



### The Use of Politeness Strategies by Indonesian Vs Malaysian Student Debaters in the 2018 World Schools Debating Championship (WSDC)

Nurrahmah✉, Dwi Rukmini, Issy Yuliasri

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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#### Abstract

The aims of this study were to analyze the types of politeness strategies realized by student debaters and how the Indonesian Vs Malaysian student debaters used politeness strategies in the debate competition. The data of this research were taken from YouTube of debate competition video series namely “WSDC 2018 R2: Indonesia VS Malaysia.” The study used a descriptive qualitative method which was analyzed using the politeness strategies proposed by (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The subjects in this study were 6 student debaters (2 teams) from Malaysia and Indonesia who participated in the 2018 World Schools Debating Championship (WSDC). This study found that most of the student debaters used positive politeness strategies to deliver their arguments appropriately. There were four types of politeness strategies realized by the debaters. Sub-strategies of positive politeness were mostly used by Indonesian debaters. They used sub-strategies of positive politeness to keep the hearer's positive face, to safe opinions when delivering arguments clearly as the opposition team and make the preposition team agreed with their insight. Malaysians used off-record strategy dominantly. They used inviting implicatures to imply meanings.

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Correspondence Address  
Kampus Pascasarjana unnes, Semarang. Jl. Kelud  
Utara III Semarang 50237, Indonesia  
E-mail: nurrahmahridwan@gmail.com

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## INTRODUCTION

In any society, there are several rules and principles that guide how people to speak politely which refers to keep hearer's face. However, one of the rules is positive politeness in which it is an inevitable thing that is often done by people in a communication process. When the speaker says polite words, it is a characters reflected by speaker to addressee. We often use a strategy to maintain hearer's respective faces in social interaction. For instance, the awareness of how we modify the interaction in addressing the different types of listeners.

Politeness regarded a complex system for softening face-threatening acts. It is a crucial process to construct a politeness in order to incorporate into social relationship. Therefore, people have to acknowledge and show awareness of the face, the public self-image, the sense of self, and the addressee. It is in line with Glaser (2009) who defined that the speaker communicative competence deals with pragmatics.

As stated by Acheoah, John Emike & Ibileye, Gbenga (2016, p: 1) the focus of pragmatic theories from classical to contemporary times includes speech acts, contexts, shared knowledge and meaning (implicatures and pre-suppositions). Thus, other lexical differences often do not exist in the formal language such as please, excuse, thank you, etc. The exmple of expressions mostly do not used in the informal language (Enggins, 2004, p. 101).

The politeness strategy can be found in daily conversations and in debating events. nevertheless, one of the debates concerned in this study is an education debate competition. According to Al-Mahrooqi and Tabakow (2015, p. 418), the debate has a general meaning as argument or discussion about specific issues that evoke differences of opinion, calling to mind intense verbal exchanges in political contests. Politeness theory can help the students for selecting words when face- threatening may be faced when debate takes place. It requires

softening when language users try to develop politeness strategies to reduce face loss. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 92) categorized politeness into four politeness strategies; positive politeness strategies, negative politeness strategies, bald-on record strategies, off-record strategies.

Moreover, debate is the way which aims to build students' competitiveness and increase communicative competence and it is also as the spirit of implementation curriculum 2013. Thus, the debate competition focused in this research is a National School Debate Championship (NSDC) administered by the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. It aims to prepare students who will attend in the next competition. If the students successfully participate in that event and becomes as the winner, they will attend to an international level that is the World Schools Debating Championship (WSDC). To achieving communicative competence, this event provides a container to develop the potential of students, analytical thinking, creativity, solving the problem with their ideas.

Furthermore, the challenges faced by debaters may happen when they are implementing debate activities since few students confidently to express their rebuttal and compliment because of the lackness of politeness knowledge. For instance, in Unismuh Debater Club (UDC) of Muhammadiyah Makassar University. Based on my preliminary research by interviewing one lecturer and one student there, many students face difficulties when speaking English appropriately in debate for comprehension speaker's means about issues.

