

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides a brief overview on the aspects of politeness strategies. In addition, the writer presents some previous related studies. All theories are used to assist her in answering the research questions.

2.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a way of investigating how sense can be made of certain texts even when, from a semantic viewpoint, the text seems to be either incomplete or to have a different meaning to what is really intended, for example, when people consider a sign seen in a children's wear shop window: "Baby Sale - lots of bargains". People know without asking that there are no babies for sale - that what is for sale are items used for babies. Pragmatics allows us to investigate how this "meaning beyond the words" can be understood without ambiguity. The extra meaning is there, not because of the semantic aspects of the words themselves, but because people share certain contextual knowledge with the writer or speaker of the text (Campsall, 2011).

Pragmatics studies have related to many subjects, one of them is politeness which the writer of this research wants to find more about its strategies used. According to Yule (1996: 59), a linguistic interaction is necessarily a social interaction. In order to make sense of what is said in an interaction, people have to look at various factors which relate to social distance and closeness. Some of

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A linguistic interaction is necessarily a social interaction. In order to make sense of what is said in an interaction, people have to look at various factors which relate to social distance and closeness. Some of these factors are established prior to an interaction and hence are largely external factors. They typically involve the relative status of the participants, based on social values tied to such things as age and power. People take part in a wide range in interactions where the social distance determined by the external factors is dominant. However there are other factors, such as amount of imposition or degree of friendliness, which are often negotiated during an interaction. These are internal to the interaction and can result in the initial social distance changing, and being marked as less, or more, during its course. These internal factors are typically more relevant to participants whose social relationships are actually in the process of being worked out within the interaction. Both types' factors, external and internal, have an influence not only on what people say, but also on how people are interpreted. In many cases, the interpretations goes beyond what people might have intended to convey and include evaluations such as 'rude' and 'inconsiderate', or 'considerate' and 'thoughtful'. Recognizing the impact of such evaluations makes it very clear that more is being communicated than is said. The investigation of that impact is normally carried out in terms of politeness.

Politeness, in an interaction, can be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person's face (Yule, 1996: 60).

2.2. Face Threatening Acts (FTAs)

Brown and Levinson (1987: 65) stated that Face Threatening Act or FTA means an act that threatens the positive and negative face of the hearer. "If someone says something that represents a threat to another individual's expectations regarding self-image", it also can be described as FTA (Yule, 1996: 61). For instance, when someone is using insult terms such as 'stupid', 'bastard', and 'jerk' to another person is an impingement on his self-image, which causes a threat to the hearer's positive face, which wants to be appreciated by everyone.

In general, when people disagree with someone's opinion it causes a threat to his positive face, as it means that people indicate that he is wrong about something. Meanwhile, when people request someone to refrain from doing something, it threatens the negative face of the hearer, who expects to have freedom of action. Also, when people ask someone to lend them money, it causes a threat on that person's negative face as people have imposed themselves on him, that his want to be free from being imposed has been encroached. Therefore, if people threaten someone's positive or negative face, but they do not mean it, then they need to minimize it by applying politeness strategies as suggested by Brown and Levinson.

2.2. Politeness Strategies

Politeness strategies are strategies that are used to minimize or avoid the face threatening acts that a speaker makes. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 68-69), politeness strategies consists of bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. Bald on record consists of two strategies, positive politeness consists of fifteen strategies; negative politeness consists of ten strategies, and off record consists of fifteen strategies. The relation between the strategies can be seen in the diagram below:

