

Language Politeness Badan Permusyawaratan Desa (BPD) Meetings in Buria Village West Seram Regency Maluku Province

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Abstract

This research aims to describe language politeness that occurs in BPD meetings. Politeness in language revolves around faces. Where everyone has a face (positive and negative face), and that face must be maintained and people must not be put down. The conversation participants play the role of a speaker or listener, alternately which shows the role of language politeness in BPD meetings in seeing whether the form of greeting is polite or not through the role of turn taking. This research is descriptive qualitative research. The data source for this research is a conversation between the BPD chairman, BPD members, and Buria Village Staff. The technique used in collecting data uses recording techniques, recording techniques, the validity of the data is obtained through theoretical triangulation. Judging from the classification of conversation data from BPD Staff and Buria Village Staff, using the language politeness scale from Brown and Levinson, namely the speaker and hearer relative power scale (social status ranking scale between speaker and scale of choice, as well as switching turns of speech by taking over turns of speaking (taking over), continuing the speech partner's speech, and creating initiation or realization. The results of this research show two conclusions. First, compliance with the negative type of politeness includes expressing respect and giving an apology. Second, compliance with the type of positive politeness includes seeking agreement, making offers, giving reasons, avoiding disagreements, involving the speech partner.

Keywords: *Language Politeness; Politeness Scale; Turn Taking*



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INTRODUCTION

Language is a medium or means of communication used by every human being. Language is not only used to express good opinions, but also to show mutual respect among speakers, since every utterance produced by a speaker is often influenced by the situation. Language functions as a means of communication carried out between individuals as well as groups. However, in communication activities, sometimes a speaker tends to follow only their own desires rather than listening to or considering the ideas of others (Affandi, 2013). As a result, they may neglect proper and polite ways of speaking, causing others to feel hurt, underestimated, or unappreciated. Communication is a form of utterance that is used systematically to achieve certain goals or intentions. The communication process between speakers and interlocutors gives rise to what is known as a speech event.

Leech, as cited in Mahardika (2014), argues that language politeness should be applied in everyday life. Politeness is an interpretation of the speech act process. Every speaker has responsibility for their utterances within an ongoing situation. Speakers are expected to use polite language in order to facilitate communication and minimize potential debates that may arise between speakers and listeners. Politeness in speech, as well as one's character, reflects the speaker's identity (Mujianto, et al., 2022). Therefore, politeness is very important in communication among speakers, as seen in various forms of interaction within speech events, such as teaching and learning activities, seminar discussions, court hearings, and meetings.

Brown and Levinson, as cited in Chaer (2010), state that language politeness refers to the notion of face. The notion of face consists of two aspects: positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to a person's self-image that reflects values believed to be accepted by others as pleasing or satisfying. Negative face refers to a person's self-image that expects to be respected through interactions between speakers and interlocutors, allowing freedom of action without being forced to do something. Thus, politeness is divided into two types: negative politeness and positive politeness.

Research on language politeness focusing on speech and politeness scales by Brown and Levinson in the Prayogo, et al. (2021) includes the following: First, the Social Distance Rating Scale between the speaker and the interlocutor. In this scale, the older a person is, the higher the level of politeness in their speech. This indicates that older individuals tend to display greater politeness in speaking. Second, the Social Status Rating Scale between the speaker and the interlocutor, which is based on the asymmetrical relationship between them. Third, the Speech Act Rating Scale, which is based on the comparison of the relative level between one speech act and another within the context of actual speech practices.

According to Leech, as explained by Chaer (2010), politeness scales are divided into three types. First, the Cost-Benefit Scale. This scale refers to the extent of loss or benefit generated by a speech act in a conversation. The greater the loss experienced by the speaker, the more polite the conversation is considered to be. Conversely, the greater the benefit gained by the speaker, the less polite the conversation is considered. Second, the Optionality Scale. This scale refers to the number of options provided by the speaker to the interlocutor in a conversation. The more choices available or offered by the speaker to the interlocutor, the more polite the conversation is considered. On the other hand, if the conversation provides no opportunity for choice to either the speaker or the interlocutor, it is regarded as less polite. Third, the Indirectness Scale. This scale refers to how direct or indirect the intention of an utterance is (Parker, 2014). More direct utterances are considered less polite, while more indirect utterances are considered more polite. Speech in meetings is also influenced by conversational dynamics known as turn-taking. Meetings generally involve collaboration between two or more individuals in making decisions. Discussions of speech and language politeness are therefore closely related to speech events occurring in BPD meetings in Buria Village.

