Contrastive Syntactic Structures of Speech Act of Requests in Thai and Vietnamese

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ในภาษาไทยและภาษาเวียดนาม

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to study shows different syntactic structures of speech act of requests in Thai and Vietnamese by using Tagmemic – Transformation – Case Grammatical approach analyze them. The data were collected form Discourse Completion Test (DCT), to 100 Thai and 100 Vietnamese. All of them have 15 situations. Based on the questionnaires collected in Thai & Vietnamese language, the structure was divided from 3,000 answers into 6 forms of rating scale questionnaire and statistics, with the different frequency. The structure act of request in Thai and Vietnamese is divided into two large groups according to the frequency: 1) similarities and 2) differences. The group of similarities that Thai and Vietnamese people use the structures 2 (Post-posed), 4 (In between posed) and 6 (Multiple Heads) popularly with the similar frequencies without many differences like the 2nd group. The second group indicates that the structures 1 (Head act only), 3 (Pre-posed) and 5 (No Head Acts) have very different frequencies compared to the first group.

Keywords: Syntactic structures, speech act of requests, Thai, Vietnamese
บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาความแตกต่างของโครงสร้างของประโยคขอร้องภาษาไทยและภาษาเวียดนาม โดยใช้ทฤษฎี Tagmemic - การแปลงเปลี่ยน – วิธีการวิเคราะห์ทางไวยากรณ์ เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลโดยใช้แบบสอบถามชนิดเติมเต็มพหูชนิด (DCT) จากชาวไทย 100 คนและชาวเวียดนาม 100 คน โดยมีสถานการณ์ที่แตกต่างกัน 15 สถานการณ์ จากแบบสอบถามทั้งภาษาไทยและภาษาเวียดนามจำนวนรวม 3,000 ชุด แบ่งโครงสร้างจวนกรมการทำขอร้องได้ 6 รูปแบบ ได้แก่แบบสอบถามด้วยสถิติร้อยละละและคำสั่งอื่นๆ พบความถี่ที่ปรากฏในการขอร้องแตกต่างกัน โครงสร้างจวนกรมการทำขอร้องภาษาไทยและภาษาเวียดนามแบ่งออกเป็นสองกลุ่มโดยคิดความถี่คือ 1) กลุ่มที่พบความถี่ในการใช้คล้ายคลึงกันและ 2) กลุ่มที่พบความถี่ในการใช้แตกต่างกัน กลุ่มที่มีความถี่ในการใช้คล้ายคลึงกันทั้งชาวไทยและชาวเวียดนามนิยมใช้โครงสร้างที่ 2 (Post-posed), ที่ 4 (In between posed) และที่ 6 (Multiple Heads) ซึ่งกลุ่มนี้นิยมปรากฏความถี่ในการใช้คล้ายกันโดยไม่แตกต่างกันมากเหมือนตัวเลข กลุ่มที่ 2) จะพบว่าโครงสร้างที่ 1 (Head Act only), ที่ 3 (Pre-posed) และที่ 5 (No Head Acts) มีความถี่ในการใช้ที่แตกต่างกันมากเนื่องจากมีกลุ่มแรก

คำสำคัญ: โครงสร้างประโยค, จวนกรมการทำขอร้อง, ภาษาไทย, ภาษาเวียดนาม

Introduction

The structures of speech act of requests in Thai and Vietnamese: Currently, the method of learning foreign languages is not only learning grammar but also learning how to use the language and communication culture of that country. In the past, researchers often studied the syntax and semantics but did not study the relationships between language forms. In addition, they did not know how to organize the language forms into chains, and which chains are considered to be correct in the world entity, as well as how words are related to things. In the act of verbal request of Thai and Vietnamese, the speaker (S) can use many different ways of speaking depending on the suitability of each situation. When speaking, S should pay attention to choosing
words appropriately to make the hearer (H) do what S wants without losing each other’s affection. That is the reason why it is necessary to choose the right words with natural and formal voice because the verbal request usually consists of two parts: 1) Head Act is the main content that expresses the meaning of the request, such as “ช่วยหยิบหนังสือให้หน่อย” (Lấy giúp chị (một) quyển sách)/ (Please bring me (a) book), and 2) Supportive move is the supplement or addition of the act of request that can be used to save face of H before giving a request or make each request more weight. This is because textbooks may not describe clearly, usually only describe a few sentences in the request. Moreover, explaining the language usage in textbooks will mostly focus on grammar rather than explain how to use the sentences and strategies of request that are suitable for each situation and person. Therefore, if S chooses to use inappropriate structure of request in each situation, H may be confused and does not understand the request or such choice can even make both H and S dissatisfy.

