

Religious Message in Yusuf Estes' Public Lecture *The Universal Messages of Islam* (A Study of Politeness Strategies)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze politeness strategies and find out the religious message in Yusuf Estes' public lecture *The Universal Message of Islam* by using Brown and Levinson's theory. Brown and Levinson classified four politeness strategies namely; positive politeness, negative politeness, off record, and bald on record. This study used the descriptive qualitative method. The data for this study were taken from utterances of Yusuf Estes in his public lecture "the universal message of Islam". The data were collected from searching for the audiovisual of Yusuf Estes' public lecture, downloading, watching, reading, classifying, selecting, and coding the data. Then, the religious message contained in the expression of Yusuf Estes can increase knowledge as well as a reminder about the life of a servant based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. Then, the religious message contained in the expression of Yusuf Estes can increase knowledge so that it leads the servant to live based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Keywords: *public lecture, politeness strategies, religious message*

INTRODUCTION

Politeness is the way people interact and behave in society. In this case, the speaker should use politeness so that the people who are talking with him/her, which is the hearer, feel respected, valued, and not offended by what the speaker says. In line with Yule (1998: 60), politeness is defined as a way to show awareness of another person's public self-image. Cruse (2006: 131) states that politeness is a matter of minimizing the negative effects of what one says on the feelings of others and maximizing the positive effects. It means that a speaker must try to determine the choice of words in expressing ideas so that the listener can properly accept what the speaker is saying.

Politeness strategies are the methods a person employs to convey her/his speech in such a way that what she/he conveys is heard politely by the listener. Politeness strategies are developed to save the listener's face (Brown and Levinson: 1987). The term 'face' in the statement refers to an individual's respect for himself or herself, whether in a public or private setting. Politeness strategies, in this sense, serve to save the listener's face when he or she

wants to say something. It means that being polite involves understanding the other person's feelings. It also means using awareness of other people's faces. In addition, everyone should regard the face as a fundamental need to know each other's desires. When someone feels comfortable, there will be a good relationship between them. Within this study, the writer would like to look out more clearly about the use of politeness strategies in a public lecture. A public lecture is a speech that is open to the public. In general, public lectures are attended by audiences from various social backgrounds. Therefore, a politeness strategy is needed to soften the language argument so that it does not sound harsh to the listener, shows respect for the audience, and reduces facial threats that may occur.

The writer assumed that there are politeness strategies in Yusuf Estes' public lecture because, based on the article of "Buchtelite", when Yusuf Estes spoke, he welcomed the other non-Muslims. Besides, he usually uses humor and informality to make the audience in the room feel comfortable. For example, in his public lecture entitled *The Universal Message of Islam*, Yusuf Estes said to his audience, "It makes me feel good to see it that action activity and this enthusiasm". The sentence shows that Yusuf Estes uses Politeness strategies in his public lecture. The writer chose Politeness strategies from Yusuf Estes' public lecture entitled *The Universal Messages of Islam* on 24th April 2010 as the unit of analysis because the writer finds that there are kinds of politeness strategies that have not been revealed yet used by Yusuf Estes; therefore the writer is present to reveal those problems. Besides that, the aim is to see how the politeness strategy applied by Yusuf Estes keeps the hearer's face and attracts attention to make the audience feel at ease when attending the public lecture he delivered. Yusuf Estes is a former Christian preacher who converted to Islam. Before converting to Islam, he constantly invited people to enter his religion. However, after he converted to Islam, he also became a speaker who always invited people to Islam. He frequently appears as a guest presenter and keynote speaker at various Islamic events. One of those things is that he is frequently invited to speak at public lectures in various countries.

The writer chose Yusuf Estes' public lecture because of two reasons. The first is because Yusuf Estes is a Muslim speaker known for his character that is always humorous and friendly when speaking; of course, this is related to politeness strategies, and it is pretty important to know what strategies he uses when speaking. The second reason is that the data taken from audiovisuals is suitable for conducting this research. This study is important

because it relates to the daily needs of a society where talking and interacting are human needs as social beings. When someone talks to other people, they must be polite and avoid coercion, therefore by doing this research, it is beneficial for people to know how to behave when speaking, how to treat listeners comfortably when interacting and can also help others to avoid any conflicts that might occur and make a harmonious interaction. Therefore, this research is also necessary for readers because it can help them understand more about politeness strategies and guide them in making speeches that listeners easily accept.