Politeness strategies are means to preserve at least the semblance of harmony and cohesion (Lakoff, 1990, p. 34). The lack of pragmatic competence may lead to a problem for the EFL learners who have speech act performance so that communication breakdown may occur. These strategies are expected to support students to express their ideas, arguments, judgments,

and disagreement naturally to achieve communicative competence.

Moreover, several previous studies have become background to support this study, such as the use of politeness strategies applied in the Qur'an and the representation of women in the Holy Qur'an (Al Momani, K., Migdadi, F., & Rabab'a, E., 2018), applied in a gendered political debate (Fracchiolla, B. 2011), debate show (Ali, R. M. S., & Tareq, N., 2018), reality talk show (Rudiansyah, R., & Rukmini, D., 2018). While, the use of politeness strategies applied in English Language Teaching (ELT) these are teachers' politeness as a predictor of students' self-esteem and academic performance (Uzair-ul-Hassan, M., & Farooq, S., 2017) and for motivating students to learn English (Elisdawati, Y., Husein, R., & Setia, E., 2018), and it built positive values in students, (Aulia N., K., 2017) were also used to support this study. Thus, there was also used politeness strategies analyzed in English Book that the comparison of politeness components between New Headway Intermediate Student's (Ibnus, N., & Mujiyanto, Y., 2018).

Based on the explanation above, the researcher focused on politeness strategies in a educational debate which has pedagogical implication to contribute to EFL. This statement was supported by Celce-Murcia (1995) who clarified that various components of communicative competence are interrelated. It indicates that politeness strategies are a part of strategic competence and debate is a part of discourse competence. Thus, both are necessary and to contribute for EFL learners specially, debaters.

The researcher was interested in evaluating the participants' pragmatic knowledge by their utterances. Those strategies are needed to help them speak English strategically and efficiently. In addition, these are to support students' performance for expressing their arguments, judgments, and disagreement naturally for achieving communicative competence. The purposes of debate competition (WSDC, 2018) are to improve student's english ability for expressing

arguments systematically and to increase critical-thinking, and strengthen the characters of students. This could help the Indonesian Vs Malaysian to deliver interpersonal meanings as debaters for increasing harmony and efficiency of language usages.

Therefore, this research aimed to identify the types of politeness strategies used by student debaters and how the Indonesian Vs Malaysian student debaters use politeness strategies in the 2018 World Schools Debating Championship.

Through the investigation, the researcher expected that this study could give pedagogical implications for both teachers and students to speak respectfully. We need discourse competence to speak appropriately and we need to understand the concepts of politeness to speak harmony structurally.

## METHODS

This researcher focused on the spoken text. The researcher analyzed the use of politeness strategies used by Indonesian Vs Malaysian student debaters to achieve communicative competence. The data of this research were taken from YouTube that video series of debate competition quoted WSDC 2018 R2: Indonesia VS Malaysia. The study used a descriptive qualitative method and analyzed used the politeness strategies proposed by (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

The subjects in this study were 6 student debaters (2 teams) from Malaysia and Indonesia who participated in the 2018 WSDC. The text of debate competition was observed, transcribed and analyzed. Meanwhile, the objects of this study were the types of politeness strategies realized by debaters and how they used it. There were five steps to analyze the data; transcribing within the spoken text (see in appendix 4.1) reading, categorizing, analyzing (see appendix 4.2) and triangulation. The researcher used investigator triangulation to make sure that valid and accurate data.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In this part, the researcher presented the result of the use of politeness strategies by Malaysian and Indonesia students in the World Schools Debating Championship 2018. The politeness strategies were found in the data as many as 686 (100%) times occurrences of the utterances by debaters that were divided into two groups consisted of Malaysian and Indonesian. Malaysian is proposition team and Indonesian is opposition team. As the reseacher classified above, it is realized by a proposition team as many as 295 (43%) times occurrences. the utterances contained all types of politeness strategies. While in the opposition team, it realized as many as 391 (57%) and contained all types of politeness strategies.

**Table 1.** bellow presented the analysis result of the politeness strategies found in Malaysian and Inonesianstudents debaters.

