POLITENESS AND IDEOLOGY: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Gino Eelen

1. Introduction

The aim of this contribution is twofold. On the one hand it will attempt to place the various papers of this special issue in perspective vis-à-vis each other and vis-à-vis the notion of ideology -the overall topic of the 6th International Pragmatics Conference and the driving theme behind the present volume. The goal is to provide a broader view on the different papers as a whole, to summarize their claims without repeating what they have already said, but by looking for relevant interconnections. For although they do share a common topic, the specific subject matter they examine is quite varied, as are their respective approaches, ranging from the empirical to the theoretical, from the specific to the general. My second aim lies beyond the papers themselves, as their comparison will reveal two issues that are left largely undiscussed. A more in-depth look at these issues will be proposed as a way of complementing the other contributions by completing their combined interpretation of the relationship between politeness and ideology.

2. Ideologies of politeness

An obvious point of comparison between the papers in this special issue can be found in their common theme, which was also the general theme of the IPrA Conference: ideology. However, this similarity also hides an underlying distinction, as different authors have interpreted this notion in different ways. A comparison reveals that at least three types or kinds of ideology can be distinguished.

The first could be called the *commonsense* ideology of politeness, and refers to the set of stipulations or norms which determine what is 'polite' and what is 'impolite' in everyday ordinary interaction. This kind of ideology thus pertains to ordinary speakers, and comprises evaluations of social acts as well as the rules and mechanisms that inform such evaluations. An example from current theorizing would be so-called 'culture-specific' interpretations of politeness -think for instance about the 'Japanese' versus 'American' (or more generally Eastern vs. Western) notions of politeness which have amply been discussed in the literature. A possible further distinction within this category runs between what ordinary speakers actually *do* (the actual evaluations they make) and what they *say* they do (their metapragmatic beliefs and discourse about politeness). That these two are not always or necessarily identical has been pointed out by Okamoto when she emphasizes the fact that Japanese cultural ideologies of politeness do not adequately capture actual

everyday usages, which are often far more complex than the ideologies would lead to believe. Such metapragmatic ideologies, in the form of canonical rules of politeness, tend to present a simplified version of reality, in that they highlight specific cultural commonplace values -such as the direct socio-structural indexicality of politeness in the case of Japanese.

Watts, Ide & Ehlich (1992: 3) have labeled commonsense ideologies of politeness 'first-order politeness', and contrasted them to 'second-order politeness', which is the second type of ideology to be distinguished here. It comprises *scientific* ideologies of politeness, and refers to the different ways in which science has tried to make sense of -or capture or explain- politeness phenomena. This ideology thus involves scientific concepts and theoretical constructs, and describes how scientists see politeness. Although scientific ideologies have mostly employed conceptualizations and terminologies that differ vastly from those of commonsense ideologies, Okamoto's paper points out that this dissimilarity may be merely a veil, as scientific views are often implicitly based on commonsense canonical rules and values.

The third type of ideology is *social* ideology, which refers to beliefs having to do with certain aspects of social organization or social structure (e.g. the power relations that prevail in a society), and their associated values. This ideology consists of elements that make up what could be called a 'social worldview' (e.g. notions of right and wrong, of good and bad, of social worth, and so on). Although strictly speaking, social ideologies are not ideologies of politeness, the two are closely connected, in that social worldviews are often used as explanatory factors in scientific accounts of politeness. Again, 'individualistic' Western social ideologies are often contrasted to Eastern 'collectivistic' ideologies, a distinction which is called upon to explain differences in politeness concepts and practices between Eastern and Western cultures.

