

Politeness Strategies in Directive Speech Acts in a Short Movie “Mind Your Language”

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Abstract---The objective of the research is to recognize kind of politeness strategies, in directive speech acts in the short movie “Mind Your Language”. The method used in this research is a descriptive method using a qualitative approach that focuses on pragmatics. The data source is a script of “Mind Your Language” short movie created by London Weekend Television in 1977 and directed by Stuart Allen. The sample of data is transcripts directive speech acts from five speakers. It expresses speech acts that represent the criteria of politeness strategies include bald on record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. The analysis is completed by collecting the directive speech acts as the data and giving code: 1 (bald on record), 2 (positive politeness), 3 (negative politeness). This code-giving technique is used to make it easier in identifying the politeness strategies used by the speakers. The writer uses the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) to investigate the data. There are 30 (thirty) utterances occurred. The writer found 14 utterances that are categorized as directive speech acts. It means that those fourteen utterances are used as the sample to be analyzed based on politeness strategies. The most common politeness strategies in the directive speech act in this movie are a positive politeness strategy which indicates the speaker is seeking a close relationship and giving appraisal to the listener. Hence, studying about politeness and its strategies is important to make meaningful communication and to respect the addressee. The writer hopes that many people will be interested to study politeness deeper to create a better attitude, particularly about how to respect and save the face of a speaker and addressee.

Keywords: *negative politeness, positive politeness, bald on record strategy*

1. INTRODUCTION

Politeness is an important thing to generate good communication between a speaker and an addressee. There are some strategies used in an utterance to produce meaningful communication and to respect the addressee. Brown and Levinson (1987: 60) stated that “politeness strategy is used not only to respect the addressee but also to avoid the face-threatening act (FTA)”. Face Threatening Act is an act that is threatening the face of the addressee because of feeling bad things by the speaker’s utterance. Yule (1996:60) stated that “Politeness, in

an interaction, can be sharpened as the means employed to show awareness of another person’s face.” In pragmatics, politeness is a way to reverence the “face” or image of someone. In utterance, politeness is an essential concept to emerge so that the image or face of the speaker is looked well and to keep the listener being respected. Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that “politeness is an act of avoiding and managing the speech act threatening addressees and speaker’s faces (Face Threatening Acts)”. The face can be simply outlined as an image of someone. The face concepts will always be talked about when explaining politeness. Yule (1996:60) said that “Face indicates the public self-image of a person”. Brown and Levinson in Stockwell (2002:23) divided the face into two kinds: negative and positive face. Negative face is a desire of someone not to be disturbed by others, to be independent and to have the freedom to act. Positive face means the desire of someone to be respected and accepted by others.

Yule (1996:61) stated that “If a speaker says something that denotes a threat to another individual’s expectation regarding self-image, it is described as a face-threatening act “. This statement shows that politeness strategy is important to do so that the image (face) of the speaker and listener can be treasured. For example, in a meeting, an employer does not agree with the leader’s opinion, so he should use the FTA. The employer could interrupt the leader’s opinion by saying: “I wonder whether I could just short of asking you a little question”? The politeness that he shows is negative politeness. The example in this short movie is when Ali did not like his friend’s comment (Ranjeet), he said: “Oh, you are changing tone”.

A Politeness strategy is a strategy used to escape or reduce the effect of the image caused by face-threatening acts that are done by the speaker. Brown and Levinson (1987:60) defined four strategies of politeness; bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record.

1.1 Bald on-Record (Direct Strategy)

In this strategy, the speaker does not do anything to minimize his FTA. The speaker does clear and direct speech acts. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:95), “The prime reason for bald on-record usage may be generated simply: in general, whenever

S wants to do the FTA with maximum efficiency more than he wants to satisfy H's face, even to any degree, he will choose the bald on-record strategy." It means that by using this strategy, the desire of the speaker to maximize the efficiency from the speech act in any condition is larger than his desire to respect his face. Here, there is no attempt to acknowledge the hearer's face wants and in applying this strategy, someone can utilize its five sub-strategies. They are showing disagreement (criticism), giving suggestions/advice, requesting, warning; threatening, and using the imperative form. This type of strategy is commonly found in people who know each other very well, and who are very comfortable in their environments, such as a close friend and family. An example is an utterance such as "Bring me my book."! This utterance indicates the speaker said it directly and clears without minimizing the threatening and does not care about the face of the speaker. The example in this movie is when Mr. Brown saying thanks to Ranjeet: "Thank you for carrying it"! This sentence identified an imperative form.

