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Creating the Middle Ground Register in Thai Conversation*

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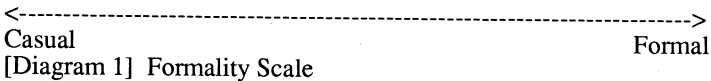
Preeya Ingkaphirom Horie (National Language Research Institute, Japan)

1. MIDDLE GROUND REGISTER

Speaking at the proper speech level register is one of the most important considerations for individuals engaged in conversation. A particular register exhibits the participants' awareness of, among other things, such variables as the relative power difference and psychological distance between them, and the speech event situation (Brown and Gilman 1960; Hymes 1972; Halliday 1978; Brown and Levinson 1978 among others). In this paper we will investigate how Thai speakers create appropriate speech levels using various linguistic cues.

At the outset, we identify two types of registers: the 'protocol' register and the 'middle ground' register. Protocol register is called for when all the variables mentioned above are clearly determined (e.g., commoner's first encounter with a king). Middle ground register is required when one or more of the variables is not easily specifiable (e.g., college freshmen who have just gotten acquainted with each other) or is in conflict with another or other variables. The protocol register used in non-ambiguous social situations is static, while the middle ground register (or MGR) which is necessary when negotiating the appropriate speech level in ambiguous situations is fluid. It is this second type of dynamic register which we examine in this paper.

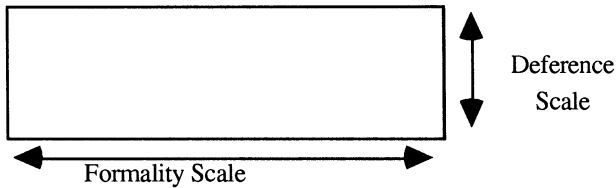
We propose to define the speech registers by two scales, the Formality Scale and the Deference Scale. The degree of formality is set along the Formality Scale (as shown in Diagram 1) according to the speech event situation.



When a speech participant assesses the situation to be extremely formal, the formality value is at or near the right most point on the scale shown above. When a speech participant assesses the situation to be very informal or casual, the value is at or near the other extreme (the left most point on the scale).

Independent of the Formality Scale there exists the Deference Scale which is elucidated by the relative power difference and the psychological distance between the interlocutors. Deference embodies a special bond that exists between two individuals who are not equal in terms of age, social rank and/or occupation but who feel affection for each other. This affection can be an intimacy coalesced with respect that an inferior has for the superior or fondness that a superior feels for an inferior. By definition, deference does not exist between two equals or between two strangers.

A speech level within the MGR may be specified by using the Formality Scale (the horizontal axis) and the Deference Scale (the vertical axis) and may be represented by a point in space as is represented by Diagram 2 below. The higher end of the Deferential Scale indicates a higher degree of deference and the lower end a lower degree.



[Diagram 2] MGR Space

The proposed conceptualization of speech levels finds its support in the theory of politeness suggested by R. Lakoff (1973, 1975, 1977, 1979). According to Lakoff, conversation participants employ three rules of politeness: 1. Formality, 2. Deference, and 3. Camaraderie. Formality makes interlocutors "keep aloof" from each other, while Camaraderie makes interlocutors show sympathy with each other and recognize in-group membership. Deference "recognizes the existence of both participants and their relationship" (Lakoff 1979:63). It is extremely important to observe that Deference is a distinct strategy from Formality and Camaraderie: Lakoff maintains that while Formality and Camaraderie politeness strategies cannot be used together, it is possible to have both Deference and Formality, or both Deference and Camaraderie. This suggests that while Formality and Camaraderie define a single scale (i.e., our Formality Scale), Deference constitutes an independent one (i.e., our Deference Scale).