The BPD, as an auxiliary body outside the structure of the village administration, conducts BPD meetings once a year, with two meetings held within the ongoing months, to discuss issues faced by the community as well as to evaluate the performance of the Buria Village government staff. The purpose of these meetings is to empower the community and to achieve a progressive and prosperous society in accordance with government programs.

A conversation runs effectively when there is an exchange of roles between the speaker and the interlocutor. This is in line with the opinion expressed by Sacks (Rani et al., 2004), who states that a conversation can occur if several people take turns speaking. The influence within a conversation is known as turn-taking. Teluma (2019) explains that turn-taking refers to a dialogue in which each participant

alternately assumes the role of speaker or listener. Polite turn-taking in communication can make interlocutors feel comfortable and pleased because they feel respected and appreciated (Rahardi, 2005). Turn-taking occurs when one of the participants in the conversation supports the topic being discussed. Therefore, to analyze turn-taking, it is also necessary to understand the movement or shift of topics, which includes several aspects related to turn-taking strategies, turn-taking patterns, and turn-taking rules. These patterns are usually characterized by forms of communication, namely formal and informal communication patterns. If two or more people are involved in a speech event and some of them speak simultaneously, whether intentionally or unintentionally, this is considered normal. Purwoko (2008) explains that the process of taking turns in speaking can be classified into six categories: (1) taking over a speaking turn given by the previous speaker; (2) taking over a speaking turn before the previous speaker has finished, where the interlocutor interrupts as a tactic while waiting for the continuation of the speech; (3) taking over while someone is speaking in order to continue what is intended to be conveyed; (4) taking over the conversation by replacing or continuing the interlocutor's speech because the interlocutor is unable to continue speaking; (5) taking over by creating an initiation or reinitiation so that a new or subsequent exchange is created; and (6) taking over the next turn because the interlocutor does not make use of the opportunity provided.

The strategies of turn-taking that should be recognized include the following types. First, the moment when the first speaker or the next speaker takes over the speaking turn, which includes: (1) initiating speech through hesitant expressions or firm statements (starting up); (2) taking over the speaking turn (taking over); (3) interruption, which occurs when someone takes the speaking turn from another speaker or cuts off their speech; and (4) overlap, which occurs when a participant begins speaking before the current speaker has finished, resulting in two or more participants speaking simultaneously. Second, the situation in which a speaker is uttering words and maintaining the opportunity to continue speaking (holding the floor). Third, the moment when a speaker gives the opportunity to speak to the next speaker (yielding the floor). Generally, participants know when they should speak and when they should stop speaking to allow others (their interlocutors) to speak. If someone is speaking, other participants in the conversation should refrain from speaking; in other words, at any given moment in a conversation, there should ideally be only one speaker. Polite turn-taking rules can make communicating parties feel comfortable, respected, and appreciated. The purpose of this study is to describe language politeness in BPD meetings in Buria Village, West Seram Regency, Maluku Province.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method because its purpose is to describe the types and processes of applying language politeness in conversations during Village Consultative Body (BPD) meetings in Buria Village. The data in this study consist of words, phrases, and sentences presented in italics in order to distinguish utterances included as data conveyed during the BPD meetings among meeting participants. Meanwhile, the data sources in this study are derived from conversations occurring between the head of the BPD, other BPD members, and the staff of Buria Village during the meetings.

The data in this study were collected using the observation method, in which the researcher obtained both oral and written data by listening to the conversations of the meeting participants. Furthermore, observation techniques were used to directly monitor the meeting process while recording and note-taking techniques were conducted to record voices and document the utterances of the BPD meeting participants.

The data analysis techniques used in this study include data collection, data reduction, and data presentation. The collected data were then coded in the following sequence: KN MPM 01, 02 (negative politeness with sentence types showing respect, where 01 refers to the first datum, 02 to the second datum, and so forth); KP MBA 01, 02 (positive politeness with sentence types giving reasons, where 01 refers to the first datum, 02 to the second datum, and so forth); KP MMT 01, 02 (positive politeness with sentence types involving the interlocutor, where 01 refers to the first datum, 02 to the second datum, and so forth); KP MKS 01, 02 (positive politeness data with sentence types seeking agreement, where 01 refers to the first datum, 02 to the second datum, and so forth); KP MKES 01, 02 (positive politeness data with sentence types avoiding disagreement, where 01 refers to the first datum, 02 to the second datum, and so forth); and KP MT 01, 02

(positive politeness data with sentence types offering suggestions, where 01 refers to the first datum, 02 to the second datum, and so forth).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This discussion describes the types of politeness found in negative politeness and positive politeness utterances, politeness scales, and turn-taking. The data presented in the table below have been coded according to their respective types of politeness. The collected data consist of 5 utterance data showing negative politeness and 9 utterance data showing positive politeness. These results are presented in the following table.

