

## THE REALIZATION OF LEECH'S MAXIMS IN THE STUDENTS' INTERACTIONS

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### Abstract

This research aimed to identify the types of politeness maxims realized by the students in the classroom interactions. This research used a qualitative method. The subject of this research was the students from regular 001 2017 in the 5<sup>th</sup> semester in the English Department at the University of Jambi. There are 29 students as the participants of this study that consists of 28 females and 1 male. There are two research instruments in collecting the data, such as classroom observation and audio recording. Besides, the steps of analyzing the data were transcribed, identification, classification, and data reduction. The findings of this research were six politeness maxims realized by the students. In this case, the students have realized six politeness maxim proposed by Leech. Besides, the most maxim realized by the students is tact maxim and the fewer maxims realized by the students are generosity and modesty maxim. So, the students have realized the maxims 23 times in 4 classes.

**Keywords:** *Politeness Principles, Students' Interactions.*

### INTRODUCTION

Each social group has uniqueness. One of the uniqueness is the way they communicate with others. Communication is a process of delivering information from a person to another person. We communicate with others while we make sense of ourselves, and our ideas (Blackwell, 2015:245). In the daily activity, people often use verbal communication with others because most activities need communication. People usually communicate with others at home, office, market, and school. By communicating, people can share information, news, and issues. Therefore, communication has an important role to share information with others in any situation.

Ideally, communication happens everywhere, one of the theory is in the classroom. Commonly, students do communication with friends and teachers to share information and though. There are the hearer (H) and the speaker (S) when people communicate with others. According to Leech (2014:56), communication is therefore concerned with intentions or goals (from S's point of view) and inferences about intentions or goals (from H's point of view). In this case, the communication in the classroom has the uniqueness because each group of students has their way to realize politeness in their communication. Sometimes, the students' communication fails because there is a misunderstanding between the students as the speaker and the hearer. In order to make the communication work effectively, politeness principles have an important role in communication because politeness can make the speaker's utterances being easy to understand by the hearer.

As a part of the pragmatic features, polite beliefs expressed by the speaker are Beliefs favorable to the other person, whereas impolite Beliefs are beliefs unfavorable to others (Leech, 2014:34). In communication, both the speakers and the hearers often have a problem. The speakers have the problem in delivering effective information and it makes the hearer cannot understand the

point from the speaker. In this case, politeness principles have an important role in making effective communication. So, the students who want to share their thought in communication, it can be easy to understand because of using politeness principles.

Classroom is one of the places to share information and thought. In the classroom, the politeness principle has an important role to make communication understandable. By using politeness, the success of communication is higher rather than not using politeness in the speaker's utterances. The communication can be a success because there is no misunderstanding between the speaker and the hearer.

In order to see the students' uniqueness in the way they interact with others in the classroom, the researcher tried to find out the types of politeness principles in the classroom that are used by the students at the University of Jambi.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Pragmatics

Leech (1983:8) defined Pragmatics as the study of how utterances have meaning in situation. Whereas, Yule said that Pragmatics is the study of meaning of an utterance which is said by a speaker and then being interpreted by a listener (1996:3). In a conversation, people rarely say what they mean directly. Sometimes the words that have been said by the speakers have other meanings.

Griffiths (2006:6) has argued that Pragmatics is the study of utterance meaning. Meaning is complicated because it has several interpretations and the interpretation is not always correct. Pragmatics is very important because if Pragmatics does not exist, there will be a lack of understanding in utterance meaning. Because of that, Pragmatics acts as the basis for language interactions, especially in meaning.

According to Leech (1983:13-14) There are five phenomena of speech situation deal with Pragmatics:

#### A. Addressers and Addressees

Addressers and addressees are the speakers and the hearer. An addresser or speaker represents people who send the message or a person who wants to send the thought. An addressee or hearer is people who receive and interpret the message and thought.

#### B. The Context of an Utterance

A Context is considered as any background knowledge assumes to be shared by the speaker and hearer and contributes to the hearer interpretation of what the speaker means by giving the utterance. Besides, Richard (1991:87) said that a context is something, which occurs before and/or after a word, a phrase, even a longer utterance or text.

#### C. The Goal(s) of an Utterance

A goal refers to the intended meaning of an utterance or the speaker's intention by uttering it.

#### D. The Utterance as a Form of Act or Activity: a Speech Act.

An utterance is a form of act or activity which deals with the verbal act of performances that takes place in particular situations in times.

#### E. The Utterance as a Product of a Verbal Act.

In issuing an utterance, the speaker has formed a product of act. It means that the utterance will give a signal to another speaker or hearer to perform an act.

### 2. Politeness

Politeness is a central concept of Pragmatics concerning the polite behavior of people when they speak. Yule (1996: 60) defined politeness as a situation in which people show awareness of another person's self-image. In this case, people can understand and realized when other people switch their self-image. This argument also shows us how the hearer realized the speakers do and switches self-image when they speak. Yule (2010:135) has argued that in general terms, Politeness is having to do with ideas like being tactful, modest, and nice to other people.

