

## AN ANALYSIS OF REFUSAL STRATEGY OF THE CHILDREN AT KETARE VILLAGE: A PRAGMATIC STUDY

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### Abstract

The aims of this study are to identify refusal strategies used by children at Ketare village and to analyze the factors that influence the differences refusal strategies used by children at Ketare village. This study used descriptive qualitative method. The data was collected by observing, recording and taking notes. The results of this study are direct and indirect refusal strategies identified at Ketare. Related to family scope, there is direct refusal with nonperformative statements and indirect refusal with excuse, reason, explanation, set condition for future or fast acceptance, and promise of future acceptance. Related to children scope there are direct refusal with non-performative statement and indirect refusal with statement of regret, excuse reason explanation, set condition for future acceptance, and promise of future acceptance. In terms of adult's scope, they are direct refusal with data non-performative statement. The factors of different refusal used by children are factors from gender, age, environment, and social culture.

**Keywords:** *language, pragmatic, refusal strategy, children*

### ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi strategi penolakan yang digunakan oleh anak-anak di desa Ketare dan untuk menganalisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi perbedaan strategi penolakan yang digunakan oleh anak-anak di desa Ketare. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dengan mengamati, merekam, dan mencatat. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah strategi penolakan langsung dan tidak langsung yang diidentifikasi di Ketare. Terkait dengan ruang lingkup keluarga, ada penolakan langsung dengan pernyataan nonperformatif dan penolakan tidak langsung dengan alasan, penjelasan, kondisi yang ditetapkan untuk penerimaan di masa depan atau cepat, dan janji penerimaan di masa depan. Terkait dengan ruang lingkup anak-anak, ada penolakan langsung dengan pernyataan non-performatif dan penolakan tidak langsung dengan pernyataan penyesalan, penjelasan alasan, menetapkan kondisi untuk penerimaan di masa depan, dan janji penerimaan di masa depan. Dalam hal ruang lingkup orang dewasa, penolakan langsung terjadi dengan data pernyataan non-performatif. Faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi terjadi penolakan adalah faktor jenis kelamin, usia, lingkungan, dan budaya sosial.

**Kata Kunci:** *bahasa, pragmatik, refusal strategy, anak-anak*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the most important aspects used by human beings to interact each other. It is used to deliver information and express feelings and ideas. Communication is not only expressed in words but it also can be any kind of non-verbal through gesture such as smiling, turning the head, and moving their finger. It is called non-verbal communication. Both verbal or non-verbal communication aimed to communicate and interact with people to know other feelings and views of something. The way people communicate is influenced by norms, cultures, tone, gesture and the others so that it is necessary to grow people awareness to concern on those aspects in order to establish good communication (Wijayanti, 2016).

There are various ways for people to accept or refuse request or order. In daily communication using refusing is often used by people. It is not merely used by adults, but also children used refusal frequently. For example, when they get invitation to play with their friends or when their friend asks something, and if they don't like it, they will reject and avoid the invitation and orders from their parents or their friends and they will automatically use the language of refusal. It can be concluded that refusal is a way to convey a feeling of disagreement with their expression. Refusal itself is a speech-act performed that showed people in rejection some invitations, suggestions, offers, and requests of the other. Refusal include of negative responds of interlocutor.

According to Beebe (1990) in (Moaveni, 2014), there are two types of refusal strategy namely direct and indirect

refusals. These strategies are the way to reject invitation, command, suggestion or request someone. Type of direct refusal usually use: No; Sorry, I can't. direct refusal used when people do not accept an order or invitation from someone. Indirect refusal used when people does not want to give someone responses and has any reason to reject someone invitation. Refusal is the opposite response to acceptance in which the condition is when the hearers do not do the expected response and people generally use the word "no" to refuse something (Permataningtyas, Sembodo, & Mada, 2018). It is difficult to identify the meaning of the speakers when they refuse order or request. As stated that refusals is one of the most interesting areas to be researched because it is more complicated than other speech acts in the sense that respondents tend to use more indirect strategies to minimize the offence or negotiate rather than saying no (Önal & Çiftçi, 2018).

