

## 1 Introduction

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### 1.1 Aim and Readership of the Book

This book is aimed at all those who are interested in intercultural relations – in relating with people who have different national, linguistic, social, ethnic, religious or other backgrounds to ourselves. The focus, as the subtitle indicates, is therefore on managing relations across cultures – how people build, maintain and manage relations when communicating across group boundaries of various kinds, such as national, linguistic and ethnic.

We have two broad aims: one conceptual and the other applied. Conceptually, we take a relational approach to (im)politeness and seek to advance the theoretical modelling of (im)politeness by developing a framework and a cluster of concepts that can be used for understanding and analysing intercultural interaction from the perspective of intercultural relations. To help achieve this, we take an interdisciplinary approach, drawing together notions and insights from politeness theory (mainly within pragmatics) on the one hand and from intercultural theory (within psychology and communication studies) on the other. From an application perspective, we hope that our framework, experiential examples and analyses will be helpful from a practical point of view. We acknowledge that managing relations can be challenging, whatever the context, but this may be even more the case when participants hold different attitudes, expectations and evaluation criteria. Yet we believe that engaging with difference, as intercultural interaction inevitably entails (by definition – see below), can bring richness and personal enhancement, to the benefit of all.

In taking an interdisciplinary approach, we are very aware that some of the concepts and frameworks discussed in the book will be very familiar to some of the readership yet new to others. We have tried to assume as little prior disciplinary knowledge as possible, but also to bring together ideas and understandings from different fields to provide fresh perspectives and insights. The book is thus written for a wide-reaching audience:

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- those who are interested for academic reasons; for example, readers who are taking postgraduate courses in the area or undertaking (postgraduate) research;
- those who are interested for professional development purposes; for example, readers who are working in intercultural contexts and who wish to update their understanding of the field and learn about recent theories and research; and
- those who are interested for personal, altruistic reasons; for example, readers who have neighbours, friends and/or family members who are from different cultural backgrounds and who wish to gain some insights into the factors that influence relational management across cultures.

For all these different types of readers, we believe that our book will provide a helpful mapping of relevant issues, thought-provoking examples of intercultural encounters, concepts and frameworks for interpreting those encounters, accessible analyses of key features of those encounters, and pointers for the journey towards greater competence and pleasure in relating across cultures.

### 1.2 The Title of the Book: The Terms ‘Politeness’ and ‘Intercultural’

The main title of the book has two elements: ‘intercultural’ and ‘politeness’. It is important, therefore, to explain early on our interpretations of those terms. We start with ‘politeness’.

The term ‘politeness’ and its linguacultural equivalents such as *limao* 礼貌 in Chinese and *reigi(tadashii)* 礼儀 (正 し い) in Japanese, are often popularly associated with etiquette. In many daily life contexts, admitting that someone is an academic working on ‘politeness theory’ would unavoidably raise eyebrows as it would suggest the person is spending their time scrutinising table manners and other aspects of good manners. However, in the fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics in particular, politeness and impoliteness – or ‘(im)politeness’ to refer to a regular technical term – is interpreted differently from this. It encompasses the wide range of interactional phenomena by means of which interactants build up, maintain or challenge interpersonal relationships. As people engage (or refuse/fail to engage) in interaction, they say and do things which the other then evaluates and reacts to, which, in turn, may also get reactions. In terms of relational management, the production and evaluation of politeness and impoliteness enhances or undermines rapport. Since intended polite behaviour can have an impolite effect, and the other way around, we do not use ‘politeness’ and ‘impoliteness’ as separate terms. We focus instead on the notion of relating – fostering or enhancing of relations, undermining or damaging of relations, or simply maintaining the status quo of relations. In most of this book, therefore, we use the term ‘politeness’ to encompass both polite and impolite behaviour and evaluation, unless we specify otherwise.

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In many disciplines outside of pragmatics, ‘politeness theory’ is primarily associated with the seminal model of Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson (1987) (see Chapter 2). However, politeness has been studied very broadly within the field of pragmatics, such that it has become a huge field with several hundreds or even thousands of new publications on the subject appearing each year.