Three important matters concerning the middle ground registers and speech levels should be noted before we embark on our discussion of the relevant phenomena in Thai. First, in the most global view, it can be said that a register and speech level is the result of blending various types of "contextualization cues" (Gumperz 1982), including turn taking behaviors, paralinguistic features, exclamations, non-verbal cues, topic choice and so forth. In a more restricted view, the register is conceived as a result of linguistic cues such as honorific lexemes, pronouns, address terms, and particles. In this paper, we investigate register and speech level phenomena only in the latter more restricted sense. Second, the middle ground register is observed at word, sentence and discourse levels. Both at the word and the sentence levels a speaker sometimes mixes different types of register coding cues (Agha 1993:151). The middle ground register is also a product of discourse: a speaker regulates the use of various cues at different stages in discourse. Third, participants with non-equal status use different register conceptualizations. While one participant might maintain a rather formal speech level, the other may try to use a less formal level. As long as the participants consider each other's register appropriate, the register remains more or less stagnant, but if one participant considers the other's register inappropriate, he may try to alter his own speech level or encourage the other to change the speech level.

2. REGISTER CODING CUES IN THAI CONVERSATION

Thai has several grammaticalized cues which encode speech levels. In our research, we have identified three such cues: (a) speech participant reference terms, (b) speech level markers, and (c) pragmatic particles. In this paper we will examine only the first two cues for their distribution and frequency, leaving the

discussion of pragmatic particles for future analysis.¹ These cues dynamically intermingle and shape various degrees and shades of register.

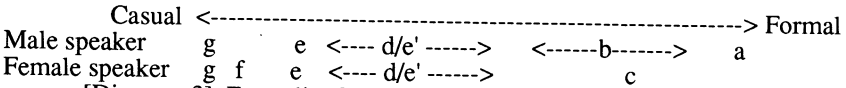
2.1. *Speech act participant reference terms*

Thai has an extremely large inventory of terms that refer to speech act participants (Cooke 1968, Campbell 1969, Palakornkul 1972), and these terms can be classified into three major types: pronominals, personal names, and nominals.²

2.1.1. *Pronominals*: First person pronominals used frequently are described below. Description of each pronominal is a modification from Cooke (1968).

a. *kraphǒm* (1st-m): male addressing high-ranking nonroyalty, or in a very formal situation. b. *phǒm* (1st-m): general polite term used by males speaking to equals and superiors. c. *dichǎn* (1st-f): female speaking to superiors; formally to equals. d. *chǎn* (1st-f/m): male speaking to inferior or female intimate; female speaking to an intimate equal or inferior. e. *raw* (1st-m/f): superior to inferior; between friends of the same sex, referring to oneself in soliloquy. e'. *raw* (1st-m/f): general first person plural. f. *khǎw* (1st-f): young woman speaking to an intimate. g. *kuu* (1st-m/f): nonrestraint form, male speaking to a close male friend; female to female among close intimates

Pronominal forms indicate different points on the Formality Scale. Diagram 3 below is an attempt to show the approximate points at which each first person pronominal form falls on the scale. Those with arrows extending on both sides are general forms applicable in larger contexts than those without arrows.

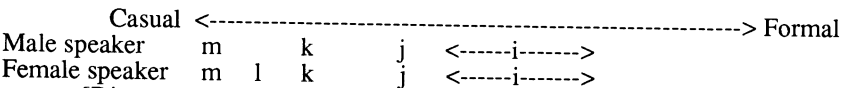


[Diagram 3] Formality Scale and First Person Pronominal Forms

Commonly used second person pronominals are as follows:

i. *khun* (2nd-m/f): general polite term used to equals and superiors. j. *naaj* (2nd-m/f): general friendly term used by male to male and female equals; female to female equals. k. *raw* (2nd-m/f): speaking to inferiors. l. *thəə* (2nd-f): female speaking to inferiors or intimate equals. m. *məŋ* (2nd-m/f): male speaking to intimate male; occasionally used by or to females

Diagram 4 below shows the formality of each second person pronominal form.



[Diagram 4] Formality Scale and Second Person Pronominal Forms

The speaker chooses first and second person pronominal forms which are appropriate for the speech situation. Also, the speaker may employ (and does so quite frequently) what is called the zero form to refer to him/herself or the addressee, when wishing to actively avoid register specification (Palakornkul 1972:28-9).

