

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter was conducted intentionally in serving the introduction of research which determined in the following content from research background, research question, research objective, research significances, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is fundamentally both an individual and a social possession, a shared code through which members of a community communicate and negotiate meaning. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2021) mention that every language consists of multiple varieties and functions as a system of communication that individuals use to interact with others. At the same time, language is more than an external tool; it also shapes how people perceive and interpret their social world. Sapir (1929) emphasizes that language acts as a symbolic guide to social reality, influencing how individuals understand culture and experience everyday life. Taken together, these perspectives show that language is not only a structural system but also a cultural and psychological force: it enables communication, reflects collective identity, and frames how reality is constructed and shared among speakers.

Communication, from a systemic functional perspective, is fundamentally shaped by the context in which it occurs. Halliday and Hasan's (1989) model emphasizes that people do not communicate in an abstract way; instead, every sample of language use appropriate context to a particular situation that influences how messages are formed and interpreted. As noted in Yusrina et al. (2024) pragmatics helps explain this context delivered because it studies how speakers mean more than they say. Yule (1996) defines "Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning. pragmatics as the study of speaker meaning", which "is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)". focusing on what people intend in a given context.

Politeness is a central topic in pragmatics because people often need to criticize, request, or disagree without causing a scene. Based on face as a public

self-image Goffman (1967), Brown & Levinson (1987) explain how speakers protect positive face (the need to be liked) and negative face (the need for freedom) using strategies like positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record hints. Leech & Short, (2007) adds that politeness supports social harmony by reducing conflict in interaction. These ideas predict that people will hedge, soften, or use humor when topics are sensitive, since careful language helps maintain relationships (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983)

Modern communication expands these dynamics because public talk now happens on platforms that mix conversation, performance, and sometimes with audience feedback. Podcasts are a clear example: they are episodic, spoken, and accessible anywhere, blurring lines between broadcast and everyday (Rime et al., 2022). On YouTube, podcast-style talk shows reach large audiences and invite comments, clips, and shares, creating a participatory culture where tone and stance matter (Burgess & Green, 2018). In these spaces, speakers must be engaging yet careful, balancing clarity with civility. This makes them ideal for studying pragmatics and politeness in real time (Burgess & Green, 2018; Rime et al., 2022).

The Based(less) Indonesian Show, a YouTube channel with 46.7K subscriber presents podcast content hosted anonymously and showed up with name The Buzzer. Inviting varies of guests to discuss politics and culture in a relaxed, from Basuki Tjahaya Purnama (former governor of DKI Jakarta), Ronald Sinaga (PSI Party), Raffif Rizqullah (PKB Party), Tsamara Amany (Former PSI Party) until infamous public figure like Coki Pardede, Cania Citta, and Pandji Pragiwaksono . The Buzzer's critique style create space for unexpected perspective, jokes, and varies of language style especially in politeness. This setting offers rich data for analyzing politeness and humor in unscripted dialogue.

Pandji Pragiwaksono (b. 1979) is an Indonesian stand-up comedian, writer, and media host whose work blends political commentary. As a former radio host and TV presenter, he helped popularize Indonesian-language stand-up and has toured nationally and abroad. His specials include *Bhinneka Tunggal Tawa* (2011), *Merdeka Dalam Bercanda* (2012), *Mesakke Bangsaku* (2013), *Juru*

Bicara (2016), and *Pragiwaksono* (2018), documented across official releases and his platforms like Comika.id, YouTube, and X (formerly Twitter). In long-form conversations and on stage, Pandji's public persona often using humor to engage audiences in evaluative talk about government, identity, and social events. This combination of entertainment, social critique, and audience interaction makes him a strong case for analyzing politeness, indirectness, and facework in contemporary Indonesian media.

Hartati (2021) analyzed the politeness strategies used in Sule's podcast with guest Rizky Febian. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the study transcribed and translated the entire conversation and classified the utterances according to Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. The findings show that Sule employed all four major politeness strategies (bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record) but the interaction was strongly dominated by positive politeness. This strategy appeared through behaviors such as attending to the hearer, exaggerating approval, using in-group identity markers, seeking agreement, joking, giving reasons, and offering sympathy. The study further notes that Sule's strategy choices were influenced by expected guest responses, the high level of intimacy between speaker and guest, and his consideration of potential risks associated with face-threatening acts. Overall, the research demonstrates that relational nature of Sule's podcast encourages a consistent use of strategies that maintain closeness and minimize interpersonal threat.