As we will point out in Chapter 2, politeness has the following five key characteristics:

- politeness is a relational phenomenon;
- politeness follows (linguistic) patterns;
- politeness means different things, depending on who attempts to define (or interpret) it;
- politeness comes into existence partly in interaction, and partly by not engaging in interaction (e.g. a person may get criticised for *not* doing something in interaction); and
- politeness is both an interactional and an extra-interactional phenomenon, in the sense that intercultural interaction is influenced by phenomena such as intergroup attitudes and stereotyping (see Chapter 3), which are not interactional in the strict sense of this word. Rather, people ‘bring’ such phenomena into a particular interaction. Such factors may become salient in intercultural scenarios.

As this outline illustrates, evaluation is fundamental to how politeness comes into existence, and in the body of politeness research it has even been argued that it is more important how we interpret politeness than how we produce it (see Eelen, 2001). Simply put, while productive intention may be important in politeness behaviour, ultimately such intention is nulled if the other party does not interpret what is said or done accordingly. Considering the importance of evaluation in politeness theory and the relevance of evaluation to intercultural scenarios, we dedicate Part II of this book to capture facets that influence the evaluation process, in particular in those intercultural settings in which there is a certain sense of pragmatic uncertainty. We will approach evaluation through the concept of what we call an ‘evaluation warrant’, which consists of interpersonal sensitivities and a socio-moral order, that influences how someone judges a particular instance of interaction in a specific setting.

Part III of this book focuses on ‘producing politeness’ to manage relations. For organisational purposes, we explore this from two main angles: ‘proactive’ and ‘reactive’ forms of behaviour. We attempt to move away from the concept of ‘realising’ politeness – a way in which it is often described in pragmatics – by approaching politeness behaviour as unfolding in interaction and by devoting special attention to the ways in which culture may influence this process. Within interaction, politeness may come into existence in the form of proactive behaviour as people seek to maintain smooth relationships (e.g. engage in

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a chit-chat with someone they know) or establish new relationships. It may also come into existence through reactive behaviour, as interactants react to offence, including instances when they perceive that they have offended others or that someone else has offended them.

Turning now to the term ‘intercultural’, this word literally means ‘between cultures’ and so we first need to comment on our interpretation of culture. As we explain in Chapter 3, the notion of ‘culture’ is very complex, and here we simply present our working definition. Building on the definitions given by Spencer-Oatey (2008c: 3) and Ting-Toomey and Dorjee (2019: 14), we define culture as:

a complex set of meaning systems that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, schemas, norms, and symbols, that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a social group and that influence (but do not determine) each member’s behaviour and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behaviour.

This definition draws attention both to the ‘content’ or cognitive representations of culture, as well as to its cognitive framing (i.e. guiding impact; see Section 3.3.1 and Hong et al., 2000) influence on behaviour and interpretations of behaviour. Chapter 3 explores both of these facets in detail and here we provide an introductory overview, as depicted in Figure 1.1.

We are born into social groups (family, national, etc.), which increase and diversify as we go through life (see Section 3.3). We are socialised into these groups and so develop cultural group affiliations as well as cultural patterning. This patterning (which is interconnected with our group identities) is wide-ranging and covers elements like norms of behaviour, schematic representations

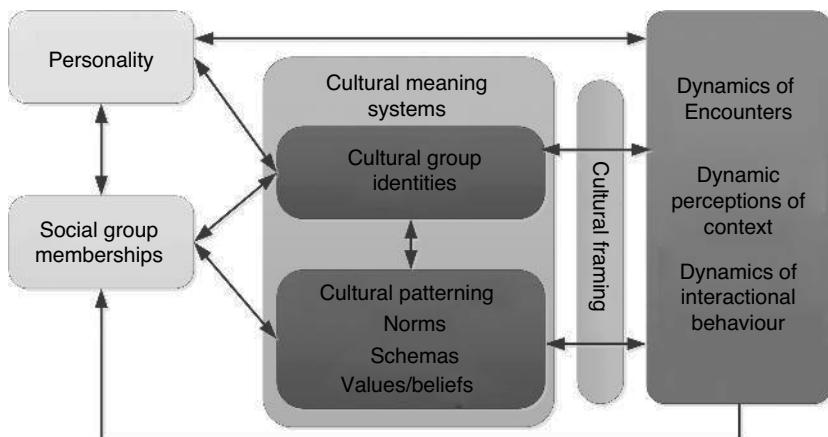


Figure 1.1 Overview of the impact of culture on interaction

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of situations, as well as values and beliefs. Our group identities and cultural patterning, along with our individual personality traits (which are also influenced by socialisation), may all influence (but do not determine) the dynamics of the encounters we have with others.

