POLITENESS IN INTERLANGUAGE REFUSALS BY ENGLISH TEACHERS IN INDONESIA

Maya Hartuti

SMPN 1 Pilangkenceng, Madiun
mayahartuti@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper is a part of a larger scale interlanguage pragmatic study exploring politeness involved in refusals conducted by the English teachers in East Java, Indonesia. The data were elicited by discourse completion tasks (DCT), from 38 English teachers, (n=14 males and n=24 females). The empirical data of politeness strategies were analyzed by Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory. The findings showed that the EFL teachers applied two semantic formulae indirect and direct strategies in conjunction to adjuncts across three initiating acts of refusals (invitations, offers and suggestions). When declining invitations and suggestions, they mostly applied positive politeness, but when refusing offers they predominantly used bald on record.

Keywords: *Politeness, interlanguage pragmatics, refusal strategy*

Abstrak

Artikel ini merupakan bagian dari laporan hasil penelitian pragmatic interlingual yang secara kusus meneliti pengguaan kesantunan pada tindak tutur penolakan yang dilakukan oleh para guru bahasa Inggris di Jawa Timur, Indonesia. Data penelitian diambil dengan menggunakan angket isian wacana (DCT) dari 38 guru yang terdiri dari 14 orang laki-laki dan 24 orang perempuan. Data kesantunan yang digunakan oleh partisipan dianalisis menggnakan teori kesantunan Brown and Levinson. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa para guru bahasa Inggris dalam penelitian ini menggunakan strategi penolakan langsung dan tidak langsung bersama-sama dengan adjunct untuk menolak tiga tindak tutur (undangan, tawaran, saran). Ketika menolak undangan dan saran, mereka lebih sering menggunakan tipe kesantunan positif, namun demikian ketika mereka menolak tawaran, mereka lebih sering menggunakan kesantunan bald on record.

Kata kunci: kesantunan, pragmatik interlingual, strategi penolakan

1. Introduction

Beebe, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990) pointed out that refusal is a complex speech act which requires a high level of pragmatic competence to perform successfully. Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that refusal is an act which disregards the positive face of addressees. According to Chen (1995), refusal is a face-threatening act to the listener/requestor/inviter, because it contradicts to his or her expectations. Due to its face threatening, a significant point to consider when refusing is that refusers have to employ strategies that could eliminate the offense on the part of the hearers. By this awareness, the employment of politeness strategies is crucial for minimizing the possibility of communication breakdown when refusing. In interlanguage pragmatic research, politeness employed in interlanguage refusals has been very limited, therefore this present study would like to analyze politeness strategies employed particularly by Indonesian teachers of English when realizing refusals in a number of different social contexts. This leads to the review of politeness strategies in the following section.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Politeness

Robin Lakoff has been considered as ''the mother of modern politeness theory'' (Eelen, 2001:2). Lakoff (1975:6) claimed that politeness was a set of conversational strategies that a speaker can use to avoid a conflict with his/her partner, "to reduce friction in personal interaction". Lakoff interpreted the maxim of politeness as a ''rule of pragmatic competence.'' She introduces two rules of pragmatic competence, be clear and be polite, and first she contrasts them. She sees the first rule as corresponding to Grice's maxims of conversation, which she then comes to see as a sub case of the second rule, more precisely as a sub case of the first rule of politeness, ''Don't impose'' (1975:303). The conversational maxims are thus interpreted by Lakoff as a kind of rule of politeness.

Unlike Lakoff, Leech (1983) defined politeness as forms of behavior that establish and maintain social conformity, viz. the ability of participants in a social interaction to engage in interaction in an atmosphere of relative harmony. Leech introduced six maxims representing interlocutors' goals of achieving mutual understanding and maintaining good interpersonal relationships known as Principles of Politeness (POP) including tact (minimize cost to the hearer), generosity (minimize benefit to self), approbation (minimize dispraise of the hearer), modesty (minimize praise of self), agreement (minimize disagreement between self and hearer) and sympathy (minimize antipathy between self and hearer). Leech's model shares many of the assumptions of Brown and Levinson's approach, as well as their goal of universality, but takes a somewhat different approach in analysing linguistic politeness.

