

## POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED BY TOBA BATAK SELLERS IN BANDUNG DISTRICT WEST JAVA, KOSAMBI AND CIROYOM TRADITIONAL MARKET; An Action Research of Language Analysis

Thompson R. Lingga, S.S., S.Sas., M.Hum.<sup>1</sup>, Nita Seraphine<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sastra Inggris Universitas Kebangsaan Republik Indonesia| [thomaslingga18@gmail.com](mailto:thomaslingga18@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Parahyangan| [nita.seraphine@unpar.ac.id](mailto:nita.seraphine@unpar.ac.id)

**Abstract.** This study deals with politeness strategies used by toba batak sellers in Kosambi and Ciroyom districts traditional market. The objectives of this study were (1) to describe the types of politeness strategies were used by Toba Batak sellers in West Java, (2) to investigate the type of politeness strategy was mostly used describe the reasons, (3) to describe the roles of politeness to Toba Batak society, and (4) to describe the implication of politeness strategies. The data of this study were the language of conversation between Toba Batak sellers and their buyers. This study applied descriptive quantitative method. The findings show that there are four types of Politeness Strategies used by Toba Batak Sellers in West Java district such as Dago and Kosambi traditional market, namely: Bald on record 4 utterances (2.53%), Off record 17 utterances (10.75%), Positive politeness 129 utterances (81.64%) and Negative politeness 8 utterances (5.06%). Positive politeness is the most dominant type of Politeness Strategies used by Toba Batak sellers in district West Java Bandung.

*Keywords: Politeness Strategies, Toba Batak Sellers, and west java*

### 1. Introduction

Human need other human in their life. During the process of communication, people think of polite or impolite words to use because politeness itself can support the communication smoothly. Watts (2003:9) state that human societies use communication strategies to avoid or minimize conflict, and increase comfort and understanding. While the way people do communication is different from another, it depends on the culture. Each culture influences the way its people talking as language is a part of culture. Culture complements all the aspects of human life.

Culture is the rule of law or the norms that bind human beings and social life. It means that human is not able to act at will, but must comply with the norms which contained within the society. Related to the language itself, there are norms or rules that must be adhered how to speak politely. Badaruddin (2013) said that Toba Batak gets stereotyped as "rough" people, especially in terms of narrative language. Toba Batak people have the attitude that an expansion is so strong that they pay less attention to other people's feelings. Whereas the Toba Batak has its own uniqueness. Historically, the Toba Batak ancients have rules of speaking. They are the attitude, addressee term, and metaphorical expressions. Samosir is selected as the object of research

because this area is a speech community, the community that respects the interaction between the speaker and hearer based on the norms of the community mores.

These research questions of the present study are; what types of politeness strategies were used by the Toba Batak sellers in Ciroyom and Kosambi traditional market; what type of politeness strategy was mostly used by the Toba Batak sellers in West java district; what were the roles of politeness to the Toba Batak society and that was the implication of politeness strategies to the Toba Batak society.

### ***Politeness Strategies***

Brown and Levinson (1987) state that politeness is showing awareness of another person's public self-image face wants. There are four types of politeness strategies, bald on record, off record-indirect strategies, positive politeness, and negative politeness Brown and Levinson (1987 : 91).

#### **1. Bald On Record**

Bald On Record is one of the four types of politeness strategies suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987 : 94-98) which provides no strategy is made to avoid an FTA. This strategy is commonly found in people who know each other very well, and are very comfortable in their environment.

For examples:

- a. "Help! (an Emergency); "Your pants are on fire!"
- b. "Leave it to me". "Put your coat away (request)"

#### **2. Off Record**

According to Brown and Levinson (1987 : 211-227), a communicative act is done off-record if it is done in such a way that it is not possible to attribute only one clear communicative intention to the act.