1.1.1 Positive Politeness

Positive face refers to every individual's basic desire for their public self-image that wants to be shown engagement, ratification, and appreciation from others-the want to be wanted. The FTA is performed employing strategies oriented towards the positive face threat to the hearer (Bousfield, 2008: 57). The positive politeness displays that the speaker recognizes the hearer has the desire to be respected. It also authorizes that the relationship is friendly and it expresses group reciprocity. This type of strategy is usually seen in groups of friends or where the people in the social situation distinguish each other fairly well. Here, the threat to the face is relatively low. It usually attempts to minimize the distance between them by expressing a friendly statement and a solid interest in the hearer's needs. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1987:101-103) stated that positive politeness derives in a group whose participants have the same purpose, desire, and background knowledge. This strategy appears because the speaker wants to perform a good impression to the addressee and wants to have a closer social relationship through the same point of view and desire between the speaker and the listener. Brown and Levinson (1987:103-129) divided the positive politeness strategy into fifteen kinds, those are Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods), Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H), Intensify interest to H, Use in-group identity markers, Seek agreement, Avoid disagreement, Presuppose/raise/assert common ground, Joke, Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants, Offer, promise, Be optimistic, Include both S and H in the activity, Give (or ask for) reasons, Assume or assert reciprocity, and Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation). For example, someone talks to his friend in avoiding disagreement: "Well, in a way, I

suppose you are sort of right. But look at it like this. Why don't you...? The other example is "Good heaven Ranjeet, you're here on time", Mr. Brown is giving appraisal when Ranjeet come on time in the class.

1.1.2 Negative Politeness

The negative politeness also identifies the hearer's face. However, it also declares that the speaker is in some way imposing on the hearer. This is the most common and linguistically diverse strategy. Negatively polite constructions comprise negative face by demonstrating distance and wariness. The negative face embodies the want of every action to get freedom from impingement. Bousfield (2008: 57) states that the FTA in this strategy is performed utilizing strategies oriented towards redressing the negative face threat to the hearer. Here, the threat to face is relatively high. The negative politeness focuses on minimizing the imposition by attempting to soften it.

Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1987:129) state: "Negative politeness is repressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want told has his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded." It means that negative politeness is a speech act of avoiding and minimizing the FTA to the negative face of the listener. When a speaker wants the listener to do something, the freedom and desire of the speaker will be burdened. The strategies of negative politeness are being in conventionally indirect, Question, hedge, be pessimistic, Minimize the imposition, give deference, Apologize, Impersonalize S and H: Avoid the pronouns 'I' and 'you', State the FTA as a general rule, Nominalize, and Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H. (Brown and Levinson (1987:129-211)). Here is an example someone talks to his friend to minimize the imposition: "Could I talk to you for just a minute"? The other example from this movie is when Ali did not like Ranjeet's comment: "Oh, you are changing tone".

1.1.3 Off-record (Indirect Strategy)

Off-record (indirect) takes some of the pressure off of the speaker. Its utterances are indirect uses of language in which complete meaning has to be interpreted. The FTA performs off record, typically through the deployment of an indirect Illocutionary act which has more than one interpretation and, thus, allows for plausible deniability on the part of the speaker if the intended recipient takes offense at the face threat inherent in the utterance (Bousfield, 2008: 58). Thus, if the speaker wants to do an FTA, on the contrary, he/she wants to avoid the responsibility in doing it. He/she can do off-record and leave it up to the addressee to decide how to interpret it. The hearer cannot see with certainty that a hint has been broached; the speaker can credibly claim an alternative interpretation. Here, the threat to face is very high.

The usage of FTA is done through off record if it needs some ways to comprehend the meaning of the communication since the speech act will be felt like ambiguous and the addressee will get confused and difficult to understand it. This strategy is commonly used in the indirect speech act so that the situation and context of utterance become important points in understanding this politeness strategy. In off-record strategy, there are fifteen kinds according to Brown and Levinson (1987:211); Give hints, Give association clues, Presuppose, Understate, Overstate, Use tautologies, Use contradictions, Be ironic, Use metaphors, Use rhetorical questions, Be ambiguous, Be vague, Over generalize, Displace H, and be incomplete, and use ellipsis. Here is an example while someone feels bored her daily activity, she talks to her husband by using presuppose: "I cleaned the home again today".