**Theoretical framework**

Tagmemics is the theory used for analyzing the syntactic structures of requests. In 1950, Tagmemics was introduced by Kenneth L. Pike to rectify the confusion between funcion (slot) and word class (filler). Tagmemics is used for presenting basic structure of requests and arranging data as a hierarchy of ranks; sentence, clause, phrase, word, etc. Tagmemics’s aim is to find a language system and to explain it correctly and elegantly.

Function or slot is the position which language units appear. The position shows the function of than unit. For example, subject, predicate of a sentence. Word class of filler is the language forms found in the same position and having the same function. For example, there are various word classes which can be found in a subject function such as pronoun, proper noun and noun phrase. A head Act is the minimal unit that can realize a request; it is the core of the request sequence.

A supportive Move is unit external to the request/ the Head Act occurring either before or after it, which modifies its impact by either mitigating or aggravating its force.
Scope the study

The data were collected from Discourse Completion Test (DCT). All of them have 15 situations, 4 choices (Other answer options for each situation for participants to answer on their own) of rating rating scale questionnaire and statistics. We distributed DTC questionnaires to 100 Thai and 100 Vietnamese. Thus, the survey content has a total of 3,000 content (200 people 15 situations) and additional daily speeches collected (collected on other answer options of each situation).

Purpose of the Study

1. To study the syntactic structure of requests in Thai and Vietnamese
2. To analyze the ratio of request sentences in Thai and Vietnamese
3. To contra the similarities and differences, using sentences in Thai and Vietnamese

Results of the Study

The syntactic structures the act of request in Thai and Vietnamese

The examples given are taken from the other answer option’ (written by the respondents themselves, not by the available form) in the DCT form. Thai examples we will translate into Vietnamese in a way that keeps the originals and order of the words in Thai. Based on the other answer DCT. We divided the syntactic structures into 6 structures as follows: (อภิภูฉัย เดชาธิวัฒน์กิจ, 2547)

**Structures 1: Head act only** [ ] is the structure consisting of head acts or only part of request that S does not explain the reason or does not refer to the cases related to request interpretation including the way to use other supportive moves at any position in the request sentence.
Example in Thai
Sentence 10
(1) [รบกวนสูบบุหรี่ในที่ที่เขาจัดให้

[Làm phiền hút thuốc ở nơi được phép hút nhé ạ]
[Please smoke in the permitted place]

When the word ‘นะ’ (‘nhé’) is translated into Vietnamese, it does not appear; however, in Thai language it is often found at the end of the sentence to complement the verb added in the sentence, in order to reduce the request of S to H, and avoid the same as the imperative sentence.

Example in Vietnamese
Sentence 1
(2) [Em lấy cho chị ít salad với]
[Please give me some salad]

The aforementioned two answers belong to the explicit meaning group because of using the word ‘cho’ (‘give’) with the meaning of obvious request and adding the word ‘lấy’ (‘take’), which makes H know more and more clearly that S wants H to do something for S. In addition, the word ‘với’ is used to make it imperative for the speaker, which is in the inward manner. Therefore, this type of imperative sentence only uses the second-person pronoun/noun as the subject, not uses the general pronoun. The word ‘với’ expresses a strong and urgent ‘imperative’ nuance because the action performance must also depend on H’s consent or permission, and the word ‘với’ at the end of the sentence also shows a begging voice or there can be modal particles like the imperative sentence. In terms of function, they signify the imperative nuance for the whole speech and form the imperative mood.

Structures 2: Post-posed [ ] – ( ) is the structure that S expresses his/her request and then has a supportive move to discuss other things related to the request in order to make the request more weight.
Example in Thai
Sentence 10

(3) [ช่วยไปสูบบุหรี่ไกลๆ จากตรงนี้หน่อยได้ไหมคะ] (น้องแพ้กลิ่นบุหรี่มากๆ เลยค่ะ ห้ามเข้าใกล้ห้องทำงาน ปวดหัวมากทำให้ทำงานไม่ได้เลยค่ะ)

[Giúp đi hút thuốc xa xa được không ạ?] (em dị ứng mùi thuốc lắm a, chỉ hút đây có mùi bay đến phòng làm việc, nhức đầu làm việc được được ạ.)