According to Yule (1996:60) Politeness is a fixed concept as in the idea of 'polite social behavior' or etiquette within a culture and it is possible to specify a number of different general principles for being polite in social interaction within a particular culture. In this case, politeness has an important aspect when people communicate with others.

### **2.1 Face Threatening Act (FTA)**

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), they argued that "face as the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (p.61). In this case, face means the image that has been claimed by self and other people can see the face that has been claimed by someone. Brown and Levinson (1987) argued that every member of a society has a face, which is defined as one's public self-image and when the speaker decides to commit an act which potentially causes the hearer (or the speaker) to lose face, the speaker will tend to use a politeness strategy in order to minimize the risk. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), they argued that "every individual has two types of face, positive and negative" (p.61). Positive face is defined as the individual's desire that her/his wants be appreciated and approved by others members of society. On the positive face, someone usually shows the best version of self. On the other hand, the negative face is a desire for freedom of action and freedom from imposition. In this case, someone usually tries to be her/his self.

### **2.2 Politeness Strategy**

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), they argued that "politeness strategies are developed in order to save the hearer's face" (p.68). Brown and Levinson (1987) argued that "divides the strategies of politeness into four strategies are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record" (p.60).

### **3. Conversational Principles**

Yule (2020:145) has argued that in simple terms, English conversation can be described as an activity in which, for the most part, two or more people take turns at speaking. Typically, only one person speaks at a time and there tends to be an avoidance of silence between speaking turns. In this case, there should be two or more people in a conversation to make it works. In addition, the rule of conversation is the hearers have to be patient waiting for their turn and they have to respect the speaker by keeping silent until their turn. If it happens in a conversation, the conversation can be effective. On other hand, politeness is a universal feature of language usage. According to Watt (2003:12), all of the languages possess the means to express politeness. One of the maxims is Grice's maxims (1975). Grice has formulated that Conversational Principles consist of 4 maxims, namely:

#### **1. Maxim of Quantity**

According to Grice (1975:46), the category of quantity relates to the information that has been provided, and the quantity maxim consists of the principles below:

- Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)
- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required

## 2. Maxim of Quality

The category of quality relates to make your contribution one that is true, and two more specific maxims:

- Do not say what you believe to be false
- Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

## 3. Maxim of Relation

Under the category of relation, it places a single maxim, namely, “Be relevant”. I expect your contribution to be appropriate to immediate needs at each stage of the transaction; if I am mixing ingredients need for a cake, I do not expect to be handed a good book or even an oven cloth (Grice, 1975:47).

## 4. Maxim of Manner

The category of manner related about what is said “be perspicuous”, and there are some principles of the maxim of manner as bellow:

- Avoid obscurity
- Avoid ambiguity
- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)
- Be orderly

According to Watt (2003:203), he argued that politeness principle might be added to the Cooperative Principle (CP) and it even suggests that the maxims of the CP are subordinate to those of the Politeness Principle (PP).

## 4. Politeness Principles

Politeness is not something we are born with, but something we have to learn and be socialized into (Watts, 2003:10). According to Leech (2014:35) Politeness principle is a principle that can be observed, breached, suspended, or flouted. To account for polite linguistic behavior, Leech postulated six maxims. In this case, the writer gives some examples for each maxim that have been adapted and modified from a book by Richard J. Watts (2003:66-67). It was summarized, as follow:

### 1. Tact maxim

Minimize cost to others, maximize the benefit to others.

### 2. Generosity maxim

Minimize benefit to self, maximize cost to self.

### 3. Approbation maxim

Minimize dispraise of others, maximize praise of others.

### 4. Modesty maxim

Minimize praise of self, maximize dispraise of self.

### 5. Agreement maxim

Minimize disagreement between self and other; maximize agreement between self and other.

6. Sympathy maxim

Minimize antipathy between self and other; maximize sympathy between self and other.

Based on the explanation above, the writer concludes that Politeness Principle by Leech fixed the trouble in Cooperative Principle by Grice. CP is redeemed from difficulty by the PP (Leech, 1983:81).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is included in the qualitative research. According to Bilken (2007:5) qualitative research is descriptive. It means that the data should be analyzed in the form of a description that does not use the number or statistical accounting. Descriptive research is a method where things are determined and reported as the way they are (Gay, 2003:277).

This research was conducted at the University of Jambi in UPT 1 and LAB Computer at English Education Department in class of Literacy and Discourse Analysis. There was 4 meeting and each course has 2 meetings. The data have been collected by the writer during the teaching and learning process in English Education Department. The subjects of this study are the students in a class of regular 001 2017 in English Department. There were 27 students as the participants of this study that consists of 26 females and 1 male. In addition, this class was unique because the students in this class came from the different regions but they used English mix with Bahasa Indonesia in their interactions. In this case, the writer saw the students' interactions.

There was a research instruments that the writer used during collecting the data, namely: audio record. In the audio records, the writer used a smartphone to record the students' interactions because according to Blackwell (2015:431) audio recordings are perfectly adequate to capture what participants are doing as they speak.

