POLITENESS STRATEGY OF DIRECT SPEECH ACTS IN THE *POTO WUA TA'A* CEREMONY

[1]Lusiana Mariyeta Balik*
[1]Universitas Nusa Nipa Maumere, Indonesia
[1]lusianabalik@gmail.com

[2]Marta Alinda
[2]Universitas Nusa Nipa Maumere, Indonesia
[2]martaalinda87@gmail.com

Abstract: Politeness is very important in society as a social control during social interaction. This study aimed at analyzing the types of politeness strategy of direct speech act in the *poto wua ta'a* ceremony. The method used in this study was descriptive qualitative method, in which the researcher used politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) to analyze, interpret and discuss the data in a form of utterances in *poto wua ta'a* ceremony. The result of the study showed that the politeness strategy used were negative politeness strategy, positive politeness strategy and off record strategy. However, the dominant strategy used in the ceremony of the *poto wua ta'a* was negative politeness strategy such as be conventionally indirect, be pessimistic, state the face threatening acts (FTA) as a general rule, as well as minimize the imposition. Thus, the use of negative politeness strategy made the hearer to be more respected and would do something willingly without pressure from the speaker.

Keywords*: direct speech act, face threatening act, politeness strategy, poto wua ta'a,*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a crucial aspect of human life in society. The existence of language in society as a means of communication to express idea, intention, opinion and purpose. According to (Aitchison & Wardaugh, 1987, p. 22), language is a mean of communication as a system of linguistics which is used by particular communities both spoken and written. Furthermore (Nahdoh et al., 2019) and (Legère et al 1994: p. 22) revealed that language serves many ways of saying the same things; addressing and greeting other, describing things, and paying compliments. Thus, the role of language in society is as a means of communication to achieve the goal of communication. Nevertheless, there is a different way in expressing idea, opinion, and purpose between one society to another because of the relation of language and culture.

Language and culture cannot be separated from each other. Language as a means of communication plays important role in society, so that community can be built in a good way if both speaker and hearer use the politeness strategy. It can be seen that the role of politeness strategy in society as a social control to control social interaction between people. According to (Mill, 2003, p. 6) cited in (Siburian, 2016), politeness is the expression which is expressed by the speaker to deal with his/ her intention to migrate face threats carried by certain face threatening act toward another. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 157) cited in (Siburian, 2016) stated that politeness strategies are developed in order to save the hearers' face. Face refers to the respect that an individual has for him or herself and maintaining the self-esteem in public or in private situation.

 In relation to Socio cultural and Linguistic behavior, Nirangkliung community has a traditional ceremony as part of socio-cultural aspect. Socio-cultural aspect refers to the existence of the culture, custom and habit in every society for each ethnic group. One of the cultural heritages is language. Language is used to express idea, feeling, emotion and intention; nevertheless, language behavior is influenced by the socio-cultural aspect for each ethnic group. The function of language as a means of communication for every situation is different from one another, for example the speech acts used in the traditional ceremony held by people in *Nirangkliung* village in marital ceremony namely in the ceremony of *poto wua ta'a.* Those utterances used is unique since the utterances used are different with daily language, and the meaning of the language is not grammatical meaning but contextual meaning. The ceremony of *Poto Wua Ta'a* is the first step of marriage ceremony in *Nirangkliung* community. The term *Poto Wua ta'a* is derived from two syllables, namely *poto* which means to carry, and *wua ta'a* which means betel nut. In sum, *poto wua ta'a* literary means to carry the betel nut.

People in Nirangkliung village believe that betel nut is a symbol of relationship. In this case, the groom's family comes with betel nut to establish relationship with the bride's family as a symbol of respect and honor. In delivering their intention, each the groom's and the bride's family delegate a delegation and spokesman. The delegation of each family must deliver the groom's and the bride's family intention. The dialog in this ceremony involves utterances exchange between both spokesmen. Those utterances are delivered in *Sikka* language, that is a local language used by people in *Nirangkliung*

village. Those utterances used in this traditional ceremony are different from daily language to avoid hearer to lose face, or feel offended by the speech of another person.

To maintain a good communication, it is important to consider the rule of communication. According to (Jaya Made et al., 2014), people usually talk for a purpose to assert belief, request, help, promise, action, express, congratulation or ask for information. Similar to *poto wua ta'a* ceremony*,* the words uttered by speaker are known as forms of language and its actions. The communicative act or called as the utterances of the speaker commonly represents verbal communication. It means that people do not only produce an utterance which is focused on grammatical structure, but also the way they perform the utterance, in the other term is called as speech acts. The aspect of actual usage, according to (Rostiana & Novari, 2021), is the relationship between language and its context in linguistic field which is called pragmatic. Yule (1996, p. 8) stated that pragmatics studies the use of language by humans determined by the condition of a society. The concept of pragmatic to deal with how language is acted by the hearer based on the context of situation is called direct speech acts.