[Can you smoke over there away from me please?] (I’m very allergic to cigarette smoke. If you smoke here, I can smell cigarette smoke in the office and I can’t really work because of a headache.)

The head structure as mentioned above belongs to the query preparation group, S shows a worried or uncertain expression about whether H will be willing to comply with S’s request or not, so S has an expression asking about H’s ability to perform action in the form: ‘ได้ไหม’ ‘ได้รึเปล่า’ [có thể... được không?] [can ... please?]. In addition, the supportive move is to supplement modulation of illocutionary force about the reason why the speaker asks the hearer to do such action.

Example in Viet
Sentence 10

(4) [Em nghĩ anh nên đi chỗ khác hút thuốc đi ạ] (vi đậy là khu công cộng mà anh).

[I think you should go somewhere else to smoke] (because this is a public area).

(5) [Anh hút thuốc chỗ khác được không anh?] (Ở đây cấm hút thuốc đấy ạ).

[Can you smoke elsewhere?] (Smoking is prohibited here).

The two sentences above all have the same supportive move, which is complementary to the statements related to the reason for doing action. And the head structure has the word ‘nên’ (‘should’) to denote illocutionary act as an advice. At the end of the sentence, the word ‘di’ is a modal particle with the
function of making a request to urge H to do action; however, it also reduces the high imperative nuance because of the word ‘ạ’ at the end of the sentence to indicate S’s attitude to save face for H.

**Structures 3: Pre-posed ( ) - [ ]** is the structure that S tries to hide or not dare to say immediately. Therefore, firstly, S uses a supportive move for modulation of illocutionary force to pre-pose with H and then says the request which S wants.

**Example in Thai**

**Sentence 3**

(6) (น้อง xxx) (พอมีเวลามั้ยจ๊ะ) (คือคอมพ์เสีย ต้องลงโปรแกรมใหม่จ่ะ)

(พี่ทำไม่เป็น) (น้อง xxxพ่อจะช่วยพี่ลงได้เมื่อช้า)

(ฟ้า xxx) (โครันร้องท่อนย่ํา,) (มาย์ทิชห้องไฟต้องค้กจํะ)

(น้อง xxx) (คือคอมพ์เสีย ต้องลงโปรแกรมใหม่จ่ะ)

(พี่ทำไม่เป็น) (น้อง xxxพ่อจะช่วยพี่ลงได้เมื่อช้า)

Example in Viet

**Sentence 2**

(7) (Chị chuẩn bị dọn nhà cu ơi,) (có mọi mình chị,) [em có sắp xếp dc thời gian hôm nào qua giúp chị với.]

(I’m going to move into a new house) (there is only me), [do you arrange any time to help me?]

(8) (Mai chị định chuyển đồ sang nhà mới mà chưa biết làm sao) [em tiện không thì lái xe sang chuyển đồ giúp chị với.]

In Thai language, the personal words (relatives-related words, personal pronouns, first names, position-related words) are used to identify the speaker and hearer in the role of the subject or personality of act, at the same time denote the position correlation and the level of friendliness among the talkers such as (6). Moreover, there is ‘คำบอกมาลา’ (Mood) like ‘จ๊ะ’ ‘ง่า’ (ạ, à). S wants to reduce the formality, and in Thai language, this kind of word will appear quite a lot and be used in many different situations. (see (นววรรณ พันธุเมธา, 2551))

Example in Viet

**Sentence 2**

(7) (Chị chuẩn bị dọn nhà cu ơi,) (có mọi mình chị,) [em có sắp xếp dc thời gian hôm nào qua giúp chị với.]

(I’m going to move into a new house) (there is only me), [do you arrange any time to help me?]

(8) (Mai chị định chuyển đồ sang nhà mới mà chưa biết làm sao) [em tiện không thì lái xe sang chuyển đồ giúp chị với.]

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(I’m going to move into a new house tomorrow but I don’t know what to do) [Do you have free time to drive to help me with your car.]

‘Với’ is used to make it imperative for the speaker, which is in the inward manner. Therefore, this type of imperative sentence only uses the second-person pronoun/noun as the subject, not uses the general pronoun. The imperative sentence with the particle ‘với’ expresses a strong and urgent ‘imperative’ nuance because the action performance must also depend on H’s consent or permission.