Negative Politeness by Showing Respect

KN MRH 01

(SB): Good morning, shalom! Honorable Head of Buria Village and staff, respected Chairperson of the BPD, and our beloved fellow BPD members present at this time. We shall now proceed to the next agenda, namely the presentation of material to be delivered by the Chairperson of the BPD. Sir, the floor is yours.

Based on the data in the table above, the expression showing respect reflects a politeness scale that occupies the level of social distance between the speaker and the interlocutor as a result of a speech act. This is indicated by the utterance *the honorable* produced by (SB), as observed in the conversation above (SB) (KN MRH 01). Furthermore, the word *please* represents a turn-taking pattern in which the speaking turn is taken over after being given by the previous speaker. This belongs to the strategy where the first speaker or the next speaker takes the floor, specifically within the sub-strategy of *starting up* (initiating the conversation). Thus, KN MRH 01 constitutes an example of negative politeness in which both the speaker and the interlocutor take action out of obligation in carrying out something.

Negative Politeness by Using Apologies

KN MPM 01

(AL): As the chairperson, I would like to apologize because I conveyed this meeting invitation only verbally, without preparing and distributing formal invitation letters to all of you.

Based on the data in the table above, the use of apologies reflects the cost-benefit scale, considering the time that had already been devoted by the other meeting participants, although no final decision had yet been reached regarding the construction of the *baileo* and the renaming of the historical site. The excerpt KN MPM 01 indicates the presence of a turn-taking signal from (AL), marked by a brief pause or silence, which functions as an interactional cue for initiating and ending the conversation.

Positive Politeness by Seeking Agreement

KP MKS 01

(AL): The management of the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDES) in Buria is currently experiencing stagnation. In other words, the management composition process of the BUMDES has been running, but up to now it has become neglected/stalled. Therefore, what efforts or solutions can we possibly undertake so that, in principle, we may propose to the Regency Government that a new management board be established?

Based on the data in the table above, the effort to seek agreement reflects the social distance rating scale between the speaker and the interlocutor, which is marked by differences in age. The speaker (PL)

demonstrates a low level of politeness in speech because they were unable to control their anger and behaved impolitely by pointing toward (YM), who is older than (PL).

Positive Politeness by Offering Suggestions

KP MT 01 and 02

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| (ES): | All right! Mr. Chairperson and all colleagues, regarding the agenda about the BUMDES, what if the BUMDES manager (YL) is unable to attend the upcoming meeting with the village government? In that case, the solution could be to contact the person directly through a video call (VC). |
| (SL) | Regarding scholarships, these are some fundamental ideas from the BPD that are being proposed to the village government, so that in the near future we can observe the extent of their development for community members (students) in higher education institutions. |

Based on the scale of positive politeness, the data categorized as offering suggestions reflects the optionality scale, as indicated by the utterance *through a video call*, as well as the cost-benefit scale reflected in the proposal addressed to the village government to realize the scholarship agenda. Turn-taking is evident from the silence following the utterance delivered by (SL), who offered suggestions so that the Village Staff together with the BPD could realize one of the agendas concerning higher education funding. The utterance delivered by (EL), marked by the word *next* directed to the other meeting participants, represents a turn-taking pattern of taking and replacing turns, with the sub-strategy of creating an initiation or reinitiation as a direct response to (SL), who openly expressed ideas and suggestions.

Positive Politeness by Giving Reasons

KP MBA 01

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| (ES): | Furthermore, my suggestion is that the name of the historical site should simply be changed to <i>place of worship</i> . The reason is that if it is called a sacred place, people may no longer want to visit the site. |
| (SL) | Regarding scholarships, these are some fundamental ideas from the BPD that are being proposed to the village government, so that in the near future we can observe the extent of their development for community members (students) in higher education institutions. |

