Positive Politeness in "James Corden on Final Week of the Late Late Show" Video

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzed positive politeness strategies using Brown & Levinson (1987) theory in the video "James Corden on Final Week of The Late Late Show." A descriptive qualitative method and Sugiyono (2013) observational approach was employed. The researcher followed a systematic process that included watching the video, identifying positive politeness utterances, and categorizing them based on the 15 strategies proposed by Brown & Levinson. The analysis revealed a total of 27 instances of positive politeness. The fifth strategy, seeking agreement, was the most frequently observed, appearing 14 times. This strategy often involved responses that affirmed or agreed with the speaker's statements, contributing to a harmonious and cooperative interaction. Other identified strategies included exaggerating (found once), intensifying interest to the hearer (found twice), avoiding disagreement (found four times), presupposing or raising or asserting (found four times), and joking (found twice). Exaggeration was seen when Jimmy enthusiastically responded "Absolutely" instead of a simple "yes." Intensifying interest was demonstrated through James's father's captivating storytelling, which engaged Jimmy's curiosity. Avoiding disagreement was evident when James chose a vague response to Jimmy's comment about his middle name. Presupposing, raising, or asserting was used by James with filler words like "you know" to create a sense of shared understanding. Joking was exemplified by Jimmy's humorous introduction to James, which entertained the audience. The remaining nine strategies from Brown & Levinson's framework were not observed in the data. This study provides insights into the use of positive politeness in media discourse, highlighting the practical applications of these strategies in maintaining positive social interactions.

Key words: Positive Politeness; Descriptive Qualitative Method; Observational Method

INTRODUCTION

Communication is known as one of the most important aspects of human life. It is something that cannot be avoided by any human being. As social beings, humans are predestined to live in society and interact with others by communicating. Communicating with each other is to express ideas and opinions or to give suggestions. Haunts (2019) stated that communication is used to establish connections with others and demonstrate genuine interest in what is being said. As a result, communication can help humans build relationships in their daily activities. In communication, not all meanings from utterances can be directly seen from the form of the utterance itself. Sometimes, there are other meanings that are not stated directly in the utterance. These meanings are called implied meanings, which are related to context. Context is known as the meaning of a sentence that differs from the form of the sentence itself, where the meaning of the sentence does not follow the form of the sentence. In addition, learning context is very important to understand the implied meaning of the speaker.

In linguistics, there is a field that discusses the learning of context, called pragmatics. The concern of pragmatics is in understanding the meaning from the speaker's utterance in order to use the appropriate way to convey messages. Yule (2010) explained that the study of context is the main concern of pragmatics, which is a part of linguistics. Kasper & Kulka (1993) also explained pragmatics as a field that can help people understand what other people want and how they speak through utterances that Contain context. Therefore, understanding the context of utterances is very important in communication.

Besides understanding the context, applying politeness in communication is also very important. Yule (2010) stated that politeness is an act of being aware of the face of another person. It deals with the speaker's ability to address the audience politely in order to avoid being interrogated by them. Additionally, Brown & Levinson (1987) stated that politeness is an attempt to make up for insults to a person's self-worth or to successfully assert good societal values in social interactions. Politeness can be a way to avoid conflict with other people in conversation (Watts, 2005).As a result, by implementing politeness in our conversation, the possibility of conflict can be reduced due to the understanding of people's face.

In the study of politeness, it is divided into four categories: positive politeness, bald on record, off record, and negative politeness. This research focuses on positive politeness, specifically using Brown & Levinson (1987) fifteen strategies for analysis. Positive politeness, which conveys friendliness, includes strategies such as exaggerating, joking, giving reasons, assuming reciprocity, and intensifying interest. It also involves using in-group identity markers, seeking agreement, avoiding disagreement, and showing knowledge of the listener's desires. Additionally, positive politeness can be expressed by presupposing, raising, or asserting, offering or promising, being optimistic, noticing the listener, involving

both speaker and listener in activities, and giving gifts like goods, understanding, sympathy, and cooperation. These methods highlight the diverse forms positive politeness can take.