In this research, the writer is interested in researching the politeness strategies focusing on directive speech acts in a short movie because most of the conversation is directive speech acts. The directive speech act is a kind of speech act whose goal is to make the addressee doing something, such as to request, command, force, warn, and so on (Yule, 1996). Those kinds of directive speech acts will be analyzed in terms of politeness strategies that consist of bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off record (Brown and Levinson, 1987:60). The writer chooses the short movie "Mind Your Language" produced by London Weekend Television and directed by Stuart Allen as a data source because the story is interesting and unique. The concept of politeness strategies is frequently occurring in that movie with English Education as a subject in their classroom. For example, when students asking for something or explore their ideas, and so on. Besides, this communication class has special characters that make the writer interested to analyze it. There are some background people's characters from many countries (English, Spaniels, Pakistan, Italy, and India) by different styles dialect. Hence, misunderstanding happens more frequently. For this reason, the writer conducts the mini research entitled "Politeness Strategies in Directive Speech Acts in a Short Movie Mind Your Language".

The research question is "What kind of politeness strategies used by the five speakers in directive speech act in that short movie"? The objective of the research is to identify the politeness strategies used in the directive speech act in the short movie.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a discourse study that focuses on pragmatics. In this research, the writer emphasizes more on politeness strategies usage in directive speech acts. The method used in this research is a descriptive method using a qualitative approach

(Sugiyono, 2007). The writer uses the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) as a basic theory to analyze the kind of politeness strategies in directive speech acts because most of the conversation is directive speech acts.

2.1 Data Source and Sample

The data source in this research is Mind Your Language, a short movie produced by London Weekend Television. Sample of data was taken from script directive speech acts the five speakers in that short movie. The writer used a purposive sampling technique. It's mean the sample is taken in particular deliberation (Sugiyono, 2007) and only directive speech acts as the sample because the directive speech act represents the politeness strategy's criteria of Brown and Levinson (1987). Politeness strategies include bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off record. There are 30 (thirty) utterances occurred. The writer found 14 which are categorized as directive speech acts. It means that those fourteen utterances are used as the sample to be analyzed based on politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson (1987).

2.2 Data Analysis

The analysis was done by collecting the directive speech acts as the data and giving the code for each directive speech act. This code-giving technique was used to make the writer easier to identify the politeness strategy used by the five speakers. The code (1) is used for bald on record, (2) for positive politeness, and (3) for negative politeness. The data analyses in the script of "Mind Your Language" short movie are:

Table 1. The Result of Politeness Strategies Analysis

Code	Politeness Strategy frequency	Percentage (%)
(1)	Bald on record 3	21
(2)	Positive Politeness 7	50
(3)	Negative Politeness 4	29

Utterances of directive speech act that survive in the short movie are classified by the politeness strategy.

Table 2. The Result of Bald On-record Strategy

No	Utterance
(2)	"Thank you for carrying it"!
(3)	"Excuse please"!
(14)	"Yes, good"!

The sentences (2), (3), and (4) are identified as imperative forms. Besides that, they also do not have

ambiguous, clear, and direct and without minimizing the imposition. Bald-on record strategy is also commonly found in this group of people who know each other very well in their environment, in this case among the teacher and the students. The main characters (Mr. Brown and his students) are comfortable with their conversation classroom by different dialect among them.

Table 3. The Result of Positive Politeness

No	Utterance
(1)	"Good heaven Ranjeet, you're here on time".
(4)	"Just sit down a minute Ali, will you"?
(6)	..I mean you were doing quite well,
(7)	Oh, it could be half a million pounds".
(8)	"I'm very happy for you because you are my best friend".
(9)	"I'm a true friend of Ali, we are practically bloody brothers"!
(10)	I mean I'm very pleased for you of course".

The sentences (1), (8), (9), and (10) are expressing the positive politeness strategy conveying that the speaker and hearer are cooperators. Meanwhile, the sentences (4), (6), and (7) indicate that speakers fulfilling the hearer for some utterances.

