

POLITENESS STRATEGIES OF REFUSALS TO REQUESTS BY AMBONESE COMMUNITY

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Abstract: The study aims to determine the politeness strategies of refusal used by the Ambonese in refusing requests, and to determine the affects of social relationship towards politeness strategies of refusal used by the Ambonese in refusing requests. The data were taken from 25 respondents of Ambonese in Namlea sub-district, Buru Regency of Maluku Province by recording the conversations in any situation and taking note to remember every little thing that would be happened between the interlocutors. The analysis was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method. The results showed that Ambonese people more likely to combine more than two or three strategies in refusing requests. In the interaction between strangers, Ambonese people tend to use positive politeness strategy such as expressing gratitude which is combined by addressed form, reason and offer new solutions. In solidarity politeness system such as intimate relationship, Ambonese people tend to combine addressed form, reason, promise, joke or offer new solution as sub-strategies of positive politeness strategy. In hierarchical politeness system, Ambonese people tend to use negative politeness strategy such as apology, give deference and be conventionally indirect.

Keywords: refusal, politeness strategy, Ambonese people.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In human communication or interaction, there is a combination of cooperation and understanding, because success in communication depends on the ability to recognize speakers' communicative intentions and pragmatic meaning in speaking or writing to convey the purpose from the speakers to the hearers. But in conveying the intent or purpose, every person has their own different way depend on a variety of social factors and speech situation.

In announce a speech, a person has a certain purpose, so it is called speech act. As noted by Tanck (2003), that in order to achieve a goal of communication, speakers use various speech acts Include Searle's categories of speech act such as; representatives, directives, commissives, expressive, and declarations. In addition, in the categories of speech acts, there are some specific measures such as; apologies, requests,

complaints, and refusals (Kasper & Rose, 2001 in Sattaret al., 2011). One type of speech act that is very vulnerable to the occurrence of gaps and misunderstandings between individuals is refusal speech act. This act is performed by the speaker when making any utterance. It is seen that when a person refuses someone straightaway, that person feel awkward because it sometimes seems as an insult of that person.

Refusal is referred to a face-threatening act in speech acts. It is a sensitive situation in the communication process, which might create a positive or a negative affect over the communication (Nelson et al., 2002). According to Brown & Levinson (1987), each person has Face that must be tended, because the refusal itself is an action that can threaten a hearer's face, called Face Threatening Act (FTA). Therefore, a form of refusal or rejection should be expressed politely, so it can be acceptable for the hearer and to minimize misunderstanding in communication process. Due to the essence of politeness theories are we change our language based on who is the hearer and some involvement factors.

Studies about refusal have been carried out by some researchers, including Ebsworth & Kodama (2011), Nadaret al (2006), Al-Kahtani (2005), etc. Turnbull & Saxton (1997), stated that the refusal of a request in English is often stated, for instance: "Sorry, I'd love to, but I'm working then so I do not think I can make it. I could do it next week." So it can be said that there are a series of refusals in English such as; apologizing (Sorry), expressing the sympathy (I'd love to), reveals the reason (but I'm working then), revealed the inability (so I do not think I can make it), and make an offer (I could do it next week). Nadaret al (2006), in their study about "*Penolakan Dalam Bahasa Inggris dan Bahasa Indonesia*" found that refusal in English is already polite to refuse someone's request with short combination of speech acts, while the refusal in Indonesian language is used more combinations of speech acts that will be more polite to refuse someone's request.

In Ambonese context, the study about politeness strategies of refusals has yet to be ventured, specially focusing on the appearance of politeness in Ambonese culture. The researcher believes that Ambonese society (referred to the people in Maluku province generally) has their own way of politeness strategies in refusing requests.

Based on the introduction above, this study aims to determine the politeness strategies of refusals used by the Ambonese in refusing requests.

2. METHODS

In this research, the researcher used descriptive qualitative method. The data were taken from 25 respondents of Ambonese in Namlea sub-district, Buru Regency of Maluku Province. In collecting the data, the researcher used direct observation by recording the conversations in any situation and taking note to remember every little thing that would be happened between the interlocutors. In analyzing the data, the researcher identified the collected data that had been taken from the participants in terms of social relationship between the interlocutors such as intimacy, stranger, and hierarchy based on six models of politeness system by Yassi (2012), approaches. The researcher then classifies the politeness strategies which are formulated by Brown & Levinson (1987).

3. RESULTS

In this research, the researcher finds some linguistic form of politeness strategies of refusal to requests used by the Ambonese in different social relationship of interlocutors.

To deference politeness system in non-kin context (-P, +D, -K) for instance the interaction between two strangers below indicates that speakers tend to attempt respecting the hearers when refusing a request. It can be seen when the speakers use addressed form "ade", "abang/babang", and "sodara" which are combined with direct expression of refusal "seng" in refusing request even they do not know each other.

Examples:

(1) A: permisiabang, caca tolong bali katong pung kue dolo, katong adamo cari dana.

(Excuse me. Would you like to buy our cake, please? We are doing on fundraise)

B: **o seng, sengade, maaf e.**

(No, I am sorry)

In Deference politeness system in kin context (-P,+D,+K) for instance the interactions between distant families below show that Ambonese speakers tend to use positive politeness strategies such as joke, promise, addressed form and reason in refusing both requests.