The Politeness Strategies Found in the Debate				
Students' Debaters	Malaysian		Indonesian	
	(P1,P2,P3)		(O1,O2,O3)	
Types of Politeness	Times	%	Times	%
Positive Politeness	161	54	255	65
Negative Politeness	43	14.5	52	13
Bald-on Record	32	11	40	10
Off-Record	59	20	44	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>9.7</b>

Based on table above, it was presented three debaters from Indonesian and three debaters from Malaysian as candidates. The researcher used a symbol P; P1, P2, P3 as preposition team from Malaysian and O; O1, O2, O3 from Indonesian as opposition team. It aimed to make clearly in classifying and made easier for readers to know the content of the table.

Furthermore, the debaters utterances were from the the internet which was transcribed by the researcher. Then, concerning the schematic structure analysis, it was shown in Appendix 2. The theme of the debate was "This house opposes the development of lethal

autonomous weapons". The text contained their knowledge about the accountability of weapons systems and perception of lethal autonomous weapons decrease accountability. Briefly, the debate theme concerned on the illegal use of weapon that infringed human rights.

**The Politeness Strategies Found in Malaysian Students Debaters**

In Malaysian, there were found 161 (54%) politeness strategies expressed by three speakers. The total of number found was 595 (7%) which was consisted of four types of politeness such as positive politeness was 161 (54%), negative politeness was 43 (14.5), Bald-on Record was 32 (11%), and off-Record was 59 (20%) times occurrence. Therefore, the most expressed strategy of politeness strategies in Malaysian students debaters was positive politenes. furthermore, The total number of politeness strategies expressed by P1 was 94 (16%), P2 was 103 (15%), and P3 was 98 (15%) times occurrence. Thus, the speaker who expressed politeness strategies among them was the second speaker or P2.

Furthermore, politeness strategies expressed by P2 was 103 (15%). Its total was included the four sub-category of politeness startaegies. They were positive politeness found 51 (1%), Negative politeness was found 17 (1%), Bald-on record was found 16 (1%), and Off record was found 29 (1%). The next sub-category was P3 and its total was 98 (15%) times occurrence. It consisted of positive politeness was found 56 (1%), Negative politeness was found 13 (1%), Bald on-record was found 12 (1%), and Off record was found 17 (1%) times occurrence. Meanwhile, P3 was the least speaker who used politeness strategies and the total of number found was P1 was 94 (16%). Its amount was included positive politeness was 54 (1%), negative politeness was 13 (1%), Bald on-record was 14 (1%), and Off record was 13 (1%). Thus, the sepaker who mostly used the positive politeness was P3.

Further, as it is figured in the table, P3 mostly used sub-strategies of politeness strategies than the others. It means P3 as a

speaker to conclude the debate from the topic that has been discussed. The sub-strategy of positive politeness mostly expressed was Conveying S & H are cooperators which was 46 (82%) times occurrence. It was followed by the sub-strategies claimed common ground which was occurred 10 (18%) and fulfilling Hearers' desires was not found.

### **The Politeness Strategies found in Indonesian students debaters**

In Indonesian students debaters, the total of number of politeness strategies expressed by the three speakers was 391 (9.7%) times occurrence. It was consisted of four sub-strategies such as positive politeness was found 255 (65%), negative politeness was found 52 (13%), Bald-on Record was found 40 (10%), and Off-Record was found 44 (11%) times occurrence. So, the strategy mostly expressed by Indonesian students debaters was positive politeness strategy.

Further, O3 expressed 200 (8%) politeness strategies times occurrence. It was consisted of four strategies such as positive politeness expressed 110 (1%), off-record strategy found 29 (1%), negative politeness strategies found 37 (1%), and bald-on record strategy as the least strategy found was 24 (1%). The next politeness strategy expressed by O1 was 116 (13%) times occurrence. The total of numbers was included the four sub-types category such as positive politeness was 95 (1%), bald-on record was found 11 (1%), off-record was found 7 (1%) and sub-strategies of negative politeness was 3 (1%) times occurrence. Meanwhile, O2 expressed 75 (20%), which was consisted of four sub-strategies. They were positive politeness was found 50 (1%), negative politeness was 12 (1%), Bald on-record 5 (1%), and Off record strategy was found 75 (20%). Therefore, the third speaker O3 mostly used politeness strategy and tended to use the positive politeness comparing with O1 and O2.

