This study aims to reveal that how one's consideration for smooth relationship, or politeness, is reflected on linguistic behavior in terms of speech levels, speech level shift and hedge. The factors (age and gender) entailing them and their functions in discourse were clearly explained by comparative and contrastive studies on the conversations between unacquainted people in Japanese and Korean. Politeness strategies for smooth communication in both Japanese and Korean were analyzed from the perspective of 'discourse politeness' suggested by Usami (1998, 1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003b;2006c;2006d;2006e) who had developed politeness theory, where she insisted on the existence of universality among languages.

This study was composed of 9 chapters and outline of each chapter was described as follows.

In the first chapter, precedent studies were compiled and the general scheme of this thesis was suggested.

First of all, it was pointed out that the study of politeness, considered merely as 'politeness in linguistic forms' so far, was misunderstood as that of honorific expression or respectful expression. After scrutinizing related precedent studies, the unique methodology in which natural conversations under controlled condition should be analyzed at discourse level was suggested. In addition, speech levels were analyzed with a viewpoint of hedge as well as 'honorific expression'. I pointed out that this analysis was possible through the new viewpoint of 'politeness' and 'discourse-politeness'. The relationship between the theories and this study was explained and the necessity of analyzing with this tool was emphasized.

In chapter 2, methodology and analysis method were described.

In this study, a linguistic social psychological approach is taken in order to capture the dynamism of language use in an actual interaction.(Usami, 1999 a). In order to analyze manipulation of language use of a subject while changing the interlocutors' age and gender as the main factors of language use, a base subject is asked to have a conversation with six different partners: older same-
sex, same-age same-sex, younger same-sex, older opposite-sex, same-age opposite-sex, younger opposite-sex. Furthermore, in this study, in order to keep the subjects' social distance constant, a base subject is required to converse only with those they are meeting for the first time. In order to confirm the validity of each conversation, a follow-up 5-step evaluation questionnaire survey was conducted after each conversation. 72 conversations obtained through the abovementioned method were transcribed, based on the "Revised Edition: Basic Transcription System for Japanese: BTSJ" (Usami, 2003) and "Basic Transcription System for Korean: BTKS" (Usami et al., 2007) (total: 12hours). The transcribed data was encoded according to the items of analysis so that quantitative analysis was enabled.

In chapter 3, a follow-up 5-step evaluation questionnaire survey was analyzed. The adequacy of the data was verified by checking one's recognition on age and social status, and 'naturalness' of collected conversation, etc. The number of utterance, basic information of the data, was also suggested.

In chapter 4, the use proportion of utterance (substantive utterance(SB) or backchannels(BA)), speech levels (speech level at the end of utterance, speech level of whole utterance or speech level at the vocabulary level), and types of No politeness-marker(NM) (complete utterance(C) or incomplete utterance (I)) were analyzed with respect to the gender of base, the gender and age of talking partner in Japanese and Korean. The main results are as follows.

In both Japanese and Korean, the proportion of backchannels (BA) was high between the two with noticeable age gap while that of substantive (SB) was high between the two of same age. The high proportion of backchannels(BA) between the two with age gap was thought to be a consideration for promoting conversation from talking partner by reducing psychic distance arisen from age difference and to function as a politeness strategy for smooth communication. For the two of the same age, since the psychic distance between them is not so far as that of the two of different age, the proportion of substantive utterance (SB) is high, implying that they participate in conversation positively.

With respect to speech level, the proportion of Polite-from (P) is highest as over 50% in all the conversations for both Japanese and Korean. In the viewpoint of discourse-politeness theory, Politeform (P) appears an un-marked speech level in the first-meeting of two social beings. Additionally, it was found that the proportion of No politeness-marker (NM) is slightly higher in Japanese than Korean while that of Non-polite form (N) is slightly higher in Korean than Japanese. Regarding for the proportion of speech level at the end of utterance in Korean, Polite-form (P) is proportional to the age of talking partner and Non-polite form (N) is inverse proportional to that. In addition, the proportion of Super-polite form such as respectful and humble forms (S) in speech level is also
proportional to the age of talking partner. In other words, the hierarchical relations arisen from age difference were more strongly reflected on the linguistic form at the end of discourse such as Polite-form (P) or Non-polite form (N) and the use of Super-polite form such as respectful and humble forms (S) in Korean than in Japanese, which indicated that 'language use that conforms to sociolinguistic norms and conventions' is considered more important than 'strategic language use' in Korean. As for Japanese, on the contrary, the proportion of Non-polite form (N) was in inverse proportion to the age of talking partner but that of Polite-form (P) was highest between persons of the same age. However, when excepting No politeness-marker (NM) from substantive utterance (SB), the proportion of Polite-form (P) is almost proportional to the age of talking partner.

As for Japanese, the hierarchical relations arisen from age were not explicitly reflected on the linguistic form at the end of utterance of Polite-form (P). The marker expressing the hierarchical relations became ambiguous by frequent using No politeness-marker (NM). Instead, when marker expressing consideration to talking partner was absent, the considerations were expressed through the choice of Polite-form (P) or Non-polite form (N) in whole utterance or at vocabulary level according to the norm of "honorific expression". That is, the choice of speech levels in Japanese implies two aspects, "language use that conforms to sociolinguistic norms" and "conventions and strategic language use". Moreover, it was found that women for Japanese and men for Korean tend to use more polite expression frequently. More polite expression was used toward to men regardless of speaker's gender in both Japanese and Korean.