Examples: (2) A: Antimo, beta deng se pungtas jua?

(Antimo, May I have your bag?)

B: **Ado Liliken e, satu-satunya di permukaan bumi saja itu e.**

(Oh, it is the only one in the world)

In Solidarity politeness system in non-kin context (-P,-D,-K) for instance The interaction between two friends in refusing request indicates that B as speaker tends to use positive politeness strategy to refuse a request of a such as a joke "Ado adakereni" which is combined with addressed form "bro", and followed by a promise "nanti tanggal muda jua, so tar lama lai".

Examples: (3) A: Bro, katong dudu-dudu bagini ada tahu isi ka.

(while sitting, could you serve us some tofu, please)

B: **Ado adakereini bro e, nanti tanggal muda jua, so tar lama lai**

(oh I am really poor now brother, maybe on the first date of month, it is already closer)

In Solidarity politeness system in kin context (-P,-D,+K) for instance the interactions among close family in refusing request indicates that a speaker who is younger refuses a request of addressee who is older by using positive politeness strategy such as offer of new solution, and give reason which is combined with addressed form.

Examples:(4) A: Yanti, piantar Onco do karumasaki.

(Yanti, could you take Onco to the hospital?)

B: Pamanjua, barang beta tako bale sandiri mem e.

(Could you ask Paman, because I am afraid to go back alone.)

In Hierarchical politeness system in non-kin context (+P, +D, -K) for instance the interaction between superior and inferior shows that the speakers tend to start the refusal by using negative politeness strategy such as apology which is followed by giving deference to indicate the respect of inferior to superior person. But this strategy is still not enough to minimize the hearer's face, so it is often combined by positive politeness strategy such give reason and offer new solution.

Examples: (5) A: pa Anto, tolong kase pa dengan a-ana pung nama dolo skarang.

(Mr. Anto, could you give me the list of students now, please?)

B: mohon maaf pa, beta balong ketika kang nama-nama itu, nanti beta antar di ruangan jua pa kalo so selesai.

(I am really sorry sir, I have not typed the list yet, I will bring it to your room if it has been done sir.)

In Hierarchical politeness system in kin context (+P, -D, +K) for instance the interactions between a father and a daughter indicate that a daughter refuses a request of her father by using negative politeness strategies such as be conventionally indirect which is combined with positive politeness strategy such as addressed form and give reason.

Example: (6) A: e..Ona, ator aba pungkartas-karta situ do?

(Ona, could you arrange my paper, please?)

B: sadiki lai do Aba, beta kase selesai akan gini do capat-capat.

(Wait a minute father, I am swabbing this up, I am going to finish it first)

4. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings above, Ambonese speakers are more likely to combine more than two or three strategies. It is accordance with Nadaret al. (2006), who stated that the refusal in English is already polite to refuse with short combination of speech

acts, while the refusal in Indonesian language is used more combinations of speech acts that will be more polite.

In deference politeness system for instance the interaction between strangers, Ambonese speakers tend to use positive politeness strategy to accentuate the closeness or relationship between participants such as expressing gratitude which is combined by addressed form, reason and offer new solutions. It is also supported in deference politeness system in kin context where Ambonese speakers tend to use a joke when refusing a request. Those data then show inconsistent with Scollon & Scollon (1995), who stated that the immediate consequence of the perception of deference politeness system will be the mitigation of FTAs by means of negative politeness strategy which is shown the social distance among the participants or off record strategies. While in refusing requests, Scollon and Scollon's statement is still effective where Ambonese speakers often combine negative politeness strategy such as give apology with bald on record strategy such as direct expressing of refusal and positive politeness strategy such as addressed form and reason.

In solidarity politeness system such as intimate relationship, Ambonese speakers tend to combine addressed form, reason, promise, joke, and offer new solution as sub-strategies of positive politeness strategy and bald on record strategy. It is in line with Scollon & Scollon (1995), who stated that the existence of deference politeness system allows individuals to perform their FTAs baldly on the record or using positive politeness strategies.

Other results also showed that in hierarchical politeness system, Ambonese speakers and probably the whole of Indonesian people tend to use negative politeness strategy in lower status such as apology, give deference and be conventionally indirect in refusing requests. The using of these strategies are parallel with Scollon & Scollon (1995), who stated that in hierarchical politeness system, in the need the individual of lower status feels to avoid FTAs, to perform them off the record or to compensate them by means of negative politeness strategy but the strategies are used differently when in a hierarchical politeness system in kin context where Ambonese speakers are more likely to use positive politeness strategy or bald on-record strategy.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the analysis of the data which have been presented above, the researcher would like to draw some conclusions on the politeness strategies of refusals to requests used by the Ambonese. They are: first, Ambonese speakers tend to combine more than two or three strategies in refusing requests. Second, Ambonese speakers tend to use positive politeness strategies such as using in-group identity marker (addressed form), reason, promise, joke, and offer new solution in refusing requests. Based on the conclusions above, the researcher would like to present some suggestions that it should be more researchers on politeness strategies of refusal used by another culture, because ultimately in cross-cultural communication, sometimes misunderstanding is existed between the interlocutors event in the same language but cannot convey the same purpose in communication. The researcher also hopes to the next researcher to analyze other linguistic features which also work in study of pragmatic and sociolinguistics

field. Moreover, the research hopes that there will be more studies which investigates deeper and accurately.

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