Due to the occurrence of positive politeness in conversation, many instances of positive politeness can be found in various media, such as television news, Instagram, Facebook, newspapers, and YouTube videos. In this research, the researcher chose YouTube as the tool for finding positive politeness phenomena. The purpose of this research is to analyze the application of positive politeness strategies within the selected YouTube video. By examining how the interviewer and James Corden as a guest employ these strategies during their interactions on the video, the study aims to understand how positive politeness functions in a real-life media context. Specifically, the research seeks to identify and categorize the fifteen positive politeness strategies proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987) within the video, providing a detailed analysis of how these strategies are utilized to foster friendly and engaging communication.

Ultimately, this research aspires to enhance the comprehension of positive politeness strategies in spoken discourse, offering valuable insights for linguists, communication scholars, and media professionals. By examining the practical implementation of these strategies in a popular talk show, the study underscores the importance of politeness in fostering effective and harmonious communication in various contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Study

There are three previous studies found related with this research, first study is from Shanti Manipuspika & Sudarwati (2017) the study examines the politeness strategies used by students in text messages to their lecturers in the English Study Program at the Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya Malang, Indonesia. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the researchers analyze the text messages according to Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory. The findings reveal that students employ various politeness strategies, including both positive and negative politeness, but none use the off-record strategy. The study also finds no significant difference in the strategies used when texting junior versus senior lecturers, indicating that seniority does not influence the students' choice of politeness strategies. Interviews with students suggest that their writing style and word choices can negatively affect lecturers' feelings, highlighting the importance of careful language use in academic communication. Second is from Novita Sari & Sutopo (2024), this research investigates the positive politeness strategies employed by characters in the movie "Spiderman: Far from Home," guided by Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory. The study aims to identify the different positive politeness strategies used, determine the most dominant strategy, and examine the factors influencing their use. Using a qualitative approach, the researchers analyze

dialogue from scenes exhibiting positive politeness. The findings reveal eight positive politeness strategies, with "Observing, attending to the listener" being the most prevalent, accounting for 15.9% of the 37 instances observed. The study also identifies two main factors influencing the use of positive politeness: reward and specific circumstances, which include social distance, relative power, and the degree of imposition. The last previous study is from Fuad (2022), this study investigates the pragmatic politeness strategies, as outlined by Brown and Levinson, used by two sixth-semester English department students during their discourse analysis classroom presentations. Despite extensive research on politeness in contemporary pragmatics, there is a limited focus on English students' politeness strategies, necessitating further exploration. Data was collected through observation and recording, and analysed using techniques of data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion. The findings reveal that during the opening activities, the presenters predominantly employed positive politeness strategies, such as greeting and thanking expressions, followed by bald on-record strategies, including task-oriented requests and alerts. Positive politeness strategies were the most frequently used, while negative politeness and off-record strategies were not observed.

This research and the other studies focus on analysing positive politeness strategies using Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory and employ qualitative approaches to examine communication in various contexts. They all emphasize the importance of understanding situational context in analysing politeness strategies. However, there are key differences. This research analyses a YouTube talk show, while the other studies focus on academic text messages, movie dialogues, and classroom presentations. This variation in data sources and settings influences the types and frequency of politeness strategies observed. This research may uncover different dominant strategies and factors influencing politeness due to the unique dynamics of a talk show. These differences highlight the unique contributions of each study to the understanding of politeness strategies in diverse communication contexts.

