

On directive acts among Arek-dialect Javanese speakers: A politeness aspect

Emy Sudarwati – Sukarsono – Nanik Sri Rahayu

DOI: 10.18355/XL.2024.17.01.14

Abstract

Being polite is vital in fostering a harmonious relationship with any member of society with different sociocultural backgrounds. This paper aims to contribute to the field of an ethnic politeness behavior, especially the Javanese sub-ethnic, well-known as Arek Soroboyo, who speak *Arek-dialect* Javanese (ADJ). The main objective of this study is to know ADJ Speaker's polite linguistic behavior in performing directive acts such as ordering, asking, requesting, or suggesting, which are examined based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theoretical account. The study was qualitatively approached, employing observation techniques of speech events and *Discourse Completion Test* (DCTs) for data collection. The study participants, of at least 17 years of age, were born and raised in Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Mojokerto and must speak *Arek* dialect. The data were analysed using Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Strategies. The findings reveal that ADJ speakers, who are mostly egalitarian, dominantly employ positive politeness and bald on-record strategy, rarely employ negative strategies and none of the employing case of off-record strategy. This implies a conclusive proposition that sociocultural values greatly affect the linguistic politeness behavior of members of a speech community.

Key words: directive act, politeness strategies, Arek-dialect Javanese speakers

Introduction

To maintain social harmony, a person needs to be wise as he communicates with others, especially when dealing with an utterance containing a face-threatening act or FTA, i.e. an imposing impingement or disrespectful feeling on the part of an addressee. As he fails to perform such an utterance wisely, he likely ruins his social relationship with his addressee. Thus, for a rational person, conveying an utterance which potentially confiscates one's want of freedom, such as a request, needs prudent consideration to ensure its appropriacy so that an ill feeling on the part of the hearer can be avoided. In other words, in order to minimize the potential threat of a person's face in interactions, people vary their directive expression by using indirect strategies depending on different factors such as power relations, social distance, rate of imposition, and cultural values (Tawalbeh & Al Oqaily, 2012).

A directive act such as requesting, ordering, and suggesting or advising is potentially face-threatening as they are not well managed and performed. In general, a directive act is of a prevent act which expresses the speaker's expectation of the hearer to do a speaker-desired action, verbal or nonverbal (Blum-Kulka, 1989). From Leech's politeness theory, such acts are performed for the speaker's benefit, but, on the other hand, it is at the hearer's cost. Meanwhile, from Brown and Levinson's FTA theory, these acts inherently generate a negative FTA since they contain impositive elements on the hearer's part. A directive act could make an addressee lose his negative face in the sense that it generates potentially intrusive impingement on a hearer's freedom of action. To perform a directive act appropriately, a speaker needs to call for a redressive action, a compensating behavior by the speaker to the hearer due to the occurring impositive effect he receives. On the other hand, a directive act may put the rational requester in an awkward situation since he is aware of risking the hearer's loss of face. Hypothetically, the speaker's choice of directive expression is uniquely influenced by the speaker cultural and social background. As such, a variety of pragmalinguistic realizations of directive acts from different ethnic backgrounds has been of interest to pragmatic researchers.

Studies on directive acts, especially on request, have been conducted by some scholars in educational and cultural contexts. The former instances can be represented by the works of Nina Daskalovska, et. al. (2016), who studied the use of request strategies by English students at an intermediate proficiency level. The data were analyzed by the framework of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) and revealed that the students most frequently used conventional indirect strategies, specifically query preparatories both in formal as well as informal situations.

Similar works were done by Mahmood Hashemian, & Maryam Farhang-Ju (2017), who investigated cross-cultural variation in the use of request strategies by Iranian EFL/ESL learners to their faculty. The subjects' request strategies are elicited by a discourse completion test (DCT), and the findings suggested that the students prefer to use conventionally indirect request strategies to their faculty. Statistical analysis by chi-square showed that their first language (L1) had no effect on the choice of request strategies employed by such learners to their faculty. The conclusion is that EFL/ESL learners generally use more negative politeness strategies to mitigate their requests to their faculty.

Another study in the EFL context was carried out by Megaiab et al. (2019), who examined the politeness strategies of request used by Libyan students and their lecturers in the classroom, which was qualitatively approached. The study found that the subjects used Query Preparatory, which falls under conventionally indirect request, to show politeness and to avoid imposition. Both the Libyan students and their lecturers mostly used query preparatory strategy, which was used 39 times in the study more than other request strategies, followed by direct and non-conventional indirect request strategies. It was also found that social power and social distance play a significant role in determining the use of the strategies used by the Libyan students and lecturers.

Meanwhile, from an Indonesian setting, Habibi (2017) investigated the request strategy by non-native English speakers, emphasizing the rank of imposition in the choice of request and politeness strategy between twenty-five males and females of postgraduate English students at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The data were obtained via discourse completion tests (DCT) which consisted of six situations. The study results showed that the students used the hearer-oriented conditions strategy as they spoke to a higher-status hearer. Meanwhile, the male students are likely to use a direct request strategy in the situation as they act as speakers of high position status.

Directive act studies like requests aiming at portraying the request performers' cultural behavior can be traced by the work of Jeanyfer and Tanto (2018), who have studied request pertaining to politeness phenomena as a part of Pragmatic domain of Indonesians. The data were in the forms of text messages made by Indonesian people who would like to request a favor, thing, or information. The study suggested that, in terms of strategies, Indonesians tended to use negative politeness strategies as they communicated with superior addressees and used a mix of negative and positive strategies as they communicated with the addressees of equal and lower power.

A work of the same concern was also coined by Diah Supatmiwati (2017), who was more interested in studying politeness strategies used by the Javanese speech community in Lombok. Instead of dealing with how those Javanese people performed requests, she focused on how they refused a request. The study concluded that, based on the investigation, Brown and Levinson's theory on negative politeness is inadequate to be universally claimed, and investigations of (FTAs) and politeness using culturally sensitive models of interaction were advocated.