**Structures4: In between posed ( ) - [ ] - ( ) is the structure that S uses the supportive moves. First of all, S may be afraid of H and not dare to say the request immediately. At the same time, after requesting, S also use the supportive moves to increase the word weight because S tries to save his/ her face that has lost due to his/ her own request.**

**Example in Thai**

Sentence 5

(9) (xxx แย่แล้ว) (ทำไงดี) [คือพี่ต้องไปสนามบินด่วนเลย แต่รถพี่เสีย จะเป็นอะไรเมื่อย้ำพี่ขออีมรวมเจ้า 2ชม.] (แล้วพี่เตรียมน้ำมันให้เต็มถัง) (สัญญาว่าจะขับระวังสุดๆเลยจ้า)

(xxx, oh my god!) (What should I do now?) [I have to go to the airport right away, but my car is broken, can I borrow your car for 2 hours?] (and then I will fill the tank of petrol immediately) (I promise to drive carefully).

Using written language instead of spoken language is to let H know that S stretches voice to show a decrease in pressure or threatening to H, and the use of letters is also a substitute for indirect begging.
Example in Viet
Sentence 12
(10) (Ông/ Bà ơi,) [ông/ bà có thể hướng dẫn cho mình bài tập này một chút được không?] (Minh không biết cách giải).
(Grandpa/ Grandma,) [Can you guide me to do this exercise?] (I don’t know how to solve it).

In addition, there is the case in which S uses a personal pronoun for H that is not suitable for age or social context such as: S calls himself/ herself ‘minh’ (as a friend) but calls the hearer ‘Ông/ Bà’ (‘Grandpa/ Grandma’). From the context of unfriendly colleagues, it can be seen that S wants to hide two things: firstly, help to feel closer for a joke, secondly, help to increase the level of courtesy during the conversation and want to ask H to help do something that S has requested. Using personal pronouns in the society shows that one of the characteristics of Vietnamese culture is modesty, praise and respect to others.

Structures 5: No Head Acts ( ) ( ) is the structure that S does not specify his/ her request but discusses the common issues related to the event that S requires H to do. H must understand the intention of S by himself/ herself; based on the context of situation, or other things, H can understand the request of S. This structure is the indirect strategy with the highest level, and S also saves face for both S and H.

Example in Thai
Sentence 15
(11) (เธอ) (เธอมีปากกาอีกด้ามไหม พอดีเราลืมเอาปากกามา)
(Cậu,) (Cậu có cái bút nữa không? Vì tớ quên không mang theo.)
(Hey,) (Do you have another pen? Because I forget to bring it.)

The speaker uses the vocative word to call the hearer with a normal expression in a friendship. The speaker tries to keep and highlight their distance when using an interrogative sentence to see how the hearer’s attitude is. After that, the speaker continues to say his/ her implication so that the hearer will decide whether to agree to the speaker’s request or not. In addition, Thai
people often say “พอที่” which has the same meaning as “bởi vì” (“because”) to give reasons.

**Example in Viet**

Sentence 10

(12) (Anh ơi,) (hình như ở đây ko được phép hút thuốc đâu anh ạ.)

(Excuse me,) (it seems that smoking is prohibited here, sir.)

This sentence uses the supportive move. Because this situation is quite difficult to say, S chooses an indirect strategy for speaking to make H pay attention to S and chooses a strategy to remind H to care about the environment and the surrounding people, because sometimes H can forget and not observe.

**Structures 6: Multiple Heads** [] [] is the structure that the speaker makes a request with multiple heads, and the speaker is less interested in the negative face of the hearer.

**Example in Thai**

Sentence 3

(13) (น้องครับ) (ไม่ทราบว่าพอจะมีเวลาหรือเปล่า) [อยากจะรบกวนน้องให้น้องช่วยดูคอมให้หน่อยครับ] [แต่ถ้าไม่สะดวกก็ไม่เป็นไรครับ]

(Hey,) (I don’t know if you have free time or not.) [Could you please check my computer?] [If it is not convenient for you, it’s okay.]

