

LANGUAGE POLITENESS OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

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Abstract

This research is based on the discovery of students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi, Riau, who spoke impolitely. As people working in the world of education, students and teachers must certainly pay attention to politeness in language. For this reason, this research needs to be conducted to see the extent of the politeness of students and teachers in communicating in the realm of education. Also, this study not only looked at the politeness of students and teachers but also want to see the factors causing the impoliteness of students and teachers in speaking. This research uses a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods. Sources of data in this study were students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi, Riau. The data in this study are the speech of students and teachers containing six maxim of politeness raised by Leech. The results of this study indicate that students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi Riau can already be categorized politely in speech. This can be seen from the 101 utterances found that only 38 utterances are categorized as impolite or violate the six maxims of the politeness principle stated by Leech.

Keywords: *Language Politeness, Students, Teachers, Speech Act, Education Realm.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool used by humans to communicate. Humans will not be separated from the process of using language in everyday life. Language plays an important role in life because language has a role as a messenger from one human to another. In communicating, language users must also be able to choose the language used in interaction to avoid conflicts between speakers and interlocutors. This is very much related to the choice of language in the use of the language. One aspect of language that is very important is politeness. This is caused that politeness can also facilitate interactions between individuals in communication.

Language politeness is one aspect of language that can improve the emotional intelligence of speakers because in communication speakers and interlocutors are not only required to convey the truth, but also must remain committed to maintaining harmonious relationships. To maintain harmony in relationships, there is a need for procedures of

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communication. The communication procedure concerns the politeness of the speaker in speaking the language. The more polite someone in the language means that someone is getting better at communicating with others. The politeness of language must be controlled by all levels of society who want to use language in communication, especially those who are involved in the world of education such as students and teachers.

As a student surely they need to pay attention to politeness in language. Researchers found many students' language phenomena related to politeness. When researchers conducted interviews with some of the teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat Kuantan Singingi Riau, some teachers said that there were still students who were not polite in language use. Then, the researcher also conducted interviews with several students, many of them also complained about their friend's impolite attitude when communicating both inside and outside the classroom. So that it can cause a quarrel because a student feels offended by the words of the others. Besides students, teachers must also pay attention to politeness in language because teachers are role models for their students.

Politeness is a very important aspect to shape one's character and attitude. The use of a person's language in speaking can be known as the character and personality of that person. For this reason, politeness must be possessed by every student and teacher. Related, the characters that are arranged in students through education can be moved from how students communicate with others. Besides, teachers who can help students are also found to pay less attention to politeness. Impoliteness found in teachers sometimes also influenced by students' attitudes so that causes resentment to the teacher. Some of the phenomena above are interesting to study more in-depth so that research is needed regarding politeness in students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi, Riau.

The following will present some examples of conversational situations between teachers and students. In this example illustrated utterances from teachers and students who obey and violate some of the maxims that are in the principle of politeness.

Example 1. Obedience and violation of the tact maxim

Situation: This utterance occurred on Friday, April 13, 2017 around 9:00 WIB in X1 class.

Previously the teacher has told a story related to daily life that is about carrots, eggs, and coffee associated with human nature then the teacher tells students to retell what has been told by the teacher in the form of further essays from the story students are asked to determine facts and opinions, but there are students who exception if the task is done individually, but the teacher still tells students to do it individually.

- GR : *"Silahkan kalian ceritakan dulu dari awal sampai akhir, lalu nanti setelah itu uraikan mana fakta mana opini!"* [Please tell from the beginning to the end, after that describe what facts are opinions!] (56)
- SW4 : *"Satu berdua ya bu?"* [Pairwork, mam?](57)
- GR : *"Hmm...kok satu berdua?"* [Hmm...pairwork?] (58)
- : *"Ya semuanya sendiri-sendiri!"* [It's individually!] (59)
- SW5 : *"Bukunya habis bu"* [There's no book anymore, mam] (60)
- GR : *"Eee...ibu sekalian mau menilai kemampuan kalian untuk bercerita, jadi disitu ada nilai mendengarkan"* [Eee ... I want to evaluate all of your ability to tell stories, so there is a score of listening] (61)
- SW6 : *"Bu ulangin lagi bu!"* [repeat again, mam!] (62)
- GR : *"Kenapa? Ada yang ingin bertanya?"* [Why? Any question?](63)