In our book, when we explore the impact of culture within dynamic encounters, we are drawing on evidence for any of the following:

- participants' orientation to group identity (their own or that of their interlocutors);
- differences between interlocutors in their linguistic/behavioural norms;
- differences between interlocutors in the schematic representations they hold (e.g. of role relations, and procedures for a given communicative activity); and
- differences between interlocutors in the values/beliefs that they hold.

Traditionally in cross-cultural psychology, cultural group memberships have been primarily interpreted as national group membership (although there has been work on organisational membership), which has been seen as influencing values which in turn directly influence behaviour. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, this has been challenged in multiple ways and cross-cultural psychologists themselves now realise that that was too simplistic.

Much work within discourse, and – to a certain degree – pragmatics, has focused on the dynamics of encounters and argued that culture is co-constructed in the encounters. While interaction – and cultural stances within an interaction – are definitely co-constructed, our argument would be that participants are still influenced by their personal histories. Social group memberships and socialisation lead to cultural identities and cultural patterning, which in turn influence or frame the bases on which participants make evaluative judgements of other individuals and their behaviour. In other words, participants may be influenced by their perceptions/preconceptions of other social groups, and these perceptions/preconceptions may be influenced by their own personal and group histories. Holliday (2011: 2) argues that “The success of intercultural communication will not be modelled around awareness of and sensitivity to the essentially different behaviours and values of ‘the other culture’, but around the employment of the ability to read culture which derives from underlying universal cultural processes.” In our view, the ability to ‘read culture’ is vital, but we would maintain that this entails in part developing sensitivity to the range of elements that influence both our evaluative judgements of others and the ways in which we ourselves behave and communicate.

We would thus argue that the binary distinction between ‘culture-as-given’ and ‘culture-as-construct’ (Handford et al., 2019), where one perspective on culture is pitted against the other, is unhelpful, as it fails to recognise the importance of both angles and their inherent interconnectedness. Our approach combines acknowledgement of personal histories with the dynamics of

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interaction, and our book aims to unpack how cultural identities and cultural patterning can affect the dynamics of interaction.

How then can ‘intercultural’ be defined? Blommaert (1991) asked the question ‘how much culture is there in intercultural communication?’ This draws attention to the important point that the communicative behaviour that occurs in ‘intercultural’ interactions is not all the result of cultural group influences. As Figure 1.1 indicates, on the one hand, culturally based cognition only frames (interpretation of) behaviour. On the other, personality is an additional factor and psychological elements such as tiredness or stress can also influence the dynamic unfolding of an encounter. Here we build on the interpretation given by Spencer-Oatey and Franklin who, drawing on work by Žegarac (2007), define it as follows:

An intercultural situation is one in which the cultural distance between the participants is significant enough to have an effect on interaction/communication that is perceived in some way by at least one of the parties. (based on Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009: 3)

In line with this definition and from the perspective of intercultural politeness, we would argue that the key is participants’ own interpretive perceptions. Often the communication may proceed completely smoothly, and even though participants may have different cultural backgrounds (e.g. in terms of nationality, language, ethnicity), in these situations the interaction would not be intercultural in our terms. Sometimes, though, the interlocutors’ orientations may be in terms of ‘them’ and ‘us’, on the basis of their cultural group identities and attitudes. In these situations, participants may attribute behaviour to cultural differences, when in fact they are actually a reflection of personal idiosyncrasies or goals. We nevertheless regard them as intercultural interactions because that is how one or more of the participants perceives them. In fact, such perceptions are often unhelpful or even harmful overgeneralisations, but in terms of intercultural relations and the process of relating to each other, it is important to examine how such interpretive perceptions influence the process of managing relations. Such incidents need to be analysed and explained, and many of the examples in the book aim to do so.

However, we would maintain that not all problematic encounters necessarily relate to ‘them’ and ‘us’ orientations. Sometimes they may stem from differences in cultural patterning which have an impact on the meaning making process and evaluative judgements. In these cases, each of the participants may negatively evaluate the other because of differing expectations. They may have varying degrees of awareness of the cultural source of these differing expectations. We also treat these instances as ‘intercultural’. Here, gaining a greater understanding of the source(s) of the expectation gaps is usually helpful, in that it can shift the ‘blame’ from the ‘other’ to behavioural patterns, helping

participants realise that the behaviour was not a personal insult but a reflection of someone else's typical pattern.

