IMPOLITENESS STRATEGIES USED ON ONLINE COMMENTS IN AN INDONESIAN FOOTBALL WEBSITE

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Abstract

This research investigates linguistic impoliteness used in online football comments through the examination of impoliteness strategies proposed by Jonathan Culpeper. It examines how impoliteness strategies are used on online comments and what strategy mostly used by Indonesian participants in Okezone, an Indonesian football website. The research uses descriptive qualitative method supported by quantitative data. First, the writer found that Indonesian participants mostly used positive impoliteness strategy to express their negative attitude on giving comments. Second, there are four out of five impoliteness strategies used by Indonesian participants. Withhold politeness strategy is excluded.

Keywords: impoliteness strategies; online comments; football website

INTRODUCTION

Language, which links interlocutors in a dynamic interaction, is an integral part of human life. Speakers use language to express their thought, feeling, and emotions. In communication, people adhere to cultural norms showing that they are competent speakers. Robin Lakoff (1989:116) suggested two underlying *rules of pragmatic competence*; be clear and be polite. Ideally, the speakers must fulfil both requirements, but sometimes the rules conflict. Talking about politeness, it could not be separated from the culture involved. An utterance is considered (im)polite depends on its use. All cultures provide rules for appropriate communication approach, defining behaviours that should occur, that may occur and that should not occur in given context.

Politeness is one of social phenomena that play important roles in our interaction. While hardly do we maintain the face, we may trip over of the politeness inversion, i.e. impoliteness. The idea of culture as system of shared norms leads to a vague distinction of which 'polite' and 'impolite'. Impoliteness evaluation is situational embedded and argumentative. Basically, impoliteness has several synonyms in the English language and somehow they all refer to the evaluation of negative behaviour (Culpeper, 2010: 3233), because they attack somebody's identity or rights, and they cause specific emotional reactions (e.g. hurt, anger). It has been directly associated with the intentions of the speaker and perceptions of the hearer.

The use of personal computer to facilitate communication has revolutionized linguistic and social interactions. Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) enables people to interact in far distant of space and time. There are two types of CMC which are synchronous and asynchronous interaction. The writer puts the object of research, *Okezone* website, as asynchronous because it does not apply the usual conversational structure. Participants may not be aware who others are writing online comments and they might respond whenever they wish, but there is never any expectation of an immediate reply by anyone in particular. The non-face-to-face communication gives the chance of doing impoliteness. In most cases, participants in CMC are more likely to use comparatively impolite ways in communication in comparison with face-to-face communication.

Therefore, this thesis will first examine the phenomenon of impoliteness by investigating Indonesian participants on giving online comments in Indonesian football website using five impoliteness strategies as a means of attacking face proposed by Culpeper i.e.; *bald on record impoliteness*, *positive impoliteness*, *negative impoliteness*, *sarcasm or mock politeness*, and *withhold politeness;* and the second is find out the mostly used strategy in expressing impoliteness in Indonesian.What is meant by Indonesian football websites here is the Wide Web pages

containing any football news and made available online by individual, company, educational institution, government, or organization that in this case is *Okezone*.

Before coming to the impoliteness itself, the term of face must be understood first. As Spencer-Oatey (2007:642) stated the definition of face as *relating to attributes speakers want to be credited with and situational contingent*. Face may imply different kinds of desire or face-wants that people have. Face could be conceptualised as either positive or negative. Positive face refers to the desire to be appreciated or approved of, while negative face refers to the basic claim to territories and personal perseveres. When the face is attacked, there would be lack presence of politeness leading to impoliteness in communication. Constructing the definition and theory of impoliteness has proved rather problematic because there was no established theoretical framework that could be used properly. In regards to this current study, Culpeper's definition toward notion of impoliteness is used as follows:

> Impoliteness is a negative attitude toward specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts. It is sustained by expectations, desires and/or beliefs about social organization, including, in particular, how one person's or group's identities are mediated by others in interaction. (Culpeper, 2010: 3233).

Through this research, the writer would like to review the strategies of impoliteness proposed by Culpeper in 1996, 2003, and 2005 for knowing which strategies are used by most of Indonesian participant on giving online comment(s) in football website. The strategies are *bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm or mock politeness,* and *withhold politeness* which are systematically related to the degree of face threat from the least to the highest. These five strategies relate to three crucial social variables; relative power, social distance, and the forcefulness of the act involved (otherwise referred to as power, solidarity, and weight).

- **Bald On Record Impoliteness**

The face threatening act (FTA), a threat to a person's face, is performed in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way in circumstances where face is not irrelevant or minimized (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69). It is the most obvious and straightforward impoliteness.