Pragmatics

Understanding the context of a sentence when speaking to someone else is crucial for effective communication. In linguistics, pragmatics is one of the scopes that examines context as the main concern of the study. Trosborg (1995) explained pragmatics focuses on how people interpret the context of language use in various contexts. Kasper & Kulka (1993) also stated pragmatics which is defined as the study of the context or people's intentions while using language to form utterances or sentences. On the other hand, Yule (2010) also stated pragmatics as the study of understanding implied meaning in conversation. In addition, pragmatics is very important to be studied in our life. Both benefits and drawbacks might come from studying pragmatics. When learning a language, pragmatics can be helpful since it allows one to infer what other people are trying to say, make assumptions about their intents or aims, and identify the different acts (such as requests) individuals make when speaking. On the other side, a major drawback is how challenging it is

to regularly and impartially assess all these human conceptions. Some inferences about people's wants based on what they say are not always accurate. This is so that each person can express their unique personality and communication style. As a result, a greater comprehension of pragmatics is required to better grasp the communication situation, such as by deeper learning at politeness from a pragmatic scope.

Politeness

An act of being polite to reduce the possibility of offending the other people is called politeness. The definition of politeness according to Brown & Levinson (1987) is an act of rewarding recipient's good side, his abiding wants that his wish (or the action, purchase, or value it results in) should be regarded as desirable. Watts (2005) also defines politeness as a study that emphasizes polite speech directed at the recipient's positive face. According to a principle called modesty, people seek to safeguard their self-image by using facial-based concepts. Everybody has an emotional and social sense of who they are that they want to be shared with others, and this is what the word "face" refers to as. The goal of being polite is to prevent antagonism in order to avoid offending other people, to make everyone feel free and at ease around one another, or to reduce face-threatening behaviors (FTAs). A face-threatening behavior is one that jeopardizes another person's perception of themselves.

In politeness study, there are 4 types of politeness divided by Brown & Levinson (1987), they are:
1) Bald on record, where it is imperative to make the communicative part of a statement obvious and speech is like a request made directly to another person. In other terms, a bald note is when a request is made directly. In the crudest recorded utterances, the imperative form is utilized without any refinement. 2) Positive politeness is known as a compensation that emphasizes the recipient's positive attributes and their steadfast desire for their wish (or the action, purchase, or value that results from it) to be accepted as desirable. It focuses on people's smiling faces, which frequently imply camaraderie and emphasize that both speakers have goals. 3) Negative politeness, known as a face-saving endeavor, that one sees on the faces of the negative types. It highlights the significance of others' time and concerns while also apologizing for any interruptions or compulsion that may have occurred. The need of the other person to be valued is strongly understood by speakers. However, the speaker thinks that by communicating in a similar manner to the listener, he can become a better person. In this etiquette, a person's negative face is more frequently displayed than his happy face. Techniques for negative behavior conceal courteous faces. centered on someone who frequently exhibits peculiarities and has an unattractive appearance. 4) Off record, which employs the most oblique language, lessens the speaker's capacity to impress the listener. Although it is not necessary to beg for anything, one can decide to do so. Others weren't immediately instructed in the strategy. One could present that statement as unusual. If this

strategy works as an if statement, it may or may not be communicated rather than expressed upfront.

Positive Politeness Strategies

In positive politeness study, there are 15 strategies of positive politeness divided by Brown & Levinson (1987) which divided into 3 broad mechanisms, they are:

a. Claiming common ground 1) noticing strategy applies speaker's ability to understand hearer's condition. Speaker must be able to know what hearer wants him to know, such as hearer's interest to something and also any kinds of things that hearer wants speaker to notice. Usually, speaker shows what noticed by him by giving compliment to show good impression. 2) exaggerating intonation, stress, and other prosodic elements as well as intensifying modifiers are used in this strategy. Speaker exaggerates something to make it look more attractive to the listener. 3) intensify interest to hearer, in this strategy, speaker shows his interest or his wants by telling a good story to the conversation and try to pull hearer to the story which is being talked in order to get hearer's interest. In making the story, speakers use narrative to the conversation. 4) use in-group identity marker, In this strategy, speaker use many forms of call word to address hearer in order to get closer and building deeper relationship with them. Speakers can use address forms, dialect, slang and also ellipsis as the identity markers.

