

## **Politeness Strategies in 2014 Presidential Debates between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study analyzed the politeness strategies employed by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in 2014 Presidential Debates. This study used descriptive qualitative method. Kothari (2004:2) states that Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. In this study the writer described the utterances of president candidates debate into written text. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present. The instrument of collecting data is video recording of Debat Capres Cawapres Jokowi Jk- Prabowo Hatta at Metro TV on July 5, 2014. Particular attention is given to candidate's use of bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record and do not do speech act or do the FTA (face threatening act) as defined by Brown and Levinson theory. The focus of the paper is on the types of politeness strategies that used in debate, the dominant type of politeness strategies, and the reason of dominant type usage in debate. The result showed that the most dominant type is Positive politeness (61,53%). Then there was also Negative politeness (30,76%), On record (3,84%), Off record (3,84%) and do not do the FTA (0%). The president candidates mostly used positive politeness because want to reduce face-threatening act besides how the two candidates can be conveyed smoothly without making one party feels threatened.

*Key Words: Debate; Brown and Levinson theory; Politeness Strategies Usage*

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## INTRODUCTION

Language is absolutely central in our communication. When people are communicating they should have communicative competence that comprises not only linguistic competence but also social-cultural, interactional, formulaic and strategic competence (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p.45). Socio-cultural, interactional and strategic competence refers to the speaker's pragmatic knowledge. The pragmatic perspective can be particularly defined as knowledge of communicative action and how to carry it out, and the ability to use language appropriately according to context (Kasper, 1997).

Pragmatics entails some fields, they are deixis, speech acts, implicature, and politeness. Those are interested to be investigated and one of them will be the focus on this study which is called politeness.

In 1978 Brown and Levinson proposed a theory of politeness, which created a model for protective conversational politeness. The model examined how one can go about producing a face-threatening act in a (Western) polite manner. The center of strategies politeness is the used of appropriate politeness strategy from a variety of perspectives. So the speaker may minimize FTA (face threatening acts) by choosing an appropriate linguistic strategy. Politeness strategies will therefore be those which aim (a) at supporting or enhancing the addressee's positive face (positive politeness) and (b) at avoiding transgression of addressee's freedom of action and freedom from imposition (negative face).

One of the some previous researches related to Politeness Strategies is *Kesantunan Berbahasa Dalam Acara Debat Kontroversi Surat Keputusan Bersama Ahmadiyah Di TV One by Saragih (2010)*. His study intended to describe the types of positive politeness and negative politenesses are used by political debate and the context with communication ethic Islam. In his research he found that the most dominant politeness strategies that was used by political debate is positive politeness; Give or Ask for reasons. He also found that there are correlation between politeness strategies and communication ethic Islam.

Related to the explanation above, it is interesting to analyze the types politeness strategies, the most dominant, and the reasons of the dominant strategy in 2014 Presidential Debates between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto because they are rated as the most popular leaders in the Government of Indonesia. Jokowi is popular with 'blusukan' leader when he was a Mayor of Solo and Governor of Jakarta. Prabowo also known as Commandant of the Special Command Force General (Kopassus). The writer assumed that they are the best example for Indonesian youth who want to be a governor or politician. They are a president candidate; they must consider the importance of politeness in their language, especially in presidential debate.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies**

Brown and Levinson postulate a set of five possible strategies which are available to the speaker:

(a) to follow what it says, bald on record, (b) perform speech acts using positive politeness (refer to the positive face), (c) perform speech acts using negative politeness (refer to the negative face), (d) indirect speech act (off the record), and (e) do not do speech act or say anything (do not do the FTA).

### **The reasons of politeness strategies usage**

Brown in Murni (2013:28) states that there are some motives that cause someone to use a politeness strategy when he communicates with others. Usually the motives consider three elements namely the perceived social distance between them (D), the perceived power difference between hearer and speaker (P) and the cultural ranking of the speech act (R). Murni (2013:64) says the struggle over the value of linguistic politeness in a parliament meeting can be classified into five categories. They are : 1) Minimizing the conflict and confrontation; 2) Minimizing imposition; 3) Asserting reciprocity; 4) claiming common ground; and 5) Bringing forwards accurate arguments and data. It means that someone

should choose an appropriate strategy in accordance with what they are going to say and to whom they speak.

### **Conversational Expectation**

In interpersonal interactions individuals have certain conversational expectations (Sacks et al., 1974). People expect others to listen and not overlap, participate while avoiding silence, care (or at least pretend to care), and be present in the interaction. Some ways in which individuals display presence in conversation are by being attentive (Cegala, 1984), immediate (Burgoon & Hale, 1988; Gorham, 1988), conversationally and relationally/socially appropriate (King & Sereno, 1984) and polite (Holtgraves, 2005).