The Experiential Examples and research data used throughout the book report interactions where one or more of the participants perceives some kind of expectation gap which turns the interaction into an intercultural one for them personally. Our overall orientation and analytic goal is in line with that taken by Scollon et al., who maintain the following:

The real question is, *what good does it do to see a given moment of communication as a moment of intercultural communication?* What kinds of things can we accomplish by looking at it in this way? (2012: 2, italics in the original)

We hope that our step-by-step examination of the relational management process, from both evaluative and performance perspectives, can help throw new light onto the process of relating across cultures, as well as provide a robust framework for analysing relational management and interpersonal relations more broadly.

### 1.3 The Need for This Book

As Kádár and Haugh (2013) argue, a very large body of work in politeness research has focused on comparing how politeness arises in a particular linguaculture, such as (People's Republic of China) Mandarin Chinese, (British, American, Australian) English, Japanese and Turkish, and then comparing that with how these forms or strategies differ from those in their counterparts. A particularly important work in this strand of research has been Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). This is generally termed cross-cultural pragmatics and politeness research, or contrastive pragmatics in a broader sense, where interactions or other forms of data are "obtained independently from different cultural groups" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008c: 6). There are literally thousands of published studies, including dozens of monographs and edited volumes, that focus on politeness from a cross-cultural perspective.

Such studies continue to be a fundamental area in politeness research, and indeed have contributed a considerable amount to academic understandings of differences in the way politeness arises through different forms and practices across cultures. They thereby provide very useful and important benchmark-type insights and data on particular linguacultures. However, from the perspective of intercultural interaction and relational management across cultures, they need to be complemented by the collection, analysis and theorising of fully fledged intercultural data, as well as analytic concepts with roots in intercultural theory. While it has been enormously popular to compare forms and practices that occasion politeness across cultural groups, it has been much less common for researchers to focus on examining understandings of

## 4 Overview of the Politeness Evaluation Process

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### 4.1 Introduction

Part II of our book focuses on the process of making evaluative judgements with regard to politeness. Early in the history of mainstream politeness research, Fraser and Nolan (1981: 96) argued that words and phrases are not inherently polite or impolite, but rather are judged as such by participants. As mentioned in Chapter 2, twenty years later, Eelen (2001) argued for the importance of studying politeness from an evaluation perspective. Yet, as Kádár and Haugh (2013: 60) argue, for many years there was remarkably little research into the process of interpersonal evaluation. Recently this has begun to change, with a number of papers (e.g. Chang and Haugh, 2011a; Economou-Kogetsidis, 2016; Fukushima, 2013; Haugh and Chang, 2019; Kádár and Márquez-Reiter, 2015) reporting empirical studies of people's evaluative judgements. In the last few years there have also been a number of publications (e.g. Culpeper, 2011a; Davies, 2018; Haugh, 2013b; Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2016; Spencer-Oatey and Xing, 2019) that have aimed at theorising the evaluation process. Nevertheless, Davies (2018: 122) maintains that 'the enthusiasm for the concept of evaluation in discursive approaches to politeness has overtaken the degree to which it has been theorized', suggesting that there is still more work to be done. This may be the case in particular when we study politeness in intercultural scenarios, considering that the cultural background of the interactants, the extent to which culture influences the context of the interaction and other aspects of culture can strongly influence politeness evaluations.

In this chapter we outline the various steps involved in the process of making politeness evaluations, which we explore in detail in subsequent chapters of Part II. Chapters 5–9 provide more in-depth conceptual explanation and use experiential examples to illustrate the points. Chapter 10 applies the model to case study data to demonstrate how it can be used for analytic purposes.

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## 4.2      Key Components of the Politeness Evaluation Process

Figure 4.1 provides a diagrammatic representation of the evaluation process. We have broken the process down into component elements so that the multiple factors can be explained. In reality, of course, they take place in split seconds – provided that an interaction takes place synchronously – although subsequent reflection can continue for a long time.

### 4.2.1      Behaviour in Context (Step 1 in Figure 4.1)

Our model is based on the assumption that the evaluation process is potentially triggered when an instance of contextualised interpersonal behaviour takes place. Behaviour involves both verbal and nonverbal behaviour; in other words, it encompasses any interactional behaviour.