5) seeking agreement, Positive politeness can be communicated while using the speaking approach for safely reaching consensus. By using this strategy, speaker is able to visualize situations in which he or she would concur with a remark about the issue that is appropriate for the listener. The agreement may take the shape of repetition and safe topics. 6) avoiding disagreement, this strategy focuses on how people react when others undertake actions that need approval, even though those who have agreements may have different views or ideas. Avoiding disagreement can be done in 4 ways, first is token agreement where the speaker pretends to concur with the listener. Second, pseudo agreement that is made by using the conjunction "then" to draw conclusions. Third, white lies where the speaker deceives the listener to avoid requests. And fourth, hedging opinions where the speaker pretends to be unsure of his own opinion to conceal his disapproval. 7) presupposing or raising or asserting, the hearers share the speaker's interests, convictions, and ideas. This strategy engages listeners in the conversation by using small talk. Pronouns are a conversation-starting device that speakers can utilize. 8) joke, in talks, the humor feature can be used to highlight commonalities in origins or ideals. The speaker can lessen the likelihood of face-threatening actions by giving jokes.

b. Convey that the speaker and hearer are the cooperator 9) assert or presuppose the knowledge of speaker and concerning of what hearer wants, the speaker is showing support by emphasizing that they are aware of the listener's private information. Additionally, the speaker expresses a cooperation to follow the speaker in an effort to communicate what the listener wants. By offering the audience a second option,

the speaker can get hearer's positive face. 10) offering or promising, in order to lessen potential threats and to demonstrate that the two parties are cooperating, speakers can make promises or offers to the audience. Speakers might guarantee their audience will get something. This strategy demonstrates the speaker's sincere interest in granting the listener's requests. 11) being optimistic is a great way to communicate. Because the speaker has a commitment that results from the listeners' collaboration and listener will have faith in the speaker. 12) Include both speaker and hearer into the activity where in this strategy, speaker use the inclusive form of the verb "let's" or the pronoun "we" to make the listener feel appreciated as a friend or group member who can assist in gaining the listener's positive face. 13) Giving or asking for reason, the speakers use this strategy to demonstrate cooperation with speech partners by providing or suggesting reasons in order for the listener to grasp what the speaker wants. As a result, the audience concurs with the speaker's justification for making it. 14) Assume or assert reciprocity, cooperation between speakers and speech partners can also be sought or coerced by showing the reciprocal rights or obligations reached between speakers and speech partners.

c. Fulfill hearers' want for some X (Things) 15) Give gifts to hearer, the speaker might preserve the listener's goodwill by granting one of their wishes. This strategy can be applied by offering not only material goods but also cooperation, empathy, and understanding.

METHOD

Design and Samples

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method to analyze social phenomena using Sugiyono (2013) observational approach. Creswell (2014) states that qualitative methods explore, understand, and explain social processes. The study analyzed 15 positive politeness strategies in the YouTube video "James Corden on Final Week of The Late Late Show." The sample for this study consisted of specific interactions and dialogues from the video, selected for their relevance to positive politeness strategies. By focusing on a media context, particularly a popular talk show, the research aimed to explore how politeness strategies are employed in public, high-stakes communication settings. The video was transcribed, and each instance of positive politeness was identified and categorized according to the 15 strategies.

Instrument and Procedure

Data collection for this study involved watching the selected YouTube video, "James Corden on Final Week of The Late Late Show," and identifying instances of positive politeness utterances. Relevant data from these instances was then gathered and categorized based on Brown and Levinson's 15 strategies of positive politeness. Utterance was analyzed for its content and context to determine the specific strategy being employed. The coding scheme helped to organize the data

and facilitate the identification of patterns in the use of positive politeness. The procedure for data collection involved multiple viewings of the video to ensure thoroughness. Each positive politeness utterance was quoted and relevant contextual information was noted. After completing the data collection process, the researchers conducted a detailed analysis of the coded data. This analysis involved examining the frequency of each positive politeness strategy, as well as the context in which they were used.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the researcher applied Brown & Levinson (1987) theory of positive politeness, which comprises 15 strategies. These strategies were utilized to examine the YouTube video "James Corden on Final Week of The Late Late Show," serving as the data source for this research. The findings will be presented in two formats: a table summarizing all occurrences and an explanation of one representative example for each strategy.