Although the papers in this volume discuss different kinds of ideologies or different interconnections between them, together they clearly demonstrate that all of them are in fact closely interconnected. For starters, Gudrun Held convincingly argues that commonsense ideologies of politeness are connected with social ideologies, by showing how the meaning and function of certain politeness formulae are transformed -by changing their meaning and function- when the underlying social structures change, and with them the accompanying social ideology. More specifically she illustrates how notions like 'democracy' and 'social equality' have influenced the meaning and use of formulae that were historically directly related to the power-structure of society. Rathmayr also raises this issue in examining the effects of the growing westernization of Russian society on politeness usage, as does Terkourafi, in linking differences between Cypriot and Mainland Greek usage of diminutive forms to features of the social organization of the different communities. Watts's paper focuses on the connection entirely, as he examines the political and socio-structural functions of early eighteenth century British politeness.

That same connection -between commonsense and social ideologies- is also discussed by Klotz, when he establishes the link between social structure, political correctness, and politeness. But Klotz also establishes the connection between social and *scientific* ideologies, by showing how scientific conceptualizations of politeness (and even of communication in general) can be related to social organizational features. E.g. current politeness theories mostly favor explanations and models based on (again) 'democratic' principles -or at least principles ideologically connected with the concept of democracy.

Notions such as Grice's Cooperative Principle or Fraser & Nolen's Social Contract (and, I might add, more in general the whole idea of politeness as a socially 'harmonizing' and 'stabilizing' force or phenomenon -the ever-popular notion of politeness as conflict-avoidance) are examples of this connection. These concepts can thus be seen to be 'ideologically informed', and without doubt politeness and communication in general would be conceptualized quite differently -using different concepts, that is- in different times or societies, e.g. in highly vertically structured societies with a social ideology emphasizing distinction rather than equality. Once again, the above mentioned distinction between Eastern and Western social ideologies and their influence on scientific conceptualizations of politeness comes to mind here, which is epitomized by Brown & Levinson's (1978/1987) individualistic strategic interpretation versus Ide's (1989) strongly socio-structurally informed notion of 'discernment'.

Rathmayr's paper then closes the triangle of ideologies by raising the issue of the connection between scientific and commonsense ideologies of politeness by examining the treatment of politeness in Russian linguistics and contrasting it to actual everyday usage. As indicated above, Rathmayr is joined in this by Okamoto (regarding Japanese linguistics), but the link is also present in any of the other empirically oriented papers, since empirical investigations allow scientists to validate or invalidate their theoretical constructions, i.e. to test scientific ideologies against everyday reality, as Hernández-Flores does for Brown & Levinson's theory on the basis of Spanish politeness. As such, the link is crucial to science, as it gives us, eternally ethereal scholars, an idea of what exactly we are talking about -and of whether during those talks we have been using the proper terms and making valid claims.

Finally, through advancing the co-constituting view of communication, Arundale spells out the way in which ideologies in general -whether they are political, commonsense, or scientific- actually come into being, how they are (co-)constituted, and also how they 'work', i.e. in which ways they come to influence our language behavior -and vice versa. At the same time, it seems, this co-constituting view of communication is also excellently placed to explain exactly how the connections between the different ideologies are established. E.g. how elements of social ideologies can come to influence scientific ideologies, as when scientists are co-constituting their theoretical ideologies, their 'interpretings' are necessarily informed by their social-political ideological 'interpretings' and knowledge.

So although the different authors may differ in the kinds of ideologies they discuss, there is also clearly a connection between all of them, in the sense that all of the ideologies which they have talked about are closely interconnected. In this light, the above made distinctions are only valid as purely analytical constructs -as a meta-scientific heuristic tool-, and so, although I have associated specific authors with specific ideologies or connections between ideologies, on an implicit level they are all in fact discussing all of the ideologies simultaneously. This can be illustrated through Hernández-Flores' paper, whose reference to the Spanish notion of 'confianza' not only says something about the Spanish commonsense ideology of politeness, but also about the relationship between commonsense and scientific ideologies -as she integrates 'confianza' in her scientific account of Spanish politeness-, as well as about the connectedness of both commonsense and scientific ideologies with social ideologies, since 'confianza' can be regarded as an element of a

social ideology -if only through its mere existence as a socially meaningful and relevant notion for Spanish-speaking people.