2.1.2. Personal Names: Personal names are also used as speech act participant referent terms. In Thailand, most people have, besides a given name and a surname,³ a nickname or an abbreviated given name. A given name (non-abbreviated or abbreviated) or a nickname is often used instead of pronominals referring to the first and second persons. For example an individual whose given name is *phichaj*, and whose nickname is *lék* may be addressed one of the following ways: (1) *khun phichaj* (the most formal form consisting of a title *khun* (same form as the formal "you" in 2.1.1) and the given name), (2) *khun lék* (the next formal form consisting of a title *khun* and the nickname), (3) *phichaj* (given name alone, the less formal form), and (4) *lék* (the nickname alone, the most casual form). In the most casual setting, he may also refer to himself as *lék*.

2.1.3. Nominal terms

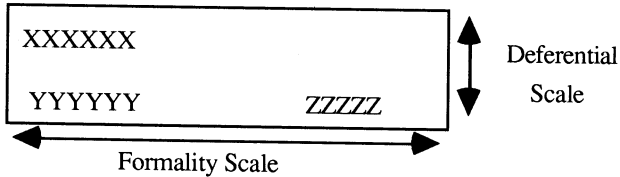
2.1.3.1 Occupational terms: Occupational terms (e.g., *mǎɔ* 'doctor,' *khruu* 'teacher' and *ʂacaan* 'professor') may also be used instead of the first and second person pronominals. All occupational terms, which usually denote superior, but sometimes non-superior (e.g., *choofǎə* 'chauffeur'), indicate formal level of speech. All of these occupational terms may be followed by a given name (and sometimes by a nickname) (e.g., *ʂacaan phichaj*).

2.1.3.2. Kin terms: Kin terms are also used as speech act participant reference terms, but they are different from all other such terms in that they are sensitive to the Deference Scale rather than the degree of formality, as most of these terms assume human relational concepts (e.g., *phǐi* 'older siblings,' *nǎa* 'mother's younger sibling,' *luŋ* 'older brother of parents,' and *pǎa* 'older sister of parents.') Deference, as defined earlier, is a special bond that exists between two individuals who are close but are not equal, and it embodies affection, i.e., friendliness, respect and fondness.

The most widely used kin term, *phǐi*, for example, is employed by a younger speaker to refer to an older addressee (who may or may not be a blood relative), denoting the power difference, which may be interpreted as respect, and at the same time the smaller psychological distance, which is interpreted as intimacy (Cooke 1968:50). When used by an older speaker to refer to himself, *phǐi* acknowledges his responsibility associated with his senior status and his fondness towards his inferior. The term *nǔu* 'mouse,' though not a kin term in the strict sense, is a counterpart to *phǐi* and refers to the less powerful party in an interaction.⁴ Thus the "I-You" relationship may be expressed by "*phǐi-nǔu*" (from the superior's point of view) or "*nǔu-phǐi*" (from the inferior's point of view). Although these words that specify deference are independent of formality, such deference is more readily expressed in an informal situation. Thus these words tend to appear in less formal conversation and when the two interlocutors call each other with these terms, the speech level is casual yet deferential.

In Diagram 5 below, these words of deference (indicated by Xs) are compared with terms which are not sensitive to Deference (indicated by Ys and Zs). The actual form of non-deference will be selected depending on the

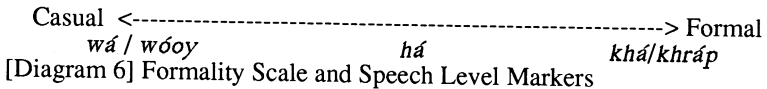
formality of the speech event: if the situation is informal, the format Nickname (speaker's) - Nickname (addressee's) may be selected (Ys in the diagram) and "phôm-khun" for example, may be selected (Zs in the diagram) if the situation is formal.



