

Analysis of Language Politeness in Arif Muhammad's Youtube Video “*Beti Pelakunya*”

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Abstract. *This study aims to examine the forms of politeness in language used in Arif Muhammad's YouTube video entitled "Beti Pelakunya" by applying Leech's politeness principle theory. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the required data was taken from the transcription of the characters' speech in the video, which was then analysed through six maxims of politeness: wisdom, generosity, praise, humility, agreement, and empathy. The findings of this study indicate that the characters, especially Beti and Sutrisno, often employ politeness strategies to maintain harmonious communication, such as apologising, providing clarification, and giving compliments. However, some utterances also appear to violate the principles of politeness, especially from the characters Min and Along, who often express criticism openly or display selfish attitudes. Overall, the interactions that occurred indicate that the principles of politeness can still be applied in digital media, even in the context of entertainment and jokes. Polite language in these videos reflects the social and cultural values of society and emphasises the importance of communication ethics in the digital age.*

Keywords: *pragmatics, politeness, video.*

1. Introduction

Language is a means of communication that plays a crucial role in interactions or relationships between individuals (Dewi, 2025). Language is not only used as a tool for communication but also reflects the cultural, moral, and etiquette values of a community. In social interactions, the use of polite language is vital for building balanced and mutually respectful relationships between individuals. According to Sari (2023), politeness in language reflects respect for the interlocutor, both in formal and informal situations, and represents the character and personality of the speaker. In this case, politeness is not only related to word choice but also to tone of voice, context, and manner of conveying information.

This idea is in line with Bakari's (2019) view that politeness in communication is a form of interaction in a language that does not offend either party, be it the speaker or the listener. This politeness must be in line with the context, namely the use of polite and correct language. Politeness is also part of the social norms agreed upon by all members of the community. As explained by Sukmayani (2023), politeness is a form of ethics that originates from the traditions, customs, and rules that exist in a group. Therefore, politeness in language applies not only to verbal communication but also to written communication and communication through digital media. In this era of rapid advancement in information technology, maintaining politeness in language has become increasingly urgent, especially when many interactions take place online, where there is a high risk of misunderstanding.

Furthermore, politeness in language becomes even more important when linked to

Indonesian culture, which highly values politeness. As stated by Milenia (2022), politeness in language is related to ethics in the communication process, where we must use appropriate expressions and consider who we are talking to, where, when, and the purpose of the conversation in order to maintain the dignity of others and ourselves. This politeness is evident through the use of polite language, which does not appear to be oppressive or condescending and gives the listener options and makes them feel comfortable. In this context, cultural norms greatly determine the behaviour of speakers. Speakers need to comply with the cultural norms that exist in society when interacting because this can reflect individual behaviour, for example, showing humility, irritability, caring, or wisdom (Pramujiono, 2020). Conversely, if these norms are not adhered to, the person may be judged negatively, such as being considered indifferent, selfish, or arrogant, among other things. Politeness is one of the traits that every individual should possess in social interactions. Demonstrating politeness will make others appreciate, respect, and feel happy with their presence as part of society (Aris, 2023).

Polite language cannot be separated from the application of ethics in speaking. As stated by Simanjuntak (2024), speaking is not only about following rules but also about applying language ethics that are important in building relationships between speakers and listeners. Speech is considered polite if it does not sound forceful or arrogant, gives the listener a choice, and makes them feel happy. By communicating politely, a person can maintain their self-esteem and dignity while respecting others. However, these expectations are often difficult to achieve because accepting others as they are (empathy), sincerely appreciating others' achievements, and feeling concerned about others' sadness are still very difficult to do. Politeness in language is reflected in the way we communicate using verbal cues. It is related to elements of language, such as sentences or expressions. It is known that pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the use of language in specific contexts (Adriana, 2019).

By paying attention to the importance of politeness in various forms of communication, both verbal and written, its relevance becomes even stronger amid advances in digital technology. The development of digital technology, especially on social media and video-sharing platforms, such as YouTube, has changed the way people interact and convey information. One interesting phenomenon of this change is the emergence of content creators who not only provide entertainment but also convey social messages in a unique way that is relatable to the public. Arif Muhammad, a famous YouTuber in Indonesia with the character *Mak Beti* is an example of a public figure who conveys messages through digital media. In each of his videos, Arif not only displays humour but also shows that the use of polite language can still attract viewers' attention. The politeness in the language used in his content reflects the importance of communication ethics in the digital age, where the line between entertainment and social values is becoming increasingly blurred. Therefore, it is important to analyse how various forms of polite language appear in his videos and their impact on viewers.

2. Method

This research was descriptive qualitative in nature. In a qualitative approach, the data obtained is in the form of sentences or narratives collected through qualitative data collection techniques (Mappasere, 2019). In general, qualitative research refers to descriptive research that tends to use analysis. In this approach, the process and meanings were emphasised more than quantitative measurements. The underlying theory was used as a guide to ensure that the focus of the research is in line with the facts in the field.

Therefore, qualitative research was chosen because it is able to explore phenomena in depth and contextually.

Furthermore, according to Rukin (2021), qualitative research is an independent field of research that touches on many disciplines, fields, and themes. This research covers complex and interrelated themes, concepts, and assumptions, including the traditions of positivism, post-structuralism, and various perspectives in interpretive cultural studies. This reinforces the reasons for choosing a qualitative approach in this study due to its exploratory nature and orientation towards in-depth interpretation of data.