Different person has different ways to reject request, commands, and the other. The way children response to children will be different from responding to adults or older people. The people refuse request or commands is based on the *domain* (who speak, what the topic, what the situation, with whom they speak). Some people will refuse directly or indirectly to show politeness. Based on the data this research tries to analyzed the types of refusal strategy that used of the children when their communicate with their parents, their friends or another people using a pragmatic approach. The research is focused on identifying the types of refusal strategies used by children in Ketare and the factors that are context-dependent.

## Pragmatics

Some scholars defined pragmatics in various ways. Crystal (1985), Leech (1983), and Thomas (1983) cited in (Lestari, 2017) pragmatics is influenced by the knowledge and awareness of the community accepted norms and account the sociocultural contexts. Both also Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) divided into two components, namely *pragmalinguistics* competence and *sociopragmatic* competence in which *pragmalinguistics* refers to the resources for conveying communicative acts and relational or interpersonal meanings and *sociopragmatic* refers to the knowledge how to select and appropriate choice of linguistic forms for particular goal in a particular setting.

Pragmatic approaches agree that the interpretation of words in utterance depended on the recognition of the speaker's intentions and the meaning of behind speaker's utterances and verbal communicative process (Li, without year) and (Wijana, 2015). Pragmatics has various meanings that it depends on the speaker utterances. For example, when people refuse something, they will use various sentences. According to Permataningtyas et al. (2018) pragmatic transfer in refusal situations mostly used when one person refused to people who were if higher status.

## Refusal strategies

Refusal strategies are used frequently by people to reject commends, requests, and the others. Brown and Levinson (1978) mentioned that a refusal might offend the listeners; hence getting message or deliver message to listener clearly without offending the listeners becomes difficult (Amirrudin & Salleh, 2016). The people

refuse requests or commands depended on cultures where the people live. Önal & Çiftçi (2018) noted that refusal speech act reflects to the cultural values and norms of each group of people. Refusals strategies are used in the conversation when someone disagrees or rejects someone request, offer or question. Refusal is essentially an action that disagrees with a condition or something. This is already a sure thing that someone asked for something to others it means that the person hopes his desire to be realized or approved by the people he turned to the request. Classification of refusals adapted from Beebe, Takahasi and Uliss-Weltz (1990) cited in (Moaveni, 2014, p.15). The detail semantic formula provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. Classification of Refusals**

Semantic Formula
Direct
A. Performative (e.g., "I refuse.")
B. Nonperformative
1. "No"
2. Negative willingness/ability (e.g., "I can't" "I don't think so")
Indirect
A. Statement of regret (e.g., "I'm sorry. . ."; "I feel terrible. . .")
B. Wish (e.g., "I wish I could help you. . .")
C. Excuse, reason, explanation (e.g., "My children will be home that night."; "I have a headache.")
D. Statement of alternative
1. I can do X instead of Y (e.g., "I'd rather. . ." "I'd prefer. . .")
2. Why don't you do X instead of Y (e.g., "Why don't you ask someone else?")
E. Set condition for future or past acceptance (e.g., "If you had asked me earlier, I would have. . .")
F. Promise of future acceptance (e.g., "I'll do it next time"; "I promise I'll. . ." or "Next time I'll. . ."
— using "will" of promise or "promise")
G. Statement of principle (e.g., "I never do business with friends.")
H. Statement of philosophy (e.g., "One can't be too careful.")
I. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor
1. Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester (e.g., "I won't be any fun tonight" to reuse an invitation)
2. Guilt trip (e.g., waitress to customers who want to sit a while: "I can't make living off people who just order coffee.")
3. Criticize the request/requester, etc. (statement of negative feeling or opinion); insult/attack (e.g., "Who do you think you are?"; "That's a terrible idea!")
4. Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.