[Diagram 5] Formality Scale and Personal Names

2.2 Speech level markers

Most speech level markers are markers of the level of formality. For example, *khá* (female)/*kháp* (male) and their phonological variants⁵ are formal speech level markers. A phonologically reduced form, *há* and its variants (used by both male and female speakers) are markers of mid-level formality. There are also the very casual speech style markers *wá* ("unrestrained, or coarse, or familiar ... may convey aggressiveness ... Chiefly used between males but occasionally used by or to females" Cooke 1989:27) and *wóoy* ("unrestrained or coarse, or familiar ... used chiefly between males" Cooke 1989:28), which code an extremely casual speech register.



[Diagram 6] Formality Scale and Speech Level Markers

To summarize, most register coding cues specify degrees of formality along the Formality Scale, but some are sensitive to deference. Various types of middle ground register are created by mixing these cues. The most interesting mixture is perhaps the mixture of a cue that codes casual register and a cue that codes deference since this combination could create a informal yet deferentially polite speech level.

3. CREATING MID GROUND REGISTER

3.1. Register coding at the word level

Words that are of different degrees of formality and of different types may be combined. Thus, *khun mǎo* 'doctor,' is more formal than *mǎo* by itself. Also, when the title *khun*, which codes a formal level, and *páa* 'older sister of parents,' which codes deference, are combined (i.e., *khun páa*), both dimensions of the register can be manifested with one noun phrase.

3.2. Register coding within a sentence

Utterance (1) below clearly is a sentence with high formality because it contains the pronominal *phôm* (1st-m) (see Diagram 3) and the formal speech level marker *kháp* (see Diagram 6).

(1)⁶ 133 F: phôm kô mây sâap na kháp
 1st-m HP NEG know P SLM "I don't know either."

Another item of formality in this utterance, which is not in the scope of our current discussion, is the verb *sâap* 'know,' which is a formal equivalent of a more general *rúu* 'know.' No items showing deference appear in this sentence. Observe now sentence (2) below.

(2) 74 M: lian laam còp máy ha "Did you graduate from
 study R. University finish Q SLM Ramkhamheang University?"

The style in example (2) is less formal than (1) because it is marked by the mid-level formality marker, *hă*, with the zero form for the agent. Deference is not coded in this utterance as in (1) above. This is one type of a sentence which is often found in the MGR. (3) below, however, is an even clearer case of an MGR sentence.

(3) 5 J: nũu phũg maa thũg thii-nia
 1st ASP come arrive here-P "I have just arrived here."

Utterance (3) is different in two ways from (1) and (2). It is deferentially polite because of the use of the subject *nũu* (a nominal form) which denotes 'friendliness' and 'respect' towards the interlocutor as we discussed earlier. (3) is also different from (1) and (2) in that it is not marked by any speech level markers. Thus (3) is a typical utterance of MGR. Now observe (4).

(4) 1 K: ũm yũu trog nãy ũa
 (name) stay where P "Where have you been?"

The speaker (male) of (4) refers to his addressee (female) as *ũm* which is the addressee's nickname. This is a sign of casual speech and it often appears in conversations between very close friends. The lack of one of the polite speech level markers *kháp/kháp* here is thus predictable and appropriate. The same nickname may also be used as the first person reference term as we will see in the next section.

Unless a person is speaking in a rigid protocol register, he can freely mix different types of register coding cues in order to adjust his speech style with precision. The middle ground register refers to the space in which such adjustment of speech style is made.

3.3 Register coding in conversation discourse

We have seen in the above section that different kinds of speech level are created by mixing various cues within one sentence. We need, however, to also examine how speech level is achieved in discourse since speech level is a phenomenon holistically recognized. For this purpose we examined four different types of conversations. All the examples in the previous section except (1) are from the following four conversations which constitute our data base. The length of each conversation data set was measured in terms of intonation units (IU) (Chafe 1993; 1994) as indicated by the number in the parentheses. Most IUs relevant for our discussion are of the clausal type.

