The request utterance in example (4.4) consists of the attention getter at the beginning, and then the object and temporal downgrader ခဏ /k^həŋə/ 'moment' are mentioned. The required action is not mentioned in this example.

(4.4)

သား	ရေ၊	ဘောပင်	ခဏ	လောက်။
θá	jè,	bópìN	k ^h əŋə	lau?
son	APP,	pen	moment	as.much.as

'Boy, (Lend me) a pen for a moment.'

[3/F37/UFL]

It can be said that in example (4.4), the verb of the sentence is omitted by considering example (4.5-4.6), in which the verb conveying the requested action, နှား /ŋá/ 'borrow', is explicit both in the imperative and yes/no question.

(4.5)

ဘောပင်	ခဏ	လောက်	နှား	ပါ။
bópìN	k ^h əŋə	lau?	ŋá	pà
pen	moment	as.much.as	borrow	POL

'**Lend** (me) a pen for a moment please.'

(4.6)

ဘောပင်	ခဏ	လောက်	နှား	ပါ	လား။
bópìN	k ^h əŋə	lau?	ŋá	pà	lá
pen	moment	as.much.as	borrow	POL	Q

'**Could you please lend** (me) a pen for a moment?'

Since the utterance is considered a request, I would like to suggest that this elliptical structure, like in example (4.4), is part of an imperative form of a direct request. This kind of linguistic construction is mostly found in situations in which a teacher wants to borrow a pen from an unfamiliar student; in other words, when the imposition of the request is low. The social distance between the participants is high,

but with more power than the listener, using an elliptical form of imperative construction is appropriate in Burmese culture and it is understood as request.

In addition, according to the results of my study, there are three types of perspectives in Burmese requests in imperative construction: hearer oriented, speaker oriented, and inclusive oriented:

Hearer oriented: the request head-acts in the imperative form are considered hearer oriented, i.e. the hearer will be the expected actor. This is common in requests because the request is a speech act in which the speaker asks the hearer to do something. This is why the performative verb of request in Burmese cannot be used in imperative form. If it is used, for example, တောင်း /táun/ 'ask for' > တောင်းပါ /táun pà/ 'please ask', as hearer oriented, it will convey that the hearer will be the one who asks for the action (not the speaker).

Speaker oriented: when the request made by a verb phrase plus ပါရစေ /pà ja sè/ 'let me', the perspective changes to speaker oriented. ပါရစေ /pà ja sè/ derives from the combination of three elements: a politeness marker ပါ /pà/, verb ရ /ja/ 'get', and causative auxiliary verb စေ /sè/. Therefore, using ပါရစေ /pà ja sè/ in a request, the speaker is asking the hearer to cause her/him to perform the required action. In the other words, the speaker is asking for permission to do the act, and the speaker is the one who will perform the action.

(4.7)

ဆရာ၊	ကျွန်တော်	စာတမ်း	ပြုစု	ချင်	လို့
s ^h əjà,	tɕənò	sàdán	pjusu	tɕ ^h ín	lɔ
teacher,	1SG.M	essay	compile	DES	SUB

ဆရာ	ရဲ့	စာအုပ်	ကို	ခဏ	ငှား	ပါရစေ	...
s ^h əjà	jɛ	sàŋou?	kò	k ^h əna	ŋá	pà.ja.sè	...
teacher	POSS	book	OBJ	moment	borrow	LET.ME	...

'Teacher, I want to write an essay, please allow me to borrow your book.'

[6/M16/WBMI]

The requester in example (4.7) is of lower status than the hearer, they are not familiar with each other, and the imposition is in low rank. Instead of asking the hearer to lend the book, the speaker asks for permission from the hearer to let him borrow the book. This utterance seems more polite because the responsibility of the act falls on the speaker, not the hearer.

Inclusive oriented: in Burmese, when a verb phrase is used with ရအောင် /jə ʔàun/ 'Let's V' both the speaker and the hearer are expected actors of the requested action. ရအောင် /jə ʔàun/ is the combination of the verb ရ /jə/ 'get' and the verb အောင် /ʔàun/ 'succeed/'. When they are combined, their literal meaning should be "to get the action to succeed".

(4.8)

...မင်း	နဲ့	ဆရာ	တစ်ယောက်	တစ်ဝက်
...mín	nɛ	s ^h əjə	tə = jəu?	tə = wɛ?
...2SG	COM	teacher	one=CL	one=half

ခွဲ	သယ်	ရအောင်	ကွာ။
k ^h wé	θè	jə.ʔàun	kwà
divide	carry	LET'S	NTAG

'...Let's carry (the book) half by half.'

[6/M16/WBMI]

In this situation the speaker is asking for help carrying a book. While most request utterances from the questionnaires are hearer oriented, only the utterance in example (4.8) is inclusive oriented. Even though the speaker is of higher status and the imposition of the act is considered low because of their familiarity, the speaker chooses to use ရအောင် /jə ʔàun/ 'Let's V' at the end of the verb phrase in order to state that not only the hearer but also the speaker will do the requested act. However, the negative tag ကွာ /kwà/ at the end of the utterance shows the intimacy between them because it is usually used between people who are familiar with each other.

There are other linguistic features that are used to modify the imperative in requests, such as particles, some kinds of auxiliary verbs, and other internal modifications (see details in section 5.2 internal modifications).

4.1.2 Interrogative constructions

The interrogative construction that functions as a request in Burmese is the yes/no question. By using a question in a request, the speaker leaves some options to the hearer, i.e. the hearer can interpret the utterance either as a request or a question. It reduces the force of the request on the hearer. Yes/no questions are mostly used in query preparatory strategies. They are used to ask about the willingness, ability, or plausibility of the hearer to do the act. In Burmese, လာ: /lá/ is a question word that requires a yes or no answer from the hearer.

(4.9)

သမီး၊	ဆရာမ	ကို	ဘာပင်	ခဏ	လောက်	ငှား	ဝါ	လာ:။
θəmí,	s ^h əjəm̩	kò	bópìn	k ^h əŋə	lau?	ŋá	pà	lá
daughter,	teacher.F	TOP	pen	moment	as.much.as	borrow	POL	Q
'Daughter, can you lend me a pen for a moment?'								[3/F53/UFL]

Example (4.9) shows a yes/no question used as a request. It is an utterance made by a lecturer who has forgotten her pen and needs to use it during class. Therefore, she has to borrow one from her student who is unfamiliar to her. By means of this structure, the politeness marker always appears. As I have mentioned earlier the imperative with ဝါ /pà/ is the common form of Burmese request, so the yes/no question construction as in (4.9) is a modified form of the imperative. The attachment of the yes/no question marker လာ: /lá/ at the end of imperative makes the request more polite.

A combination of မဝ် /mè/ and a yes-no question word လာ: /lá/ into a form of မလာ: /mə = lá/ is another way to form a yes/no question in Burmese. Since မ /mə/ (a clitic form of a sentence final particle မဝ် /mè/) indicates a future action, intended action, or assumption (Okell & Allott 2001: 161) and also a speculative event (Jenny 2009), using မလာ: /mə = lá/ in a request can show that the speaker expects some future

action from the hearer. Most Burmese request utterances using မလား /mə=lá/ are usually accompanied by an auxiliary verb that indicates the sense of 'ability', such as နိုင် /nàin/ 'win', ရ /ja/ 'get'.

(4.10)

ဝင်းမြင့်၊	ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	နည်းနည်း	လောက်
wínmjǐn,	ŋa	kò	paiʔsʰàn	né~né	lauʔ
Win.Myint,	1SG.DEP	OBJ	money	little~RDPL	as.much.as

ချေး	နိုင်	မလား။	...
tɕʰí	nàin	mə=lá	...
borrow	ABLE	FUT=Q	...

'Win Myint, could you please lend me some money?'

[1/F89/UFL]

A request between close friends, but with high imposition, as in example (4.10), is in a form of a yes/no question. The auxiliary verb နိုင် /nàin/ 'able' and မလား /mə=lá/ indicate that the speaker is asking about the ability to do the required act of the hearer. This can also be used as an indirect request. The interpretation is left to the hearer.

Sometimes, yes/no questions end with the quotative marker လို့ /lo/ as shown in example (4.11a). This is a request between colleagues who are not on familiar terms. The speaker asks the hearer to do work that is the speaker's duty. The imposition of the request is considered high because of their unfamiliarity and since the participants are of equal status.

(4.11a)

...ငါ	အစား	သွား	ပေး	လို့	ရ	မလား	လို့။
...ŋa	ʔəsá	θwá	pé	lo	ja	mə=lá	lo
...1SG.DEP	representative	go	BEN	SUB	GET	FUT=Q	QUOT

'...(I wonder whether) you will please go for me.'

[7/M61/WBMI]

(4.11b)

...ငါ	အစား	သွား	ပေး	လို့	ရ	မလား	လို့
...ŋa	ʔəsá	θwá	pé	lɔ	ja	mə = lá	lɔ
...1SG.DEP	representative	go	BEN	SUB	GET	FUT=Q	QUOT

သိ	/	မေး	ချင်	တယ်။
θi	/	mé	tɕʰɪN	dɛ
know	/	ask	DES	NFUT

'...(I want to know/ask whether) you will please go for me.'

The speaker uses a yes/no question to ask about the hearer's ability to do the act. The question ends with the quotation marker လို့ /lɔ/ but the matrix clause is omitted. According to Okell and Allott (2001: 209), 'လို့ /lɔ/ marks the end of quotation, reported speech, and can be used in incompleted sentences, after questions with an unstated verb meaning "I wonder" etc', the utterance in (4.11a) may convey the speaker's desire to know whether the hearer can do the requested act or not. The completed sentence of this utterance is shown in (4.11b).

However, there is one example of wh-question used in requests found in my data.

(4.12)

...ဆရာ-မ	ကို	ဘယ်	သူ	ဘောပင်	တစ်ချောင်း	လောက်
...sʰəjə-ma	kò	bè	θù	bópɪN	tə = tɕáun	lau?
...teacher-F	OBJ	INTER	person	pen	one=CL	as.much.as

ငှား	ပေး	ချင်	လဲ။
ŋá	pé	tɕʰɪN	lé
borrow	BEN	DES	Q

'... Who wants to lend me a pen?'

[3/F32/UFL]

In example (4.12), the requester phrases her request in wh-question form. She asks her student, 'Who wants to lend me a pen?' instead of using the imperative form such as, တောဝင် တစ်ချောင်းလောက်ငှားပါ။ /bópǐN tə=tɕ^háun lau? ɲá pà/ 'Lend me a pen, please.' This kind of question may be interpreted as a hint, not a directive question, because it leaves the options to the hearer: to answer the question or to do the act (to lend the pen). In this example, the participants are unfamiliar with each other because it is the first time they have met. Even though the imposition of the request is low and the speaker has more power than the hearer, the speaker still hesitates to make the request. Therefore, she requests by asking a question.

All interrogative forms that function as requests are considered indirect requests since they allow the hearer to interpret whether the utterances are questions or requests.

4.1.3 Declarative construction

Declarative sentences in Burmese can end with verbal particles: non-future the particle တယ် /dè/, future particle မယ် /mè/, sequential particle ြ /pǐ/, or nominal particles: politeness marker ဝါ /pà/, restrictive particle ခဲ /bé/. The declarative is another variant of linguistic forms that can function as a request in Burmese in two ways: to state the desire of the speaker and to give a hint to the hearer. The first one is a direct request, while the second one is an indirect request.

The speakers usually state their desire explicitly by using the auxiliary verb ချင် /tɕ^hɪN/ 'want, desire'. It immediately follows the main verb of the sentence and cannot stay alone as the main verb in the sentence.

(4.13)

...စာအုပ်=လေး	ခဏ	ငှား	ချင်	ဝါ	တယ်။
...sàʔou? = lé	k ^h əŋa	ɲá	tɕ ^h ɪN	pà	dè
...book=DIM	moment	borrow	DES	POL	NFUT

'... (I) would like to borrow the book for a while.'

[6/F16/UFL]

Example (4.13) is a request made by a student who wants to borrow a book from an unfamiliar teacher. She states her desire to borrow a book by using the auxiliary verb ချင် /tɕʰin/ after the main verb ငှား /ŋá/ 'borrow', and the politeness marker used in this utterance softens the force of the request because the hearer is of higher status. This form indicates that the speaker is the one who wants to borrow, not the hearer.

(4.14)

...သမီး	ကို	ခဏ	လောကံ	ငှား	စေ	ချင်	ဝါ	တယ်။
...θəmí	kò	kʰənə	lau?	ŋá	sé	tɕʰin	pà	dè
...daughter	TOP	moment	as.much.as	borrow	CAUS	DES	POL	NFUT

'...(I) would like (you) to lend me (a book) for a while.'

[6/F8/UFL]

Example (4.14) is the same situation as (4.13). It is also a declarative form with the auxiliary verb ချင် /tɕʰin/ but the speaker of (4.14) uses the causative auxiliary verb စေ /sè/ together with ချင် /tɕʰin/. This combination is used to indicate that the speaker wants someone to do something (Okell & Allott, 2001: 55). Therefore, adding စေ /sè/ in the declarative form with ချင် /tɕʰin/ changes the perspective of the request utterance from speaker oriented to hearer oriented and also increases the force of the request.

Some declaratives in requests are statements about something partially related to the requested act but not the required action directly. This type of request is called a hint. Hints are considered polite because "...they leave options open to the addressees to interpret them in the way they wish, so that they do not feel compelled to conform to something they do not want to do" (Sifianou, 1992: 149). Hints can be found easier in everyday conversation than from questionnaires. Example (4.15) shows request utterances from my observations. While I was sitting in a coffee shop and checking my questionnaires, one of the waitresses asked me what I was doing. I showed her my questionnaires and asked if she wanted to do one too. Then I gave her one. Five minutes later, she came back and told me that one of her friends also wanted to answer the questions.

(4.15)

ဟို	တစ်=ယောက်	လည်း	ဖြေ	ချင်	တယ်	တဲ့	အစ်မ။
hò	tə=jau?	lé	p ^h jè	tɕ ^h ĩN	dè	dɛ	?əma
that	one=CL	INC	answer	DES	NFUT	QUOT	sister

'(That person said that) s/he also wants to answer, sister.'

This utterance is obviously considered a request because the event is related to the previous one.

Declarative is one form in which a request performative verb in Burmese can occur. When Burmese speakers use a request performative verb, they use it in a statement of desire.

(4.16)

...ရေး	ပေး	ဖို့	အကူအညီ	တောင်း	ချင်	လို့	ပါ။
...jé	pé	p ^h ɔ	?əkù?əɲì	táun	tɕ ^h ĩN	lɔ.	pà
...write	BEN	PURP	help	PER:ask.for	DES	SUB	POL

'...I would like to ask you to write (the essay) for me.' [12/M76/SEA]

In example (4.16) the performative verb of request တောင်း /táun/ 'ask for' is used together with the desirative auxiliary verb ချင် /tɕ^hĩN/ 'want, desire'. This utterance ends with the subordinate sentence particle လို့ /lɔ/ 'because' and a politeness marker. The speaker uses this form to express his desire to make a request.

(4.17)

...ဝယ်	ပေး	ရ	မှာ	နော်။
...wè	pé	jə	mà	nə
...buy	BEN	MUST	FUT	AGR

'...(you) must buy (a car) for me.' [2/M46/UFL]

Example (4.17) is another form of declarative used in requests. This utterance occurs in the context in which the son asks his father to buy him a new car. The obligative auxiliary verb ရှိ /jə/ 'must' is used to increase the force of the request. This is an example of the role of intimacy. The familiarity between the participants allows the increased use of request force. Since the speaker has lower power than the hearer, the final particle နော် /nə/ is used to soften the force.

Most request utterances in declarative form are used to indicate the desire of the speakers. Some are used to give hints or to indicate that the speaker is seeking an agreement from the hearer.

4.1.4 Negative construction

Negative constructions in Burmese request are found in the form of tags in the sentence. Many request utterances made by Burmese people ended with a negative tag. Two expressions can be used as a tag in Burmese requests:

မဟုတ်လား	လား။
mə = hou?	lá
NEG=right	Q
'Isn't it right?'	

မသိဘူး	ဘူး
mə = θi	bú
NEG=know	NEG
'(I) don't know.'	

They are used to convey the speaker's hesitation and uncertainty to a request. These two tags are usually attached at the end of the utterances. The first one မဟုတ်လား လား။ /mə = hou? lá/ which means 'Isn't it right?' is used to convey that the required action is something that the hearer has said before, as in (4.18).

(4.18)

...ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	အစား	ဘဏ်	သွား	ပြီး
...təŋɔ̌	kò	ʔəsá	bàN	θwá	pí
...1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	representative	bank	go	SEQ

ပိုက်ဆံ	ယူ	ပေး	နိုင်	တယ်၊	မဟုတ်	လား။
paiʔs ^h àN	jù	pé	nàin	dè,	mə=houʔ	lá
money	take	BEN	WIN	NFUT,	NEG=right	Q

'...You can go to the bank and take the money for me, **isn't it true?**' [7/M4/UFL]

The second negative tag, မသိဘူး /mə=θi bú/ '(I) don't know', is used as a hedge expression to convey uncertainty on behalf of the speaker, and the hesitation to make a request, as in (4.19).

(4.19)

ဟို	ဘောပင်=လေး	တစ်ချက်	လောက်
hò	bópìn=lé	tə=tɕ ^h ɛʔ	lauʔ
that	pen=DIM	one=CL	as.much.as

ငှား	လို့	ရ	မလား၊	မသိ	ဘူး။
ŋá	lɔ̌	ja	mə=lá,	mə=θi	bú
borrow	SUB	GET	FUT=Q,	NEG=know	NEG

'Uh...**I don't know** whether you could please lend me a pen for a while?'

[8/F64/UFL]

In natural conversation, sometimes a negative marker ဘူး /bú/ in the question tag မသိဘူး /mə=θi bú/ '(I) don't know' can be dropped without changing the meaning.

In addition, some request utterances appear in a negative construction as a dependent clause. The question tag မကောင်းဘူးလား။ /mə=káun bú lá/ means 'Wouldn't it be good?' It is used with the conditional clause or if-clause for making suggestions to the hearer.

(4.20)

... ကား=လေး	တစ်=စီး	လောက်	ဝယ်	ထား	ရင်
... ká=lé	tə=sí	lau?	wè	t ^h á	jìn
...car=DIM	one=CL	as.much.as	buy	keep	COND

မ=ကောင်း	ဘူး	လား။
mə=káun	bú	lá
NEG=good	NEG	Q

‘...wouldn’t it be good if you bought a car?’

[2/M75/SEA]

Another negative form is found in Burmese requests. It is used when the speaker wants to borrow something from the hearer. The sentence that means ‘Don’t you have X.’ or ‘Don’t you bring X.’ is usually used.

(4.21)

မင်း	မှာ	ဘောပင်	တစ်=ချောင်း	လောက်	အပို
mín	mà	bópìn	tə=t ^h áun	lau?	?əpò
2SG	LOC	pen	one=CL	as.much.as	extra

မ=ပါ	ဘူး	လား။
mə=pà	bú	lá
NEG=bring.along	NEG	Q

‘Didn’t you bring an extra pen?’

[8/M18/WBMI]

In example (4.21), the speaker wants to borrow a pen from an unfamiliar classmate. Using the negative question မ=ပါဘူးလား။ /mə=pà bú lá/ ‘Didn’t you bring?’ is an indirect way to make a request.

In Burmese, the noun စိတ် /sei?/ means ‘heart, mind’ and can be used to state someone’s attitude or feeling (Okell & Allott, 2001: 57). In requests, it is used to ask for the hearer’s desire to perform the action in the form of a negative question.

(4.22)

... ဖေဖေ	မှာ	သမီး	ကို
...p ^h èp ^h ɛ	mà	θəmí	kò
...father.DEP	LOC	daughter	OBJ

ကား	ဝယ်	ပေး	ချင်	တဲ့	စိတ်	မရှိ	ဘူး	လား။
ká	wè	pé	tɕ ^h ɪN	dɛ	sei?	mə=ʃi	bú	lá
car	buy	BEN	DES	NFUT.DEP	heart	NEG=have	NEG	Q

‘...Don't you feel like buying me a car?’

[2/F29/UFL]

Example (4.22) shows the use of negative questions in asking about the hearer's desire to perform the action. The speaker, who wants her father to buy her a new car, asks her father indirectly with negative question ကားဝယ်ပေးချင်တဲ့စိတ်မရှိဘူးလား။ /ká wè pé tɕ^hɪN dɛ sei? mə=ʃi bú lá/ 'Don't you feel like buying me a car?'. The literal meaning of the expression is 'Don't you have the heart to buy me a car?'

A different negative form conveys a different meaning depending on the literal meaning of the negated verb.

Burmese requests can be formed by various linguistic constructions, i.e. imperative (the most common form), declarative, yes/no question, or negative construction. While imperative forms are direct requests, some forms of declarative can be direct, and some are indirect requests. Requests with yes/no questions are indirect. However, different forms of requests are not concerned with the degree of politeness. Every form can be modified to be polite if used in an appropriate context.

4.2 Request components

From the data, it was found that some respondents made requests with one sentence, while some made them longer with many sentences. As a result, the obtained request utterances reveal many linguistic features used in the colloquial style of

Burmese, such as address terms, final particles, the colloquial form of sentence final particles, and so on. These elements function as different components of request utterances.

In Burmese, a request can be a combination of four components: head-act, alerter, supportive moves, request indicator, or head-act alone. Each of them functions differently in the requests.

4.2.1 Head-act

A 'head-act' is the minimal unit of the request that serves to realize the request independently. According to Blum-Kulka et al (1989), the most explicit realization of the request is counted as the head-act of the request. Therefore, in each request, there is at least one head-act.

(4.23)

ဘော့ပင်လေး	တစ်ချောင်း	လောက်	ခဏ	ငှား	ပါ။
bópìn = lé	tə = tɕ ^h áun	lau?	k ^h əŋə	ŋá	bà
pen=DIM	one=CL	as.much.as	moment	borrow	POL

'Please lend me a pen for a moment.'

[8/F42/UFL]

In example (4.23), the speaker borrows a pen from an unfamiliar classmate by using an imperative sentence form: a verb followed by the politeness marker ပါ/pà/. This is a common form of a request in Burmese. In this utterance, only the head-act of the request is used.

The request head-act can be formed by various linguistic structures: imperative, interrogative, negative, and declarative construction, which has been presented in section 4.1 above.

4.2.2 Alerter

An alerter is an optional component in request utterances and serves as an attention-getter from the addressee. Alerters appear in the beginning of the request utterance. The linguistic elements that function as alerters are kinship terms, personal names, relationship terms, occupational terms, endearment terms, general nouns, and

attention getters. The use of alerters reflects the degree of deference and the different statuses of the participants. Therefore, the alerter not only functions to get the attention of the hearer but also to modify the request.

4.2.2.1 Kinship terms

In Burmese, kinship terms can be used to address someone, and their use implies a degree of intimacy. It can also be used to make familiarity with others because kinship terms can be used with people who are not related to the speaker, or even with strangers. When used with a stranger, it is a way to show respect to the hearer. Examples of kinship terms found in this study include the following:

အစ်မ, မမ	/ʔəmə , məmə/	'elder sister'
ဦးလေး, အနီကယ်	/ʔúlé , ʔànkè/	'uncle'
သား	/θá/	'son'
သမီး	/θə mí/	'daughter'
မောင်လေး	/məuŋlé/	'younger brother (of the sister)'

(4.24)

အဖေ၊	သား	ကား	သစ်	တစ်စီး	လိုချင်	လို့	ပါ။ ...
ʔəp ^h è,	θá	ká	θiʔ	tə = sí	lòtɕ ^h ìN	lɔ	pá ...
father,	son	car	new	one=CL	want	SUB	POL ...

'Father, I need a new car, please. ...'

[2/M38/UFL]

The alerter in example (4.24) is the kinship term အဖေ /ʔəp^hè/ 'father'. It is used by a son who wants his father buy him a new car. He starts his request by calling his father. It shows the relationship between the interlocutors.

The words သား /θá/ 'son' and သမီး /θə mí/ 'daughter' are generally used by an elder to address a younger person. For example, a teacher usually calls his/her students with these two kinship terms in order to show intimacy. In the same way, the students also use these kinship terms as a first-person pronoun to convey respect.

(4.25)

သမီး၊	တီချယ့်	ကို	ဘောပင်=လေး	ခဏ	လောက်။
θəmi,	tìtɕ ^h ɔ̃	kò	bópìN = lé	k ^h əna	lau?
daughter,	teacher.DEP	OBJ	pen=DIM	moment	as.much.as
'Daughter, (please lend me) a pen for a moment.'					[8/F42/UFL]

Example (4.25) shows the use of a kinship term as an alerter in the request utterance. A teacher uses it to address an unfamiliar student in order to get her attention before making the request. This use is common in Burmese society. As it is a familiar case, the speaker uses a kinship term plus the name of the addressee as the alerter.

(4.26)

သား	မောင်အေး၊	ဆရာ	စာအုပ်	တွေ	ကို
θá	màun?é,	s ^h əja	sà?ou?	dwè	kò
son	Maung.Aye,	teacher.DEP	book	PL	OBJ
ဝိုင်း	သယ်	ပေး	ဝါ	ဦး	...
wáin	θè	pé	pà	?óun	...
together	carry	BEN	POL	ADD	...
'Son Maung Aye, please help me carry the books. ...'					[10/F99/UFL]

Example (4.26) illustrates the use of a kinship term accompanied by the personal name of the addressee at the beginning of the utterance as an alerter of the request. The speaker is the teacher and the hearer is the student. The use of the kinship term and personal name illustrate their familiarity.

4.2.2.2 Name

Burmese people have only personal names. They do not have last names or family names. Some Burmese have nicknames or names that are used among in-group members, such as close friends and family members. A proper name alone can be used to address someone who is of equal or lower status. As for addressing an unfamiliar person or someone of higher status, it may be preceded by a

title. Example (4.27) shows the use of a personal name as an alerter in the case of familiar participants, while example (4.28) is the case of unfamiliar participants.

(4.27)

ဝင်းမြင့်	ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	၁၅၀၀၀	လောက်
wínmjǐn	ŋa	kò	paiʔs ^h àN	tə = θáuN.k ^h wé	lauʔ
Win.Myint	1SG	OBJ	money	15,000	as.much.as

ချေး	ပါ	လား။	...
tɕ ^h í	pà	lá	...
borrow	POL	Q	...

'Win Myint, please lend me about 15,000 Kyats. ...'

[1/M5/UFL]

This utterance is used between two close friends. Only the name is used as an alerter at the beginning of the request made by the friend.

(4.28)

ကိုနီ	ကျွန်မ	ကို	တစ်ခု	လောက်	ကူညီ	ပါ	လား။	...
kòni	tɕəma	kò	tə = k ^h y	lauʔ	kùjì	pà	lá	...
Mr.Ni	1SG.F	OBJ	one=CL	as.much.as	help	POL	Q	...

'Mr. Ni, could you please help me something? ...'

[7/F1/UFL]

In this example, the speaker asks the new officer to do work for her. She begins her request by an alerter, which is the name preceded by the title ကို /kò/. Using title plus name is a way to show respect to the hearer.

4.2.2.3 Relationship terms

Relationship terms are words that convey relationships between speakers and hearers. Such terms can also be used to address someone who is unfamiliar but equal in status. There is only one word found in this study: သူငယ်ချင်း /θəŋɛdʒín/ 'friend'.

(4.29)

သူငယ်ချင်း	မင်း	မှတ်စုစာအုပ်	ငါ့	ကို	တစ်=ရက်	လောက်
မာၣ်ဒဲးဒိုင်	mín	maʔsɯ̀sàʔouʔ	ŋa	kò	tə=jɛʔ	lauʔ
friend	2SG	notebook	1SG.DEP	OBJ	one=day	as.much.as

ငှာ:	လို့	ရ	မ=လား။
ၣ်ဒါ	lɔ	ja	mə=lá
borrow	SUB	GET	FUT=Q

'Friend, can you lend me your notebook for one day?'

[4/M70/SEA]

The alerter in the beginning of the utterance in (4.29) is the relationship term သူငယ်ချင်း /မာၣ်ဒဲးဒိုင်/ 'friend'. It is used between close friends. Sometimes, it is used together with a proper name as an alerter. For example, သူငယ်ချင်း ဝင်းမြင့် /မာၣ်ဒဲးဒိုင် wínmjìN/ 'Friend, Win Myint'.

4.2.2.4 Occupation terms:

The occupation of the hearer can also be used as an alerter in requests. For example,

ဆရာ	/s ^h əjà/	'teacher'
ဘော့စ်	/bɔ/	'Boss'
ဆိုင်ရှင်	/s ^h aiNʃìN/	'shopkeeper'

(4.30)

ဘော့စ်	ကျွန်မ	ကို	လစာ	ငွေ	ကြိုတင်	ထုတ်
bɔ	tɕəma	kò	lɔk ^h ɔ	ŋwè	tɕótiN	t ^h ouʔ
boss	1SG.F	OBJ	salary	money	advance	take.out

ပေး	နိုင်	မ=လား။	...
pé	nàin	mə=lá	...
BEN	WIN	FUT=Q	...

'Boss, could you please give me my salary in advance? ...'

[11/F20/UFL]

In example (4.30), the hearer, who owns the shop where the speaker is working, is called by the occupation term **ဘော့** /bɔ̃/ 'boss'. It is an English word in Burmese.

(4.31)

ဆရာ	တစ်ခု	လောက်	ကူညီ	ပါ	နော်။	...
s^həjà	tə = k ^h u	lau?	kùjɹi	pà	nò	...
teacher	one=CL	as.much.as	help	POL	AGR	...
'Teacher, please help me one thing, OK? ...'						[6/F65/UFL]

The alerter in example (4.31) is an occupation term used for a teacher. Interestingly, the occupation term **ဆရာ** /s^həjà/, which normally is glossed as 'teacher', can be used to call other occupations in common, such as doctors, drivers, or even employers.

(4.32)

ဆရာ	ကျွန်မ	ကို	ကြိုတင်	လစာ	ထုတ်
s^həjà	ɕəma	kò	ɕótiN	lāk ^h a	t ^h ou?
teacher	1 SG.F	OBJ	advance	salary	take.out

ပေး	နိုင်	မလား	ဆရာ	...
pé	nàin	mə = lá	s^həjà	...
BEN	WIN	FUT=Q	teacher	...