Behaviour always takes place in a situational context and our interpretation of this situational context is a very important aspect of the evaluation process (marked as 1 in Figure 4.1). As we will explain in detail in Chapter 5, individuals build up background knowledge over time on a wide range of

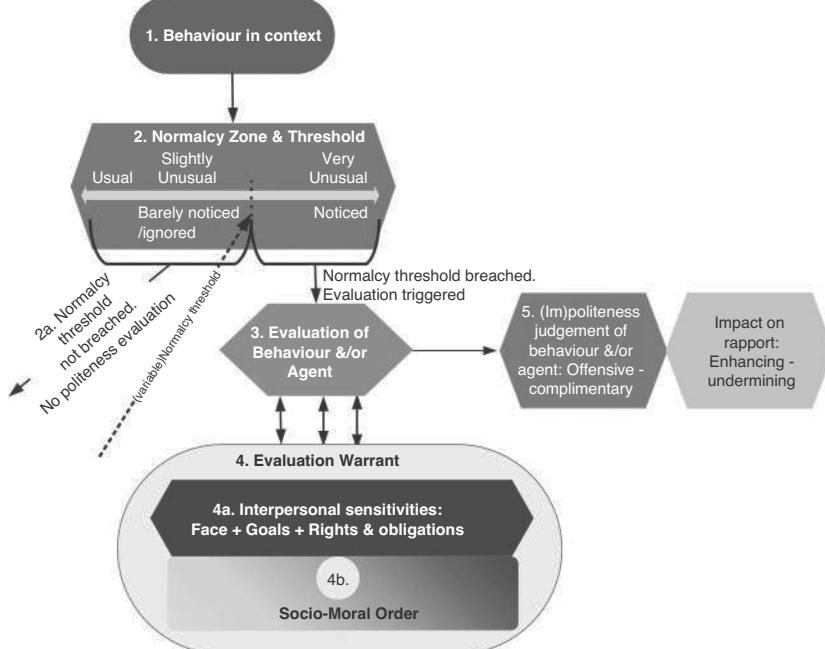


Figure 4.1 Key components and steps in the evaluation process

different types of situational context, holding schematic-type knowledge and norms on what typically happens, who is present to say and do what, and so on. In other words, through interaction in a range of social groups, as well as through broader socialisation processes, individuals develop cultural patterning in the form of schemas and norms about situations and their participants, and these give rise to expectations as to what will and will not happen. In combination with their cultural values and cultural group identities, this cultural meaning system influences their conceptions as to what should or should not happen in this particular context, which in turn influences their evaluative judgements.

In Chapter 5 we explore the various aspects of the situational context that people assess and the types of expectations they may have in relation to them.

#### 4.2.2 *Normalcy Zone and Triggering of the Politeness Evaluation Process (Steps 2–3 in Figure 4.1)*

Individuals bring their socialisation/experience-based contextually situated expectations into any interaction, and it is these expectations that give rise to evaluative moments. If a form of behaviour is completely expected, it will fall within their normalcy zone and so will typically not even be noticed. If it is perceived to be a deviation, but only a minor one, it will typically be barely noticed or else ignored, and the politeness evaluation process goes no further on this occasion (2a in Figure 4.1). In other words, these instances of behaviour that a participant perceives as not deviating or only deviating to a minor degree from expectations, remain within the normalcy zone and are probably barely noticed.

When the divergence from expectations is greater and falls outside a person's normalcy zone (i.e. it is marked in some way), this is when the politeness evaluation process gets truly started. In verbal behaviour, the deviation can relate to what is said (i.e. the message content of the communication), how it is said (i.e. the manner in which the message is conveyed), or both. It is important to note that the behaviour could be unexpected in both positive and negative senses, or a combination of the two (e.g. see Experiential Example 7.2 and associated text in Chapter 7), although at this stage it is just its unusual/unexpected nature that has triggered the evaluation process. In other words, when the behaviour falls beyond the normalcy threshold, the process of evaluating it (positively or negatively) begins.

Chapter 6 explores this step in the evaluation process by considering norms, expectations and culture. It also notes the potential impact of cultural group identities and ingroup/outgroup attitudes. Participants' evaluations are more likely to be triggered when they dislike the other, feel anxious about them and/or hold prejudices against them. The dotted line in the Normally Zone and

Threshold box in Figure 4.1, indicates the movability of the normalcy threshold (see Section 6.5).

