

**MAIN STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS OF THE THEORY OF POLITENESS**

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Abstract: *This article discusses the strategy of politeness between communication strategies. People use communication to carry out social activities. Communication can only be achieved through the use of a tool that is used to express and receive interactive ideas, thoughts and feelings, i.e. language. The way people communicate is very complicated. Although this is a very controversial topic, the claim that fully discloses how human communication works is still unproven.*

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Communication is necessary for people to understand and be understood, to be in tune with others. In order for a language user to be comprehensible, he or she must have the ability to manage strategically in speech (as well as in written text) to achieve their goals. Among the strategies in communication is the strategy of politeness.

The theory of politeness is a comprehensive framework designed to understand how aspects of language use motivate interpersonal relationships. The theory of politeness is seen as an important basic concept in the areas of pragmatics and speech. This theory was developed after a study by Robin Lakoff, who linked politeness to the impact of a conversation developed by Paul Gris on how interlocutors adhere to the principles of collaboration to achieve successful communication. The study provides many insights and encourages many other studies that analyze people's interactions using a social psychological approach to language use.

This chapter analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of the theory of politeness proposed by scientists Brown and Levinson in the context of intercultural communication. The next section describes the basic concepts and terms used in the theory of politeness. It also explains how Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness has caused heated debate in the last thirty years, and how their debates have been. Finally, based on the research conducted with its development, its advantages and disadvantages, and how the concept of politeness can be applied in the context of English language teaching (ITO) are discussed.

Basic terminology in the theory of politeness

Politeness is described by Jeffrey Leach as a "form of behavior that establishes and maintains harmony". In other words, politeness refers to people's ability to communicate with relative harmony in social relationships. Politeness is a form of social interaction conditioned by the socio-cultural norms of a particular society, which can be expressed through communication and communicative actions.

Another basic concept associated with politeness is "face". Face is a concept that expresses each person's self-esteem, is emotionally achieved, can be lost, preserved and strengthened, and is always involved in the interactions of individuals. This concept was originally introduced by



Goffman as a metaphor for the human mask, which varies depending on the audience and the types of social and interpersonal relationships in which the individual participates.

The theory of politeness suggests that people can use social interaction strategies to protect the listener's face under the influence of facial threatening actions (FS). YTS is described by Brown and Levinson as actions that undermine the listener's need to maintain self-esteem. In this context, facial care is seen as a condition, not a goal, of the relationship. Brown and Levinson point out that anthropologists can use the concept of the face, which is respected as norms or values adopted by members of society. Instead, they suggest using the face as a necessity. Brown and Levinson divide the face into two types: negative face and positive face. A negative face means that "every competent adult" wants his or her actions not to be hindered by others, and a positive face means that everyone's wishes are at least pleasing to others.

Brown and Levinson suggest five courtesy strategies that can become speakers' choices, namely, strategies to counter the interviewee's face needs (direct appeal strategy), positive politeness, negative politeness, mixed sense politeness, and non-threatening facial expressions.

The direct address strategy is used when the speaker intends to threaten the listener's face. He uses this strategy to achieve maximum effectiveness in communication. The strategy is in line with Gris's words. It is to adhere to the quality of the word while avoiding falsehood; adhere to the amount of words by speaking when necessary; adherence to words that signify relevance for relevance, avoidance of ambiguity and ambiguity, and adherence to style linguistic devices.

The use of a direct referral strategy differs in two situations, one of which is the "face threat minimization situation," where maximizing efficiency is key. This can occur in the following situations: (1) in times of extreme urgency and frustration, such as screaming for help in an emergency; (2) situations of task-oriented interactions, such as instructing the listener to assist in lifting a heavy object, asking one to hold the other end; (3) Interactions in a noisy environment also fall into this category, where the only important thing is that the listener hears what the speaker is saying. Such situations can be encountered in an individual's relationship with a student; (5) situations in which the speaker wants to be rude without thinking about the risk of insult; (6) the circumstances in which the speaker is compassionately seeking advice and warnings; (7) in cases where the speaker allows what the listener asks for. Another set of uses for this strategy is the use of direct referrals to YTS. The strategy is actually face-oriented, and it includes a mutual respect for the face, such as greetings, suggestions, and greetings.