Moreover, S is older than H or the social status of S is higher than H’s. When S makes a request with H, the words such as “ค่ะ/ครับ/นายค่ะ” / ‘daf/vang/qa’ often appear. In addition to expressing politeness, these words can sometimes be interpreted as the fact that the speaker and hearer are not very close. Because in the sentence there are many ways to use the formal words such as “ไม่ทราบว่า”/ ‘không biết’/ ‘don’t know’ and “หรือเปล่า”/ ‘hay không’/ ‘or not’, etc…
Example in Viet
Sentence 7
(14) (Anh/ chị ơi,) [nếu tiện thì mong anh/chị mua giúp em một chiếc túi.] (Em không rõ về luật hàng không máy, không biết có phải trả phí cho hàng ký gửi không a?) [Nếu tiện cho anh/chị thì mong anh/chị giúp em gấp,] (Nếu được thì anh/chị gửi số tài khoản để em gửi tiền sang trước cho a!)
(Excuse me, Sir/Madam,) [if convenient, I hope you can help to buy a bag for me.] (I’m not sure about aviation law, do I have to pay for consignment?) [If convenient, I hope you will help me as soon as possible.] (If possible, please send me your account number so I can transfer you first!)
(15) (Anh/Chị ơi,) [em đang muốn mua chiếc túi này, nhưng không nhờ được ai mua giúp (order),] [anh/chị mua hộ em với nhé,] (có thể mua được ở sân bay đấy a!)
(Excuse me, Sir/Madam,) [I want to buy this bag, but I can’t ask anyone to order it,] [Can you buy this bag for me?] (It can be bought at the airport!)

The words ‘mong’ (‘hope’), and ‘giúp’ (‘help’) are used in the sentence (14) to repeat S’s request two times in order to emphasize the need for H’s help. Therefore, S repeated the words to clearly show his/her request. Although these words are used in the head structure of the sentence, S still thinks of H’s face by giving H the opportunity to make choices through using the conditional sentence with the word ‘nếu’ (‘if’). Meanwhile, all the structures of the sentence (15) use the same method, they are only different in vocabulary but have the same meaning.

Summary table of structures of speech act of requests in Thai and Vietnamese

Based on the questionnaires collected in 100 Thai and 100 Vietnamese. Instruments used for data collection were 15 item of rating rating scle questionnaire and statistics (Boonchom Srisa-Ard, 1992: 105). The structure were divided from 3,000 answers into 6 forms, with the different frequency. The results are shows in the table below.:
According to the above figure, bit presents that “Pre-Posed Requests” are the most used by the Thai people (30.08%) while “In Between-Posed” is the sentence structure which is the most used by the Vietnamese (31.07%). The range of these frequent-used sentences is slightly different. Meanwhile, the “No Head Acts Requests” is rarely used in both languages (Thai 0.73%, VN 4.13%). These percentages illustrate the similar and different forms of requests applied in Thai and Vietnamese language. This study only focuses on the differences as follows:

The structure table of act of request in Thai and Vietnamese is divided into two large groups according to the frequency: 1) similarities and 2) differences. The group of similarities in the aforementioned structure table shows that Thai and Vietnamese people use the structures 2, 4 and 6 popularly with the similar frequencies without many differences like the 2nd group. The second group indicates that the structures 1, 3 and 5 have very different frequencies compared to the first group. We can describe in detail as follows.

**Comparison of the only differences in the act of request in Thai and Vietnamese**

**Structure 1: Head act only**

In Thai, the structure of head act has the use frequency of 13 times while it has the use frequency of 77 times in Vietnamese, which shows that both Thai and Vietnamese people use this structure of head act with the lowest frequency compared to other structures because the structure 1 does not have elements.
of modulation of illocutionary force as well as the imperative structure. As a courtesy, the Thai people do not accept the use of imperative structure without the elements of modulation of illocutionary force attached to the request; and if this structure is used, the ‘request’ will no longer be a ‘request’ but it is a ‘command’. Because both the imperative structure and the request structure have the words “ซิ, นะ” [đi, nhé] at the end of the sentence, the only difference is to add modulation of illocutionary force into the sentence.

In Thai, “ซิ, นะ” [đi, nhé] are “Mood” but they are always used in communicating, which makes the sentence not too short. It also helps to focus on the purpose of S to show suspicion, command, intimidation, request or begging etc… In addition, Thai language has the words ค่ะ/ครับ ‘dạ/vâng/ạ’ at the end of the sentence to increase the politeness in the sentence. S using ค่ะ/ครับ ‘dạ/vâng/ạ’ is not only the person who is younger or has a social status lower than H, but also is the peer or the person older than H. In addition, every satisfaction or closeness is also found in many ways, such as จ๊ะ, ง่า, จ้า, น่า, น้า (see นววรรณ พันธุเมธา, 2551).