Speeches of (56), (58), and (59) are classified into tact maxims. In a speech (56) the teacher tries to maximize the profit of his speech partner by asking students to do assignments about facts and opinions, this aims to see the ability of students to understand material about the facts and opinions that have been taught. Speeches of (58) and (59) are also included in the maxim of tact because in these speeches the teacher as a speaker does not try to maximize the benefits of the partner by saying reject the suggestions of students who want the work done in pairs. Speech (56) is considered to comply with the tact maxim but speech (58) and (59) are considered to violate the tact maxim.

Example 2. Obedience and violation of the approbation maxim

Situation 2 : This utterance occurs on Monday, April 3, 2017 at around 8:25 WIB in X1 class. At that time the learning activities had just begun, the learning activities began with a story about the visit of the regent in the village of Sukaraja, then continued with a story about the village of Sungai Taro. The teacher asks students about the existence of the Taro River.

- GR : *"Sungai Taro itu terletak di daerah kabupaten Banyu Asin, Sumatera?."* [The Taro River is located in the Banyu Asin, Sumatra.....?] (24)
- SW6 : *"Banyu Asin, Sumatera Selatan."* [Banyu Asin, South Sumtra](25)
- GR : *"Iya, betul sekali."* [Yes, totally correct] (26)

Speech (26) can be classified into approbation maxim. Categorized into a maxim of approbation because in the speech of teacher as a speaker is seen giving praise to students

who have managed to answer their questions correctly, so then he gives praise in the form of words. Speech (26) is considered to comply with the maxim of approbation. The following are some of the examples of utterances which obedient and violate the maxims of approbation.

Situation 4 :This utterance occurs on Monday, April 3, 2017 in the morning around 9:05 WIB in X1 class. Students were seen writing down an example of an invitation letter written by the secretary on the board, but there was a student who was bothering his friend who was taking notes, which made his friend feel annoyed.

SW 7 : “Agung ki, ngrusui wae.”(*Agung ni mengganggu saja*) [Agung is just annoying] (34)

SW8 : “Koe ki ngomong karo aku bayar sek utangmu!”(*Kamu ni ngomong sama aku bayar dulu hutangmu*) [You talk to me, you should to pay your debt first] (35)

SW9 : “Oalah le le utang kok dibahas.”[Oh... should be discussed the debt](36)

SW7 : “Asu, bajingan koe!” (*Anjing , bajingan kamu!*) [*Dog, you're bastard!*] (37)

Speeches (37) can be classified into approbation maxim. The speech was classified into the maxim of approbation because SW7 as a speaker was seen abusing his partner by saying a bad speech. Speech (37) is considered to violate the approbation maxim.

The theory used in this study is the theory of politeness according to Leech as seen from the maxim of politeness expressed by Leech as a reference. The concept of ‘politeness’ owes a lot to Goffman’s work (1955, 1967) about ‘face’. In social interaction, he presents the face to others and the faces of others. Goffman (as cited in Wardhaugh, 2006) says that we are obliged to protect our faces and the faces of others to the extent that every time we interact with other people we play a kind of mini-drama, a kind of ritual where each party is required to recognize that identity another claim for himself.

Furthermore, Brown & Levinson (1987) explain the politeness is a speaking system that is applied in interactions to maintain face. Maintaining here is so that the face does not get threatened or lose face. Brown and Levinson explain the central themes of rationality and face which are both universal traits of the speech actors. Rationality is the reasoning or logic of the means of purpose, whereas faces consist of positive faces and negative faces.