#### 4.2.3 *Evaluation of Behaviour and Agent (Step 3 in Figure 4.1)*

Once evaluation has been ‘activated’, both the behaviour itself and/or the person performing the behaviour are subject to evaluation. Experiential Example 4.1, which was personally experienced by the first author, illustrates this point. It took place in a university setting and concerns the procedures associated with handing in an assignment.

In this case neither participant mentioned what was wrong with the behaviour of the other during the incident, but rather evaluated the other person. By doing so, they attributed their negative evaluation of the behaviour to the individual concerned; this is what we label as ‘agent’ in our model (see 3 and 5 in Figure 4.1). Note that neither the student nor the administrator treated the incident explicitly in intercultural terms; they just complained about each other angrily, each blaming the other for unreasonable behaviour. The example thus points to the need to unpack the factors that can affect people’s reactions, as well as the major role that emotions can play in the evaluation process. We explore the latter in detail in Chapter 9.

#### **Experimental Example 4.1 Protocols When Submitting an Assignment**

I [Helen] had just given a one-hour lecture and after a ten-minute break, students were returning to class for a seminar. One of the international students commented as she came in: ‘I am so angry I won’t be able to concentrate on the class. One of the office staff has just been extremely rude to me!’ I was shocked to hear this, since I had never before heard a complaint like this about the office staff. Since the course was intercultural in focus and this could be a valuable learning opportunity for all the students, I decided to take the time to talk through what had happened. It turned out that the student had handed in her work, but then, without speaking to the administrator, taken it away again to check on something. The administrator rather sharply asked her what she was doing, but the student did not understand what she had done wrong. Later, when I finished the class and went to the main office, the administrator immediately told me ‘Your student was really rude to me earlier.’ It turned out that they each had differing understandings of the protocols associated with submitting a piece of coursework and these had given rise to the misunderstandings.

(Spencer-Oatey, personal experience)

First, though, we need to consider the criteria that people use to make these judgements of behaviour and of the agent. This involves the evaluation warrant.

#### 4.2.4 *Evaluation Warrant (Step 4 in Figure 4.1)*

We define the evaluation warrant as the grounds that people appeal to when making an evaluation. As can be seen from Figure 4.1, we regard the evaluation warrant as comprising two interconnected elements: individuals' interpersonal sensitivities and concerns, and underpinning socio-moral order. For the former, we draw on Spencer-Oatey's (2008b) bases of rapport management: interactional goals, face sensitivities, sociality rights and obligations. For the latter, we draw on work within moral psychology to gain insights as they relate to politeness evaluations.

Spencer-Oatey's three bases of rapport management cover a wide range of evaluation criteria, which Chapter 7 explores in detail. Here we just present one experiential example to illustrate the types of issues at stake. It was experienced by the first author when she was working in Shanghai in the 1980s as a foreign teacher. At that time, many foreign teachers lived in a designated section of a hotel, as their university had no other suitable accommodation for them. Many teachers were concerned (or annoyed or upset) by a frequent question/comment made to them when they were leaving their building.

To English speakers, 'Where are you going?' is a request for information and it is rather awkward to refuse politely without causing some kind of face threat to the other person. For instance, in English it is not usual to respond with 'Oh

#### **Experimental Example 4.2 Where Are You Going?**

In the 1980s, I [Helen], along with twenty or so other non-Chinese teachers, were living in a special wing of a well-known hotel in Shanghai, China – the Jin Jiang Hotel. This wing comprised a number of different blocks, with entrances that led to multiple rooms on four floors. Each block had one or more room attendants who were located near the entrance/exit to that block.

Very frequently, when a foreign teacher was on his/her way out, a room attendant would ask 'Where are you going?'. This greatly annoyed the teachers, who would regularly complain among themselves that the authorities were spying on them. They wanted to be able to go in and out without a member of the hotel staff noticing and commenting on it. On the one hand, they felt it was part of their right to privacy; on the other, they were sometimes meeting local Chinese which at the time was somewhat monitored.

(Spencer-Oatey, personal experience)

somewhere', while to say 'None of your business' is typically regarded as rude. So the foreign teachers felt put in an awkward position. They evaluated it negatively for two reasons. On the one hand, they felt that the role relationship 'room attendant–hotel guest' entitled them to privacy; in other words, that their role as guest entitled them to be free from such questioning. On the other hand, their goal was sometimes to slip out of the hotel unnoticed, so that they could meet a local Chinese friend without drawing undue attention to the matter. Thus, there were three possible bases to their dislike and negative evaluation of the room attendant's question:

- It infringed their right to privacy (i.e. their sociality rights, in Spencer-Oatey's (2008b) framework).
- It interfered with their goal of slipping out of the hotel unobtrusively (i.e. interactional goals, in Spencer-Oatey's framework).
- It caused a sense of face threat, as they found it awkward to respond to (i.e. face sensitivities, in Spencer-Oatey's framework).