Cegala (2007:144) states Conversational attentiveness is “the extent to which one tends to heed cues to the immediate social environment”. One might ask relevant questions, ask for expansion of the topic, or simply engage the speaker in a conversation. According to King and Sereno (1984), in order to be conversationally appropriate, one’s “conversational contributions must be appropriate to a cooperative realization of the relationship between the conversants” (p. 266). When people violate levels of appropriateness, feelings may be hurt, comments may be made, assumptions of unimportance may be inferred, or future interactions may be stifled. Individuals may be relationally appropriate, in that conversational contributions are appropriate, given the relationship of the conversational partners, or individuals may be socially appropriate in that contributions meet social expectations and follow social norms of the conversation.

### **Debate**

A debate is a discussion or structured contest about an issue or a resolution. A formal debate involves two sides: one supporting a resolution and one opposing it. Such a debate is bound by rules previously agreed upon. All debates are based on a motion. At school, for example, you might debate the motion that ‘This House believes that the requirement to wear school uniform is outdated’ or that ‘This House believes that fourteen year olds should be allowed to ride motor

bikes'. The reason for having a motion is to ensure that everyone knows exactly what is being debated.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study used descriptive qualitative method. Kothari (2004:2) states that Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. In this study the writer described the utterances of president candidates debate into written text. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

1. There were 26 utterances which has analyzed as politeness strategies that used by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto. It consist of 16 (61,53%) utterances of positive politeness strategies, 8 (30,07%) utterances of negative politeness strategies, 1 (3,84%) utterance of on record, 1 (3,84%) utterance of off record, 0 (0%) of do not do the FTA (face threatening acts) strategy.
2. The dominant type of politeness strategy that used by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in presidential debates is positive politeness strategy with total number 16 (61,53%) utterances particularly on Intensify interest to the hearer, Include both speaker and hearer and Be optimistic.
3. Based on the analysis, the writer found the reason of Positive politeness strategies using by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in Presidential debates. In this case the speaker and the hearer want to reduce face-threatening act, besides how the two candidates can be conveyed smoothly without making one party feels threatened.

### **Discussions**

As the writer observed the utterances by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in 2014 Presidential Debates showed that there were 26 utterances of politeness strategies such as Positive politeness strategy, Negative politeness strategy, On record and Off record. The most dominant type of Politeness strategies in 2014 Presidential Debates is Positive politeness with total number 16

(61,53%). In all of their dialogue they used many sub strategies of Positive politeness strategies such as Intensify interest to the hearer with total number 3, Include both speaker and hearer with total number 3, Be optimistic with total number 3, Seek agreement with total number 1, Presuppose/raise/assert common ground with total number 2, Assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern for H's wants with total number 2, Offer ; promise with total number 1, and Give or ask for reason with total number 1.

In the second level type is Negative politeness with total number 8 utterances (30,76%). Many substrategies of Negative politeness strategies are used by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in ther dialogue such as Question;hedge with total number 1, Be pessimistic with total number 2, Minimise the imposition with total number 3, State the FTA (face threteaning acts) as a general rule with total number 1, and Go on record as incurring a debt or as not indebting hearer with total number 1.

In the fewest number type is On record and Off record with total number 1 (3,84%). Meanwhile in this study there was no utterance that used do not do the FTA strategy in 2014 Presidential debates because this strategy means does not give comment. Just keep silent. Whilethis is a debate. The candidates must give comment in every debate session so there are only four strategies are used by president candidates.

The writer found some motives that cause president candidates more often used Positive politeness strategies in presidential debates. It because to reduce face-threatening act, besides how the two candidates can be conveyed their wants smoothly without making one party feels threatened.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusions**

After analyzing the data based on the theories, it is concluded that there are four types of politeness strategies used in 2014 Presidential Debates between Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto. They were: (1) Positive politeness

strategies with total number 16 (61,53%), (2) Negative politeness strategies with total number 8 (30,76%), (3) On record with total number 1 (3,84%) and (4) Off record with total number 1 (3,84%).

The data findings showed that the most dominant type of politeness strategies used by Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto in 2014 Presidential Debates was Positive politeness strategies with total number 16 (61.53%) utterances, particularly on Intensify interest to the hearer, Include both speaker and hearer, Be optimistic. It because to reduce face-threatening act, besides how the two candidates can conveyed their wants smoothly without making one party feels threatened.

### **Suggestions**

Grounded on the results of analysis, this study is intended to suggest that the students who have studied in applied linguistics can use this study not only to get more knowledge but also can practice this study as the strategy to minimize the confrontation that may be found in daily conversation. They who are interested to do the similar research can enrich their references.

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