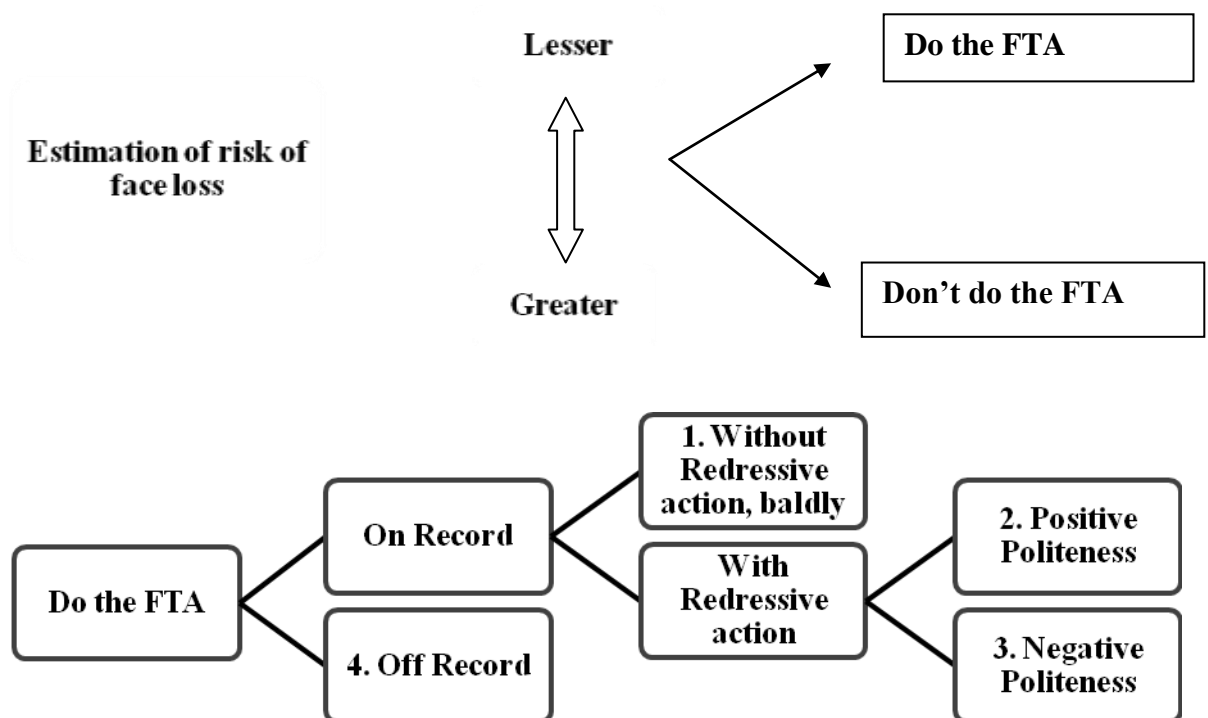


Figure 1: Circumstances determining choice of strategy

(Taken from Brown and Levinson, 1987)

2.2.1. Categories of Politeness Strategies

The main theory that the writer chooses is Brown and Levinson's *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (1987: 94-227). In general, there are four categories namely bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. Each category is described below.

1. Bald on Record

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:94-98), the prime reason for using bald on record is when the speaker wants to do the face threatening acts with maximum efficiency more than to satisfy hearer's face, even to any degree. Bald on record has two classes: those where face threatening is not minimized, where face is ignored or irrelevant, and those where in doing the FTA, speaker minimizes face threats by implication. This bald on record consists of two strategies as shown below:

a. Strategy 1: Cases of non-minimization of the face threat

If speaker and hearer both know that maximum efficiency is important, no face redress is necessary. In cases of great urgency or desperation, redress would decrease the communicated urgency. Speaker provides metaphorical urgency for emphasis. For example:

Listen, I've got an idea...

Look, the point is this: ...

Speaker is powerful and does not fear retaliation or non-cooperation from hearer (speaker's want to satisfy hearer's face is small). For example:

Bring me wine, Jeeves.

Speaker does care about hearer, so that no redress is required. For example:

Careful! He's a dangerous man. (warning hearer against someone who could threaten him)

b. Strategy 2: Cases of FTA-oriented Bald-on-record usage

This strategy is oriented to face. Usually, it is used in 1) welcomings (or post-greetings), where speaker insists that hearer may impose on his negative face, for example: *Come in, it's okay. I'm not busy*, in 2) farewells, where speaker insists that hearer may transgress on his positive face by talking his leave, for example: *Okay, I'm stay here, you go*, in 3) offers, where speaker insists that hearer may impose on speaker's face, for example: *Leave it to me (I'll do it)*.