However, while 'Where are you going?' sounds like a request for information in English and was interpreted as such by many of the foreign teachers, in fact in Chinese it was a conventionalised greeting. This phrase is used frequently for friendly small talk, similar to the British tendency to comment on the weather. So, the room attendants were probably just being very friendly and even polite by saying that when they saw a guest they recognised. In Chinese, it can be answered very vaguely, such as by saying 'Oh, somewhere', and this is regarded as perfectly acceptable.

So, when considering the evaluation process in intercultural communication, key issues to address are the ways that cultural factors (along with linguistic conventions and participants' familiarity with them) may (or may not) influence people's conceptions of their interactional goals, face sensitivities and perceived rights and obligations. If individuals hold different conceptions of these bases to rapport, they are more likely to differ in the criteria they use for evaluation purposes, and this in turn may lead to different evaluations of the same behaviour. Note that such differences may decrease with the passing of time. This is why the 'interculturality' of politeness is a matter of degree: the more familiar interactants become with each other, with a particular interactional practice, and the context of a practice, the less likely that such differences will influence their rapport negatively.

When people make evaluations, they often add comments to justify their appraisal. Sometimes, these relate to the interpersonal sensitivities we have just discussed; for instance, 'I was really embarrassed by what he said' (face threat), or 'she had no right to treat me like that' (infringement of sociality rights). However, sometimes people appeal to a 'deeper reason', arguing that something is 'unethical' or simply 'wrong'. In other words, they are appealing to a moral order – i.e. an ideal order of 'how things should be'. Several theorists

within politeness theory (e.g. Haugh, 2013a; Kádár and Haugh, 2013) have drawn attention to this, arguing that people implicitly subject behaviour to moral evaluations. Such reflections on interaction are often referred to in the field of pragmatics as metapragmatic behaviour (for an overview, see Lucy, 2004). When engaging in metapragmatic reflections on what has been said or done, interactants often appeal (frequently implicitly, but sometimes explicitly) to fundamental values such as the importance of showing care and concern for others. In Figure 4.1 we have depicted this by including the socio-moral order within the evaluation warrant (4b in Figure 4.1). We explore this aspect of the evaluation warrant in Chapter 8, considering the links and synergies between concepts and frameworks in pragmatics, moral psychology and cross-cultural psychology.

#### 4.2.5 *Judgement of Behaviour and Agent (Step 5 in Figure 4.1)*

The final step in the evaluation process (5 in Figure 4.1) is the judgement itself. This judgement can be positive (i.e. complimentary) or negative (i.e. offensive). Chapter 9 examines this and considers issues such as the target(s) of the judgement, the role that emotions play and the influence of other factors such as stereotypes and prejudice.

As mentioned above, participants frequently evaluate not only the unexpected behaviour they have encountered but also the person performing the behaviour (i.e. the agent – see 3 and 5 in Figure 4.1). In fact, interlocutors often make no conscious distinction between the two and simply focus on the person. This can have very important consequences for the degree of rapport between the participants concerned, enhancing it or undermining it. Part III of the book, which focuses on managing politeness, follows up on this. Chapters 12 and 13 explore reactive politeness; in other words, they examine how people handle relations when an evaluative judgement has just been made and the impact that culture may have on this process. Chapters 14 and 15 explore ways that participants proactively handle intercultural relations, either to try to prevent relational problems occurring or to positively try to enhance them.

### 4.3 Summary

In this chapter we have provided an overview of our model of the politeness evaluation process in intercultural interaction. Although we have separated the evaluation process into separate steps, it is important to remember that in real-time interaction, these steps are typically compressed into seconds or even milliseconds. The reason we have separated them out is twofold. On the one hand, our aim is to convey the range of elements that affect the evaluation

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process. On the other, sometimes people reflect on unexpected incidents afterwards, especially if they are emotionally salient to them, and during the meta-process of reflection they will often draw on one or more of the elements involved in the process (e.g. the situational context, or the interactional rights they perceive themselves to have).