Politeness is studied in the context of language based on its use, which examines the forms of language expression used by speakers to achieve their communication goals. According to Leech, politeness is a strategy or a set of strategies used by speakers of a language to obtain various goals, such as establishing and maintaining harmonious relationships. Leech (1993) said the principle of politeness with its six maxims is a rule of

communication for expressing politeness. Politeness concerns the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor. The following six maxims are explained by Leech, (1) tact maxim; (2) maxim of generosity; (3) approbation maxim; (4) maxim of modesty; (5) agreement maxims or compatibility maxims; and (6) maxim of sympathy.

Based on the opinion of some experts above, it can be concluded that politeness is the procedure of the speaker in maintaining the face of the speech partner so that the communication objectives can be achieved. To obtain the communication objectives, it is necessary to have a strategy in speaking and communication in speaking must pay attention to the context.

In certain contexts, a person can also speak the impolite language because several factors cause it. Pranowo (in Chaer, 2010: 69) states that several factors cause a statement to be impolite. Some of the causes of impoliteness are direct criticism with harsh words, encouragement of the emotional sense of the speaker, protective of opinions, deliberately accusing the interlocutors, and deliberately cornering the speech partners.

Many similar studies have been carried out by previous researchers who are relevant to the research conducted by researchers which are published in international journals. First, research conducted by Mariani, (2016) which entitled *"Developing Students' Intelligent Character through Linguistic Politeness: The Case of English as a Foreign Language for Indonesian Students"*. Second, research conducted by Huang (2008) which entitled *"Politeness Principle in Cross-Culture Communication"*. Third, research conducted by Adel, (2016) *"A qualitative study of politeness strategies used by Iranian EFL learners in a class blog"*. Fourth, research conducted by Salom, (2009) *"Interacting with the Reader: Politeness Strategies in Engineering Research Article Discussions"*. Fifth, the research conducted by Comes, Joan, Borràs & Bazin (2015) *"Vocative Intonation Preferences are Sensitive to Politeness Factors"*.

The research conducted by researchers is a different study from the five international journals above. The difference lies in the subject, object, and place of research. The first difference can be seen from the research conducted by Nanik lies in the research model. Nanik's research is a classroom action research that aims to investigate the politeness of teachers and students. While the research that the researcher does is not classroom action research. The next difference is if there are speeches that are not polite the researcher also looks at what are the things that cause such impoliteness.

Furthermore, the second study conducted by Huang, (2008) his research is looking at how politeness strategies used by people who have different cultures, in this case, are important differences in politeness between Chinese and Western cultures. While the

research researchers looked more at the politeness of the students' language regardless of the ethnicity and culture of the student. Next, a third study conducted by Adel, (2016) looked at how the use of technology (blogs) can be used as a politeness strategy that is quite effective in forming emotional relationships between teachers and students. The fourth study conducted by Salom, (2009) is the use of politeness strategies in scientific writing to create solidarity and engagement with the scientific community. The last or fifth study conducted by Joan Borràs-Comes was to look at socio-pragmatic and situational factors and Catalan vocal intonation in politeness theory increasingly broadening our understanding of how politeness inferential meaning controls intonation variations in language.

Based on the five international journals which are relevant studies with this research conducted by the researcher there are some similarities. The similarity of this research with relevant research is to both study and use politeness theory to analyze how communication can work well between one individual with another. However, although they have similarities, of course, they also have some differences, those differences are seen from the subject of their research.

Based on the explanation above, the problem of this research can be focused on two things, namely: the politeness of students and teachers in terms of Leech politeness principle and the causes of students' and teachers' language impoliteness at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi, Riau.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods. According to Moleong, (2007) qualitative research is research experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, actions and others holistically and descriptively in the form of words and language in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods. Furthermore, related to ethnographic methods, Emzir, (2015) says that ethnography refers to social research that examines human behavior in everyday contexts and to understand their environment.