2. Positive Politeness

Positive politeness is used to satisfy the positive face of the hearer by approving or including him as a friend or as a member of an in-group. According to Yule (1996: 64), a positive politeness strategy “leads the requester to inquire for a common goal, and even friendship”. The tendency to use positive politeness is to emphasize closeness between speaker and hearer. It can be seen as a “solidarity strategy”. This strategy is usually used by people who have known one another in order to indicate common ground and solidarity in which speaker shares hearer's wants. Thus, the usage of positive politeness is not only to redress the FTA, but also to indicate that speaker wants to come closer to hearer. Positive

politeness contains fifteen strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 101-129) as seen below:

a. Strategy 1: Notice, attend to hearer (his interest, wants, needs, goods)

Speaker pays attention to any aspects of hearer's condition (noticeable changes, remarkable possessions, etc). For example:

Goodness you cut your hair! (When someone cuts her hair)

What a wonderful car this is! Where did it come from? (When someone buys a car)

b. Strategy 2: Exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with hearer)

Speaker uses exaggerate intonation, stress, and other aspects of prosodic to show interest, approval, and sympathy to hearer. For example:

How fantastic your house is!

He looked incredibly dirty.

c. Strategy 3: Intensify interest to hearer

Speaker includes hearer into the middle of the events being discussed to intensify the interest of speaker's contribution by "making a good story". For example:

I came to her house, and what do you think I see? A huge mess over the kitchen, the clothes are scattered all over the room, and the phone's off the hook...

Speaker uses of directly quoted speech such as the usage of tag questions that draw hearer as a participant into that conversation. For example: *You know?*

Speaker exaggerates facts to overstate. For example: There were *a million* of people in the Co-op tonight!

d. Strategy 4: Use in-group identity markers

- 1) *In-group usages of address forms*, it is to express such in-group membership include into generic names and terms of address. For example: *honey, buddy, sweetheart, pals, guys, Blondie*.
- 2) *Use of jargon or slang*, where speaker may evoke all the shared associations and attitudes that both of them have toward an object. For example: lend us two *bucks* then, *wouldja pal?*
- 3) *Contraction and ellipsis*, where speaker and hearer must share some knowledge about the situation to understand the utterances, which is marked by ellipsis and contraction. For example: *mind if I smoke?*

e. Strategy 5: Seek agreement

Repetition, speaker stresses emotional agreement, interest, and surprise by conversation, to show that he has heard correctly what was said and to satisfy hearer. For example:

A: Ann went to Paris this week.

B: *To Paris!*

When someone is telling a story, the addressee often utters brief agreement after the speaker has spoken one or two sentences to indicate emphatic agreement.

For example:

A: I won the championship.

B: *Really?*

f. Strategy 6: Avoid disagreement

Token disagreement, speaker pretends to agree by twisting his utterances in order to hide disagreement that is to respond ‘yes’ rather than ‘no’. For example:

A: So they haven’t heard a word, huh?

B: *Not a word. Not at all. Except Clara maybe.*

Hedging opinions, speaker may choose to be vague for his own opinions, so as not to be seen to disagree. For example: *I have absolutely no idea.*

g. Strategy 7: Presuppose/raise/assert common ground

- 1) *Personal-center switch*, speaker to hearer speaks as if hearer was speaker or hearer’s knowledge was equal to speaker’s knowledge. For example: I just am sad, *aren’t I?*
- 2) *The usage of tag questions* is to claim hearer’s knowledge of situation, where hearer couldn’t possibly know. For example: I have a great time, *you know*, it’s very nice to go with him and people have same hobbies, *you know*, he’s good.
- 3) *Place switch*, the use of here and this rather than there and that seems to express increased participation or empathy. For example: *This* was a lovely party VERSUS *that* was a lovely party.
- 4) *Presuppose knowledge of hearer’s wants*, tastes, habits, etc and to redress the imposition of FTA. For example: *Don’t you wanna drink?* (Offers)

- 5) *Presuppose familiarity in speaker-hearer relationship*, the use of familiar address forms is to presuppose that the addressee is 'familiar' and soften the threat of FTA. For example: Look, *you're a pal of mine*, so how about ...
- 6) *Presuppose hearer's knowledge*, the use of in-group codes (language, dialect, and jargon, local terminology) to show that hearer understands and shares the associations of that code. For example: I watched *High Life* yesterday and ...
- 7) The use of pronoun where the referent hasn't been made clear. For example: Oh, *this is* wonderful (complimenting a skirt)

h. Strategy 8 : Joke

It is a technique for putting hearer 'at ease' or minimizing an FTA or requesting. For example:

Mind if I *tackle* those choc chips now?