This research is a follow-up study of Ummah (2018) about politeness strategies in the Q and A session of Yusuf Estes' public lectures. When doing the preliminary study, the previous researcher only examined politeness in the Q and A session of Yusuf Estes' speech. However, she did not examine the content of the speech. So, in this study, the researcher will focus on examining the politeness in the content of Yusuf Estes' speech and does not address the part of Q and A. Then, Yusuf Estes' utterances have not been studied in terms of politeness strategies that contain religious messages. Therefore, the writer decided to analyze politeness strategies that contain religious messages in the utterances of Yusuf Estes' public lecture.

In this study, the writer uses the politeness strategy theory by Brown and Levinson (1987). The author uses Brown and Levinson's theory compared to other theories because the theory supports this research. Then the theory is more detailed in the distribution of politeness strategies, making it easier for the writer to find the politeness strategies used by Yusuf Estes. This research focuses on analyzing the utterances of Yusuf Estes' public lecture entitled *The Universal Message of Islam* which contains politeness strategies. The writer limits the data that only contains religious messages. By doing this analysis, it will be found what politeness strategies Yusuf Estes uses when conducting public lectures so that public lectures can be followed comfortably by the audience. Besides that, we can reveal the religious messages behind the utterances of Yusuf Estes when he delivered a public lecture.

RESEARCH METHOD

Referring to the study's research questions and objectives, the researcher employed the descriptive qualitative method, which entails compiling and analyzing data gathered from a variety of sources relevant to the study. Descriptive qualitative research is "research that

describes phenomena in the form of words rather than numbers or measures." Wiersma (1995, p.12). Based on Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p.28), qualitative research data is collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. Furthermore, the writer must use all of their knowledge to thoroughly analyze the data. The writer explained the idea, opinion, argument, and analysis related to the topic in this study. The statement is also strengthened by the writer's use of Brown and Levinson's underlying politeness theory. Furthermore, the writer employs qualitative analysis to examine Yusuf Estes' use of politeness strategies and the religious message in his public lecture titled *The Universal Message of Islam* on 24th April 2010, at California State University, Fullerton.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

No	Data	Types	Religious Message
1	<i>Anyhow, we're here and we're having a good day. Are you having a good time? Ever having a good time? Allahu Akbar.</i>	Positive politeness strategies	Islam encouraged to praise the greatness of Allah for all the goodness that Allah has given us in the form of our gratitude to Allah.
		Strategy 1: Notice, attend to hearer (his interest, wants, needs, goods)	
2	<i>Now let's ask a Muslim what is Islam? Islam is peace brother we love everybody we're tolerant, no problem. Sorry, but that didn't work either.</i>	Negative politeness Strategies	The morals that are prescribed for Muslims to always be civilized when talking to other people, especially if we make mistakes to others, we should apologize.
		Strategy 4: Apologize	

Table 1. Politeness strategies and the religious message in Yusuf Estes' public lecture *The Universal Message of Islam*

Data 1



0:51-1:00

Yusuf Estes: *Anyhow, we're here and we're having a good day. Are you having a good time? Ever having a good time?*

Audience: *Yes (cheering and clapping)*

Yusuf Estes: *Allahu Akbar.*

The utterances above happened at 0:51 to 1:00 Yusuf Estes greeted the audience with a very enthusiastic intonation and this provoked the enthusiasm of the audience then he glorified

God when he saw the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of the audience by saying Allahu Akbar. It shows that Yusuf Estes has paid attention to the audience and satisfied the positive faces of the audience. Brown & Levinson (1987) stated that strategy 1: Notice, attend to the hearer (his interest, wants, needs, goods), the speakers should pay attention to the listener's state. It can be expressed in a variety of ways, including sympathy, concern, or even a compliment. The data is categorized as strategy 1 because the speaker: Notice, attend to hearer (his interest, wants, needs, goods) because this data indicates that the speaker paid attention to hearer or notice the hearer wants. The religious message of the statement above is to glorify God for all the goodness He has given by saying Allahu Akbar. Islam encouraged to praise the greatness of Allah for all the goodness that Allah has given us in the form of our gratitude to Allah. As Allah says in the following Qur'an, *"Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying). I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless pours on you) and never be ungrateful to Me"* (QS. Al- Baqarah 2:152).