Direct speech act realizes the effort of the speakers, so the speakers could do anything to achieve the goal. Based on the preliminary study, the problems found regarding *poto wua ta'a* ceremony was the local culture shift caused by technological developments that caused this ceremony to be less appreciated as by Nirangkliung people, as well as lack of awareness by the people toward the traditional ceremony of *poto wua ta'a* as one of local wisdom to enrich politeness character. In speaking the language, speaker has to consider the norm namely politeness. It is done to provide an atmosphere of friendship and solidarity. It can be said that politeness strategy functions as a norm to control speaker and hearer in communication. Thus, the objective of this research was to investigate the types of politeness strategy of direct speech act in the *poto wua ta'a ceremony* at Nirangkliung village.

There are some previous studies which are related to this study. Firstly, Ihsan (2017) studied the politeness strategy in direct speech acts of *Tolea Pabitara* on the traditional marriage ceremony of the Tolaki-Mekongga ethnic group. This research identified the types of direct speech acts used in Tolea- Pabitara in the ceremony of Tolaki- Mekongga ethnics of South Sulawesi. The next study was done by (Syah et al., 2017) about The Politeness of Directive Speech Acts In *Satu Jam Lebih Dekat on TV One* (Pragmatic

Approach). The result showed that there are some types of direct speech acts such as: asking, inviting, prohibiting, announcing, showing, intention, warning, and advising. The focus of this research was to identify the kinds of direct speech acts. The third research from (Mulatsih et al., 2021) about politeness strategy in commissive speech acts aimed to describe and explain politeness in commissive speech acts in a variety of speech situations. The method used the descriptive analysis method. The research found four types of commissive speech acts, namely promise, swear, pledge and vow. It revealed that this research focuses on the politeness strategy of commissive speech acts. Based on the three previous studies, it can be concluded that the politeness strategy can be used in various situations including in ritual ceremonies. However, this study focuses on analyzing the type of politeness strategy in the *poto wua ta'a ceremony* at *Nirangliung*.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are some theories about the concept of pragmatics, the definition and types of directive speech acts, and the principles of politeness in conversation about *poto wua ta'a*. According to (Yule, 1996, p. 10), pragmatics is the study of language and its context as the basis of language understanding. Furthermore, pragmatics is related to the use of language and its action in real situations. Pragmatic is more concerned with the performance principle of language use. Furthermore, pragmatics is a part of a linguistic study; furthermore, pragmatics is about how the hearer interprets utterances (Griffiths cited in Fitria, 2019). Meanwhile, speech acts are a part of pragmatic.

Speech acts are sub-disciplines of pragmatics that investigates the language from the aspect of actual usage. Speech acts are verbal actions happening in the world. Utterance production needs realization in the form of action. Austin (1979:52) originally used the term speech acts to refer to an utterance and the total situation in which the utterance is issued. *(Yule, 1996, p. 32)* distinguished two classifications, namely connotative speech acts and performative speech acts. Furthermore, Austin distinguished the performative aspect into (1) locutionary act, which is the act of pronouncing sounds with sense and reference such as 'Do this and you'll never see me again'; (2) illocutionary act which is the act that in uttering the sentence under the specific circumstances; and (3) perlocutionary acts. Speech acts are those of making statements or questions, giving commands or orders, refusing, completing, apologizing, and many others. Three

categories of speech acts explained that when people say something, they may involve the three dimensions which are locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts. Locutionary acts mean the utterance of a sentence to determine sense and reference. An illocutionary act means making a statement, offer, promise, or others in uttering a sentence, by the conventional force associated with it or with its explicit performative paraphrase. While perlocutionary act means to bring about the effect on the audience using uttering the sentence; such effects are special to the circumstances of utterance.