3. Commonsense vs. scientific ideology

Although each type of ideology and each interconnection between ideologies has been of importance at some point or other throughout the present volume, there nevertheless seems to be a slight discrepancy in how they have been treated. All of the ideologies and connections have been the object of explicit theorizing, except one: the connection between commonsense and scientific ideologies. True, it has been said that this connection is present in any empirical account, but this is only on the implicit level. Whereas the other connections have been *examined* and explicitly *questioned*, the commonsense-scientific connection seems largely to be taken for granted, with the exception of the above mentioned claim by Okamoto that theories do not always accurately capture the practice of everyday reality. E.g. Held, Rathmayr, or Hernández-Flores' papers all involve this connection in an essentially 'practical' way: data are used as input for theoretical conclusions. Although this seems a pretty obvious and normal thing to do, since after all our theories are supposed to be about empirical reality, the exact relationship between those data and the theoretical claims made on their basis is not always extensively discussed. In fact, just like in the bulk of politeness literature, it is mostly left implicit or taken for granted. But as I shall briefly sketch in the following discussion, it is not always as straightforwardly unequivocal as it may seem at first sight.

Throughout the politeness literature, the relationship between commonsense ideologies and scientific ideologies has always been ambiguous -and that is only putting it mildly. On the one hand, we scientists somehow never seem to be talking about actual ordinary speakers' politeness, in the sense that the notion as we construe it would be designed to cover exactly those phenomena ordinary speakers would identify as 'politeness' or 'impoliteness'. In other words, our 'politeness' is almost never that of ordinary speakers'.

This is already evidenced by Brown & Levinson's (1978/1987) monograph which starts out with the statement that their notion of politeness is "very broadly and specially defined" (1987: 55). Further on, throughout the literature, examples abound where scholars qualify certain utterances as polite or impolite, where it is not always clear -and sometimes even doubtful- whether the interactants that produced those utterances did -or even would, when so asked- also qualify those utterances in terms of politeness/impoliteness. In any case, the question is almost never asked. And the latest trend is to discuss politeness without even using the term 'politeness' at all, which is evidenced by e.g. Watts (1989, 1992), who talks of 'politic behavior' instead. Examples can also be found in the present volume: Arundale discusses 'Face Constituting', while Held talks of 'Submissive Gestures'. Klotz, finally, referred to various scholars who have interpreted politeness in some non-commonsensical form: Watts' politic behavior again, or Fraser & Nolen's (1981, but see also Fraser 1990) Social Contract interpretation. Obviously such 'scientific' terms do not have a direct connection with any 'commonsense' or 'everyday' notion of politeness -in the sense that 'ordinary speakers' would probably not think of politeness in those terms.

On the other hand, however, all theories of politeness evidently *are* talking about what ordinary speakers actually do, about what goes on in their heads. So the 'politeness' we scientists talk about must have *something* to do with what's inside real speakers' heads. For example, very often theories have been tested by comparing them with judgments or evaluations by ordinary speakers -a good example are the experimentally obtained rankings of different utterances in terms of 'more-or-less-polite', where it is obvious that the notion of politeness targeted is that of ordinary speakers. Also, in the present volume, empirical data are used to construct or (in)validate theoretical claims about politeness. Still further, when certain claims are made about e.g. the Japanese -or Chinese, or American, or whichever- notion of politeness, this can -in my opinion- only refer to how 'the Japanese' in general (including ordinary speakers, not just the scientists) see politeness.

So the relationship between the scientific and the commonsense notions of politeness is a bit unclear to say the least. In any case, it is hardly ever questioned. Most of the time, the link is more or less presupposed, taken for granted, treated as unproblematical. In most cases (im)politeness becomes some sort of objective characteristic of linguistic utterances, independent of any real speaker/hearer's judgment. For example, Held examines 'Gestures of Submission' and classifies them as 'politeness' without questioning whether or not ordinary speakers would make the same evaluation in all instances, a scientific practice which, again, abounds throughout the literature. Rathmayr does the same with apologies, Terkourafi with diminution, Hernández-Flores with certain linguistic strategies in advice-giving, and Okamoto with Honorific forms. And they are of course not alone; it is common practice throughout the field of research.