Another work was coined by Husna (2018), who examined the types of request strategies used by the characters in performing requests in Ramona and Beezus's movies. She employed both descriptive qualitative and quantitative analyses on the data of utterances containing requests uttered by the characters in Ramona and Beezus's movie. The results of the research showed that there are eight types of request strategies with the most dominant type was the imperative request strategy. Another finding revealed that there are four types of politeness strategies they are bald-on strategy, off-record strategy, positive politeness strategy, and

negative politeness strategy. The bald-on-record strategy was of the highest rank because the characters prefer to choose a direct way of delivering their request and to make clear intentions.

In the light of the previous directive act studies on cultural context, the current researchers hardly found a study on polite behavior of performing directive acts such as ordering or requesting by East-Javanese people, who speak the Javanese language within the Arek dialect, as opposed to the *Matraman* dialect. This sub-ethnic of Javanese are considered to have quite different sociocultural values compared to the dominant Javanese culture in general. This sub-ethnic of Javanese is generally more egalitarian than the *Matraman*-Javanese speaking counterparts. Hence, it is of great curiosity to know how these Arek-Javanese-speaking people behave politely in terms of performing a directive act in different situational contexts in order to infer their linguistic politeness behavior.

The Study Framework

The conception of politeness was initially accounted for by Goffman (1967) in his *On Face-Work*, in which the notions of ‘face’ and ‘face-threatening acts, commonly shortened as FTA, were introduced. Subsequently, Goffman’s work was developed by Brown and Levinson (1987), who elaborated the ‘*face*’ theory, covering such basic a notion as *face*, which refers to “something that is emotionally invested, and that can be lost, maintained or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction”. Also, the notion of the Face-Threatening Act (FTA), pertaining to an act that inherently ruins the face of the hearer or the speaker since they potentially act in a way that is contrary to each other’s basic wants and desires to be unimpeded or to be liked or appreciated, which are metaphorically termed as *negative face* and *positive face*.

Another theoretical account of politeness has also been coined by Leech (1983), who, in fact, reacted to Grice’s Cooperative Principles, which he considered inadequate in outlining the theory of how it is possible for humans to communicate with each other using language. Grice’s Cooperative Principles (1957, 1975) were elaborated into four conversational maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner, guiding men’s communication behavior by using language. Such an account, in Leech’s view, merely touched the communication purpose pertaining to effective information exchange between interlocutors, not that one concerning the communication purpose of building or maintaining social harmony. Seeing this theoretical flaw, Leech then suggested his politeness principle consisting of six maxims (*tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement and sympathy*). The maxims were based on *cost and benefit* rules, namely: minimizing the benefit and maximizing the cost to *self* and minimizing the cost and maximizing the benefit to *others*. All in all, one could behave politely and maintain his social harmony with others if he holds and observes Leech’s politeness maxims. In terms of its explanatory adequacy on human communication account, Leech’s politeness principles were credited as the saviour of Grice’s Maxims.

Still, there are some other contemporary approaches to politeness, such as the works of Lakoff & Sachiko (2005) and Katz (2015). The former summed up that politeness as a facilitator of interaction by minimizing the potential conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interactions. Meanwhile, the latter accounted for politeness as the effect a speaker intends to have on a listener’s self-image. However, both works of Leech (1983) and Brown and Levinson (1987) have greatly influenced the essential account of politeness in Pragmatics as well as Sociolinguistics. In essence, in doing verbal interaction, interlocutors ought to use specific strategies to minimise the imposition and disrespect or disgrace to others, technically termed as a rational assessment of the face risk in order to redress or avoid doing FTAs.

This study used Brown and Levinson’s (1987) Politeness Strategies as the basis of data analysis since it is considered sufficiently comprehensive and relevant to the aims of the study, i.e. finding out the polite strategies employed by the East Javanese People in performing the requestive acts. Another consideration is that this theory tends to be universally valid in terms of accounting the rational human polite behavior (Najeeb et al., 2012). Brown and Levinson (1987) suggested four super-strategies of politeness. The first

super-strategy is a *bald-on record*, used in an urgent situation when the speaker expresses an intention unambiguously, directly and baldly, which means no redressive action is necessary. This super-strategy will only be used in the following situations:

1. In cases of great urgency or desperation.
2. Cases of channel noise, or where communication difficulties exploit pressure to speak with maximum efficiency such as in calling across a distance.
3. Task-oriented, in this kind of interaction face redress will be irrelevant.
4. S's want to satisfy H's face is small, either because S is powerful and does not fear retribution or non-cooperation from H.
5. S wants to be rude without risk of offending, so S does not care about maintaining face.
6. Sympathetic advice or warnings.
7. Granting permission for something that H has requested.

The next super-strategy is a *bald-on record with redressive action*, which can be further categorized into *positive politeness* and *negative politeness*. The former is used to satisfy the hearer's want to be liked or respected (positive face) by treating the hearer as a member of an *in-group* so that the FTA is not felt as a negative evaluation on the part of the hearer. It redresses a positive face by demonstrating intimacy, appealing to friendship and establishing common ground. In detail, it includes the following sub-strategy:

1. Notice, attend to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods).
2. Exaggerate (interest approval, sympathy with H)
3. Intensify interest to H
4. Use in-group identity markers
5. Seek agreement
6. Avoid disagreement
7. Presuppose/raise/assert common ground
8. Jokes
9. Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants.
10. Offer, promise.
11. Be optimistic
12. Include both S and H in the activity
13. Give (or ask for) reasons
14. Assume or assert reciprocity
15. Give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)

Meanwhile, the sub-strategy of *negative politeness* is oriented toward the hearer's want to be free from others' imposition (negative face), which can be achieved by demonstrating distance and circumspection. This strategy is used to avoid intruding on each other's territory, which can be indicated by expressions of apologizing, hedging and not imposing on the hearers. The sub-strategies of the negative politeness strategy are listed as follows:

1. Be conventionally indirect
2. Question, hedge
3. Be pessimistic
4. Minimize imposition
5. Give difference
6. Apologize
7. Impersonalize S and H
8. State the FTA as general rule
9. Nominalize

10. Go on record as incurring debt, or as not incurring H.

The last super-strategy is *off-record*, where a speaker can achieve it by giving hints, clues and ambiguous utterances. For example, the utterances 'it's time' suggest going home or 'it's hot in here' (sending an indirect message for someone to turn on the air conditioner). This sub-strategy is so ambiguous that the hearer needs to infer the utterance by the help of situational context. The sub-categories of *off-record* strategies include:

1. Give hints
2. Give association clues
3. Presuppose
4. Understate
5. Overstate
6. Tautologies
7. Contradictions
8. Be ironic
9. Use metaphors
10. Use rhetorical questions
11. Be ambiguous
12. Be vague
13. Over-generalize
14. Displace H
15. Be incomplete, use ellipsis

Research Method

The current study is qualitative research employing two techniques. The first one was the observation of speech events in which requesting utterances occur among *Arek* dialect Javanese Speakers (ADJS). The second one was *the Discourse Completion Test (DCT)*, a short written description of different situations which includes such variables as age, power, and solidarity of the participants of a given written speech event. The participants were asked to imagine themselves in the described situations and to fulfill in the space provided in the test with their most appropriate responses. The latter was used to complete the data that failed to be collected by the former technique until the data were saturated.

Both observation and DCT were provided to participants who were born and raised in Surabaya, Sidoarjo, and Mojokerto. The selected participants were purposively sampled, targeting East-Javanese people speaking *Arek* dialect aged from at least 17 years old; considering that the main research variables under the investigation were closely related to politeness. The researchers assumed that the targeted age range is mature enough in the acquiring process of East Javanese culture assimilation. Both male and female participants got involved in a speech event in which a directive act was performed and were purposively selected for the objective of the study.

In the data collection process, the researchers were assisted by some native Javanese of the *Arek* dialect, who had joined briefing sessions on how to mingle and engage with study subjects in several speech events in recording activities without disturbing the naturalness of conversation in a particular speech event. During a datum-recording activity, the researchers were observing the situational context of a request-speech event and jotting down necessary notes on it. The data collection process took place about a three-month period.

The data saturation was indicated by no-more found request patterns of *arek*-dialect Javanese utterances in four types of sociopragmatic attributes constellation, namely: [S>H, +F], [S>H, -F], [S<H, +F], and [S<H, -F], where S stands for *speaker*, H for *hearer* or *addressee*, and F for *familiarity*. Meanwhile, such mathematic symbols as '>' means *superior*, '<' means *inferior*, '+' is *present* and '-' is *absent*. Respectively, they represented the data of (1) the conversation between a speaker *superior* to the addressee and both are socially *solidary*, (2) the conversation between a speaker *superior* to the addressee but both are *not solidary*, (3) the conversation between a speaker *inferior* to the addressee and both are *solidary*, and (4) the

conversation between a speaker who is *inferior* to the addressee but both are *not solidary*. Those social variable constellations are later on represented by such symbols. Such constellations were also applied in DCTs development, which were based on the framework of Brown and Gilman (1968).

Inasmuch as the main goal of this current study is to find out the polite strategies observed by the Arek-dialect Javanese speakers (ADJS) in performing the requestive acts, the data analysis was based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework due to its theoretical comprehensiveness and relevance with the purposes of the study. In addition, this theory has been recognized as a universally valid account of rational human's polite behavior (Zena Moayad Najeeb et al. 2012).

Results

The data analysis revealed that, viewed from Brown and Levinson's theoretical framework (1987), the strategies used by Arek-dialect Javanese speakers (ADJS) can fall into four categories, each of which is discussed in the section that follow.

1. Performing Directive Speech Acts by Bald on record Strategy

The use of *bald on record* strategy is indicated by (1) clarified *communicative intention*, (2) *one unambiguously attributable intention* of an utterance, (3) no employment of words, phrases, or clauses indicating *redressive action*, and (4) the speaker has no fear of hearer's *retribution* due to such factors as emergency, speaker's superiority, a very little sacrifice of hearer in complying with speaker's order or request. From the data corpus, it is found that in performing requests, ADJS generally use *bald on-record strategy* in a speech event of such a context of S>H, +S, -F, which respectively means that the strategy employed by a speaker of higher power than hearer, close relation between interlocutors, and in an informal situation, as given by the following data:

- [1] *Arek iki jagaen aja sampe mlayu* 'Keep an eye on this guy, don't let him escape!'
- [2] *Mudhuna dhisik kene lho, Ngopi...*
- [3] *Lemune dipol ae rek, mlayu-malyu ngono lo nek isuk!'*
- [4] *Oe... grajine uncalno kene, ...uncalno.*
- [5] *Iyo, gawe en gakpapa*

Those utterances are respectively used in such situations as great urgency or desperation like in datum (1); channel noise like in datum (4), or where communication difficulties exploit pressure to speak with maximum efficiency such as in calling across a distance; task-oriented, like in (2), thus an interaction face redress will be irrelevant; as such the speaker is more powerful than the hearer so that the speaker (S) does not fear retribution or non-cooperation from hearer (H); and (5) S wants to be rude without risk of offending, so S does not care about maintaining face, as indicated by utterance (6) below:

- [6] *Lemune dipol ae rek, mlayu-malyu ngono lo nek isuk!'*

Bald on record strategy is popularly used in cases of benefiting the addressee, as in the datum below.

- [7] P1: *Mangano Jok age.* 'Go, get some meal, Jok'.
P2: *Engko dhisik Cak, Sik wareg.* 'Later Older Brother, I'm a kind of full'.