Sources of data in this study were students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi, Riau. The data in this study are the speech of students and teachers containing six maxims of politeness principles raised by Leech, (1993) Techniques of data collection are the most strategic step in research because the main purpose of research is to get the data. To collect the data, there are several techniques used in this study, namely: observation, recording and field notes techniques.

The data analysis technique of this research is based on the interactive technique of Miles and Huberman, (1992) Through this model, data analysis activities are carried out by using the following techniques, namely: (1) data analysis is carried out at the time of collection and after the data is collected. Then, the data is finished transcribed from spoken language to written language; (2) data reduction stage is the stage that includes the identification, classification, and coding of language politeness strategies and causes of impoliteness. Data analysis activities in this study began with the data reduction stage. At this stage, the process of identifying, classifying, sorting and coding the data is carried out. The identification process is carried out on students' speech acts; (3) the data presentation includes the reduced arrangement. The arranged data is presented in a table following the sub-focus of the problem under study, and (4) drawing conclusions or verification carried out on the interpretation of the data after it is presented.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Below will be presented several research findings related to students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi Regency, Riau.

1. The Language Politeness of Students and Teachers reviewed from the Leech's Principles of Politeness.

a. Tact Maxim

Based on data obtained in the field 20 utterances contain tact maxim. In this case, the maxim of tact is classified as a maxim which is quite widely used in teacher with student speech and student with other student speech. It can be seen from 101 speech data where 20 speeches belong to the tact maxim. Speeches that obey to the tact maxim are 17 utterances and those that violate the tact maxim are 3 utterances. It shows that speakers both students and teachers always try to maximize profits for other parties in speaking activities.

b. Maxim of Generosity

Based on data obtained in the field, 21 utterances contain a maxim of generosity. The number of utterances included in the maxim of generosity is greater than the tact maxim. Speeches that obey to the generosity maxim are 7 utterances and those that violate the generosity maxim are 14 utterances. This shows that speakers always try to maximize profits for themselves in speaking activities so that speakers are considered impolite.

c. Maxim of Approbation

Based on data obtained in the field by using some data provisioning techniques, 11 utterances contained a maxim of approbation. Speeches that obey the maxim of approbation amount to 4 utterances and utterances that violate the maxim of approbation totaling 7 utterances. It shows that there are still many speakers who have not tried to give awards to other parties in their speaking activities.

d. Maxim of Modesty

Based on data obtained in the field 8 utterances contain maxim of modesty. Speeches that obey the maxim of modesty are 5 utterances and those that violate the modesty maxim are 3 utterances. This shows that there are still many speech participants who have not tried to be humble in their speech activities because from 101 speech data, the author found only 8 utterances included in the maxim of modesty.

e. Maxim of Agreement

Based on the speech data that the authors analyzed from 101 speech data, 38 utterances were classified in the maxim of agreement. The number of agreement maxims was included in the maxims that were most widely used in the speech of students and teachers. Speeches that obey the maxims of agreement amounted to 28 utterances and utterances that violate the maxims of agreement amounting to 10 utterances, the high number of utterances that obey to agreement maxims shows that the speech participants are already able to foster mutual compatibility in their speech activities.

f. Maxim of Sympathy

Based on the results of the analysis conducted by the author, from 101 data that the author of the analysis turned out there were only 3 utterances that were classified as sympathy maxim. Speeches that obey the maxim of sympathy amounted to 2 utterances and those that violated the maxim of sympathy amounted to 1 utterance, at least the speech categorized in the maxim of sympathy showed that many speech participants had not been able to maximize the attitude of sympathy towards other parties in speaking activities.