- **Positive Impoliteness**

Refers to the strategies that are designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants, the desire to be appreciated or approved of. The strategy include ignore the other, exclude the other from an activity, be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic, use inappropriate identity markers, use obscure or secretive language, seek disagreement, use taboo words, use derogatory remarks.

- **Negative Impoliteness**

It attacks the addressee's negative face, which is the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction - i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition. Frighten, condescend, scorn or ridicule, be contemptuous, do not treat the other seriously, belittle the other, invade the other's space (literally or metaphorically), explicitly associate the other with a negative aspect (personalize, use the pro-nouns "I" and "You"), and put the other's indebtedness on record belong to negative impoliteness strategy.

- **Sarcasm or Mock Politeness**

Here, the FTA is performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realizations. Both of strategies are the same, performing impolite utterances because of clearly insincere intention. It is heavily related to the context and it is a surface politeness which can be interpreted in an impolite way because of certain contextual clues and the intention of not causing offense but rather to show social intimacy. Often one has to know the person well in order to understand that he is being sarcastic, mocking you, or that he is joking.

- **Withhold Politeness**

Meaning politeness that is expected in a certain situation but is left out for some reason. Some instances of withholding impoliteness involved the absence of manners that are expected from anyone in a normal interaction (greeting saying goodbye). Culpeper (1996: 357) notes that

impoliteness may be realized through, "...the absence of politeness work where it would be expected." Then, Culpeper (2005: 42) gives the example that "failing to thank someone for a present may be taken as deliberate impoliteness".

METHODS

Linguistic scholars seeking to answer question about impoliteness and the strategies have found experimental and quantitative methods to be insufficient in explaining the phenomenon they wish to study. Therefore, the research is decided to use descriptive qualitative approach supported by quantitative data in order to explore behaviour, perspective, feeling, and experience as impoliteness. The techniques which are used are text analysis, meaning and, the analysis of written online comments in sites.

The sources of the data were taken from the website, *Okezone*. So, the data would be the online comments made by users in *Okezone* website, in special feature of *Bola*, related to the use of online impoliteness utterances in commentating football news. Each online comment expressed in an utterance will be considered a datum. Moreover, the data were collected for 50 utterances several times within a month by taking data during August to September 2012. When the data had been collected, the writer would sort them as polite or impolite. The writer surely referred to the theory from Culpeper about the definition of impoliteness which is a negative attitude toward specific behaviours occurring in a specific context. The writer would detect any impolite utterances came through the five strategies of impoliteness:

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From 50 utterances collected for a month through the *Okezone* website, the writer finally got the finding of strategies used and mostly used by Indonesian participants. The findings show that from five impoliteness strategies proposed by Jonathan Culpeper (1996:356-7, 2005:41-2), there is one strategy that Indonesian participants do not use, i.e. withhold politeness. After doing the data analysis, Indonesian participants show that they mostly perform positive impoliteness strategy followed by negative impoliteness. The reason why number of strategies found bigger than the data collected is because participants mostly perform more than one strategy in one utterance.

Table 1.The Findings of Impoliteness Strategies Used

No.	Model of Impoliteness	Number of Findings	Percentage
1	Positive Impoliteness (PI)	34	40.48%
2	Negative Impoliteness (NI)	28	33.33%
3	Bald on Record Impoliteness (BOR)	15	17.86%
4	Sarcasm / Mock Politeness (MP)	7	8.33%
5	Withhold Politeness (WP)	0	0%
	TOTAL	84	100%

- **Positive Impoliteness**

It exists for the use of strategies designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants. Positive face refers to the need to be thought of as desirable, for instance; if someone suggests they should do this together, they are showing interest towards another person's positive face. The possible reason on why this strategy is mostly used is Indonesian participants in *Okezone* football website have most positive face wants, whereas they want to be approved and acknowledged by others. Football is an important means for people to form and maintain strong

friendships that might otherwise not exist. Most participants seem to have the sense of belonging on certain football clubs and they express it on their comments. Below are some examples in comments:

o Topic: *Sabet Supercopa, Madrid Selingi Dominasi Barca* [Winning Supercopa, Madrid Interspace Barca's domination]
Blues Chelsea*: Kalah karena pemain kartu merah di jadikan alasan cape deh kan gol madrid tercipta sebelum mendapat kartu merah, semifinal lc barca vs chelsea disitu chelsea pun 10 orang dan bisa menang atas barca kok jd ga ush bacot deh fans barca* [**Blues Chelsea**: Losing because of getting red card should not be a reason, I'm tired, Madrid's goal happened before the red card's accident. Champion League semi-final leg, Barca vs. Chelsea also same, where Chelsea just played with 10 players and could win. So, shut your fucking mouth off, Barca's supporter]

