

Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies in Some Javanese Jokes

Khafidhoh, Astry Fajria, Rifky Dora Wijayati, Umi Rokhyati, Japen Sarage

Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, 55161, Indonesia

***Corresponding Author:** Astry Fajria, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Yogyakarta, 55161, Indonesia

Abstract:

Purpose: This article tries to overview some Javanese jokes to find out some possible politeness strategies based on Brown's and Levinson's pragmatic theory. As a joke normally consists of jabs and punches and pragmatics discusses locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, this article relates the element of the jokes to the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts especially in the view of politeness strategy. Some of the jokes may involve rather dirty jokes in the sense that they are not explicitly dirty jokes.

Methodology: The data of Javanese jokes are obtained from the internet due to the fact that many Javanese jokes are available in the internet of Javanese traditional shows of shadow puppet shows or wayangkult performances. The data in the form of jokes are described in terms of their elements and then their meanings are analyzed pragmatically in the view of politeness strategy.

Results: Some Javanese jokes make use of politeness strategy of face preserving strategy so that both the hearer's and speaker's face or self-esteem is maintained. This kind of strategy may prevent children from being involved in matters of adult things.

Implications: Politeness strategies in Javanese jokes are capable of hiding adult materials from children. This is a kind of veil, which is necessary and wants appreciating much for joke writers and performers.

Keywords: politeness strategy, face, jabs, punch, Javanese jokes.

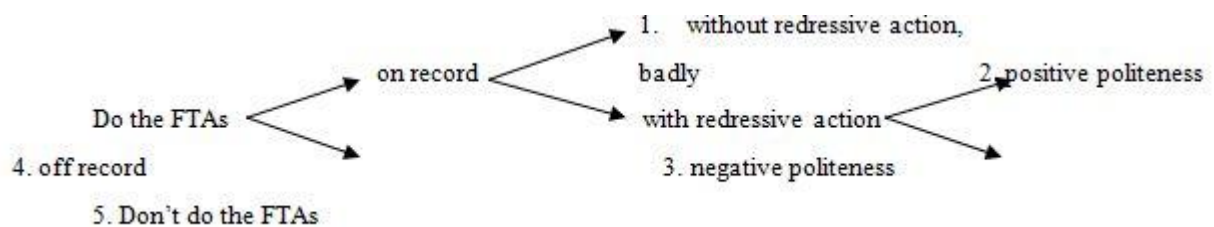
1. INTRODUCTION

Politeness normally occurs in conversational exchanges (Brown and Levinson: 1978) where violation is avoided to maintain cooperation between a speaker and a hearer (Leech:2014) (Searle: 1985). Sociologically and psychologically, violation is prevented to secure face threatening acts for both the speaker and the hearer or the interlocutors (Leech: 1978) . In conversational jokes the interlocutors make use of jabs and punches where the jabs introduce background settings and the punches conclude the key points of the jokes due the double meanings of the locution. This article tries to overview politeness and impoliteness in some Javanese jokes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Politeness as introduced by Goffman (1967,1971) and popularized by Brown and Levinson (1978),and also adopted by Leech (1983) has become an interesting topic to discuss. The idea of politeness is based on Brown's and Levinson's theory of face (1978), which is defined as individual's self-esteem. At the beginning of its development, politeness is considered as the speaker's way of minimizing violation of the hearer so that he employs strategies for some presuppositions before choosing a certain degree of politeness in his speech acts (Leech: 204). This is to say that the speaker's speech acts may contain face threatening acts, which may terminate the conversational exchanges.

In politeness there are degrees where levels of face threatening acts range from which politeness strategies are done to avoid or mitigate them.



The first strategy i.e. do the FTA without redressive action or baldly, is done when there is no risk of loss of face. The participants have achieved mutual understanding so there is no need to mitigate FTA. The second and third strategies involve redressive action where the speaker has to maintain the addressee's face as well as his/her face. In other words, the speaker has to avoid or mitigate some possible FTAs. The fourth strategy is employed when the risk of loss of face is great, the communicative act is made ambiguous and the interpretation is left to the addressee so that FTA is flouted to prevent from the loss of face. In the positive politeness strategy, the speaker tries to please the addressee so that he can maintain the cooperative principle while in the negative politeness strategy the speaker tends not to disturb the addressee so that the addressee's face is secure. The fifth strategy involves things not to be said because the risk of loss of face is too great.

The politeness strategy is often contrasted to the impoliteness strategy where FTA is emphasized rather than avoided. The following table shows different strategies of impoliteness as described by Culpeper.