How about lending me this old *heap of junk*? (hearer's new Cadillac)

i. Strategy 9: Assert or presuppose speaker's knowledge of and concern for hearer's wants

It is a way to indicate that speaker and hearer are cooperators and to put pressure on hearer to cooperate with speaker. For example:

Look I know you want the car back at 5, so shouldn't I go to town now?

j. Strategy 10: Offer, promise

To redress the potential threat of some FTA, speaker claims that whatever hearer wants, speaker will help to obtain, to show speaker's good intentions in satisfying hearer's positive faces wants, even if it is false. For example:

I'll drop by sometimes next week.

I'll come to your house sometimes.

k. Strategy 11: Be optimistic

It is another type of cooperative strategy. Speaker assumes that hearer wants speaker's wants for speaker (or for both) and will help him to obtain them.

For example;

I've come to borrow a cup of flour.

You'll lend me your lawnmower for the weweekend, won't you?

l. Strategy 12: Include both speaker and hearer in the activity

Speaker uses an inclusive 'people' for, when speaker actually means 'you' or 'me', to call upon the cooperative assumptions and thereby redress FTA. For example:

Let's stop for a bite. (i.e. I want a bite, so let's stop)

Let's have a cookie then. (i.e. Me)

m. Strategy 13: Give (or ask for) reasons

Speaker gives reason as to why he wants what he wants and assumes (via optimism) that if there are no good reasons why hearer shouldn't or can't cooperate, he will. For example:

Why don't people go to the beach!

Why don't people try those cookies!

n. Strategy 14: Assume or assert reciprocity

Speaker asks hearer to cooperate with him by giving evidence of habit or obligations obtained between speaker and hearer. Thus speaker may say, in effect, "I'll do X for you if you do Y for me" to soften his FTA. By pointing to the

reciprocal right (or habit) of doing FTA to each other, speaker may soften his FTA by negating the debt aspects and/or the face threatening aspect of speech acts such as criticism and complaints. For example:

Well, I'll keep quiet, if you keep it quiet about me keeping me quiet.

o. Strategy 15: Give hints to hearer (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)

Speaker may satisfy hearer's positive face wants (that speaker wants hearer's wants, to some degree) but actually satisfying some of hearer's wants. Hence people have the classic positive politeness action of gift-giving, not only tangible gifts (with demonstrate that speaker knows some hearer's wants and wants them to be fulfilled), but human-relation wants such as those illustrated in many of the outputs considered above-the wants to be liked, admired, cared about, understood, listened to, and so on.

3. Negative Politeness

Negative politeness is redressive action addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded. It is the heart of respect behavior, just as positive politeness is the kernel of 'familiar' and 'joking' behavior (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 129-210). The main focus for using this strategy is to assume that speaker may be imposing by the hearer, and intruding on their space. Therefore, these automatically assume that there might be some social distance or awkwardness in the situation.

According to Brown and Levinson, there are ten negative strategies:

a. Strategy 1: Be conventionally indirect

In this strategy a speaker is faced with opposing tensions: the desire to give hearer an 'out' by being indirect, and the desire to go on record. For example:

Can you pass the salt?

Why for God's sake are you painting your house purple?

b. Strategy 2: Question, hedge

This strategy enjoins the speaker to question or hedge such assumptions.

For example:

I suppose that Harry is coming.

I wonder if (you know whether) John went out.

c. Strategy 3: Be pessimistic

This strategy gives redress to hearer's negative face by explicitly expressing doubt that the conditions for the appropriateness of speaker's speech act obtain. For example:

Could you jump over that five-foot fence?

