

SOLIDARITY AND POLITENESS

Brown & Gilman (1960) defined social relationships in terms of POWER and SOLIDARITY.

Forms which indicate POWER establish who has authority and how great that authority is.

Forms which indicate SOLIDARITY establish the degree of intimacy in the relationship.

SUMMONS: the opening of interactions

A SUMMONS is the verbal equivalent of catching someone's eyes (no conversation is likely to proceed without one or the other).

A summons may take many forms and may or may not be combined with an address form.

eg. *uh, excuse me, waiter, Joe, Dr. Taylor* etc.

GREETINGS: may or may not be followed by conversation

FUNCTION:

greetings: may also function as a summons.

summons: it has a purpose from the point of view of conversation; it implies that more is to come.

ADDRESS differs from summons and greetings in two ways:

1. Summons and greetings are used only at the outset of conversations and *are not repeated*.

Address may be repeated throughout the speech event.

2. A summons is used to get someone to attend to the summoner; greetings may be used phatically;

Address is used almost solely for *power* and *solidarity*.

The pronouns of POWER and SOLIDARITY:

TU (T): familiar form
VOUS (V): polite form

T and V are used to control social interactions by indicating the *degree* of power and solidarity.

non-reciprocal T/V usage: “power relationship”

reciprocal V usage: “polite”

reciprocal T usage: “intimacy”

BUT: culture and language specific differences!!!

Study examples on pp. 260-266!

POLITENESS



SOCIALLY PRESCRIBED!

Javanese: very complex system of politeness (pp. 277-281)

Japanese: extensive system of *honorifics* and *dishonorifics*
(see the HANDOUT!)

Inuit: rules of politeness

RULES FOR POLITE ACCEPTANCE AND REFUSAL DIFFER CROSS-CULTURALLY!

**THE DIFFERENCES REFLECT SOCIAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES
IN DIFFERENT SOCIETIES.**

Study the HANDOUT!