However, I am not claiming here that this practice is simply wrong. All I am saying is that unless the question is asked and thoroughly examined, we can never be sure exactly how our claims relate to the data we derive them from, or even whether our data actually are what we take them to be, whether they represent valid instances of what we claim to be examining.

Also note that rating experiments do not as such offer a solution here. Although they would indeed record 'evaluations of politeness', it is not at all clear how these evaluations relate to speakers' spontaneous everyday evaluations in real, and real-time interaction with specific, and living interactants. At best, they are records of people's politeness evaluation of isolated sentences (or at most sentences in hypothetical and highly simplified situational contexts) during a rating experiment carried out by a scientific researcher. Ultimately it is not even a question of methodology at all. It cannot be done away with by simply following a strict and rigid method in data-collection and analysis. For then we are still left with the question of what those data -and our analyses- signify, and how the data relate to our analytical tools and techniques. It is rather a question of epistemology, of heuristics, indeed of philosophy, and concerns issues such as the nature of social reality, our view as scientists of the nature of social reality, our place as scientists vis-à-vis 'everyday reality' -e.g. what are the consequences of using terms such as 'everyday reality' and 'ordinary speakers'?-, our role in defining that reality -which leads to the question of our role in society-, and so on and so forth.

But apart from these rather broad questions, at a more down-to-earth and direct level the question is first and foremost: 'Whose politeness are we talking about?' Ordinary speakers' or our own (scientific) notion? And how do we see the relationship between our own notions and those of ordinary speakers? And if we claim that there is in fact a

relationship, that we are studying 'commonsense' politeness, how can we ever verify our claims if we use noncommonsensical terms in our theories? For if we do not speak the same 'language' as our ordinary speakers, doesn't the empirical analysis of any stretch of conversation simply become a case of 'Hineininterpretation', of seeing whatever we have conjured up instead of what is really there for the speakers, so that empirical analysis in fact becomes a trivial exercise, without any real (in)validating value, as we can not 'ask' ordinary speakers any questions relating to our concepts?

Above all it seems to be a question of choices, and as such it goes beyond the misleading simplicity of the distinction between first-order and second-order politeness. It does not suffice to claim that first-order politeness is what ordinary speakers think and second-order politeness what scientists think, and then just happily go on with or scientific theorizing. We have to go further and seriously contemplate the nature of the relationship between our own and ordinary people's thinking, lest we lose ourselves in boundless theorizing about 'politeness' without knowing whether we are actually saying something about 'everyday' politeness or simply making up our own 'social reality' without any solid foothold in everyday reality. After all, in the end it seems to be the latter that should interest us most. As Watts (this volume) shows, a valuable starting point may lie in critically examining this 'commonsense' notion for all its historical and socio-political complexities.

As can be seen, the question of the scientific-commonsense connection quickly becomes a rather encompassing issue, but nevertheless I think it is a pertinent question that at least deserves to be asked. And I hope that by raising it, I have somehow complemented the other papers, and thereby more or less completed their round-up of the different kinds of ideologies and their interrelationships, providing some kind of 'closure' for the whole of this volume.

4. The ideology of culture

Apart from ideology, a second bond between the papers in this volume can be found in the fact that they, explicitly or implicitly, use or refer to the notion of 'culture' at one point or other in their discussions. Of course this is more evident in the empirically oriented papers than in the purely theoretical ones, but even the latter are -or will be- confronted with the notion when the fruits of their theorizing finally meet the real world. As anyone who is familiar with politeness research knows -but this also applies to many other fields of research- 'culture' is the order of the day for any self-respecting scientist. In the present volume, you can find accounts of the British, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Austrian, French, Italian, and Greek 'cultures' -with Terkourafi also arguing for adequate ways in which to approach cross-cultural research. 'Culture' is placed between quotation marks here, because the term is often not used as such. 'Society', 'community', or 'language' frequently take its place, but mostly they are used with the same epistemological meaning and to the same overall effect.