I don't imagine there'd be any hope of you.

d. Strategy 4: Minimize the imposition

This strategy indirectly may pay hearer defense. For example:

I just want to ask you if I can borrow a tiny bit of paper.

I just dropped by for a minute to ask if you...

e. Strategy 5: Give deference

Speaker humbles himself, his capacities, and possessions, namely that which satisfies hearer's wants to be treated as superior. For example:

People look forward very much to dining with you.

Oh yes thank you.

f. Strategy 6: Apologize

By apologizing for doing an FTA, the speaker can indicate his reluctance to impinge on hearer's negative face and thereby partially redress that impingement. For example:

I'm sure you must be very busy, but...

I hope this isn't going to bother you too much.

g. Strategy 7: Impersonalize speaker and hearer

One way to indicate that speaker does not want to impinge on hearer so to phrase the FTA as if the agent were other than speaker, or at least possibly not speaker or not speaker alone, and the addressee were other than hearer, or only inclusive of hearer. This results in a variety of ways of avoiding the pronouns 'I' and 'You'. For example:

It seems to me that...

It is not possible you do that.

h. Strategy 8: State the FTA as a general rule

One way of dissociating speaker and hearer from the particular imposition in the FTA, and hence a way of communicating that speaker does not want to

impinge but is merely forced to by circumstances, is to state the FTA as an instance of some general social rule, regulation, or obligation. For example:

Passengers will please refrain from flushing toilets on the train.

I'm sorry, but late-comers cannot be seated till the next interval.

i. Strategy 9: Nominalize

In English, degrees of negative politeness (or at least formality) run hand in hand with degrees of nouniness, that is, formality is associated with the noun end of the continuum. For example:

People urgently request your cooperation.

It is my pleasure to be able to inform you...

j. Strategy 10: Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebteding hearer

Speaker can redress an FTA by explicitly claiming his indebtedness to hearer, or by disclaiming any indebtedness of hearer, by means of expressions such as for requests and for offers. For example:

I'd be eternally grateful if you would ... (for request)

I could easily do it for you. (for offers)

4. Off Record

Off record is an indirect politeness strategy in which the speaker says something that can be interpreted in more than one way (Brown and Levinson, 1987:211-227). A communicative act is done off record if it is done in such a way that it is not possible to attribute only one clear communicative intention to the

act. In other words, the actor leaves himself an ‘out’ by providing himself with a number of defensible interpretations; he cannot be held to have committed himself to just one particular interpretation of his act. Thus if a speaker wants to do FTA, but wants to avoid the responsibility for doing it, he can do it off record, and leave it up to the addressee to decide how to interpret it.

According to Brown and Levinson, there are fifteen off record strategies:

a. Strategy 1: Give hints

If speaker says something that is not explicitly relevant, he invites hearer to search for an interpretation of the possible relevance. The basic mechanism here is a violation of the Maxim of Relevance.

For example:

It’s cold in here. (i.e. Shut the window)

What a boring movie! (i.e. Let’s leave)

b. Strategy 2: Give association clues

A related kind of implicature triggered by relevance violations is provided by mentioning something associated with the act required of hearer, either by precedent in speaker-hearer’s experience or by mutual knowledge irrespective of their interactional experience. For example:

My house isn’t very far away. There’s the path that leads to my house. (i.e. Please come to visit me)

Are you going to market tomorrow? There’s a market tomorrow, I suppose. (i.e. Give me a ride there)

c. Strategy 3: Presuppose

A third set of clues to speaker's intent is related in a different way to the Relevance maxim. An utterance can be almost wholly relevant in context, and yet violate the Relevance Maxim just at the level of presuppositions.

For example:

I washed the car again yesterday.

John is in the bathtub yet again.

d. Strategy 4: Understate

Speaker understates what he actually wants to say. In the case of a criticism, speaker avoids the lower points of the scalar predicate, such as: tall, nice, good, and in the case of a compliment, or admission, speaker avoids the upper points. For example:

A: What do you think of Jim?