5. Let interlocutor off the hook (e.g., "Don't worry about it." "That's okay." "You don't have to.")
6. Self-defense (e.g., "I'm trying my best." "I'm doing all I can do.")
- J. Acceptance that functions as a refusal
  1. Unspecific or indefinite reply
  2. Lack of enthusiasm
- K. Avoidance
  1. Nonverbal
    - a. Silence
    - b. Hesitation
    - c. Do nothing
    - d. Physical departure
  2. Verbal
    - a. Topic switch
    - b. Joke
    - c. Repetition of part of request, etc. (e.g., "Monday?")
    - d. Postponement (e.g., "I'll think about it.")
    - e. Hedging (e.g., "Gee, I don't know." "I'm not sure.")
- Adjuncts**
  - A. Statement of positive opinion/feeling or agreement ("That's a good idea. . . I'd love to. . .")
  - B. Statement of empathy (e.g., "I realize you are in a difficult situation.")
  - C. Pause fillers (e.g., "uhh"; "well"; "oh"; "uhm")
  - D. Gratitude/Appreciation

In Indonesian context, Azis (2000) researched Indonesian refusal and its politeness implication; then Hassani et.al (2011) and Abed (2011) stated that there are various ways to express the refusals in regards with social status namely culture based (Wijayanti, 2016).

Brown and Levinson (1987) consider that the concept of face (self-image) creates theory of politeness in which in the past research the theory noted that the speech of refusal threatens the listeners' face-value by saying "the speaker does not care about the listener's desires and that the speaker's desires are not the same as the listener's intention" (Amirrudin & Salleh, 2016, p.33). there are various factors people used politeness including age, level of education, culture, power and distance. Based on Felix-Brasdefer (2006) research showed that power and distance has a crucial role to determine and consider appropriate degrees of politeness in

Mexican society (Permataningtyas et al., 2018).

## B. METHODS

### Research Design

This research used descriptive qualitative method. From this data, the researcher analyzed the conversation of the children when they refuse something in daily communication with their family or their friends.

### Population and Sample

The source of data was taken from the conversation of the children at Ketare village when they refuse something to other people. The population that become the object of this research is the children at Ketare Village. However, the sample of this research merely focused on 40 children and the children of the age 5-11 years old in several hamlets at Ketare village namely Sarah, Reban and Karanbayan. According to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia resources children is from the age 5 until 11 years old.

### Data Collection

In collecting data, the researcher used recorder and note taking as the instrument. In order to find the data easily, the researcher made some notes to classify the important units or part of script that related to the problems and objectives of the research.

In collecting data for this research, the researcher used observation by listening and recording the utterance produced by the children as samples. The children speak freely without giving feedback or comment to the children. There is no elicitation or



comment or even feedback from other people to elicit the samples to talk more. While recording the children, making some notes are important to write some crucial points that relate to refusal responses.

## Technique of Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the research analyzed in this research used content analysis technique are identify the types of refusal that children use in daily communication can classify the types of refusal strategy that used the children. Then, analysis the data refusal strategy and the factors influence that researcher found in daily communication of the children and describe of data is making the conclusion based on the data analysis. Afterwards, analyze the data and draw conclusion.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Results

#### 1.1 Types of Refusal strategies used by Children

Based on the data showed that there are two types of refusal strategy found at Ketare village namely direct with non-performative strategies and indirect with statement of excuse, reason, explanation, set condition for future or fast acceptance, statement of regret, excuse reason explanation, set condition for future acceptance, and promise of future acceptance, postpone, and repetition. The detail data can be seen in the following Table 2.