In her later work, Leech (2005) proposed as a Grand Strategy of Politeness (GSP) that was believed to work more universally and she declared that her earlier politeness model worked primarily in Western culture. The construct of Leech's (2005:12) GSP is proposed as: 'in order to be polite, S expresses or implies meanings which place a high value on what pertains to O (other speakers) or places a low value on what pertains to S (S = self, speaker)'. In this new design, Leech (2005:26) redefines the notion of face as "the positive self-image or self-esteem that a person maintains as a reflection of that person's estimation by others". While *neg*-politeness is to serve negative face goals: 'the goal of avoiding

loss of face (Loss of face is a lowering of that self-esteem, as a result of the lowering of that person's estimation in the eyes of others.)', while *pos*-politeness is oriented for positive face goals: 'the goal of enhancing face (i.e. the heightening/maintaining of a person's self-esteem, as a result of the heightening/ maintaining of that person's estimation in the eyes of others.)'. Leech (2005) reformulates the previous Principles of Politeness maxims into ten pragmatic constraints in this politeness design. The odd numbers identify *post*-politeness constraints while the even numbers concentrate on *neg*-politeness constraints: (1) place a high value on O's wants. (2) place a low value on S's wants, (3) place a high value on O's qualities, (4) place a low value on S's qualities, (5) place a high value on S's obligation to O, (6) place a low value on O's obligation to S, (7) place a high value on O's opinions, (8) place a low value on S's opinions, (9) place a high value on O's feelings, and (10) place a low value on S's feelings

A face saving strategy the seminal work of Brown and Levinson (1987) has been the most influential theory of politeness. Inspired by the concept of face, that is, the notion of being embarrassed and humiliated or losing face, Brown and Levinson (1987) develop a politeness model based on the Anglo-western conception of the supremacy of an individual's *face* wants. They distinguish *face* as follows: *negative face* the want of every 'competent adult member' that his actions be unimpeded by others and *positive face* the want of every member that his wants be desirable to at least some others'. The positive face not only includes the want that the wants be desirable to others, but also that the wants to be approved of by others (1987:58). Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that positive and negative-face exist universally.

Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that a number of acts are threatening both positive and negative face. A face threatening act (FTA) is an act that naturally damages the face of the addressee or the speaker by acting in opposition to the wants and desires of the other. Negative face is threatened when an individual does not avoid or intend to avoid the obstruction of their interlocutor's freedom of action. It can cause damage to either the speaker or the hearer, and makes the interlocutors submit their will to the other. Freedom of choice and action are impeded when negative face is threatened. Brown and Levinson (1987) divided some impacts that happened from negative face threatening act for the speaker and the hearer into two kinds, threatening to speakers and threatening to hearers. An act is threatening to hearers when it denies a future act of the hearers and creates pressure on them to either perform or not perform the act, e.g. orders, requests, suggestions, advice, reminding, threats, or warnings. It is an FTA when it expresses the speaker's sentiments of the hearers or the hearers' belongings, e.g. compliments, expressions of envy or admiration, or expressions of strong negative emotion toward the hearers (e.g. hatred, anger, lust), and it conveys some positive future act of the speakers toward the hearers. A threat occurs to the speakers when an act shows that the speakers are giving in to the power of the hearers.

By contrast, positive face is threatened when the speakers or hearers do not care about other interactors' feelings, wants, or does not want what the others want. Positive face threatening acts can also damage either the speakers or the hearers. For example when an individual is forced to be separated from others so that their well being is treated less importantly, positive face is threatened.

For Positive face threatening act, Brown and Levinson (1987: 70) also classify the damage into two kinds: (1) threatening the hearer and (2) threatening to the speakers. The former could include an act that expresses the speaker's negative assessment of the hearer's positive face or an element of his/her positive face. The latter may include an act that shows that the speaker is in some sense wrong, and unable to control himself.

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory accounts for the redressing of face damaged by face-threatening acts (1987: 61). They suggested three aspects that can be used to calibrate the strength of FTA: P (power), D (social distance), and R (the degree of imposition). They also stated that three wants have to be considered if speakers want to communicate the FTA: (1) the wants to communicate the contents of FTA, (2) the want to be efficient and or urgent, and (3) the want to maintain hearers' face to any degree.