Further, as it is figured in the table, O3 is the most speaker use sub-strategies of politeness strategies than the others. It means O3 as a speaker to conclude the debate from the topic

that has been discussed. The sub-strategy of positive politeness mostly expressed was Conveying S & H are cooperators which was 86 (78%) times occurrence. It was followed by the sub-strategies claimed common ground which was occurred 23 (21%) and fulfilling Hearers' desires is the last sub-strategies which appeared only 1 (1%) times occurrence.

### **The Politeness Strategies Found in Malaysian and Indonesian Students Debaters**

The discussion of the politeness strategies analysis realized by debaters in 2018 World Students Debating Championship, it was showed by the table 4.3. It showed that there were 686 (100%) found in the utterances delivered by the debaters from Indonesian and Malaysian. The positive politeness strategy was the most found event among the four strategies. It indicated that the sub-strategy of positive politeness preferred employing by debaters. In other hand, the other strategies for making harmony in their utterances were described in table.

The table above showed the politeness strategies which was found in Malaysian and Indonesian students debaters. The politeness was included four sub-strategies such as positive politeness, negative politeness, Bald on-record, and Off record. In Malaysian, the most expressed sub-strategy was positive politeness 161 (54 %). It was followed by the off record 59 (20%) as the second mostly used. Then, negative politeness was 43 (14.5%) and the least sub-strategy used was Bald on-record which was 32 (11%). However, Indonesian students debaters also tended to use the positive politeness strategy which was found 255 (65%) times occurrence. Then followed by negative politeness was 52 (13%), Off record was found 44 (11%) and the least strategy used was Bald-on record which was found 40 (10%). Thus, based on the table, it could be concluded that the Indonesian students debaters mostly used positive politeness comparing with Malaysian students debaters. However, Malaysian students debaters used more politeness strategies than which was total 595 (7%) than Indonesian students debaters

which was 391 (9.7%). It could be seen in the total column.

### The Use of Politeness Strategies by Malaysian Students Debaters

The example of sub-strategies of positive politeness used by the student debaters which was presented in the dialogue within the texts, below:

(1)

**P1** : *The burden fact these preposition seeks to prove presentation based, it's simple. It's that a lethal autonomous weapon system makes wars.*

In the text 1, the situation happened when the speaker made the hearer to focus on its topic which was about House opposes the development of lethal autonomous weapons. In this case, the speaker gave an assumption about the topic and the factor caused by lethal autonomous weapon systems. The first statement was an opening debated delivered by the first speaker from preposition team. So, the speaker was delivering an argument or assume for stressing the topics through the utterance "*It's that a lethal autonomous weapon system makes wars*". The utterance was belong to positive politeness which was assumed by the speaker to show the sense interest topic of self. The speaker satisfied the hearer's positive face by noticing that hearers needed the information.

(2)

**P1** : *I am going to do this. Through two points presented in my speech.*

From text 2 above, the preposition team opened the debate by showing their optimistic and the speaker was delivering the arguments confidently. The speaker's positive face in delivering the topic will give positive impression to the hearer. thus, the utterance categorized as Positive politeness concerning directly. By saying "*I am going to do this*" referred to a positive face by the speaker for further improve the quality, value, or extent of her few arguments.

The example of sub-strategies of off-record expressed by the student debaters see in the texts, below:

(3)

**P1** : *I've three means stress to these topics. First of all, I want to show you why lethal autonomous weapons to be merciless? Secondly, I'm going to*

*talking about changing how self-learning moves on. Thirdly, I'm going to talk about the possibility and the rare check and peace of the catching.*

In text 3 showed that the Malaysian team gave some association clues to Indonesian team for deeper understanding. It could be seen in the utterance "I've three means stress to these topics". It meant that Malaysian constructed the argumentation to keep hearer perception suitable with speaker's opinion. She tried to minimize the imposition when she gave some clues for Indonesian debaters. So that they would have same focused based on perceptions as the speaker mentioned.

