

Negative Politeness Strategies of Mbojo Speakers in a Family Environment: A Linguistics Study of Sociopragmatic

Muhammad Sahrain

Universitas Qamarul Huda Badaruddin, Nusa Tenggara Barat - Indonesia

sahrainparadise@gmail.com

| 8

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received January 12, 2025

Revised January 30, 2025

Accepted February 5, 2025

Available online Maret 25, 2025

Kata Kunci: *Negative Politeness; Mbojo Speakers; Sociopragmatic*



This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.
Copyright © 2023 by Author. Published by Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha.

ABSTRACT

This study aims at describing negative politeness principle strategies carried on Mbojo Speakers in a Family Environment by applying socio-pragmatics analysis, it's a sub-dicipline of linguistics. Data were collected from speech events in Mbojo family environment and further analyzed descriptively. In the process of analyzing the data applies the theory of negative politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. The result shows that from seven strategies of negative politeness, in speech events of the Mbojo family Environment, there are four negative politeness strategies were found, including Strategy of Using Indirect Expressions, Strategy Use Hedge Honorin, Strategy Using impersonal form.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mbojo language (*Nggahi Mbojo*) is the one of the local languages in West Nusa Tenggara. Mbojo language is used by the people of Bima Regency, Dompu Regency, and Bima City. This language has long been labeled as Nggahi Mbojo. So in terms of daily interaction, this language has become a tool for communication and unification by the people of Bima, Dompu, and migrants. It is same as the Sasak language, which has become a communication tool for the people of Mataram, North Lombok, West Lombok, Central Lombok, and East Lombok. It is no different from the Javanese language used by various districts and cities in Java. The only difference is the variety of dialects and idiolects among the community.

Regarding the realm in the region, this is a cultural treasure certainly. Culture has positioned the Mbojo language as a wealth and heritage of copyright, senses, and culture of the ancestors that is very meaningful, maintained its existence and reflected on the wisdom values it contains. Mbojo language is also a dynamic regional language, where one time its speakers can change from generation to generation. For example, the word Lenga (friend) becomes lenk. This change can be caused by various factors, both internal and external factors. Muhammad (2014) suggests that the factors in language are arbitrary, productive, unique, universal, dynamic, human, system, symbol, sound, meaningful, conventional. The external factors are language society, language variation and social status, language use, and language interaction. Departing from this nature, so that humans are labeled thinkers, creators, and societies then trigger the emergence of new terms. This cannot be denied because in general, dynamic is the nature of a language, it would even be threatened with extinction if it is not well maintained and

passed on to the next generation. This needs to be considered by all circles of the existence and essence of the Mbojo language, be it by government agencies or private institutions of cultural observers. In certain areas, the Mbojo language still shows politeness in speech, both among people of different social status and age levels.

Mbojo language also has variations in its usage, whether then children to parents, children to children or parents to parents, etc. So from these levels, Mbojo language has richness in vocabulary selection, especially politeness in a speech by speakers to speech partners. Based on age, the level of use of Mbojo language by Bima people is often harsh. One of the studies conducted by Erwin et al (2013) showed that the variation in the use of Mbojo language is sometimes common and sometimes rude. From the age of young and old, the variation is common and smooth. While speakers of gender are dominated by common speech variations.

Politeness would be opposite of impoliteness. In a sociological perspective, politeness created a harmonious society, whereas impoliteness created a society colored by conflict. Conflict motives can be initiated by speech that is not polite (Sahrain, 2018). In every speech, whether intentional or unintentional, it always has a purpose. The purpose is what is referred to as the speaker's guide to direct speech to achieve good and bad goals, both for speakers and speech partners and vice versa. The purpose of the action supports a function. However, one type of action may not be able to show the function that supports it. The function of the question only appears after a series of actions are communicated to achieve a purpose. For example, this speech occurs when two people are called speakers and speech partners. In Mbojo language, the politeness marker is embodied in the word "Ta". If certain words are added with the suffix Ta, the speech will seem polite. Just like the speech made by speaker A: Asking Speaker B "Wati hido loko ta? (not hungry?)", the intention of Speaker A's speech is for B to immediately cook food for A and eat with him, but B replies "Iyo ta wati ta? (no)". In certain contexts, if B understands A's intention, without being told, B immediately cooks food for A, because he already understands the meaning of A's question.