When we combine this 'cultural twist' in politeness research with the notion of ideology, this leads to a view of politeness as a cultural or social ideology. In Hernández-Flores' words (this volume):

> "[…] politeness is based on a social ideology, i.e. on a set of ideas about behaviour which are shared by a community and, hence are recognized as appropriate in the community"

So this entails a view of ideology as a more or less fixed set of ideas, shared by all the members of a culture, which guides their linguistic behavior. Politeness, as one such ideology, is therefore also seen as such a fixed and shared system. And furthermore, as both politeness and ideologies are associated with cultures, cultures become groups of basically like-minded people (at least in terms of politeness), where people share cultural ideologies. Until today (at least as far as I am aware of), this seems to be the prevailing view throughout the field of politeness research. And because scientific theories can also very well be regarded as 'ideologies' in their own right, as Arundale argues, I think we can thus identify a prevailing social ideology within politeness research which could be called the 'ideology of cultural groups', where the world is seen as divided into groups of like-minded people.

But when scientific theories are seen as ideologies, a basic scientific concept such as 'culture' of course also becomes an ideological construct. And as an ideological construct it becomes essentially contestable, especially in view of Arundale's claim that ideologies are more like arguments between people than like fixed structures inside people's heads. It seems therefore interesting to examine this notion of 'culture' a little bit further.

A first point to be made in that respect, is that 'culture' has always been a notoriously elusive concept -and I would argue that it is precisely that characteristic that has made is so popular among scientists of all kinds: for the more vague a term is, the more purposes it can be used for. In this respect, one prominent fact has already been pointed out: 'cultures' can take the form of 'societies', 'communities', 'languages', or even, as is the case with Terkourafi, varieties within a language. The 'cultures' within Terkourafi's paper further also receive a sociological and a politico-geographical qualification: the investigation involves 'people from large urban centers' in 'Mainland Greece' and in 'Cyprus'. Analogously, Held's paper is about Austrian, French, and Italian 'youth' -an age-related qualification. And of course they are not alone, this is a recurrent phenomenon throughout the literature on politeness, where 'culture' has received various linguistic, geographical, political, geo-political, ethnological, religious, or socio-structural definitions -with sometimes complex mixes of more than one, and with ranges from very small communities (as in Brown's investigations in Tenejapa, "[…] a peasant Mayan community in the Chiapas highlands of southern Mexico, about 20 miles from the town of San Cristóbal de la Casas" -Brown 1990), to an entire hemisphere (as in the ever-popular term 'Western Culture').

Whatever their specific definition, however, the results reported in such research are always said to pertain to the whole of the group under investigation. Together with what was said above about politeness as a 'cultural ideology', such groups or cultures are therefore always portrayed as groups of basically like-minded people. In Spanish culture for example, people are said to all have face wants for 'autonomy' and 'confianza'. Terkourafi even proposes a way in which this like-mindedness could be conceptualized: people could all have the same 'situational frames' in their heads. Again this is a widespread practice. Throughout the literature, notions of politeness are invariably taken

to be shared throughout 'cultural groups', and this sharing is explained by means of various theoretical constructs such as rules, maxims, scripts, norms, etc.

Only Okamoto seems to present some counterweight to this position, but even then only up to a point. For although she claims that evaluations of politeness can differ from one person to another depending on the speaker's ideas about politeness, a position which seems to counter the idea of cultural sharedness, this individual variability only concerns the *amount* of politeness to use in specific situations and towards specific persons. The 'content' of the notion of politeness is still conceptualized as basically shared throughout the community -e.g. that it has to do with formality and deference, that specific honorific forms index various amounts of these qualities, and that such forms are always used out of politeness concerns.