The writer is interested in the username of this participant and his/her standing point on commenting the winning of Real Madrid toward Barcelona in Supercopa champion. From the username, the writer could see participant's standing point which becomes the supporter of Chelsea and absolutely not the fan of Barcelona. The participant takes side in Real Madrid and do not agree if Madrid won just because Barcelona (Barca) played with 10 players. Here, the participant is *showing disagreement strategy*. S/he uses the reason or account to explain why Madrid deserves 'full' winning. As was discussed earlier, a positive face want means a person's will or need to be a part of a certain action, or to be approved of. The ones who have positive face is Barca's supporter. They want to be approved by others, especially rivals that Barca is the best team and the lost happened because of some unfair treatments. So, the participant attacks the need of Barca's supporter to be approved that Barca is the best team compare to others.

o Topic: *Sabet Supercopa, Madrid Selingi Dominasi Barca* [Winning Supercopa, Madrid Interspace Barca's domination]
barcelona: *barcelonakan melahirkan pesepakbola terhebat di dunia buktinya lionel messi, andres inesta dan xavi , sedangkan real medit ?? apa?? bisanya cuman beli pemain doank yang hanya mengandalkan uang .. uang bukan segalanya coyy .. salam ..* [barcelona: Barcelona produces the greatest world football players as; Lionel Messi, Anders Iniesta and Xavi. Compare with Real 'Medit'(=Stingy)?? What?? They usually buy players, and rely on money... money is not everything, man..greetings..]
Looking at the context, actually the participant wants to deny that Real Madrid has defeated Barca. The duel between Real Madrid and Barcelona is very 'hot' and often end up with chaos. Real Madrid is well-known as a rich football club that often buy expensive players like Kaka and Cristiano Ronaldo. This is why s/he ends up calling Real Madrid as Real Stingy because it could not make great players, which is one of the sub-strategies of positive impoliteness; call the other names of using *derogatory nomination* as 'stingy' to Madrid. The phrase *bisanya cuman beli pemain doank yang hanya mengandalkan uang.. uang bukan segalanya coyy* are extended avoidance of agreement which is qualified with the reason as to why s/he is indeed avoiding agreement of the winning.

• **Negative Impoliteness**
The use of begative politeness strategy is designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants. Negative face refers to the need of not being imposed upon or intruded on by others. For example; if someone says that they will leave you alone so that you can concentrate, they are showing interest towards another person's negative face. This strategy is the second most impoliteness strategy used. It often appears with positive impoliteness as a combination strategy. The reason could be that these strategies have long list of sub-strategy compared with other strategies. Positive and negative impoliteness strategies are supported with many output strategies; ignore, unconcerned, seek disagreement, scorn, belittle the other, frighten, etc. The strategy can be seen in the following examples:

o Topic: *Sabet Supercopa, Madrid Selingi Dominasi Barca* [Winning Supercopa, Madrid Interspace Barca's nomination]

Mbeeeeee: *fans madrid ini pada nora semua, padahal madrid cuma menang lawan 10, mou aja ga berani komentar apa-apa dan cr7 ga banyak komentar, krn mereka tau kalau lawan 11 pemain madrid ga mgk menang.. seneng boleh tapi jgn kampungan krn keliatan bener dongo lo, malu-maluin nama besar real madrid !!!* [Mbeeeeee: Madrid's supporters are tacky! Madrid only wins over 10 players, Mourinho (mou) didn't make any statement and Cristiano Ronaldo (CR7) said nothing, since they knew that if they (Barca) played completely, Madrid would lose. Feel free to be happy, but don't be plebeian because you will look so idiot… It's a shame for Real Madrid!!!]