In order to save others' face, Brown and Levinson developed politeness strategies into: Bald-on-Record, Negative Politeness, Positive Politeness and Off-Record. *Bald-On-Record* strategy provides no effort to minimize threats to the hearer's face and it does not normally recognise the addressee's want of respect. *Negative Politeness* strategy, which addresses negative face, concerns the assumption that the speaker is somehow imposing on the hearer and it is used by a speaker to satisfy a hearer's negative face or it functions to avoid or minimize the imposition of a face-threatening act on a hearer. This type of politeness is characterized by speaker self-effacement, formality and restraint and conventionalized indirectness. The following are some of Brown and Levinson's Negative politeness strategies: Be conventionally indirect, question, hedge, be pessimistic, minimize the imposition, give deference, apologize, hesitation, avoid pronoun, I,

you and we, give impression as a cost. *Positive Politeness* strategy recognizes the hearer's desire, interest, want and need to be respected. It therefore addresses positive face concerns, often by showing positive social concerns for the other's face. In other words Positive Politeness is to satisfy a hearer's positive face, e.g., notice, attend to hearer's interest, wants, etc, use in- group markers, be optimistic, seek agreement, indicate common ground, offer, promise, give and ask reasons, common statements, include the speaker and the hearer in a conversation. *Off-Record* strategy employs an indirect way of making a demand. It seeks to recognise and respect the hearer's face: It shows little or no threat to the addressee's want of respect and dignity. When the risk of damaging hearers' face is too great, speakers can relinquish the FTA completely or 'don't do FTA'.

A growing body of research has witnessed the application of Brown and Levinson's politeness in a number of different domains. For example, employing Brown and Levinson's taxonomy, Fitri (2010) compared politeness strategies applied by American and Indonesian speakers in their conversations. The researcher found Americans used more strategy types including bold on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record strategies. Meanwhile Indonesian speakers tended to use positive politeness and negative politeness. Nevertheless, in term of directness, the latter group tended to use indirect utterances as the influence of Indonesian cultural values, whereas American speakers tend to used direct utterances as the influence of their cultural background. The research suggested that the strategies of expressing politeness were influenced by the way they apply their own cultural values.

A study by Phượng (2011) reported the application of positive and negative politeness strategies in the conversational

activities of an English course book. The study found that the conversational activities of the book "New Headway Pre-Intermediate (the Third Edition)" mostly used positive and negative politeness strategies.

Hastari (2013) probed politeness in requests used by characters of Pride and Prejudice Movie using Brown and Levinson's theory. The result of this research reported that the four types of politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson (Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness and Off Record) were commonly used in requests by the characters. Of these, Bald on Record was used the most frequently. Some factors working on the application of politeness, as claimed by Brown and Levinson (1987): social distance (D) of speaker and hearer, relative 'power' (P) of speaker and hearer, and the absolute ranking (R) of imposition in the particular culture.

To extend an interlanguage pragmatic research in Indonesian context, Pratiwi (2013) conducted research on politeness strategies involved in complaints by Indonesia EFL learners. The data were spoken utterances of complaint strategies elicited through oral DCT (Discourse Completion Tasks) scenarios and the data were analyzed by Brown and Levinson's Politeness theory. The objectives of the research were to identify complaint strategies are used by Indonesian EFL learners and to explain politeness strategies are used in complaint in relation to P (relative power) and D (social distance). Regarding politeness, the research reported that Indonesian EFL learners tended to used bald on record and positive politeness. Social distance (D), rather than relative power (P), tended to influence the strategies of complaint and politeness.

A parallel study was by Wijayanto, et al. (2013) who investigated politeness strategies involved in complaints relating to different social status levels and social distances. The research seek to answer of the research questions: (1) whether Indonesian learners of English use politeness strategies when they make complaints, (2) whether different social distances (familiarity) instigate different use of politeness strategies, and (3) whether different status levels (power) induce different use of politeness strategies. The results of the study indicated that most complaints employed bald on record, thus sounded very direct, particularly the ones addressed to lower-unfamiliar interlocutors. This study revealed that different status levels and social distances induced different frequencies of politeness strategies rather than different types of politeness.