However, it will be found that the frequency of using the structure 1 of Vietnamese people is higher than that of Thai people because Vietnamese people actively carry out verbal actions directly with explicit language. S ‘speaks up’, ‘speaks publicly’, ‘speaks out’ the things to be said which can lose face, with the desire to close the gap and at the same time express the intimacy and friendship between S and H. In particular, through the behavior of S, H feels that the ‘barrier’ between them has been removed, and there have been sympathy, closeness and intimacy between them without shyness, etc… In such cases, it is often in the physical or mental superiority so that the hearer may ask for or S may have a higher social position or at least equal to H. For example, Sentence 1: [Em lấy cho chị ít salad với] [Please give me some salad]. In Vietnamese, it is seen that the words used in the structure 1 are the predicates of action such as “để/ let”, “giúp/ help”, “hỗ/ help”, “cho/ give” (Dao Thanh Lan, 2010). These words are often found in the head structure with the meaning related to the requested meaning.

In addition to the above aspects, the requests with imperative sentence are often used in the situation in which its focus is work and completion of a certain task. In such cases, the
sophisticated and beautiful words are not necessary because the efficiency of work is the first target, for example:

Sentence 10
(16) [ nakam suan mu kai ni phat jaadt hu som ]
[Làm phiền hút thuốc ở nơi quy định ạ]
[Please smoke in the permitted place]

Structure 3: Pre-posed

In Thai, the “supportive - head” structure is used with the frequency of 413 times which is twice as many as the use frequency in Vietnamese (only 298 times). Thai people commonly use the supportive move before the head act. We clearly see that in Thai the use frequency of the structure 3 is twice as many as that of the structure 2 (Structure 2: Head - Supportive: 256, Structure 3: Supportive - Head: 413). This is due to the shyness of Thai people. If wanting to disturb someone, S firstly has to use a supportive move to let H know and prepare before S says the head act. In addition, Thai people often have the proverb of น้ำพึ่งเรือเสือพึ่งป่า/ ‘Water relies on boat and tiger relies on forest’ and its meaning in Vietnamese is ˈDựa vào nhau mà sống’/ ‘Dependence on each other to live’; therefore, when you communicate with others or plan to do anything, you must think of other people, should not force anyone or harm each other. Similarly, Piyawan (ปิยะวัลย์ วิรุฬหชัยพงษ์, 2543) said that Thai people mostly use a supportive move before head act, and the supportive move aims to make an implication or tell H the reason. Moreover, Apaporn (อาภาภรณ์ เศรษฐวิจารณกิจ, 2547) also affirmed that the structure which Thai people use most commonly is the supportive move before the head act. In terms of selection of supportive moves in Thai, personal pronouns are a part of attractive element. From the DCT sentence table, we will find ways to use ‘XXX’ instead of calling H’s first name in order to increase closeness and emphasize more individuality. And in Thai society, if people are not close to each other, calling with ‘social status + name’ or full name is often used. Tam (Tạ Thị Thanh Tâm, 2009) said that “calling someone by pronoun or relatives-related noun, or first name is more specific and accurate. Through this calling way,
outsiders also easily assess the relationship between S and H, and identify the nature of the complex relationship between them. The presupposition of calling by first name is the fact that objects of communication must have previous acquaintance, which is the relationship between their social positions. It should be added that the first name is an element of “ego territory”, which is the negative face of each person. Therefore, it is impolite to use first name to call someone when the communication role is not clearly defined”.

Using the personal pronouns connoting the kinship is a different way to show that everyone has a common lifestyle which is related to each other and not individual. This creates intimacy, closeness, solidarity, love and harmony. This is a society that is not very different in terms of social role and status of people. Therefore, there is no clear separation of social classes. As though like Chau (Nguyen Thi Thuy Chau, 2560) said that in Vietnamese society, the use of personal pronouns connoting the kinship to address the outsiders, in addition to create intimacy and familiarity, is also a source that creates a lot of behavioral culture such as respecting the elderly and loving children. The structure of a kinship society has made everyone care for each other, help and support each other. Although that person is not a relative or a family member, he/ she is also in the same society.