**Table 2. the data of refusal strategy that mostly used by the children.**

No	Scope	Type s of Refu sal	Strategies	Most ly used
1	Famil y	Direc t	Nonperform ative Statement	2
		Indir ect	excuse, reason, explanation	7
			set condition for future or fast acceptance	1
			promise of future acceptance	2
2	Childr en	Direc t	Nonperform ative Statement	3
		Indir ect	statement of regret	1
			excuse, reason, explanation	4
			set condition for future or fast acceptance	2
			promise of future acceptance	1
<b>Tot al</b>				<b>27</b>

The table shows that there are two scopes namely family and children with two types of refusal strategies: direct and indirect. The direct refusal strategy consists of non-performative

statement. While, there are various types of indirect refusal strategies namely excuse, reason, explanation, set condition for future or fast acceptance, statement of regret, excuse reason explanation, set condition for future acceptance, and promise of future acceptance, postpone, and repetition.

## 1.2 Factors in Refusal Strategies

### Family Scope

#### a. Direct Refusal Strategy

The data are direct refusal strategy with two examples. One datum was carried out between a child of around 9 years old and his brother, the child refused the instructions from his brother "*nteh dengank pebelik tukang aiq edak aiq gallon (let's buy a gallon of water)*". The child refused the order with direct rejection, "*eeeeeeeeeee, lalo bae sudangm (I don't want to go, no I can't)*". The second data was obtained from a child and her mother. She rejects her mother impolitely. She said that "*laun juluk inaq, ndek kawe isikm (wait a minute's mom, wait. I hate you)*".

#### b. Indirect Refusal Strategy

##### 1) Explanation and excuse

In terms of indirect refusal strategy, there are some types of refusal strategies identified such as strategy of rejection by using the word clarification as excuse, reason, and explanation. Based on the data, Anung refused a request from her sister. Anung said "*Kekabotkh, kelihm bae peketuan*

*Dirimm (how lazy I'm, you can do by yourself)*". She uses the word "*kekabotkh (how lazy I'm)*" as an excuse to reject the request from her sister.

The conversation also occurred between a mother and a child with the age range 6-9 years. The mother commanded his child with the sentence or prohibition "*sah tam maen beledok iku salak tam talent maten baturm isikm (stop playing, you can hurt your friend)*". The boy rejected it with indirect sentence, "*anangn nitik maten ape, dengan badan doang tetitik (I shoot him little, I don't think he will die because of it)*". Another datum among a son and a father with the age 7-11, when their fathers ask requests, their sons refuse their father requests "*dengan libur dengan nani arak dengan zikir (it's free to read qur'an daddy, they go to) zikir*".

The data also identified when among sisters refuse each other. The data showed that among sisters refuse the request by excuse for examples: "*masihk kecek tiang ndek man tao beroas (I'm still child, I can't washing the kitchen equipment)*" and "*berembe tank a ndemak kesakit imek iak. (I cannot take it because my hand still sick)*". The excuses are the way to refuse the requests or commands.

##### 2) Set condition for future or past acceptance & Promise for future acceptance

One of the data is the conversation between the mother

and child with age range of 7-9 years. Mother says the command sentence for her daughter" *wahn be bian ini, lampak ndaus muk ngaji terus (it was late afternoon time bathroom continue to go to reading qur'an)*. However, the girl uses refusal strategy with the sentence governing conditions or agreements to carry out the order by using the sentence " *laun juluk kembeq inaq ketelihk aran (wait a minute mom, it so cold)*". The sentence " *laun juluk*" show the availability of the girl to do the command, but mother gives more time to do it because the girl uses reason to reject it.

It is the same as another datum presented occurred between a mother and a child in the age range of 8-11 years. The child uses indirect rejection " *laun juluk kembek neteh, ite doang tesuruh elek onek kelelahkh (can I do it next time, now I feel so lazy)*". The word " *laun juluk* " expresses unilateral agreement stating tomorrow from the boy to carry out orders given by mother.