B: Nothing wrong with him (c.i. I don't think he's very good) (The understatement of criticism)

e. Strategy 5: Overstate

Speaker exaggerates or chooses a point on a scale, which is higher than the real situation. For example:

There were *a million of people* in the Co-op tonight! (It could convey an excuse of being late)

You *never* doing washing up. (convey a criticism)

f. Strategy 6: Use tautologies

By uttering a tautology, speaker encourages hearer to look for an informative understanding of the non-informative utterance. For example;

Your clothes belong where you clothes belong. My clothes belong where my clothes belong. Look upstairs! (criticism)

g. Strategy 7: Use contradictions

By stating two things that contradict each other, speaker shows that he cannot be telling the truth and encourages hearer to look for an interpretation that reconciles the two contradictory things. For example:

A: Are you upset about that?

B: Well, yes and no.

h. Strategy 8: Be ironic

By saying the opposite of what he means, speaker can indirectly express intended meaning. For example:

Jim's real genius. (after Jim has done twenty stupid things in a row)

Lovely neighbor, eh? (in a slum)

i. Strategy 9: Use metaphors

There is a possibility for the use of metaphor by off record, which marked with hedging particles such as: real, regular, sort of, as it were that make their status explicit. For example:

Jim's a real fish. (c.i. he drinks/swims/is slimy/is cold-blooded like a fish)

The main thing is that (he) 'eats kicks'. (let him suffer)

j. Strategy 10: Use rhetorical questions

Speaker asks a question with no intention of obtaining an answer; it may be used to do FTA. For example:

How was I to know ... (an excuse, c.i. I wasn't)

What can I say? (nothing, it's so bad) (a criticism)

k. Strategy 11: Be ambiguous

Speaker achieves a purposeful ambiguity through metaphor. For example:

Jim's a pretty sharp cookie. (it could be either a compliment or insult)

l. Strategy 12: Be vague

Speaker goes off record with an FTA by being vague about who the object of the FTA is, or what the offence is. For example:

Looks like someone may have had too much to drink. (vague understatement)

I'm going ... you know ... where...

m. Strategy 13: Overgeneralize

Speaker utters a rule instantiation which may leave the object of the FTA vaguely off record. Hearer then has the choice of deciding whether the general rule applies to him. For example:

Mature people sometimes help do the dishes.

A penny saved is a penny earned.

n. Strategy 14: Displace hearer

“Speaker goes off record as to whom the target for his FTA is, or he may pretend to address the FTA to someone whom it wouldn't threaten and hope the

real target will see that the FTA is meant at him” (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 226). For example:

A secretary in an office asks another – but with negative politeness – to pass the stapler, in circumstances where a professor is much nearer to the stapler than the other secretary. His face isn’t threatened, and he can choose to do it himself as a bonus ‘free gift’

o. Strategy 15: Be incomplete, use ellipsis

Speaker purposely does not finish his utterance and leave an FTA half undone, thus leaves the implicature ‘hanging in the air’, just as with rhetorical questions. For example:

Well, I didn’t see you ...

Well, if one’s leaves one’s tea on the wobbly table...

When people start or begin a communication with others, they have to pay attention on maintaining relationship with others. People have to consider their communications are based on how close the relationship status that they have with others, which on the theory it is called as social distance.

2.3. Social Distance

Green (1996: 151) says that although many people associate the notion of politeness exclusively with formal and informal behavior, both Lakoff and Brown and Levinson take the ways which intimates are expected to show their regard to each other as a natural extension of formal and informal politeness principles that govern interpersonal interaction between non-intimates.

Brown and Levinson (1987: 17-22) attempt to characterize the factors which make one rule or strategy more appropriate than the others, allowing a large power, small distance relationship (e.g. parent-child) to count the same as the medium power, medium distance (e.g. doctor-patient) in determining that the informal, negative politeness strategy of offering options is called for. Then, Brown and Levinson's scheme predicts that in situation where there is a large power differential between the participants, they will use different politeness strategy. Speakers, even a particular speaker and addressee, may differ in their respective estimates of social distance between them. In addition, speakers apply the various politeness strategies and tactics in different ways according to their desire to change that social distance, their beliefs about what kind of situation a certain behavior is appropriate to, and finally according to their personal style.