The main characters (Mr. Brown and Ali) preferred to apply a positive politeness strategy in conveying their utterances since this strategy usually occurs in the groups of people in the classroom. It is also closely related to the relationship between the main characters and the students. As it is seen in *Mind Your Language* movie which happens in the context of classroom discourse, the main characters Mr. Brown and Ali know each other very well since they often interact in their conversation classroom.

Table 4. The Result of Negative Politeness

No	Utterance
(5)	"No thank you, I am only coming to tell you I am not coming".
(11)	"You mean you're going to retire"?
(12)	"Oh yes, he's gotta eight, he's gotta eight draws, good, but they're not all the same line".
(13)	"Oh, you are changing tone".

The sentences (5), (11), (12), and (13) are showing that the negative politeness expresses a consideration form. The negative politeness also recognizes the hearer's face. However, it also admits that the speaker is in some way imposing on the hearer. This is the most common and linguistically diverse strategy. The negative face represents the want of every action to get freedom from impingement. Bousfield (2008: 57) states that the FTA in this strategy is performed utilizing strategies oriented towards redressing the negative face threat to the hearer.

The negative politeness focuses on minimizing the imposition by attempting to soften it.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis above, it was found that the common politeness strategy used in directive speech acts between five men in the short movie of "Mind Your Language" is a positive politeness strategy with frequencies are 7 utterances. In other words, about 50% in directive speech acts in positive politeness has been uttered in that short movie. Table 1 presents the occurrences of politeness strategies and the way those strategies are realized by *Mind Your Language* short movie main characters, Mr. Brown and Ali Nadem. From the table, there are 14 occurrences of politeness in the 30 dialogues among the main characters, teachers, and students. Among the three strategies, a positive politeness strategy has the most occurrences. It shows that the main characters prefer employing a positive politeness strategy to other strategies in their utterances. As it is seen, positive politeness is applied in as many as 7 times by the main characters (Mr. Brown as a teacher and Ali Nadem as a student). It is followed by a negative politeness strategy which is functioned in as many as 4 times and bald on-record strategy which is applied in as many as 3 times out of 30. Further, as it is proved in the previous explanation that the positive politeness is the most applied by the main characters, the occurrences of its strategies also have the largest rank. The sentences (1), (8), (9), and (10) are showing the positive politeness strategy conveying that the speaker and hearer are cooperators. Meanwhile, the sentences (4), (6), and (7) appears that speakers fulfilling the hearer for some utterances. The speaker is finding a close relationship and giving appraisal to the listener. The main characters (Mr. Brown and Ali) preferred to apply a positive politeness strategy in conveying their utterances since this strategy usually occurs in the groups of people in the classroom. Conveying that S & H are Cooperators happen 4 times and fulfilling hearer for some utterances 3 times occur out of the whole occurrences. As the next level, there is a negative politeness strategy. It has four utterances by the percentage of 29%. The strategy used in this negative politeness is question and statement. The sentences (5), (11), (12), and (13) are indicating that the negative politeness expresses a consideration form. The negative politeness also engages the hearer's face. However, it also admits that the speaker is in some way magnificent on the hearer. The negative face represents the want of every action to get freedom from impingement. Bousfield (2008: 57) states that the FTA in this strategy is performed utilizing strategies oriented towards redressing the negative face threat to the hearer. The negative politeness focuses on minimizing the imposition by attempting to soften it. The last level is a bald on-record strategy. It has three utterances by a percentage

of 21%. The sentences (2), (3), and (4) are identified as imperative forms that occur 3 times out of 30. They also do not have ambiguous, clear, and direct and without minimizing the imposition. Bald-on record strategy is also commonly found in this group of people who know each other very well in their environment, in this case among the teacher and the students. The main characters (Mr. Brown and his students) are comfortable with their conversation classroom by different dialect among them.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This research explains about strategies of politeness towards the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) in the short movie entitled "Mind Your Language". The most common politeness strategies in directive speech acts are positive politeness strategy which indicates the speaker to be directed to the addressee's positive politeness through the strategies of seeking close relationships and giving appraisal to the listener. Studying about politeness and its strategies is important to make meaningful communication and to respect the addressee. The deeper someone learns about politeness, the more he or she could respect someone or people whom he/she talks to. The writer hopes that many people will be interested to study about politeness to create a better attitude in people, particularly about how to respect and save the face of a speaker and an addressee.

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