Based on the positive politeness utterance data, giving reasons reflects the Speech Act Rating Scale, which concerns the relative position of utterances in actual speech situations. This is indicated by the utterance *if it is called a sacred place, people will no longer visit it*, which served as the reason conveyed to the BPD staff and the Village Staff so that they would consider the argument presented by (ES). Through this contribution of ideas, (ES) proposed changing the name of the sacred place to *place of worship*, with the intention that visitors would not feel afraid to come there. The turn-taking pattern in the data categorized as giving reasons belongs to the pattern of taking and replacing the interlocutor's speaking turn. The utterances expressed as mutual respect by (YM) and (AL), through saying *thank you*, while continuing from the previous utterance within the same speaking occasion, represent the strategy in which a speaker continues uttering statements while maintaining their speaking turn (*holding the floor*). This indicates that (ES), during the opportunity to speak, repeatedly raised their hand as a sign that they had not yet finished speaking and still wished to express their opinion to the meeting participants.

Positive Politeness by Avoiding Disagreement

KP MKES 01

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| (AL): | The management of the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDES) in Buria is currently experiencing stagnation. In other words, the management composition process of the BUMDES has been running, but up to now it has become neglected/stalled. Therefore, what efforts |
|-------|--|

	or solutions can we possibly undertake so that, in principle, we may propose to the Regency Government (PemKab) that a new management board be established?
(EL)	Yes! Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Next, would any other ladies or gentlemen like to respond?

The data categorized as positive politeness through avoiding disagreement reflects the optionality scale, as shown by (BL) following up on what was stated by (PL), marked by the utterance *there must be an accountability report submitted to the village, so that later we can take steps regarding this matter*. This refers to the accountability report to the village in order to take measures concerning the management of the BUMDES while also accommodating the aspirations of the community. These two conversations also demonstrate a cost-benefit scale for the Village Government and the BPD, by requiring an accountability report on the manager's performance in order to avoid uncertainty related to public concerns as well as the aspirations of the people of Buria Village.

Positive Politeness by Involving the Interlocutor

KP MMT 01

(EL):	Yes! Thank you, Mr. PL. Next, would any other ladies or gentlemen like to respond?
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Based on the positive politeness utterance data, involving the interlocutor reflects the optionality scale, as indicated by the utterance *Next, would any other ladies or gentlemen like to respond?* This demonstrates that the speaker performs a speech act that does not pressure the interlocutor to respond hastily, but instead provides an opportunity to offer suggestions or input. The turn-taking strategy in KP MMT 01 represents the strategy in which the first speaker or the following speaker takes the opportunity to speak (*taking the floor*). The utterance delivered by (EL) serves as a response to the previous statement made by (BL), after which (EL) directly gives the speaking turn to the other meeting participants so they may express their opinions or additional suggestions regarding the agenda previously presented by (AL).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings discussed in the previous chapter, the conclusion of this study is that language politeness scales have been implemented in communication during Village Consultative Body (BPD) meetings in Buria Village, West Seram Regency, Maluku Province. This implementation can be demonstrated by the greater number of utterance data that comply with language politeness scales compared to those that deviate from them. In general, the utterances used in the meetings tend to be polite. This is reflected through negative politeness strategies (NP) in the form of expressions of respect and apologies, as well as positive politeness strategies (PP) in the form of utterances that seek agreement by offering suggestions, giving reasons, avoiding disagreement, and involving the interlocutor. These two strategies are employed to reduce the negative face-threatening acts toward the interlocutor while at the same time expressing the speaker's intentions so that communication may proceed smoothly and without obstacles. Politeness in conversations during BPD meetings is implemented by considering: (a) the social distance rating scale between the speaker and the interlocutor, namely differences in age among meeting participants; (b) the social status rating scale between the speaker and the interlocutor due to the participants' positions within the BPD meetings; and Leech's politeness scales, namely (a) the cost-benefit scale, which arises in the utterances of BPD meeting participants; (b) the optionality scale, referring to the extent to which choices are expressed by BPD meeting participants; and (c) the indirectness scale, referring to the degree of directness in the utterances delivered by BPD meeting participants. This study also reveals the existence of turn-taking, turn-taking patterns, and turn-taking strategies. Turn-taking in conversations between BPD staff and Village Staff occurs because participants are given opportunities to speak during the meetings. Speech in the Village Consultative Body (BPD) meetings demonstrates a turn-taking pattern of (a) taking over the speaking turn that has been given by the previous speaker, marked by the word *please* in the utterance data (SB). The turn-

taking strategies most commonly found in the BPD meetings are the *yielding the floor* stage, in which the speaker gives the speaking turn to the next speaker, and the *taking the floor* stage, in which the first speaker or the following speaker takes over the speaking turn.

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