

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the research which consists of sub-chapters including background of research, statement problems, research objectives, research significances, dan definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of Research

Cross-cultural pragmatics is achieved if two cultures are present to achieve the same goal in a conversation. This naturally looks at the context of culture, which is closely related to individual backgrounds, so as to create variations in the process of human communication, including politeness strategies. The aspect of politeness is undoubtedly embedded in the pragmatic approach, which refers to the cultural differences created by every human being. According to House & Kádár (2021:3) stated that cross-cultural pragmatics refers to the comparison between cultures by including linguistic and cultural differences. Through the cross-cultural differences achieved, it can investigate the patterns of language use and interpretation in various cultures. Additionally, through cultural pragmatics, it is possible to understand the interaction between language users with different cultural backgrounds to achieve the purpose of communication. Language use in cultural pragmatics refers to related individuals as culture has traditionally linked with language, one of which is through politeness strategies to cover the realm of closeness and respect between individuals.

Politeness strategies will be adapted to the requirements and behaviours of using language between individuals. Politeness strategies are also corroborated by the rules of pragmatics, which strictly observe the relationship between context or action and language. Through pragmatics, it can be seen how language is used to communicate, and the communication created will always create meaning. Pragmatics is also a branch of linguistics that studies the

influence of social context in language so that many differences in human backgrounds are connected through the rules of pragmatics (Permadi et al., 2022). The purpose of pragmatics is to recognize the intent and purpose of the speaker so that this scientific rule can find out how the hearer interprets or interprets the intent and purpose of the speaker. In other words, pragmatics examines the relationship between the social context and the communication of both participants, which can be seen through the hearer's and speaker's perspectives.

Language can be used to convey messages in the form of feelings, emotions, thoughts, ideas, and others. Therefore, the communication can be seen through the language used. Naturally, in communicating, every human being must use polite language and not justify the others. Based on this statement, it can certainly be seen that maintaining Politeness in communication is a form of maintaining feelings, face, and relationships with others (Isabella et al., 2022). Politeness can be interpreted as socializing with others and treating others appropriately. Politeness strategies not only include the words "sorry", "please", "excuse me", and "thank you" in conversation, but also follow the rules in the guaranteed language. Therefore, according to Brown & Levinson (1987), the purpose of promoting Politeness is to maintain two faces, namely the Face Threatening Act (FTA) and Face Saving Act (FSA). On the other hand, the two faces can be called "positive face" and "negative face". FTA can be represented as a negative face, while FSA can be a positive one.

Brown & Levinson (1987) stated that face is provided emotionally and may be eliminated, maintained, or enhanced. Therefore, each individual has their face and should always be considered in every inch of interaction. In interacting with others, humans are faced with two choices: maintaining the face of others or ignoring the face. However, to maintain the atmosphere of the meeting and conversation, both speakers and hearers should maintain face by not threatening each other. Therefore, to clarify the rules of face, Brown and Levinson (1987) explained in their book that the face is divided into two parts: negative and positive. Negative face refers to politeness derivatives that can threaten the

speaker's and hearer's public self-image. Meanwhile, positive face refers to the derivative positive Politeness by maintaining the speaker and hearer's public self-image. The amount of interaction between people fosters positive faces, including conversation as an invitation to approve, like, or admire.

Moreover, all individuals must communicate by paying attention to the hearer's face to avoid social conflicts. In addition, this Politeness is undoubtedly mandatory for public figures as they always influence other individuals, especially their supporters. Thus, this research will focus on the related object with the same issues and positive Politeness to comprehend the communication among utterances. Analysis of positive politeness strategies is essential for the readers due to the interpretation of communication through the context. Therefore, the researcher will analyze the types of positive politeness strategies used by BTS Kim Namjoon and Zach Sang towards the YouTube channel and examine what factors are implemented in using positive politeness strategies. The researcher chose the episode of the interview *RM Breaks Down His Debut Album 'Indigo'* on Zach Sang Show YouTube channel as an identification of podcasts has become a method to communicate through audio recordings by using various related devices such as microphones, headphones, and other podcasts devices. Podcasts are used as an activity with a background to entertain the public and in the realm of education to increase interest among students (Rachmaniputri et al., 2021)—many application portals provide podcasts, such as *YouTube*, *Spotify*, *Joox*, and many others.

