

9.5 Characteristic Features of Request in Relation to Different kinds of Persons

9.5.1 Distance and Persons

The informants have been asked to make a request to the following categories of persons who hail from different walks of life. Each one will have different kinds of relationship with the informant. For this study the informants were asked to construct request sentences to the following personalities belonging to six categories :

- (1) Unacquainted people (2) Neighbourhood (3) Friend
- (4) Colleague (5) Superior and (6) Subordinate.

Each social relationship is different from the other in the informant's social network level. For instance, the relationship between the informant and an unacquainted person is distant whereas the relationship between the informant and his friend is close or intimate. Similarly the relationship between the superior and the informant is a distant one and with the colleagues the relationship is somewhat close. The relationship between the informant and subordinate is quite distant. However, the distant existing between, the informant and superior, the informant and subordinate is different from each other. In the former, the distance is kept and maintained by the superior, whereas in the latter the informant keeps and maintains the distance from the subordinates.

9.5.1.1 Request Made to a Stranger

A stranger is one whose social position and other backgrounds are not known. Hence the requester will tend to use politeness markers depending upon the age and the mode of dressing of the requestee. The informants were asked to make a request to a person who is in his late forties (above 40 years of age) and who wears a moderately neat dress. The following pattern of requests have been constructed by different groups of informants :

9.5.1.1.1 Indirect Request

Indirect requests are made by different kinds of people belonging to three communities viz., forward, backward and scheduled.

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|----|----------------------|-------------------|--|
| 1. | <u>e:nunka</u> | <u>ti:ppet̥ti</u> | <u>tarri:nkala:</u> |
| | Att. Ca. + Hon. Suf. | match box | give + Pre. Ten. + Hon. Suf. + Ind. Req. |

'Hello, will (you) please give (me) match box?'

- | | | | |
|----|----------------|---------------|--|
| 2. | <u>pe:ppar</u> | <u>koñcam</u> | <u>tarri:nkala:</u> |
| | paper | Persu. | give + Pre. Ten. + Hon. Suf. + Ind. Req. |

'Will (you) please give (me) paper?'

This type of request is found in the speech behaviour of the young age group school educated girls, the school educated female

agriculturists and contractors, college educated students and retired professionals. They all employ indirect request strategy in their request made to strangers. The retired professionals make use of double indirect requests in their request.

inta pe:ppar

paṭiccuṭṭi:nkaḷa:

this paper read + Pas.Ten. + Aux.Comp. + Hon.Suf. Ind. Req.

koṅcam

kuṭukkiri:nkaḷa:

Persu. give + Pre. Con. Ten. + Hon. Suf. + Ind. Req.

'Have (you) read this paper, will (you) give (it) please'

9.5.1.1.2 If Clause

ennanka

paṭiccitti:ṅkanna:

Att.Ca. + Hon.Suf. read + Pas.Ten. + Aux.Comp. + Hon.Suf. + If

kuṭuṅka

pa:ttuṭṭut

tarre:n

give + Hon.Suf. having seen + Aux.Comp. give + Pre.Ten. + I PT

'Hello, if you have read the paper, give (it), (I) will go through (it) and return'

The similar kinds of if clause embedded structure requests are constructed with some modifications, such as,

1. dropping the attention caller

2. dropping the assurance marker
3. mentioning the name of the object that is wanted, such as match box, newspaper, etc.

The above type of request is found in the speech behaviour of different kinds of people such as old aged and college educated professionals to show respect to the stranger.

9.5.1.1.3 Minimizing the Imposition

The school educated young agriculturists make a request to a stranger by using the strategy of minimizing the imposition.

pe:ppar oru pattu nimiṣam kuṭun̄ka
 paper one ten minutes give + Hon. Saf.

pa:ttuṭṭut tarre:n
 see + Fut. Ten. + Aux. Camp. give + Pre. Ten. + I PT

'Give the paper for ten minutes (I) will return
 (it) after going through it'

9.5.1.1.4 Asking Apology for Intrusion

The college students belonging to the forward community ask apology for intrusion on the hearer's action first and then make a request. The following request is made by college educated informants :

ekskyu:s mi: sa:r pe:ppar kuṭunka
 excuse me sir paper give + Hon. Suf.

'Excuse me sir, give the paper'

However, the women of the same category drop the address term but add the reason why they need and assure to return the thing which they want for a short while.

9.5.1.1.5 Address Terms Used

The address term sa:r is used to give deference to the requestee. It is a kind of showing politeness to the person who happens to be a requestee.

sa:r pe:ppar koñcam kuṭunka paṭuccuṭṭut
 Sir paper Persu. give + Hon.Suf. read + Aux. Comp.

tarre:n
 give + Pre. Ten. + I PT

'Sir, please give the paper, (I) will return it
 after going through it'.

The above said request and specifically such address terms as sir, madam are used by college students and professionals with college education.

9.5.1.2 Request to Neighbourhood

An analysis of the requests made by different kinds of informants to their neighbours shows that the following strategies were employed by them for making some requests.

9.5.1.2.1 Asking Permission to Take the Paper

Brahmins of economically lower income group and old age group while making a request to their neighbours who belong to the same community and middle age group make use of the following strategy to make their request.

<u>na:n</u>	<u>anta</u>	<u>pe:ppar</u>	<u>etuttunḍu</u>	<u>po:yittu</u>
I	that	paper	take + Fut. Ten.	go + Aux. Comp.
	<u>koṇṭu vantu</u>		<u>vaccirre:n</u>	
	bring		place + Fut. Ten. + Aux. Comp. I PT	

'I take that paper and bring (it) back afterwards'

9.5.1.2.2 Hint

Old age group forward community house-wives use hint as a strategy to ask the match box from their neighbours of a backward community, as,