This speech can occur among the youth community as well as families. So, this research examines how to speak between speakers and speech partners using Mbojo language in the family area. The purpose is to describe the principles of Mbojo language politeness in the family environment. In the societal context, politeness is relative. A certain speech is usually said to be polite in a certain group of people. However, in other societal groups, it can be said to be impolite. The purpose of politeness, including language politeness, is to make the atmosphere of interaction pleasant, not threatening the face of the interlocutor, effective, and not causing harm to the interlocutor, because regarding behavior that is expressed in a good or ethical way. Politeness is a cultural phenomenon, so what is considered polite by one culture may not be the case with another culture. Politeness includes intonation. Intonation is the high-low, long-short, loud-weak, pauses, and rhythms that accompany speech. Intonation can be divided into two, namely intonation that marks the end of a sentence or final intonation, and intonation that is in the middle of a sentence or non-final intonation. Intonation serves to clarify the meaning of speech. Then Sunaryati (in Rahardi, 123) intonation can be further divided into news intonation, question intonation, and the exclamation intonation. The intonation of the exclamation itself can still be further detailed into the intonation of orders, invitations, requests, ridicule, and requests.

Language politeness is one of the studies of pragmatics, a branch of linguistics. If someone discusses language politeness, it also means talking about pragmatics. Some experts who discuss language politeness are Lakoff (1972), Fraser (1978), Brown and Levinson (1978) and Leech (1983). Their theory stems from the same observation, namely that in actual communication; speakers do not always adhere to Grice's Principles of Cooperation, which consist of the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner. The difference, among others, lies in how these experts see the form of politeness rules (social rules), while Fraser, Brown, and Levinson are (perhaps because of the most in-depth), followed by Leech's theory.

| 10

Refers to Lakoff, (1972) argues that, there are three rules that we need to obey so that our speech sounds polite to our listeners or interlocutors. The three rules of politeness are formality, dexterity, and equality or friendliness. Unlike Lakoff (as mentioned above), Fraser, 1978 discusses politeness not on rules, but on the basis of strategies. However, he does not specify the forms or types of politeness strategies as Brown and Levinson do, who specify the strategies into five. Fraser only mentions that there are 18 strategies for expressing directives, without indicating which one is more polite.

However, what is noteworthy about Fraser's work is that he distinguishes politeness from respect. The theory of language politeness revolves around the notion of face, another term for the 'self-image' that every member of society wants to have. In addition, this politeness can be interpreted as an effort to avoid conflict between speakers and their interlocutors in the communication process. Brown and Levinson (1987) state that language politeness is closely related to language ethics, this is because language ethics also regulates how to use language in communication. In line with some opinions, as previously described, Brown and Levinson (1987) assert that three scales can be used to measure politeness in society. The three scales are (a) the social distance between the speaker and his/her speech partner, (b) the relative power or authority relationship between the speaker and his/her speech partner, (c) the relative position level of speech in a certain situation with the same speech in another situation. Meanwhile, refers to Brown and Levinson (1987), several strategies that can be guided in negative politeness, including the following:

Strategy 1: Indirect expression

One of the strategies for polite communication in communication activities, namely by expressing indirectly. In this case, it has the purpose that the speaker does not offend or threaten the face of the speech partner. The intention conveyed or desired by the speaker even though it is expressed indirectly. "Can I ask you to help me get the book?"

Strategy 2: Use a hedge

Using a hedge when expressing intent is also one of the strategies to create polite communication. By using this form of speech, the continuity of the speaker's intention will be reduced so that it feels more polite than the indirect expression. For example, "I have been wondering if you would help me?"

Strategy 3: Give respect

One strategy for polite communication in communication activities is to show respect. For example, "I am asking for your help because I know you are always willing to help people."