In other words, the purpose of choosing an interview on the YouTube channel as the object of this research is to find out how the performance of podcasts consists of audiovisuals by presenting both the podcaster and the guest star. Through podcasts, the researcher can observe and analyze how the expressions of the guest star whenever answering questions from the podcaster. This can also be associated with politeness derivatives that prioritize comfort for speakers and hearers always to pay attention in every utterance to establish communication with the interlocutor—(Brown & Levinson, 1987) stated that the rule of politeness emphasizes the form of linguistics studies that focus on

the inference of complex human and cultural relationships. This has implications for the results of social interactions that are always maintained to reveal the social relationships between participants made from the beginning and the convenience of one another, grounded in cultural skills, to achieve an order of social interaction.

Erving Goffman (1956: 12) highlights the importance of understanding cross-cultural pragmatics in social interactions between speakers and hearers. Differences in understanding the intent and purpose of communication can be observed through cultural factors such as language, accent, and habits. Politeness, a universal characteristic, is crucial in maintaining public self-image. This study used two participants from different cultural backgrounds, Kim Namjoon (RM) from BTS and Zach Sang from Western culture. The differences in politeness strategies between the two participants were significant, as they tried to maintain each other's public image. According to Li et al., (2020) stated that to understand similarities and differences in cross-cultural Politeness, it is essential to learn the background of the participants through their communication and examine the differences in positive politeness strategies used by both participants.

According to BTS' Kim Namjoon's background as an Asian, there are various traditions and ethics in communication to maintain the "face" of the interlocutor. This is also seen from the podcaster in the show, Zach Sang, who has a Western cultural background so these differences can produce different perceptions. Samovar et al. (2013: 203) expressed that Asian cultural communication ethics or traditions involve various aspects such as vague, indirect, implicit, and avoiding aggression. The difference presents a view through the eyes of the researcher to examine how BTS' Kim Namjoon answered all questions and maintained the atmosphere of communication with Zach Sang to maintain the rules of positive politeness strategies and maintain the 'face-saving' of the podcaster on the show. Maintaining social interaction requires mutual understanding and respect, as emphasized by Effendi (2021). This facilitates communication and promotes social interaction between

participants. Positive politeness strategies can help maintain public self-image by promoting understanding and building a 'face-saving' relationship. Therefore, maintaining social interactions is crucial for effective communication.

Based on the statement above, the researcher chose a podcast from Zach Sang's YouTube channel with the RM 'Indigo' Interview theme. The podcast title is *RM Breaks Down His Debut Album 'Indigo'*. This research shows how BTS' Kim Namjoon conveyed the message through the related utterances by using positive politeness strategies to maintain the public self-image among participants. Therefore, the novelty of this research can be seen through the Asian communication habit conveyed by BTS' Kim Namjoon so that he can convey the message through positive politeness strategies. The researcher chose the podcast for the following reasons. First, this podcast discusses BTS' Kim Namjoon's journey in making his solo album, the highest-viewed video on the channel with 514K viewers. This shows how high the engagement of the global audience is, attracting a large global audience.

Furthermore, the highest number of viewers displayed shows how influential Kim Namjoon is as one of Asia's leading figures who has universal appeal and attracts engagement from various parts of the world. The second Reason is that Kim Namjoon can be seen as a representative of Asian culture, specifically in South Korea. Through this representation, Kim Namjoon may often serve as a bridge between Asian and Western cultures so that it is possible to see how someone represents Asian culture to a global audience. Third, since the video can be a concrete representative of the phenomenon of intercultural communication that functions in a popular context, this video also represents the use of positive politeness strategies formulated by Brown and Levinson (1987). Through a video that presents to a global audience, Kim Namjoon can reveal various phenomena that are answered based on the host's questions while maintaining Korean cultural norms, including honour and politeness.