'Boss, could you please give me my salary in advance, **Boss**? ...' [11/F14/UFL]

This example is a request utterance made by a worker to an employer. The speaker uses the occupation term **ဆရာ** /s^həjà/ 'teacher' as an alerter to get the attention of the hearer. In this case, the hearer is not the teacher. He owns the shop where the speaker is working. But the term **ဆရာ** /s^həjà/ 'teacher' conveys a sense of respect.

4.2.2.5 Endearment terms

Endearment terms are words or expressions used to show the speaker's affection for the hearer, similar to "honey" or "darling" in English. In this study, there is no typical term of endearment, but there are two ways to express

affection toward the hearer in Burmese. The first one is to reduplicate part of a kinship term, e.g. မေမေ /p^hè~p^hè/ 'father', ကိုကို /kò~kò/ 'elder brother', မမ /má~má/ 'elder sister'. These reduplicated words can be used either by the speaker or the hearer. They can also be used as address terms. Another way to express affection in Burmese is to form an expression by combining the verb ချစ် /tɕ^hi?/ 'love' with other address terms (e.g. kinship or relationship terms). When making requests in Burmese, such endearment terms are used as alerter components that function as attention-getters and, at the same time, convey feelings of love toward the hearer. This kind of alerter may encourage the hearer's willingness to perform the requested action. Example (4.33) illustrates endearment terms in reduplicated form, and example (4.34) illustrates endearment terms in the combination with verb ချစ် /tɕ^hi?/ 'love'.

(4.33)

ကိုကို	သား	သူငယ်ချင်း	နဲ့	စာ	သွား	လုပ်
kò~kò	θá	θəŋɛ̀tɕín	nɛ̌	sà	θwá	lou?
elder.brother~	son	friend	COM	home.work	go	make
မ=လို့	အဲဒါ	မသွား	ရဲ	လို့		
mə = lɔ̌	ʔé-dà	mə = θwá	jé	lɔ̌		
NFUT=SUB	ANA-that	NEG=go	brave	SUB		
ကိုကို	လိုက်	ပို့	ပါ	လား	...	
kò~kò	lai?	pɔ̌	pà	lá	...	
elder.brother~	FOLLOW	send	POL	Q	...	

'Brother, I would like to do homework with my friend. For that, could you please give me a ride because I'm not brave to go there alone?' [5/M70/SEAMEO]

Example (4.33) is a request made by a younger brother to his older brother, asking for a ride to his friend's house to do homework. The request starts with an alerter that is the reduplication of the kinship term ကိုကို /kò~kò/ 'elder brother'.

(4.34)

ချစ်	ဖေ	ကြီး၊	သားသား	ကား	အသစ်	တစ်=စီး	လောက်
tɕʰi?	pʰè	tɕí,	θá~ θá	ká	ʔəθi?	tə = sɿ	lau?
love	father	big,	son~	car	new	one=CL	as.much.as

လိုချင် တယ်။ ...
 lòtɕʰiN dè ...
 want NFUT ...

'My beloved father, I want a new car. ...'

[2/M70/SEA]

Example (4.34) is a request made by a son to his father. The son asks his father to buy him a car. The request starts with an endearment term as an alerter. The endearment term in this example is the combination of verb ချစ် /tɕʰi/ 'love', kinship term ဖေ /pʰè/ 'father', and the honorific marker ကြီး /tɕí/ 'big'. Using this kind of endearment term indicates love, familiarity, and respect to the hearer.

It is noteworthy that the honorific marker ကြီး /tɕí/ 'big', also plays an important role in indicating affection in Burmese. The honorific marker ကြီး /tɕí/ derives from a stative verb meaning 'big'. It is frequently added to occupation or kinship terms to show respect when referring or speaking to a person. Also for the diminutive လေး /lé/ 'small', when it is used with relationship terms, kinship terms, or occupation terms, affection is revealed.

(4.34)

ကို=လေး	...	အချိန်	အား	ရင်	လိုက်
kò = lé	...	ʔətɕʰèiN	ʔá	jìN	lai?
elder.brother=DIM	...	time	free	COND	FOLLOW

ဝို ဖေ ဝါ လား။
 pɔ pé pà lá
 send BEN POL Q

'Brother, ... if you have time could you please take me (to my friend house)?'

[5/F27/UFL]

The speaker in example (4.34) is the younger sister of the hearer. She uses diminutive attached to a kinship term as an alerter to address her brother. It indicates the affection between the participants.

4.2.2.6 General noun

To refer to people in a lower status, such as a younger brother, daughter, son, or equal status such as close friend, the speaker sometimes uses a general noun as an alerter. For example, by using ကလေး /kələ/ 'children' to address students, or ကောင် /kəuɴ/ 'boy' (short word of အကောင် /ʔəkəuɴ/ 'body') to address younger familiar male or close friends.

(4.35)

ဟေ့	ကောင်	မနေ့က	သင်	တဲ့	စာအုပ်	ခဏ
hɛ	kəuɴ	mənɛkə	θiɴ	dɛ	sàʔouʔ	kʰənə
hey	boy	yesterday	study	NFUT.ATTR	book	moment

လောက်	ငှား	လို့	ရ	မလား။
lauʔ	ŋá	lɔ	ja	mə = lá
as.much.as	borrow	SUB	GET	FUT = Q

'Hey boy, can you lend me a book you learned yesterday?'

[4/M41/UFL]

The alerter in example (4.35) is a combination of the attention getter ဟေ့ /hɛ/ and the general noun ကောင် /kəuɴ/ 'body'. Normally, the word ကောင် /kəuɴ/ is used to refer to animals, and it is used to address or refer to someone who is of equal or lower status than the speaker (either male or female). When it is used to refer to a female, the female marker မ /mə/ is attached as ကောင်မ /kəuɴ mə/ 'girl'.

All six elements mentioned above can be followed by appellative suffixes such as ရေ /jè/, ရာ /jà/, ရယ် /jè/, ရ /ja/ (these are the same word reflecting various pronunciations). They are used when calling or addressing someone, often pleading or remonstrating (Okell & Allott, 2001: 183). For example, အဖေရယ် /ʔəpʰɛ̀jè/ 'father',

သားရေ /θájè/ 'son'. The alerter with appellative can be used to address a person who is of lower, higher or equal status, but it is mostly used with a familiar person.

(4.36)

ဝင်းမြင့်	ရေ၊	ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	ချေး	ပါ	လား။	...
wínmjìN	jè,	ŋà	kò	pai?s ^h àN	tɕ ^h í	pà	lá	...
Win.Myint	APP,	1SG	TOP	money	borrow	POL	Q	...
'Win Myint, can you lend me money? ...'								[1/M42/UFL]

(4.37)

အစ်ကို	ရေ၊	ကျွန်တော်	သူငယ်ချင်း	အိမ်	မှာ	စာ	သွား
ʔəkò	jè,	tɕənò	θəŋèdʒìN	ʔèiN	mà	sà	θwá
elder.brother	APP,	1SG.M	friend	house	LOC	book	go
ကျက်	ချင်	တယ်။	...				
tɕɛʔ	tɕʰiN	dè	...				
memorise	DES	NFUT	...				
'Brother, I would like to study at my friend house....'						[5/M5/UFL]	

At the beginning of example (4.36), the proper name ဝင်းမြင့် /wínmjìN/ 'Win Myint' is followed by appellative suffix ရေ /jè/ in order to address the speaker's close friend. In example (4.37), the appellative ရေ /jè/ is attached to the kinship term အစ်ကို /?əkò/ 'elder brother' to address the elder brother of the speaker. Both examples feature utterances among familiar participants.

4.2.2.7 Attention getters

Attention getters are elements that serve as a means of initiating conversation and getting the attention of the hearer. Examples of these expressions in Burmese are တစ်ခဏလောက် /tə^sh^{ei}?lau?/ 'Excuse me', or interjections such as ဟေ့ /hɛ/ 'Hey' , ကဲ /kɛ/ ~ ကယ် /kɛ/ 'Well'. The တစ်ခဏလောက် /tə^sh^{ei}? lau?/ 'Excuse me' can be used with every person, while the interjections cannot be used with

people of higher status. The interjections can also be used between people of equal status or by the person who has more power.

(4.38)

ဟဲ	နင့်	မှာ	ပိုက်ဆံ	အပို	ပါ	လား။	...
hɛ	nɪ̃N	mà	paiʔs ^h àN	ʔəpò	pà	lá	...
hey	2SG.DEP	LOC	money	extra	bring.along	Q	...

'Hey, do you have some extra money? ...'

[1/F/50/UFL]

The speaker in example (4.38) starts her request with the interjection as an attention getter. This utterance is spoken between two familiar friends. Therefore, stating the request with 'Hey' is appropriate among friends but sounds impolite when used to address people of higher status.

Additionally, greeting expressions like မင်္ဂလာပါ /mìŋgə̀lə̀bà/ 'Hello' or နေကောင်းလား /nè kaúN lá/ 'How are you?' can be used to get the hearer's attention, especially if the person is someone whom the speaker does not know. By uttering greeting words, an acquaintance is made and the request is expected to come across as shown in example (4.39).

(4.39)

မင်္ဂလာပါ	ဆရာ။
mìŋgə̀lə̀bà	s ^h ə̀jà
GREETING	teacher

ကျွန်တော်	က	ပထမ	နှစ်	ဝိဇ္ဇာ	ကျောင်းသား	ပါ။	...
tɕənò	ka	pə ^h əmə	niʔ	weiʔzà	tɕáunθá	pá	...
1SG.M	SBJ	first	year	B.A.	male.student	POL	...

'Good morning teacher. I'm a first year student. ...'

[6/M83/SEA]

Example (4.39) is the beginning part of a request utterance made by a student who wants to borrow a book from an unknown teacher. He gets the teacher's attention by greeting with မင်္ဂလာပါ /mìŋgə̀lə̀bà/ which can be used with everyone,

regardless of the time speaking. This expression means 'Wish you an auspicious time'. After that, the speaker introduces himself since the hearer does not yet know him.

4.2.2.8 Combination of the alerter elements

Elements that can function as alerters are combinable to serve as alerters in request utterances. For example,

attention getter + relationship term :

ဟေ့	သူငယ်ချင်း
hə	θəŋɛ̀dʒín
hey	friend
'Hey, friend'	

kinship term + name:

သား	မောင်အေး
θá	maùNʔé
son	Maung.Aye
'Son, Maung Aye'	

endearment terms + relationship terms + name:

အချစ်ဆုံး	သူငယ်ချင်း	စည်သူ
ʔətɕiʔsʰóuN	θəŋɛ̀dʒín	sìθu
dearest	friend	Si.Thu
'Dearest friend, Si Thu'		

(4.40)

ဟေး	တပည့်	မောင်အေး၊	မင်း	အိမ်	ပြန်	တော့	မှာ	လား။ ...
hé	təbɕ	maùNʔé,	mín	ʔèiN	pjàN	dɔ	mà	lá ...
hey	pupil	Maung.Aye,	2SG	house	return	CTR	FUT	Q ...
'Hey student Maung Aye, are you going home? ...								[10/M30/WBMI]

The alerter in example (4.40) is the combination of three elements: attention getter ဟေး /hé/ 'Hey', role တပည့် /təbɛ/ 'pupil', and proper name မောင်အေး /màunʔè/ 'Maung Aye'. This example is an utterance by the teacher to the student. The interjection and proper names are used because the participants are familiar to each other.

All elements mentioned above function as alerters in request utterances. The speaker can choose one or combine such elements together. The choice of alerter used in the request reflects the social relationship between the participants. Moreover, the use of an alerter also helps in request mitigation. However, some request utterances are made without an alerter.

4.2.3 Supportive move

Supportive move is an external modification of request. They are used to support the request head-act in two ways: by decreasing the force of the request, or by increasing the force of the request. The first is called 'mitigating supportive moves', and the second is called 'aggravating supportive moves'.

4.2.3.1 Mitigating supportive moves

The mitigating supportive moves decrease the force of a request. There are seven types of mitigating supportive moves found in this study: grounder, preparator, getting a precommitment, imposition minimizer, giving a compliment, considering of the hearer's feeling, promising of a reward, and asking for a favor.

(a) Grounder: grounders are the reasons, explanations, justifications or information relating to the requested action that the speaker provides to the hearer. The grounder stands out as the single most frequent supportive move.

(4.41)

ဆရာ	ကျွန်တော်	ပထမ	နှစ်	ဝိဇ္ဇာ	ကျောင်းသား
s ^h əjà	tɕənò	pət ^h əmə	niʔ	weiʔzà	tɕaúnθá
teacher	1SG.M	first	year	B.A.	male.student

တစ်ယောက်	ပါ။	စာတမ်း	ရေး	ဖို့	စာအုပ်=လေး	တစ်အုပ်	လို	နေ	လို့။
tə=jau?	pà	sàdán	jé	p ^h u	sà?ou?=lé	tə=?ou?	lò	nè	lò
one=CL	POL	essay	write	PURP	book=DIM	one=CL	want	STAY	SUB

အဲဒီ	စာအုပ်	ကို	ဆရာ	ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	ငှား	ပေး
?é=dì	sà?ou?	kò	s ^h əjà	təəng	kò	ŋá	pé
ANA=this	book	OBJ	teacher	1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	borrow	BEN

လို့	ရ	မ=လား	ဟင်။
lò	ja	mə=lá	hín
SUB	GET	FUT=Q	AGR

'Teacher, I'm a first-year student. I want the book for my essay writing.

Would you please lend me this book?

[6/M39/UFL]

Example (4.41) is a situation in which a student wants to borrow a book from a teacher with whom he is not familiar. After the alerter, the student gives information about himself by saying 'I'm a first-year student' and follows with the reason why he wants to borrow the book: 'I want the book for my essay writing' to support his request.

(b) **Preparator**: the speaker prepares the hearer for a request by announcing that he or she will make a request or by inquiring about the potential availability of the hearer to perform the requested act. In this kind of supportive move, the performative verb of request is mostly used.

(4.42)

အန်တီ	ကျွန်မ	တစ်ခု	တောင်းဆို	ချင်	ပါ	တယ်။
?àntì	təəma	tə=k ^h u	taúns ^h ò	tə ^h ín	pà	dè
auntie	1SG.F	one=CL	ask.for	DES	POL	NFUT

ကျွန်မ	ကို	ဒီ	လ	အတွက်	လခ	ကို
tɕəma	kò	dì	lɑ	ʔətweʔ	lɑk ^h ɑ	kò
1SG.F	OBJ	this	month	for	salary	OBJ

ကြို	ထုတ်	ပေး	လို့	ရ	မ=လား။	...
tɕə	t ^h ouʔ	pé	lɔ	ja	mə = lá	...
advance	take.out	BEN	SUB	GET	FUT=Q	...

'Auntie, **I would like to ask you for some thing.** Would you please let me take my salary in advance? ...

[11/F76/UFL]

In example (4.42), after the alerter, the speaker lets the hearer know that she is going to request something by saying ကျွန်မ တစ်ခုတောင်းဆိုချင်ပါတယ်။ /tɕəma tə = k^hu taúns^hò tɕ^hIN pà dè/ 'I want to ask you one thing.' before making the actual request. In this sentence the performative verb တောင်းဆို /taúns^hò/ 'ask for' is used together with the desirative auxiliary verb ချင် /tɕ^hIN/ in order to inform the hearer that the speaker has something to request.

(c) **Getting a precommitment:** a speaker tries to get a commitment before telling what he/she is going to ask for, and tries to check on a potential refusal of the hearer. The yes/no question is used to seek the hearer's commitment, as shown in example (4.43).

(4.43)

ကိုနီ	ကျွန်မ	အကူအညီ	တောင်း	ချင်	တယ်	ရ	မ=လား။
kòni	tɕəma	ʔəkùʔəjì	táun	tɕ ^h IN	dè	ja	mə = lá
Mr.Ni	1SG.F	help	ask.for	DES	NFUT	GET	FUT= Q

ကျွန်မ	ဒီ	နေ့	နေ	မ=ကောင်း	လို့	ဘဏ်	ကို
tɕəma	dì	nɛ	nè	mə = káun	lɔ	bàn	kò
1SG.F	this	day	stay	NEG=good	SUB	bank	LOC

သွား	ရ	မယ့်	ကိစ္စ=လေး	အစား	သွား	ပေး	လို့
θwá	ja	mɛ	keiʔsa=lé	ʔəsa	θwá	pé	lɔ
go	GET	FUT. ATTR	affair=DIM	representative	go	BEN	SUB

ရ မ=လား။ ...

ja mə=lá ...

GET FUT=Q ...

'Mr. Ni, **I would like to ask you something, can I?** Today, I'm sick. Would you

please go to the bank for me? ...'

[7/F32/UFL]

Example (4.43), the speaker asks her colleague to do work for her temporarily because she is sick. She uses the sentence ကျွန်မ အကူအညီတောင်းချင်တယ်၊ ရမလား။ /tɕəmə ʔəkùʔəjɹi táun tɕʰɪN dè ja mə=lá/ 'I would like to ask you something, can I?' in order to check the availability of making a request. Then the reason of the request is given, followed by the head-act.

(d) **Imposition minimizer:** the speaker reduces the degree of imposition because if the force of the request is low, the hearer tends to do a requested act. There are different ways to minimize the request imposition, such as giving the option, or stating that the requested action is not a big task.

(4.44)

ဟေ့	မောင်အေး	...	လမ်း	ကြို	ရင်	ဆရာ	ကို
hɛ	màunʔé	...	lán	tɕòun	jɪN	sʰəja	kò
hey	Maung.Aye	...	way	opportune	COND	teacher.DEP	OBJ

စာအုပ်	နည်းနည်း	ဝိုင်း	သယ်	ပေး	ပါ	လား	ကွာ။	...
sàʔouʔ	né~né	wáin	θè	pé	pà	lá	kwà	...
book	little~	together	carry	BEN	POL	Q	NTAG	...

'Hey, Maung Aye, ... **If you are going my way**, could you help me carry books?...'

[10/M81/SEA]

In the situation of a teacher asking his student to carry the books, in example (4.44), the teacher mitigates the imposition by means of a conditional sentence 'If you are going my way'. By this conditional clause, the force of the request is reduced because the requested action would be performed only if the hearer is going the speaker's way. If not, the hearer has the right not to perform the action.

(e) **Giving a compliment:** the speaker gives a compliment to the hearer in order to get his/her willingness to do what is asked. Paying a compliment is one of the most obvious ways to show politeness to the hearer (Holmes, 1998: 100).

(4.45)

သား	မောင်အေး၊	ဆရာ	ကို	စာအုပ်	တွေ	ကူ	သယ်
θá	màunʔé,	s ^h əjà	kò	saʔouʔ	dwè	kù	θè
son	Maung.Aye,	teacher	TOP	book	PL	help	carry
ပေး	ဝါ	ဦး။	...	သား	က	လိမ္မာ	ဝါ
pé	pà	ʔóun	...	θá	kə	lèinmə	pà
BEN	POL	ADD	...	son	SBJ	well-behaved	POL

'Maung Aye, could you please help me carry the books? ... **You are well-behaved.**'

[10/M78/SEA]

Example (4.45) shows that the sentence 'You are well-behaved' is a compliment the teacher gives to his student after he asks for assistance carrying the books. In Burmese, normally the expression လိမ္မာဝါတယ်။ /lèinmə pà tè/ 'well-behaved' is used to compliment to young people.

(f) **Considering the hearer's feeling:** in Burmese, there is an expression that conveys the consideration of other people's feelings. It is အားနာ /ʔánà/. It derives from the noun အား /ʔá/ 'power, strength' plus the verb em /nà/ 'hurt, pain'. The derived word အားနာ /ʔánà/ refers to the feeling of losing one's own power or strength. This expression is frequently used in Burmese everyday life. In requests, it is used to show that the speaker considers the hearer's feelings.

(4.46)

ဆရာ	ရေ၊	...	အား	တော့	နာ	ပါ	တယ်။
s ^h əjə	jè,	...	?á	dɔ̌	nà	pà	dè
teacher	APP,	...	power	CTR	pain	POL	NFUT

ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	ခဏ	ငှား	ပေး	ပါ။
kʷənɔ̌	kò	k ^h ənə	ŋá	pé	pà
1SG.M.DEP	TOP	moment	borrow	BEN	POL

'Teacher,... **I feel considerate of you.** Please lend it to me for a while.'

[6/M4/UFL]

Example (4.46) is a request made by a student to his unfamiliar teacher in order to borrow a book. The speaker uses the sentence အားတော့နာပါတယ်။ /?á dɔ̌ nə pà dè/ 'I feel considerate of you.' to show that the speaker does not want to bother the hearer. After that, the request head-act is stated.

(g) **Promising of a reward:** giving a reward helps to encourage the hearer to do what is requested of him/her. In addition, referring to the benefit of the hearer is included in this type of supportive move because it may indirectly encourage the hearer to perform the action. Example (4.47) illustrates the promise of a reward, and example (4.48) refers to the benefit of the hearer respectively.

(4.47)

ဆရာ	ရေ	...	အဆီရင်ခံစားလေး	ကူ	ရေး	ပေး	ပါ	ဦး။
s ^h əjə	jè	...	?ə ^h jìnk ^h ànsà = lé	kù	jé	pé	pà	?óun
teacher	APP	...	report=DIM	help	write	BEN	POL	ADD

ဆရာ	ကို	မုန့်	ဝယ်	ကျွေး	ပါ	မယ်။
s ^h əjə	kò	mʊn	wè	tɰwé	pà	mè
teacher.dep	OBJ	snack	buy	treat	POL	FUT

'Teacher,... Please help me write the report. **I will treat you to a snack.**'

[12/F39/UFL]

In example (4.47), a lecturer asks a new tutor to write a report for him. At the end of the utterance, the lecturer promises to treat him to a snack.

(4.48)

ညီလေး	ရေ၊	ငါ	ကို	အစီရင်ခံစာ=လေး	ဝိုင်း	ကူ
jìlé	jè,	ŋà	kò	ʔəsìjìnkʰànsà = lé	wáin	kù
younger.brother	APP,	1SG	TOP	report = DIM	together	help

ရေး	ပေး	ဝါ	ကွာ။	...
jé	pé	pà	kwà	...
write	BEN	POL	NTAG	...

မင်း	လည်း	အတွေ့အကြုံ	ရ	တာ	ပေါ့။
mín	lé	ʔətwɛʔəɸòun	jə	dà	pɔ
2SG	INC	experience	get	NFUT.NOM	RINF

'Brother, please help me to write the report. ... **You also will gain experience from this.**'

[12/M58/SEA]

The speaker of (4.48) refers to the benefit (experience) the hearer will receive if s/he performs the requested action. This means the speaker will not only gain the benefit of the action, but the hearer will also get something from doing it.

(h) Asking for a favor: in Burmese, when a dependent clause ကျေးဇူးပြုပြီး... /tɕézú pjú pí.../ 'Do me a favor for...' is used with the head act of a request ('Do me a favor + request head-act), the requester is asking for a favor from the hearer.

(4.49)

...ကျေးဇူး	ပြု	ပြီး	ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	ချေး	ဝါ	လား	ကွာ။
...tɕézú	pjy	pí	ŋa	kó	paiʔsàN	tɕʰí	pà	lá	kwà
...favor	do	SEQ	1SG.DEP	OBJ	money	borrow	POL	Q	NTAG

'...Could you please **do me a favor** for lending me some money?' [1/M12/WBMI]

In example (4.49), the expression 'do me a favor', which precedes the request head-act, makes the request more polite than expressing thanks after the request head-act. Some people have suggested that English influenced this construction. However, from my observations, the request modified by ကျေးဇူးပြုပြီး... /tɕézú pjú pí.../ 'do me a favor...' can be found in natural conversation, especially when the speaker is of a lower status than the hearer, and it is considered more polite than expressing thanks at the end of a request.

4.2.3.2 Aggravating supportive moves: sometimes the speaker intends to force the hearer to perform an action even it threatens the hearer's face. In this case, together with a head-act, the supportive move that increases the force of imposition is used. There are five types of aggravating supportive moves found in this study: threatening, moralizing, emphasizing the request, thanking, and disarmer.

(a) Threatening: to ensure compliance with the request, sometimes the speaker threatens his/her hearer by referring to a bad thing that might happen if s/he does not comply with the request.

(4.50)

အဖေ	ကျောင်း	တက်	ဖို့	ကား	တစ်စီး	လောက်	လိုချင်	တယ်။	...
ʔəp ^h è	tɕáun	tɕ?	p ^h ɔ̌	ká	tə=sí	lau?	lòtɕ ^h ìN	dè	...
father	school	ascend	PURP	car	one=CL	as.much.as	want	NFUT	...

မ=ဝယ်	ပေး	ရင်	အမေ	ကို	ပရိကိစ္စ	ပြန်	တိုင်ပြော	မယ်။
mə=wè	pé	jìN	ʔəmè	kò	pəɾiɕkeiʔsə	pjàN	tàìnpjɔ̌	mè
NEG=buy	BEN	COND	mother	OBJ	affair	return	report	FUT

'Father, I want to drive a car to school. ...If you don't buy a car for me, I will report that affair to mother.'

[2/M16/WBMI]

In example (4.50), the son wants his father to buy a new car for him. At the end of his utterance, he threatens his father that if his father does not do what he wishes, he will tell his mother about his father's secret affairs. By this, the force of the request is increased. Threatenings are used between familiar participants.

(b) Moralizing: most Burmese people are Buddhists. They have faith in the Buddha's principles. Referring to the Lord Buddha's teaching is normal in Burmese daily life. In requests, when the morals are raised in the utterance, the speaker intends to emphasize that what will be done is something related to the Buddha's teaching.

(4.51)

...	ဆရာ	ကို	ကူညီ	တာ	ကုသိုလ်	ရ	ပါ	တယ်။
...	s ^h əjà	kò	kùjì	tà	kyθò	ja	pà	dè
...	teacher	OBJ	help	NFUT.NOM	merit	get	POL	NFUT

'...By helping me, you can get a merit.'

[10/F27/UFL]

In example (4.51), the expression 'By helping me, you can get a merit', spoken by the teacher, may make the student feel that his action is a good deed. Even though it increases the force of the request, the hearer may be willing to do so because s/he thinks it is a good deed.

(c) Emphasizing the request: these linguistic elements usually appear after the head-act, or at the end of the request utterance to add emphasis. Mostly, the expression with the verb ကူညီ /kùjì/ 'help', which is placed at the end of the utterance, is used to emphasize the force of the request. Example (4.52) is the utterance spoken by an employee to his employer requesting his salary in advance. They are not familiar yet since the employee is new to the job.

(4.52)

သူဌေး၊	ကျွန်တော်	ဒီ	လ	လစာ	ကြိုတင်	ထုတ်
θət ^h é,	təənò	dì	lā	lāsà	təòtìN	t ^h ou?
rich.man,	1SG.M	this	month	salary	advance	take.out

ထား	ချင်	လို့	ပါ၊	သင့်ဌေး။ ...	ကူညီ	ပါ	သင့်ဌေး။
<i>t^há</i>	<i>tɕ^hìN</i>	<i>lɔ</i>	<i>pà,</i>	<i>θət^hé. ...</i>	<i>kùni</i>	<i>pà</i>	<i>θət^hé</i>
<i>keep</i>	<i>DES</i>	<i>SUB</i>	<i>POL,</i>	<i>rich.man...</i>	help	POL	rich.man

'Boss, I would like to take this month salary in advance. ... **Help me please, boss.**'

[11/M62/WBMI]

In example (4.52), the most explicit realization of the request is the first sentence (italic sentence), 'I would like to take this monthly salary in advance.' It is counted as the head-act of this request. The sentence 'Help me please, boss.' which comes after the head-act, however, is in the form of imperative; in this utterance, it functions to emphasize the request at the end of the utterance.

(d) Thanking: the speaker can express gratitude toward the hearer by saying ကျေးဇူးတင်ပါတယ်။ /tɕézu tìN pà dè/ 'Thank you' at the end of the utterance. Thanking the hearer in advance makes the request stronger and forces the hearer to do the requested action because it implies that the speaker expects that the hearer will perform the requested action.

(4.53)

ကိုနီ	ကျွန်မ	ကို	ဘဏ်	ကို	ခဏ	လောက်
kòni	tɕəma	kò	bàN	kò	k ^h əna	lau?
Mr.Ni	1SG.F	TOP	bank	LOC	moment	as.much.as

သွား	ပေး	ပါ	နော်။	ကျေးဇူး	တင်	ပါ	တယ်။
θwá	pé	pà	nè	tɕézu	tìN	pà	dè
go	BEN	POL	AGR	favor	place	POL	NFUT

'Mr. Ni, go to the bank for me please. **Thank you.**'

[7/F6/UFL]

Example (4.53) is a request between colleagues. The new worker is asked to do work for the requester. After the head-act, the requester ends her request by thanking the hearer ကျေးဇူးတင်ပါတယ်။ /tɕézu tìN pà dè/ immediately. Note that the

word ကျေးဇူး /tɕéʒú/ 'favor' can also be used to mitigate the request imposition by asking for a favor, as already stated in section 4.2.3.1 Mitigating supportive moves.

(e) **Disarmer**: the speaker tries to prevent objections the hearer may raise against the request. For example, saying that the hearer is the only one who can do a task, or that s/he is the only person the speaker can ask. Sometime a statement expressing trust or faith in the hearer can cause the hearer to be unable to refuse the request. Example (4.54) shows the supportive move, which conveys that the speaker has faith in the hearer.

(4.54)

ဟေ့	ငါ	အလုပ်	သွား	စရာ	ရှိ	လို့	ငါ့	သမီး	ကို
he	ŋà	ʔəlouʔ	θwá	səjə	ʃi	lɔ	ŋə	θəmí	kó
hey	1SG	work	go	NOM	have	SUB	1SG.DEP	daughter	OBJ
မင်း	သွား	ကြို	လိုက်	နေနဲ့။	...ငါ	စိတ်	ချ	မယ်	နေနဲ့။
mín	θwá	tɕə	laiʔ	nə	...ŋə	seiʔ	tɕʰə	mè	nə
2SG	go	pick.up	FOLLOW	AGR	...1SG	heart	put.down	FUT	AGR

'Hey, I have to go to work. Please go and pick up my daughter. ... I will trust you.'