Structure 5: No head Acts

In Thai language, a frequency of using the structure only including supportive move is 10 times while this frequency in Vietnamese is 62 times. Compared to other structures, this structure is the least frequently used. Although the speaker does not give a request to force or lose face of H, it is not quite polite to use the supportive move at all times.

Sentence 10

(17) Anh ơi, hình như ở đây không được phép hút thuốc đâu anh ạ.

Excuse me, it seems that smoking is prohibited here, sir.
The sentence above is also an indirect sentence, but the indirect mode here is not implied by words, but it is the warning which increases imposition of action and often creates other conversation implications. Therefore, such indirect sentence is less polite than the corresponding direct requests and is only used in special situations. The indirect mode in Vietnamese is not always more polite than the direct mode. In our opinion, it is due to the limitation of the scope of action: indirect sentence in Vietnamese only has the effect of increasing politeness in the act of competitive request (causing damage to H) rather than in the act of sociable request (beneficial to H).

Both Thai and Vietnamese people are considered as formal. This structure is the least polite compared to other structures. It is assumed that if the hypothesis of uniformity between indirect sentence and politeness is correct, which means that indirect sentence is always more polite than direct sentence, Jonathan Culpeper. (1996) argued with the efforts of Brown and Levinson (1987) to save face, showing that in real life, people will always try to save face of themselves, make positive impoliteness: using strategic methods to hurt desire for positive face of H about indirect speaking mode.

However, according to Huong (Vũ Thị Thanh Hương. 2000), this could be explained that the communicating situation in intimate contexts (talking with family members and friends rather than outsiders and strangers), and hierarchical correlation (making a request to the younger people rather than the older people), allows S to use the head structure. Therefore, to assess which request is more polite, it is impossible not only to rely on the number of types of requests used, but also to consider the level of politeness represented by them. It is assumed that if the hypothesis of uniformity between supportive move and politeness is correct, it cannot be said like that.

**Conclusion**

The aforementioned tables show that both the structure of head act and the structure only including supportive move are the least frequently used by both Thai and Vietnamese people. Because if S asks someone to follow his request, needs to talk smartly to win H’s heart, both these structures must be used
together; however, the supportive - head structure is the most frequently used by Thai people, on the contrary, the head - supportive structure is the most frequently used by Vietnamese people. However, using only head structure or only supportive structure rarely occurs in both Thai and Vietnamese. Because if only one head structure is used, it is considered to be ordering H while no one wants to be threatened face. This is due to the shyness of Thai people. If wanting to disturb someone, S firstly has to use a supportive move to let H know and prepare before S says the head act. In addition, Thai people often have the proverb of ‘น้ำพึ่งเรือเสือพึ่งป่า’/ ‘Water relies on boat and tiger relies on forest’ and its meaning in Vietnamese is ‘Dựa vào nhau mà sống’/ ‘Dependence on each other to live’; therefore, when you communicate with others or plan to do anything, you must think of other people, should not force anyone or harm each other. Similarly, Piyawan (ปิยะวัลย์ วิรุฬหชัยพงษ์, 2543) said that Thai people mostly use a supportive move before head act, and the supportive move aims to make an implication or tell H the reason. Moreover, Apaporn (อาภาภรณ์ เศวจารย์กิจ, 2547) also affirmed that the structure which Thai people use most commonly is the supportive move before the head act. In terms of selection of supportive moves in Thai, personal pronouns are a part of attractive element. Similarly, Do (Nguyễn Văn Độ, 1999) also said that the act of request is divided into two parts: the core part and the peripheral part. The core part is the implementation of request, the peripheral part is the increase or decrease of the request force called as “the elements that make modulation of illocutionary force of request”. We see that although there are similar methods, the act of request in Thai and Vietnamese uses the elements and methods to make modulation of illocutionary force in different words to influence the force of request speech. It can be briefly stated that Thai and Vietnamese mainly use the structure of the request speech. There are similarities of using the types of words in which the highlight is the modal particles at the end of sentence such as “à, ư, nhi nhé, ạ...” and special types of words, vocative words, personal pronouns, structures of the opening sentences, etc... and especially the tone (words with repeated letters) to increase or decrease the illocutionary force of the act of request. It is proved that both Thai and Vietnamese people prefer using the imperative structure with the elements of modulation of
illocutionary force such as the system of personal pronouns, vocative words, etc... This study emphasizes that understanding and selecting the appropriate form of requests in both Thai and Vietnamese languages are the keys to achieve communications.

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