For examples:

- a. "This soup's a bit bland (Pass the salt)
- b. "What a boring movie!" (Let's leave)

#### **3. Positive Politeness**

Positive politeness is oriented toward the positive face of H, the positive self-image that he claims for himself. Positive politeness is approach-based; it "anoints" the face of the addressee by indicating that in some respect, S wants H's wants (e.g by treating him as a person whose wants and personality traits are known and liked).

For examples:

- a. "You must be hungry; it is a long time since breakfast. How about some lunch?"
- b. "Goodness, you cut your hair! By the way, I came to borrow some flour.

#### **4. Negative Politeness**

Negative politeness is oriented mainly toward partially satisfying (redressing) H's negative face, his basic want to maintain claims of territory and self determination.

For examples:

- a. "Can you play the piano?"
- b. "I need a comb".

### **Batak Toba**

Batak tribe consists of six parts, namely; Toba, Karo, Simalungun, Pak-Pak Dairi, Angkola and Mandailing. According to Sianipar (2012 : 10) Toba Batak is located in the northern district Tapanuli (*before expansion*). Each tribe has its own language. The factors that can affect their language are attitude, addressee term, and metaphorical expression.

#### **1. The Attitude and Daily Activity of Toba Batak**

An attitude is an expression of favor or disfavor toward a person. Generally, Toba Batak people are very extrovert and they do not like to hold grudges. Because of this character, many people have negative thinking with them. Sianipar (2012: 12-15) gives some examples of the attitude and daily activity of Toba Batak into eight parts; such as:

- a. Appreciate the principle of life "habatahon", the attention and commit the messages (Tona), agreement (Padan), and law (Uhum).
- b. The self-esteem is very high, dynamic, can be categorized as aggressive person, and do not want abused by others.
- c. In general, Toba people are extrovert and do not like to hold grudges.
- d. Toba Batak have high work spirit and willing to work hard.
- e. In principle, Toba Batak belong to members of the public who live work hand in hand.
- f. Toba Batak love to sing a song.
- g. Toba Batak like to speech and intelligent, do not shy / hesitant to express their idea.
- h. Mothers derived from Toba tribes loyal to their family.

#### **2. The Addressee Term in Batak Toba**

According to Yuka (2009), the only explicit information about functions of address terms is the explanation about "name and friendliness". In Japan, the addressee term influenced by social status of someone. Otherwise, addressee term is very important in Toba Batak, because it means the relationship among them. Sianturi (2012 : 45-47) states there are some common and close addresses in Toba Batak:

##### **a. Amang**

Amang is a father. This word is uttered by a son or a daughter to his/her father. Parents address their son too by saying "amang" that shows their love feeling. The word "amang" can also be used as a greeting to a younger man by a madam or a sir at the first introduction before they talk about family name further.

b. Inang

Inang is called of the daughter and the son to his/ her mother. The husband of father's sister is also our mother as "inang".

c. Pariban

Pariban (Boru Tulang) is the closest relation, the daughter of our mother's brother. The concept of an ideal marriage, according to Batak culture is the marriage between boru tulang (uncle's daughter) with anak namboru (aunt 'son).

### 3. Metaphorical Expressions in Batak Toba

By saying metaphorical expression, we do an action and speaking at once. Metaphorical expression is one of the etiquettes or norms to maintain politeness in the Toba Batak language. Furthermore, Sianturi (2012 : 48-51) describe some of metaphorical expressions in Toba Batak:

a. Pattun hangoluan, tois hamagoan,

*(Sikap hormat dan ramah mendatangkan kehidupan dan kebaikan; sikap ceroboh atau sombong(tidak tahu adat) membawa kematian/malapetaka).*

b. Sise mula hata, sungkun mula uhum, *(tegur awal bicara, tanya awal hukum).*

c. Martahuak manuk di taumbara ni ruma. Halak na pantun marama, idona saut martua, *(orang yang sopan berbapak, akan berumur panjang).*

## 2. Methods

This study was conducted by applying of descriptive quantitative that involved the description, analysis, and interpretation of conditions that exist within the topic. The data of this study were the language of conversation between Toba Batak sellers and their buyers. The subject were the sellers in Kosambi and Ciroyom traditional market, Bandung district within the period of 15, 16 and 18 of May 2015. The sellers were mostly selling some daily needs, clothing, shoes, and children toys. Fifteen sellers were taken from each week. Therefore, there were 30 conversations of the sellers to be analyzed. They are the native speaker of Toba Batak language.