The utterances (1-7) are examples of conversational fragments containing directive acts conveyed by ADJS that occurred in the context of (Pn>Pt, +S, -F). In such a context, the

conveyed directive act of ordering is done with a straightforward politeness strategy, namely bald on record. The indicator of the use of such a strategy is that there is a clear communicative intent or a single, non-ambiguous intent of the speaker. In this regard, the hearer could clearly understand the single intention conveyed by the speaker.

Another common contextual feature where the BOR strategy occurs among AdJS is in the constellation of sociopragmatic factors (Pn=Pt, +S, -F). That is, the strategy is used by S who has relatively the same authority as Pt, the relationship or social distance between Pn and Pt is quite close or familiar (+S), and the speech event occurs in an informal situation (-F). Pay attention to the following conversation text.

[8] P1: *Njupuka maneh gak popo wis.*
P2: *Wis suwun wareg.*

The act of ordering in the text above is found in utterance (8), containing an order conveyed by S to H, a close friend. In this case, S told H to take the available snacks because H seemed reluctant to enjoy them. Based on the theoretical perspective of Brown and Levinson (1987) the method of conveying orders as in utterance (8) can be categorized as a BOR strategy since it is conveyed directly and does not cause multiple interpretations. Because it is used among close friends and in informal situations, the level of face threat posed by such an order is very small.

A straightforward speaking strategy among MT is also used to convey impositive speech in the constellation of other sociopragmatic factors, namely (Pn<Pt, +S, -F). That is, this strategy is used by Pn to convey positive actions to Pt who has higher authority (Pn<Pt) and has close social relations (solidarity) (+S) and in informal situations (-F). The use of straightforward speaking strategies in this constellation can be found in conversational text [9]

[9] P1: *Yu, parute pean tak gawe sik*
P2: *Ya gaween wong nganggur kok*

A conversation [9] took place in a kitchen between a housewife (P2) and her neighbor, who borrowed something when she was cooking in the kitchen. In terms of age, P1 looks younger than P2 and it seems that the relationship between P1 and P2 is very close. The conversation took place in an informal setting. P1 intended to borrow a kitchen tool. In this speech event, the directive act of borrowing was conveyed straightforwardly by BOR strategy because the utterance contains a single communicative intention, namely the act of borrowing only. A straightforward speaking strategy can also be meant to maximize the intent or content of the utterance. The efficiency of conveying messages in these utterances is due to the explicit coding of the conveyed action represented by the verb *nyilih*, which is given no effort of minimizing the level of face threats by adding words or phrases to soften the coercion or employment of politeness devices as a redressive action.

2. Performing Directive Speech Acts by Positive Politeness Strategy

A great deal of data also revealed that ADJS perform directive acts by positive politeness strategy, i.e. redressive actions aimed at saving or satisfying positive face, that is, an addressee's perennial desire to be liked, acknowledged, approved or appreciated in terms of his action achievement, or personal values in his life. After conducting data analysis, the researchers found four categories of positive politeness sub-strategy as used by ADJS in performing directive acts.

a. Sub-strategy of in-group identity markers

One-group identity marker strategy was used by S to emphasize the impression in H's mind that they come from the same community or social group. In this way S can generate a sense of group solidarity in H's mind so that the positive actions he puts forward on H are not felt as a pressure, but rather as a means to manifest concern for other individuals who come from the

same group. Based on data obtained from the field, AdJS who are expressing impositive speech acts often use familiar greeting words such as *rek, cak, yuk, Pak Lik, Pak dhe, budhe*, and the like. in order to show solidarity in groups. The use of greeting words is very commonly used in communication or social interaction among Javanese people in general to show the attitude of social bonds. Thus, these various greeting words actually have a function as a social accelerator that accelerates the process towards social closeness in social interaction among the Javanese people. As part of the Javanese ethnicity, AdJS also often use greeting words in expressing positive acts towards others.

The data shows that the sub-strategy of positive politeness, namely using in-group identity markers to convey impositive speech acts among AdJS is found in the contextual features of [Pn<Pt, +S, -F]. That is, the strategy is used by S to convey positive actions to H who has lower authority (S<H), has close social relations (+S) and in informal situations (-F). See the datum below.

[10] P1: *Pak!*

P2: *He, karo sapa Nak?*

P1: *Pak, aku tumbasno blender mainan ya.*

P2: *Blender? Piroan?*

P1: *Boten sumerap.*

Text 10 is an example of a conversation that occurs between speech participants who have a sociopragmatic variable constellation of [S<H, +S, -F]. The impositive speech in the above text is found in speech (65), which contains the act of asking. In this regard, H, who is the daughter of S, asked to buy a toy blender. The use of the greeting word *Pak* is a form of positive politeness sub-strategy, namely the strategy of using group identity markers. The use of the address *Pak* in the speech above indicates that S emphasizes social closeness with H so that the weight of FTA from the act of asking can be minimized. This happens because, theoretically, the smaller the social distance between the speech participants, the less FTA weight caused by an impositive act.

The sub-strategy of using in-group identity markers to convey impositive speech acts among MT is also found in the constellation of sociopragmatic factors [Pn>Pt, +S, -F]. That is, the conveyance of positive MT actions is carried out by Pn to Pt who has authority (power) higher than Pt (Pn>Pt) and has close social relations (solidarity) (+S) and in informal situations (-F).

[11] P1: *Tali rafiane niki pintenan ?'*

P2: *Rumput jepang ta? Sing lor telengewu trus sing kidul iku rongewu.*

Se Le, gawaen rene se.

Text 11 is a speech event between participants within the context of [Pn>Pt, +S, -F]. The addressing term *Le*, which means *son*, is inserted in the directive act of ordering. As such, the ordering was conveyed by the strategy of using group identity markers in the form of the addressing term *Le*. Such a term implies a social closeness between S and H. By reducing the social distance between S and H, the FTA weight caused by the act of commanding is also getting smaller so that it sounds more polite.

Meanwhile, the exemplified use of in group identity marker strategy in performing directive acts that were collected from DCT can be presented below.