Table 1. Table of occurrences of positive politeness strategies

No.	Positive Politeness Strategies	Frequency
1	Noticing	0
2	Exaggerating	1
3	Intensify interest to hearer	2
4	Use in group identity marker	0
5	Seeking agreement	14
6	Avoiding disagreement	4
7	Pressuposing, raising, asserting	4
8	Joke	2
9	Assert or presuppose	0
10	Offering or promising	0
11	Be optimistic	0
12	Include both speaker and hearer into activity	0
13	Giving or asking for reason	0
14	Assume or assert reciprocity	0
15	Fulfill hearer wants for some X	0
	Total	27

(Brown & Levinson, 1987)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following section details the occurrences of positive politeness strategies identified in the data source:

a. Exaggerating
The occurrence of the second strategy called exaggerate was found in 1 of 27 data. The explanation of the data found can be seen below:

> *James: So, if I grow this beard, can I come back and host this show?*
> *Jimmy: Absolutely.*

From the statement above, it can be seen that Jimmy used the word "Absolutely" to answer James as the sign of allowing James to come back to the show. From the word "Absolutely", we can see that Jimmy exaggerate the word to answer James question from instead of just saying "yes". This exaggeration adds emphasis and enthusiasm to his agreement, making it more engaging and positive. By exaggerating his response, Jimmy not only affirms James' question but also adds a touch of humor and warmth to the interaction, enhancing the overall positive tone of the conversation.

b. Intensify interest to hearer
The occurrence of the third strategy called intensify interest to hearer was found in 2 of 27 data. One of the explanations can be seen below:

> *James' dad: So, what, what happened was when my grandfather was born, his auntie had to take him to be christened because his mum was poor and, on the way, they'd heard that the boars had been defeated in the Battle of Kimberley and she said we're putting that in this lad's name. So, so he was Thomas Edwin Kimberly Corden, my dad was Cedric Kimberly Corden, Malcolm Kimberly Gordon, James Kimberly Corden.*
> *Jimmy: So, it had gone the other way?*

From the conversation above, it can be seen that James father tried to show his own interest by contributing to the conversation in telling a good story in order to make people get interest to him. And his action is success because it shows Jimmy as the hearer asking him back as the sign of interest or curious to James' father story.

c. Seeking agreement
The occurrence of the fifth strategy called seeking agreement was found in 14 of 27 data One of the explanations of the data found can be seen below:

> *James: we just show, just now finished the show.*
> *Jimmy: Yeah.*

The data includes instances where Jimmy seeks agreement with James by responding affirmatively to his statements. For example, when James mentions that they have just finished the show, Jimmy responds with a simple "Yeah," indicating his agreement and alignment with James's statement. This strategy of seeking agreement helps to maintain a harmonious and cooperative interaction between the speakers, enhancing the overall positive atmosphere of the conversation.

d. Avoiding disagreement

The occurrence of the sixth strategy called avoiding disagreement was found in 4 of 27 data. One of the explanations of the data found can be seen below:

Jimmy: I learned also that your middle name is Kimberly which would have made you Jimmy Kimberly which would have been weird.
James: I didn't even think of that. It is, that is my middle name my middle name is James Kimberly Corden.

In this instance, Jimmy avoids disagreement with James by making a lighthearted comment about James's middle name, Kimberly, which could have been "weird" if his first name was also Kimberly. Instead of directly disagreeing with James, Jimmy uses humor to deflect any potential disagreement, maintaining a friendly and positive tone in the conversation.

e. Presupposing or raising or asserting

The occurrence of the seventh strategy called presupposing or raising or asserting was found in 4 of 27 data. One of the explanations of the data found can be seen below:

James: Yeah, that's a good way of putting it it's sort of it is. You know you're just trying to soak it up really that's, that's what you're trying to do. It's, it's a, it's a, you know, it's only really people that have done shows like this and it's not just you and I the whole teams that that make these shows and you essentially create a found family really.