[9/F97/UFL]

At the end of the request utterance in (4.54), the speaker shows that she trusts the hearer that s/he can do the requested act successfully. The verb စိတ်ချ /seiʔtɕʰə/ is derived from the noun စိတ် /seiʔ/ 'heart' plus the verb ချ /tɕʰə/ 'put down'. This compound verb expresses the speaker's feeling.

All supportive moves mentioned above can precede or follow the head-act. There can be one or more supportive moves in a request utterance.

4.2.4 Request indicator

Many request utterances contain several supportive moves. Most of them consist of the element indicating that the head-act of the request is going to be said.

Such an element is a request indicator. In requests, request indicators usually precede the head act of a request.

The request indicators found in this study are the combination of three main elements: anaphora အ~အဲ /ʔé~ʔé/, demonstrative ဒါ/dà/ 'that', and subordinator ကြောင့် /tɕaun/ 'because'. The most common request indicators in requests are:

အဲဒါ~အဲဒါ	/ʔé-dà~ ʔé-dà/	'For that'
ဒါကြောင့်~ဒါကြောင့်	/dà-tɕaun~dà-tɕaun/	'Therefore'
အဲဒါကြောင့်	/ʔé-dà-tɕaun/	'For that reason'

Anaphora and demonstrative refer to the reasons or things related to the request that the speaker has mentioned before the head-act. The subordinator that means 'because' is used to indicate the reason why the head-act will be said.

(4.55)

ဆရာ	ကျွန်တော်	အမေ	နေ	မကောင်း	လို့	ဆေးခန်း	ပြ
s ^h əjə	tɕənò	ʔəmè	nè	mə=káun	lɔ	s ^h ék ^h án	pja
teacher	1SG.M	mother	stay	NEG=good	SUB	clinic	show

ချင်	တယ်။	အဲ-ဒါ	ကျွန်တော့်	လခ	ကြို	ထုတ်	ပါရစေ။
tɕ ^h ín	dè	ʔé-dà	tɕəng	lɔk ^h ɔ	tɕò	t ^h ou?	bàjasè
DES	NFUT	ANA-that	1SG.M.DEP	salary	advance	take.out	LET.ME

'Boss, because my mother is not well, I want to take her to the clinic. **For that reason** please let me take my salary in advance.'

[11/M24/WBMI]

After giving the reason, the speaker in (4.55) uses a request indicator အဲဒါ /ʔé=dà / 'For that ' to let the hearer know that the head-act is going to be said. Then the head-act is stated.

However, in cases where the supportive is part of the sentence of the head-act, there can be a supportive move between a request indicator and a head-act.

(4.56)

ကိုနီ	ရေ	ငါ	တော့	နေ	မ=ကောင်း	လို့
kòni	jè	ŋà	dɔ̌	nè	mə = káun	lɔ̌
Mr.Ni	APP	1SG	CTR	stay	NEG=good	SUB

လဲ	နေ	ပြီ	ကွာ။
lé	nè	pì	kwà
lie.down	STAY	NSIT	NTAG

အဲ-ဒါ	ငါ့	အစား	မင်း	အား	ရင်
ʔé-dà	ŋa	ʔəsá	mín	ʔá	jìn
ANA-that	1SG.DEP	representative	2SG	free	COND

Request indicator	Head-act:-	SM: imposition minimizer
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ဘဏ်	ကို	သွား	ပေး	လို့	ရ	မ=လား။	...
bàN	kò	θwá	pé	lɔ̌	ja	mə = lá	...
bank	LOC	go	BEN	SUB	GET	FUT=Q	...

-Head-act: yes/no question

'Mr. Ni, I have to rest because I'm sick. **For that reason**, if you have time, could you please go to the bank for me?' [7/M75/SEA]

Example (4.56) shows a request to a new officer to do work for the speaker. They are unfamiliar with each other. Between the request indicator and the head-act of the request, there is a supportive move, which is the imposition minimizer. It is in the conditional sentence, which is a dependent clause ended by a conditional marker ရင် /jìn/ 'if'. This conditional clause gives options to the hearer: if the hearer is X, then the requested act would be done. But if the hearer is not X, then the requested act would not be done.

All of the request components presented in this section are components that Burmese people use in making requests to someone to do something. The three

components are the same as those proposed by Blum-Kulka et al (1987), while the last one, a request indicator, emerged in this study. It plays an important role in Burmese request. When there are several supportive moves in one utterance, the request indicator is used to signal the head-act of the request. However, all request components function differently and can be combined in different patterns to form a request.

4.3 Request patterns

Combining request components in different ways forms different patterns of the request. In this study, there are two groups of patterns for making a request: single-head-act, and multiple-head-acts.

4.3.1 Single-head-act

A single-head-act pattern is the request utterance that contains only one head-act. In this pattern, the head-act can appear alone or it is accompanied by other components. If there is an alerter, the alerter always appears at the beginning of the utterance. The supportive move can be placed before or after the head-act of the request. As for the request indicator, it appears before the head-act in order to signal the head-act of the request. From the data, most request utterances are of the single head-act pattern (~94.72%).

4.3.1.1 Head-act-alone

Most head-act-alone patterns are used in a situation where the degree of request imposition is low or in the situations where the speaker is of equal or higher status to the hearer. In such cases, using merely a head-act is possible to make the request successful. Of all request utterances, only 1.56% of head-act-alone patterns were found in this study.

(4.57)

ဆရာ-မ	ကို	ဘော့ပင်	ခဏ	ငှား	ဝါ။
s ^h əjà-mə	kó	bópìn	k ^h əŋə	ŋá	pà
teacher-F	TOP	pen	moment	borrow	POL

'Please lend me a pen for a moment.'

[3/F57/UFL]

A teacher wants to borrow a pen from a student whom she does not know by using a head-act-alone. Even though there is social distance between the participants, the head-act-alone does not increase the force of imposition. The use of a politeness marker at the end of the imperative makes the request more polite and appropriate in this context. However, in the same situation, most head-act utterances are made together with at least an alerter or a supportive move. Therefore, it can be said that Burmese people do not prefer to use the head-act-alone pattern.

4.3.1.2 Head-act and supportive move

In this pattern, a head-act is accompanied by one or more supportive moves. Supportive moves can precede or follow the head-act. Example (4.58) shows a request pattern that consists of supportive move, followed by a head-act and ending with another supportive move.

(4.58)

မင်း	အလုပ်	ပြီး	ရင်
mín	?əlou?	pí	jìN
2SG	work	finish	COND

SM: imposition minimizer

ငါ	သမီး	ကို	သွား	ကြို	ပေး	ဝါ	ကွာ။
ŋa	θəmí	kò	θwá	tɕò	pé	pà	kwà
1SG.DEP	daughter	OBJ	go	pick.up	BEN	POL	NTAG

Head-act: imperative

ငါ	မှန်ဖို့	ပေး	မယ်။
ŋà	mɔ̃np ^h ó	pé	mè
1SG	pocket. money	give	FUT

SM: Promising of a reward

'If you finish your work, **please go to pick up my daughter**. I will give you some pocket money.'

[9/M56/WBMI]

Example (4.58) is a request made by a hostel's warden who cannot go to pick up his daughter himself; therefore, he asks an officer to do it for him. They are familiar with each other. The speaker starts the request with the conditional sentence 'If you finish your work'. By this sentence, the hearer has two choices: if the work is finished then he would do the requested act, and if the work is not finished then he would not do the requested act. These reduce the imposition of the request; this is called an imposition minimizer. After that, the head-act of the request is stated using an imperative with a politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ and a negative tag ကွာ /kwà/, which is only used with lower rank or familiar people. The request ends with another supportive move, which promises a reward 'I will give you some pocket money'. A reward makes the hearer willing to do the action.

4.3.1.3 Head-act and alerter

This pattern consists of an alerter followed by a head-act without any supportive moves. Most of them are found in situations where the imposition is low. The speaker is of higher status (i.e. more powerful).

(4.59)

သမီး	ရေ၊	ဘော့ပင်	ခဏ	လောက်
θəmí	jè,	bópin	k ^h əŋə	lau?
daughter	APP,	pen	moment	as.much.as

Alerter: kinship-APP	Head-act: elliptical imperative
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'Daughter, (lend me) pen for a moment'

[3/F37/ UFL]

Example (4.59) is an utterance made by a teacher who wants to borrow a pen from her student. The speaker starts her request with an alerter, which is a combination of kinship term plus an appellative suffix, followed by the head-act, which is an elliptical imperative sentence. The elliptical imperative can be used

appropriately because the imposition of the request is low and the speaker is of higher status, even if they are unfamiliar to each other.

4.3.1.4 Head-act, supportive move and alerter

A single-head-act pattern is used in every situation, especially in a pattern consisting of a head-act accompanied by an alerter and supportive move. This pattern is the most frequently used in everyday situations.

(4.60)

ကိုနီ	ကျွန်မ	ကို	ဘဏ်	ကို	ခဏ	လောက်
kòni	ʔəma	kò	bàN	kò	kʰəna	lau?
Mr.Ni	1SG.F	TOP	bank	LOC	moment	as.much.as

Alerter: name	Head-act: imperative-
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သွား	ပေး	ပါ	နော်။	ကျေးဇူး	တင်	ပါ	တယ်။
θwá	pé	pà	nə	ʔézú	tìn	pà	dè
go	BEN	POL	AGR	favor	place	POL	NFUT
-Head-act: imperative				SM: thanking			

'Mr. Ni, go to the bank for me please, OK? Thank you.'

[7/F6/UFL]

Example (4.60) represents a situation in which the speaker asks her unfamiliar colleague to do something for her because she is sick. The request is begun with a name, which serves as an alerter, followed by a head-act in an imperative form. Finally, it ends with thanks as a mitigating supportive move. Even though there is social distance between the participants, the imperative can be used since it is modified by a politeness marker and the agreement particle နော် /nə/. The agreement particle နော် /nə/ is used to seek agreement with the hearer. In requests, it is mostly used at the end of an imperative to gain agreement for the requested act from the hearer.

4.3.1.5 Head-act, supportive move, and request indicator

Request utterances consist of a head-act, supportive move and request indicator. A request indicator mostly precedes the head-act; meanwhile the supportive move can be found either before or after the head-act.

(4.61)

ကိုနီ	ကို	အကူအညီ	တစ်ခု	တောင်း	ချင်	လို့
kòni	kò	ʔəkùʔəjì	tə = k ^h y	táun	tɕ ^h ìN	lɔ
Mr.Ni	OBJ	help	one= CL	ask.for	DES	SUB

SM: preparator

ကျွန်မ	ဒီ	နေ့	နေ	မကောင်း	လို့	ဘဏ်	ကို	မသွား	နိုင်	ဘူး။
tɕəma	dì	nɛ	nè	mə = káun	lɔ	bàn	kò	mə = θwá	nàìN	bú
1SG.F	this	day	stay	NEG=good	SUB	bank	LOC	NEG=go	WIN	NEG

SM: grounder

ဒါကြောင့်	ကျွန်မ	အစား	ကိုနီ	သွား	ပေး	ပါ	လား။
dàtɕəuN	tɕəma	ʔəsá	kòni	θwá	pé	pà	lá
therefore	1SG.F	representative	Mr.Ni	go	BEN	POL	Q

Request indicator

Head-act: yes-no question

'(Because) I want to ask you for help. Today, I cannot go to the bank because I'm sick.

For this reason, **could you please go for me?**

[7/F38/UFL]

The request in example (4.61) starts with a supportive move by announcing that the speaker has something to request. This is followed by the reason she has to make the request. Then the request indicator is used to signal the head-act, which immediately follows it. After preparing the hearer that the speaker wants to ask for a favor, the reason why the request has to be done is given. Then the speaker indicates that the head-act is going to be said by concluding with a request indicator ဒါကြောင့် /dàtɕəuN/ 'therefore'.

4.3.1.6 Head-act, supportive move, alerter, and request indicator

This pattern consists of all components of a request. An alerter is the first constituent of the request; the supportive move can precede or follow the head-act. Some utterances consist of more than one supportive move. Request indicators can be immediately followed by a head-act or supportive move. This pattern is used in all situations; however, only one instance was found in which the participants assumed social distance, equal status, and low imposition, such as borrowing a pen from a new classmate.

(4.62)

အကို	ရေ	ညီမ	သူငယ်ချင်း	အိမ်	မှာ
ʔəkò	jè	ɲìmə	θəŋɛ̀d͡ʒín	ʔèin	mà
elder.brother	APP	younger.sister	friend	house	LOC
Alerter:kinship		SM: grounder			

စာ	အတူတူ	သွား	ကျက်	မ=လို့
sà	ʔətùtù	θwá	tɛɛʔ	mə = lɔ
book	together	go	memorize	FUT=SUB

SM:grounder	
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အဲ-ဒါ	လိုက်	ပို့	ပေး	ပါ	လား။
ʔé-dà	laiʔ	pɔ̌	pé	pà	lá
ANA-that	follow	send	BEN	POL	Q

Request indicator	Head-act: yes/no question
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'Elder brother, I will go to study at my friend's house. For that, **could you please give me a ride?**' [5/F15/UFL]

In example (4.62), the request begins with a kinship term plus an appellative particle, which serves as an alerter, followed by the grounder, request indicator, and head-act. It is a request made by a younger sister to her elder brother to ask for a ride.

4.3.2 Multiple-head-acts

Multiple-head-acts pattern refers to request utterances that consist of two or more head-acts. From all examples in my study, only 5% of the requests were multiple head-acts. The requests with multiple-head-acts pattern can be categorized into two main patterns: two-head-act pattern and three-head-act pattern.

4.3.2.1 Two-head-acts

This pattern consists of two head-acts accompanied by other components, such as alerters, supportive moves or request indicators.

(a) Two head-acts and alerter: in my study, only two examples consisted of two head-acts accompanied by an alerter. Both were used in situations in which there was no social distance between the participants, and the imposition of the request was high. In one used by a male respondent, the speaker had more power than the speaker, while another was used by a female respondent, and the speaker had less power than the hearer.

(4.63)

ဆရာ	ကျွန်တော်	ကို	အစီရင်ခံစာ	ရေး	ပေး	ပါ	လား။
s ^h əjə	tɕənò	kò	?əsìjìnk ^h ànsà	jé	pé	pà	lá
teacher	1SG.M	TOP	report	write	BEN	POL	Q
Alerter: role		Head-act: yes/no question					

ကျွန်တော်	ကို	ကူ	ပြီး	ရေး	ပေး	ပါ။
tɕənò	kò	kù	pí	jé	pé	pà
1SG.M	TOP	help	SEQ	write	BEN	POL
Head-act: imperative						

'Teacher, could you please write the report for me? Please help me to write the report.'

[12/M46/UFL]

Example (4.63) is a request made to a new colleague to ask for help with the speaker's work. The two participants are not familiar with each other. The speaker starts his request with an alerter, followed by a one head-act then another head-act. There is no supportive move used in this utterance. The first head-act is a yes/no question about the hearer's willingness to do the act, while the second head-act is an imperative with benefactive particle and ends with a politeness marker. Since the imposition of the request is high, the use of two head-acts may increase the force of the request, but the question form and politeness marker make the request polite in this case.

(b) Two-head-acts and supportive move: this pattern is mostly found in situations in which there is no social distance between the participants but in which the speaker is of a higher status and the imposition of the request is high.

(4.64)

သမီး	ကို	သေချာ	သွား	ကြို	လိုက်	နော်။
θəmí	kò	θètʰà	θwá	tɕò	lai?	nò
daughter	OBJ	sure	go	pick.up	FOLLOW	AGR

Head-act: imperative

cí	အရေးကြီး	ကိစ္စ	ရှိ	လို့	သွား	မ=ကြို	နိုင်	ဘူး။
ŋà	?əjédʒí	keiʔsə	ʃi	lɔ	θwá	mə = tɕò	nàin	bú
1SG	important	affair	have	SUB	go	NEG=pick.up	WIN	NEG

SM: grounder

သေသေချာချာ	ကြို	နဲ့	နော်။
θè~tʰà~	tɕò	kʰɛ	nò
surely	pick.up	DSPL	AGR

Head-act: imperative

'Go to take my daughter back. I cannot go because I have an important thing to do.
Go to take her surely.'

[9/F54/UFL]

The situation in example (4.64) presents a hostel warden asking the hostel's officer, with whom she is familiar, to pick up her daughter from a friend's house. Because this act is not really his duty, asking him to do such thing is considered high imposition. Using two head-acts may increase the force of request. However, the form of head-act that is the imperative attached by agreement particle နေ် /nè/ in both head-acts can help to reduce the degree of imposition.

(c) **Two-head-acts, supportive move and alerter:** this pattern of request is also found in all situations but mostly in situations with no social distance, a high degree of imposition, and with the speaker of lower status than the hearer (asking a father to buy a new car).

(4.65)

ဖေဖေ	သမီး	ကို	ကား	တစ်စီး	လောက်	ဝယ်
p ^h è~	θəmí	kò	ká	tə=sí	lau?	wè
father	daughter	OBJ	car	one=CL	as.much.as	buy

Alerter: Kinship	Head-act: yes-no question-
------------------	----------------------------

ပေး	နိုင်	မလား။	ဖေဖေ	မှာ	ပိုက်ဆံ	ရှိ	နေ	တယ်
pé	nàin	mə=lá.	p ^h èp ^h é	mà	pai?s ^h àn	ʃi	nè	dè
BEN	WIN	FUT=Q	father.DEP	LOC	money	have	STAY	NFUT

Head-act: yes-no question	SM: imposition minimizer
---------------------------	--------------------------

ဆို	ရင်	ဝယ်	ပေး	ပါ	လား။	နေ်။
s ^h ò	jìn	wè	pé	pà	lá,	nè
SAY	COND	buy	BEN	POL	Q,	AGR

-imposition minimizer	Head-act: yes-no question
-----------------------	---------------------------

ဖေဖေ	က	အရမ်း	ချစ်	ဖို့	ကောင်း	တာ	ပဲ။
p ^h è~	ka	?əján	tɕ ^h i?	p ^h o	káun	dà	bé
father	SBJ	very	love	PURP	good	NFUT.NOM	REST

SM: giving a compliment

'Father, **could you please buy a car for me?** In case you have money, could you please buy it for me? **You are really very lovely.**' [2/F17/UFL]

Since the speaker is the hearer's daughter, they are familiar with each other. The daughter asks her father to buy a new car, which is a high imposition (due to the high cost of a new car), by means of two head-acts accompanied by alerter at the beginning of the utterance and two supportive moves, which are imposition minimizer and giving a compliment. Both the imposition minimizer and giving a compliment may help to encourage the hearer to do the requested act even though it is a high imposition. In addition, both of the two head-acts are in yes/no question form; one is asking about the hearer's ability to do the act, and the other one is asking for the hearer's willingness to do the act. Requesting by questioning is considered polite because it gives options to the hearer.

(d) **Two-head-acts, supportive move, and request indicator:** this pattern is scattered in various situations in few numbers.

(4.66)

ကျွန်တော်	ဒီ	ဆိုင်	မှာ	စ	လုပ်	တာ	ခု	မှ	အ=စ	ဆိုတော့
tɕənò	dì	s ^h àin	mà	sə	lou?	dà	khɯ	mə	?ə = sə	s ^h ódɔ
1SG.M	this	shop	LOC	start	do	NFUT.NOM	now	CEXP	DVL=start	SUB

SM: grounder-

ငွေ	သုံး	ဖို့	သိပ်	မ=ကောင်း	ဘူး။	အဲ-ဒါ	ကျွန်တော်	ရ	မယ့်
ŋwè	θóuN	p ^h ɔ̌	θeiʔ	mə=káuN	bú	ʔè-dà	tɕənɔ̌	ja	mɛ
money	use	PURP	very	NEG=good	NEG	ANA-that	1SG.M	get	FUT.ATTR

-SM: grounder	Request indicator	Head-act:
---------------	-------------------	------------------

လခ	ထဲ	က	တစ်=ပတ်စာ	လောက်	ကြို	ထုတ်	ချင်	လို့။
lak ^h ga	t ^h é	ka	tə=paʔsà	lauʔ	tɕò	t ^h ouʔ	tɕ ^h IN	lɔ
salary	in	LOC	one=weekly.salary	as.much.as	advance	take.out	DES	SUB

-Head-act: declarative (want statement)

အဲ-ဒါ	ဖြစ်	နိုင်	ရင်	ကူညီ	ပေး	ပါ	လား။
ʔé-dà	p ^h ji?	nàin	jìN	kùjì	pé	pà	lá
ANA-that	be	WIN	COND	help	BEN	POL	Q

Request indicator	Head-act: imperative
-------------------	----------------------

'I just start working this shop. So, my expense does not good. For that, **I would like to take my weekly salary in advance.** For that, **if it is possible, could you please help me?**'

[11/M53/SEA]

Example (4.66) is a request by an employee to his/her employer for an advance salary. The speaker begins the request with a supportive move, which is the reason of the request. Then before the first head-act, the speaker uses the request indicator to signal that the head-act is going to be said. Again, a request indicator is used before the second head-act. The first head-act is a statement of the speaker's desire for the requested action, while the second head-act is a question about the hearer's willingness to do the act. Since the imposition of the request in this case is high, the speaker is of lower rank than the hearer, and they are not familiar to one another, the use of two request head-acts may increase the force of the request. However, the speaker uses a politeness marker to soften the force of the request and to make the request more polite.

(e) Two-head-acts, supportive move, alerter and request indicator:

the request pattern that consists of two head-acts accompanied by all other request components are scarcely found in seven of the 12 situations provided in the questionnaire. The use of this pattern does not involve any social factors.

(4.67)

ဆရာ	ကျွန်တော်	ကို	ကူညီ	ပါ	အုံး။	ပါမောက္ခ	က
s ^h əjà	ʔəuɴ	kò	kùjì	pà	ʔóuɴ	pàmauʔk ^h ə	kə
teacher	1SG.M	OBJ	help	POL	ADD	professor	SBJ
Alerter:Role		Head-act: imperative				SM:grunder-	

ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	အစီရင်ခံစာ	ရေး	ခိုင်း	တာ	မ=ပြီး	သေး	လို့။
təəŋ	kò	ʔəsìjìnkʰànsà	jé	kʰáin	dà	mə=pí	θé	lɔ
1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	report	write	order	NFUT.NOM	NEG=finish	PERS	SUB
-SM: grounder								

အဲဒါ	ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	ကူညီ	ပါ	ဦး။
ʔɛ-dà	təəŋ	kò	kùjì	pà	ʔóun
ANA-that	1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	help	POL	ADD

Request indicator	Head-act: imperative
-------------------	----------------------

'Teacher, **please help me**. I do not finish the report that the professor has ordered me to do. For that, **please help me**.'

[12/M18/WBMI]

This request utterance begins with an alerter to get the attention from the hearer, followed by a head-act, and then a supportive move, which expresses the reason the request is given. After that, a request indicator is used, immediately followed by a second head-act. Both head-acts are in the form of an imperative, which is modified by a politeness marker.

4.3.2.2 Three-head-acts

This pattern consists of all four components: three head-acts, supportive move, alerter and request indicator. Only two instances of three-head-acts pattern were discovered.

(4.68)

စည်သူ	မနေ့က	ငါ	အတန်း	ပျက်	ထား	တာ
sìthù	mənekə	ŋà	ʔətán	pjɛʔ	tʰá	dà
Si.Thu	yesterday	1SG	class	destroyed	keep	NFUT.NOM
Alerter: name	SM: grounder					

စာအုပ်=လေး	ငှား	ပေး	ပါ	ဦး။
sàʔouʔ=lé	ŋá	pé	pà	ʔóun
book=DIM	borrow	BEN	POL	ADD

Head-act: imperative

သုငယ်ချင်း	ရဲ့	မှတ်စုစာအုပ်=လေး	ခဏ	လောက်	ငှား	ပေး	ပါ	နေနီ။
မာ့ၼေ့ၼ်	jɛ	maʔsɯsàʔouʔ = lé	kʰəŋa	lauʔ	ŋá	pé	pà	nò
friend		POSS notebook=DIM	moment	as.much.as	borrow	BEN	POL	AGR
Head-act: imperative								

နင်	က	သေသေချာချာ=လေး	note=လေး	တွေ	ထုတ်	ရေး	တတ်	တာ
nìn	ka	θè~tɕʰà~ = lé	nouʔ = lé	dwè	tʰouʔ	jé	taʔ	dà
2SG	SBJ	carefully=DIM	note=DIM	PL	take.out	write	can	NFUT.NOM
SM: giving a compliment-								

ငါ	သဘောကျ	တယ်။	အဲဒါကြောင့်	ငှား	ပေး	ပါ	နေနီ။
ŋà	θəbɔʔkə	dè	ʔé-dàtɕəuN	ŋá	pé	pà	nò
1SG	appreciate	NFUT	ANA-there.for	borrow	BEN	POL	AGR
-SM: giving a compliment		Request indicator		Head-act: imperative			

'Si Thu, yesterday, I missed the class. **Lend me some books, please. Lend me your notebook for a while, please.** I appreciate your note taking. Therefore, **lend them to me please.**'

[4/F35/UFL]

This request starts with an alerter followed by a grounder and the first head-act. Then, the second head-act is introduced; after that, the speaker gives a compliment to the hearer and uses the request indicator to signal that the head-act is going to be said. Each of the three head-acts are in imperative form with politeness markers. One of them ends with ခွီး /ʔóuN/, which functions to indicate the additional action. Two of them end with an agreement particle နေနီ /nò/, which functions to get the hearer's agreement to do the act. Since the use of three-head-acts pattern may increase the force of the request, this pattern should be used in situations in which the degree of imposition is high or the participants are not familiar with each other. However, from the data, this pattern is found in situations where the speaker is familiar with the hearer and they are of equal status, and when the imposition is low. This may be the personal characteristic of this particular respondent because most of her requests fall into the multiple-head-acts patterns.

This chapter has demonstrated the possible syntactic structures that can be used to make a request. Different structures can function as requests, either directly or indirectly. Moreover, the elements that occur in Burmese request utterances, and the ways these elements are combined in the utterances, was also presented. The next chapter presents the results concerning how Burmese people make their requests, including the modifications used in the requests.

CHAPTER V

STRATEGIES AND MODIFICATIONS IN BURMESE REQUEST

The previous chapter provided information about request components and how they are combined in Burmese request utterances, including the linguistic forms that can be used to make requests. In this chapter, request strategies and request modifications will be presented.

5.1 Request strategies in Burmese

A request can be performed with various constructions. Different constructions of head-acts represent different strategies used in requests. Based on CCSARP's model, Burmese request strategies can be grouped according to a directness scale into three main strategies: direct, conventional indirect, and nonconventional indirect. The frequency of request strategies was made in order to determine whether the universal claims of Blum-Kulka et al – that there are three types of request strategies and that the conventional indirect strategy is the preference – are true or not in Burmese. The percentage of request strategy usages found in this study was counted from a total number of 1,545 request head-acts (because a head-act is the core unit of a request utterance). Each strategy, including sub-strategies, will be presented in turn.

5.1.1 Direct request

Direct strategy refers to utterances in which the illocutionary act is explicitly stated. There are four sub-strategies, ordered by a scale of directness from the most direct to the most indirect: 1) mood derivable, 2) performative, 3) obligatory, and 4) want statement.

5.1.1.1 Mood derivable

Mood derivable strategies are "utterances in which the grammatical mood of the verb signals illocutionary force" (Blum-Kulka et al (1989: 18). Among all request strategies, mood derivable is regarded as the most direct strategy. From my data of direct request strategies, Burmese people generally prefer mood derivable. It was used in 44.72% of the total number of request head-acts. The verbal phrase without a verbal final particle, but one that is attached to a politeness marker ဝါ /pà/, is the most common form of mood derivable strategy in Burmese. Mood derivable may be considered impolite in other languages, but when they are modified by a politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ or some other elements (such as polite tags, agreement particles, understater, etc.), they are not impolite in Burmese culture. These elements function to mitigate the imposition of the request or make the request more polite (see details about these elements in section 5.2 Request modifications in Burmese).

(5.1)

... ကျွန်တော်	ကို	အဲဒီ	စာအုပ်	ခဏ	လောက်
... tɕənɔ̀	kò	ʔé-dì	sàʔouʔ	kʰəna	lauʔ
...1SG.M	OBJ	ANA-this	book	moment	as.much.as

ငှား	ဝါ	ခင်ဗျာ။
ဂံာ်	pà	kʰəmjà
borrow	POL	PTAG

‘Lend me this book for a moment please.’

[6/M14/WBMI]

In example (5.1), the request head-act is in the imperative form, which is the mood derivable strategy in making the request. Even in this situation, where the participants are not on familiar terms, the speaker has less power than the hearer, and the imposition is low, the speaker chooses to use the mood derivable strategy but modifies it by a politeness marker ဝါ /pà/, polite tag ခင်ဗျာ /kʰəmjà/ and temporal understater ခဏ /kʰəna/ ‘moment’. The syntactic structure of the verb phrase + ဝါ /pà/ + ခင်ဗျာ /kʰəmjà/ is considered appropriate in Burmese culture to make a polite request.

5.1.1.2 Performative

The performative strategy refers to "utterances in which the illocutionary force is explicitly named" (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 18). In this study, two verbs function as the performative verbs of request: (a) တောင်း~တောင်းဆို /táun~táun^hò/ 'to ask for', and (b) ခိုင်း /k^háin/ 'to order'. Their literal meanings illustrate the speech act of request. The use of request performative in Burmese is limited. They can only be used in the declarative structure. They are never used in the imperative form because when the performative is used in the imperative, the speaker is requesting the hearer to request back to the original speaker as shown in (5.2b).

(5.2a)			(5.2b)		
ဘောပင်	ငှား	ဝါ။	ဘောပင်	တောင်း	ဝါ။
bópìn	ŋá	pà	bópìn	táun	pà
pen	borrow	POL	pen	PER:request	POL
'Lend me a pen, please.'			'Request me a pen, please.'		
IMPERATIVE			IMPERATIVE: PERFORMATIVE		

There are only five examples of performative strategy found in the data of this study (0.32 % of 1,545 request head-acts). Example (5.3) shows the use of a performative verb in a declarative sentence.