The example of sub-strategies of negative politeness employed by the student debaters see within in the texts, below:

(4)

**P2** : *I'm gonna move on to any argument while you're not into a state of fear within society.*

In the text 4 above stated that "*while you're not into a state of fear within society*". The speaker constructed the text because he wanted to deliver disagreement with showing pessimism to hearer. So, she expressed the utterance in negative usage. It had an implicatures meaning of disagreement by saying "*I'm gonna move on to any argument*". This strategy categorized as one of sub-strategies in negative politeness that was pessimistic. The sentence showed the negative face of the speaker expressed doubt explicitly. In this sentence, the speaker showed his hesitation regarding to the lethal autonomous weapons are not dangerous by using speech act contains maxim of relevance. It could be seen in the speaker's satisfaction as the preposition team position. It is stressing on they provided some argumentations that must be paid attention by hearer through using imperative form of hesitation.

The last commonly found in 2018 WSDC was the bald-on record strategy. It was because the gap among students debaters which was affected by their environment, such as different cultures or countries. For examples, politeness strategies expressed by the student debaters which was shown within in the texts, below:

(5)

**P1** : *You should think this encompasses all weapons systems in the military so for example,...*

In this text-5 occurred because the speaker constructed the text to deliver discussions by saying "*you should think*". It was suggested by the proposition team to the opposition team". It implied that a recommendation proposed by Malaysian (P1) to Indonesian debaters to keep understanding the topics directed. This was reflected by the speaker because they were dejected by disregarding the fact which was caused by lethal autonomous weapons systems in the military.

**(6)**

**P1** : *... It means the opposite their decreases. Learn! Why it's hard to identify and punishment works?*

The text-6 above explained that the proposition team delivered a warning to the opposition team by showing the warning-threatening by saying "*Learn! Why it's hard to identify and punishment works*". She delivered the word "*learn!*" to emphasize on her argument to the hearer by using an imperative form for expressing warning. This strategy was suitable for applied in close friends and families. However, in Indonesian Vs Malaysian students debaters slightly used this sub-strategies because it was formal activity as academic debate. It also indicated as an equal relationship among the student debaters.

### **The Use of Politeness Strategies by Indonesian Students Debaters**

The example below was the sub-strategies in positive politeness that was expressed by the Indonesian team in the text, below:

**(7)**

**O1** : *Let's go to the first argument on white the utilization of human soldiers creates the house dangerous of weapons.*

In the sentence, the speaker delivered an offer so that the hearer would help or support him through an optimistic expression of FTAs. The text 7 above showed that the opposition team opened the debate with an optimistic expression by delivering the arguments confidently. It was concerned on the person's positive face that emphasized on the Proposition

team. The utterance "Let's go to the first argument!" referred to the speaker's positive face for further improve the quality, value, or extent of the opinions. Speaker offers some arguments to the hearer to safe topics.

**(8)**

**O3** : *Those two, two ICJ which is literally control by United States.*

The text 8 was related to the explaining about notice sub-strategy of positive politeness. In this case, this sentence suggested that the opposition team pay attention on the aspects which made the hearer interest in the topic. The speaker made sure to notice the hearer's interest regarding to the utterance expressed. So that the speaker will understand the hearer need regarding to the information delivered well.

The example of sub-strategies in negative politeness expressed by the student debaters dialogue within in texts, below:

**(9)**

**O2** : *Ladies and gentleman. No mechanism so on and so forth and these other parts because technically you can still fix the system well.*

The text 9 above showed disagreement strategy because the speaker criticized the hearer to fix the system arrangement and it was continued by giving a reason to solve the problem. The second Indonesian debater showed her refusal of the arguments about the systems happened. Therefore, she used the utterance "*No mechanism so on and so forth and these other parts...*" as her response and disagreement towards Proposition teams' argument. It was categorized as positive politeness because there was the cooperation between speaker and hearer and they showed any feedback between them.

**(10)**

**O2** : *Finally, I talk about having, why are hacking increases? To know about this happened offline vice versa over the harder to hard. Immortalization of military was technology-based weapons.*

The text 10 above was another example of disagreement. The Malaysian debaters' stated the fact in the field of war caused by the use of military technology-based weapons systems. It was clearly seen from his utterance "*To know about this happened offline vice versa over the harder*

to hard". The speaker used this strategy aimed to being honest without trying to attract it directly. It also to soften the face-threatening act as the way he explained with the factual occurred.