James uses the strategy of presupposing or raising or asserting by using filler words like "you know" to create a sense of shared knowledge and understanding between himself and the listener. By using these filler words, James subtly asserts his perspective and invites the listener to agree or align with his point of view, thereby enhancing the rapport and connection between them.

f. Joke

The occurrence of the eighth strategy called joke was found in 2 of 27 data. One of the explanations of the data found can be seen below:

Jimmy: Our first guest tonight is the host of what they call in his country a chat show. He came to America in a tugboat and went on to become a 12-time Emmy winner and the most irresponsible driver in LA. This is his final week of shows on CBS concluding with a prime time special called the last last Late Late Show with James Corden carpool karaoke special that's on Thursday at 10, followed by his last Late Late Show. Please welcome, James Corden!

Jimmy uses humor to entertain James and the audience by joking about James's arrival in America on a tugboat and his reputation as the most irresponsible driver in LA. This joke lightens the mood and adds a playful element to the conversation,

eliciting laughter from the audience and creating a more enjoyable and positive interaction. Jimmy's use of humor in this context serves to entertain and engage the audience, contributing to the overall positive atmosphere of the show.

This study's analysis of positive politeness strategies within the context of media discourse, specifically the "James Corden on Final Week of The Late Late Show" video, offers significant insights into the practical application of these strategies in public communication. By examining the use of Brown and Levinson's (1987) fifteen strategies for positive politeness, this research contributes to a growing body of work on how politeness strategies are used to maintain social harmony in various communicative settings.

The study provides a novel contribution by focusing on a talk show setting. While previous studies like those by Novita Sari and Sutopo (2024) analyzed positive politeness in movie dialogues and Fuad (2022) focused on academic presentations, this study uncovers how the dynamics of a live media context—characterized by high stakes and public visibility—impact the use of positive politeness strategies. The talk show setting, unlike the academic or cinematic contexts explored in other studies, involves spontaneous, unrehearsed dialogue that can reveal more organic uses of positive politeness. The finding that seeking agreement is the most frequent strategy (14 out of 27 instances) may reflect the host's desire to maintain a sense of mutual understanding and cooperation with the guest, a dynamic unique to interactive media discourse. This study also highlights strategies that were notably absent, such as offering or promising, being optimistic, and giving reasons, which suggests that certain strategies may not be as relevant or necessary in a talk show setting. Unlike other contexts, the goal of a talk show is to entertain and engage rather than to resolve conflicts or make explicit requests, which could explain the lack of certain strategies.

The findings of this study have practical implications for media professionals and communication scholars. Understanding how positive politeness strategies operate in high-profile media interactions can inform the development of more effective communication tactics in public speaking, journalism, and broadcast media. Given that politeness strategies can reduce conflict and promote cooperative communication (Yule, 2010), media hosts and interviewers could benefit from intentionally incorporating these strategies to create a more engaging and amicable atmosphere for both guests and audiences. Moreover, this research offers valuable insights for linguistic pragmatics by showing how context shapes the use of politeness strategies. The unique environment of a talk show—with its blend of entertainment, humor, and public engagement—demonstrates how politeness strategies like exaggeration, humor, and avoiding disagreement can be used to foster positive interactions in live, unscripted situations. This adds a new dimension to politeness studies, particularly in media discourse, complementing prior research in academic and cinematic contexts.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the YouTube video "James Corden on Final Week of The Late Late Show" revealed 27 instances of positive politeness strategies. These included one instance of exaggerating, two of intensifying interest, fourteen of seeking agreement, four of avoiding disagreement, four of presupposing or raising or asserting, and two of joking. Nine strategies were not observed: giving reasons, being optimistic, offering or promising, noticing the hearer, using in-group identity markers, asserting knowledge of the hearer's wants, including both speaker and hearer in activities, assuming reciprocity, and fulfilling the hearer's wants. The most frequently occurring strategy was seeking agreement.

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