(5.3)						
...ငါ	က	အရေးကြီး	အလုပ်ကိစ္စ	တစ်ခု	ပေါ်	လာ တော့
...ŋà	ka	ʔəjédʒí	ʔəlouʔkeiʔsa	tə=k ^h y	pò	là dɔ̃
...1SG SBJ		important	work	one=CL	occur	come CTR
မင်း	ကို	ငါ	ခိုင်း	ရ	တာ	ဝါ။
mín	kò	ŋà	k ^h áin	ja	dà	pà
2SG	OBJ	1SG	PER: order	GET	NFUT.NOM	POL
'...There is an important thing I have to do. I have to ask you...'						[9/M5/UFL]

Example (5.3) reflects the use of the performative verb ခိုင်း /k^háin/ 'order' in a situation where the participants are familiar with each other, but where the speaker is of higher rank. After giving some reasons why he cannot do the act, the speaker asks

the inferior to do the act for him. The politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ is used to mitigate the imposition of the request since the action is not regarded as the requestee's responsibility.

Sometimes, the performative verb of request in Burmese is modified by a modality expressing subject desire ချင် /tɕʰɪN/ 'want' to convey the speaker's desire for the action. The occurrence of the performative verb lets the hearer know the speaker's intention explicitly, while the use of the modal verb ချင် /tɕʰɪN/ 'want' helps to decrease the force of the request. There are only two examples of this usage found in this study.

(5.4)

...	ဆိုင်ရှင်	ခင်ဗျာ၊	ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	ဒီ	လ	အတွက်
...	sʰàɪNʃɪN	kʰəmjà,	tɕənɔ̌	kò	dì	lɑ	ʔətʰwɛʔ
...	shop.owner	PTAG,	1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	ANA	month	for

လစာ	ကြို	ထုတ်	ပေး	ဖို့
lɑsà	tɕó	tʰouʔ	pé	pʰɔ̌
salary	advance	take.out	BEN	PURP

တောင်းဆို	ချင်	ဝါ	တယ်	ခင်ဗျာ။
táunshò	tɕʰɪN	pà	dè	kʰəmjà
PER:ask.for	DES	POL	NFUT	PTAG

‘... Boss, (I) would like to ask for my salary in advance...’

[11/M6/UFL]

In example (5.4), after giving the background of the request, the speaker uses the combination of the performative verb တောင်းဆို /táunshò/ ‘ask for’ and the modal verb ချင် /tɕʰɪN/ ‘desire, want’ to express that the requested action is his own desire and not the hearer's. He is the one who asks for help and threatens his own face. He also makes the request more polite by adding the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ and polite tag ခင်ဗျာ /kʰəmjà/.

5.1.1.3 Obligatory

Obligatory is the strategy the speaker uses when s/he wants to avoid refusal by the hearer. In the Burmese language, particles play the most important role in this strategy. The speaker chooses the appropriate particle for his/her utterances depending on the literal meaning. There are six examples of the obligatory strategy (0.39%), found in this study (five by male and one by female respondents).

(5.5)

...မင်း	ဝဲ	သွား	ကြို	နဲ့	ပေးတော့။
...mín	bé	θwá	tə̀	k ^h ɛ̃	pèdɔ̃
...2SG	FOC	go	pick.up	DSPL	IMP
'... Only you , go to pick her up.'					

[9/M80/SEA]

From example (5.5), the focus particle ဝဲ /bé/ 'only' is attached to the pronoun မင်း /mín/ 'you' to indicate that the hearer is the only person requested to do the desired action. And this utterance ends with the particle ပေးတော့ /pèdɔ̃/ conveying a sense of imperative that is often brusque (Okell & Allot 2001: 118). In this situation, the speaker has more power than the hearer and they are on familiar terms, so the use of ပေးတော့ /pèdɔ̃/ is not considered impolite.

5.1.1.4 Want statement

The speaker can make a request using "utterances which state the speaker's desire that the hearer carries out the act" (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 18). By this strategy the speaker uses the modal verb ချင် /tɕʰin/ 'desire, want' after the main verb to express his/her desire for the requested action to be undertaken by the hearer.

(5.6)

ဆရာ	ကျွန်မ	သုံး	စရာ	ပိုက်ဆံ	မရှိ	လို့
s ^h əjà	tɕəmə	θóuN	s ^h əjà	paiʔs ^h àN	mə = ʃi	lɔ̃
teacher	1SG.F	use	NOM	money	NEG=have	SUB

လခ	ကြို	ထုတ်	ချင်	လို့	ဝါ	ရှင်။
lak ^h ə	tɕò	t ^h ou?	tɕ ^h IN	lɔ	pà	ʃIN
salary	advance	take.out	DES	SUB	POL	PTAG

‘Boss, **I want to take my salary in advance** because I don’t have money to use.’

[11/F28/UFL]

In example (5.6), the speaker asks his boss for his salary in advance. They are not on familiar terms because the speaker has been working for only one week and he is in a position of lower authority than the hearer. The imposition of this situation is considered as high value because the speaker has been working for only a short time, and the interlocutors are unfamiliar. The speaker chooses to state his desire by using the modal verb ချင် /tɕ^hIN/ ‘desire, want’ rather than verb phrase with ဝါ /pà/, which is commonly used in requests because the want statement strategy is less direct. Want statement strategy was used in 5.95% of the 1,545 request head-acts. It is the third most preferred strategy used by Burmese people.

5.1.2 Conventional indirect request

Conventional indirect strategy refers to utterances in which the illocutionary act is indirectly stated. There are three sub-strategies: 1) suggestory formulae, 2) hedging, and 3) query preparatory sub-strategies. Query preparatory is used most frequently, followed by hedging and suggestory formulae, respectively.

5.1.2.1 Suggestory formulae

The speaker may request someone to do something indirectly by suggestion. In Burmese, the use of an if-clause together with a short sentence like မကောင်းဘူးလား။ /mə=káUN bú lá/ ‘Isn’t it good?’ is considered as a suggestion to the hearer. From the data, there were only six examples of this strategy (0.39%), all by male respondents.

(5.7)

... ကား=လေး	တစ်=စီး	လောက်	ဝယ်	ထား	ရင်
... ká=lé	tə=sí	lau?	wè	t ^h á	jìN
...car=DIM	one=CL	as.much.as	buy	keep	COND

မ=ကောင်း	ဘူး	လား။
mə=káUN	bú	lá
NEG=good	NEG	Q

‘...wouldn't it be good if you bought a car?’

[2/M75/SEA]

In example (5.7), the son asks his father to buy a new car for him. Because of his lower rank, he uses the suggestion formula in order to make the request. The attachment of the negative sentence မကောင်းဘူးလား။ /mə=káUN bú lá/ ‘Isn't it good?’ suggests to his father that if he buys his son a new car, it would be good.

5.1.2.2 Hedging

The speaker can also use a request utterance that contains a hedge expression to ask someone to do something. Hedge expressions convey that the speaker does not assume the hearer is able or willing to do the action (Brown & Levinson 1987: 146). In Burmese, the expression မသိဘူး။ /mə=θi bú/ ‘I don't know.’ is an example of hedging. It is normally placed after a yes/no question.

(5.8)

ဆရာ	ကြီး၊	သမီး	စာတမ်း	ရေး	တာ၊	စာအုပ်	တစ်=အုပ်
s ^h əjə	ɕí,	θəmí	sàdán	jé	dà,	sà?ou?	tə=?ou?
teacher	BIG,	daughter	essay	write	NFUT.NOM,	book	one=CL

လို	နေ	လို	ခဏ	ငှား	လို	ရ	မ=လား၊	မ=သိ	ဘူး။
lò	nè	lɔ	k ^h əna	ŋá	lɔ	ja	mə=lá,	mə=θi	bú
need	STAY	SUB	moment	borrow	SUB	able	FUT=Q,	NEG=know	NEG

‘Teacher, I'm writing an essay and need a book. **I don't know** if you could lend one to me?’

[6/F47/UFL]

Example (5.8) shows the use of the negative sentence မသိဘူး။ /mə=θi bú/ ‘I don't know’ after a yes-no question, which expresses the desired action of the speaker. By using this kind of negative sentence, the speaker indicates uncertainty as to whether the hearer will perform the requested action or not. Hedging strategies were used in 1.49% of the total number of request head-acts in this study.

5.1.2.3 Query preparatory

Query preparatory strategy refers to "utterances containing reference to preparatory conditions (e.g., ability, willingness) as conventionalized in any specific language" (Blum-Kulka et al 1989: 18). Requesting by questioning makes the request more polite than directly stating the request because the pressure on the hearer to do the act is diminished. It provides options: to answer the question, or to perform the act. The hearer can choose whether or not to do the requested action. There are three types of query preparatory strategy found in my data: (a) asking about the hearer's willingness, (b) asking about the ability of the hearer to perform the action, and (c) asking about the possibility to do the requested action.

(a) Asking the hearer's willingness to do the act: the speaker can make a request indirectly by asking whether the hearer is willing to perform the requested action. Example (5.9) is a question about the hearer's willingness to do the requested act.

(5.9)

ဘော့ပင်	တစ်ချောင်း	လောက်	ခဏ	ငှား	ပါ	လား။
bópìn	tə=ɬʰáun	lau?	kʰəŋə	ŋá	pà	lá
pen	one=CL	as.much.as	moment	lend	POL	Q

‘Would you please lend me a pen?’

[8/F46/UFL]

This request is made by a student who wants to borrow a pen from someone she is not well acquainted with. The speaker uses a yes/no question ending with the question word လား /lá/, seeking to determine the hearer's willingness to lend a pen.

(b) **Asking the hearer's ability to do the act:** by asking about the hearer's ability to perform the action, the speaker mostly uses modal verbs such as နိုင် /nàin/ 'win', ရ /ja/ 'get', တတ် /ta?/ 'be able' and the yes/no question word လား /lá/ with the future marker မ /mə/ (a reduced form of မယ် /mè/). Example (5.10) shows the use of a query preparatory strategy by asking about the hearer's ability to perform the action.

(5.10)

သူဌေး:	ကျွန်တော်	ပိုက်ဆံ	သုံး	ဖို့	မ=လောက်	လို့
θə ^h é	tɕənò	pai?s ^h àN	θón	p ^h ɔ	mə = lau?	lɔ
rich.man	1SG.M	money	use	PURP	NEG=enough	SUB

တစ်လစာ	ကြို	ထုတ်	ပေး	နိုင်	မ-လား။
tə = lasà	tɕò	t ^h ou?	pé	nàin	mə = lá
one=salary	advance	take.out	BEN	WIN	FUT=Q

‘Boss, **could** you please give me my salary in advance because I don’t have enough money.’ [11/M35/UFL]

The speaker in example (5.10) uses a question that indicates future action and a modal verb နိုင် /nàin/ in order to ask about the hearer's ability to perform the action. This request is spoken to an employer by an employee. The speaker is of lower status than the speaker, the imposition of the request is considered high, and they are not on familiar terms.

(c) **Asking about the possibility to do the requested act:** from the data, the conditional marker ရင် /jìn/ 'if' plays an important role in this strategy, and it is accompanied by auxiliary verbs containing the meaning of ability. For example, the conditional expression ဖြစ်နိုင်ရင် /p^hji? nàin jìn/ ‘If it is possible...’ is mostly used together with other strategies to make an indirect request by asking whether or not the requested act is possible on the part of the hearer.

(5.11)

...ဖြစ်	နိုင်	ရင်	ကူညီ	ပါ	ဆရာ	ရယ်။
...p ^h ji?	nàin	jìn	kùjì	pà	s ^h əjà	jè
... be	WIN	COND	help	POL	teacher	APP

Possibility	Mood derivable
-------------	----------------

‘...if it is possible, please help, teacher.’

[12/M29/WBMI]

In example (5.11), the speaker states the possibility by using the conditional clause ဖြစ်နိုင်ရင် /p^hji? nàin jìn/ ‘if it is possible...’ accompanied by the imperative with a politeness marker ပါ /pà/ and appended appellative ဆရာရယ် /s^həjà jè/ ‘teacher’, which function to mitigate the imposition of the request.

Query preparatory strategy has the highest percentage of use (45.83% of 1,545 request utterances), among all request strategies found in my study. And among query preparatory strategy sub-types, my data found that asking about the hearer's willingness was found most often, followed by asking about the ability of the hearer to perform the action, and asking about the possibility to do the requested action, respectively.

5.1.3 Nonconventional indirect request

A nonconventional indirect strategy features an utterance in which the illocutionary act is implicit. The speaker may mention only a part of the act. In other words, a nonconventional indirect request gives a hint to the hearer. With hints, the speakers do not make their requests known explicitly; they only refer to something related to the requested act. The context helps with the interpretation of the request. Especially when the participants know their statuses and roles, the nonconventional indirect request or hint can be interpreted easier (Aoyama, 2002). As for the data found in this study, all respondents expressed their intention to comply with requests, which may have led most of the utterances to reveal the request overtly. Therefore, the number using hints was small. There are two types of hints: strong and mild.

5.1.3.1 Strong hint

Giving a strong hint provides a strong clue for the hearer to do the requested action, but the intention of the request is not overt. Only nine examples of hints were found in this study (0.91%) and all of them were interpreted as strong hints. Example (5.12) shows the use of a strong hint collected from the questionnaires.

(5.12)

ဘာ	သူငယ်ချင်း	ရေ	ငါ	ဘောပင်	မ=ပါ	ဘူး	ကွာ။
bà	thùŋɛ̀dʒɪN	jè	ŋà	bɔ̀pɪN	mə=pà	bú	kwà
what	friend	APP	1SG	pen	NEG=bring.along	NEG	NTAG
... မေ့ကျန်	ခဲ့	တယ်။	မင်း	မှာ	အပို	ပါ	တယ် မှတ် လား။
...meɣtɕàN	kʰɛ̀	dè	mín	mə	ʔəpò	pà	dè m̥ou? lá
...forget	DSPL	NFUT	2SG	LOC	extra	bring.along	NFUT not.true Q
‘What! My friend, I didn’t bring a pen....I forgot it. You have an extra pen, right? ’							

[8/M37/UFL]

In this example, the speaker mentions that he did not bring a pen and asks the hearer if he has an extra one. This utterance is considered a request because it is a question about the precondition of the feasibility of the requested act. The speaker just states his problem that he forgot a pen and asks the hearer: ‘You have an extra pen, right?’ In this case, if the hearer has an extra pen with him, then he may be able to lend one to the speaker; if he does not have an extra pen, he cannot lend one to the speaker.

5.1.3.2 Mild hint

Giving a mild hint provides fewer clues for the hearer to do the requested action. The speaker may refer to only one related component, and the interpretation is left to the hearer. From my observation of everyday conversations, Burmese people sometimes use mild hints in making requests. They are mostly used in situations where the speaker considers that the imposition of the request is high. Example (5.13) shows the use of a mild hint collected from a natural conversation.

(5.13)

T1: သမီး ဆရာ-မ သူငယ်ချင်း တွေ က ဆရာ-မ အီးမေးလ် ကို
 0əmí sʰəjǎ-mǎ 0əŋɛtɕín dè kǎ sʰəjǎ-mǎ ʔímé kò
 daughter teacher-F friend PL SBJ teacher-F email OBJ
 နီ ဖွင့် တယ်။
 kʰó pʰwǐN dè
 steal open NFUT

‘My daughter, my friends have accessed my email.’

S1: ၀တ်(စ်)၀တ်(ဒ်) ကို ပြောင်း ပါ။
 paʔwuʔ kò pjáun pà
 password OBJ change POL

‘Change your password, please.’

T2: အေးလေ အဲ-ဒါ ဘာ လုပ် ရ မလဲ၊ မသိ ဘူး။
 ʔélè ʔé-dà bà louʔ jǎ mǎ = lé, mǎ = 0j bú
 that's.it ANA-that what do able FUT=Q, NEG=know NEG
 ‘I know, but I don't know how to do that

(T = teacher, S = student)

Example (5.13) is a conversation between a teacher and her student; they are familiar with each other. The teacher has more power than the student. The teacher asks her student to teach her how to change an email password. Her first utterance is ‘My friends have accessed my email’ (T1). She does not refer to the requested act or even the object of the act. All she mentions is the problem she is facing. From this utterance, the hearer cannot interpret it as a request. Therefore, the student suggests the teacher change the password. The phrase အေးလေ /ʔélè/ ‘That's it.’ at the beginning of the teacher's utterance (T2) indicates that what the student said is what she already

knew, but the point is that she does not know how to do it. So, it may then be interpreted that the first utterance by the teacher (T1) is a mild hint of request. In this situation, even though the speaker is of a higher position than the hearer, the speaker uses a mild hint to make the request. The speaker gives high value on the request imposition because she is asking the hearer to do something not concerning the hearer. This may be not the first time the speaker has requested this task.

From the examples of strong and mild hints above, we can see that there are no specific linguistic forms of these strategies. They are concerned with the meanings of the utterances. The utterances can be interpreted as requests depending on the hearer's interpretation, including the context of the request.

According to Blum-Kulka et al., the conventional indirect request strategy is proposed to be universal (i.e. conventional indirect request is the most preferred strategy used in making requests). In order to find out whether this is the same in Burmese, the frequency of each strategy used by Burmese people, from my data, were counted and the results are shown, as follows:

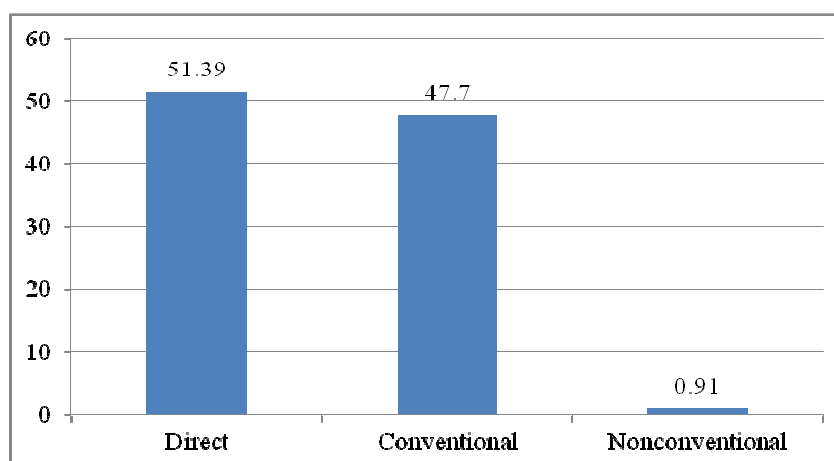


Figure 5.1 The frequency of request strategies used by Burmese people (%) from the total number of 1,545 request utterances

From Figure 5.1, based on the total number of 1,545 request head-acts, the direct strategy had the highest percentage of usage (51.39%), followed by the conventional indirect strategy (47.7%), and the nonconventional indirect request (0.91%). However, the use of direct and conventional indirect strategies are not very different. When sub-types of each strategy are considered, (as shown in Figure 5.2), the query preparatory of conventional indirect strategy has the highest percentage of use (45.83%), whereas mood derivable of the direct strategy was the second highest (44.72%). Figure 5.2 also illustrates that it seems both mood derivable and query preparatory strategies are common in requests in Burmese culture, as revealed by the fact that they are used in almost equal frequency.

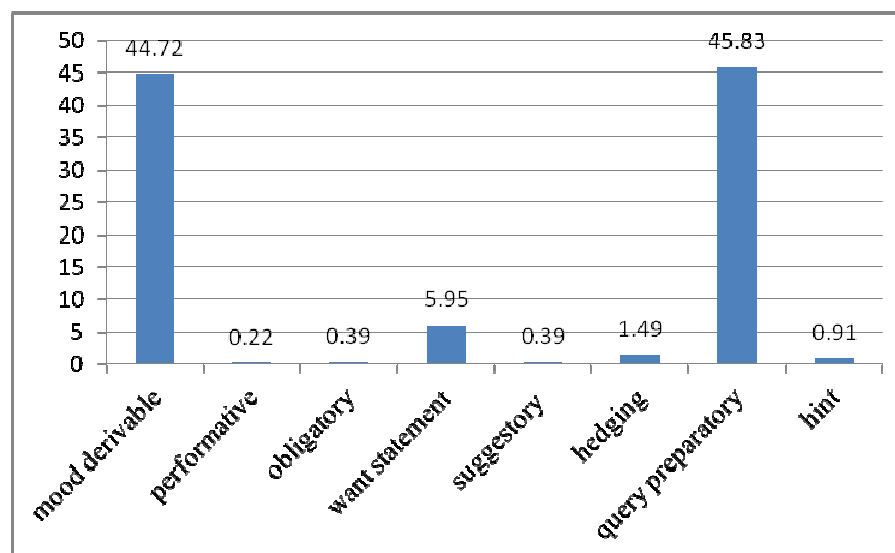


Figure 5.2 The frequency of request sub-strategies used by Burmese people (%)

The questionnaires were assigned according to the respondent's gender in order to investigate the influence of the gender on the request strategies. I counted the frequencies of request strategies used by Burmese people differentiated by gender, and the results are presented in Figure 5.3.

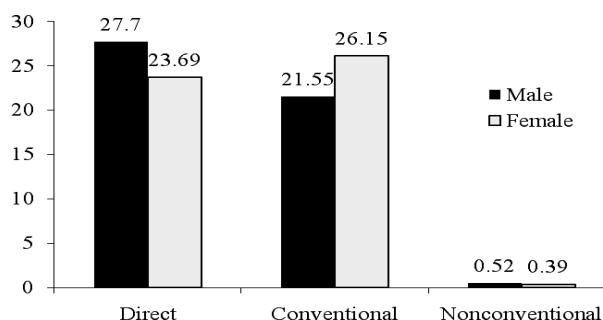


Figure 5.3 Request strategies used by different genders as a percentage

Considering the gender of the request respondents, as shown in Figure 5.3, male and female respondents used a slightly different number of strategies. Male respondents tended to use direct strategies more often than female respondents, while female respondents used conventional indirect strategies more often than the male respondents did. As for the nonconventional indirect strategy, male respondents used it more than female respondents did. However, the difference in percentages is not significant enough to claim that male use is generally more direct than female use in Burmese culture. This aspect still requires further study.

Besides different strategies for making requests, to request someone to do something for the benefit of the speaker, the utterances could be combined with various elements that affect the results of the act, either to increase or decrease the imposition of the act. In the next section, the request modifications will be presented.

5.2 Request modifications in Burmese

In making the request, there are two dimensional modifications: internal and external modifications (Faerch & Kasper, 1989). While the external modifications are added optionally to the request utterances, the internal modifications are the elements added within the head-act of the request. The realizations of external modifications are the supportive moves of the request and some kinds of alerter elements, which have already been discussed in section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 in chapter IV.

Therefore, this section will give details about the internal modifications of requests found in my study. Internal modifications function in two ways: to mitigate the imposition of requests, and to emphasize the impact of requests. The one that functions to mitigate the request imposition is called a *downgrader*, but the one that functions to increase the force of request is called an *upgrader*.

5.2.1 Downgraders

Downgraders are elements that function to reduce the imposition of the request within the head-act. The downgraders found in this study include politeness markers, downtoners, understaters, appealers, alternative lexemes, appended appellatives, and some auxiliary verbs.

5.2.1.1 Politeness markers

There are two types of politeness markers occurring in Burmese requests: politeness markers and polite tags.

(a) **Politeness marker ဝါ /pà/**: it is placed between the main verb and the final particle in the declarative sentence. In an imperative sentence, the politeness marker is placed after the main verb and sometimes a final particle is placed after it. It is the most significant feature to make polite requests because it is used in every situation and every strategy. Even though there is no need to add ဝါ /pà/ in situations where the participants are on familiar terms, or the speaker is of higher status than the hearer, many utterances from these situations include ဝါ /pà/.

(5.14)

မောင်အေး	ရေ၊	ဆရာ	ကို	စာအုပ်	ကူ	သယ်	ပေး	ဝါ	အုံး။
màun.ʔé	jè,	s ^h əjà	kò	sàʔouʔ	kù	θè	pé	pà	ʔóun
Maung.Aye	APP,	teacher	OBJ	book	help	carry	BEN	POL	ADD
'Maung Aye, help me carry the book please.'									[10/M42/UFL]

Example (5.14) features a request made by a teacher to ask for help from his student to carry a book. In this utterance, the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ is used even

though the speaker has more power than the hearer, and even though they are familiar with one another.

(b) Polite tags: there are two polite tags in Burmese differentiated by the gender of the speaker. They are ရှင် /s^hIN/ for females and ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/ for males. These two polite tags are used to show respect to the hearer, and always appear at the end of the sentence. Example (5.15) shows the use of a positive polite tag by a male speaker.

(5.15)

ဦးလေး	ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	လခ	နည်းနည်း	လောက်
ʔúlé	ɕəŋɔ̌	kò	lɔk ^h ə	né~	lauʔ
uncle	1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	salary	little~	as.much.as

ကြို	ထုတ်	ပေး	ပါ	ခင်ဗျာ။
ɕò	t ^h ouʔ	pé	pà	k ^h əmjà
advance	take.out	BEN	POL	PTAG

'Uncle, please give me the salary in advance....'

[11/M17/WBMI]

Example (5.15) shows the use of a positive polite tag ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/ accompanied by a politeness marker ပါ /pà/ in the situation where both the distance and the imposition value is high and the speaker has less power than the hearer.

5.2.1.2 Downtoners

Downtoners are elements that function to soften the force of requests within the head-act. Some particles in Burmese can be used to reduce the force of request utterances due to their meanings. Two types of particles are used as downtoners in requests: additional particles, agreement particles, and some auxiliary verbs soften requests.

(a) Additional particle: ဦး~အုံး /ʔóUN/ conveys the sense of future action and the additional noun or action that will be done in the future (Okell & Allot, 2001: 261-262). Additionally, the Myanmar-English dictionary (Department of the Myanmar

Language Commission, 2001), ဦး~အုံး /ʔóun/ denotes "a prerequisite, definite or imperative condition".

(5.16)

...	အဲ-ဒါ	ဆရာ	နည်းနည်း	ကူညီ	ပါ	ဦး။
...	ʔé-dà	s ^h əjà	né~	kùjǐ	pà	ʔóun
...	ANA-that	teacher	little~	help	POL	ADD
'...For that, teacher, help me a little please.'						[12/M13/WBMI]

Example (5.16) is spoken by a senior to a junior teacher in order to ask for help writing a report. In this case the speaker ends his request head-act with ဦး /ʔóun/ to imply that the speaker knows that the hearer has other work to do and that the requested action is an extra action for the hearer to do.

(b) Auxiliary verbs softening request: some auxiliary verbs in Burmese are used in requests in order to soften the requests. They are: ကူ~ကူညီ /kù~kùjǐ/ 'help', and ဝိုင်း /wáin/ 'together'. Both of them precede the main verb.

ကူ~ကူညီ /kù~kùjǐ/ 'help': this verb is used to express a speaker's desire for help explicitly. It can be used either as a main verb or auxiliary verb. When it is used as an auxiliary verb, it immediately precedes the main verb, or sequential particle ဖြီး /pí/ 'then'. Even though this auxiliary verb reveals a speaker's desire for help overtly, the force of the request does not increase because it also conveys that the speaker will also do some part of the action.

(5.17)

ပါမောက္ခ	က	တော့	ကျွန်မ	ကို	အစီရင်ခံစာ	ရေး	ခိုင်း	တယ်။
pàmauʔk ^h ə	kə	də	tɕəma	kò	ʔəsìjìnk ^h ànsà	jé	k ^h áin	dè
professor	SBJ	CTR	1SG.F	OBJ	report	write	order	NFUT

အဲ-ဒါ	မ=ပြီး	သေး	လို့
ʔé-dà	mə = pí	θé	lɔ̃
ANA-that	NEG=finish	PST	SUB

ဆရာ	ကျွန်မ	ကို	ကူ	ရေး	ပေး	နိုင်	မ=လား။
s ^h əjà	tɕəma	kò	kù	jé	pé	nàin	mə = lá
teacher	1 SG.F	OBJ	help	write	BEN	ABLE	FUT=Q

ရှင်	ကူ	ပြီး	ရေး	ပေး	ဝါ	နေဉ်။ ...
ʃin	kù	pí	jé	pé	pà	nò ...
2SG	help	SEQ	write	BEN	POL	AGR ...

'The professor orders me to do the report. Could you please **help** me **write** it because I haven't finished it yet? Please **help and write** it for me. ...' [12/F21/UFL]

Example (5.17) consists of two head-acts of request. Each head-act reveals a different way to use the auxiliary verb ကူ /kù/ 'help'. In the first head-act, which asks for the hearer's ability to do the act, it precedes the main verb ရေး /jé/ 'write', while in the second head-act, which features a mood derivable strategy, the sequential particle 'then' links ကူ /kù/ and ရေး /jé/. Both of them let the hearer know that s/he does not need to perform all of the action; the speaker already did some parts of the act.

ဝိုင်း /wáin/ 'together': the literal meaning of this word is 'gather around; surround; besiege'. When it precedes the main verb, it conveys the meaning that the action will be done by more than one person. In the case of a speaker asking someone to do something, using this auxiliary verb denotes that both the speaker and the hearer will do the requested act together. This can help the hearer feel that the requested act is not too difficult, because the speaker will do it too.

(5.18)

သား	မောင်အေး	ဆရာ-မ	ကို	စာအုပ်=လေး
thá	màunʔé	s ^h əjà-ma	kò	sàʔouʔ=lé
son	Maungaye	teacher-F	OBJ	book=DIM

ဝိုင်း	သယ်	ပေး	ဝါ	လား။	...
wáin	thè	pé	pà	lá	...
together	carry	BEN	POL	Q	...

'Maung Aye, could you please carry these books **together with me?** ...' [10/F33/UFL]

The speaker in example (5.18) asks his student to carry a book for him. He uses the auxiliary verb ဝိုင်း /wáin/ 'together' to indicate that he will also perform the action with the hearer. With this usage, the imposition of the request is reduced.

Sometimes, ဝိုင်း /wáin/ and ကူ~ကူညီ /kù~kùjì/ occur together. ဝိုင်း /wáin/ always precedes ကူ~ကူညီ /kù~kùjì/ as shown in (5.19).