The study by Dewi et al., (2023) entitled *Positive Politeness Strategies Used By The Main Character In The Animation Movie "Encanto"*. examines the

positive Politeness strategies used by the main character in the animation movie "Encanto." The research uses Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory to analyze politeness strategies and the FTA and FSA of each main character. The qualitative descriptive method was used, and the results show that the most common positive Politeness strategy used in the movie is Give Ask for the Reason, with 35% of the total. The study also found that the least common positive Politeness strategies were Exaggerate, Avoid Disagreement, Offer, Promise, Be Optimistic, and Give Gifts to Hearers. These previous studies serve as benchmarks for improving the quality of this research.

The second study is *The Positive Politeness Strategies Used on WhatsApp Conversation Between Student and Teacher in English Learning at Al-Lutfah Islamic School* by Santoso & Indriani (2021) explores the use of positive Politeness strategies in English learning conversations on WhatsApp. The research, based on Brown and Levinson's theory, uses a qualitative descriptive method and data collection techniques, including note-taking and observation. The study focuses on conversations between students and teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results reveal 15 positive politeness strategies, with Seeking Agreements being the dominant type. This strategy aims to show respect and minimize potential threats of face threatening in conversations on WhatsApp. The study highlights the importance of positive Politeness in promoting respectful communication and reducing potential threats.

Another previous study entitled *Positive Politeness Strategies In "Jay Shetty Podcast" Youtube Channel: An Interview With Will Smith* by Wahdani et al. (2023) uses qualitative content analysis (QCA) to analyze and interpret the strategies. The study found that Jay Shetty uses 10 out of 15 positive politeness strategies proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987), with 21 data points. The most significant aspect is exaggeration, which is used to respond to guest star utterances to avoid threats to his public image and maintain social interaction. The study provides valuable insights into the use of positive politeness in various contexts. Jay Shetty uses this aspect to respond to the utterances of his

guest star to avoid being threatened by his public image and maintain social interaction.

The similarities between this study and the previous studies mentioned above include. Firstly, this study discusses positive Politeness by explaining different sub-strategies. Secondly, the theory used in this study also refers to the theoretical rules promoted by Brown and Levinson (1987) as the fundamental principle in the analysis and interpretation of this study. Also, the qualitative method used is very influential in this research. Among the several similarities found in the research, there are differences as a gap principle with previous research. The difference can be seen through the object and research question used. This research focuses on an object with a music background, and it is based on an interview conducted by BTS Kim Namjoon and Zach Sang in a podcast on the Zach Sang Show YouTube channel.

Furthermore, in this study, the researcher focuses on the aspects and types of positive politeness strategies and explored various factors of positive politeness strategies used by BTS Kim Namjoon and Zach Sang. Moreover, it is shown that the researcher investigates the positive politeness strategies used by BTS' Kim Namjoon in *RM Breaks Down His Debut Album 'Indigo'* on Zach Sang Show YouTube channel by using Brown and Levinson's theory to propose positive politeness strategies. Hence, the researcher conducts this research titled *Representation of Asian Culture Through Positive Politeness Strategies (A Cultural Pragmatics Study on the Interview with BTS Kim Namjoon in Zach Sang Show YouTube Channel)*.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the research problem outlined in the background, the researcher observes that BTS Kim Namjoon and Zach Sang come from different cultural backgrounds. Namjoon, as an Asian, and Zach Sang, as a Westerner, engage in intercultural communication throughout the interview. In this context, Kim Namjoon employs positive politeness strategies to reflect Asian cultural habit in communication. Additionally, as an Asian public figure, he attempts to bridge the cultural differences with Zach Sang, demonstrating intercultural

communication to the audience. Therefore, this research focuses on two main questions:

1. How does BTS' Kim Namjoon use positive politeness strategies as representative of Asian culture during an interview *RM Breaks Down His Debut Album 'Indigo'* in Zach Sang Show YouTube channel?
2. What are the factors influencing positive politeness strategies in maintaining the public self-image used by BTS' Kim Namjoon during interview in Zach Sang Show YouTube channel?