Table1. *The categories of constraint violation of the "General Strategy of Impoliteness."*

Violation of Maxim (expressed in an imperative mood):	Related pair of maxims	Label for the maxim violated	Typical speech-act type(s)
(M1) give an unfavorable value to O's wants	Generosity / Tact	Generosity	Refusing, threatening
(M2) give a favorable value to S's Wants		Tact	Ordering, demanding
(M3) give an unfavorable value to O's Qualities	Approbation / Modesty	Approbation	Insulting, complaining, telling off
(M4) give a favorable/high value to S's Qualities		Boasting, being	complacent
(M5) give an unfavorable/low value to S's obligation to O	and apologies	Obligation (to O)	Withholding thanks or apologies
(M6) give a favorable/high value to O's obligation to S(to S)		Obligation	Demanding thanks
(M7) give an unfavorable/low value to O's opinions		Agreement	Disagreeing, contradicting
(M8) give an favorable/high value to S's Opinions	Feeling	Opinion reticence	Being opinionated
(M9) give an unfavorable/low value to O's feelings		Sympathy	Expressing antipathy to O
(M10) give a favorable/high value to S's feelings		Feeling reticence	Grumbling, grousing

In conversational exchanges of joke, both politeness and impoliteness strategies are often used altogether for the participants often play different roles. The main purpose of the conversational joke is to entertain audience or to produce laughter (Fedfern: 2008). The typical characteristics of joke show the jabs i.e. introductory part of the joke, and punches i.e. the laughter-causing part of the joke (Attardo: 1994) (Chiaro: 2010). The jabs invite the audience to have shared understanding of a thing, which normally double or multi-interpretable case (Berger: 1993) (Cheang: 2006) (Ortega: 1989). The punches bring the audience to a certain understanding and let them conveyed in different meanings (Raskin 1944) (Bucharia: 2004).

3. METHOD

The qualitative data in the form of Javanese jokes in a puppet shadow performance are taken from the internet and then they are transcribed into a text and translated into English for the sake of discussion. Their jabs and punches are described to show the funny aspects of the jokes. The politeness and impoliteness strategies are overviewed and discussed to find out some characteristics of the Javanese conversational jokes.

4. DISCUSSION

In discussing the Javanese jokes from the point of view of the joke quality and from the point of view of politeness strategy, the following table may help us understand the case. The table presents the conversational exchanges of Javanese jokes, which then are translated into English. After that classification of joke jabs and punch is given followed by classification of (im)-politeness strategies. Table 2 deals with data taken from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cVcdDRTLg0

Table2. Data of joke 1 (J1) and their classification of joke elements and (im)-politeness strategies

Conversational exchanges (Javanese) strategy	English translation	Jab and punch	Politeness and impoliteness
07.48 A – <i>Kupingmubudheg</i> .(1)	You are deaf.	Jab	Insulting (impoliteness)
B – <i>Ora isaakutetepkrungu</i> .(2)	It’s impossible. I still can hear.	Jab	Refusing (impoliteness)
A – <i>Tenantaktakoni</i> . (3)	Sure? I am asking you now.	Jab	Demanding (impoliteness)
B – <i>Iya</i> . (4)	Yes.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
A – <i>Jenengmusapa?</i> (5)	What’s your name?	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Kirun</i> . (6)	Kirun.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
A – <i>Umurmupira?</i> (7)	Your age?	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Papat lima</i> . (8)	Four five.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
A – <i>Alamat?</i> (9)	Address?	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Jawa</i> . (10)	Java.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
A – <i>Emememem?</i> (11)	Hem hemhemhem?	Jab	Boasting (impoliteness)
B – <i>Ha ha</i> (12)	Er er	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
A – <i>Budheg... budheg....budheg</i> (13)	Deaf ... deafd deaf	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
B – <i>Apa sing mburi</i>	What? The last word		
<i>Em...em....em</i> (14).	hem...hem...hem....	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
A – <i>Liyanekrungu. Sing rkrungukowe</i> .(15)	Others hear. You did not hear.	Punch	Disagreeing (impoliteness)
08.19 repeats
08.35 B – <i>Asem ki. Kowe</i> (16)	Shit. You?	Jab	Insulting (impoliteness)
A – <i>Ya</i> . (17)	Yes.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Jenengmusapa?</i> (18)	What’s your name?	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
A – <i>Marwata</i> . (19)	Marwata.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Umure?</i> (20)	Age?	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
A – <i>Seketpapat</i> . (21)	Fiftyfour.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Omahe?</i> (21)	Address?	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
A – <i>Negara Jawa</i> . (22)	A place. Java.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Em...em....em....</i> (23)	Hem...hem....hem...	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
A – <i>Anakkutelu</i> . (24)	My children are three.	Punch	Bally (politeness)
B – <i>Em...em....em....</i> (25)	Hem...hem...hem...	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
A – <i>Wedokelolorolanangesiji</i> (26)	Two daughters and one son.	Punch	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Ra ngenah. Em...em....em....</i> (27)	You don’t answer. Hem....hem....hem....	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
A – <i>Sing siji wis sekolah....</i> (28)	One is studying.	Punch	Baldly (politeness)
B – <i>Iki ora genah Blas. Em..em..</i> (29)	You don’t understand at all. Hem..hem	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
A – <i>Sing siji wis omah-omah</i> (30)	The other has been married.	Punch	Baldly (politeness)
09.16 B – <i>Anakmumodarkarepmu</i>	Your children died, not my business.	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
<i>Wong akuoratakonem....em...</i>	I don’t ask any question Hem...hem..	Punch	Baldly (politeness)
<i>Anakkuteluumurengene ..telek</i> (31)	My children are three.. the age ... shit.	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)

From the table above the joke presents jabs (1-11) i.e. introductory setting and punch (12-15) funny aspects which are followed by laughter. The funny aspect makes use of desired miscommunication. The same case happens to the succeeding parts, which make use of the same aspect but the second person is successful in insulting the first person.