(5.19)

မောင်အေး	ရေ	ဆရာ-မ	ကို	ဒီ	စာအုပ်=လေး	တွေ
màunʔé	jè	s ^h əjà-ma	kò	dì	sàʔouʔ=lé	dwè
Maungaye	APP	teacher.F	OBJ	this	book=DIM	PL

ဝိုင်း	ကူညီ	သယ်	ပေး	ဝါ	လား။	...
wáin	kùjì	thè	pé	pà	lá	...
together	help	carry	BEN	POL	Q	...

'Maung Aye, could you please help me to carry these books **together?** ...

[10/F19/UFL]

The situations of (5.18) and (5.19) are similar. But the speaker in (5.19) uses ဝိုင်း /wáin/ and ကူညီ /kùjì/ together because both of them function in the same way; that is, they soften the request.

(5.20)

... အဖေ	သား	ကို	ကား	သစ်	တစ်=စီး	ဝယ်	ပေး	ပါ	နော်။
... ʔəp ^h è	θá	kò	ká	θiʔ	tə=sí	wè	pé	pà	nò
... father	son	OBJ	car	new	one=CL	buy	BEN	POL	AGR
'... Father, buy a new car for me please, OK? '									[2/M9/UFL]

စံ /hĩN/ is used "as a sentence final in questions and solicitations" based on the Myanmar-English dictionary (Department of the Myanmar language commission, 2001: 530). In this study, this particle was not often found; in fact, there were only eight examples.

(5.21)

အဖေ	ဖြစ်	နိုင်	ရင်	သား	ကို	ကား	အသစ်	တစ်=စီး
ʔəp ^h è	p ^h jiʔ	nàin	jìn	θá	kò	ká	ʔəθiʔ	tə = sí
father	be	ABLE	COND	son	OBJ	car	new	one=CL
ဝယ်	ပေး	ပါ	လား	ဟင်။				
wè	pé	pà	lá	hìn				
buy	BEN	POL	Q	AGR				

'Dad, if it's possible, could you please buy a new car for me, **OK?**' [2/M56/WBML]

Example (5.21) is the same context as (5.20), that is, the son is asking his father to buy him a new car. The speaker makes the request by asking about the hearer's willingness to perform the action. He ends his utterance with an agreement particle ဝဏ် /hĩN/ in order to ensure the hearer's agreement to perform the requested action.

5.2.1.4 Understaters

By definition, understaters are "...adverbial modifiers by means of which the speaker under-represents the state of affairs denoted in the proposition (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989: 283)". In this study, understaters are elements that function to reduce the force of the request in terms of quantity and time.

(a) Quantitative understaters: the elements indicate the lesser imposition that the hearer will carry out. These are words that mean 'a little', 'some' such as အနည်းငယ် /ʔəné ŋɛ̀/, နည်းနည်း /né-né/, or the combination of number and classifier such as တစ်ခု /tə=kʰy/ 'one thing', တစ်ဝက် /tə=wɛʔ/ 'a half'. They make the hearer feel that the speaker's desire is not much. In addition, the diminutive marker လေး /lé/ can be used to convey a sense of understatement, civility or desirableness.

(5.22)

... သာ:	ကို	ကား	အသစ်	လေး	တစ်-စီး	လောက်
... θá	kò	ká	ʔəθiʔ	lé	tə=sí	lauʔ
... son	OBJ	car	new	DIM	one=CL	as.much.as
ဝယ်	ပေး	ပါ	လား။			
wè	pé	pà	lá			
buy	BEN	POL	Q			
'...Could you please buy a new car for me?'						[2/M78/SEA]

Example (5.22) illustrates the use of quantitative understaters in Burmese requests. This request head-act consists of the word လေး /lé/, which is attached to the noun phrase ကားအသစ် /ká ʔəθiʔ/ 'new car' and the use of the phrase, တစ်စီးလောက်

/tə = sɪ lau?/ 'about one car'. These try to convince the hearer that the expected action is not much, asking for only one car.

(b) Temporal understaters: the elements indicate a lesser duration of time that the hearer will need to perform the requested action. It uses words such as **ခဏ** /k^həŋa/ 'moment' or the phrase တစ်ရက်လောက် /tə = jɛ? lau?/ 'about one day'.

(5.23)

စည်သူ	ရေ	ငါ့	ကို	မနေ့က	သင်	တဲ့	မှတ်စု	တွေ
sìθù	jè	ŋa	kò	məŋɛka	θìn	dɛ	maʔsy	dwè
Sithu	APP	1SG.DEP	OBJ	yesterday	study	NFUT.ATTR	notebook	PL
ခဏ	ငှား	ဝါ။	...					
k^həŋa	ŋá	pà	...					
moment	borrow	POL	...					

'Sithu, lend me the notebook you studied yesterday for **a moment** please.'

[4/M49/UFL]

In example (5.23), the speaker uses the word **ခဏ** /k^həŋa/ 'moment' to convey that he will borrow the book just for a moment. This may convince the hearer that he will get the book back in a short time.

5.2.1.5 Appealers

Based on Blum-Kulka et al. (1989: 285), appealers are "...[the] elements used by a speaker whenever he or she wishes to appeal to his or her hearer's benevolent understanding. Appealers function to elicit a hearer signal, occur in a syntactically final position, and may signal turn-availability. Tags are a common realization". Additionally, in this study, the appended address terms that appear immediately after the head-act also fall into the category of appealers. It functions to make the hearers feel sympathy for the speaker. Appended address terms are generally used in the form of the same elements as alerters, which can be found alone or

attached by the appellative suffixes. Therefore, in this study, there are two types of appellations: tag and appended address terms.

(a) Tags: most tags found in this study are in negative form. They convey different senses of action, such as a suggestion, hedge, or refer to utterances, due to the meaning of the verb in the tags as discussed in section 4.1.4 (Negative form of request). Example (5.24) presents the use of tags in requests.

(5.24)

...ကျွန်တော့်	အစား	ဘဏ်	သွား	ပြီး	ပိုက်ဆံ	ယူ
...təŋŋ	ʔəsá	bàN	θwá	pí	paiʔsáN	jù
..1SG.M.DEP	representative	bank	go	SEQ	money	take

ပေး	နိုင်	တယ်၊	မဟုတ်	လား။
pé	nàin	dè,	mə = hou?	lá
BEN	WIN	NFUT,	NEG=right	Q

'... You can go to take the money for me, **isn't it?**'

[7/M4/UFL]

The tag at the end of this request head-act is the negation of the verb ဟုတ် /hou?/ 'right'. This tag is used to seek the hearer's confirmation for performing the requested action.

(b) Appended address terms: these elements usually appear at the end of head-act to elicit the hearer's sympathy. They are an attempt to convince the hearer to willingly perform the action. Appended address terms can be formed by various elements, which are the same as the alerters (see details of alerters in section 4.2.2). Example (5.25) presents the use of appended address terms, which are a combination of kinship terms and appellative suffixes.

(5.25)

...ဒါကြောင့် အစ်ကို အား ရင် ကျွန်တော့် အစား
 ...dàtɕaŋN ʔəkò ʔá jìN tɕənɔ̌ ʔəsá
 ...therefor elder.brother free COND 1SG.M.DEP representative

ဘဏ် ကို သွား ပေး ဝါ လား၊ အစ်ကို ရာ။
 bàN kò θwá pé pà lá, ʔəkò jà
 bank OBJ go BEN POL Q, elder.brother APP

'... Therefore, if you are free, can you go to the bank for me, **my brother**? ...'

[7/M76/SEA]

Example (5.25) is a situation in which there is distance between the participants who are of equal status; the degree of imposition is high because the speaker asks the hearer to do what is not the hearer's responsibility. The request head act is attached by the appended appellative အစ်ကိုရာ /ʔəkò jà/ 'brother', which is a combination of a kinship term and an appellative suffix. Kinship terms are used in conversations between unrelated people in order to make the hearer become an in-group person and to increase familiarity. In Burmese culture, kinship terms can be used for strangers.

5.2.1.6 Alternative lexemes

Instead of using a word that directly conveys the requested action, Burmese people sometimes choose another word that contains a softer meaning. For example, in the case of a boy asking his father to buy a new car, instead of the verb ဝယ် /wè/ 'buy' the speaker chooses to use the word လဲ /lé/ 'change' or ချေး /tɕʰé/ 'borrow'. Asking his parents to buy a new car means that the requestee has to spend lot of money for a new thing. When the verb 'buy' is replaced by the verb 'change', the requestee has no need to buy the new one but can just change from an old one to a new one, which may require less money. This means that the speaker softens the request on behalf of the hearer. In the case of borrowing money from a friend, some speakers choose to use the word ခိုလ် /sai?/ 'make a temporary payment on behalf

of somebody' instead of ရေး /tɕʰi/ 'borrow' because ခိုက် /saiʔ/ conveys the sense that the speaker will return the money within a short time. As for the situation asking a new colleague to complete a report, while the other respondents use the verb ရေး /jé/ 'write', one of the respondent uses the verb ဖြည့် /pʰje/ 'fill' instead, as shown in example (5.26).

(5.26)

...အဲဒါ	ပါမောက္ခ	ရေး	ခိုင်း	တဲ့	အစီရင်ခံစာ=လေး
...ʔé-dà	pàmauʔkʰə	jé	kʰáin	dɛ	ʔəsìjìnkʰànsà=lé
...ANA-that	professor	write	order	NFUT.ATTR	report=DIM
ဝိုင်း	ဖြည့်	ပေး	ပါ	လား။	
wáin	pʰje	pé	pà	lá	
together	fill	BEN	POL	Q	

'... For that, could you please **complete** the report the professor ordered?'

[12/M70/SEA]

Using the word ဖြည့် /pʰje/ 'fill', in (5.26) rather than ရေး /jé/ 'write' makes the hearer know that the requested action has been done partly by the speaker himself. The hearer only needs to add something more.

5.2.1.7 Subjectivizers

Subjectivizers are 'elements in which the speaker explicitly expresses his/her subjective opinion vis-à-vis the state of affairs referred to in the proposition, thus lowering the assertive force of his request' (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989: 284).

(5.27)

... ကျွန်တော် စာတမ်း	ရေး	ဖို့	စာအုပ်	တစ်=အုပ်	လို	တာ
... tɕənò sàdán	jé	pʰɔ	sàʔouʔ	tə=ʔouʔ	lò	dà
... 1SG.M essay	write	PURP	book	one=CL	want	NFUT.NOM

ဆရာ	ဆီ	မှာ	ရှိ	တယ်	လို့	သိ	လို့
s ^h əjə	s ^h i	mà	ʃi	dè	lɔ	θi	lɔ
teacher	PROX	LOC	have	NFUT	QUOT	know	SUB

ဆရာ	ကူညီ	မယ်	လို့	ထင်	ပါ	တယ်	ခင်ဗျာ။
s ^h əjə	kùjì	mè	lɔ	t ^h ìN	pà	dè	k ^h əmjà
teacher	help	FUT	QUOT	think	POL	NFUT	PTAG

'... I need a book for writing an essay. I know that you have that book.

(I) think you will lend me the book.'

[6/M47/UFL]

Example (5.27) shows a request modification by means of subjectivizer. After giving a reason why the speaker has to complete the request, the head-act of the request is stated and modified by the verb ထင် /t^hìN/ 'think', which conveys the speaker's opinion of the requested act. In this utterance, the subject of the verb ထင် /t^hìN/ 'think' is implicit, and the omitted subject is understood; the subject of the sentence can be omitted when it has been referred to in the previous clauses.

5.2.2 Upgraders

Upgraders are elements that function in the request head-act to increase the force of the request. In this study, there are three types of upgraders: time intensifiers, pluralization, and emphatic addition.

5.2.2.1 Time intensifiers

The expression of time such as မြန်မြန် /mjàn~/ 'quickly', အခု /ʔək^hu/ 'now' are considered time intensifiers. These expressions force the hearer to do the requested act immediately. These elements appear in cases where the speaker has more power than the hearer, such as the hostel warden asking his officer to pick up his daughter from a friend's house, as shown in example (5.28) below.

(5.28)

...	သွား	ကြို	လိုက်	စမ်း	ကွာ	အခု။
...	θwá	tɕə	lai?	sáN	kwà	ʔəkʰy
...	go	pick.up	FOLLOW	IMP	NTAG	now
'...Go to pick up now .'						[9/M15/WBMI]

In example (5.28), the expression အခု /ʔəkʰy/ 'now' is used at the end of the head-act to emphasize that the hearer has to perform the required action at the moment of speaking.

5.2.2.2 Pluralization

In order to make the hearer willing to complete the action, the speaker uses the plural form of the noun 'help'. This signal to the hearer that the task he will do is considered important. With this strategy, the hearer may be proud of his/her self.

(5.29)

...အဲ-ဒါ	ကိုနီ	အကူအညီ	များ	ပေး	နိုင်	မလား။
...ʔé-dà	kòni	ʔəkùʔəjì	mjá	pé	nàin	mə = lá
...ANA-that	Mr.Ni	help	PL	give	WIN	FUT=Q
'...For that reason, Mr. Ni, can you give me helps ?'						[7/M40/UFL]

The use of a plural form of 'help' does not mean that the requested action is of a high imposition, but it reflects the speaker's idea that there are many things the speaker must do, and also denote that the hearer has much help to offer.

5.2.2.3 Emphatic addition

According to Blum-Kulka et al (1989: 286), emphatic addition refers to 'Set lexical collocations used to provide additional emphasis to the request'. From the data, some Burmese particles are used together with other verb functions to

emphasize the request. They are the particle suffixed to the verb စမ်း /sán/, and လိုက် /lai?/ 'follow', and negative tag ကွာ /kwà/.

(a) စမ်း /sán/: it contains the sense of request and command itself. It is used to convey a strong wish (Okell & Allot, 2001: 58). It is found in the situation where the interlocutors are on familiar terms. When စမ်း /sán/ is used to modify the verb of the sentence it conveys that the speaker is emphasizing his stated action, particularly the request.

(5.30)

...အဲ-ဒါ	မင်း	ငါ	သမီး	ကို
...ʔé-dà	mín	ŋa	θəmi	kò
...ANA-that	2SG	1SG.DEP	daughter	OBJ

သွား	ကြို	ပေး	စမ်း	ပါ	ကွာ။
θwá	tɕò	pé	sán	pà	kwà
go	pick.up	BEN	EMP	POL	NTAG

'...For that reason, please go to pick up my daughter.'

[9/M13/WBMI]

In example (5.30), as a high power participant, the speaker uses the particle စမ်း /sán/ to emphasize his request. In this utterance, both a negative tag ကွာ /kwà/ and a politeness particle ပါ /pà/ are used. A negative tag is used because of their familiarity, while a politeness marker is used to soften the request because of the high imposition of the request.

(b) လိုက် /lai?/ 'follow': has different meanings depending on the context. In requests, when it is used after the requested verb, it indicates impulsive action. The speaker wants to emphasize that the requested action must be done and should be done at the moment of speaking or within a short time.

(5.31)

...မင်း	ငါ့	သမီး	ကို	သွား	ကြို	လို့က်	ကွာ။
...mín	ŋa	θəmí	kò	θwá	tɕò	lai?	kwà
...2SG	1SG.DEP	daughter	OBJ	go	pick.up	FOLLOW	NTAG
'...You go to pick up my daughter.'							[9/M43/UFL]

A request utterance in (5.31) is spoken in this situation in which the speaker has more power than the hearer. The imposition is high because it is not the responsibility of the hearer as an inferior. But as a superior, the speaker modifies his request head-act by using the particle လို့က် /lai?/ in order to emphasize the required action.

These two particles, မင်း /sán/, and လို့က် /lai?/, can occur together in the sentence to emphasize the stated action. လို့က် /lai?/ always precedes မင်း /sán/.

(5.32)

ငါ့	သမီး	ကို	သွား	ကြို	လို့က်	မင်း	ပါ	ကွာ။	...
ŋa	θəmí	kò	θwá	tɕò	lai?	sán	pà	kwà	...
1SG.DEP	daughter	OBJ	go	pick.up	FOLLOW	EMP	POL	NTAG	...
'Please go to pick up my daughter.'									[9/M64/WBMI]

The speaker of (5.32) modifies his request head-act by emphasizing the action. He uses the particle လို့က် /lai?/ followed by the particle မင်း /sán/ immediately. The use of မင်း /sán/ is restricted with the familiarity or higher rank of the speaker, while the use of လို့က် /lai?/ is not concerned with social factors.

(c) **negative tag ကွာ /kwà/**: ကွာ /kwà/ (including its variations ကွယ် /kwè/, ကွ /kwə/) is used to compel people to pay attention (Okell & Allot, 2001). Familiar participants or speakers of a higher status use this form. Example (5.33) shows the use of a negative tag in an utterance between close friends.

(5.33)

...ဒါကြောင့်	ငါ	ကျောင်းလခ	အတွက်	မင်း	မှာ	အဆင်ပြေ	ရင်
...dàtɕaũN	ŋà	tɕaúN.lak ^h g	ʔətweʔ	mín	mà	ʔə.s ^h ĩN.pjè	jìN
...therefore	1SG	school.fee	for	2SG	LOC	convenient	COND

ချေး	ဝါ	ကွာ။
tɕ ^h í	pá	kwà
borrow	POL	NTAG

'...Therefore, if it's convenient for you, please lend me the school fee ...'

[1/m65/WBMI]

Even though the imposition of the request in example (5.33) is high, the speaker chooses an imperative structure and modifies it with a politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ and ends it with ကွာ /kwà/, which emphasizes the request and conveys the intimacy or friendship between the interlocutors. This negative tag is not found in situations where the interlocutors are not familiar or when the speaker has less power than the hearer.

Burmese people prefer to modify their requests by using various types of internal modifications in order to make their requests more appropriate depending on the context. Internal modifications can be used either to decrease or increase the imposition and the illocutionary force of requests. Particles are significant features and function as request modifiers, especially in Burmese.

CHAPTER VI

POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN BURMESE REQUESTS

This chapter presents politeness strategies used by Burmese people when making requests. The data were analyzed within the framework of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy (1987), which is based on the notion of 'face'. Therefore, in the first section of this chapter the notion of 'face' in Burmese society is provided; after that, the results and analyses will be presented.

6.1 The notion of 'Face' in Burmese

The Burmese word that means 'face' is မျက်နှာ /mjɛ̃n̥nà/. According to the Myanmar-English dictionary (Department of Myanmar language commission, 2006), မျက်နှာ /mjɛ̃n̥nà/ has four meanings: 1) face, 2) points of the compass; direction, 3) surface, and 4) (in personal relations) regard or esteem for someone or something. The Burmese-French dictionary (Bernot, 1988) provides a similar meaning of မျက်နှာ /mjɛ̃n̥nà/ as the fourth meaning in the Myanmar-English dictionary; that is 'éclat, valeur; consideration, point d'honneur'. In both dictionaries, various expressions are derived from the word မျက်နှာ /mjɛ̃n̥nà/ in Burmese. These expressions convey four main meanings of မျက်နှာ /mjɛ̃n̥nà/: 1) indicate facial expression, emotion, 2) indicate relationship among the people in society, 3) indicate the position, rank of the people in the society, and 4) indicate recognition, approbation of the people in the society.

The first meaning of မျက်နှာ /mjɛ̃n̥nà/ is to indicate facial expression or emotion. Physically 'face' is the front part of the head where the eyes, nose, and mouth are located. People can show their feelings or emotions through the characteristics of their faces. Therefore, there are also various words or expressions in Burmese that use the word 'face' to indicate people's feelings. For example, မျက်နှာပုပ် /mjɛ̃n̥nà pou/ 'to scowl' (rotten face), မျက်နှာမည်း /mjɛ̃n̥nà mé/ 'unhappy' (black face), မျက်နှာပူ /mjɛ̃n̥nà

pù/ 'be flushed of embarrassment' (hot face), မျက်နှာမကောင်း /mjɛʔnà mə=káun/ 'look cheerless, wear a long face' (bad face).

The second type of face expression is used to indicate relationships among people in society. Some expressions consisting of the word မျက်နှာ /mjɛʔnà/ are used to convey relationships in positive or negative ways. When someone says he looks at someone's face using the expression မျက်နှာကြည့် /mjɛʔnà tɕi/ 'look at face', this means he is considering his rapport with that person. In Burmese, if we say that our face's tendons are compatible, မျက်နှာကြောတည့် /mjɛʔnà tɕá tɕj/, it means we are on good terms, but if we say that our face's tendons are not compatible, မျက်နှာကြောမတည့် /mjɛʔnà tɕá mə=tɕj/, it means we are not on good terms.

The third type of face expression in Burmese indicates position or rank of people in society. This refers to higher or lower positions. Using the word မျက်နှာ /mjɛʔnà/ together with the word ကြီး /tɕí/ 'big' or the word ငယ် /njè/ 'small' indicates the authority or power of the person who is referred to. မျက်နှာကြီး /mjɛʔnà tɕí/ 'big face' refers to a high status person, while မျက်နှာငယ် /mjɛʔnà njè/ 'small face' refers to a low status person. In Burmese မျက်နှာကြီးရာ ဟင်းဖတ်ပါ။ /mjɛʔnà tɕí jà hínp^ha? pà/ means 'the person who is in the high position, or authority will get the best food'. This saying illustrates the favor of power or authority in society; that is, in the feast, the person who is of the highest rank of society, or at least the highest in the place, will be served the best food at the feast.

The fourth type of face expression in Burmese is used to indicate recognition or the approbation of people in society. Together with the word မျက်နှာ /mjɛʔnà/ 'face', some verbs can be used to indicate recognition in either positive or negative ways. By saying 'someone has face', မျက်နှာရှိ /mjɛʔnà ʃi/, the speaker indicates that that person is respectful and receives social recognition. On the contrary, when someone says 'someone does not have face', မျက်နှာမဲ့ /mjɛʔnà mɕj/, it indicates there is no social recognition for that person. We can express our consideration of the other approbation by saying that we support the face of that person, မျက်နှာထောက် /mjɛʔnà t^hau?/. And if you get face မျက်နှာရ /mjɛʔnà ja/, it means others in society appreciate you. In Burmese, if you say you damage someone's face (မျက်နှာဖျက်

/mjɛʔnà p^hɛʔ/ 'damage someone face'), it means you damage the reputation of that person. By contrast, if you say your face is damaged (မျက်နှာပျက် /mjɛʔnà pjɛʔ/ 'face is damaged'), it means you lose your face or suffer degradation.

From these meanings of the word မျက်နှာ /mjɛʔnà/ 'face' in Burmese, it can be said that 'face' is something precious that people want to have in Burmese society. Its size implies power or appreciation from other members of society. It can be lost or damaged by others. In social interactions, people should be aware of and support other people's face; in particular, those of lower positions have to be aware of the face of those of higher positions. For example, in a family, sons and daughters have to be aware of their parents' faces when doing anything. In the work place, workers and officers have to recognize their boss's face. Therefore, in Burmese society, apart from 'appreciation and approbation' from others, 'face' also refers to a high position in society. In order to maintain a smooth interaction, both the speaker and the hearer are usually aware of each other's face. Otherwise, a face threatening act might occur.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), face is the public self image that social members want to claim for themselves. The public self image, or social basic want, consists of positive and negative face wants. Positive face want is the want to be appreciated and approved by others, while negative face want is the want to be free from the imposition and the want of deference from others. In Brown and Levinson's study, this evidence is illustrated through various uses of politeness strategies in making requests.

6.2 Politeness strategies in Burmese requests

Request is a speech act that intrinsically threatens the negative face of the hearer. It impinges on the hearer's freedom to perform or not perform the action. If one has to make a request toward another, one may employ different strategies in order not to make the requestee feel bad or to make him willing to comply with the required action. According to strategies for face threatening acts (FTAs) proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) as shown in Figure 2.1 (Chapter 2), there are five possible

main strategies: 1) doing FTA on record without redressive action, 2) doing FTA on record redress by positive politeness, 3) doing FTA on record redress by negative politeness, 4) doing FTA off record, and 5) don't do the FTA. Since the main data for the present study were collected in questionnaires, the respondents or the requesters were forced to do the FTA. Therefore, the first and last strategies are not found in the data from questionnaires. However, they are used in the daily lives of Burmese people. The first strategy or bald on record is found in situations in which the speaker realizes the risk of losing face is low, the value of distance is low, or the power of the speaker is high. As for the last strategy, or when not doing an FTA strategy, it is used in situation in which there is a high risk of losing face.

6.2.1 Bald on record

Bald on record is normally used in actions when both the speaker and hearer know that the redressive act is not necessary. It is mostly found in situations where the value of distance is low, and especially when the speaker is of higher status than the hearer. For example, when asking a close friend to turn off an electric fan, the speaker only uses a verb with an impulsive particle, as shown in example (6.1).

(6.1)

ပိတ်	လို့တုံ။
pei?	lai?
close	FOLLOW
'Turn it off.'	

In this case, the participants are on familiar terms and of equal status. The reason for saying this is understood because both of the people involved in the situation already know why the electric fan should be turned off. That is, there was another friend who was sick and Burmese people believe that sick people will get worse in cold conditions. Therefore, this case can be considered urgent because it concerns other people's health; Brown and Levinson say that urgency is one factor that causes the bald on record strategy (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 95). Because of the low imposition of the request between close friends, the speaker can use only the verb

to ask the hearer to do the act. The impulsive particle လိုလို့ /lai?/ 'follow' is used to emphasize the request. However, making requests directly without any redressive utterances makes it sound like an order rather than a request. The request utterance in example (6.1) may be considered an order because the illocutionary force of the order is higher than the illocutionary force of the request.

6.2.2 On record with redressive action: positive politeness

A positive politeness strategy is used to redress the hearer's positive face; that is, the hearer's wants should be thought of as desirable (Brown & Levinson 1987: 101). Positive face want is the want to be appreciated and approved by others. It is the want to be equal or in the same group as the others. In making requests by redressing with positive politeness, the speaker indicates an appreciation and approval of the in-group membership of the hearer. The hearer's want is considered by the speaker. There are 12 ways to redress the FTA by positive politeness strategies found in my study.

6.2.2.1 Showing in-group membership

The positive face of the hearer is the want to be appreciated by others. Therefore, the speaker claiming the hearer as an in-group member is a positive politeness strategy used in requests in order to preserve the positive face of the hearer. In-group members include anyone regarded as family, relatives, friends, or acquaintances. In Burmese, in-group membership can be shown in different ways, as follows.

(a) Address form: some linguistic elements of alerters, such as kinship terms, names, relationship terms, endearment terms, nouns, and attention getters (as discussed in chapter 4), are used to show the intimacy between the participants. The use of kinship terms with strangers indicates that the speaker considers the hearer a family member. Using only personal names or relationship terms with friends shows that the participants are on familiar terms. Endearment terms are used to show the speaker's feelings toward the hearer and can be used among people who are on familiar terms. Addressing a person of lower status by a diminutive noun such as ကောငါးလေး /kàun lé/ 'little boy' indicates the intimacy between the participants.

Attention getters such as *ဟေ့* /hə/ can be used together with other elements to get the hearer's attention. It is also used among persons who are on familiar terms. The use of these address forms indicate that the speaker and hearer are members of the same group.

(6.2)

သူငယ်ချင်း	ရေ	မင်း	မှာ	ဘော့ပင်	အပို	ပါ	လား။
မာ့ဂျဲဇ်ဂျိန်	jè	mín	mà	bópìn	?əpò	pà	lá
friend	APP	2SG	LOC	pen	extra	bring.along	Q
ငါ	မှာ	မ=ပါ		လို့	ကွ။		
ဂျာ	mà	mə = pà		lò	kwa		
1SG.DEP	LOC	NEG=bring.along		SUB	NTAG		
တစ်=ချောင်း	လောက်	ငှား	ပါ	လား	ကွ။		
tə = tɕ ^h áun	lau?	ŋá	pà	lá	kwa		
one=CLF	as.mush.as	borrow	POL	Q	NTAG		

'**Friend**, did you bring an extra pen? I didn't have it. Could you please lend me a pen?'

[8/F100/UFL]

Example (6.2) is a request among students who are not on familiar terms, but the imposition of the request is considered low (borrowing a pen). The speaker starts her request by an alerter, which is a combination of a relationship term သူငယ်ချင်း /θəŋɛ̀tʃín/ 'friend' and an appellative suffix ရေ /jè/. This usage implies that the speaker considers the hearer as a friend even though it is the first time they have met each other.

There is another way of addressing that conveys in-group membership between participants. This involves referring to a third person involved in the request as the hearer's kin. This kind of referring was found in the situation where the hostel warden requests the worker to pick up his/her daughter from his friend's house. In some examples, the warden's daughter is referred to as a worker's sister or a niece.

(6.3)

... မင်း	အား	ရင်	မင်း	ညီမ	ကို		
... mín	ʔá	jìN	mín	jìma	kò		
... 2SG	free	COND	2SG	younger.sister	OBJ		
တစ်ချက်	လောက်	သွား	ကြို	ပေး	ပါ	လား	ကွာ။
tə = tɕʰɛʔ	lauʔ	θwá	tɕò	pé	pà	lá	kwà
one=CLF	as.much.as	go	pick.up	BEN	POL	Q	NTAG
'... If you are free please just go to pick up your sister .'						[9/M48/UFL]	

In example (6.3), the speaker refers to his daughter as the hearer's younger sister. Actually, in this situation they are not real kin but they are on familiar terms. In order to show in-group membership, the speaker claims that the hearer is his relative.

(b) Pronoun: in Burmese, some pronouns are used to express intimacy, for example, ငါ /ŋà/ 'first person pronoun', မင်း /mín/ or နင် /nìn/ 'second person pronoun'. Some are used among people who are not on familiar terms, i.e. ကျွန်တော် /tɕənṵ/ 'first person pronoun, male speaker', ကျွန်မ /tɕəma/ 'first person pronoun, female speaker', ခင်ဗျား /khəmyá/ 'second person pronoun, male speaker', ရှင် /ʃìn/ 'second person pronoun, female speaker'. Therefore, in requests, when the pronouns for intimates are used with unfamiliar people, it indicates that the speaker intends to make the hearer an in-group member. Using the first person pronoun ငါ /ŋà/ and second person pronoun မင်း /mín/ or နင် /nìn/ indicates familiarity between the interlocutors. Normally, they are used by people of equal status but can also be used by a higher person when talking to a lower person.