As for "NM type" a substantive utterance of No-politeness-marker (NM) at the end of utterance, "incomplete utterance (I)" is proportional to the age of talking partner while "complete utterance(C)" is reverse proportional to that in both Japanese and Korean. The results mean that the hierarchical relations arisen from age was reflected on the NM type in both languages. The results lead to the conclusion that "incomplete utterance" functions as Polite-form while complete utterance (C) does Non-polite form.

In chapter 5, the results of 'speech level shift', understanding dynamically speech level at discourse level, were suggested.

The proportions of down shift (D), up shift (U), no shift (N) with base's gender and talking partner gender and age were investigated. The key results were as follows. Regardless of base's gender in both Japanese and Korean, down shift was highest for the elder talking partner while no shift was highest for younger talking partner. That is, since one showed more polite linguistic behavior toward elder person, rank derived from age difference was reflected on the speech level shift. As for Korean, the ratio of up shift outnumbers the sum of no shift and up shift ratios. Whoever the subject of down shift, talker or talking partner, Korean showed stronger tendency to return to unmarked speech level (P) after down shift than Japanese.
I pointed out that speech level shift functioned as a politeness strategy for smooth communication by downshift or no shift satisfying positive face, or upshift preventing negative face. The function of speech level shift is not understood at sentence level and it firstly revealed by the analysis at discourse level.

In chapter 6, the use proportion of hedges from the viewpoint of “the numbers of hedges per each utterance”, “the existence of hedges in whole utterance”, and “the existence of hedges in the end of utterance” were analyzed with respect to the gender of base, the gender and age of talking partner in Japanese and Korean. The main results are as follows.

Hedge was more frequently used in Japanese than Korean, regardless of the position where hedge appeared. While “the numbers of hedges per each utterance”, “the existence of hedges in whole utterance”, and “the existence of hedges in the end of utterance” were proportional to the age of talking partner in Korean, the proportionality was observed only for “the number of hedge per each utterance “ in Japanese. Hedge in Korean roles more often as a function of negative politeness strategy like “Polite-form (P)” than Japanese.

On the other hand, the proportion of hedge was higher for a man base in Japanese and for a woman base in Korean with respect to “the numbers of hedges per each utterance”, “the existence of hedges in whole utterance”, and “the existence of hedges in the end of utterance”. Considering that hedge softens expression by avoiding decisive expression and makes an utterance more polite, the results shows opposite tendency to the frequency of speech level with the base gender.

The observation leads to the conclusion that polite communication was possible thorough properly harmonized hedge and speech level in both Japanese and Korean.

In chapter 7, the relationship between speech level and hedge was investigated in the viewpoint of coincidence of them in Japanese and Korean. The occurrence of speech level and hedge with base gender and talking partner’s gender and age was investigated. The main results are as follows.

The Non-polite form(N) showed highest coincidence of speech level and hedge, followed by No politeness-marker(NM) and Polite-form(P) in Japanese. As for Korean, the coincidence was highest in Non-polite form(N) followed by Polite-form(P) and No politeness-marker(NM). That is, although the degree of politeness is relatively low in the aspect of linguistic form in both Japanese and Korean owing to high coincidence of Non-polite form, a hedge, the non-linguistic supplementary device, makes a discourse more polite. The coincidence of Polite-form (P) and hedge shows that in “the existence of hedges in whole utterance” the number of hedge per whole discourse is proportional to the age of talking partner in both Japanese and Korean while the proportionality appears only in Korean for “the existence of hedges in the end of utterance”. In conservation with an elder, there was a tendency to be more polite by using Polite-form (P) with hedge in both Japanese and Korean. The
tendency was more noticeable in Korean.

It can be said that hedge as well as speech level functions as politeness strategy.

In chapter 8, each analysis of speech level and hedge from chapter 4 and 7 was collectively analyzed with key concepts of discourse-politeness theory suggested by Usami.

On the concrete, it was emphasized that the politeness entailed by marked behavior was relatively understood by classifying the basic state of discourse politeness as an unmarked politeness of speech level and hedge in the first meeting of two social beings.

It is also suggested that the study on the classification of "standard situation" of important "discourse behavior" in each language would give a solution for misunderstanding or miscommunication between difference cultures.

In chapter 9, this study was summarized. Also, implications and future work for second language education was described.

In this study, speech level and hedge which don't seem to have any relation between them were analyzed together in the viewpoint of coincidence of them. The results show that speech level and hedge were tightly related and that both of them were intended for one's consideration for smooth relationship.

This study also reveals that the politeness as a linguistic behavior for smooth relationship is embodied by not only language use that conforms to sociolinguistic norms and conventions like using honorific expressions such as respectful and humble forms but also strategic language use such as "No politeness-marker" and "hedge" in both Japanese and Korean. Therefore, the use of speech level and hedge can be said an important politeness strategy for smooth communication and mutual understanding.

Also, it was emphasized that the results suggested in this study were derived only by the analysis based on the viewpoint of discourse politeness, which comprehensively understands the factors composing linguistic behavior at not only the level of sentence but also discourse level.