(a) "Students" - (298 IU): A casual conversation between male and female students, recorded on campus at Mahidol University (Salaya, Thailand). (b) "Interview" (306 IU): A job interview between a male interviewer and a female interviewee who has applied for a waitress position at a hotel in Bangkok. (c) "Teachers" - (210 IU): A conversation between a senior and a junior college teacher, both female, recorded in a school office in Bangkok. (d) "Earthquake" (285 IU): A conversation between two strangers (both students studying at colleges in Los Angeles) talking about their personal experiences during the Northridge earthquake.

Below we will examine how frequently different register coding cues are employed and by whom. The register coding cues we examine are (i) first person reference terms in the subject position, (ii) second person reference terms in the subject position, and (iii) speech level markers.

3.3.1. "Students"

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Male	49	1 (chán)	6 (nickname)	0	56
Female	43	0	15 (nickname)	0	58

[Table 1] First Person Reference (in the subject position)

The most striking feature found in this very informal conversation is the abundant use of nicknames by both speakers to refer to themselves as Table 1 shows: the male student used his own nickname to refer to himself six times and the female student used her own nickname to refer to herself 15 times. This feature itself sets the conversation at a very informal level.

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Male	7	0	4 (nickname)	0	11
Female	6	0	0	0	6

[Table 2] Second Person Reference (in the subject position)

Table 2 also shows a feature of informal register. The male speaker used the female student's nickname, *ŏm*, four times when referring to her. (See example (4) in the previous section.) Predictably, neither speakers employed the first and second person formal pronominal forms in this conversation.

	<i>khá/khráp</i>	<i>há</i>	<i>wá ? wóoy</i>	Total
Male	0	0	6 / 1	7
Female	0	0	1 / 0	1

[Table 3] Speech Level Markers

Another sign of the casual conversation is the lack of formal and mid-formality speech level markers (*khá/khráp/há*) as seen in Table 3. However, both the male and female speaker marked their utterances with *wá* and *wóoy*. All three tables indicate that various register coding cues are working in concert to create a very informal, casual conversation.

3.3.2. "Interview"

This is the most formal conversation among the four we examined. Since the objective of this conversation is to solicit information about the female applicant for the job, it is natural that both the interviewer and the interviewee talk about her.

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Male	6	1 (<i>phǒm</i>)	0	0	7
Female	40	2 (<i>raw</i>)	0	0	42

[Table 4] First Person Reference (in the subject position)

We see in Table 4 that the male interviewer used *phǒm* once to code the speech level as formal, but in the other 6 cases, he used the zero form. His use of the zero form instead of *phǒm* may be interpreted as his attempt to make the job interview less formal and less threatening for the interviewee. This point is supported when we look at speech level markers in Table 6 below. The female interviewee's form of choice was the zero form (40 out of 42 cases). She used *raw* twice: one as the first person singular self address term (i.e., she is talking to herself) and one as the first person plural. The formality level of plural *raw* is general (not too formal and not too casual) and that of the self addressing *raw* is neutral. We also note from Tables 3 and 4 that neither of the speakers used kin terms which code deferential politeness.

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Male	25	0	0	0	25
Female	0	0	0	0	0

[Table 5] Second Person Reference (in the subject position)

Only the male interviewer used the second person reference term, which took the form of zero. If the conversation is more formal, we expect some uses of *khun*, a formal second person referent form. Again avoiding *khun*, the interviewer tries not to make the interview too formal.

	<i>khá//khráp</i>	<i>há</i>	<i>wá ? wóoy</i>	Total
Male	2	22	0	24
Female	34	5	0	39

[Table 6] Speech Level Markers

The assumption that the interviewer tried to make the interview session easier for the interviewee is supported by the interviewer's abundant use of the mid-level formality marker *há* (22 times) rather than the high formality marker of *khráp* (2 times). While the interviewer attempts to make the conversation less formal, the interviewee maintained the higher formality by choosing *khá* most of the time (34 times) over the mid-level *há* (5 times).