The speech of the sellers and their buyers were recorded by visual and real observation. The instrument of the data was camera digital. The data were analyzed by the descriptive quantitative that finds the material about the types of Politeness Strategies by the following technique; transcribing the conversation into written, identifying the language of conversation, tabulating Politeness Strategies by using Brown Levinson theory, determining the most dominant type by using the formula, determining the implication of the most dominant type, and concluding the findings of the study.

### 3. Result and Discussion

The data of this study consisted of the conversations from the sellers, which were taken from 15, 16, 18 of May 2015. Each week was taken fifteen conversations of the sellers. Therefore, the data to be analyzed were thirty conversations. The types of politeness strategy that consist of four, appointed by Brown and Levinson are used by Toba Batak sellers in their communications. They are bald on record, off record, positive politeness, and negative politeness.

#### 1. Bald on record

a) *"Pitu puluh dua pe hu lehon na."*

("I will give you seventy two.")

b) *"buat ma da, dibereng hamu do na lagi martali ahu."*

("Pick them up, did you see that I have a work?")

In this type, the sellers insist that buyer may impose on sellers' negative face. This is mutually known to both seller and buyer, so no face redress is necessary. In cases of great urgency or desperation, redress would actually decrease the communicated urgency.

#### 2. Off record

a) *"Boha do Inong nuaeng?"*

("What about you, Mother?")

b) *"Boha hu baenon ku, Natua?"*

("What should I do, the parents?")

Sellers ask question with no intention of obtaining an answer. The Questions that leave their answer hanging in the air, implicated, may be used to do face threatening acts.

#### 3. Positive Politeness

a) *"Nion na bagak na."*

("Here's the better.")

b) *"On ma dongan na."*

("Here's the couple of that.")

The sellers notice of aspect of buyer's condition. They serve what the buyer's looking for, want or need of their goods. Anything which looks as though buyer would want, the sellers notice and approve of it.

#### 4. Negative politeness

a) *"Dang be di partawar-tawar on."*

("Can not be bargain anymore.")

b) *"Sarupa do harga na dua on."*

("Both of this have the same price.")

The sellers try to be indirect so there can be no misinterpretation of what they means. In this case, the sellers use understandable indirect speech acts.

### **Research Findings**

Having analysed the data and determining the types of politeness strategies, the results are presented as follow. The table shows that Toba Batak sellers used four types of politeness strategies. The number of utterances based on the strategies is 158. The total of bald on record strategy is 4 utterances, off record is 17 utterances, positive politeness 129 utterances, and negative politeness 8 utterances.

### **Table 2 : The Dominant Type of Politeness Strategies Used by Toba Batak Sellers**

The table presents the percentages of bald on record strategy (2.53%), off record (10.75%), positive politeness (81.64%), and negative politeness (5.06%). The dominant type of politeness strategies is positive politeness.

### **The Roles and Implication of Politeness to Toba Batak Society**

The assessment of politeness is how do we speak and with whom we speak. In essence, our politeness is our social ethics in the society. Politeness strategies give contribution to the sellers' utterances. Their utterances show their own politeness and how the sellers utter it to their buyer. Some of their utterances, politeness strategies that used by Toba Batak sellers in Ciroyom and Kosambi traditioanal market Bandung district are mostly shown by the using address term, avoid disagreement, and seek agreement. Then the sellers also attend to the buyer, they intensify or interest the buyer's need. These positive politeness strategies are used by Toba Batak sellers to make their utterances more polite. The choice of politeness strategies depends on the relationship between the sellers and their buyer. Positive politeness strategies are mostly used by the sellers with their buyer who want to pay attention, concern to each other or narrow the distance between them. In order to sell their goods efficiently it is essential to employ politeness strategies appropriately in certain situations in accordance with the purpose of communication.