Strategy 4: Minimize coercion

One of the strategies to create polite communication is by not burdening speech partners or by minimizing coercion to speech partners. For example, "can I bother you for a moment?"

Strategy 5: Be pessimistic

Being pessimistic when expressing a point is also a strategy to show polite communication. For example, "I'd like to ask for help, but I'm afraid you won't want it."

Strategy 6: Expressing an apology

Expressing an apology when speaking is also one of the strategies to create polite communication. In general, speech partners will feel appreciated when speaking using an apology. For example, "Before I apologize, please be patient to wait for me."

Strategy 7: Using impersonal forms

One of the strategies to create polite communication in communication activities is by not mentioning the speaker and the listener. For example, "it seems that this computer needs to be moved"

Strategy 8: Utter the speech act as a general rule.

Speech acts as general provisions such as "passengers are not allowed to smoke on the bus". This statement can be concluded that the form of language politeness is divided into two; negative politeness which functions to maintain negative face and positive politeness which functions to maintain positive face. This is because negative politeness creates social distance and positive politeness minimizes social distance.

From the explanation above, the politeness in social interaction is very important. It can minimize the occurrence of conflict between individuals (interpersonal conflict). The theory above can be used as a benchmark in dissecting speech acts presented in society. So, in this study, the theory used as an analysis knife is Brown and Levinson's theory of negative politeness strategies.

Sociopragmatics

Sociopragmatic is a study of local conditions and more specifically local conditions regarding language use. In local societies, it is more specifically seen that the principle of cooperation and the principle of politeness take place in a changing manner in different cultures or various language societies, in different social situations. In other words, sociopragmatics is the meeting point between sociology and pragmatics, Tarigan (1986). Thus, it can be concluded that sociopragmatics is a study that examines speech adapted to certain situations in a particular environment.

2. METODE

This research used a qualitative descriptive. It relates to the presentation and depiction of data based on objective facts. The goals to describe the reality or state of the data naturally. Research type used a type of field research, researcher was directly involved in conducting research in the family environment. The data source used directly related to the problem under study from the source. The data sources can be in the form of conversations in one family environment referring directly to two family members. The data used is oral data through conversations in various locations naturally. Thus, data were obtained by recording, taking notes, and interviews. Data analysis using Denzin & Lincoln's interactive model (2009) includes four stages, namely; data analysis, data reduction, data presentation, and (4) conclusion/verification.

| 12

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Language politeness is one of the strategies to show polite communication in communication activities, namely by expressing indirectly by both speakers and speech partners. This strategy can also be a solution for two situations that are contrary to each other and do not fulfill their desires openly. The point is the desire not to suppress the speaker and the desire to state the message directly without rambling and clear messages conveyed. So in this study, sorting and examining how to convey messages indirectly but the meaning of the message is clear and unambiguous based on certain contexts?

Strategy of Using Indirect Expressions

The context of the speech took place in Waran's room at night. The speakers are Waran and Hidayah. Waran asked Hidayah for help to buy food. Waran as the younger sister of Hidayah.

Speaker (Waran): *Ta lao tabe ita? Ta wa'a ja piti mada ni, pala ita dula lao pangaha!* (Hidayah, where are you going? Bring me some money, but you'll come home with snacks!)

Speech Partner (Hidayah): *Be pitim, nahuma weli weam pede.* (Where's your money, I'll buy it for you later)

According to the measure and standard of solidarity, the tilted speech above "*wa'a ja piti mada ni, pala ita dula labo pangaha.!*"

Within the limits of reasonableness. Based on the politeness strategy according to Brown and Levinson, it can be analyzed that the above speech is directive or asking for help that has the potential to threaten the negative face of speech partners. So that the speech sentence conveyed by the speaker to the speech partner is not directly expressed as a request. Judging from the context, this utterance is made by two people with different statuses. Waran as Hidayah's younger sister has a lower status in terms of age. This utterance is directly expressed by Waran but the sentence is indirect. The message conveyed can be understood well by Hidayah as an older brother without feeling offended by Waran's request as a speaker who has a lower age. It appears that Hidayah immediately responded well by saying "*Be pitim, Nahuma weli weam*". While in the speech Waran did not convey buy. This indicates that the speech partner understands the indirect speech delivered by the speaker.