2.2 Speech Act of Refusal

Refusal occurs when a speaker directly or indirectly says "no" to a request, invitation etc. Campbell (1990) noted that refusing, as in response to requests, is socially threatening. It is a speech act by which a speaker denied to engage in an action proposed by interlocutors (Chen, Ye, and Zhang, 1995). Searle and Vandervken (1985) defined the speech act of refusal in terms of the negative counterparts to acceptances and consents. Just as one can accept offers, applications, and invitations, so each of these can be refused or rejected. It is worth pointing out that refusals are face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and is because they commit the speaker not to perform an action (Searle, 1975). Refusals are negative responses to requests, invitations, suggestions, offers, and the like which are frequently used in our daily lives (Sadler & Eroz, 2001)

The speech act of refusal has been one of the important topics in pragmatic research over the past few decades (Fraser, 1990; Wannaruk, 2008). This might be due to

the fact that refusal is one of the speech acts in which communication problems are likely to happen. Fraser (1990) and Smith (1998) similarly claimed that refusals are complicated because of the fact that they are influenced by some social factors, namely, age, gender, level of education, social distance, and power.

In general, people use different kinds of refusal strategies according to social factors such as gender, age, level of education, power, and social distance (Fraser, 1990). Rubin (1983:12-13) proposed nine universal refusal strategies: (1) be silent, hesitate, show a lack of enthusiasm, (2) offer an alternative, (3) postponement, (4) put the blame on a third party or something over which you have no control, (5) avoidance, (6) general acceptance of an offer but giving no details, (7) divert and distract the addressee, (8) general acceptance with excuses, and (9) say what is offered is inappropriate. Rubin's (1983) taxonomy has provided a fundamental concept for the most seminal refusal strategies proposed by Bebee, Takahashi, and Uliss-Weltz (1990).

Beebe et al. (1990) proposed taxonomy of refusal which classifies refusal into two broad categories and subcategories of strategies: direct and indirect. Refusal responses are segmented into *semantic formulae*: utterances to perform refusals and *adjuncts* to refusals: remarks which by themselves do not express refusals but they go with semantic formulae to provide particular effects to the given refusals. A direct strategy is a direct denial using denying vocabulary or statements showing unwillingness or inability which consists of:

- A performative verb (e.g. 'I refuse')
- A non-performative statement:
  - No directly ("No")
  - Negative willingness/ability (I can't./I won't./I don't think so)

Indirect strategy is expressed by means of one or more semantic formulae, of which the following are the most common types:

- Statement of Apology/regret (I'm sorry.../I feel terrible.../I feel embarrassed.)
- Wish (I wish I could help you...)
- Excuse, reason, explanation for not complying. (My children will be home that night/I have a headache/I still have some things to do.)
- Statement (offer or suggestion) of alternative
  - I can do X instead of Y (I'd rather... / I'd prefer...)
  - Let me do it.
  - You can come tomorrow.
  - Why don't you do X instead of Y (Why don't you ask someone else?)
- Set condition for future or past acceptance. (If you had asked me earlier, I would have.../If he comes, I will come.)
- Promise of future acceptance (I will certainly come next time/I'll do it next time. / I promise I'll.../Next time I'll...)
- Statement of principle (My husband never accepts gifts/I never do business with friends.)
- Statement of philosophy (One can't be too careful/Help one, help all)
- Attempt to dissuade interlocutor
  - Threat or statement of negative consequences to the requester (I won't be any fun tonight to refuse an invitation)
  - Guilt trip (waitress to customers who want to sit a while: I can't make a living off people who just order coffee.)
  - Criticize the request/requester (statement of negative feeling or opinion; insult/attack (Who do you think you are? /That is a terrible idea!)

- Request for help, empathy, and assistance by dropping or holding the request.
- Let interlocutor off the hook (Don't worry about it. /That's okay/You don't have to.)
- Self-defense (I'm trying my best. / I'm doing all I can do.)