This phenomenon is typical for a conversation between two unequal participants. The two participants use two different kinds of speech levels. The female interviewee maintains a certain level of formality with the formal speech level marker but her insistent avoidance of formal pronominal forms keep the speech level from reaching the most formal level. The male interviewer aims at a slightly lower speech level with the use of the mid-level speech level marker.

This pattern of interaction suggests that the inferior status speaker is restrained more than the superior status speaker in keeping the formality level. Finally no deferential politeness is present since the interlocutors do not have any informal personal relations.

3.3.3. "Teachers"

This conversation took place between two female college teachers in their office (semi-casual speech event situation). While the two teachers know each other well (closer psychological distance), there is still an age and rank difference between them (larger power difference), and the subordinate teacher clearly shows features of MGR.

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Senior	23	0	0	0	23
Junior	7	1 (<i>chán</i>)	0	6 (<i>nǚu</i>)	14

[Table 7] First Person Reference (in the subject position)

Here we observe a striking difference between the senior and junior teacher's usage of first person reference terms. The senior teacher avoided overt forms completely, leaving no sign of formality level or deference. The junior teacher, on the other hand, used overt forms half of the time when she mentioned herself as the subject, using *chán* once and *nǚu* six times. This shows that the junior teacher codes deferential politeness most of the time (*nǚu*) with a hint of equal status (*chán*). (Recall that according to Cooke (1968), *chán* is used by a 'female speaking to an intimate female or inferior'.)

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Senior	3	0	0	1 (<i>nǚu</i>)	4
Junior	9	0	0	7 (<i>phǚi</i>)	16

[Table 8] Second Person Reference (in the subject position)

Table 8 also shows the senior teacher's reluctance to make the conversation either too formal or too casual, although she displayed a slight move towards the deferential speech by using *nǚu* once. On the other hand, the junior teacher tries to emphasize deference with the frequent use of *phǚi*.

	<i>khá/khráp</i>	<i>há</i>	<i>wá ? wóoy</i>	Total
Senior	0	3	0	3
Junior	0	17	0	17

[Table 9] Speech Level Markers

Since this conversation is not formal as Tables 7 and 8 show, it is predicted that the female formal speech marker *khá* does not appear, which is confirmed in Table 9. The junior colleague, however, used *há* 17 times (compared to 3 times by her elder interlocutor) to keep the conversation from falling to the casual level.

In this conversation, the senior teacher generally avoids both formality and deference. However, the less powerful uses more tokens of mid-formality and deferential politeness. This leads to the frequent use of MGR sentences. Typical MGR sentences are given below.

- (5) 29 J: *phii* *ca* *ʃaw ʃaray há*
 older sister ASP take what SLM "What do you want?"
- (6) 14 J: *nũu* *mây mii kaaw*
 mouse NEG have glue "I don't have glue."

In (5) the kin term, *phii*, denotes both respect and intimacy, and the mid-formal style marker *há* denotes the not-too-formal and not-too-casual level. This is a very typical MGR sentence. In (6), on the other hand, the junior teacher only indicates deference by using *nũu* which refers to herself, but does not specify the level of formality. In other words, the same speaker is not always consistent in coding formality and deference within one conversation. By producing different types of utterances, the interlocutors negotiate various shades of register in discourse.

3.3.4. "Earthquake"

Although the participants in this conversation were strangers to each other (a greater psychological distance) and one student was four years senior to the other (a slight relative power difference), they shared common background in student status, home country and so forth (smaller psychological distance). This situation is likely to induce MGR.