## Techniques of Data Analysis

Since the writer got the data of students' interactions in the class of Regular 001 2017 English Education Department, the research was continued by transcribing the data and analyzing them. There were some steps of analyzing the data, as follows:

a. Data Reduction

According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. (2014), "data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data" (p.31). In this step, the writer selected the suitable audio with the topic. After the writer collected the audio in classroom observation, the writer selected the audio and took the audios that have the students' interactions which were suitable and clear because according to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) "data reduction process continues after the fieldwork is over, until a final report is completed" (p.31).

b. Transcribing

After reducing the suitable audio, the writer transcribed the audio data. The writer transcribed the data by listening to the audio record and wrote the utterances on the personal computer. In transcribing the data, the writer tried to transcribe the data as real as possible.

c. Identification

In the step of identification, the writer tried to identify the source of data which were the transcription of utterances. In this step, the writer identified the utterances because the writer was focused on the students' utterances. After identifying the speaker's utterances, the writer made some codes. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) have argued that "the researchers might have a coding category for each type of participant" (p.174). The writer made the code for the speakers' utterances, such as lecturer (L), individual student (S), and a group of students (SS). In addition, the writer gave the codes for each utterances that realized the politeness maxim, such as: tact maxim (a.1, a.2, a.3, a.4), generosity maxim (b.1, b.2, b.3, b.4), modesty maxim (c.1, c.2, c.3, c.4), approbation maxim (d.1, d.2, d.3, d.4) agreement maxim (e.1, e.2, e.3, e.4) and the sympathy maxim (f.1, f.2, f.3, f.4).

#### d. Classification

In this process, the writer classified the students' utterances that indicate maxims proposed by Leech, such as tact maxim, generosity maxim, modesty maxim, approbation maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim.

#### e. Data Display

According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) "data display designed to assemble organized information into an immediately accessible, compact form so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw a justified conclusion" (p.32). So, the writer was grouping the utterances that suitable with the type of maxims proposed by Leech.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Maxims Realized

In this research, the writer focused on the politeness principles that realized by the students in a class of regular 001 2017 in English Department, University of Jambi. There are five types of maxims realized by the students in the classroom interactions in the English Department at the University of Jambi. The maxims have been used by the students during the discussion group, presenting the material, and explaining the answer. In this case, the students used English and Bahasa Indonesia in classroom interactions but the writer focused on their English utterances. The data have displayed in a table, namely:

Types of Politeness Principles	Discourse Analysis (1)	Literacy (1)	Literacy (2)	Discourse Analysis (2)	Total
Tact maxim	2	4	-	1	7
Generosity maxim	1	-	-	-	1
Approbation maxim	-	1	3	-	4
Modesty maxim	-	-	-	-	-
Agreement maxim	5	1	-	-	6
Sympathy maxim	-	2	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>

**Table 1: amount of maxim realized by the students**

### 2. The Analysis

The data of this research are the transcriptions of audio recording. The writer has done the research and got the complete data by using audio recording. The data were analyzed by data

reduction, transcribing, identifying, classifying, and the data display. The writer reported the results based on the research question in chapter 1.

The research has been done on the fifth-semester students in the University of Jambi in a class 001 at the English Department. The class that the writer took sample is the Literacy class and Discourse Analysis class. The data have been conducted on 1st October 2019-16th December 2019

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **1. Conclusions**

The data analysis and the result of research findings have been concluded as follows:

1. The most maxim that was realized by the students is tact maxim because the students tried to minimize the cost to others and maximize the benefit to others in their utterances. In addition, the students tried to be as loyal as they can to the other person. On the other hand, the students realized the tact maxim when they were answering the question and presenting the material.
2. The modesty maxim is a maxim that was not realized by the students in classroom interactions. The modesty maxim was not realized by the students because modesty maxim minimizes praise of self and maximizes dispraise of self. In this case, the students rarely realized the modesty maxim because they did not talk about something related to the praising. So, that's why they have not realized modesty maxim in classroom interactions.

### **3. Suggestions**

Based on the conclusion above, this research has some suggestions for the reader especially for the students who will do interaction with others in the classroom or outside of the classroom as follows:

1. The students should be able to realize the six politeness maxims in classroom interactions. The students have to realize tact maxim to minimize the cost to other and maximize the benefit to others. They also have to realize generosity maxim because it can minimize the benefit to self and maximize cost to self. In addition, the students have to realize the approbation maxim in order to minimize dispraise of others and maximize praise of others. Other than that, the students have to realize the modesty maxim for minimizing praise of self and maximizing dispraise of self. The agreement maxim should be realized by the students to minimize disagreement between self and others and maximize agreement between self and others. The last, the students have to realize the sympathy maxim because it can minimize antipathy between self and others and maximize the sympathy between self and others.
2. The politeness maxims have an important role in a conversation. In this case, the speakers have to realize politeness maxims in order to make the communication happen effectively and successfully. In addition, the speaker should pay more attention in using politeness maxims because each maxim has its own rule and benefits.

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