[12] *Cak, ndoge pitik jawane apa lali? Golekna ndang tak tukune.* [DCT-1]

Lur, tulung babatana glagah iku, ga ngatasi aku. [DCT-4]

Yuk, sesuk sampean nganggur ta? Rewangana tandur ya? [DCT-2]

Lik, pean sesuk longgar a? Neke longgar, nek rewangana mrontok.
[DCT-3]

Bulik, aku titip endog mau wis oleh apa durung? Tulung sampean betangriki nggih. [DCT-Budhe, rika sesuk longgar apa orak? Neke longgar mbok direwangi matun enthang. [DCT-5]

Among ADJS, the addressing terms Cak, Lur, Yuk, Lik, Bulik, Budhe, and the like, are typical greetings of a family for reducing the social distance. *Cak is an instance of addressing term for an older brother or a man who is older in the family tree than S.* On the other hand, the word Yu is a typical greeting for a sibling or a woman who is older or older in the family tree than S. Pn. The words Pak lik, Bulik, and Budhe are used to address the brothers and sisters, either older or younger, of the father or mother of S. The use of greeting words, as can be seen in the utterances above, indicates that S considers H as someone who is socially close because these greeting words are commonly used among family members. In addition, the use of these greeting words can also reduce the power gap between Pn and Pt so that the impositive power in the utterances above becomes soft. In this regard, the pressure generated by the utterances is relative due to the loss of the support factor of authority. In other words, these impositive utterances are no longer power-backed commands, so they sound more polite.

b. Sub-strategy of Seeking Agreement

Another way to express common ground is to seek agreement among the speech participants. In this regard, S seeks to find a way in such a way that his desires can be in line with those of H. One way to use the sub-strategy of seeking agreement is to convey a safe topic in speech and repeat a part or all of what the speech partner has said. In expressing directive acts, AdJS seek agreement by using the word *ya* or repeating part or all of the utterances uttered by their previous partner. Pay attention to the following data:

[13] - *Nyilih pacule, ya?*

- *Nek kober, rewangana ndaut winih, ya?*

- *Lik, sepedaha kulo damel teng Indomart, boten nopo-nopo, nggih?*

- *Dienteni kanca-kanca ndik Pos. mari adus ndang mrono ya?*

- *Nek bar maem, piringe diseleh buri, ya?*

In Performing directive speech acts, ADJS commonly seek agreement by asking confirmative questions about the actions taken by S to H. In this regard, S asks H questions regarding the approval of the action requested or commanded by S to H. By asking such a confirmatory question, S implicitly indicates that he does not coerce H to grant the positive act he asked for and at the same time indicates his respect for H. By not being coercive and showing respect, Pn indirectly gives satisfaction to Pt of the desire to be liked or appreciated so that the impositive degree in speech is getting diminished and thus it sounds more polite.

c. Sub-strategy Offering or Promising Something to the Hearer

The strategy of offering or promising something to H is a common way in expressing directive speech acts among ADJS. Such a sub-strategy derives from a desire to imply that S and H are individuals who are cooperatively involved in a relevant activity. Willingness to cooperate is a form of social acceptance which is the essence of positive politeness. If S and H can cooperate, it means that they have relatively similar interests or goals and thus they can be socially united. By offering or promising something to H, S can reflect H's wishes on his own. In other words, S implies that H's wish is also his desire so that H doesn't feel a loss in helping S. Thus, the basic desire for social acceptance of S by H or vice versa can be fulfilled.

Among ADJS, directive acts expressed by the sub-strategy of offering or promising something are found in speech events that occur in the contextual features of [S>H, +S, -F], which means that the delivery of positive MT actions is carried out by S who has higher authority (power) than H, here is symbolized by (S>H), has close social relations

(solidarity), symbolized by +S and occurs in informal situations, (-F). The following text taken from the data corpus is an example of conversation between ADJS participants that occurs in the mentioned context.

[14] P2: *Se Dhe, aku tak nyathet rokok, Sabtu tak sauri.*

P1: *Yo, Surya a? 'Rokok apa, Ndun?'*

P2: *Iyo biasane...*

By context, the conversation above took place in a resident's house between a teen boy (P1) and a cigarette seller (P2). The boy approached seller who was waiting his kiosk. The boy intended to owe a pack of cigarettes to the seller and promised that he would pay the debted cigarette by weekend. In performing the directive act of borrowing, the speaker uses positive politeness sub-strategy of offering or promising something. The act of promising can be detected in the phrase *Sabtu tak sauri* (I'll pay it off on next Saturday). Speech (174) contains three illocutionary acts, namely (a) the act of agreeing, (b) the act of ordering, and (c) the act of promising. The impositive force in directive act performed by the speaker sounds polite because it is accompanied by an act of promising which basically benefits H as well as implies the compensation for H's cost in carrying out an action required by S.

d. Sub-strategy of Giving or Asking for a reason

Positive politeness strategy by giving or asking for a reason was also found among ADJS in expressing directive speech acts. Just like the offering or promising sub-strategy, this sub-strategy is also based on an assumption that S and H are individuals who are willing to work together or be cooperative. A reason given by S when expressing a directive speech act implies that S is trying to understand H in term of the emergency condition that S is bogged in a problem or a need in such a way that S is forced to involve H in order to get rid of the problem or need.

ADJS's directive speech act which is expressed by the sub-strategy of giving or asking for reasons can be found in conversational texts in contextual features of [S<H, +S, -F], explicating that S is of lower authority (power) than H, S and H are solidary and the speech event occurs in informal situations (-F). An exemplified conversation containing a directive act between ADJS participants occurring in this context is presented below.