Indonesian slang is predominantly used in spoken or everyday conversation, social milieus, in popular media. For those living in more urbanized regions of Indonesia, Indonesian slang language is often used as the primary language for communication in daily life and nowadys in online media. *Nora* (/*Norak*: Jakarta slang language) and *dongo* (/d*ungu*) has negative meaning, both in Indonesia and English. The participant actually does not really care about who the winner of game. S/he comments more on the way Madrid player and coach respond to the victory. It stated that Madrid could not win if Barca played with complete players. This is showing that participant does not treat the victory of Madrid seriously, meaning condescend Madrid and its supporter.

o Topic: *Casillas: Madrid Tak Tahu Cara Bertahan!* [Casillas: Madrid Never Knows How to Defend]

puyol: *sejak mou datang memang madrid menjadi tim yang tidak bermutu. Fans juga ikut-ikutan tidak bermutu. Selalu menyanjung tim sendiri membabi buta tidak rsepect pada tim lain. Iker Cassilas mungkin satu-satunya pemain madrid yang masih bermutu. Ramos mulai ikutan MOU. Keberadaan MOU di Laliga hanya untuk menaikkan gengsi laliga, tapi tidak meningkatkan mutu permainan madrid.* [puyol: Since Mourinho (Mou) came, Madrid becomes unqualified team and so its supporters. You always feel proud toward yourself and not respect to others. Iker Cassilas, perhaps the only qualified player in Madrid. Ramos is starting to follow MOU (Maurinho's behaviour). The existence of MOU in La Liga is only to elevate its prestige but not the quality of players.]

When participant uses Puyol's name, it becomes as if Barca's player giving statement about his rival. This Puyol put Mourinho (Mou)'s, new couch of Real Madrid, indebtedness on record. S/he said that after Mou came, Madrid and its supporters have no quality. The way participant writes the name of 'mou' with lowercase showing condescends or humiliates Madrid's coach. Since this is a written interaction, the way how a participant addresses someone's name will influence on the perception of the reader. The name of Iker Cassilas, it said to be the only qualified player, is written in proper way, compared to Mou that sometimes is written with upper and lowercase. When all uppercase are used it means the participant showing negative behaviour toward the object. Shouting is followed with criticism of lowering quality of Madrid's players. Therefore, the participant truly belittles Mourinho and Madrid overall.

• **Bald on Record Impoliteness**
Bald on record impoliteness is the most obvious and most straightforward impoliteness. The strategy is typically deployed when there is much face at stake, and where there is an intention on the part of the speaker to attack the face of the hearer and/or where the speaker does not have the power to (safely) utter an impolite utterance. It is usually used by people who have a close relationship. The application of staretgy can be seen below:

o Topic: *Ronaldo Uring-uringan, City Siapkan 95 Juta Pounds* [Ronaldo is in Hot Blood, City is Preparing 95 Million Pounds]

jojon: *Tertekan di madrid..capek bersaing dgn barca..*
[**jojon**: Depression in Madrid…Weary competing with Barca]

We see the reasons on why Ronaldo is getting mad to his club, Real Madrid. This player is said that he is not happy anymore playing in the club. This comment touches Ronaldo's face in terms of his incapability on playing in Madrid. When it is a spoken utterance, of course, the hearer will be offended. This is intentional threats to face, the offending participant appears to act maliciously with intention to cause open insult. Anyone reading this comment is encouraged to support destroying Ronaldo's face without losing the speaker's own. Ronaldo shows as if he is a frustrating player. Perhaps that is true Ronaldo is stressed right now but in the next utterance the participant directly associates it with Barcelona and clearly attack Ronaldo's face.

o Topic: *Sabet Supercopa, Madrid Selingi Dominasi Barca* [Winning Supercopa, Madrid Interspace Barca's domination]
mampos barca: *mampos barca kalah, gak mungkin barca selalu menang , udeh ganti pelatih siap2 gawang paldes RATA !! HAHA* [**mampos barca**: Finish off you, Barca!! You will never win…you just change the coach, be ready that Paldes's goal post will end!!! HAHA]

The username shows on which position the participant is. *Mampos* in English refers to vulgar word as die and exclamation about something unfortunate. Seeing from the participant's username, s/he could not be a Barcelona (Barca)'s supporter. The loss of Barca shows that it will never be a winner. This time, Madrid can defeat them and become a champion. The participant also treats a subject of changing the coach in Barca which leads to go to the wall. The participant insult the new coach that will make Barca loses points in each game. When using bald on record impoliteness strategy, participant always has intentional threat to face.

o **Sarcasm or Mock Politeness**
For Culpeper, sarcasm or mock politeness means the face threatening act are performed with the use of politeness strategies that are obviously insincere, and thus remain surface realisations. Some examples of utterances showing sarcasm or mock politeness strategy:
Topic: *Sabet Supercopa, Madrid Selingi Dominasi Barca* [Winning Supercopa, Madrid Interspace Barca's nomination]
barcelona: *barcelonakan melahirkan pesepakbola terhebat di dunia buktinya lionel messi, andres inesta dan xavi , sedangkan real medit ?? apa?? bisanya cuman beli pemain doank yang hanya mengandalkan uang .. uang bukan segalanya coyy .. salam ..*
[**barcelona**: Barcelona produces the greatest world football players as; Lionel Messi, Anders Iniesta and Xavi. Compare with Real 'Medit (=Stingy) '?? What?? They usually buy players, and rely on money.. money is not everything, man..greetings..]