Politeness speaking, the politeness and impoliteness strategies are employed in the conversational exchanges. As jokes are desired to produce laughter scarifying face is necessary. That is why both politeness and impoliteness are present.

Now let us see the following joke, which is found in the internet <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hg49objZ7Jg>. The joke also contains jabs and punches, which followed by laughter. The joke employs the face or self esteem of the interlocutors. For the politeness and impoliteness strategies the case is just the same as found in the previous joke.

Table3. Data of joke 1 (J2) and their classification of joke elements and (im)-politeness strategies

Conversational exchanges strategy	English translation	Jab and punch	Politeness and impoliteness
08.00	A – <i>Taksawang sampean ki kaya blandarnjeronika</i> .(1)of wood inside there.	Jab	Insulting (impoliteness)
	B – <i>Ora masalah pancendhagelan bentuke kaya blandar</i> . <i>Ngapa?</i> (2)	Jab	Expressing
antipathy (impoliteness)	A – <i>Tapibengi kidhalange bentuke kaya kontener</i> . (3)	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
	C – <i>Lara atimukowe</i> . (4)	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
(impoliteness)	B – <i>Ben, yendhagelankayablandarki?</i> (5)	Jab	Being opinionated
	C – <i>Justrumalah bersyukur nggihta?</i> (6)	Jab	Disagreeing (impoliteness)
	B – <i>Besyukursakandi? Dhagelandiunekne kayablandar</i> . (7)	Jab	Disagreeing (impoliteness)
	C – <i>Aja nyawang kayunenuwun sewu</i> . Nggih. (8) Yes.	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
	B – <i>Kaya blandarkoweweruhmburiora?</i> (10)	Jab	Disagreeing (impoliteness)
	C – <i>Diturokneora ana sing nyawang ningdinyangwongreganelarang</i> . (11)	Jab	Insulting (impoliteness)
	B – <i>Hoh...</i> (12)	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
	C – <i>Kuwikayulho, mingdiglethake dinyanglarang, nek kowengglethak sapa sing gelemnganyangbathang kaya kowe, orabersyukur</i> . (13)	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
	B – <i>Koweberartimbandhingkeaku kaya kayu</i> (14).	Punch	Insulting (impoliteness)
	C – <i>Nek kowe karo tawon isih aji tawon</i> .(15)	Punch	Disagreeing (impoliteness)
	B – <i>Wong kewanromenungsa ki drajate dhuwurmenungsalho</i> . (16)	Jab	Insulting (impoliteness)
	C – <i>Tawonkae yen madunedikumpulnesak botolreganetelungatusseket</i> . a bottle can cost 350 thousands. You	Punch	Demanding (impoliteness)
	<i>Madumuklumpuknasakbotol. Sapa sing arepwaninuku?</i> (17)		
	B – <i>Tandhonenseminggurakkecing</i> . (18)	Punch	Demanding (impoliteness)
09.23	<i>Suwe-suwekoknjijiki</i> (18)	Jab	Bally (politeness)

The third joke as found in <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAt03kdccCY> involves adult materials. Although there is no dirty words, the locution *emut*, which means remember is interpreted as sucking by the addressee (2) of table 4. The use of language can be comprehended by both the speaker and the hearers so that there is laughter. The politeness and impoliteness strategies are actively employed in the joke.

Table4. Data of joke 1 (J3) and their classification of joke elements and (im)-politeness strategies

Conversational exchanges strategy	English translation	Jab and punch	Politeness and impoliteness
05.55	A – <i>mbokeling, emut</i> . (1)	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
	B – <i>Kowekokkesusuarep</i>(2) Oh, don't be in a hurry to ...	Punch	Being opinionated (impoliteness)
	A – <i>Ngapa, kupingebudhegwongemut kok</i> . (3) deaf, eh.	Jab	Demanding (impoliteness)
	C – <i>Apa? Aku kokanggepmbang gula pa piye? Aku tokanggeppermen pa</i>	Punch	Baldly (politeness)

	<i>piye?</i> (4) A – <i>mBokeling nek orangertiemut ki eling.</i> (5)	Remember, if you don't know the word <i>emut</i> means <i>eling/remember.</i>	Jab	Baldly (politeness)
06.24	B – <i>Kuwijenengebantal dawa. Guling</i> (6)	That means a long pillow.	Bolster. Punch	Being opinionated (impoliteness)

From the above mentioned discussion some points can be taken out in the conclusion.

5. CONCLUSION

Politeness and impoliteness strategies are mutually found in Javanese jokes. This is due to the fact that the interlocutors try to dominate the conversation. Like any other jokes, Javanese jokes also consist of jab and punch as the elements producing funny feelings. The jab and punch employ different illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts of a locution. Adult material is hidden in the illocutionary acts. It prevents from being received by children.

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