[15] P1: *Kompore tak gawene sik ya Dik? Pas nggoreng gase kenyekan.*

P2: *O... ya Mbak aku wis mari masak kok.*

The conversation above occurred as a mother (P1), who intended to borrow a gas stove from her sister-in-law who lived next door (P2). Both of them were very familiar to each other and seemed to get used to borrowing each other's a kitchen utensil as each needed it. P1 used a positive politeness strategy by giving a reason, i.e. she ran out of gas in her stove, as she performed the directive act of borrowing, i.e. borrowing an LPG stove for cooking. The reason was put forward to give P2 an understanding of the cooking problem she was facing. As such, P1 can indicate that she and P2 are individuals who are willing to be cooperative and can provide social acceptance to one another.

Other examples of data obtained from DCT, in which the directive acts are performed by using positive politeness, specifically by giving a reason, can be provided below.

[16] *Pak, kulo betah serat jalan kangge boro kerja teng Kalimantan Pak.*

[TMW-1] (197)

Tulung sampean Periksa yugo kulo Bu Bidan, pun kalih dinten niki benter terus e... [TMW-2] (187)

Se Cak, nyilih ungalke. Wek ku digawe Pak Ndan durung dibalekno.

[TMW-5] (188)

Yu, ana duwik satus a. Tak selange dhisik dina nek bayaran tak balikna.
[TMW-6] (189)
Le, rewangana ngangkat iki Le. Uabote... [TMW-4] (195)

3. Performing Directive Speech Acts by Negative Politeness Strategy

The last strategy used by ADJS in performing directive speech act is negative politeness, that is a redressive action indicated by the speaker as he is aware that he has transgressed the freedom of action of a hearer. As such, the speaker makes an effort to partially satisfy the hearer's negative face, i.e. a perennial desire to be free from coercion, impingement, or pressure from others. The very essence of this strategy is the speaker's avoidance-based behavior and respect behavior to the hearer's freedom of action, and thus, it tends to be socially formal and distant between participants. By data, ADJS are also aware of the hearer's freedom of action as they convey utterances containing a directive acts such as ordering, requesting, or suggesting something to their addressee. Based on Brown and Levinson's theory, the strategy of negative politeness used by ADJS can be categorized as follows.

a. Sub-strategy of Hedging

The motivation underlying S in using this sub-strategy is the attitude of not coercing H; that is, S does not force H to obey and gives H an option not to act A as given by S the choice (not to carry out the request. But specifically, this strategy is based on an assumption that H cannot or is not willing to take the action requested by S. Among ADJS, this politeness strategy is manifested in the form of a phrase/clause that functions to modify the degree of illocutionary force within the action contained in the proposition of directive utterance, as shown by the datum below.

[17] P1: ***Nek e awakmu kober**, rewangana ngunggahna gentheng ya mene.*
P2: *Iya siap. Aku nganggur kok mene. Tukange sapa se?*
P1: *Aku ngongkon Heri*
P2: *Oh ya kebenaran.*

The text of the conversation above takes place in a contextual feature of [S>H, -S, -F]. The underlined utterance contains a directive act of ordering, which is delivered with a sub-strategy of hedging. The sub-strategy is stated by the construction of a conditional clause as indicated by the bolded part of the utterance. The clause *Nek e awakmu kober* 'If you have spare time', made by S is intended to provide a condition for the act of commanding he addressed to H. With this condition, P1 assumed that P2 could not carry out his order if the stated condition in the clause was not met. Hence, P1 is not coercive to P2 for obeying his order. In addition, this condition also indicates that P1 gives P2 an option not to carry out the order if this condition is not fulfilled.

The other examples of using the strategy of hedging among ADJS in performing directive acts are also found in the data obtained from DCT. Below are examples of utterances of directive acts delivered by using the politeness sub-strategy of hedging, as shown by the underlined part of the utterance.

[18] *Pak, wis oleh ndoge pitik jawa apa ta? Neke oleh aku nempil ya?*
[DCT-3]
Bik, mene sampean nganggur ta? Rewangana aku rong-rong dina ae.
[DCT-4]
Bekne ana duwik sik durung kanggo, tak gawene dhisik kanggo tuku pupuk. [DCT-6]

b. Sub-strategy of Apologizing

This strategy is used by S to imply his reluctance or regret for having intervened or deliberately transgressed H's freedom so that an FTA is unavoidable. The statement of reluctance or regret by S to H is a redressive action against the existing FTA. This politeness strategy usually occurs in the context of S<H, where S has less power than H, or in a striking social distance between S and H. This strategy is often used together with the deference strategy as shown in the following datum.

[19] P1: Pak *Sepuntune* nggih, mobile empun diparkir ngriki. Teng ngriko

Lho Pak pun disediakaen.

P2: Oh nggih, ngapunten boten sumerap.

P1: Nggih boten napa-napa.

The word *sepuntene* conveyed by P1 in the text above is a realization of the politeness strategy of apologizing as a sign of reluctance or regret towards the intended FTA addressed to P2, who prohibited P2 from parking anywhere but in the area provided. The word *sepuntene* also suggests social distance between P1 and P2, so that P1 needs to use the *krama* speech level, a higher Javanese speech level than *sepurane* as termed in *ngoko* speech level. Hence, the use of the deference strategy of politeness is also applied. The deference strategy implies that S humbles himself in front of H and vice versa he elevates H's existence as an individual who is superior, free, and worthy of respect. S really understands that the power factor attached to H is very great. Hence, the respect strategy is closely related to the satisfaction of one aspect of H's positive face, namely the desire to be treated as a superior individual.

The apology strategy is also used by ADJS to an addressee familiar with S but the performed directive act has a high degree of imposition (Rx), such as borrowing money, a vehicle or important equipment owned by H as found in the DCT data.

[20] *Sepurane* ngrepoti nyelang duwik 200 ae kanggo mbayar listrik. Emben tak balikna.

Cak *sepurane*, nek ga digawe, gerindane tak gawane sik ya.

Cak *sepurane* sepadae nganggura .. tak gaene ngeterna Tata sekolah dhisik. [DCT 4-5]

The utterances above contain directive acts of request, which are conveyed with an apology strategy by giving an acknowledgement of the interruption to H. In this way, S indirectly states that he actually does not want to transgress H's freedom if he is not forced to do so.