The data also presented the conversation occurred between a mother and a child in the age range of 10-11 years. In terms of the data, it can be identified that mother gave a command to the girls" *barak oak daniqm aloh arak temoen toloq, to brugaqn oak yoga taokn.(tell your auntie there are guests coming)* but the girls reject command her mother use indirect sentence" *ndek naon taok waq dani tiang, laun juluk mbojak aneh (I do not know where*

*is Dani, I'll find her later)*. The sentence" *(I'll find her later)* means that the girl refuses politely with giving promises to her mother to find her aunty if she finessed watching her favorite movie.

## Children Scope

### a. Direct Refusal Strategy

The data between children (7-9 years), Lucky gave an invitation to **Fatan**"*Atan ,ak ngupakm lamum bani kawih jilbab iaq (Atan, I will give you money if you want to wear this hijab)*". However, Fatan firmly refused with a direct sentence "*iiii, ndek kawe (no, I don't want)*". He uses direct rejection to refuse Lusi command with nonperformative statement. The conversation also occurred between children in the age range of 8-11 years. Nizar gave the invitation to Lusi " *lalo mancing nteh nang mbungn mu'as (lest go fishing to "mbung mu'as")*, but Lusi rejected the invitation with a clear sentence that stated the unavailability of Lucky to obey the commands of Nizar" *ndekh, wahk tesilikh sik bapak uiq (no, my father prohibits me)*.

The data also was obtained from children aged 8-11 years. Teta invites her friend" *meletkh ambon aneh, llo mbau nteh ken bangketn miq jian (I want cassava, lets dig up the cassava on miq jian fields)*, but Andin rejects the invitation using direct and a very clear sentence to reveal unwillingness Andin towards her friend invitation " *ndekh bani aku, tesilikt sik miq jian laun (no I can't, I'm afraid of miq jian)*". She uses this strategy to refuse her friend invitation

because she afraid that Miq Jian get angry.

Based on the data, the conversation between two children aged 8-10 years old (Arma and Jiman), Arma invites Jiman " *nteh jiman lalo latihan karate nani (come on jiman lets practice karate now)*. However Jiman refused by using the direct rejection strategy " *aneh,,edak angenk (yahhh, I'm lazy now)*" to reject the invitation of Arma.

## b. Indirect refusal strategy

### 1) Excuse, reason, explanation

Based on the data the conversation between Dagul and Arik with the age 9-11. Dagul invites arik " *ken embung waq wawan taokn penok mpak, ye laint mincing nteh (there are a lot of fish there, let's go fishing)* but Arik reject Dagul invitation " *tepalekh laun marak uik (he caught me later, it is the same as yesterday)*. Arik uses indirect refusal to reject Dagul invitation.

In terms of the research results showed that the conversation was carried out by children (8-11 years). Anung begins the conversation with giving advice to Fadila " *ken deket jeding bibik ju eto malik taokt begawek nteh (let's do it near the bathroom)*". but Fadila rejects the invitation using the sentence of reason as an explanation " *gerahn to a taokt malik,loek tain bembek to (how do we do it there there is a lot of goat droppings)*". Fadila uses indirect rejection to refuse Anung Invitation. Another datum also gained from two children

(8-10 years). Lucy says that " *Alfan nteh mendaran nteh (Alfan, let get lunch)*", but Alfan refused with polite to excuse the sentence " *wahkh be medaran baruq to bale (I had eaten at home)*" as a rejection strategy conducted by Alfan.

From other data showed that the children (9-11 years). Haliq invites Hazizi to go to shower but Hazizi gives a response to rejection by using sentence indirect strategy reasons as explanatory sentences. that the Hazizi says " *eeeh,, ndek kawe tesilikh isiq amaqh (I do not dare later my father scolded me)*. He uses the sentence of rejection because Hazizi didn't want his father angry of him like yesterday when another his friend invites Hazizi.