Meanwhile, Searle categorized illocutionary acts into some parts namely: (1) representatives, which means the point or purpose of the members of the representative class to commit s to the truth of the expressed proposition such as stating, suggesting, boasting, complaining, claiming, reporting; (2) directives, which are intended to produce some effect through action by the hearer such as ordering, commanding, requesting, advising and recommending; (3) commissive, which is commit s (to a greater or lesser degree) to some future action such as promising, vowing, offering; (4) expressive, which have the function of expressing or making known the speaker's psychological attitude toward a state of affairs, which the illocution presuppose; (5) declarations, which are illocutions whose successful performance bringing about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality such as resigning, dismissing, christening, naming, excommunicating, and appointing

Based on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) in (Retnowaty, 2015), there are four strategies of politeness, namely bald on record, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and off-record strategy. Bald on record strategy is mostly used strategy by speakers who closely know their hearers, such as close friends or family. There are different kinds of bald-on-record strategies, such as direct impressive for great urgency or desperation, sympathetic advice or warnings, welcoming, farewells, and offers. Positive politeness strategy, on the other hand, try to minimize the threat to the hearer's face. It is commonly used in a situation where the audience knows each other fairly well to avoid conflict. There are different kinds of positive politeness strategies, such as noticing the hearer's interest (wants and needs), exaggerating (interest, approval, sympathy with the hearer), intensifying the interest of the hearer, use in group identity markers, seeking agreement, avoid disagreement, assert or presuppose people's knowledge and concern for hearer's wants, offer, promise, be optimistic, include both

speaker and hearer in the activity, give (or ask for) reasons, assume or assert reciprocity. In contrast, negative politeness strategies have greater respect for the hearer than positive politeness strategies. There are different kinds of negative politeness strategies, such as: being conventionally indirect, questioning, hedging, being pessimistic, minimizing the imposition, giving deference, apologizing, impersonal speaker and hearer, state face-threatening acts (FTA) as a general rule, nominative, go on record as incurring a debt of record as in doing debt.

Poto Wua Ta'a itself is a ceremony in Nirangkliung village, one of the villages which are located in Sikka regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province. Nirangkliung village is included in Sikka tribe which communicates by Sikka language. Such as other tribes in East Nusa Tenggara Province, this tribe has its characteristics, especially in terms of holding ceremonies. One of the unique things that are found in Nirangkliung is the marital ceremony.

In Nirangkling village, when a couple (a man and a woman) love each other and want to get married, they have to hold the process of *poto wua taa* ceremony. Poto *wua ta'a is* derived from two syllables. *Poto* means to deliver while *wua ta'a* means betel nut, so literary *poto wua ta'a* means delivering betel nut. Nirangkliung community believe that betel nut is a kind of fruit used as a symbol of friendship and welcoming guest. *Poto wua ta'a* ceremony is the ceremony when the groom's family and his delegation come to the bride's house to propose to the woman whose the man loved. Basically, in holding this ceremony, both delegations will produce some utterances in the Sikka language and those utterances will be understood based on the context of proposing.

METHOD

This research was the descriptive qualitative approach, regarding politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) which aims to investigate the politeness strategy of direct speech acts uttered by spokesmen. The data used in this study was in a form of audio recording during the ceremony of *poto wua ta'a*. The observation was done during the interaction between delegations who acted as the representatives of both families, while semi-structured interviewed was carried out to *tua adat* to find the information about the ritual, the meaning of ritual and direct speech act of *poto wua ta'a* ceremony. The data were collected through observation and interviews by Sikka language then translated into

Bahasa Indonesia. The collected data were analyzed based on the politeness strategies developed by Brown & Levinson, then interpreted in the form of words.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings and discussion refer to the context of utterances by a spokesman in the ceremony of *poto wua ta'a* at Nirangkliung village. Furthermore, the data were analyzed based on pragmatic approach is politeness strategy, as the following:

Table 1. Politeness strategy used by the bride and groom's delegation

No	Politeness Strategy	Total
1	Negative politeness	9
2	Positive Politeness	5
3	Off Record Politeness	3

Table 1 showed the use of politeness strategies by both delegations. Both delegations used three types of politeness strategies. The strategy used in the direct speech act of *poto wua ta,a* ceremony was negative politeness with 9 occurrences, while second place was positive politeness strategy with 5 occurrences and off record strategy with 3 occurrences.

Table 2. The Use of Politeness Strategy by the Bride and Groom's Spokesman

No	Politeness strategies	Groom's Spokesmen	Bride's Spokesmen
1	**Negative politeness**		
	-Be conventionally indirect	2	3
	- Be pessimistic	-	1
	- State FTA as a general rule	1	1
	- Minimize the imposition	1	
2	**Positive Politeness:**		
	- Give or (ask for the) a reason	2	
	- Offers	1	
	- Intensify interest to hearer Use in group identity markers	1	
	- Include both S and H in the activity	1	
3	**Off record strategy**		
	-Use metaphors	-	3

Table 2 showed the use of politeness strategy used by the bride and groom's delegation. The groom's and bride's delegations mostly used negative politeness strategy categories that were conventionally indirect, pessimistic, state FTA as a general rule, and minimize the imposition. In the second position, there was a positive politeness strategy sub category that were give or (ask for) reason, offers, and intensify interest to hearer use in the group.