Discussion

The findings of the present study revealed that the ADJS participants employed three out of all four Brown & Levinson's prescribed politeness strategies in performing directive acts. Those are bald-on record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. The only strategy which is not found in the data corpus is the off-record strategy. However, the most dominating used strategy in daily conversation seems fall into the strategies of positive politeness, followed by bald on-record and followed by the least one, i.e. negative politeness strategies.

Considering that most of ADJS are culturally egalitarian, it is interpretable that the positive politeness strategy is most dominantly used since this strategy serves various communicative functions pertaining to friendliness or solidarity in social interaction among ADJS. Hence, such a finding is in line with a proposition that positive politeness is generally used by a speaker to shorten the social distance, as egalitarian people normally do, between the conversational participants, which is carried out to seek friendliness, solid interest, and hearer's need to be respected (NurNajla 2012). And this can be obviously seen in ADJS's daily communication behaviors, especially as they perform directive speech acts mostly using positive politeness. Such a finding is also in line with what Thayalan et al. (2012), who

revealed that the positive politeness strategy was also the most frequently used strategy in his study.

The egalitarian way of social lives of ADJS is also reflected in the use of a bald on-record strategy in performing directive acts, which characteristically contains a direct illocution. Such a tendency of performing direct illocution in expressing directive acts such as ordering, asking, or suggesting seems to be affected by the egalitarianism values in ADJS's social lives. ADJS tend to say things in a straightforward manner, as reflected in the many directive utterances delivered by using the bald-on-record strategy. The choice of speaking strategy, which tends to be straightforward or with direct illocution, also reflects that ADJS upholds a high sense of solidarity among them.

The finding regarding the tendency to convey directive speech acts directly is not parallel to the findings of Kuntarto (1999), who examined politeness strategies among Indonesian-Javanese bilinguals. One of the findings in his research is that Indonesian-Javanese bilinguals tend to choose indirect speech forms in expressing directive speech acts. The tendency is of a manifestation of the Javanese principle of respect, which does not allow the Javanese to say something that might lower the honor of others (Kuntarto, 1999:229-30).

ADJS's dominating use of the strategies of both positive politeness and bald on-record, which are inherent of direct illocutionary content, also confirms a general assumption that the language behavior of a speech community is much influenced by its people's socio-cultural norms. Thus, it can be concluded that socio-cultural values greatly influence the politeness behavior shown by a group of people. This present finding supports the study results conducted by Byon (2006), which examined the role of language discontinuity and the honorific system to achieve language politeness in conveying acts of asking among Koreans. One of the study conclusions is that the manipulation of honorifics, which is followed by the choice of language discontinuity to a certain degree, is triggered by socio-cultural norms that apply uniquely to Korean society. Likewise, in expressing directive acts, ADJS's preference to explicit linguistic forms is also closely related to the ADJS's egalitarianism and high solidarity prevailing in Arek culture.

In particular, the influence of ADJS socio-cultural values on verbal ways of expressing directive speech acts can be explained as follows. First, when viewed from the degree of illocutionary continuity, various forms of ADJS directive speech in general are more likely to contain direct illocutionary forms, which convey unambiguous intentions for H. This tendency to use direct forms seems to have become a norm among ADJS. In other words, this way of expression has become a 'habitus', namely a set of dispositions which incline agents to act and react in certain ways' (Bourdieu, 1977). So, in relation to ADJS politeness behavior, especially in conveying directive acts, the way of speaking with direct illocution is a typical linguistic behavior that is influenced by a series of dispositions inherent in ADJS personality, motivated by the socio-cultural value system they adopt.

In terms of the context in which directive acts are performed by ADJS, it is likely that utterances of directive acts are performed between participants who are solidary, either with higher or lower power than the addressee. The likelihood implies that in verbal interactions among ADJS, the factor of the variable of familiarity or solidarity is placed higher than the factor of the variable of power. An ADJS who has established a close social relationship with his addressee can directly perform directive acts to an addressee despite his lower power. Conversely, a speaker who has less intimate social relations with his interlocuter had better indirectly perform directive acts even though in terms of power, he is higher than that of his addressee. Thus, the power factor among ADJS tends to have a relatively small influence on the selection of politeness strategies, especially in conveying directive speech acts among ADJS. This finding is in line with the results of Peterson's research (2010), which states that when expressing requests, it tends to show a high degree of congruence with H, who has close social relationships, either with lower or higher social status or power than S, which is marked by the use of informal, direct language varieties and the use of the second person.

However, the tendency to use direct or indirect illocutionary to act politely based on the level of familiarity of the speech participants, which is the finding of this study, is not in line with

the findings of Green (1989) and Leech (1983). The two experts found that the variable power (power) is the main determinant in the selection of politeness strategies. In other words, if a speaker is superior in terms of power to his interlocutor, other variables, such as level of familiarity, have a negligible influence. The quite opposite findings of the two experts seem to be affected by the study subjects from which the data were obtained. The study subjects of those two experts were taken from a hierarchical cultural typology society, such as European-American societies that are very aware of the importance of the rights and freedoms of others. In such a society, the factor of power, which manifests individual rights and freedoms, becomes very dominant in coloring social relations among its people. In contrast, in an egalitarian society like ADJS, social factors such as differences in status and power have minimal influence on social life because the solidarity and social care among its members is so strong (see Foley, 1997).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to know ADJS's polite linguistic behavior in performing directive acts such as ordering, asking, requesting, and suggesting, which are examined based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theoretical framework. The findings reveal that ADJS employed three politeness strategies, namely bald on-record, positive politeness, and negative positive strategies. One of the strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) that is not employed by ADJS is the off-record strategy.