Another related study by Helmaliya et al. (2024) examined adherence to and violations of politeness principles in Deddy Corbuzier's *Close The Door* podcast through a cyberpragmatic perspective. Focusing on an episode featuring Ivan Gunawan, the researchers identified both Leech's politeness maxims and violations that occur in digital conversational settings. The study found that while some utterances reflected the generosity, approbation, and sympathy maxims, violations were more prevalent, including breaches of tact, agreement, modesty, and other maxims. These violations often appeared in joking sequences, blunt remarks, or teasing that disregarded norms of deference. Importantly, the authors

argue that the digital context of YouTube shapes the interaction: the informal multimodal environment encourages relaxed speech, humor, and reduced attention to linguistic politeness. The study highlights how online podcast discourse negotiates between entertainment value and politeness expectations, making it a relevant comparison for research on language use in digital media.

The third study by Alfarobby (2023) examine politeness strategies in the Meaningful Talk podcast and explored their relevance to Indonesian language learning. Using Brown and Levinson's framework, the study identified the use of positive politeness, negative politeness, on-record, and off-record strategies in the podcast's educational discussions, showing how speakers manage face and maintain smooth interaction through respectful wording and indirectness when needed. The research also found a hybrid pattern in which two politeness strategies appear in a single utterance, reflecting the flexible pragmatics of spoken media. Importantly, the study argues that these patterns can serve as models for teaching Indonesian pragmatics at the junior high level, offering real conversational examples of how politeness supports effective and appropriate communication

Building on prior research, this study investigates how politeness strategies enable political critique in a Indonesian YouTube podcast. It focuses on how speakers deploy positive and negative politeness and off-record strategies, while humor carries implied meaning and evaluation. By targeting informal, digital talk rather than formal debates or scripted speeches, the study addresses an appliance on politeness in informal political conversation.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the research background above, the researcher aims to investigate how politeness strategies are used to deliver political critique through informal discourse in an episode of *The Based(less) Indonesian Show* Youtube Channel featuring Pandji Pragiwaksono. The conversational of the podcast allow possibility of multiple face-threatening acts (FTAs), especially when sensitive

political topics are addressed. Rather than confronting topics directly, the speakers use strategies to soften critique and engage the audience.

Therefore, the problems are formulated as:

1. What types of politeness strategies are used by Pandji Pragiwaksono and The Buzzer in The Based(less) Indonesian Show video podcast?
2. What factors contribute to the choice of politeness strategies in the conversations between Pandji Pragiwaksono and The Buzzer?

1.3 Research Objectives

To address the problems formulated above, this study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify the types of politeness strategies used by Pandji Pragiwaksono and The Buzzer in The Based(less) Indonesian Show video podcast.
2. To analyze the factors that contribute to the choice of politeness strategies in the conversations between Pandji Pragiwaksono and The Buzzer.

1.4 Research Significance

Theoretically, this study hopes to give a clearer picture of how politeness strategies are used in informal conversations that still deal with serious topics, like politics. Most studies on politeness focus on formal settings such as debates or speeches, while this research looks at a YouTube talk show that is casual but also public. By doing so, it adds to the discussion of how Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory can be applied to digital media, and how humor and indirectness work together with politeness in real conversations.

Practically, the findings can be useful for students and researchers who want to study language use in podcasts or other digital discussions. It may also be helpful for people who work with media like podcast hosts, public speakers, or content creators who need to keep their talk engaging but also respectful when discussing sensitive issues. In this way, the study does not only stay within theory but also shows how politeness strategies matter in everyday media practices.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. Pragmatics. Pragmatics is the study of how people use language in context.

It is not only about what words mean, but also about what speakers intend and how listeners interpret messages depending on the situation (Yule, 1996; Levinson, 1983).

2. Politeness Strategies. Politeness strategies are ways of speaking that help reduce conflict and keep good relationships. Brown and Levinson (1987) explain four main types: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. These strategies are used to soften criticism, requests, or disagreement.

3. Face and Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs). “Face” refers to a person’s public self-image, or how they want to be seen and respected (Goffman, 1967). A Face-Threatening Act (FTA) is an utterance that risks damaging that image, for example criticism or orders. Politeness strategies are used to reduce the impact of FTAs (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

4. YouTube Podcast. A YouTube podcast is a conversational program recorded in video form and shared on the YouTube platform. It combines the informal and often episodic style of a podcast with the visual and interactive features of YouTube. This format allows hosts and guests to discuss topics in a relaxed way while also reaching a wide audience who can watch, comment, and share. (Burgess & Green, 2018). The Based(less) Indonesian Show channel is one example of this type of program.