### 2) Set condition for future or past acceptance

From the data displayed, the conversation occurred between 2 children (7-10 years). Fatan begged for something to the Jeweh " *endeng mimis beledokm kembek (can I ask for your bullet)*". but Jeweh rejected the request " *nggakn bedoek iak,buku.m kembek bait isikm miak mimis ( this is just a little you can make finger sheet of paper)*".

Between two children in the age range 9-11 years make communication. Haqam invites Fariq " *eakm lari pagi lemak ahad? Bandara laint lamum mampu jeq (would you run with me tomorrow? We ran until airport if you can)*". However, Fariq refused with an indirect sentence " *Imak*



***muk aru meleng aok (if I can get up early okay).*** The sentence is used by Fariq as a strategy of rejecting the invitation.

### 3) Promise of future acceptance

Related to the data showed that the conversation occurred between two children (9 to 11 years). Haura requests something to Yuni" *endeng kembek nyambuk sekek (I want your guava, can you give it to me)*", but Yuni refused by using indirect sentences " *aku doang nggakn iak bedoekh. Nanik pebaukm malik aneh (I only have this one, later I'll pick it for you)*", Yuni uses the sentence agreement to give what is requested by Haura, the strategy of giving an appointment to Haura is a way Yuni to reject request for Haura.

## 2. Discussions

Based on the research results, variety of differences types of refusal strategy used by children at Ketare village. The rejection strategy carried out by children from the sample data obtained that children are more frequently using indirect sentences of rejection. Both in family scope and children scope could not ignore about the age or education. They mostly used indirect refusal strategies in family scope to reject their mother, father, brother or sister to show politeness. However, they use mostly direct and indirect refusal strategies to their friends. The children will refuse either direct or indirect to people who close to

them. Brown and Levinson (1987), Fraser (1990), and Smith (1998) cited in (Permataningtyas et al., 2018) explained that refusal is crucial in sociolinguistics perspectives because it is sensitive to social variables such as age, level of education, power, social distance and age.

Related to children scope which means that children communicate with children, the research results showed that children prefer to use both in direct and indirect refusal strategies to refuse their friends requests or commands. Because of at the same age, they can talk freely and use the language freely. Children prefer to use both refusal strategies. It is assumed that children tend to use direct and indirect refusal strategies to their family because of the closeness. Children also use most direct refusal strategies and indirect refusal strategies because of the closeness with their peer friends. It means that children aware of their level with their friends. They have the same position with their friends so that they can talk freely. Language and knowledge will develop along with the age, the children will know how to communicate well and more polite in terms of their age, the more children get older the more knowledge they have.

Related to the gender, women tend to use condition for future and promise and men prefer to use excuse, reason, and explanation. The way people choose the language

used to refuse something influenced by their gender (women or men). Moaveni (2014) stated that either men and women through out the world have contributed to the way we communicate and the way we communicate is influenced by cultural norms and gender differences. (Batang, 2019) stated information that gender, age, cognitive attributes including intelligent quotient and language performance, attitude, personality influence the people to choose their schools. It means that age and power have effect on attitude, the way of communicate, and the others.

The children strongly influenced by the guidance of parents, their friends, and people around them. Various aspects of social life create them learn how to behave politely in everyday life. The way people around them build their characters, behaviors and attitude including the way they use the language. Cultural factors also very influential in the development of children's language because social norm also people behaviors and attitudes and the language used to include at Ketare village. (Amerian & Esmaili, 2015) explained that customs, law, social norms, and ethnic background have particular disposition towards gender, attitude, behavior and even the language used by people in the community. In conclusion, some factors influence refusal strategies used by children at Ketare namely gender, environment, cultures and ages.

## D. CONCLUSION

The type of refusal strategy that is mostly used by children is direct refusal strategy with nonperformative statement and in indirect refusal strategy with types of excuse, reason, explanation, set condition for future or fast acceptance, and promise of future acceptance, promise of future acceptance. Factors that affecting the speech of a child are factors from gender, family environment, social community, culture and age.

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