(6.4)

... စာအုပ်	က	များ	တော့	ငါ	မ=နိုင်	ဘူး။
... sàʔouʔ	ka	mjá	dɔ	ŋà	mə = nàin	bú
... book	SBJ	PL	CTR	1SG	NEG=WIN	NEG

မင်း	နည်းနည်း	ကူ	သယ်	ပေး	နိုင်	မ=လား။
mín	né~né	kù	thè	pé	nàin	mə = lá
2SG	little~	help	carry	BEN	WIN	FUT=Q

'... I cannot do it because there are a lot of books. Could **you** help **me** carry them?'

[10/M12/WBMI]

The use of pronouns ငါ /nà/ and မင်း /mín/ in example (6.4) indicates familiarity between the participants. The speaker is the teacher, and the hearer is his student. Normally, in Burmese society, the teachers use the occupation term ဆရာ /s^həjà/ 'teacher' to refer to themselves and a kinship term သား /θá/ 'son' or သမီး /θəmí/ 'daughter' to refer to their students. Using kinship terms with people who are not real kin indicates intimacy, in the same way as using pronouns such as ငါ /nà/ and မင်း /mín/, which also convey that the speaker and hearer are on familiar terms.

(c) **Negative tag ကွာ /kwà/**: as stated in section 5.2.1.1 the negative tag ကွာ /kwà/ is used among persons who are on familiar terms, and also by a higher status person to a lower status person. When used with an unfamiliar person, it implies that the speaker considers him/her as an in-group member. Normally, ကွာ /kwà/ is used to end a sentence when talking with people who are on familiar terms. Sometimes, the speaker uses this negative tag when talking to an unfamiliar person to show that the speaker wants to make friends with the hearer or to let the hearer be in the same group. In-group membership makes the request easier to deliver.

(6.5)

...	ငါ	နေ	မ=ကောင်း	ဖြစ်	နေ	လို့
...	nà	nè	mə = káun	p ^h ji?	nè	lɔ
...	1SG	stay	NEG=good	be	STAY	SUB

ကူညီ	နိုင်	ရင်	ကူညီ	ပါ	ကွာ။
kùjì	nàin	jìn	kùjì	pà	kwà
help	WIN	COND	help	POL	NTAG

'... Because I'm sick, if you can help, help me please.'

[7/M22/WBMI]

The participants in example (6.5) are colleagues who are not on familiar terms. The speaker asks the hearer to do work for him because he is sick. The use of a negative tag at the end of the request shows that the speaker thinks of their familiarity.

(d) **Using in-group language:** in-group language refers to utterances that the speaker and hearer share between themselves. Even if it is unclear, the speaker assumes that the hearer knows what it means or refers to. From my data, examples of in-group language include the use of indefinite expressions, in which both the speaker and the hearer understand the intended meaning.

(6.6)

သား	လာ	ဦး၊	ဟို	ကောင်မလေး	အခု	ထိ
θá	là	ʔóuN,	hò	kàunma = lé	ʔək ^h u	t ^h i
son	come	ADD,	that	girl=DIM	now	until
ပြန်	မလာ		သေး	ဘူး		
pjàN	mə = là		θé	bú		
return	NEG=come		PERST	NEG		
သွား	ကြို	လိုက်	သိ	လား။	...	
θwá	tɕò	laiʔ	θi	lá	...	
go	pick.up	FOLLOW	know	Q	...	

'Son, come on. **That girl** doesn't come back until now. Go to pick her up.'

[9/F64/UFL]

In example (6.6), the speaker refers to her daughter by using a demonstrative together with a noun plus a diminutive marker, which means 'that girl'. The indefinite noun 'that girl' requires mutual knowledge between the participants to interpret properly. In this case, the usage shows that the speaker assumes that the hearer knows who 'that girl' refers to.

(e) **Stating the relationship between the speaker and the hearer:** the speaker may indicate his/her relationship with the hearer, such as classmate or childhood friend, to show that they are of the same social group or on familiar terms.

(6.7)

...	မင်း	နဲ့	ငါ	နဲ့	က	
...	mín	nɛ	ŋà	nɛ	ka	
...	2SG	INC	1SG	INC	SBJ	
ငယ်ငယ်	ကတည်းက	သူငယ်ချင်း	တွေ	ဆိုတော့		
ŋè~ŋè	kədékə	θəŋèdʒín	dwè	sʰòdɔ		
young~	from	friend	PL	SUB		
ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	ချေး	ပါ	ကွာ။	...
ŋà	kò	pai?sʰàn	tɕʰí	pà	kwà	...
1SG	OBJ	money	borrow	POL	NTAG	...

'... Because you and I are **childhood friend**, please lend me some money.'

[1/M76/SEA]

Example (6.7) is an utterance between two close friends. The speaker wants to borrow money for school fees from his friend. He redresses his request by mentioning the relationship between himself and the hearer: they are friends since they were young. This would intensify their closeness and may persuade the hearer to do the requested action.

(f) **Indicating the speaker's trust in the hearer:** some requests in Burmese end with a short statement of the hearer's trust. The word indicating trust is the combination of စိတ် /sei?/ 'heart, mind' and ချ /tɕʰa/ 'put down'.

(6.8)

ဟေ့	ငါ	အလုပ်	သွား	စရာ	ရှိ	လို့
hɛ	ŋà	?əlou?	θwá	səjà	ʃi	lɔ
hey	1SG	work	go	NOM	have	SUB

ငါ	သမီး	ကို	မင်း	သွား	ကြို	လိုက်	နော်။
ŋa	θəmí	kò	mín	θwá	tə̀	lai?	nə̀
1SG.DEP	daughter	OBJ	2SG	go	pick.up	FOLLOW	AGR
...	ငါ	စိတ်	ချ	မယ်	နော်။		
...	ŋà	sei?	tʰa	mè	nə̀		
...	1SG	heart	put.down	FUT	AGR		

'Hey, I have to go to work. You go to pick up my daughter, OK? ... **I will trust you.**'

[9/F97/UFL]

Example (6.8) is a request made by the hostel's warden to her worker. The participants are on familiar terms. The request is made directly by a verb-based utterance attached to an agreement particle. At the end of the utterance, the speaker adds a statement of trust on the hearer to perform the action. When the speaker says that she trusts the hearer to do the requested action, this may persuade the hearer to perform the action.

6.2.2.2 Presupposing or asserting common ground

Before making a request, the speaker may spend time chatting with the hearer about unrelated topics in order to create a relationship with the hearer. This strategy is mostly found in cases in which the participants are not on familiar terms, or if it is the first time they have met. There are two strategies:

(a) **Small talk:** small talk includes greeting and introducing oneself in cases where the participants are not on familiar terms, and also giving background information on the speaker's situation.

(6.9)

ဆရာ	နေ	ကောင်း	လား။	ဆရာ	တစ်နေ့	တစ်ခြား	ပိုပို
s ^h əjà	nè	káun	lá	s ^h əjà	tə = ne	tə = tʰá	pò~pò
teacher	stay	good	Q	teacher	one=day	one=apart	more~

ကျန်းမာ	လာ	တာ	တွေ	ရ	တယ်။	
tɕánmà	là	dà	twɛ	ja	dè	
healthy	come	NFUT.NOM	meet	GET	NFUT	
ဆရာ	အိမ်	က	ဒီ	နား	မှာ	လား။
s ^h əjà	ʔèin	kə	dì	ná	mà	lá
teacher	house	SBJ	this	vicinity	LOC	Q
ကျွန်တော်	က	ဒီ	နှစ်	မှ	တက်	တဲ့
tɕənò	kə	dì	niʔ	mə	tɛʔ	dɛ
1SG.M	SBJ	this	year	CEXP	attend	NFUT.ATTR
ပထမ	နှစ်	ဝိဇ္ဇာ	ကျောင်းသား	ပါ။	...	
pət ^h əmə	niʔ	weiʔzà	tɕáunθá	pà	...	
first	year	B.A.	student	POL	...	

'Teacher, how are you? You look healthier day by day. Is your house around here? I'm a first year B.A. student. ...'

[6/M32/WBMI]

This example is the first part of the request made by a student in order to borrow a book from his teacher. In this situation, the student does not know this teacher before. Therefore, he greets the teacher and talks about the teacher's health. Then he introduces himself to the teacher because the teacher does not know him and also to create a relationship between them. Talking about health is a safe topic especially about being in good health. Burmese people normally greet each other by asking နေကောင်းလား။ /nè káun lá/ 'How are you?' rather than the formal greeting မင်္ဂလာပါ /mìngəlà pà/.

(b) Assuming that the hearer knows the speaker's situation: the speaker states that the hearer knows the speaker's background or the reason why the request must be performed.

(6.10)

သူငယ်ချင်း	ငါ	မိဘ	အခြေအနေ	ကို	မင်း	သိ	ပါ
မာၤဂဲၤဒဲၤ	ŋa	mɪba	ʔaɪtɰʰèʔə̀nè	kò	mín	θi	pà
friend	1SG.DEP	parent	situation	OBJ	2SG	know	POL
တယ်။	ကျေးဇူး	ပြု	ပြီး	ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	ချေး
dè	tɛ́zú	pjɯ	pí	ŋa	kò	paiʔsʰàN	tɰʰí
NFUT	favor	do	SEQ	1SG.DEP	OBJ	money	borrow
ပါ	ကွာ။	...					
pà	kwà	...					
POL	NTAG	...					

'Friend, **you know my parents' situation**. Please lend me money. Thank you. ...'

[1/M52/SEA]

In example (6.10), before stating the request, which is to borrow the money from the hearer for school fees, the speaker states that the hearer knows the situation of his parents. This implies that the hearer is someone who is close enough to know the speaker's parents and also their situation of being unable to pay their son's school fees.

6.2.2.3 Seeking agreement

If the hearer agrees with what the speaker has said or done, it implies they think the same way about that thing or event, and it indicates their in-group membership. In making requests, the speaker asks about the hearer's agreement to perform the action, and the speaker gives the hearer an opportunity to be an in-group member. In Burmese two particles function to seek agreement: နေၣ် /nə̀/, and တင် /hìn/ (as discussed in 5.2.1.3)

(6.11)

သမီး ဆရာမ ကို ဘောပင် တစ်ချောင်း ခဏ လောက် ပေး နေဉ်။
 0amí s^həjámə kò bópìN tə = t^háun k^həŋə lau? pé nò
 daughter teacher.F OBJ pen one=CLF moment as.much.as give AGR
 'Daughter, give me a pen for a moment, **OK?**' [3/F35/UFL]

Example (6.11) is a request utterance made by the teacher to her student. It is the first time they have met each other. The speaker uses an agreement particle နေဉ် /nò/ at the end of the utterance in order to seek the hearer's agreement to lend a pen.

Besides using agreement particles, another way to seek agreement from the hearer is to directly ask for his/her opinion about the requested act. Example (6.12) is a request to borrow money between close friends. The speaker makes the request with a conventional indirect request and follows with a promise to return the money next month. Then, at the end, he asks for agreement from the hearer.

(6.12)

... ငါ ကျောင်း လခ စိုက် ထား ပေး ဝါ လား။
 ... ။ t^háun lək^hə sai? t^há pé pà lá
 ... 1SG.DEP school fee pay keep BEN POL Q

နောက် လ ကျ ရင် မင်း ရဲ့ ကျောင်း လခ ကို
 nau? lá t^hə jìN mìn jɛ t^háun lək^hə kò
 next month fall COND 2SG POSS school fee OBJ

ငါ စိုက် ပေး မယ် နေဉ်။
 ။ sai? pé mɛ nò
 1SG pay BEN FUT AGR

ဘယ်လို လဲ။ အဆင်ပြေ လား။
 bɛlò lé ʔə^hìN.pjè lá
 how Q convenient Q

'... Could you please pay the school fee for me? I'll pay for you next month, OK?

How is it? Is it OK with you?

[1/M86/WBMI]

At the end of the request in example (6.12), the speaker asks for the hearer's opinion on what he has said and whether it is convenient for the hearer or not.

6.2.2.4 Intensifying interest to the hearer

Expressing concern towards the hearer, the speaker saves the positive face of the hearer. In the case of making requests, the speaker can intensify his/her concern for the hearer by using the appended address terms at the end of the sentence or utterance as shown in example (6.13), in which a student wants to borrow a book from a teacher.

(6.13)

မင်္ဂလာ	ပါ	ဆရာ။	...
mìngələ	pà	s ^h əjà	...
auspicious	POL	teacher	...

ဆရာ	စာအုပ်	ကို	ရိုရိုသေသေ	ကိုင်	ပါ	မယ်	ဆရာ။
s ^h əjà	sà?ou?	kò	jò~jò.θè~θè	kàin	pà	mè	s ^h əjà
teacher.DEP	book	OBJ	respectful~	hold	POL	FUT	teacher

သား	ကို	စာအုပ်	ခဏ	လောက်	ငှား	ပေး	ပါ	လား	ဆရာ။
θá	kò	sà?ou?	k ^h əŋa	lau?	ŋá	pé	pà	lá	s ^h əjà
son	OBJ	book	moment	as.much.as	borrow	BEN	POL	Q	teacher

ကျေးဇူး	တင်	ပါ	တယ်	ဆရာ။
tɛ́ézú	tìn	pà	dè	s ^h əjà
favor	place	POL	NFUT	teacher

'Good morning, **teacher**. ... I will take a very good care of your book, **teacher**. Could you please lend me a book for a while, **teacher**. Thank you, **teacher**' [6/M75/SEA]

The student addresses his teacher at the end of every sentence (including the omitted part) to show his concern for the teacher. Additionally, it is found that in Burmese conversation the question သိလား /θɿ lá/ 'You know?' at the end of the sentence indicates that the speaker is paying attention to the hearer and trying to get the hearer into the conversation.

(6.14)

အဖေ	အခု	တက်	နေ	တဲ့	ကျောင်း	က	အရမ်း
ʔəp ^h è	ʔək ^h y	tɛʔ	nè	dɛ	tɕáun	kə	ʔəjám
father	now	attend	STAY	NFUT.ATTR	school	SBJ	very
ဝဲ	ဝေး	လွန်း	လိုက်	တာ။	...	ဒါကြောင့်	သမီး
bé	wé	lún	laiʔ	dà	...	dàtɕaun	θəmí
FOC	far	exceed	FOLLOW	NFUT.NOM	...	therefore	daughter
စိတ်ကူးယဉ်	မိ	လိုက်	တယ်။	သိ	လား	ဖေ။	...
seiʔkújìn	mɿ	laiʔ	dè	θɿ	lá	p ^h è	...
imagine	NVOL	FOLLOW	NFUT	know	Q	father	...
ဖေဖေ	(ကား)	ဝယ်	ပေး	နော်။			
p ^h è~p ^h è	(ká)	wè	pé	nò			
father	(car)	buy	BEN	AGR			

'Father, the school that I attend now is very far. ... Therefore, I imagine something, **you know, father?** ... Buy me a car, OK?' [2/F99/UFL]

Example (6.14) consists of the question သိလား /θɿ lá/ 'Do you know?' during the request made by a daughter to her father. She tells her father about her difficulty to get to school and how she will resolve the problem. Since the utterance is quite long, she uses the question သိလား /θɿ lá/ 'Do you know?' plus the kinship term ဖေ /p^hè/ 'father' to get her father into the conversation.

6.2.2.5 Avoiding disagreement

According to Brown and Levinson's theory, one of the ways to avoid the hearer's disagreement is to make a white lie. In my data, there is one utterance that may be interpreted as a white lie because the respondent noted in brackets before her request utterance with a Burmese proverb, 'မုသားမဝါ လင်္ကာမချော' /*myθá mə=pà lɪŋgà mə=tɕʰɔ́*/ which means 'If there is no lie, the conversation will not be a success'. She also noted that 'မုသားလေးနည်းနည်းတော့သုံးရလိမ့်မယ်။' /*myθá=lé né~ dɔ θóun ja lɛin mɛ̀*/ which means 'a lie has to be used'. After that, the respondent starts her request with an alerter, followed by a head-act and reason. The situation was a request for an advance salary. The lie she referred to may be the reason she has to ask for the advance salary, as in example (6.15).

(6.15)

... အိမ်	မှာ	မောင်လေး	နေ	မ=ကောင်း	တာ
...?èiN	mà	màunlé	nè	mə=káun	dà
...house	LOC	younger.brother	stay	NEG=good	NFUT.NOM
အဲ-ဒါ		ပိုက်ဆံ=လေး	နည်းနည်း	လို	နေ လို့။
?é-dà		paiʔsʰàN=lé	né~né	lò	nè lɔ
ANA-that		money=DIM	little~	need	STAY SUB
'...My younger brother is sick at home, I need the money for that.'					
					[11/F7/UFL]

Even though the reason is a lie, it may cause the hearer to agree to do the requested action.

6.2.2.6 Giving reason

By giving a reason why the speaker must do the request, the speaker shows the reasonableness of doing the FTA and why he needs help. The speaker hopes for the hearer's help and cooperation. The speaker gives different reasons s/he thinks it will persuade the hearer to do the requested action.

(6.16)

ဝင်းမြင့်	ငါ့	ကို	ကျောင်း	လခ	သွင်း	ဖို့	
wínmjǐN	ŋa	kò	ɕáun	lák ^h a	θwín	p ^h o	
Win.Myint	1SG.DEP	OBJ	school	fee	pay	PURP	
ပိုက်ဆံ	ချေး	ပါ။	ငါ့	မှာ	လည်း	မရှိ	ဘူး။
paiʔs ^h àN	ɕ ^h í	pà	ŋa	mà	lé	mə=ʃi	bú
money	borrow	POL	1SG.DEP	LOC	INC	NEG=have	NEG

အမေ	က	လည်း	အဆင်မပြေ	လို့။	...
ʔəmè	ka	lé	ʔəs ^h IN.mə.pjè	lɔ	...
mother	SBJ	INC	inconvenient	SUB	...

'Win Myint, please lend me money for school fee. **I don't have it, my mother also cannot manage it.**' [1/F30/UFL]

Example (6.16) illustrates the reasons for requesting to borrow money from a close friend. By giving a reason for doing the request, the speaker lets the hearer know her situation, which implies they are members of the same group.

6.2.2.7 Being optimistic

By being optimistic, the speaker assumes the hearer will cooperate. The speaker assumes that the hearer will perform the requested action.

(6.17)

ဟဲ့	စည်သူ၊	... နင့်	စာအုပ်	ငှား	လိုက်	ပါ	လား။
hɛ	sì.θù,	... nǐN	sàʔouʔ	ŋá	laiʔ	pà	lá
hey	Si.Thu,	... 2SG.DEP	book	borrow	FOLLOW	POL	Q
ငါ	ယူ	သွား	မယ်	နော်။			
ŋà	jù	θwá	mè	nò			
1SG	take	go	FUT	AGR			

'Hey Si Thu, ... could you please lend me your book? **I will take it, OK?**'

[4/F20/UFL]

In example (6.17), the participants are close friends. The speaker wants to borrow lecture notes from her friend. At the end of her request, without the hearer's permission, she says she will take the book and softens the request with the agreement particle နေံ /nə/.

One way to convey the assumption of the speaker is to use a question that expects to receive the 'yes' answer.

(6.18)

ဝင်းမြင့်	ချစ်	သူငယ်ချင်း၊	ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	နည်းနည်း
wínmjǐn	tɕʰi?	θəŋɛ̀tɕín,	ŋà	kò	paiʔsʰàN	né~
Win.Myint	love	friend,	1SG	OBJ	money	little~

လောက်	ချေး	ဝါ	ကွာ။	...
lau?	tɕʰí	pà	kwà	...
as.much.as	borrow	POL	NTAG	...

မင်း	ကူညီ	နိုင်	မယ်	မ=ဟုတ်	လား။
mín	kùjì	nàin	mè	mə=hou?	lá
2SG	help	WIN	FUT	NEG=right	Q

'Win Myint, my beloved friend, please lend me some money. ... **You can help, right?**'

[1/M34/WBMI]

The speaker in (6.18) wants to borrow money for school fees from his close friend. The request is redressed by the question at the end of the utterance. The speaker expects a 'yes' answer from the hearer. By this, he assumes that the hearer will do what is requested.

6.2.2.8 Promising

The speaker can redress FTA by promising something to the hearer when making the request. Making promises shows that the speaker is trying to fulfil the hearer's wants. Even though what is promised will not happen until the

future, at least the speaker shows his/her intention. Therefore, from the data, some requests are accompanied by promise statements related to the requested action. For example, when a student borrows a book from his/her teacher, s/he may promise to take care of the book, or to return it within a short time; when children ask their father to buy them a car, they may promise to be good, or to concentrate on their studies.

(6.19)

သူငယ်ချင်း	စည်သူ၊	ငါ	မနေ့က	ကျောင်း	မ=တက်	လို့	
θəŋɛ̌tɕín	sìθù	ŋà	məŋkə	tɕáun	mə = tɛʔ	lɔ	
friend	Si.Thu	1SG	yesterday	school	NEG=attend	SUB	
မင်း	ရဲ့	မှတ်စု	ကို	ငါ	ကူး	ချင်	လို့
mín	jɛ	maʔsu	kò	ŋà	kú	tɕʰín	lɔ
2SG	POSS	notebook	OBJ	1SG	copy	DES	SUB
ခဏ	လောက်	ငှား	ဝါ	လား။			
kʰəŋa	lauʔ	ŋá	pà	lá			
moment	as.much.as	borrow	POL	Q			
မ=ပျောက်	စေ	ရ	ဘူး။	ငါ	မနက်ဖြန်	ကျ	ရင်
mə = pjauʔ	sè	ja	bú	ŋà	məneʔpʰjàn	tɕa	jìn
NEG=lose	CAUSE	GET	NEG	1SG	tomorrow	fall	COND
ဖြန်	ပေး	မယ်။	...				
pjàn	pé	mè	...				
return	give	FUT	...				

'Friend, Si Thu, yesterday I didn't attend the class. I want to copy your lecture note. Could you please lend me? **I will not lose it and I will return it tomorrow. ...**'

[4/F82/UFL]

The speaker in example (6.19) wants to borrow lecture notes from her close friend. Together with the reason to do the request, the speaker promises to take

care of them and return them by the next day. The promise implies less imposition on the hearer's part.

6.2.2.9 Asserting or presupposing that the speaker's knowledge of and concern for the hearer's want

The speaker may indicate that s/he knows the hearer's wants. In requests, stating the benefits for the hearer from is one way to show the speaker's knowledge of the hearer's wants.

(6.20)

...	အစ်မ	ကို	ဒါ=လေး	ကူ	ရေး	ပေး	ပါ	လား။
...	ʔəmə	kò	dà=lé	kù	jé	pé	pà	lá
...	elder.sister	OBJ	this=DIM	help	write	BEN	POL	Q

ညီမ	အတွက်	လည်း	ဗဟုသုတ	ရ	တာ	ပေါ့။
jìmə	ʔətweʔ	lé	bəhɥθɥtə	jə	dà	pɔ̌
younger.sister	for	INC	knowledge	get	NFUT.NOM	RINF

'... Could you please help me write this? **You will also get knowledge too.**'

[12/F95/UFL]

The speaker in example (6.20) is a lecturer at the university, and she asks a new teacher to help write a report. She ends her request by indicating that the hearer will also receive a benefit from doing the requested action.

6.2.2.10 Including both the speaker and the hearer in the activity

A way to include both the speaker and the hearer in the activity is shown by the use of the auxiliary verb ဝိုင်း /wáin/ 'together'. This auxiliary verb implies that both the speaker and the hearer will do the action together. The use of this verb helps to reduce the imposition of the request. The use of this verb has already been discussed in section 5. Besides this, the statement conveys the meaning that the

participants will do the requested act together, as shown in example (6.21), also found in my study.

(6.21)

...	မင်း	နဲ့	ဆရာ	နဲ့	တစ်ယောက်
...	mín	ng	s ^h əjà	ng	tə = jau?
...	2SG	COMT	teacher	COMT	one=CLF

တစ်ဝက်	ခွဲ	သယ်	ရအောင်	ကွာ။
tə = wɛ?	k ^h wé	θè	jaʔàun	kwà
one=half	split	carry	LET	NTAG

'... You and me **let's** carry half and half.'

[10/M48/UFL]

The use of ရအောင် /ja ʔàun/ 'Let's' indicates that both the speaker and the hearer will perform the action. Additionally, the use of the comitative particle နဲ့ /ng/ with the second pronoun မင်း /mín/ for the hearer and the word ဆရာ /s^həjà/ 'teacher' for the speaker at the subject position of the sentence, indicates that both of them will be actors.

6.2.2.11 Asserting reciprocity

The speaker states reciprocal action with the hearer; that is, if the hearer performs the requested action, the speaker will do the same thing in return. This strategy shows that the speaker recognizes the hearer's wants and is willing to fulfil them.

(6.22)

သူငယ်ချင်း	ငါ	ကို	ဘောပင်လေး	ခဏ	ငှား	ပါ	ကွာ။
θəŋɛ̀tɕín	ŋà	kò	bópìn = lé	k ^h əŋə	ŋá	pà	kwà
friend	1SG	OBJ	pen=DIM	moment	borrow	POL	NTAG

...	မင်း	မ=ပါ		တဲ့	နေ	ကျ	ရင်
...	mín	mə=pà		dɛ	ne	tɕa	jìn
...	2SG	NEG=bring.along		NFUT.ATTR	day	fall	COND
ငါ	ဆီ	မှာ	လာ	ငှား	ပါ	ကွာ	
ηà	s ^h i	mà	là	ηá	pà	kwà	
1SG	PROX	LOC	come	borrow	POL	NTAG	
ငါ	ပေး	ပဲ	မယ်။				
ηà	pé	pà	mè				
1SG	give	POL.EMPH	FUT				

'Friend, please lend me a pen for a moment. ... **If you didn't bring it, please borrow it from me. I'll lend it to you.'** [8/M45/UFL]

In example (6.22), after indicating the request, the speaker redresses his utterance by conveying that if the hearer does the requested action, he will behave in the same way as the hearer.

6.2.2.12 Giving rewards

Giving rewards is a way to fulfil the hearer's wants and also to persuade the hearer to do the requested action. Rewards are special things and are not related to the required action that the speaker proposes to the hearer.

(6.23)

...	အဲ-ဒါ	ဆရာ	ကို	နည်းနည်း	လောက်	ကူ	သယ်
...	ʔé-dà	s ^h əjà	kò	né~né	lau?	kù	θè
...	ANA-that	teacher	OBJ	little~	as.much.as	help	carry
ပေး	ပါ	ကွာ။	ဆရာ	မင်း	ကို	တစ်-ခုခု	
pé	pà	kwà	s ^h əjà	mín	kò	tə=k ^h ɥ~k ^h ɥ	
BEN	POL	NTAG	teacher	2SG	OBJ	one=CLF~	

လိုက် ကျေး ဝါ မယ်။

lai? tɔwé pə mɛ

FOLLOW treat POL.EMPH FUT

'... For that reason, please help me carry the book. **I'll certainly treat you something.**'

[10/M6/UFL]

The speaker in example (6.23) offers to treat the hearer to a reward for complying with the request after the action is completed.

All positive politeness strategies mentioned in this section indicate that the speaker recognizes the hearer's positive face. The hearer is considered as the speaker's in-group member.

6.2.3 On record with redressive action: negative politeness

The requesters can redress their request utterances by showing concern for the hearer's negative face. Negative face seeks not to impinge on the freedom of action. To preserve negative face is to keep social distance between the participants. There are nine ways to redress requests by negative politeness strategies found in my study.

6.2.3.1 Being direct

To convey a request directly with negative politeness, the speaker can use a conventional indirect request strategy. Conventional indirect requests consist of three request strategies: query preparatory, suggestory formulae, and hedging. This conventional indirect strategy is indirect in linguistic form, but direct in its meaning because most hearers would interpret it as a request rather than a question, suggestion, or hedging.

(6.24)

သမီး ဆရာ-မ ကို ဘာပင် ခဏ လောက်

θəmí s^həjə-mə kò bəpɪN k^həŋə lau?

daughter teacher-F OBJ pen moment as.much.as

ငှား ဝါ လား။

၇ာ ပာ လာ

borrow POL Q

'Daughter, could you please lend me **a pen for a moment.**'

[3/53/UFL]

The yes-no question in example (6.24) indicates the request sense explicitly. In Burmese culture, this sentence would be interpreted as a request rather than a question about the hearer's willingness to do the action. A conventional indirect request conveys directness and indirectness at the same time. All conventional indirect requests are perceived as requests in Burmese society, even though the utterances are realized through the question construction.

6.2.3.2 Don't presume/ assume

The hearer can receive negative face by avoiding assuming that he wants to do the requested act. Questioning is one way to indicate that the speaker does not presume the hearer's involvement with the action. The speaker may use yes-no questions to redress his/her request utterance as in a conventional indirect strategy. Another way to show that the speaker does not presume the hearer's desire to do the act is to use hedge expressions.

(6.25)

...	အဲ-ဒါ	ဆရာ	ဆီ	က	စာအုပ်	ငှား
...	?ɛ-dà	s ^h əjə	s ^h ɪ	kə	sà?ou?	၇ာ
...	ANA.that	teacher.DEP	PROX	LOC	book	borrow

လို့	ရ	မ=လား	မ=သိ	ဘူး	ခင်ဗျာ။
lɔ	jə	mə = lá	mə = θɪ	bú	k ^h əmjà
SUB	GET	FUT=Q	NEG=know	NEG	PTAG

'... For that reason, **I don't know** whether I can borrow the book from you'

[6/M79/SEA]

In example (6.25), the speaker wants to borrow a book from his teacher, with whom he is not close. His utterance is redressed with the hedge expression မသိဘူး /mə=θi bú/ 'I don't know' in order to convey that he does not assume the hearer's compliance.

6.2.3.3 Don't coerce the hearer

To avoid threatening the hearer with negative face, the speaker shows that s/he will not coerce the hearer to perform the requested action. Giving options not to do the action is a pessimistic strategy for the speaker because it implies that the hearer may or may not comply with the request.