- Acceptance that functions as a refusal (We will think over your requests)
- Avoidance
  - Nonverbal (silence, hesitation, doing nothing, or physical departure)
  - Verbal
- Topic switch
- Joke (I can't buy insurance from you/ Seeing such a pretty insurance saleswoman like you, I will certainly spend all my salary on insurance.)
- Repetition of part of request (Monday? / Borrow money?')
- Postponement (I'll think about it/Let's think it over)
- Hedge (Gee, I don't know. / I'm not sure. / Let me try it, but I can't guarantee anything. /I'm not sure about this problem)

Beebe et al. (1990) added four adjuncts that might be added to either of the two basic strategies. They accompany a refusal but cannot be used to fulfill a refusal alone:

- Statement of positive opinion/feeling/ agreement (e.g. 'that's a good idea/ I'd love to.../ It's good, but…)
- Statement of empathy (e.g. 'I realize you are in a difficult situation')
- Pause fillers (e.g. 'uhh', 'well', 'oh', 'uhm')
- Gratitude/appreciation (e.g. 'thanks')

The taxonomy proposed by Beebe *et al.* (1990) has been considered as the most developed categorization, which covers general responses to four different initiating acts: request, invitation, offer, and suggestion.

3. Method
3.1 Research Participant

The data of politeness strategies in refusal were obtained from 38 English teachers, in Madiun Regency of East Java, Indonesia, comprising males (*n*=14) and females (*n*=24). The English teachers have taught English as a foreign language more than 13 years.

3.2 Research Instrument

The data of the research were elicited by means of a series of written discourse completion tasks (WDCTs), based on Beebe *et al.* (1990). WDCT is a pragmatic instrument that requires the participants to read a written description of a situation and ask them to write what they would say in that situation (Rose and Kasper 2001). The DCTs in this study contained nine scenarios. The research participants were requested to fill in the questionnaire with opened-ended type on those situations. Each scenario represented one of three different status relationships (collocutor is of lower, equal, or higher status) and three initiating acts of refusals (invitation, offer, or suggestion). Three DCT scenarios required participants to decline those of higher, equal, and lower status' invitation, other three scenarios required the participants to refuse an offer to those of higher, equal, and lower status, and the last three scenarios involved declining to those of higher, equal, and lower status' suggestion.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data of refusal strategies were classified into categories and subcategories of refusal strategies based on the Beebe et al. (1990). The strategies include two broad categories: direct and indirect strategies.

Politeness strategies of refusals were analyzed based on the strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987) discussed above.

4. Findings

4.1 Politeness in Refusals to Invitations

This study found 315 data politeness strategies involved in refusals to invitations. Of these, Bald on Record (BOR) comprised 7.9% of the strategies. Negative politeness (NP) strategies occurred approximately 31.7%, and Positive Politeness comprised 59.7% of the strategies. Off-record strategy was used the least often (0.6%) (see chart 1).

Chart 1. Politeness in refusals to invitations
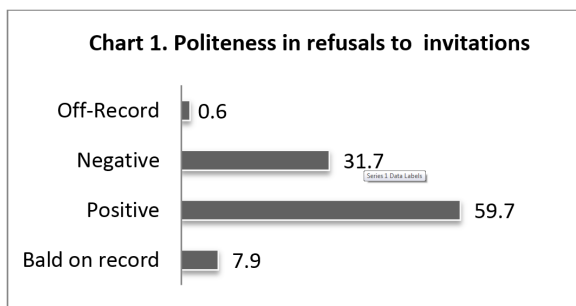
Positive Politeness (PP) strategy was the most common politeness strategy used by participants in declining the invitation. The most frequency type of PP used in declining the invitation was PP strategy of giving reasons, for example,

1) *Sound great but I have to accompany my son to the mall.*
2) *That's great, but I am sorry; I have to visit my family at hometown.*

Other PP strategy which was highly used was attending to hearer's interest and wants, for example:

3) *That's great, but I am sorry, I have to visit my family at home town.*
4) *I'd love to, but I have to see my dentist.*

Strategy of Offer; promise also occurred but not very frequently, for example:

5) *I am sorry my friend, I can't go with you, may be next time.*

The participants also commonly used in group identity markers such as *my friend* to show positive politeness, e.g.

6) *I am sorry my friend, I can't.*
7) *I am sorry my friend, I can't go with you, may be next time.*

Negative politeness (NP) strategies were the second commonly strategies used to refuse invitations. The most common NP strategies included (1) strategy to *be pessimistic*, (2) g*iving deference*, and (3) *apology*.