1.3 Research Objectives

Following the statement of the problem above, this research aims to find the answer to those questions. There are:

1. To analyze positive politeness strategies are applied by BTS' Kim Namjoon as representative of Asian culture in the interview on Zach Sang Show YouTube channel.
2. To analyze the factors of positive politeness strategies in maintaining public self-image that were applied by BTS' Kim Namjoon in Zach Sang YouTube channel towards his debut album "Indigo".

1.4 Research Significances

This research is expected to provide benefits for any readers. Therefore, the researcher hopes that the results of this study can be useful and provide various lessons to readers both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically

This study uses a pragmatic approach to examine the conversation between BTS Kim Namjoon and Zach Sang. In the pragmatics approach, the researcher suggests the phenomenon of positive politeness achieved by the speaker and hearer in the conversation. According to the politeness strategies theory, the researcher used the related theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) to provide a theoretical foundation for their analysis. This study presents the context through the conversation between BTS Kim Namjoon and Zach Sang on the Zach Sang Show YouTube channel. Consequently, this study, conducted under the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987), can provide an overview of theoretical

understanding related to the phenomenon of politeness, particularly positive politeness that occurred in reality.

2. Practically

This study aims to indicate how to express positive politeness in social life and provide concrete observations for some other people and future researchers to improve communication efficiency through social interaction. This research suggests many politeness gestures that can be directly observed through the conversations of both participants, namely BTS' Kim Namjoon and Zach Sang, thus forming a communicative and efficient interaction pattern; the phenomenon of positive politeness can be reviewed comprehensively through this study, thereby increasing the understanding of the readers and other researchers in the future.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Key terms are defined below to help readers better comprehend the terms used by the author in this study.

a. Pragmatics

The study uses pragmatics, which refers to the study of meaning and the relationship between words to achieve a common goal. Pragmatics is also a science that studies meaning, both "visible" and "invisible" meaning so that it can be easy to recognize what the "speaker's meaning" is conveyed.

b. Face/Public self-image

Face refers to a social value individuals provide as a form of mutual respect. Therefore, face can be assumed to be a self-image in social attributes owned by each individual to create a good appearance in front of others.

c. Cross-cultural Pragmatics

In the realm of linguistics, culture is continuously linked with language. Cultural differences between individuals lead to an understanding of cross-cultural pragmatics, which often shows the relationship between language and conventionalized cultural patterns. In this approach, there are

frequently different expressions between individuals that lead to an understanding of the intensity of the differences that have occurred.

d. Politeness Strategies

Politeness is a strategy individuals use every occasion to fulfill the desire for social interaction by prioritizing negative faces (desire to express one's thoughts without opposition) and positive faces (desire to have one's contributions approved) to keep away uncomfortable feelings that the listener will feel. Thus, using politeness strategies can help maintain social interaction.

e. Positive Politeness Strategy

This study is one of the branches of politeness strategy, which prioritizes the comfort of the hearer by decreasing threats to the hearer's positive face. This strategy seeks the comfort of the hearer, either related to their interests, desires, or situations, to maintain the social interactions that have been carried out. Positive politeness also refers to an expression of please through maintaining the communication that has been carried out between the two participants, both the hearer and the speaker.

f. Interview

An interview is a fundamental field that provides a platform for two-way communication. It consists of a speaker and a hearer. Various related questions will be presented throughout the interview, requiring the interlocutor to answer correctly and coherently. The interview also considers the situation and conditions of the social relationship that has been built.



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