Strategy Use Hedge

Hedge speech is one of the polite types of speech. This speech using hedge speech when expressing intentions can create polite and effective communication. In this context, the continuity of the speaker's intention will be reduced so that it seems more polite than the indirect disclosure. What is meant by the word fence is to give speakers the option to make their own choices.

The context of the speech took place at night in Mom's room. The speaker participants are Mother and Waran. The speech occurred because Waran as a child bought the wrong thing ordered by her mother. So the mother told him to exchange it back.

Speaker: *Laina ma ake ra you weli, tiloamu lao cepe wali ro?* (Not this one told to buy, can't you go exchange again?).

Speech partner (Waran): *"Kombi wati loana Ina"* (Maybe you can't, mom?).

Speaker: *coba lao sodi wausi, loa bune di cepe.* (Try going to ask first, can it not be replaced)

According to the measure of solidarity, the utterance "*coba lao sodi wausi, loa bune di cepe*" is based on the measure of politeness according to Brown and Levinson, the above expression is in the form of reasonableness. The utterance expresses its intention with the directive speech act of persuading. In this context, it can be understood that the speech containing the directive speech act of persuading, namely the mother persuades Waran to try to exchange the wrong goods purchased. The purpose of the use of the mother's question above, can be analyzed that the form of a fenced question to save the negative face of the speech partner knows another form of application of negative politeness negative page strategy (Hegde). From the context and purpose, the data above shows the speech performed by two speech participants with different social positions, where the mother has a higher status while Waran as a child has a lower status in terms of age. However, the data shows that the mother is able to convey the speech by not demeaning Waran.

Honoring Strategy

According to Brown and Levinson, the realization of giving respect to the listener is of two types whose relationship is the principle of two sides of a coin. First, the speaker humbles and ignores himself before the listener; second, the speaker elevates the listener's position which is the fulfillment of the positive human desire to be treated higher. Both of these ways, what the speaker does is actually giving respect to the listener.

The context of the speech occurs in the morning. The participants in the conversation are the mother and the vegetable seller. Mom is waiting for her regular vegetable seller in front of the house. Both of them are bargaining for vegetables.

Speaker (Buyer) : *"Nahu tiwara pitiku ma mboto. waura weliku uta mbeca akande"* (I don't have money, I already bought vegetables earlier).

Speech partner (Seller): *Upa pete lima riwu. Weha ra ba ndaimu"* (I have left some for you, four bundles of five thousand, you take it bye.)

Speaker (Buyer) : *"be tio wausi uta mbeca de."* (could I see the vegetables first, please)

According to the solidarity measure, the utterance "*akande ndaiku sai ta gang sabae ta. waura sisakan ba ndaiku ru'u ndaim ta. Ake ta Ibu, Upa pete lima riwu. Weha ra ba ndaim ta*" within the limits of reasonableness, based on Brown and Levinson's measure of politeness, the vegetable seller's speech contains the directive speech act of asking. The seller's speech has the potential to threaten the negative face of the interlocutor, because the speech partner limits the interlocutor's action by asking the interlocutor to do something. The thing in question is asking Mom as the initial speaker to buy more

vegetables. This threatens negative face. To save the mother's negative face for her face-threatening action, the seller uses a form of respect in the speech containing the directive speech act of asking. The use of this form of respect is shown by the use of the terms *Ndaim* and *ndaim ta* which shows that the vegetable seller elevates the mother's position.

From the results of data analysis, it shows that the data above is the context of the speech carried out by two people. Mom as a buyer and mom as a vegetable seller. Both have different statuses. The mother as a buyer has a higher social status, while the mother as a vegetable seller has a lower status in social terms. But in the context of the mother's speech as a seller is able to play language to keep the buyer's position from being threatened face as Brown and Levinson's view.

| 14

Using impersonal forms

The impression of negative politeness can be realized by communicating to the interlocutor that the speaker does not intend to force him. In this context, it can be shown by the use of impersonal forms. One communication is by not mentioning the speaker and listener or a specific name. This is a very efficient strategy used to reduce communication that leads to negative face of speech partners.