But of course, when I claim that this notion of 'cultural groups' should be treated as an ideological construct, this implies that I believe they are not necessarily a reality. On what grounds do I think so? I would like to advance three arguments to this effect. Firstly, it is intuitively clear that people are not all like-minded. If they were, we would live in a much more peaceful world (and I'm not talking about war here, I'm just talking about your plain old household-variety difference of opinion), and we certainly wouldn't need things like laws or politics. Furthermore, talks with any of my neigbors -and even with members of my own family- convince me enough that different people can see or interpret the world quite differently. Only think of what and how long it takes to 'really get to know' someone.

Secondly, if this is true in general, then it can be expected to be all the more true for inherently ethical phenomena like politeness. This can be illustrated by the sheer amount of variability recurring throughout empirical investigations (which is mostly countered through some form of statistical processing of the data), by the existence of etiquette books and all kinds of large- or small-scale normative campaigns, and also quite simply by the existence of impoliteness (which is an evaluative injunction that is seldom shared by the perpetrator).

Thirdly and finally, no one has as ever yet successfully delimited 'a culture'. And I mean delimited in terms of real persons: like 'this person belongs to the culture, but that one doesn't', and that done for each and every candidate-member of the culture. Especially scientists would eschew such an endeavor, as it is clear that in practice it would very quickly evolve into a basically political act (what if one of the subjects disagrees with the scientist's delimitation?). This observation alone already implies that culture is an ideological construction, and thus a much more complex notion than its day-to-day usage by scientists and 'ordinary people' alike would lead to suspect.

But where does this 'ideology of cultural groups' come from, and why is it so dominant? I think one major factor leading up to the ideology of cultural sharedness is our commonsense ideas about communication and understanding. One majestical trick that language plays on us is that it makes us believe that 'understanding' means 'having the same ideas' (or states of mind). Because we use the same words, and because we can communicate through those words, we get the feeling that those words therefore must also mean the same thing to all of us, or that using the same words implies that we have the same ideas. After all, those words do allow us to succesfully conduct our day-to-day business, to get along with people, to get things done, etc. This ideology of 'understanding as sharing' has found a firm foothold in linguistics, witness Arundale's reference to the

dominant models of communication as involving either 'direct transmission' of information, or some kind of 'encoding/decoding' process.

When this sharedness model of communication and understanding is applied to politeness, this quite naturally leads to a 'group-based' account, in which politeness is a 'group-thing', shared by all members and thus able to be 'communicated' from one member to another. In fact, the communication model directly entails and even necessitates such a sharedness-based conceptualization, because it implies that if politeness were not shared, it simply wouldn't 'work'. In order for people to be able to 'be polite' successfully, they need to agree on the interpretation of each others' verbal strategies, and therefore the rules of the politeness-game need to be shared. If they were not, politeness could have different meanings for different people, and misunderstanding would abound. Politeness would no longer be able to fulfil its social regulatory function -usually conceptualized as some form of conflict-avoidance-, and social chaos would be the result. So, within a sharedness-based communicative paradigm, whenever politeness is studied, this has to be done with reference to some kind of social group. For linguistics the most obvious choice of course is 'people speaking the same language', but groups on different levels of abstraction or defined by different criteria will also do.

But the question can be asked: is sharedness throughout a group really necessary for communication and understanding? The answer seems to be 'Only up to a point'. An example can illustrate this. Suppose two people are standing in front of an object, and one of them points to it saying 'tree'. When the other person agrees with this -or in the process learns to designate that object by the word 'tree'-, they can be said to share the concept of a 'tree'. But how far does that 'sharing' go, or better, what is the nature of that sharing? Although it allows them to 'communicate' about this object and others like it, the only thing they share about it -at least up to this point- is that they use the same word to refer to it. What they think 'a tree' actually is, how it relates to other objects, how far the concept can be stretched, or how they feel about 'trees', can all still be quite different. Of course, further interaction can resolve many of these differences and engender a greater amount of sharedness. But how much sharedness is actually needed to achieve 'communication' and 'understanding'? That seems to depend on the specific form communication and understanding take on. And it seems that there can be a number of different forms. E.g. one thing the above concept of 'tree' does is that it allows behavioral coordination. When one of them says 'look at that tree', the other one will scan the environment for an object to which 'tree' applies. Such behavioral coordination is one prominent form of 'communication' which requires only very superficial 'sharedness'.