8) *I'm sorry I can't go. I'm very busy.*
9) *Oh, I'm sorry I can't. I want to do something this weekend.*
10) *I'd love to, but I'm very sorry Sir, I could not come to your party*
11) *I am sorry Sir; I have something else to be done.*
12) *Thanks, but, I don't think I can come a long with you.*

Bald-on record (BOR) was used in the head act of direct refusals. Despite this, the refusals involved other politeness strategies to soften the BOR, for example data (13) involved apology before the BOR, while data (14) included avoiding disagreement, apology, and deference prior to BOR.

13) *I am sorry my friend, I can't.*
14) *I'd love to, but I'm very sorry Sir, I could not come to your party.*

Off-Record (OR) strategy was used the least often, comprising 0.6% of politeness strategy. For example giving a hint as follows:

15) *Thank you, that's good idea, but I've ever gone there.*
16) *Sounds great, but I have visited Sarangan last week. Have fun!*

4.2. Politeness in Refusals to Offers

The researcher found 235 data politeness strategies in declining offers. Of these, BOR comprised 46.4% of the total politeness strategies, PP strategy was 38.3%, and NP strategy was 15.3%. (see chart 2 below)

Chart 2. Politeness in refusals to offers

Negative	15.3
Positive	38.3
Bald on record	46.4
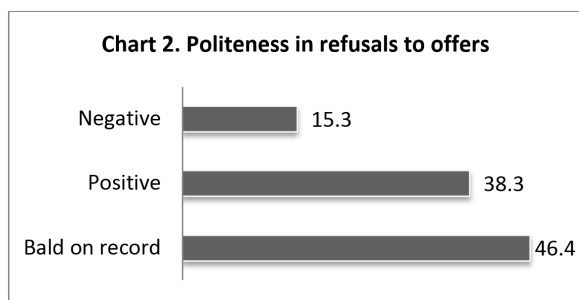
BOR was the most common strategy involved in refusals to offer. Some *sympathetic advices* and thanking were commonly used, for example:

17) *Thanks a lot, but I will use my brother's printer, don't worry.*
18) *No thanks, don't bother.*
19) *Thank a lot, but not now, next time may be.*

Positive politeness was the second most common strategy, including the strategy of being optimistic, for example:

20) *No, thanks, I can do by myself.*
21) *Thanks dear but I can manage myself*

The following are the other strategies of PP, such as attending to hearer's interest and wants, solidarity marker, promise, and avoid disagreement, e.g.,

22) *That's a good idea, but I can do it myself.*
23) *Thanks dear but I can manage myself.*
24) *Thank a lot, but not now, next time may be.*
25) *I'd love to, but sorry I can't go I am very busy.*

Negative politeness (NP) occurred the least often, including the strategy of *being pessimistic*, *give deference*, and *apology*, for example:

26) *I don't think so, thank you, I would like to call my mechanic.*
27) *Thank you for attention Sir, but I think I could fix it.*
28) *I'd love to, but sorry I can't go I am very busy.*

4.3 Politeness in Refusals to Suggestion

There are 227 data of politeness strategies in declining suggestions. BOR was 27.9% of the total strategies, PP strategies were 42.5%, NP strategies were 24.3%, and only 5.3% of OR strategies.

Chart 3. Politeness in refusals to suggestion

Off-Record	5.3
Negative	24.3
Positive	42.5
Bald on record	27.9
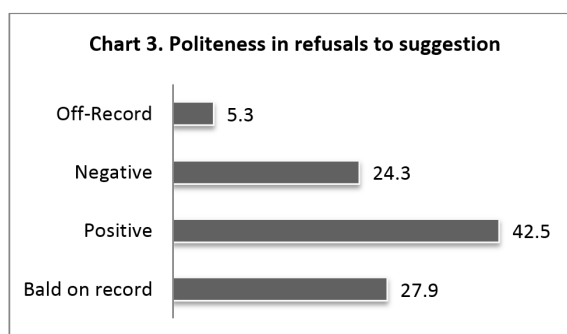
Positive politeness (PP) strategies commonly used were *giving or asking for reasons*, for example:

29) Because I will try to repair it and bring it to the mechanic.