(6.26)

...	ကျွန်တော့်	ကိုယ်စား	သွား	ပေး	ပါ	လား။
...	təonɔ̌	kòsá	θwá	pé	pà	lá
...	1SG.M.DEP	representative	go	BEN	POL	Q
ဖြစ်	နိုင်	မယ်၊	အား	မယ်	ဆို	ရင်
p ^h ji?	nàin	mè,	ʔá	mè	s ^h ò	jìn
be	WIN	FUT,	free	fut	say	COND
ကူညီ	ပါ	ဗျာ။				
kùjì	pà	bjà				
help	POL	PTAG				

'... Could you please go for me? **If it is possible or if you are free** please help me.'

[7/M78/SEA]

Example (6.26) is a request between colleagues who are not on familiar terms. The speaker asks the hearer to do work for him because he is sick. In this utterance, the speaker gives the option not to do the requested act by using the 'If

clause', i.e. 'If it is possible, if you are free'. This shows that the speaker will not force the hearer to do what is being requested.

6.2.3.4 Minimizing the imposition

To minimize the imposition is to convey that the rank of imposition is not great. It not only informs the hearer that the requested action is not much, but it also indirectly indicates deference to the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 176). There are various ways to minimize the imposition of the request in Burmese by using downgraders (as shown in section 5.3.1 chapter v).

(6.27)

သား	ရေ	ဆရာ	ကို	
θá	jè	s ^h əjə	kò	
son	APP	teacher.DEP	OBJ	
ဘောပင်	တစ်=ချောင်း	ခဏ	ငှား	ပါ။
bópìn	tə = tɕ ^h áun	k ^h əŋə	ŋá	pà
pen	one=CLF	moment	borrow	POL

'Son, please lend me a pen for a moment.'

[3/M4/UFL]

Example (6.27) shows the use of two types of understaters: quantitative understaters, တစ်ချောင်း /tə = tɕ^háun/ 'one=classifier for pen', and temporal understaters, ခဏ /k^həŋə/ 'moment'. These two elements reduce the rank of the request's imposition.

(6.28)

...	သမီး	ကို	အဆင်ပြေ	ရင်
...	θəmí	kò	ʔəs ^h ɪn.pjè	jìN
...	daughter	OBJ	convenient	COND

ကား=လေး	ဈေး	လည်း	ပေါ	ကြည့်	ကောင်း	ရုံ=လေး	တစ်=စီး
ká=lé	zé	lé	pó	ɬɛi	káun	jòun=lé	tə=sí
car=DIM	price	INC	cheap	look	good	just=DIM	one=CLF

လောက်	ဝယ်	ပေး	ပါ	နေဝံ့။
lau?	wè	pé	pà	nò
as.much.as	buy	BEN	POL	AGR

'... If it is convenient for you, please buy me a car. **The one that is cheap and looks quite good** is OK.'

[2/F8/UFL]

Example (6.28) shows how to minimize the request imposition by referring to the quality of the requested thing. The speaker in this example wants her father to buy her a new car. She redresses the request by saying she 'prefers a car that is not expensive or the really good one but just the cheap and merely good one'. This implies to her father that the request imposition is not much.

6.2.3.5 Giving deference

According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 178), "There are two sides of the coin in realization of deference: one in which S humbles and abases himself, and another where S raises H (pays him positive face of a particular kind, namely that which satisfies H's want to be treated as superior)" (S = speaker, H = hearer). Giving deference to the hearer conveys that the hearer is in higher status than the speaker. In Burmese, giving deference to the other person is realized in many different ways, such as using politeness markers or honorific markers in the utterances, or using polite tags at the end of the sentence.

(6.29)

ကို	ကြီး	သား	သူငယ်ချင်း	အိမ်	သွား	ရ
kó	ɬɛi	θá	θəŋɛ́tɕín	ʔèin	θwá	ja
elder.brother	big	son	friend	house	go	must

မှာ	ဝေး	တော့	နည်းနည်း	ကြောက်	တယ်။		
mà	wé	dɔ̌	né~né	təau?	dè		
FUT.NOM	far	CTR	little~	afraid	NFUT		
ဒါကြောင့်	ကို		ကြီး	သား	ကို	လိုက်	ပို့
dàtəuN	kò		tɕí	θá	kò	lai?	pɔ̌
therefore	elder.brother		big	son	OBJ	follow	send
ပေး	ပါ	လား။					
pé	pà	lá					
BEN	POL	Q					

'Brother, I have to go to my friend's house. It is far, so I'm a bit afraid. Therefore, could you please give me a lift?' [5/M52/SEA]

Example (6.29) is a request made by a younger brother to his elder brother to give him a ride to a friend's house. It illustrates how to give deference to the hearer in Burmese. The speaker has less power than the hearer, but as siblings the social distance between them is considered low value. The speaker uses the honorific marker ကြီး /tɕí/ 'big' attach to the kinship term ကို /kó/ 'elder brother' to address his brother and also he uses the politeness marker ပါ /pà/ in his utterance. These can show the deference to the hearer. Additionally, the speaker uses kinship term သား /θá/ 'son' to refer to himself. Referring himself as a son implies more deference and also more power on the hearer part (father has more power than brother).

(6.30)

သူငှာ	ခင်ဗျာ၊	ကျွန်တော်	အခု	ပိုက်ဆံ	ပြတ်	နေ	လို့
θat ^h é	k ^h əmjà,	tɕənò	ʔək ^h u	paiʔs ^h àN	pja?	nè	lɔ̌
rich.man	PTAG,	1SG.M	now	money	break	STAY	SUB

ဝါ	ခင်ဗျာ။	...	အဲဒါကြောင့်	လခ=လေး	ကို		
pà	k ^h əmjà	...	ʔé-dàtɕaUN	lák ^h á = lé	kò		
POL	PTAG	...	ana.therefore	salary=DIM	OBJ		
ကြို	ထုတ်	လို့	ရ	ရင်	ကြို	ထုတ်	ပေး
tɕò	t ^h ouʔ	lɔ	ja	jìN	tɕò	t ^h ouʔ	pé
advance	take.out	SUB	GET	COND	advance	take.out	BEN
ဝါ	လို့။						
pà	lɔ						
POL	SUB						

'Sir, I'm broken now. ... Therefore, if it is possible, please give me the advance salary.'

[11/M75/SEA]

Example (6.30) illustrates another way to give deference to the hearer in Burmese, i.e. the use of a polite tag. The speaker uses the polite tag ခင်ဗျာ /k^həmjà/ at the end of the sentence, after the address term and politeness marker ဝါ /pà/. He also addresses the hearer, his boss, with the word သူဌေး /θət^hé/ which means 'rich man'. By using this type of address term, the speaker praises the hearer, who is of a higher position.

Giving the hearer compliments is also a way to give deference. There is also another way to show deference found in this study: that is the speaker's humiliation of himself. Example 6.31 below shows both a compliment to the hearer (bold) and the humiliation on the speaker (italic).

(6.31)

...	ကျွန်တော်	က	ကထိက	ဆို	ပေမဲ့	ညံ့	တယ်
...	<i>tɕənò</i>	<i>ká</i>	<i>kət^hika</i>	<i>s^hò</i>	<i>pèmɕ</i>	<i>jaN</i>	<i>dè</i>
...	<i>1SG.M</i>	<i>SBJ</i>	<i>lecturer</i>	<i>say</i>	<i>even</i>	<i>silly</i>	<i>NFUT</i>

ထင်	ဝါ	ရဲ့	ဗျာ။	ဆရာ	လို	ဗဟုသုတ
<i>t^hIN</i>	<i>pà</i>	<i>jɛ</i>	<i>bjà</i>	<i>s^həjə</i>	<i>lò</i>	<i>bəhɯθuta</i>
<i>think</i>	<i>POL</i>	<i>SUPPOSE</i>	<i>PTAG</i>	teacher	like	knowledge

ကြွယ်ဝ	သူ	တစ်ယောက်		အနေ	နဲ့	ကျွန်တော်	ကို
<i>ɬwèwə</i>	<i>θù</i>	<i>tə=jau?</i>		<i>ʔənè</i>	<i>nɛ</i>	<i>ɬənò</i>	<i>kò</i>
flourish	person	one=CLF		condition	COMT	1SG.M	OBJ
ကူညီ	ပါ	လား	ဗျာ။				
<i>kùjì</i>	<i>pà</i>	<i>lá</i>	<i>bjà</i>				
<i>help</i>	<i>POL</i>	<i>Q</i>	<i>PTAG</i>				

'... *I think I'm silly even though I'm a lecturer. As a scholar* could you please help me?'

[12/M78/SEA]

The speaker in example (6.31) is a lecturer who wants to ask for help from a new teacher. In order to get help from the hearer, the speaker humbles himself by saying that he is silly, and gives a compliment to the hearer by saying the hearer is knowledgeable.

6.2.3.6 Communicating the speaker's want to not impinge on the hearer

Negative face want is the want to be free, not to be impinged by someone else. Therefore, to satisfy the negative face want of the hearer, the speaker can show that s/he does not want to impose on the hearer. In Burmese, there are various ways to communicate that the speaker does not want to impose himself on the hearer, such as by admitting the impingement, indicating reluctance or hesitation, giving an overwhelming reason, or apologizing.

(a) **Admitting the impingement on the hearer:** admitting that the speaker is impinging on the hearer conveys the speaker's recognition of the impingement and reflects that the hearer's negative face is being threatened by the request. The speaker can admit that s/he is impinging on the hearer by using a request

performative verb (**bold**) or by explicitly indicating a desire of a requested action (*italic*), as shown in example (6.32).

(6.32)

...	ဆရာ	ကို	လည်း	အကူအညီ	တောင်း	ချင်		
...	s ^h əjə	kò	lé	ʔəkùʔəpì	táun	tɕ ^h in		
...	teacher.DEP	OBJ	INC	help	request	DES		
လို့	ပါ။	အစီရင်ခံစာ=လေး		ပြီး	အောင်			
lo	pà	ʔəsìjìnk ^h ànsà = lè		pí	ʔàun			
SUB	POL	report=DIM		finish	success			
ဆရာ	က	ဆက်	ပြီး	ရေး	ပေး	ပါ	လား	ဆရာ။
s ^h əjà	ka	s ^h ɛʔ	pí	jé	pé	pà	lá	s ^h əjà
teacher	SBJ	continue	SEQ	write	BEN	POL	Q	teacher
တောင်းဆို	ပါ	တယ်။						
táun ^s hò	pà	dè						
request	POL	NFUT						

'... *I also want to ask you help. Could you please continue this report? I request you.*'

[12/F35/UFL]

The speaker in example (6.32) wants to ask the hearer to write a report for her. She indicates her desire for help by saying, 'I want to ask you for help'. And at the end of her utterance, she uses a performative verb of request to explicitly indicate the request by saying that 'I request you'. Through both statements, the speaker admits her imposition on the hearer.

(6.33)

...	အဲ့ဒါ	ကျွန်တော်	အိမ်	စရိတ်	အတွက်	လခ
...	<i>ʔɛ-dà</i>	<i>tɕənnò</i>	<i>ʔèin</i>	<i>səjeiʔ</i>	<i>ʔətweʔ</i>	<i>lɔk^hɔ</i>
...	<i>ANA.that</i>	<i>1SG.M</i>	<i>house</i>	<i>expense</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>salary</i>

ကြို	ထုတ်	ပေး	စေ	ချင်	ပါ	တယ်။
tɕ̀ò	tʰou?	pé	sè	tɕʰiN	pà	dè
advance	take.out	BEN	CAUSE	DES	POL	NFUT
'... For that reason, I want you to give me an advance salary.'						[11/M31/WBMI]

Example (6.33) is another way to show the speaker's desire for the requested action. It illustrates the use of the desirative verb ချင် /tɕʰiN/ 'desire, want' together with the causative marker စေ /sè/. This usage conveys the speaker's desire and causes the hearer to perform the action at the same time. It implies an intention to impose upon the hearer.

(b) Indicating reluctance or hesitation: the speaker can show that s/he does not want to perform the threatening action by indicating reluctance or hesitation. The use of the demonstrative ဟဲ့ /hò/ 'that' together with an emphatic marker လေ /lé/ at the beginning of example (6.34) is one way to show hesitation to do the request.

(6.34)

ဟဲ့	လေ	ဘောပင်	တစ်=ချောင်း	လောက်	
hò	lè	bɔ̀pìN	tə = tɕʰáun	lau?	
that	EMPH	pen	one=CLF	AS.MUCH.AS	
ခဏ	ငှား	ပါ	လား။	...	
kʰəŋə	ŋá	pà	lá	...	
moment	borrow	POL	Q	...	
'Ur, could you please lend me a pen for a moment. ...'					[8/F48/UFL]

This example features an utterance between students who meet each other for the first time (i.e. right at the moment of the request). The speaker shows that she is hesitating to make the request by starting her request with ဟဲ့လေ /hò lè/ 'Um that...'. Normally, the demonstrative ဟဲ့ /hò/ 'that' expresses distance from the speaker. In this case, it is used to convey that the requested action is not the thing that the speaker wants to ask.

In Burmese, the auxiliary verb မိ /mi/ 'by chance' that follows the main verb is used to indicate unintentional action. The speaker uses this auxiliary verb to imply that s/he does not intend to do the act.

(6.35)

ဆရာ၊	...	အခု	ကျွန်မ	စာတမ်း	တင်	ဖို့	
s ^h əjà,	...	ʔək ^h y	tɕəma	sádán	tìn	p ^h o	
teacher,	...	now	1SG.F	essay	put.on	PURP	
စာအုပ်	တစ်=အုပ်	လို	နေ	ပါ	တယ်။		
sàʔouʔ	tə = ʔouʔ	lò	nè	pà	dè		
book	one=CLF	want	STAY	POL	NFUT		
ဆရာ	ဆီ	မှာ	ရှိ	တယ်	လို့		
s ^h əjə	s ^h i	mà	ʃi	dè	lo		
teacher.DEP	PROX	LOC	have	NFUT	QUOT		
ကြား	မိ	ပါ	တယ်။	...	ဒါကြောင့်	ကျွန်မ	ကို
tɕá	mi	pà	dè	...	dàtɕəuN	tɕəma	kò
hear	NVOL	POL	NFUT	...	therefore	1SG.F	OBJ
ဆရာ	စာအုပ်	ခဏ	လောက်	ငှား	နိုင်	မ=လား။	...
s ^h əjə	sàʔouʔ	k ^h əna	lauʔ	ŋá	nàin	mə = lá	...
teacher.DEP	book	moment	as.much.as	borrow	WIN	FUT=Q	...

'Teacher,... Now, I need a book for my essay and **I heard that you have this book.**
 Could you please lend it to me for a moment? ... '

[6/F90/UFL]

In example (6.35), the auxiliary verb မိ /mi/ 'by chance' is used in the sentence 'I heard that you have this book'. It indicates that the speaker has unintentionally discovered that the hearer has a book. If she does not know that the hearer has a book, she may ask others instead of the hearer.

(c) **Giving overwhelming reasons:** some request utterances are redressed by giving overwhelming reasons such as, 'You are the only one I can ask', or 'If you just help me I can pass this trouble'. By these, the speaker implies that if there is no such reason s/he would never do the request, and at the same time he places the hearer in a higher position than him/herself.

(6.36)

ညီလေး:	ရေ	ငါ	ကို	အစီရင်ခံစာ=လေး	
jìlé	jè	ŋà	kò	ʔəsìjìnkʰànsà = lé	
younger.brother	APP	1SG	OBJ	report=DIM	
ဝိုင်း	ကူ	ရေး	ပေး	ဝါ	ကွာ။
wáin	kù	jé	pé	pà	kwà
together	help	write	BEN	POL	NTAG
မင်း	ကို	ဝဲ	ငါ့	မှာ	အကူအညီ
mín	kò	bé	ŋa	mà	ʔəkùʔəjì
2SG	OBJ	FOC	1SG.DEP	LOC	help
တောင်း	စရာ	ရှိ	လို့	ဝါ။	...
táun	səjà	ʃi	lɔ	pà	...
request	NOM	have	SUB	POL	...

'Brother, please help me write this report. **You are the only one who can help me. ...**'

[12/M58/SEA]

In example (6.36), a university lecturer asks a new teacher to help him write a report. Accompanied with an on-record request, the speaker adds the reason, 'You are the only one I can ask' in order to indicate that he has no other choice; the situation forces him to make the request.

(d) **Stating the request as the order by the other:** another way to convey that the speaker does not want to do the request is to indicate that the requested action was ordered by an authority, such as a company, manager, or professor.

(6.37)

ကိုနီ	...	ကုမ္ပဏီ	က	လည်း	ငါ့	ကို	
kòni	...	kònpəni	ka	lé	ŋa	kò	
Mr.Ni	...	company	SBJ	COMT	1SG.DEP	OBJ	
ဘဏ်	မှာ	ပိုက်ဆံ	သွင်း	ခိုင်း	တယ်။	...	
bàn	mà	pai?s ^h àN	θwín	k ^h áin	dè	...	
bank	LOC	money	put.in	order	NFUT	...	
မင်း	ဘဏ်	ကို	သွား	ပေး	ဝါ	လား။	...
mín	bàn	kò	θwá	pé	pà	lá	...
2SG	bank	OBJ	go	BEN	POL	Q	...

'Mr. Ni, ... **The company orders me to deposit money.** ... Could you please go to the bank? ...'

[7/F99/UFL]

Example (6.37) is a request between colleagues who are not on familiar terms. The speaker refers to the requested act as an order of the company. It is not his own desire. Since the hearer works at the same company, s/he also has a responsibility for the company benefit.

(e) **Begging for forgiveness:** this is another way for the speaker to convey he does want to not impinge upon the hearer. In Burmese, the expression for begging for forgiveness is a combination of two words: ခွင့် /k^hwjN/ 'permission', and လွှတ် /lu?/ 'release' plus the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/.

(6.38)

အစ်ကို	ကျွန်တော့်	ကို	တစ်=ဆိတ်	လောက်	ကူညီ	ပါ။
ʔəkò	tɕəŋɔ̌	kò	tə = s ^h eiʔ	lauʔ	kùjɲì	pà
elder.brother	1SG.M.DEP	OBJ	one=part	as.much.as	help	POL

အနှောင့်အယှက်	ပေး	သလို	ဖြစ်	သွား	ရင်
ʔəŋəuʔʔəjɛʔ	pé	θəlò	p ^h jiʔ	θwá	jìN
disturbance	give	like	be	GO	COND

ခွင့်	လွှတ်	ပါ။	...
k ^h wɪN	luʔ	pà	...
permission	release	POL	...

'Brother, please help me a little. **If it disturbs you please forgive me. ...**'

[8/M20/WBMI]

Example (6.38) illustrates the use of begging for the hearer's forgiveness. The participants in this situation are not on familiar terms. The speaker wants to borrow a pen from a classmate whom he just met for the first time. The speaker probably acknowledges the social distance between them, which persuades him to beg the hearer's forgiveness for making the request, even though the rank of imposition is considered low.

In addition, in Burmese there is an expression သနား /θəná/ 'sympathize' plus the politeness marker ပါ /pà/, which is used to ask for sympathy on the speaker's part, or the use of an expression to ask for understanding, such as နားလည် /nálə/ 'understand' plus politeness marker ပါ /pà/. These expressions are used to show that the speaker is aware of his or her action and that he really doesn't want to make the request.

6.2.3.7 Do not specify speaker, hearer or related thing in the request

To convey that the agent of the requested act is not the hearer (or not the hearer alone) is another way to communicate that the speaker does not want to make a request. The most explicit way to indicate that the hearer is not an agent of the act is using the imperative structure because the agents are omitted. Imperative structure is the most common form of making requests in most languages.

(6.39)

ဘောပင်	ခဏ	လောကံ	ပေး	ဝါ	ကွယ်။
bópìn	k ^h əŋa	lau?	pé	pà	kwè
pen	moment	as.much.as	give	POL	NTAG
'Give (me) a pen for a moment'					[3/F25/UFL]

In the request in example (6.39), neither the speaker nor the hearer is mentioned. In this case, the speaker and the hearer are equal in terms of their social rank because they are classmates. Not mentioning the hearer and speaker is a way to avoid responsibility for the act. On the hearer's part, his/her negative face is not imposed because the speaker does not specify any person in particular.

In a situation where the teacher wants to borrow a pen from her students, the teacher refers to the students using the plural form. It is the students' decision who will lend a pen to the teacher.

(6.30)

ဆရာ	ဘောပင်	မေ့	ကျန်	ခဲ့	လို့
s ^h əja	bópìn	mɛ	tɕàN	k ^h ɛ	lɔ
teacher.DEP	pen	forget	remain	DSPL	SUB
ငါ	တပည့်	တွေ	ထဲ	က	တစ်-ယောက်
ŋa	təbɛ	dwè	t ^h ɛ	ka	tə=jau?
1SG.DEP	pupil	PL	in	LOC	one=CLF

ဆရာ	ကို	ဘောပင်	ငှား	ပါ	အုံး။
s ^h əjə	kò	bópìN	ŋá	pà	ʔóuN
teacher.DEP	OBJ	pen	borrow	POL	ADD
'I forgot my pen. One of my students , please lend me a pen.'					[3/M34/UFL]

In example (6.40), the teacher uses the statement 'one of my students' to refer to his requestee. He does not specify which student should lend him a pen.

6.2.3.8 Considering the hearer's feeling

Saying that the speaker considers the hearer's feelings implies that the speaker notices the imposition s/he has made on the hearer.

(6.41)

သူငယ်ချင်း	ဝင်းမြင့်	မင်း	ကို	ငါ	မျက်နှာ	ပူ	ပြီး
θəŋèθjìN	wínmjìN	mín	kò	ŋà	mjeʔŋà	pù	pí
friend	Win.Myint	2SG	OBJ	1SG	face	hot	SEQ
အား	နာ	ပေမယ့်	ငါ့	ကို	တစ်=ခု	လောက်	
ʔá	nà	pèmɛ	ŋa	kò	tə=k ^h u	lauʔ	
power	pain	even	1SG.DEP	OBJ	one=CLF	as.much.as	
ကူညီ	ပါ	တာ။	...				
kùjì	pà	hà	...				
help	POL	AGR	...				
'Friend Win Myint, even though I feel sorry , please help me one thing.'							

[1/F48/UFL]

Example (6.41) is a request between close friends to borrow money for school fees. The speaker uses the metaphor မျက်နှာပူ /mjeʔŋà pù/ 'face is hot' to indicate her ashamed feeling to do the request and uses the expression အားနာ /ʔá nà/ to indicate that she really takes the hearer's feeling into consideration.

6.2.3.9 Thanking

If the hearer complies with the requested act, the speaker is in debt to the hearer. As a debtor, the speaker has less power than the hearer. Expressing gratitude to the hearer implies that the speaker notices the debt that occurs by making the request.

(6.42)

...	ကျေးဇူး	ပြု	ပြီး	ငါ	ကို	ပိုက်ဆံ	ချေး
...	tə́ɛ́zú	pjɯ	pí	ŋa	kò	paiʔsʰàN	tɕʰí
...	favor	do	SEQ	1SG.DEP	OBJ	money	
	borrow						

နိုင်	မလား။	မင်း	ကျေးဇူး	ကို	ငါ	ဘယ်တော့မှ
nàin	mə = lá	mín	tə́ɛ́zú	kò	ŋà	bèdɔ̃mɔ̃
WIN	FUT=Q	2SG	favor	OBJ	1SG	whenever

မမေ့	ဝါ	ဘူး။
mə = mɛ	pà	bú
NEG=forget	POL	NEG

'... Could you do me a favor for lending me some money? **I'll never forget your gratitude.**'

[1/M70/SEA]

The situation in example (6.42) is borrowing money for school fees from a close friend. It illustrates a way of expressing gratitude in Burmese. At the end of the utterance, the speaker uses the expression မင်းကျေးဇူးကို ငါဘယ်တော့မှ မမေ့ပါဘူး။ /mín tə́ɛ́zú kò ŋà bèdɔ̃mɔ̃ mə = mɛ pà bú/, which means 'I will never forget your gratitude' to emphasize his thankfulness.

All of the politeness strategies mentioned in this section are ways to preserve the hearer's face. They illustrate the desire not to threaten the hearer's face. The requester tries to show that s/he does not want to impinge upon the requestee.

6.2.4 Off record

According to Brown and Levinson (1987, 211), by making a request off record '...the actor leaves himself an 'out' by providing himself with a number of defensible interpretations; he cannot be held to have committed himself to just one particular interpretation of his act'. To do an act off record, the speaker leaves the decision of how to interpret the utterance to the hearer. An off record utterance is an indirect language because it contains less or different information from what the speaker intends to mean.

As mentioned in chapter 5, since the data of this study were collected from questionnaires, most of the requests were made as direct requests. Only 0.91% of 1,545 request utterances were made in indirect ways or off record. Therefore, the off record strategy subtypes in this section serve as a guide for how to make requests indirectly. They do not represent all of the Burmese off record strategies for requests. There are only two ways of doing FTA off record in my study.

6.2.4.1 Giving hints

Giving hints is a strategy in which the utterance meaning and the intention of the speaker are not the same. The speaker can give hints in two ways: raising the issue of some desired action, and questioning the condition for the action, as shown in example (6.43) and (6.44), respectively.

(6.43)

ပါးပါး	သမီး	ကား	အသစ်	တစ်=စီး	လိုချင်	တယ်။
pá~pá	θəmí	ká	?əθi?	tə = sí	lòtɕ ^h IN	dè
father~	daughter	car	new	one=CLF	want	NFUT
သမီး	ကား	အသစ်	ကလေး	နဲ့	ကျောင်း	ကို
θəmí	ká	?əθi?	kələ	nɛ	tɕáUN	kò
daughter	car	new	children	INST	school	LOC

သွား ချင် တယ်။

θwá tɕ^hIN dè

go DES NFUT

'Father, I want a new car. I want to drive a new car to school.'

[2/F51/UFL]

Example (6.43) is a request by a daughter to ask her father to buy her a new car. In her utterance, she addresses her father at the beginning of the request, and refers to the object of the request by saying it is what she wants. She does not refer directly to the requested action, which is buying a car. The speaker lets the hearer search for the intention of uttering such a statement.

(6.44)

ဘော့ပင် တစ်ချောင်း လောက် အပို ဝါ လား။

bópìn tə = tɕ^háun lau? ʔəpò pà lá

pen one=CLF as.much.as extra bring.along Q

'(Do you) have an extra pen?'

[8/M11/WBMI]

Example (6.44) is a request to borrow a pen from a classmate. The speaker asks a question about the feasibility to do the requested act, that is, 'Do you have a pen?' In this question, the speaker mentions the hearer, a requested object, and the ownership of the hearer, but he does not refer to the requested act, which is borrowing a pen.

6.2.4.2 Being ambiguous

The speaker can make the request ambiguous and leave the interpretation up to the hearer. An example of this strategy is when it is not clear whether it is a compliment, request, or insult. A Burmese woman makes the utterance in example (6.45) to a foreigner wearing a skirt different from what normal Burmese women wear. In this utterance, the speaker goes to a place where foreigners are not allowed. The hearer pretends to be a Burmese woman by wearing a tube skirt. But the one she wears, the speaker thinks it is not suitable. Then she says,

(6.45)

ထဘီ	က	တော့	စိတ်	ဝင်	စား	စရာ	ကောင်း	တယ်။
t ^h əmèiN	kə	dɔ̌	sei?	wìN	sá	səjà	káUN	dè
tube.skirt	SBJ	CTR	heart	enter	eat	NOM	good	NFUT

'The skirt is very interesting.'

The utterance 'the skirt is very interesting' in example (6.45) can be interpreted as a compliment because the content of the utterance is positive, or interpreted as an insult because the style of the skirt maybe not suitable for the situation. It can also be a request or suggestion to change the skirt, if possible.

In the data, I also found that there are mixtures of positive and negative politeness used in Burmese requests. Example (6.46) illustrates requests that consist of positive and negative politeness strategies.

(6.46)

မောင်အေး၊	မင်း	အတွက်	ဝန်ထုတ်ဝန်ပိုး	မ=ဖြစ်	ဘူး	ဆို	ရင်
màUN.íé,	mín	?ətwe?	wùNt ^h ou?wùNpó	mə=p ^h ji?	bú	s ^h ò	jìN
Maung.Aye,	2SG	for	burden	NEG=be	NEG	say	COND

ငါ	စာအုပ်	တွေ	သယ်	သွား	ပေး	ပါ။
ŋà	sà?ou?	twè	θè	θwá	pé	pà
1SG	book	PL	carry	go	GIVE	POL

'Maung Aye, if it doesn't bother you, please carry the books for me.' [10/M7/UFL]

A teacher makes the request in example (6.46) to a student to help carry some books. The first and second pronouns the speaker uses, ငါ /ŋà/ 'I' and မင်း /mín/ 'you', are normally used among in-groups, especially among persons of equal status. By using these two pronouns, the speaker shows that the hearer is his in-group member. The speaker also gives an option to do (or not do) the requested action. This means the speaker respects the freedom of the hearer's action. Therefore, we can see that both positive and negative politeness strategies are used in the request in example (6.46).

6.2.5 Don't do FTA

Based on Brown and Levinson (1989), it is possible that the speaker will choose to do or say nothing in situations in which the estimation of risk of losing face is high. This strategy is considered most polite. An example is a situation in which someone talks with you but you cannot recognize who s/he is. You cannot ask him or her directly. The best way is to not say anything and try to discover it by asking someone else instead. This would be considered polite in Burmese culture.

All of the politeness strategies presented in this chapter illustrate how Burmese people try to persuade hearers to comply with their requested actions. Based on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, Burmese people use both on record and off record strategies, and they also don't do FTA in some cases in daily life. The next chapter will include the conclusion of the results of this study, including suggestions for further study on Burmese requests.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The final chapter presents a conclusion of requests and politeness strategies in Burmese, including a discussion of considerable aspects of Burmese requests and politeness strategies. Suggestions for further studies are also proposed.