2. The Factors of Language Impoliteness in Student and Teacher Speech

a. Direct Criticism with Abusive

Based on the data obtained in the field, 4 utterances are classified as the cause of language impoliteness in the critical factor directly with abusive words. According to the authors, the factors that caused language impoliteness occur because students do not pay attention to sentences that are appropriate to be spoken when wanting to give criticism or assessment both to fellow friends or to the teacher, students generally tend to say the criticism directly. This can be seen from the 4 causes that all come from the students.

b. Encouragement of the Speaker's Emotions

Based on the data obtained in the field, 12 utterances are the cause of language impoliteness in the factors of encouragement the emotion of the speaker, 6 causes originating from students, and 6 more causes originating from teachers. According to the writer that caused the teacher to speak impolitely is because many students lack interest in learning so that it causes emotions in the teacher. Meanwhile, which causes students to speak impolitely because of the influence of fellow students.

c. Protective of Against the Opinion

Based on data obtained in the field, 6 utterances cause language impoliteness in protection against the opinion factors. The cause of language impoliteness in the protection against the opinion factors occurs because many students are lazy in doing assignments so the teacher must try to maintain his opinion so that students want to do the assignment. Protective factors for this opinion 5 factors come from the teacher, and 1 factor comes from students.

d. Accidentally Accusing Interlocutors

Based on data obtained in the field, there is 1 utterance which is the cause of language impoliteness in the factor of deliberately accusing the interlocutor. According to the authors, the factors causing language impoliteness to occur because of the many activities that are less important students carried out during study hours such as looking right and left, pensive when learning, so it makes the teacher speak impolitely.

e. Deliberately Cornering the Interlocutors

Based on data obtained in the field, 15 utterances cause language impoliteness in deliberately cornering the speech partners. The factor that causes language impoliteness is due to a large number of utterances that are commanded spoken by the teacher or student so this makes the interlocutor helpless to refuse. The factors causing intentionally cornering these interlocutors are 9 factors that come from the teacher and 6 factors come from students.

Discussion

Based on the findings of research conducted on students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat Kuantan Singingi Riau District 101 utterances contained six maxims of politeness principles raised by Leech. Of the 101 utterances, 63 students and teachers who obey politeness and 38 utterances violated the six maxims of the politeness principle. Of the 38 utterances that were categorized as impolite, several factors were found to cause impoliteness. Factors causing impoliteness of students and teacher's speech are direct

criticism with harsh words, encouragement of the speaker's emotional sense, protective of opinions, deliberately accusing the interlocutor, and deliberately cornering the speech partner.

The dominance of the maxim of Leech politeness maxim compared to the violation violations found in the speech acts of students and teachers at SMAN 01, Land and Land Logistics in Kuantan Singingi Regency, Riau shows that students and teachers there are people who are classified as polite. The politeness of students and teachers is a reflection of the formation of good character in the school environment. The findings of this study are in line with the findings of Ristiyani, 2016; Wahidah, 2017; Adriana, 2014 which shows that by adhering to the principle of politeness in each thimble can function as a means of character formation for the successful formation of the character of children throughout the country, and as an effort to build a foundation for the formation of a prosperous and noble nation civilization.

The discovery of several violations of politeness of Leech in SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi Riau Regency was influenced by several factors, namely direct criticism with harsh words, encouragement of the emotion of the speaker, protective of opinions, deliberately accusing the interlocutor, and deliberately cornering the speech partner. These factors cause some speeches of students and teachers to be impolite. This finding is in line with the findings of Rahardi & Dharma, 2013; Rahardi, 2017 who discovered many impoliteness factors, such as carelessness, playing with faces, harassing faces, threatening faces and disappearing faces.

CONCLUSION

From the results and discussion in this study, it can be concluded that students and teachers at SMAN 01 Logas Tanah Darat, Kuantan Singingi Riau Regency can already be categorized politely in speaking. This can be seen from the dominance of Leech's politeness maxim of Leech compared to his violations. This is a reflection of the formation of good character in the school environment. Furthermore, the discovery of violations of Leech politeness maxims committed by students and teachers was also motivated by several factors, namely direct criticism with harsh words, encouragement of the speaker's emotional emotions, protective of opinions, deliberately accusing the interlocutor, and deliberately cornering the speech partner.

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