## **4. Conclusions**

Having analyzed the data, it was concluded that the most exploited politeness strategy was positive politeness. It was 81.64 % out of 158 utterances. The sellers tended to exploit the politeness for some reasons: when the sellers' utterances were in understatement, ambiguity, vague, tautology, rhetorical question, and over generalization, they were used as the expression of politeness.



<http://e-journal.elatics.ukri.ac.id>

---

The sellers expressed the politeness because of their social status in the society. Generally, Toba Batak sellers express their politeness by using in-group identity markers. The types of politeness strategy used by Toba Batak sellers in their communications were bald on record, off record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. Positive politeness strategy is dominantly used because Toba Batak sellers take notice of aspect of buyer's condition, it indicates that the sellers are interested and to satisfy the buyer's wants. This strategy is used to soften the communication.

### **Acknowledgements**

We, finally, are indebted to our parents, and everybody surround us for their continuous support and encouragement for our pursuit.

## References

- Badaruddin. 2013. *Peta Konflik Bernuansa Suku, Agama, Ras, dan antar Golongan (SARA Dalam Masyarakat Plural di Sumatera Utara*. Makalah Seminar Antara Bangsa Cina Peranakan: Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Politik Universitas Sumatera Utara.
- Basaria, Ida. 2009. *Ungkapan Metafora*. Makalah Seminar Nasional BudayaEtnik III (ed) 11, Medan: Departemen Sastra Daerah.
- Best, J W. 2005. *Research in Education*. England Wood, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Brown, Penelope and Levinson, Stephen. C. 1987. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Chaer, Abdul. 2010. *Kesantunan Berbahasa*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Hadiz, Liza. 2007. *Traditional Markets in the Era of Global Competition*. Jakarta: SMERU. No 22, 1-36.
- Hambrick, D. C. 2007. The field of management's devotion to theory: Too much of a good thing? *Academy of Management Journal*, p.50(6).
- Hutabarat, Mikawati Indriani. 2012. Kesantunan Berbahasa Dalam Upacara Perkawinan Masyarakat Batak Toba. *Jurnal Sasindo*. Vol 1, No 01.
- Lakoff, Robin. 1975. *Language and Woman's Place*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Leech, Geoffrey N. 1983. *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1983. *Semantics*. New York: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Levinson, Stephen C. 1983. *Pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- Pieccci, Jean Stilwell. 1999. *Pragmatics*. Newyork: Routledge.
- Rahardi, Kunjana. 2005. *Pragmatik-Kesantunan Imperatif Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Sando, Talla. 2006. Politeness Strategies in Colloquial Cameroon English: Focus on Three Pragmatic Particles: *na, ya and eihn*. *Journal: Nordic Journal of African Studies*. 15(4): 536–544. B&K Language Institute, Cameroon.
- Sianipar, Bangarna. 2012. *Horas, Dari Batak Untuk Indonesia*. Jakarta: Perhimpunan Rumah Indonesia.
- Sihotang, Nelly S. 2010. *Kesantunan Imperatif Dalam Bahasa Batak Toba*, Skripsi: Fakultas Bahasa dan Sastra Universitas Sumatera Utara.
- Watts, Richard J. 2003. *Politeness. Key Topics in Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yuka, Akutsu. 2009. Positive Politeness Strategies in Oral Communication Textbooks: Focusing on Terms of Address. *The Economic Journal of Takasaki City University of Economics* vol.52 No.1 2009 pp.59-70.
- Yule, George. 2000. *Pragmatics*. Series Editor H.G. Widdowson. Oxford Introductions to Language Study. New York: Oxford University Press.