7.1 Conclusion

This study aims to investigate the patterns and strategies of Burmese requests and also the politeness strategies used in Burmese requests. Results are based on data collected from questionnaires and supplemented by data from observations of natural conversations in Burmese society. Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper's (1989) model of the CCSARP was applied to analyze request components, patterns, and strategies. Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory was employed to analyze politeness strategies in Burmese requests. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 presented the study's findings with respect to three main issues: 1) linguistic forms and patterns of Burmese requests, 2) strategies and modifications of Burmese requests, and 3) politeness strategies in Burmese requests. The first topic (form and patterns of Burmese request) introduced request components and how they are formed as requests. The second topic (strategies and modifications of requests) indicated what Burmese people say when they want to make a request and demonstrates the ways they modify their requests either to decrease or increase the force of the requests. The third topic (politeness strategies) described how Burmese people make their requests appropriately in different contexts. Each topic was summarized as follows:

7.1.1 Forms and patterns of Burmese request

Linguistic forms of requests illustrate how Burmese people form a sentence to make a request. There are four possible constructions of the request head-

act: imperative, interrogative, declarative, and negative constructions. Even though the imperative construction is the simplest form of command or request in most languages, a Burmese request in imperative construction must be ended by the politeness maker ဝါ /pà/ so it will be polite enough to make a request in any situation.

The imperative without the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ is mostly used to ask someone of lower or equal status because it sounds like an order rather than a request. However, in cases in which the value of familiarity is high, a bare imperative can be used by the person of lower status to a person of higher status, such as requests among family members. In some requests in imperative form, the requested verb is elliptical, especially in the case of borrowing something from someone else, only the object related to the requested action and temporal downgrader မတော် /k^həŋə/ 'moment' are stated. The hearer understands this kind of sentence as a request.

Burmese requests in an interrogative construction are made by adding the yes/no question word လား /lá/ or မလား /mə=lá/ (a combination of a future maker မလ် /mè/ and question word လား /lá/) at the end of the imperative sentence. Using a question to make a request is indirect because the hearer can interpret whether the utterance is a question or a request.

Declaratives in request can be used to indicate the speaker's desire or to give hints to the hearer. Stating the desired action explicitly is a direct request, while giving a hint about the required action is an indirect request. The auxiliary verb ချင် /tɕ^hiN/ 'want, desire' indicates desire in Burmese. It immediately follows the main verb of the sentence and cannot stay alone in the sentence. Sometimes ချင် /tɕ^hiN/ is used together with a performative verb of request in declarative construction in order to state the desire of request directly.

Requests can also be formed in a negative construction as a question tag at the end of the sentence. In Burmese, a negative tag such as မသိဘူး /mə=θj bú/ '(I) don't know', မဟုတ်လား /mə=həu? lá/ 'Is'n it right', and မကောင်းဘူး လား /mə=káun bú lá/ 'is (it) not good', can be used in request utterances in three ways: conveying uncertainty or hesitation on the part of the speaker, suggesting the hearer to do the requested act, and reminding the hearer that the required action is something the hearer has said before. These follow the main clause. In some cases, the speakers uses 'Don't

you have X?' or 'Didn't you bring X?' when they want to borrow something from the hearer, because it is an indirect way to make a request.

According to Blum Kulka, House and Kasper (1989), a request utterance is a combination of different sequences of components. The request components in Burmese consist of a head-act, alerter, supportive move, and request indicator. Each component functions differently in requests. A head-act is the core unit of request. It is the most explicit realization of the request. A head-act can stand alone to perform the request. Alerters function to get the hearer's attention. They appear at the beginning of a request. Supportive moves are external modifications of the request. There are two groups of supportive moves: mitigating supportive moves, and aggravating supportive moves. Mitigating supportive moves function to decrease the force of the request, while aggravating supportive moves function to increase the force of the request. The last component of request utterances that emerged in this study is the request indicator. It functions to signal that the head-act of the request will be stated after some supportive moves are mentioned. Most request indicators found in Burmese requests are a combination of anaphora အဲ~အဲ /ʔé~ʔé/, demonstrative ဒါ /dà/ 'this', and subordinator ကြောင့် /tɕaun/ 'because', for example အဲဒါ~ အဲဒါ /ʔé-dà~ ʔé-dà/ 'For that', ဒါကြောင့်~ ဒါကြောင့် /dà-tɕaun~dà-tɕaun/ 'Therefore', or အဲဒါကြောင့် /ʔé-dà-tɕaun/ 'For that reason'.

Considering the number of head-acts in the utterance, two groups of request patterns are found in this study: single head-act, and multiple head-acts. Request utterances with a single head-act contain only one head-act but may be accompanied by other components, i.e. an alerter, supportive move, and request indicator. An alerter always appears at the beginning of the request and the supportive moves can follow or precede the head-act of the request, while request indicators appear before the request head-act. Most of the request utterances in my study are single head-acts. As for multiple head-acts, these are request patterns that contain more than one head-act: two head-act, and three head-act patterns.

7.1.2 Strategies and modification of Burmese requests

Based on CCSARP's model (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989), three main request strategies are used in Burmese: direct, conventional indirect request, and nonconventional indirect request.

A direct strategy refers to the request utterance through which the speaker explicitly reveals his/her want. Direct request strategies consists of mood derivable, performative, obligatory, and want statement ordered on a directness scale from most direct to indirect. Among these sub-types, mood derivable is most preferred by Burmese in making requests, followed by want statement, obligatory, and performative respectively. Mood derivable was used in all situations provided by both male and female respondents in this study.

A conventional indirect strategy refers to request utterances through which the speaker indirectly states his/her desire but is understood as a request by the hearer. A conventional indirect strategy consists of suggestory formulae, hedging, and query preparatory sub-strategies. Query preparatory is used most often, followed by hedging and suggestory formulae, respectively. Query preparatory is used in all situations as well as the mood derivable strategy.

A nonconventional indirect strategy refers to the request utterance in which the speaker mentions only part or something related to the required action. The hearer can interpret the request by considering the context. There are two sub-strategies: strong hints and mild hints. In the questionnaires, only strong hints were found. However, mild hint is sometimes used in daily conversation.

As for the frequency of the request strategies used by Burmese people, counted from a total number of 1,545 request head-acts, the usages of direct and conventional indirect strategies are not much different (51.39% for direct strategy, 47.7% for conventional indirect strategy). It can be said that both direct and conventional indirect strategies are preferred in Burmese requests. And the difference between the strategies used by male and female respondents is also not very different. Male respondents used direct strategies more than females; female respondents used conventional indirect strategies more than males. But it is also found that male respondents use nonconventional indirect strategy more often than females. Therefore, it cannot be said that gender relates to the use of request strategies.

Concerning request modifications in Burmese, there are internal and external modifications. External modifications comprise elements that function to modify the request utterance outside the request head-act, while internal modifications function to modify within the request head-act. The realization of external modification is in the form of supportive moves. The internal modification that functions to mitigate the imposition of the request is called a *downgrader*, while that which functions to increase the force of the request is called an *upgrader*. The most significant feature of request modifications in Burmese is the various choices of particles or markers, which function differently.

7.1.3 Politeness strategies in Burmese request

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness concerns the notion of face, which is a public self-image that every social member wants to claim for him/herself. There are negative and positive faces. Negative face refers to the want to be free from imposition, while positive face refers to the want to be appreciated or approved of by others. In Burmese culture, face is of great value. This is revealed through four types of expressions of face used by Burmese: 1) expressions of face that indicate facial expression, 2) expressions of face that indicate relationship among social members, 3) expressions of face that indicate position or rank, and 4) expressions of face that indicate recognition or approbation. People must be aware of others' face in social interactions, with the aim of maintaining relationships with each other, especially in situations that involve face-threatening acts, such as a request for someone to do something because a request is a speech act that intrinsically threatens negative face on the part of the requestee. Therefore, the requester needs to modify his/her request utterances in order to mitigate or soften the force of the request so that the aim of the act will be achieved, or at least the relationship among the participants will not be threatened.

To mitigate the impact of the act on the hearer, politeness strategies play an important role. The results of my study show that there are five possible politeness strategies for dealing with face threatening acts (FTA) based on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987): 1) bald on record, 2) on record with redressive action by

positive politeness strategies, 3) on record with redressive action by negative politeness strategies, 4) off record, and 5) not doing FTA.

A bald on record strategy is the most direct strategy. It is used in situations where the risk of face is not serious. In Burmese requests, it is used when the value of social distance between the participants is low, the power of the requester is high, in urgent situations, or where the benefit of the act goes to the requestee.

Making a request by using on record with redressive action by positive politeness strategies is an attempt to use in-group membership to preserve the positive face of the hearer. Positive politeness strategies used in Burmese requests are realized by way of 12 different strategies: showing in-group membership, presupposing or asserting common ground, seeking agreement, intensifying interest to the hearer, avoiding disagreement, giving reasons, being optimistic, promising, asserting or presupposing speaker's knowledge of and concern for the hearer's want, including both the speaker and the hearer in the activity, asserting reciprocity, and giving rewards. Among these, showing in-group membership and giving reasons are commonly used.

On record with redressive action by negative politeness strategies is an act by which the speaker demonstrates concern for the hearer's negative face. The realization of negative politeness strategies in Burmese can be grouped into nine strategies: being direct, don't presume/assume, don't coerce the hearer, minimizing the imposition, giving deference, communicating the speaker's want not to impinge on the hearer, don't specify the speaker, the hearer or the related thing in the request, considering the hearer's feeling, and thanking. Being direct and giving deference are common strategies that Burmese people use to preserve the hearer's negative face.

An off record strategy is an indirect strategy by which the speaker leaves the interpretation of the utterance to the hearer as to whether or not it is a request. Based on my data, giving hints and making ambiguous requests are examples of how Burmese people use off record strategies to make requests.

Not doing an FTA strategy is a strategy of doing or saying nothing when one has to deal with an FTA. It is used in situations where the risk of losing face is considered high.

All politeness strategies employed by Burmese people in making requests presented in this study are demonstrations of how Burmese people try to achieve their

request aims while not threatening the hearer's face. The use of such politeness strategies depends on social factors involved in each particular situation.

7.2 Discussion

The speech act of request has been studied in various languages, mostly Western ones, with only a small number of studies into non-Western languages. There have been studies done on requests in particular languages and studies conducted across multiple languages. The study of speech act of request together with apology conducted by Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) investigated three varieties of English and four other languages: Canadian French, Danish, German, and Hebrew. The results of this project reveal the shared phenomena of requests, which were claimed to be universal. Universal phenomena associated with requests have been of interest to many linguists. There have been numerous request studies undertaken in various languages with the aim of confirming the universality of requests. Some studies succeeded in this while others did not support such universality.

As for the present study, this is an attempt to investigate the speech act of requests in Burmese as comprehensively as possible in order to expand knowledge of the speech act of request by adding Burmese to the list of languages studied. The results were described in three main topics as presented in chapters 4, 5, and 6, and summarized in section 7.1 of this chapter. There are still some issues related to the speech act of request in Burmese that need to be discussed as follows:

Based on Blum-Kulka et al (1989), request utterances consist of an alerter, supportive move, head-act, and modifications. All of these components found in Burmese requests also occur in other languages. However, only in Burmese requests are components known as 'request indicator's found. A request indicator functions to signal that the head-act of request is going to be said after supportive moves are given.

Three types of request strategies (direct, conventional indirect, and nonconventional indirect) found in Burmese requests are the same as proposed by Blum-Kulka et al, and also in other languages. Therefore, the result confirms the universal of request in terms of types of strategies used in requests. As for preferred strategies, the conventional indirect strategy was proposed to be universal. In

Burmese, the frequency of the request strategies used by Burmese people reveals slightly different percentages for direct and conventional indirect strategies (51.39:47.7). In addition, the frequency of the uses of mood derivable and query preparatory are almost the same (44.72: 45.83). It can be said that both direct and conventional indirect requests are preferred and common in Burmese. This result does not support the results of Blum-Kulka et al, but it is in line with the studies of Fukushima (1996), and Aoyama (2002), who studied Japanese requests, and the study of Byon (2004), who studied Korean requests. The results of these two studies also show that both direct and conventional indirect requests are preferred. The other studies on requests in non-Western languages, such as Chinese (Hong, 1999; Kong, 1999; Lee, 2005), Korean (Rue & Zhang, 2008), Thai (Wiriya, 2001; Sungkhaman, 2001) and Kinnuari (Saxena, 2002) show that only the direct strategy is preferred. This also does not support the universal of Blum-Kulka et al. However, the study of Thai requests by Wiroomhachaipong (2000) reported that Thai people prefer a conventional indirect request, and this supports the findings of Blum-Kulka et al. We can see that in Burmese, Japanese, Thai, and Korean, both direct and conventional indirect strategies are the preferred strategy in making a request, while in Kinnuari and Chinese the direct strategy is preferred.

Even though the result of the study shows that Burmese people prefer both direct and conventional indirect strategies, the common form of requests in Burmese, which can be used in every situation, is the imperative construction, i.e. verb phrase plus politeness marker ဝါ /pà/. This form has been taught as a polite request in Burmese culture. Even though it is in imperative construction, the influence of the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/ can soften the force of an imperative, which sounds like an order or command to be a request and verb phrase plus ဝါ /pá/ can be used to make requests in any context. Therefore, it can be said that ဝါ /pá/ is a request marker in Burmese because it changes an order to be a request. Besides a politeness marker, downgraders such as downtoners, agreement particle ခန့် /nè/, understaters, or appealers also function to decrease the force of request imposition. Therefore, imperative requests in Burmese can be used appropriately in different contexts depending on the downgraders, especially for the politeness marker ဝါ /pà/, which can

be used in any situation regardless of factor. The characteristics of Burmese requests are the same as in Chinese and Kinnuari languages. In Chinese, the significant feature of requests is the basic action verb, which is used together with 'please' (Lee, 2005; Hong, 1999; Kong, 1999). This is the same as Kinnuari, in which the system of inflectional morphology plays an important role in reflecting the range of semantics and pragmatic usages. Requesting, commanding, suggesting, or advising depends on the choices of markers used in imperative (Saxena, 2002). Also, in Japanese and Korean, the honorific system is an influential feature in making a request appropriate for different contexts.

Since request is a speech act that intrinsically threatens the negative face of the hearer, the requester needs to be aware of his/her act. In this situation, politeness strategies are used in order to preserve the hearer's face and to keep the conversation harmonious. Burmese people use the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) – bald on record, positive, negative, off record, or doing nothing. However, when considering sub-strategies of politeness, a consideration of the hearers' feelings strategy as found in Burmese request is not mentioned in Brown and Levinson's theory. It is a negative politeness strategy. When the speaker considers the hearer's feelings, the speaker knows that his/her action or utterance is an imposition on the hearer. This strategy is revealed by the use of the expression အားနာ /ʔá nà/ in Burmese. It is a combination of the word အား /ʔá/ 'power', and နာ /nà/ 'hurt' and it literally means 'the power of the speaker is hurt.'. The expression showing the consideration of the other's feeling is also found in other Southeast Asian cultures but realized in different linguistic expressions. For example, in Thai culture, it is realized by the word เคร่งใจ /kre:ŋ cai/. According to Intachakra (2010), considering for other's feeling in Thai or '*khwa:m kre:ngjai*' is the crucial interactional principle in Thai culture and consists of self-abnegation and other-accommodation. It may be said that the expression that conveys consideration for the other's feelings is common in Southeast Asian cultures.

As for social factors involved in making requests, social distance, power, and rank of imposition are important in Burmese society. Even though the data from the questionnaires cannot reveal clearly which social factor is the most significant, from the observation of natural conversations, power seems to be the most significant factor in social interactions in Burmese. People who have more power are people in

higher positions in each particular situation. For example, in the classroom, the teacher is the most powerful person; in a family setting, the father is the one who has most power; among siblings, the eldest is the most powerful. To request a person of higher status, the speaker has to be aware of his/her action and utterance with regard to the distance value between them. The speaker of lower power can use a direct request to a person in a higher position of power but both of them must be on familiar terms.

As for the gender of the participants, female speakers prefer conventional indirect strategies while male speakers prefer direct strategies, but there is only a slight difference in frequency of use between them. The result does not indicate clearly that Burmese males are more direct than females because male respondents also used nonconventional indirect strategies more often than female respondents. In Burmese society, males seem to have more power than females; in the case of requests, gender is not an important factor in making requests because there is a form of request that can be used in every situation: verb phrase plus politeness marker *o* /pà/. With this form, Burmese people can make an appropriate request in all contexts. Therefore, it is difficult to identify which factor is the most influential. In order to discover which factor is the most significant in Burmese culture, further study is needed.

7.3 Suggestions

This study is the first attempt to explore the speech act of request in Burmese, which is one of the main languages in the Tibeto-Burman languages family. The results provide knowledge of the Burmese language in terms of speech acts and pragmatics, which have not been studied previously. In order to gain more knowledge of Burmese in these aspects, studies into other speech acts, such as apologizing, complimenting, thanking and so on, should be undertaken.

Although the respondents had to write requests on paper and had to imagine situations as provided in the questionnaires, the answers in the questionnaires appear in the speaking form of Burmese. However, many Burmese people said that making requests appropriately also depends on facial countenance or the speaker's intonation. Therefore, the data collected by questionnaires may not be representative

of all Burmese requests. The study of Burmese requests in natural conversations should be investigated in order to provide a complete picture of the speech act of request in Burmese culture because natural data included intonation and facial countenance, which reflect more details of request. Additionally, an examination of which social factors play importance roles in Burmese interactions is also needed.

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, questionnaires from non-native speakers of Burmese were excluded from the present study to avoid the influence of a mother language at any rate. Nevertheless, as a 'Multi-national state', it would be interesting to do research that compares Burmese languages used by Burmese native speakers and non-native speakers or ethnic groups in Myanmar in terms of request or politeness. This kind of study may reveal how much the ethnic languages have influenced the Burmese language, especially those who study Burmese at school and live in Burmese society.

Lastly, I would like to invite future researchers to conduct pragmatic studies of other languages belonging to the Tibeto-Burman language family for further cross-cultural research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A QUESTIONNAIRE

ထင်မြင်ချက်

အပိုင်း (၁)။ ။ ကိုယ်ရေးရာဇဝင်

အသက် _____

ကျား/မ _____

လူမျိုး _____

ပညာရေးအဆင့်အတန်း _____

ပြောဆိုသုံးစွဲသည့်ဘာသာစကား _____

အခြားတတ်ကျွမ်းသည့်ဘာသာစကားများ _____

အပိုင်း (၂)။ ။ အောက်ပါမေးခွန်းတွေကို သေသေချာချာဖတ်ပြီး ပေးထားတဲ့ကွက်လပ်မှာ ကျေးဇူးပြုပြီးအဖြေရေးပေးပါ။ စကားပြောပုံစံနဲ့ရေးပေးပါ။ အခြားထင်မြင်ချက်တွေရှိရင် နံပါတ် (၁၃) မှာ ရေးပေးပါ။

၁. ရှင်နဲ့ဝင်းမြင့်ဟာ ငယ်ငယ်ကတည်းကတကွသိုလ်ရောက်တဲ့အထိ သူငယ်ချင်းတွေဖြစ်ခဲ့တယ်။ ဒီနေ့ ကျောင်းလခသွင်းရတဲ့နောက်ဆုံးနေ့ဖြစ်ပေမဲ့ ရှင်မှာ သွင်းဖို့ ပိုက်ဆံမရှိဘူး။ မိဘတွေကလည်း မပေးနိုင်ဘူး။ ဒါကြောင့် ဝင်းမြင့်ဆီက ချေးမယ်လို့ ဆုံးဖြတ်တယ်။ ရှင်က ဝင်းမြင့်ကို ဘယ်လို ပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့်အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၂. ရှင်က ကားအသစ်တစ်စီးလိုချင်ပေမဲ့ ပိုက်ဆံမရှိဘူး။ ဒါကြောင့် အဖေက ဝယ်ပေးစေချင်တယ်။ ရှင်က အဖေကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့်အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၃. ရှင်ဟာ တက္ကသိုလ်မှာ ဆရာ(သို့)ဆရာမလုပ်နေပါတယ်။ တစ်နေ့မှာ ရှင်က စာသင်နေတုန်း ရေးဖို့ဘောပင်မေ့လာခဲ့တယ်။ ဒါကြောင့် ကျောင်းသား(သို့)ကျောင်းသူတစ်ယောက်ဆီက ငှားမယ်။ ရှင်က အဲဒီကျောင်းသားကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့် အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။ (ရှင်နဲ့ဒီကျောင်းသားဟာ ဒီနေ့မှ တွေ့ဖူးတယ်။)

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၄. စည်သူနဲ့ရှင်ဟာ တစ်နှစ်ကြာကြာအတန်းဖော်သူငယ်ချင်းဖြစ်လာခဲ့တယ်။ မနေ့က ရှင်ကျောင်းပျက်လို့ ဒီနေ့ စည်သူရဲ့မှတ်စုစာအုပ်ကိုငှားချင်တယ်။ စည်သူကို ရှင်ဘယ်လို ပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့် အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၅. ဦးရွှေဟာ ရှင်ရဲ့အစ်ကိုဖြစ်ပါတယ်။ ဒီနေ့ ရှင်က သူငယ်ချင်းအိမ်သွားပြီးအတူတူအိမ်စာလုပ်ရမယ်။ သူငယ်ချင်းအိမ်က သင့်အိမ်နဲ့တော်တော်ဝေးတယ်။ ဒါကြောင့် ဦးရွှေကို ပို့ပေးစေချင်တယ်။ ဦးရွှေကို ရှင်ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့်အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၆. ရှင်က ပထမနှစ်ဝိဇ္ဇာကျောင်းသားဖြစ်ပါတယ်။ စာတန်းရေးဖို့ စာအုပ်တစ်အုပ်လိုတယ်။ အဲဒီစာအုပ်ဟာ ဦးသက်လွင်ဆိုတဲ့ဆရာတစ်ယောက်မှာရှိတယ်လို့ရှင်ကသိပါတယ်။ ဒါကြောင့် ဆရာနဲ့မခင်ပေမဲ့ ဆရာဆီက စာအုပ်ငှားချင်တယ်။ ဆရာကို ရှင်ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့် အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၇. ရှင်ဟာ ပြီးခဲ့တဲ့အပတ်က အလုပ်စဝင်တာနဲ့ကိုနီနဲ့သိခဲ့တယ်။ ဒီနေ့ ရှင်တာဝန်က ဘဏ်ကို သွားစရာရှိပေမယ့် နေမကောင်းလို့မသွားနိုင်ပါဘူး။ ဒါကြောင့် ကိုနီကို ရှင့်အစား သွားခိုင်းပေးစေချင်တယ်။ ရှင်ဟာ ကိုနီကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့် အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၈. ရှင်ဟာ တက္ကသိုလ်ကျောင်းသားတစ်ယောက်ဖြစ်ပါတယ်။ မြန်မာ့သမိုင်းအတန်း ပထမဆုံး ဝင်တဲ့နေ့မှာ ဘောပင်မပါလို့ ဘေးမှာ ထိုင်နေတဲ့ကျောင်းသားတစ်ယောက်ကို ငှားချင်တယ်။ ရှင်က ဒီကျောင်းသားကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့် အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။ (ရှင်တို့နှစ်ယောက်ဟာ ဒီအတန်းမှာ ပထမဆုံးတွေ့ဖူးတယ်။)

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၉. ရှင်က ကျောင်းအဆောင်မှူးအဖြစ်တာဝန်ယူရတယ်။ တစ်နေ့မှာ ရှင်သမီးက သူငယ်ချင်းအိမ်မှာ အိမ်စာသွားလုပ်တယ်။ အချိန်နောက်ကျပေမဲ့ ပြန်မလာသေးလို့ ရှင်က စိတ်ပူနေပါတယ်။ ရှင်မှာလည်း အရေးကြီးတဲ့အလုပ်တစ်ခုပြီးအောင်လုပ်ရမယ်။ ဒါကြောင့် အဆောင်မှာ စိတ်ချရတဲ့အလုပ်သမားတစ်ယောက် လွှတ်ပြီး သမီးကို သွားကြိုခိုင်းတယ်။ ရှင်က အလုပ်သမားကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့် အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၁၀. သင်က ကျောင်းဆရာဖြစ်ပါတယ်။ ညနေ ရုံးဆင်းချိန်မှာ ရှင်က စာအုပ်တွေကို အိမ်ပြန်ယူသွား ချင်တယ်။ ဒါပေမဲ့ စာအုပ်က များလွန်းလို့ တစ်ယောက်ထဲမသယ်နိုင်ဘူး။ ဒါကြောင့် အမြဲတမ်းတွေ့နေတဲ့ မောင်အေးကို ခေါ်ပြီး သယ်ခိုင်းလိုက်ပါတယ်။ မောင်အေးကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့်အတိုင်း ရေးပြပါ။

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၁၁. ရှင်က စားသောက်ဆိုင်မှာ အလုပ်စဝင်တာ တစ်ပတ်လောက်ပဲရှိသေးတယ်။ ဒါပေမဲ့ ရှင်မှာ အလုပ်မရှိတာကြာလို့ ဒီလမှာ ပိုက်ဆံသုံးဖို့မလောက်ဘူး။ ဒါကြောင့် ဆိုင်ရှင်ဆီက လခကြိုတင်တောင်း ချင်တယ်။ သင်က ဆိုင်ရှင်ကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့်အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၁၂. ရှင်က တက္ကသိုလ်မှာ ကထိကဖြစ်ပါတယ်။ ပြီးခဲ့တဲ့အပတ်က ပါမောက္ခ ရေးခိုင်းတဲ့ အစီရင်ခံစာ ရေးတာမပြီးသေးလို့ နည်းပြဆရာအသစ်တစ်ယောက်ကို အကူအညီတောင်း ချင်တယ်။ ရှင်ဟာ ဒီနည်းပြဆရာကို ဘယ်လိုပြောမလဲ။ ပြောမယ့်အတိုင်းရေးပြပါ။

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၁၃. အကြံပေးချက်များ

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ကျေးဇူးအများကြီးတင်ပါတယ်ရှင်။

APPENDIX B

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF BURMESE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire

Part I : Personal information

Age: _____

Sex: _____

Nationality: _____

Education : _____

Mother Language: _____

Other language that you can speak: _____

Part II : Would you now read the following situations carefully. Write what you would say in the space provided. **Please write in spoken style.** If you have any comments or wish to make additional qualifications, please write down of No. 13.

1. You and Win Myint are friends from childhood until university. Today is the last day for register payment, but you don't have the money to pay. Your parents cannot give you the payment. Therefore, you decide to borrow money from Win Myint. What would you say? Please write down in the space below.

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2. You want a new car, but you don't have the money to buy one. So, you want your father to buy for you. What would you say to your father? Please write down in the space below.

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3. You are a lecturer at the university. One day while you are giving a lecture, you realize that you have forgotten a pen. Therefore, you want to borrow one from your students. What would you say to your student? Please write down in the space below. (This is the first time you meet your student.)

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4. Si Thu and you have been friends for a year. Yesterday, you didn't attend class because you were sick, so, today, you want to borrow the lecture notes from Si Thu. What would you say? Please write down in the space below.

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5. You have to go to do homework at your friend's house which is a bit far from your house. You want your elder brother to give you a ride. What would you say to your brother? Please write down in the space below.

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6. You are a first year university student. You need a reference book for a paper you are writing. You know that the book belongs to U Thet Lwin, one of the lecturers at the university, and you want to borrow the book. What would you say? Please write down in the space below.

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7. You first met Ko Ni when you had started your new job last week. Today, you have to go to the bank for working but you can't go out because you are suddenly sick and need Ko Ni to go instead. What would you say to Ko Ni? Please write down in the space below.

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8. When you attend history class for the first time you forget to bring a pen. Therefore, you want to borrow one from the student who is sitting next to you. What would you say? Please write down in the space below. (You have never met this student before.)

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9. You are a hostel warden. Your daughter went to her friend's house and hasn't come back yet. This makes you very worried but you still have an important job to finish, so you can't go to pick up your daughter yourself. You need one of the officers in the hostel to go and pick up your daughter instead. What would you say to the officer? Please write down in the space below.

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10. You are a lecturer. One day in the evening, you want to take some books from the office to keep in your house but there are too many books. You can't carry them all by yourself. You want to ask Maung Aye, a student who you are familiar with, to help you. What would you say to Maung Aye? Please write down in the space below.

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11. You have been working at the restaurant for one week. Before this you were unemployed for a long time and don't have money to spend. You're going to ask for your salary in advance from the restaurant owner. What would you say to your boss? Please write down in the space below.

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12. You are a lecturer at the University. You were asked to do a report by the head of the department but you couldn't finish it on time. You want to ask a new tutor to help you to write a report. What would you say to that tutor? Please write down in the space below.

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13. Suggestions

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Thankyou very much.

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Miss Ampika Rattanapitak
DATE OF BIRTH	20 March 1977
PLACE OF BIRTH	Chiangrai, Thailand
INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED	Chiang Mai University, 1995 – 2000: B.A. (Thai) (Hons), Yangon University of Foreign Language, Yangon, Myanmar, 2000 – 2003: B.A. (Myanmar) Mahidol University, 2005-2011: Doctor of Philosophy (Linguistics)
RESEARCH GRANTS	The Royal Golden Jubilee Ph.D. Program, Doctoral Grant, Thailand Research Fund (TRF) and Office of the Higher Education Commission
HOME ADDRESS	239/35, Ang Kaew, Huey Kaew Road, Suthep Sub-district, Meung District, Chiang Mai, 50200, Thailand Tel. (+66) 0812692966 E-mail: maayethu@yahoo.com
EMPLOYMENT ADDRESS	Burmese Division, Oriental Languages Department, Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

- 2011 *Request strategies in Burmese*. Paper presented at the RGJ Seminar Series LXXXII Southeast Asian Linguistics, August 5, 2011, Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia, Mahidol University.
- 2010 Inlay lake: one of the interesting destinations. *Mekong-Salween Civilization studies journal*, 1(2), 37-42. [in Thai]
- 2010 *Request patterns in Burmese*. Paper presented at the RGJ-Ph.D. Congress XI, April 1-3, 2010, Jomtien Palm Beach Resort Pattaya, Chonburi, Thailand.
- 2009 An analysis of textual meaning in some selected Burmese religious tales. *Journal of Language and Culture*, 28 (2), 57-88.
- 2009 Palaung wordlist. *Journal of Language and Culture*, 28 (1), 77-122.
- 2009 *The comparison of linguistic structures of request in Burmese and in Thai*. Paper presented at the 42nd international conference on Sino-Tibetan language and linguistics, November 3-5, 2009, Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand.
- 2008 Burmese tea culture. *Oriental review journal*, 1, 15-19, Chiang Mai University. [in Thai]
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