30) That's sounds great, but I have to finished it first, may be next time.

The strategy of *Notice; attended to H (his interest, wants, needs, goods)* was also highly used by the participants, for example:

31) *That's good, but I'll try to fix it first.*

32) *It's a good idea, but I have called my brother to come here.*

The strategy of *being optimistic* was also highly used by participants, for example:

33) *I'd love to, but I have to finish it soon.*

34) *Thanks, but I'll just get this done.*

The other types of PP strategies used in declining suggestions were *group identity markers, Avoid disagreement* and *Offer, promise*. To show group identity markers, the participants used *friend* and *my dear friend*. To avoid disagreement they used various expressions, like*: Well actually I need a vacation, Actually I will, I would, Sure , you are right, You know what I need, I'd love to.* Participants used expressions *maybe next time* and *I will try it next,* to express *promise*, for example

35) *It's very nice, but sorry my dear friend. I can't do it because I have to finish it quickly.*

36) *Sure, may be next time, Lucy.*

37) *I'd love to, but I have to finish it soon.*

Regarding NP strategy, g*iving deference* was often used in declining suggestions such as *Sir,* for example:

38) *No Sir; I will repair it.*

39) *That's good idea Sir, but I'm sorry I am still used it tomorrow.*

The other types of NP strategies used in declining suggestions were *to be pessimistic* and *apology* , for example:

40) *Thanks for your suggestion, but I don't think so. I will call a mechanic home.*

41) *That would be great, you know! But maybe it's better for me to finish it firstly.*

42) *Thank you for your suggestion, but I am not sure about it.*

I am sorry, I'm sorry, and *sorry* were used to express the apology and *I am sorry* was the most dominant used to express *apology* , for example:

43) *I think I will not, I am sorry I can't leave my motorcycle here.*

44) *That's good idea Sir, but I'm sorry I am still used it tomorrow.*

To minimize the imposition, participants used the expressions such as *It's ok, no problem,* and *everything will be ok,* for example:

45) *It's ok. It's really stressful but I enjoy it. May be next time when I'm finished.*

46) *No problem, everything will be Ok.*

Bald on record (BOR) was used to refuse suggestions, all of which express *gratitude* , for example:

47) *Thanks but I think I can handle it soon.*

48) *Thank you for your suggestion, but no.*

49) *No thanks, I think I could fix it.*

Regarding off-record strategy (OR), the participants only used *giving association clues* (25%), for example:\

50) *Thanks, but I don't have time to relax.*

51) *Why are you relax?*

5. Conclusion

The present paper reported refusal strategies conducted by the English teachers of junior high school in Indonesia in three acts of refusals. To conduct refusals, they applied two semantic formulae *indirect* and *direct strategies* in conjunction to adjunct identified by Beebe *et al.* (1990) across three refusals acts (invitations, offers and suggestions). On the whole, the indirect strategy was used more frequently than the direct one and the dominant indirect strategy was excuse/explanation but most of refusals strategies were initiated by adjunct. It ensures the researcher that most teachers refused the invitations, offers, and suggestions to three status levels indirectly to be polite, and to show appreciation most of refusals were initiated by adjunct gratitude. The indirect strategy was the prominent refusal strategy especially in declining offers and suggestions. The direct strategy was the highest strategy used in declining invitations.

Regarding politeness strategies, they used all four politeness strategies (BOR, PP, NP, and OR) of Brown and Levinson (1987) across three refusals acts in different frequency. Nevertheless the frequencies of occurrence varied according to initiating acts of refusals. For example, in declining invitations and suggestions across three status levels, most of the English teachers applied PP strategy and the dominant type was *give reasons*. The dominant strategy in declining offers was BOR which most of them expressed *gratitude,* and PP was used just little bit lower than BOR.

In declining invitations, offers, and suggestions across different genders, the participants conducted the same politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987) in more or less the same frequency. Both males and females used PP significantly the highest and OR was the least dominant strategy. BOR and NP were also used by both of them in more or less the same frequency but not as often as PP. Females used PP and NP little bit more often than males but males used BOR and OR little bit more often than females. The data revealed that gender differences virtually had no influence on the choices of politeness strategy in three refusals acts across status levels.