The Use of Negative Politeness Strategy

A negative politeness strategy is used by the speakers to maintain the hearer's negative face by maintaining distance and establishing caution in communicating (Pasaribu, et al., 2021). In this paper, most of the strategies used were conventionally indirect, pessimistic, stated FTA as a general rule and minimize imposition. These strategies were used by both delegations to be respectful and avoid miscommunication between groom's and bride's families. The following are the excerpts that were classified into negative politeness.

Man's spokesmen (1)   : Ladies and gentlemen today we visit your house because we hear you have **paddy**
Man's spokesmen (2)   : So, we are here **to ask for paddy** since we are **hungry**
Woman's spokesmen (1)   : We have eaten **betelnut and we have a smoke cigarette**
Woman's spokesmen (2)   : Dowry is **like grindstone and palm tree**
Woman's spokesmen (3)   : Having dowry is like **grindstone and palm tree**

In the excerpt 1, it was found five sub categories of be conventionally indirect expressed by both delegations. The word 'paddy' symbolized the bride. They used indirect utterance to avoid the bride's family to feel offended. The utterance 'to ask for paddy' means to propose the girl. The word 'hungry' means love, while the phrase 'betelnut and smoke cigarette' to express the bride's family who accepted the groom's proposal. The last phrase 'like grindstone and palm tree' was used to express dowry based on Nirangkliung belief as a symbol of dignity, not the price to be paid in full.

The next subcategory used by the man's delegation was pessimistic, as shown in the following:

Man's spokesmen   : If you have any paddy, please receive our betelnut but if you haven't any paddy just let us go

Excerpt 2 indicated how the groom's family was humble to the bride's family even though the groom's family had already known the existence of the bride. In addition, based on the Nirangkliung tradition, this expression was used to show respect.

The third subcategory was state FTA as a general rule. It can be seen in the following excerpt:

Woman's spokesmen (1) : Neither we have paddy nor not, please don't leave. Let's enjoy the food.
Woman's spokesmen (2) : Mother and daughter have to have a price

Excerpt 3 showed the bride's delegation who used state FTA as a general rule subcategory. Those sentences are used to indicate how the bride's delegation politely treats the groom's family. The first sentence (1) implied that the bride's family asked the groom's family to stay and enjoy the food even though the woman's family refused the proposal. This strategy was used to avoid the groom's family to lose face. In the second sentence (2), the bride's delegation talked about the dowry.

The last subcategory was minimizing imposition. It can be seen as the following:

Woman's spokesman: Our daughter has already received your betelnut and they will become husband and wife.

In this excerpt 4, the phrase 'received betelnut' means the woman received the proposal and is ready to marry the man.

The use of the Positive Politeness Strategy

According to Widyastuti (2019), positive politeness confirms that the relationship of both speakers and hearers express group reciprocity to minimize the distance between them. Levinson in Widyastuti (2019) stated that this strategy attempts to serve the hearer's interests, needs, wants, and goods. Based on the recapitulation, 5 positive politeness strategies were used by the delegations, as follows:

Man's spokesmen (1): Ladies and gentlemen today we are in your house **because we hear you have paddy.**
Man's spokesmen (2): So, we are here **to ask for paddy** because we are hungry and thirsty

Excerpt 5 found types of positive politeness strategy namely give (or ask for) reason. The sentence 'because we hear you have paddy' was used to indicate the reason why the groom's family visits the bride's delegation. While the phrase 'to ask for paddy' indicated

the groom's family visits the bride's house to propose to the girl since their son falls in love with the girl and wants to marry her.

Man's spokesmen   : If you have any paddy, please receive our betelnut, but if you haven't had any paddy just let us go.

Excerpt 6 means this sentence uttered by the groom's delegation as an offering to the bride's family. The act of offering in this sentence was used to indicate that the man wanted to marry the girl. On the other side, this was just a tactic from the groom's family to get sympathy.

Woman's spokesmen: Neither we have paddy nor not, please don't go, let's eat first.

This excerpt 7 showed that the bride's delegation used sub-categories to intensify interest in the n hearer and use in group identity markers. In this utterance, the bride's family invited the groom's family to join in eating the food together. As a good host, the bride's family has to serve the groom's family. This strategy is a kind of friendship and kindness to the guest.