(11)

**O3** : *Let me tell you that the both of us will be merciless and again operate wars, three respond nations.*

In the text-11, the speaker expressed the text to assume towards the utterance '*the both of us will be merciless and again operate wars*'. The assume was one of the sub-strategies of negative politeness. In this sentence, the speaker used the utterance to focus on hearers for minimizing the face-threatening act. It required attempting softening a negative face of the preposition team by delivering arguments. It also delivered the factual conditions that within in clause *three respond to nations*. So, the assuming by the speaker was sub-strategy of negative politeness.

The example of sub-strategies of bald-on record employed by the student debaters' see in the dialogue within the texts, below:

(12)

**O3** : *You know that society doesn't necessarily favor [amm...] What does this show to you!*

In this text-12, the speaker gave a request to the opposition team for looking at reality. The word "*you know*" in the sentence was an expectancy and requesting from the speaker. In the sentence, the preposition team engaged for giving charity and caring humanity through sharing the peace which was not disagreed by opposition team. The Malaysian team also did not want to fight during a war. Regarding to utterance "*You know that society doesn't necessarily favor amm,, what does this show to you!*" it was clearly that utterance was categorized as bald-on record strategy.

(13)

**O3** : *To become as merciless that's what they want you to do!*

The text-13 above, the sentence expressed was the same as the Preposition team from Malaysian students which used imperative form exactly. The speaker gave deference to the opposition team for caring to humanity. The word "*you to do!*" gave an advice directly which was clearly included one of the types of bald-on

strategy. It meant that a person or nation engaged in fighting during a war.

The example of sub-strategies in off-record politeness employed by the student debaters see in the dialogue within the texts, below:

(15)

**O3** : *We give you three reasons!*

In the text-15 above, the Opposition team gave clues in which it was categorized as sub-strategies in off-record. It aimed to clarify the arguments and the imposition of disagreement. It had continued for giving a reason to solve the problems. Thus, the debate was very important that give clues for delivering the reason about the topics. Besides, the opposition debater showed her points the arguments about the systems happened. Therefore, the speaker used the utterance "*we give you three reasons...*" to minimize the disagreement towards Preposition teams' in positioning argument.

Regarding to the way the students debaters used the politeness strategies, it could be concluded that both Malaysian and Indonesian students debaters similarly used the four sub-strategies of politeness strategies. However, the difference was shown in using the positive politeness in which the Indonesian students debater used more than Malaysian students' debaters.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, the results of the research can be concluded as follows:

The discussions result showed the debaters used a variety of politeness strategies that was four sub-strategies realized by Indonesian and Malaysian student debaters in the debate (WSDC) 2018. These were positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on record, and off record. As it was in the previous explanation, the positive politeness was the most applied by the both students debaters team and its occurrences of its sub-strategies also had the largest rank. However, Indonesian student debaters used politeness strategies more than Malaysian student debaters. There were the sub-

strategies of off-record, Inviting Conversational Implicature, with 95 times out of occurrences data. Then, one of the sub-strategies of Bald-on-record is Using Imperative Form, which occurs is the most proportion in Bald-on Record has 20 times. Politeness is one of the concerns in ELT to improve interactive language classrooms reflected by Indonesian versus Malaysian performed. It showed that debaters preferred expressing positive politeness strategy to the other strategies for making harmony in their utterances.

Thus, the researcher suggested that the concern in linguistics was to figure out the effect of the factors of the realizations of politeness strategies to achieve a much better understanding. As a teacher, this study also gave a supplementary suggestion. When they taught, they should prepare a lesson plan composing positive politeness. It aimed to build a positive value especially to familiarize their student to be polite as early possible. It made the students' or hearers' positive face to safe harmony relation. Furthermore, for a further researcher would get any information which can be used questionnaires and interviews for creating the data to comprehend the research. They must be known about the factors which were effected by debaters to produce differently of those politeness strategies.

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