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Senior	21	1 (<i>raw</i>)	0	0	22
Junior	19	1 (<i>raw</i>)	4 (nickname)	0	24

[Table 10] First Person Reference (in the subject position)

There are about the same number of first person references by the two speakers. The senior student preferred the zero form, and so did the junior. However, the junior also used her own nickname four times. This gives an impression that the junior student is trying to make the conversation more casual. The senior student, however, used neither her own nickname nor her interlocutor's nickname because perhaps she wanted to emphasize the slight age difference, or perhaps she still felt psychological distance despite the similar background. Also noteworthy is the fact that the senior's use of *raw* is plural (and thus general), but the junior's use is singular, whose formality level is rather low, unlike the self addressing *raw* we saw in "Interview." The use of her own nickname and singular *raw* by the younger speaker suggests that unlike the interviewer in "Interview" and the junior teacher in "Teachers," it is the younger speaker in this conversation who suggested a move towards a less formal speech level, by emphasizing common background rather than the slight age difference (But see Table 12 below).

	Zero	Pronominal	Name	Kin term	Total
Senior	1	0	1 (nickname)	0	2
Junior	2	0	0	1 (<i>phii</i>)	3

[Table 11] Second Person Reference (in the subject position)

Here the senior student referred to the junior with the zero form and her nickname once each. The junior referred to the senior with the zero form twice and with

phii once. Although the numbers are small, this kind of fluctuation is typical in the MGR conversation.

	<i>khá/kháp</i>	<i>há</i>	<i>wá ? wóoy</i>	Total
Senior	0	0	0	0
Junior	3	12	0	15

[Table 12] Speech Level Markers

This table shows the different speech behaviors between the two speakers most vividly. The junior used the formal marker *khá* three times and mid-level formal marker *há* twelve times. The senior student used neither. Thus, on the one hand, the junior speaker tried to make the conversation more casual; but as we saw in Table 10, she still maintained a certain level of formality.

In "Interview," "Teachers," and "Earthquake," we saw active speech level negotiations between interlocutors, which is the essence of the middle ground register.

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Speech level register is an elusive phenomenon, but intuitively recognized by all speech participants. This paper has tried to analyze this otherwise evasive happening in natural conversation by examining concrete register coding cues. We argued that register is generally not a static phenomenon but a dynamic process in which speech level is continually negotiated by the participants. What we termed the middle ground register (MGR) is the space in which creation, negotiation and modification of speech level occurs. Since the MGR is defined by two independent variables, the Formality Scale and the Deference Scale, interlocutors may carry on a conversation in a casual but respectful tone.

We believe that the speech level register is closely related to politeness phenomena, a target of much recent debate in the area of pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Discussions on politeness, however, are largely based on constructed data as pointed out by Agha (1994:284), Hymes (1986:78) and others. Thus we also hope to have provided a direction for the research of politeness which takes actual data seriously.

Notes:

* This paper is dedicated to the late John Hinds, who died in September, 1994. The two authors of this paper appreciate his leadership in the field of discourse study and his friendship. His memory is a driving force behind the present article. Data used for this paper was collected with funding from University of California's Pacific Rim Research Program (1993-4) and ISOP Small Grant of University of California, Los Angeles (1992-3).

¹ Pragmatic particles show speaker's modal attitudes and interactional concerns. Discussions on these particles are found in Peyasantiwong (1981) and Cooke (1989).

² Besides forms for the speech act participants, Thai also has many terms that refer to the third person. Cooke, for example, lists eight 'third person forms' (1968:18-9).

³ The use of surnames is extremely limited. In conversation, hardly ever are they used.

⁴ Cooke (1986) describes *nũu* as follows: "depreciatory and friendly or intimate term denoting a child, or sometimes an adult female younger than ego, and occasionally even an adult male younger than ego. (As the second person referent form, it is used for) young male children and females up to adolescent age; (as the first person referent form, it is used) by female adults speaking to older persons, especially to females, even those only slightly older than themselves."

⁵ The tone on *kha* may vary depending on the type of sentence with which it appears. For example, it is the rising tone if the sentence is a question, but is the falling tone if it is a statement. *kháp* is very often pronounced as *kháp* especially in a less formal conversation.

⁶ Abbreviations used in this paper are as follows: ASP (aspect), HP (highlighting particle), NEG (negative), P (pragmatic particle), Q (question marker), SLM (speech level marker).

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