Data 2



32:33 to 32:48

Yusuf Estes: Now let's ask a Muslim what is Islam? Islam is peace brother we love everybody we're tolerant, no problem. Sorry, but that didn't work either.

The utterances above happened at 32:33 to 32:48. Yusuf Estes used the word "sorry" when expressing his disapproval of the meaning of Islam. He expressed it with a low intonation to avoid the listener's negative face. Brown & Levinson (1987) stated, by apologizing, asking forgiveness, admitting impingement by doing FTA, the speaker expresses his reluctance to capitalize the hearer's negative face. The data is categorized as Strategy 4 (Apologize) because this data indicates that the speaker expresses his reluctance to capitalize on the hearer's negative face. The religious message from the statement above is about the morals that are prescribed for Muslims to always be civilized when talking to other people, especially if we make mistakes to others, we should apologize. One of the commands for

forgiveness in Islam is the following hadith. Abu Hurairah said, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: *"Whoever has done injustice to his brother, whether it concerns his honor or something else, then he should ask for it to be halal from him today, before the dinar and dirham are no longer useful (the Day of Judgment). (Later) if he has good deeds, it will be taken from him in proportion to his injustice. And if he has no good (anymore), it will be taken from the badness of the (oppressed) brother and then burdened on him."* (HR. Bukhari, 6534).

Based on the findings above, the writer expected to answer the objectives of the study, they were to describe how politeness strategies and religious message were used in Yusuf Estes' public lecture "The Universal Message of Islam" on 24th April 2010. This study focus in analyzing the utterance of Yusuf Estes' public lecture "the universal message of Islam" on 24th April 2010 under the theory of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) which contains a religious message. The politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987) consist of four strategies, Bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. Based on the findings above, the writer found 32 utterances which included into politeness strategies which contain religious messages, 25 utterances of positive politeness, 1 utterance of negative politeness, 2 utterance of off-record, and 4 utterances of bald on-record.

In the findings above, the writer also found 6 strategies from 15 strategies of positive politeness that contain religious message which reflected in Yusuf Estes utterances, they were strategy 1 (Notice attend to hearer (his interest, wants, needs, good)), strategy 5 (seek agreement), strategy 7 (joke), strategy 8 (use in group-identity marker), strategy 10 (offer, promise), strategy 13 (give (or ask for) reason), and strategy 15 (give gift to hearer (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperative). The writer also found 1 strategy from 15 strategies of negative politeness that contain religious messages which could be reflected in the utterances of Yusuf Estes that is on strategy 6 (apologize). Then the writer found 1 strategy from 15 strategies off-record that contain a religious message which could be reflected in the utterances of Yusuf Estes that is on strategy 7 (contradiction). And the last, the writer found 1 strategy from 8 strategies of bald on record that contain religious messages which could be reflected in the utterances of Yusuf Estes that is on strategy 6 (Sympathetic advice or warnings). Moreover the religious message contained in this research is taken based on ideas

related to Yusuf Estes's utterance which contains religious elements and is supported by arguments from the Qur'an and authentic hadith.

CONCLUSIONS

The writer examined Yusuf Estes Public Lecture *The Universal Message of Islam*. After describing and analyzing the public lecture, the writer can conclude that there are politeness strategies and the religious message in Yusuf Estes' public lecture. From the analysis there are 32 data, the writer found four politeness strategies, namely; positive politeness, negative politeness, off record, and bald on record. There are 25 data of positive politeness, 1 data of negative politeness, 2 data of off-record, and 4 data of bald on-record. Then, the religious message contained in the expression of Yusuf Estes can increase knowledge as well as a reminder about the life of a servant based on the Qur'an and Sunnah. Then, the religious message contained in the expression of Yusuf Estes can increase knowledge so that it leads the servant to live based on the Qur'an and Sunnah.

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