When we take a look at the context, actually the participant wants to deny that Real Madrid has defeated Barca. S/he then comments on the way how Baca could produce great players as stated in his/her comments. The Indonesian slang word of 'coy' which translated into 'man' show closeness of supporters. What the writer means here is although the competition between Barca and Madrid is getting worst, but as the same Indonesian football's lovers, they have common things. Although the other participants are in Madrid's side, but this participant uses *sarasm/mock politeness* which performs impoliteness in surface. See at the last two words, *coy..salam*, means that the participant does not have intention on performing impoliteness.

o Topic: Sabet Supercopa, Madrid Selingi Dominasi Barca [Winning Supercopa, Madrid Interspace Barca's nomination]
Mbeeeeee: *fans madrid ini pada nora semua, padahal madrid cuma menang lawan 10, mou aja ga berani komentar apa-apa dan cr7 ga banyak komentar, krn mereka tau kalau lawan 11 pemain madrid ga mgk menang.. seneng boleh tapi jgn kampungan krn keliatan bener dongo lo, malu-maluin nama besar real madrid !!!*
[Mbeeeeee: Madrid's supporters are tacky! Madrid only wins over 10 players, Mourinho (mou) didn't make any statement and Cristiano Ronaldo (CR7) said nothing, since they

know that if they (Barca) played completely, Madrid will lose. Feel free to be happy, but be nice because you will look so idiot… It's a shame for Real Madrid!!!]

Comments are ended up with ridiculing Madrid which has idiot supporters. When we take a look on the whole context, this participant seems to not really intend to attack Madrid's supporter. This utterance may indicate *sarcasm* when it is seen wholly. There is an intention to attack Madrid and its supporter, but the last utterances show that this participant only wants to make a crack on Real Madrid only. The writer sees this as incidental threats to face which arise as unplanned but sometimes anticipated by the product of action-action the offender performs in spite of its offensive consequences, though not out of spite (taken from Goffman 1967:14)

- **Withhold Politeness**
  Keep silent when politeness work is expected, necessary or 'mandatory' and hence damage the hearer's face. After conducting the research, the writer could not find any participants doing this strategy. The possible reason could be that this strategy can only be used in spoken interaction process. Since the data are comments in a website, form of asynchronous CMC; do not imply the usual conversational structure. There is no comments responded by other participants, so withhold politeness strategy could not be performed.

  Mostly participants show positive face wants, in which they want to be approved by a particular group, meaning they perform positive impoliteness strategy. The result of the research may imply that while coming to impoliteness level, Indonesian participants tend to perform impoliteness in the lower degree. Although there was an intention to perform face's attack, the Indonesian participants still think much on the other face. The writer needs to relate the use of negative impoliteness as the second most used impolite strategy with Indonesian society context of politeness. Negative politeness tends to be the norm in Eastern culture and certain language group, in this case is Indonesia. Asian cultures are in general more concerned with status difference and roles in society. When it comes to impoliteness, the Asian people will be either less or more polite, depending on the wants and needs.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
This research is about impoliteness strategies used by Indonesian participants on giving online comments in Indonesian football website, *Okezone*. After conducting the research, the result showed that there are four impoliteness strategies used and positive impoliteness strategy is the mostly used strategy.

Related to the first research question about impoliteness strategies which are used by Indonesian participants while giving online comments, the writer found out that there are four out of five strategies proposed by Culpeper are used. The four impoliteness strategies are *bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness,* and *sarcasm or mock politeness.* Dealing with the second research question about the mostly used impolite strategy used, the writer found out that *positive impoliteness* strategy is the highest usage, 34. One strategy, withhold politeness, was not used at all. The possible reason could be that *Okezone* website is an asynchronous CMC which does not imply the real spoken interaction.

Although this study does not discuss polite behaviour in CMC situation, it does not imply that all communication is carried out in impolite ways. Hopefully this research may reveal impoliteness phenomenon in Indonesian context and give some contributions, having better understanding toward notion of impoliteness and strategies used, on linguistic research which is rarely done by researcher in Indonesia. Such judgement of (im)polite are part of an evaluation not of the language but the people and the cultural values that a particular group, in this case is football's website participants, is assumed to be hold.

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