And this of course equally applies to 'understanding', which can also involve basically any amount of sharedness, from the very superficial to the very 'deep'. For example, behavioral coordination involves a form of understanding which requires only sharedness of the referential meaning of words. As Shotter puts it (1993: 1):

> "Instead of taking it for granted that we understand another person's speech simply by grasping the inner ideas they have supposedly put into their words, that picture of how we understand each other is coming to be seen as the exception rather than the rule. Most of the time, we realize, we do not fully understand what another person says. Indeed, in practice, shared understandings occur only occasionally, if they occur at all. And when they do, it is by people

testing and checking each other's talk, by them questioning and challenging it, reformulating and elaborating it, and so on. For in practice, shared understandings are developed or negotiated between participants over a period of time."

So although my 'tree' example is admittedly overly simplistic, it does make some basic sense, as it illustrates (a) the above mentioned obvious fact that 'really understanding' another person takes time and interaction, i.e. effort -it does not just happen because people 'use the same language'-, and (b) that communication and understanding come in many forms and degrees, of which 'sharing ideas' may only be a (small) part. So we should be wary to extend this notion of 'communication as sharedness' too far, all the more so when inherently ethical phenomena such as politeness are involved, as these are almost by definition controversial, or at least highly debatable issues, as Watts (this volume) has shown.

For the reasons outlined above, I would therefore argue that the ideology of cultural groups, at least insofar as it conceives of cultures as shared systems, is too simplistic a worldview to adequately account for social reality. In light of the difficulties encountered and the amount of ad-hocery -or even politics- involved when one tries to apply a concept such as 'culture' to the real world, I think we should rather stop *using*, and instead start *examining* it as a concept; that is, as an ideological construction.

5. Conclusion

By means of a conclusion, it may be noted that the issues raised in the previous two sections are closely interrelated. The whole discussion of the ideology of cultural groups relates back to what was said about the connection between commonsense and scientific ideologies, as well as to Okamoto's claim that within this connection, scientific ideologies sometimes represent simplifying accounts based on commonsense canonical rules that fail to adequately capture a more complex everyday behavioral reality.

The relationship is twofold. On the one hand it is undeniably the case that commonsense notions of politeness mostly invoke an implicit framework of group-wide sharedness. When people talk about politeness or make actual politeness evaluations, they adopt an argumentative position as if their evaluations are not their personal (debatable) opinions, but to some measure 'universal' -at least shared by a larger group. They say that 'X *is* (im)polite', '*You don't do* X', '*It is* polite to say thank you', '*We* don't do that here', etc. On the other hand, current scientific accounts do exactly the same thing. They attempt to capture politeness in group-wide or even universal norms and rules. Which brings us back to the issue of choice. Should we as scientists adopt an unquestioning descriptive stance, and simply *mimick* commonsense notions of politeness -as sharedness, as group-wide objective norms-, or should we *examine* these commonsense notions -e.g. by confronting them with actual everyday variability- to try to see what exactly is going on beneath the surface. It was already said how empirical results usually display a large amount of variability. Currently, this variability is mostly dealt with by 'processing' the data through all kinds of statistical processes, so that conclusions can be drawn that cover the 'whole' of the data -in terms of trends, cultural norms, etc. The effect of this

methodology is that it dissimulates the initial empirical variability, in effect removing it from the scientific examination. Maybe we should rather take this variability for what it is, fully acknowledge it instead of trying to work it out of the picture, and examine politeness on that basis.