A positive courtesy strategy is used in communication, in which the speaker wants to show his or her positive face in order to express intimacy and friendship, and expresses interest as the listener needs to be respected. This strategy usually occurs in a group of people who know each other very well. There are 15 strategies for this category:

1. Pay attention to the listener (his interests, desires, needs, goods).
2. Emphasis (acceptance of interests, harmony with the listener)
3. Enhancing interest in the listener
4. Use of identification marks within the group
5. Striving for compromise
6. Avoid disagreement
7. Predict / raise / confirm the general opinion
8. Joking
9. Prove and guess that the speaker knows or is interested in the listener's interests



10. Offer, promise
11. Be optimistic
12. Involve both the speaker and the listener in the relationship
13. Give reasons (or ask)
14. Acceptance or confirmation of the relationship
15. Giving gifts to the listener (item, sympathy, understanding, togetherness)

The strategy of negative politeness is applied when a person wants his freedom of movement to be unimpeded and his attention to be unrestricted. It is a corrective action aimed at the negative face of the listener. There are 10 strategies for negative politeness, including:

1. Not being conditionally sincere
2. Questioning
3. Be pessimistic
4. Minimize lying
5. Say the differences
6. Apologize
7. Personalization of the speaker and listener
8. As a general rule, state a law that threatens the face
9. Nominalization
10. Speak as a debtor or as if you are not indebted to the listener

Another polite strategy is a mixed meaning strategy. This strategy is implemented, in particular, by an unregistered communicative act, “in which case it is not possible to include in the action only one explicit communicative intention”. This strategy allows the speaker to avoid the responsibility of performing the YTS and leave the delivery of the intention and interpretation to the listener. There are 15 strategies in this category:

1. Give advice
2. Giving instructions on partnership
3. Guess
4. Not speaking openly
5. Excess
6. Tautologies
7. Contradictions
8. Cutting
9. Use of metaphors
10. Use rhetorical questions
11. Being ambiguous
12. Speaking nonsense
13. Excessive generalization



14. Speaking incompletely, dropping linguistic devices and parts of speech in between

In addition to those listed above, there is another strategy, which is called deviation, but in which the person decides to refrain from making actions that threaten the face. Not taking any action that puts the face at risk allows the person to avoid any possible interactions. Therefore, it is unlikely that the speaker will interact.

Debates on the universality of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness

Brown and Levinson tried to elaborate on aspects of the relationship that involved a certain amount of politeness. The application of the model to the English context is undoubtedly clearly and meticulously designed. However, the claim that the model of politeness and the claim to have a facial model can be applied universally in different cultural contexts in the following periods has caused heated debate. The basis of the debate is that the theory of politeness was developed from an Anglo-Saxon perspective. According to Bargiela-Chippini:

"The western character of their (positive and negative) faces stems from the Anglo-Saxon notion of an intelligent person seeking to protect himself and others from face-threatening actions (FS). it's definitely cultural. "

The debate on the universality of Brown and Levinson's theory was initiated by Matsumoto, who argues that the universality of the face in the theory of politeness does not apply to the phenomena of politeness in the Japanese context. Prior to the publication of Brown and Levinson's *Politeness: Some Universals*, their aim was to "show that superficial diversity is derived from basic universal principles and can only be satisfactorily taken into account," and that the theory of politeness is universal. Matsumoto, among others, argues that the concept of "face" does not apply to Japanese society. He denies the universality of the theory of politeness in terms of Japanese language and culture. "The object of people's concern in the exchange of information depends on culture. Only by allowing cultural variability at the core of this model can we have a satisfactory theory of politeness," he said.