The context of the speech occurred in the morning in Dian room. The participants are Hidayah and Khair. The context is Hidayah is cleaning Khair's room as a habit in the morning.

Speaker (Hidayah): "*Mune'e lao tabe ku nggomi?*" (where are you going?)

Speech partner (Khair) : "*tiwara lao kaiku*" (I am not going anywhere).

Speaker (Hidayah) : "*kayaknya, musti di hanta laptop ake*" (I think this laptop should be upgraded).

Speech partner (Khair): "*nahu ma hanta na pede*" (I'll pick it up later).

According to the measure of solidarity, the utterances made by the two people above can be analyzed that the utterance "*kayaknya, musti di hanta laptop ake*" by the speaker Hidayah. Based on Brown and Levinson's measure of politeness, Hidayah's speech contains the directive speech act of asking. Hidayah's speech has the potential to threaten the negative face of the speech partner, because the speaker asked the speech partner to do something for him, namely asking the speech partner to lift the laptop on the table. The context is Hidayah cleaning Khair's room. Khair happened to be in the room. So that Hidayah's speech does not mention Khair's name so that her speech partner does not threaten negative face. This is very effective in provoking action from Khair to pick up the laptop. Meanwhile, to save the negative face of the speech partner done by the speaker is the application of negative politeness strategy 7, which is asking without mentioning a certain name or the name of the speech partner. Between speakers and speech partners have the same social level. However, the speaker is able to keep the speech partner from being offended by his speech.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research analysis above, it can be concluded that in family environment speech events in the Mbojo family community, still consider conversational strategies that pay attention to mutual harmony. The results of this study do not conclude that this strategy occurs in all Mbojo family communities, but in some families located in a remote village called Parado. Therefore, in this study, there are four negative politeness strategies were found, including Strategy of Using Indirect Expressions, Strategy Use Hedge Honorin, Strategy Using impersonal form. From those strategies were efficient strategies used to reduce communication that leads to negative face of speech partners.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

- Brown, P. & Levinson, S, C. (1987). *Politeness: Same Universals In Language Usage*. Cambrige: Cambridge University Press.
- Denzin, N, K. & Lincoln, Y,S. (2009). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Erwin, dkk. (2013). *Penggunaan Bahasa Mbojo di Lingkungan Masyarakat Bima di Bima: Sebuah Kajian Variasi Bahasa*. Jurnal Program Pascasarjana Universitas Ganesha. Vol.
- Gunawan, Asim. (1994). *Kesantunan Negatif di Kalangan Dwibahasawan Indonesia-Jawa di Jakarta: Kajian Sosiopragmatik. PELBA 7: Pertemuan Linguistik Lembaga Bahasa Atma Jaya: Ketujuh*". Jakarta: Lembaga Bahasa Unika Atma Jaya.
- Lakoff. (1972). *Politeness Principle*. Barkeley: University of California.
- Leech, Geoffrey.(1983). *Principle of Pragmatics*. New York: Longman Group Limited.
- Levinson, Stephen C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mahsun. (2005). *Konsep Ruang dalam Bahasa Mbojo dan Kaitanya dengan Cara Pandangan Masyarakat Penuturnya*. Jurnal Linguistik Indonesia tahun ke 23, No. 1.
- Muhammad. (2014). *Metode Penelitian Bahasa*. Yogyakarta. Ar-Ruzz Media
- Rahardi, Kunjana. 2005. *PRAGMATIK: Kesantunan Imperatif Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: ERLANGGA.
- Sahrain, Muhammad. (2018). *Kalembo Ade: Transformasi Nilai Masyarakat Bima-Dompu*. Mataram. Penerbit Genius.
- Searle, John.(1979). *Expression and Meaning. Studies in the Theory of Speech Acts*. Cambridge.University Press.
- Tarigan, Henry Guntur. (1986). *Pengajaran Pragmatik*. Bandung:Angkasa andung.
- Yule, George.(1996). *Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.