It is noted that among those three employed strategies, the most dominantly used strategy is positive politeness, followed by bald on-record and negative politeness strategy, as the least employed one. Such dominating phenomenon of directive act suggests a conclusive proposition that, to a certain extent, there is an incongruity between ADJS politeness behavior in conveying directive speech acts found in this study and the politeness theory formulated by Brown and Levinson (1987), especially on dimensions related to factors of politeness such as power which determine the scale of locutionary indirectness. This lack of parallelism in theoretical propositions seems to be affected by the difference between the socio-cultural values possessed by ADJS, who are mostly egalitarian, and those possessed by a Western society, which are used as referred data by Brown and Levinson. As such, it can be concluded that socio-cultural values greatly influence the politeness behavior shown by a group of people.

Bibliographic references

- Byon, A.S. (2006). The role of linguistic indirectness and honorifics in achieving linguistic politeness in Korean requests. *Journal of Politeness Research. Language, Behavior, and Culture*, 2(2), 247-276.
- Blum-Kulka S. (1989). Playing it safe: The role of conventionality in indirectness. In Blum-Kulka S., House, J., and Kasper, G. (Eds.), *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies* (Vol. XXXI in the Series *Advances in Discourse Processes*, Ablex Publishing Corporation. 37-70
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Daskalovska, N., Ivanovska, B., Kusevska, M., & Ulanska, T. (2016). The use of request strategies by EFL learners. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 232, 55-61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.10.015>
- Foley, W. A. (1997). *Anthropological linguistics An introduction*. Malden, MA 02148: Blackwell Publisher Inc.
- Green, G. (1989). How to get people to do things with words. In Cole, P., & Morgan, J. L. (Eds.), *Syntax and Semantics: Speech Acts*. New York Academic Press, 3, 83-106
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In Cole, P., & Morgan, J. L. (Eds.), *Syntax and Semantics: Speech Acts*. New York Academic Press. 3, 41-58.

- Goffman, E. (1967). On facework: An analysis of ritual elements in social interaction. In Jaworski, A., & Coupland, N. (Eds.), *The discourse reader*, London: Routledge. 306-321
- Habibi, F. (2017). Polite request strategies by male and female of English learners. *Journal Smart*, 3(1), 8-19. <https://ejournal.umpri.ac.id/index.php/smart/article/view/271>
- Husna, F. N. (2018). The speech act of request and politeness strategies in Elizabeth Allen's *Ramona and Beezus*. *Sastra Inggris – Quill*, 7(4), 379-388. <https://journal.student.uny.ac.id/ojs/index.php/quill/article/view/14543>
- Jeanfer., & Tanto, T. (2018). Request strategies in Indonesian: An analysis of politeness phenomena in text messages. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 18(2), 137-145 ; <https://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/JOLL/article/view/1569>
- Katz, M. (2015). Politeness theory and the classification of speech acts. *Working Papers of the Linguistics Circle of the University of Victoria*, 25(2), 45-55.
- Kuntarto, E. (1999). *Strategi kesantunan dwibahasawan bahasa Indonesia-Jawa. kajian pada wacana lisan bahasa Indonesia*. [Unpublished dissertation]. Malang: PPS IKIP Malang.
- Lakoff, R., & Sachiko, I. (2005). *Broadening the horizon of linguistic politeness*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Hashemian, M., & Farhang-Ju, M. (2017). Cross-cultural study of EFL/ESL learners' request strategies. *Journal of Modern Research in English Language Studies*, 4(2), 45-33. <https://doaj.org/article/2888c818b17043ea8770aba0c7d47b9b>
- Maros, M., & Rosli, L. (2017). Politeness strategies in Twitter updates of female English language studies Malaysian undergraduates. 3L: Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies, 23(1), 132-149. <https://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2017-2301-10>
- Megaiaab, M., Wijana, I. D. P., & Munandar, A. (2019). Politeness Strategies of request used between Libyan students and their lecturers using English as a foreign language. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*; 2(4), 203-212. <https://al-kindipublisher.com/index.php/ijllt/article/view/4806>
- Najeeb, Z. M., Maros, M., & Mohd Nor, N. F. (2012). Politeness in e-mails of Arab students in Malaysia. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 12(1), 125-145. https://core.ac.uk/display/11492261?utm_source=pdf&utm_medium=banner&utm_campaign=pdf-decoration-v1
- NurNajla, Z. A. (2012). *The study of language and politeness strategies among Malaysian chatters*. (Master Thesis, University of Malaya). Retrieved 4 January from <http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/3945/>
- Peterson, E. (2010). Perspective and politeness in Finish requests. *Pragmatics Quarterly Publication of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)*, 20(3), 401-423. <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.20.3.05pet>
- Supatmiwati, D. (2017). The realization of politeness strategies in Javanese speech community in Lombok. *Seminar Nasional TIK dan Ilmu Sosial (SocioTech)*, 1(1), 200-207. <https://journal.universitatumigora.ac.id/index.php/sociotech2017/article/view/307>
- Tawalbeh, A., & Al-Oqaily, E. (2012). In-directness and politeness in American English and Saudi Arabic requests: A cross-cultural comparison. *Asian Social Science*, 8(10), 85-98. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v8n10p85>
- Thayalan, M. X., Shanti, A., & May Liu Siaw Mei. (2012). Social networking politeness in Malaysian news blog. http://ir.uitm.edu.my/cgi/users/login?target=http%3A%2F%2Ffir.uitm.edu.my%2F11331%2F1%2FLP_M%2520XAVIER%2520THAYALAN%2520RMI%252012_24.pdf

Words: 8918

Characters: 56 796 (31,6 standard pages)

Dr. Emy Sudarwati, PhD.
Department of Languages and Literature,
Universitas Brawijaya Malang,

Indonesia

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6618-6109>
emoy_sanyoto@ub.ac.id

Dr. Sukarsono, PhD.

Department of English Education
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung
Indonesia

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9437-9987>
sukarsono71@gmail.com

Dr. Nanik Sri Rahayu

Department of English Education
UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung
Indonesia

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-0914-1167>
nanik.sri.rahayu@unisatu.ac.id