Woman's spokesmen: Neither we have paddy nor not, **please don't go, let's eat first.**

This utterance expressed d sub-category to include both speaker and hearer in the activity. It means that the bride's family wanted to invite the hearer (groom's family) as the guest to involve in the same activity that was enjoying the food together.

The Use of Off-record Strategy

Off-record strategy, according to Brown and Levinson in Wydiastuti (2019), means that the speakers want to avoid their responsibility of doing face-threatening acts. Off record simply means that statement when one's saying is not directly addressed to the other, or 'hints', as the following:

Woman's spokesmen (1): **Betel and nut** to raise woman's dignity
Woman's spokesmen (2): **Betel and nut are raised in a high place**
Woman's spokesmen (3): Quality seeds **like *rebo* and *rama*** seeds.

In the strategy of off record, the bride's delegation used metaphor subcategory for three times, such as in 'betel and nut' the speaker just gave unclear information oe gave hint to the hearer. Nevertheless, in this context, the hearer directly understood what the

speaker's intention was. Betel and nut in this context mean dowry. While in the sentence 'betel and nut are raised in a high place' means dowry as a symbol to raise the bride's dignity. Meanwhile, the last phrase 'like *rebo* and Rama' referred to the people in Nirangkliung village who knew the name Rebo and Rama as the name of paddy. Rebo and Rama are known as good quality seeds. The speaker expected the groom and bride were like Rebo and Rama which had high-quality seeds.

Discussion

The findings on the politeness strategy of direct speech acts in the ceremony of *poto wua taa* at Nirangkliung village showed these three politeness strategies. Based on the findings of the research, negative politeness was the most used strategy in the direct speech act of the photo *wua ta'a* ceremony. In the negative politeness strategy, utterances used contain be conventionally indirect, pessimistic, state FTA as a general rule, and minimize the imposition.

This is based on the definition of negative politeness according to Brown and Levison (1987:p131) (Nurjanah, 2017) that state that negative politeness is the heart of respectful behavior, and it is more specific and focused. It aims at the realization of solidarity. The findings of this study are similar to those studies of previous dealing with four types of politeness strategies (Yaqin & Shanmuganathan, 2020, Manurung et al., 2019). However, the finding of this study revealed three types of politeness stratey, and mostly used representative subcategories. The findings of this study are similar to Yaqin and Shanmuganathan (2020) and Manurung et al., (2019) in the context of using politeness strategies in the wedding ceremony. While the finding of direct speech acts in a wedding ceremony in (Lumbanbatu, 2018) showed the similarities between politeness strategies and speech acts used by the delegations of both families.

In this study, it was discovered that both spokesmen use more negative politeness strategy than politeness strategy and off-record strategy. Yaqin and Shanmuganathan (2020) discovered the finding in their research. In their study, the *Pembayun* (spokesman) of both families mostly used a negative politeness strategy. It is done to negotiate and come to a settlement through polite discourse. This study is devoted to pragmatics research in terms of politeness strategy and types of direct speech act in the wedding ceremony by the groom's and bride's spokesmen as representative of both families in

expressing their intention. This study is similar to Yaqin, et al. (2020) who found a negative politeness strategy since ithe n *photo wua ta'a* ceremony (proposing the girl) both families feel awkward as the effect of social power and social distance. The results of this study have described a phenomenon of politeness strategies in the context of the *pot wua ta'a* ceremony (the ceremony of proposing to the girl) as a series of wedding rituals at Nirangkliung village.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The findings of the study deal witthe h implementation of a politeness strategy in the interactiof between spokesmen from both groom's and bride's families in the ceremony of *poto wua ta'a* the series of the marriage ritual. This research revealed that the dominant strategy used by both delegations is the negative politeness strategy. It is determined by the factor of social power and social distance of both families. Those factors sometimes make both delegations have to use formal sentences and indirect sentences as a form of honor (speaker to hearer) in negotiating process of proposing the girl. As a result, they try to respect each other during the interaction of the *poto wuata'a* ceremony. It can be concluded that the implementation of the politeness strategy in *poto wua ta'a ceremony* is different from other circumstances such as talk-show, online interaction, and novel since in this ceremony the delegation of both families tries to negotiate with each other to get sympathy.

Suggestions

The ceremony of *poto wua ta'a* is a series of the marital ceremony. In conducting this ceremony, people use the politeness strategy of direct speech acts. Furthermore, the delegations of men and the woman use indirect language to show politeness between the speaker and the hearer to avoid the heare's losing face. The result of this research can be applied in daily in terms of social interaction. Future researchers are encouraged to analyze types of politeness strategies of direct speech acts in daily conversation.

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