Bibliography

Beebe, L. M., Takahashi, T, & Uliss-Weltz, R. 1990. Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. Scarcella, E. Andersen, & S. D. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 55-73). New York: Newbury House.

Brown, P. and Levinson S.C. 1987. Politeness: *Some universals in language usage*, Cambridge University Press.

Campbell, K.S. 1990. Explanations in negative messages. More insight from speech act theory. *Journal of Business Communication* 27(4):357-375.

Chen, X.L.Y. and Yanyin Z. 1995. Refusing in Chinese. In Gabriele Kasper (ed.), *Pragmatics of Chinese as Native and Target Language*, Manoa, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 119-163.

Chen, H. J. 1995. Pragmatic judgment on refusals: Its reliability and consistency". *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American council on the teaching of foreign language, Anaheim, California* (ERIC document: No. ED 391381).

Eelen, G. 2001. *A Critique of Politeness Theories*. Manchester and Northampton: St. Jerome

Fitri, N. 2010. "The Use of Politeness Strategies in Conversations of some American and Indonesian Speakers in Bukit Tinggi". English Department Faculty of Letters Andalas University Padang. http://repository.unand.ac.id/10407/:accessed on May 10th, 2013 at 20.37 p.m

Fraser, B. 1990. Perspectives on Politeness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 14(2): 219–236.

Grice, H. P. 1975. 'Logic and conversation', in P. Cole and J. J. Morgan, (eds.). *Syntax and Semantics* III – *Speech Acts,* New York: Academic Press, 4158.

Hastari, A.D. 2013. Politeness Strategies of Request Found In *Pride And Prejudice* Movie." Unpublished undergraduate thesis. UMS.

Kasper, G. and Rose, K.R. 2001. Pragmatics in language teaching, in K.R Rose and G.Kasper (eds.). *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 112.

Lakoff, R. 1975. What can you do with words: politeness, pragmatics, and performative. In Rogers, Andy (Ed.), *Proceedings of the Texas Conference on Performative, Presuppositions and Implicature*. Arlington: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Leech, G. 1983. *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.

Leech, G. 2005. Politeness: Is there an EastWest divide? *Journal of Foreign Language* 6:1-30.

Phuong, T. M. 2006. "Refusals of Requests by Australian Native Speakers of English and Vietnamese Learners of English". The School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies The Faculty of Arts Queensland the University. http://asian-efi-journal.com / thesis/2007/04/29/cross-cultural-pragmatics-refusal-of-requests-by-australian-naitve-speakers-of-englishand-vietnamese-learners-of-english: accessed on June 3rd, 2013 at 07. 37 a.m

Phương, T. T. 2011. "A study of politeness strategies in the conversational activities of the course book "New headway" pre-intermediate (the third edition)". University of Languages and International Studies. http://dl.vnu.edu.vn/bitstream /11126/439/1/04051000580.pdf: accessed on June 3rd, 2013 at 07.18 a.m.

Pratiwi, E.H. 2013. Politeness strategies used in complaints by Indonesia EFL learners in Muhammdiyah University of Surakarta: e*prints.ums.ac.id/23376/24/02._Publication_ Article.pdf* . Accessed on June 17, 2013 at 9.18 a.m.

Rubin, J. 1983. How to tell when someone is saying 'no' revisited, in Nessa Wolfson and Elliot Judd (eds.). *Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition*. Cambridge, M.A: Newbury House, 1017.

Sadler, R. & Eröz, B. 2001. "I refuse you: An examination of English refusals by native speakers of English, Lao, and Turkish." University of Minnesota: CARLA

Searle, J. R. 1975. *What is speech act? In philosophy in America*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Searle, J. and Vandervken, D. 1985. Foundation of Illocutionary Logic. Cambridge: Cambridge university Press.

Smith, C. 1998. Can adults "Just say no? How gender, status and social goals affect refusals. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of South Florida. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022022196272006

Wannaruk, A. 2008. Pragmatic transfer in Thai EFL refusals. *RELC Journal* 39(3): 318-337.

Wijayanto, A, Malikatul L., Aryati P., & Susiati, S. 2013. Politeness in Interlanguage Pragmatics of Complaints by Indonesian Learners of English. *English Language Teaching* 6 (10): 188-201.