Another attack on the universality of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness was considered by Ide, which suggests an alternative theory called the "theory of understanding". This theory refers to the concept of automatic tracking of socially adapted rules. It applies to verbal and nonverbal behaviors. The speaker is a passive subject of the system (social norm). Ide, along with Hof, refuses to use the concept of negative and positive face for Hinze and Hof for Chinese, Japanese, and English, instead proposing a metallurgical approach to replace the aforementioned concept. The metalinguistic approach, also known as the metatyl approach, is "A who thinks A thinks about B" and "When B is equal to A he thinks about B." This formula proposed by Haugh and Hinze has been proven to be applicable in any cultural context.

Nevertheless, while counter-claims to reject and replace some (if not all) notions of the theory of politeness in Eastern countries inevitably arose, some Asian linguists still advocate the universality of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness. Among those who are actively involved in the discussions are Fukuda, Asato, Pittsikoni.

The positive aspects of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness

From a socio-pragmatic point of view, the concepts of face and facework (facial movement) are considered to fit the context of English and other cultures studying this theory. Tzeltal (a Mexican city located in Mexico) and southern Indian Tamil languages and cultures from Tamilnadu were selected as the source of this data for research. Therefore, it can be concluded that Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness applies to these languages, but may not apply to others.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness can be applied to these languages, but not to others.



Originally, the term “face” was derived from the English metaphor “face” as a word used to describe someone’s social image. The concept of face may seem obvious in the norms of culture in terms of norms within the English inner circle. But these norms are still understood as standard English by many English teachers in the outside world. Therefore, the theory can be more applicable and appropriate for those who want to deal with Western culture. However, as the demand for the global English paradigm grows, the application of Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness must be adapted to the context of external culture. Apart from Western culture, other cultures should not force themselves to correct the concept of facial expressions and politeness as described by this theory, but apply politeness to their own cultures.

Holtgraves argues that the theory of politeness reveals the advantages of unproven connections between interpersonal variability and many aspects of language use, and that the theory is highly valued because it is a true social psychological approach to language use. His positive perspective is relevant in creating a conceptual picture of how language use can be described in detail and comprehensively. Brown and Levinson argue that theory is written not as an analysis but as an experiment. However, the presentation of the theory was in constructivism. Therefore, the theory can be taken as a perspective on which potential corrections and developments are available in the future.

Brown and Levinson’s contribution to explaining how the phenomenon of politeness is created and conceptualized is the theoretical basis of politeness strategies, face-to-face threatening actions. Relevant things in communication vary from one culture to another and from one subculture to another. Notwithstanding this difference in conformity, the use of language can and will lead to unintended disagreements and conflicts by the speaker. In this regard, the study of the linguistic courtesy of actors in neighboring countries can be of great service.

In addition to claiming that it is not applicable in some cultures, as discussed above, O’Driskoll’s work on positive and negative facial movements as an experimental tool for studying culturally applicable interactions also serves as a complement to other special explained that the tool can be customized by adding.

According to O’Driscoll, both positive and negative facial expressions can be classified as culturally neutral. This emphasizes that it works as an experimental tool to study interactions within cultural applications, adding other specific tools that may differ in different cultures as an additional aid to facial analysis.

Disadvantages of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness

This section discusses the universality of Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness, which has been rejected by a number of Asian linguists. The reaction is that there have been many critical reassessments to Brown and Levinson’s theory. Critical reassessments have been made by English-speaking scholars from outside the world who analyze the ideas of psychology, philosophy, and anthropology. Criticism, initially made by linguists from Asian countries, later spread to Southern Europe, South America, and South Africa.

The claim concerns, as Brown and Levinson point out, a denial of the universality of the theory of politeness. Paltridge points out that courtesy strategies vary in languages and cultures and can mean different things in different language and cultural contexts. Lack of understanding of polite strategies across languages and cultures can lead to intercultural pragmatic failure. Brown and Levinson’s theory emphasizes the absolutism of civic governance. Such an unsupported claim about universality is considered insignificant. The theory is based on Western culture. Although the Tamil language is revered as a representative of Eastern culture, the claim of its universality is still unacceptable. This demand was seen as an attempt to force Western civil structures to adapt to



Eastern contexts. "The sense of universal application includes invisible ethnocentrism," says James, endorsing his view.

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