In this way we could at the same time not only describe commonsense social reality -as involving the idea of sharedness-, but also examine its nature -as an *ideology* of sharedness-, and in the process gain a deeper insight into the mechanisms behind notions such as 'politeness' or 'culture', i.e. into the nature of 'social reality'. At the very least, it would constitute a practice that would follow through on the full implications of the phrase 'ideologies of politeness', realizing its full meaning and potential.

6. Epilogue

In this critical review of politeness and ideology I have attempted to not simply chew the cud and present a dry summary of what the other authors have already argued to more detail, but rather to look for interconnections between them, and to use these as the basis for a few critical -perhaps polemical- remarks, by raising issues that either have not been treated or are implicitly taken for granted, i.e. by questioning the unquestioned. I have tried in this way to place the whole of this volume in a broader perspective, and in doing so to also provide an active contribution to the debate. In the process I have undoubtedly to some extent done injustice to the other contributions by ignoring the many nuances in their accounts, but that is an unavoidable consequence of opting for the role of the devil's advocate rather than that of a hagiographer, of attempting to critique rather than simply applaude a point well made. And after all, what could be a better conclusion for a volume of scientific work than to look back with a critical stance and ask the eternal question 'Where can we go from here?'

References

Brown, Penelope (1990): Gender, politeness, and confrontation in Tenejapa. *Discourse Processes 13*: 123-141.

Brown, Penelope, S.C.Levinson (1987 [1978]): *Politeness: Some universals in language usage.* Cambridge: C.U.P.

Fraser, Bruce (1990): Perspectives on politeness. *Journal of Pragmatics 14*: 219-236.

Fraser, Bruce, William Nolen (1981): The association of deference with linguistic form. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language 27*: 93-109.

Watts, Richard (1989): Relevance and relational work: Llinguistic politeness as politic behavior. *Multilingua 8(2-3)*: 131-166.

------(1992): Linguistic politeness and politic verbal behaviour: Reconsidering claims for universality. In *R.Watts, S.Ide, K.Ehlich (eds.)*, 43-69.

Watts, Richard, S.Ide, K.Ehlich (1992): Introduction. In: *R.Watts, S.Ide, K.Ehlich (eds.)*, 1-17.

Watts, Richard, Sachiko Ide, Konrad Ehlich (eds.) (1992): *Politeness in language: studies in its history, theory and practice.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Shotter, John (1993): *Conversational realities: constructing life through language.* London: Sage.

Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy 8 (2):225–246. Hunt, Michael. 2009. Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Huntington, Samuel. 1957. Conservatism as an Ideology. The American Political Science Review 51 (2):454–473. Shelby, Tommie. 2003. Ideology, Racism and Critical Social Theory. The Philosophical Forum 34 (2):153–188. Shenhav, Shaul. 2006. Political Narratives and Political Reality. International Political Science Review 27 (3):245–262. Shultziner, Doron. 2013. Genes and Politics: A New Explanation and Evaluation of Twin Study Results and Association Studies in Political Science. Political Analysis 21 (3):350–367.
Modern authoritarianism and political ideology. This article analyses the ideologies of authoritarian and neo-authoritarian regimes. The analysis is carried out in three clusters: "rudimentary" authoritarian regimes, post-colonial dictatorships, neo-authoritarian regimes. The first cluster is subdivided into two subgroups: authoritarian monarchies and "communist regimes". The regimes in the third cluster are also subdivided into two subgroups: post-Soviet regimes and neo-authoritarian regimes in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In an age of the decline of ideologies on a global scale, authorita This is not the only viewpointfor a review of the theoretical debate over globalization as an ideology, seeSoborski (2012).2 The hierarchical schema mimics the model of foreign policy attitudes ofHurwitz and Peffley (1987). The consequential Nationalist–Globalist policy divide in contemporary Britain: some initial analyses. A critical analysis of the main political, social and economic advances in development aid, traces the development agenda from the advent of the Bretton Woods agreement, the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, to the Washington Consensus and its neoliberal manifesto.