This study specifically applied a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of describing and analysing the phenomenon of language use, particularly in relation to politeness in language as demonstrated in Arif Muhammad's YouTube video, *Beti* edition. Qualitative research is descriptive and emphasises analysis over measurement. The main focus of this research was on the process of language use and the meaning of the characters' speech in the video analysed in accordance with the principles of politeness. The underlying theory was used to ensure that the focus of the research remains consistent with the facts found in the data (Rukin, 2021). In this context, the qualitative approach provided ample space to understand the social and cultural dimensions that accompany the use of language by the character "Beti" and other characters in the video. Therefore, this study not only analysed the structure of language but also explored pragmatic values, norms of politeness, and interpretations of the speaker's intentions as reflected in the verbal interactions in the video.

This approach was also in line with Yusanto's (2020) view, which stated that qualitative research is an independent field of research involving various disciplines, including linguistics, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies. This study was interpretative and emphasised understanding meaning, context, and the interaction process. Therefore, a qualitative approach was very suitable for analysing linguistic phenomena that appeared on social media such as YouTube. Operationally, this study adopted a qualitative descriptive method to analyse the forms and strategies of polite language used by the characters in Arif Muhammad's YouTube video featuring *Beti*. This method was chosen because the data analysed consisted of verbal utterances that required a contextual and interpretative approach, rather than merely numerical or statistical data.

The object of research in this study was the speeches of the characters in the video, especially *Beti* as the main character, and her interactions with other characters such as parents, school friends, and the surrounding community. This study focused on how the principles of polite language were applied or even violated in various communication situations in the video.

The data collection techniques used were non-participatory observation and documentation. The researchers watched and recorded dialogues from several episodes of *Mak Beti* selected purposefully; then, they transcribed the utterances considered relevant for analysis. These transcriptions became the main data in the analysis process to describe the form and function of polite language in the context of digital media.

3. Results and Discussions

The data used in this study was taken from observations and transcriptions of Arif Muhammad's YouTube video of *Beti*'s episode *Pelakunya* ("The Perpetrator"), using a descriptive qualitative approach. In this video, *Beti* was shown in various communicative and humorous interactions but still emphasises politeness in language. This video was selected based on its relevance in showing language phenomena closely related to the

social and cultural context and values of politeness that apply in society.

The results of the analysis show that the various forms of politeness applied reflect the social situation, the relationship between the speakers, and the purpose of communication in each scene. In this case, the positive politeness strategy is the most dominant, followed by bald on record, and in some situations, the negative politeness strategy is also found. These strategies are used to maintain harmonious social relationships and show respect between characters. In addition, humour is the main tool used to convey meaning in a lighthearted but polite manner, adapted to the existing social context (Yusuf, 2025). This phenomenon shows that politeness in language in these videos is not only apparent in the form of formality but also in communication strategies that take interpersonal relationships into account. In pragmatic studies, polite language is very important for maintaining harmony in social interactions. In this case, social media serves as a connecting medium that is capable of reaching a wide audience while still presenting a sense of closeness between users. However, if not used properly, social media can create emotional distance, where those who are close can feel far away (Prasetya, 2022). Therefore, it is very important to maintain the values of politeness in digital communication.

One important theory used in this study to analyse the speech of the figures in the video is the principle of politeness theory proposed by Leech. According to Leech (as cited in Rahmawati, 2014), the principle of politeness is a crucial theory in pragmatics that aims to maintain harmony in communication and prevent conflict between speakers. This principle is known as the Politeness Principle and consists of six maxims, namely the maxims of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. Each of these maxims serves to reduce impoliteness and increase politeness in communication. These principles are highly relevant in analysing the interactions between characters such as Along, Sutrisno, Min, Beti, and Mak Beti in the video, as they reflect linguistic practices that are closely related to the values of politeness in society.

3.1 Maxim of Wisdom

The first principle is the maxim of wisdom, which dictates that speakers should not burden their interlocutors and should instead try to be helpful. The maxim of wisdom advises speakers to minimise expressions that are detrimental to their interlocutors and to maximise expressions that are beneficial or advantageous to them.

- (1) Sutrisno: *“Min, aku minta maaf lah sama kau, aku pun gak tau kalau dilepas sama istriku.”*
[Min, I apologise to you. I didn't know that my wife had left me.]

In excerpt (1), Sutrisno apologised and did not blame others; instead, he chose to be wise by apologising to avoid the conflict. This reflects a sense of responsibility, which is in accordance with the maxim of wisdom. In contrast, Along's utterance *“Hayah, lancau lu. Lu jangan asal bicara ini, Wak”* [“Hey, calm down. Don't talk carelessly, man”] is a violation of this maxim because it causes emotional distress to the other party.

3.2 Maxim of Generosity

The first principle is the maxim of wisdom, which dictates that speakers should not burden their interlocutors and should instead try to be helpful. The maxim of wisdom advises speakers to minimise expressions that are detrimental to their interlocutors and to maximise expressions that are beneficial or advantageous to them. Furthermore, the

maxim of generosity is an exhortation for the speaker to minimise benefits for themselves and maximise benefits for the listener. This is evident in Min's actions in excerpt (2) below:

- (2) Min: "*Sengaja aku jual murah biar bisa dijaga disayang.*"
[I deliberately sold it cheaply so that it could be well cared for.]

Excerpt (2) shows that Min was willing to let go of something he loved at a low price for the sake of others. This sacrifice was not for personal gain, but to ensure that his pet bird was well cared for. However, this maxim was violated by Along when he said:

- (3) Along: "*Kalau mau, 3 juta ambillah.*"
[If you want it, take it for 3 million.]

Excerpt (3) shows a self-centered attitude and unwillingness to compromise in conflict. Along did not consider the circumstances of others and only focused on his personal gain.

3.3 Praise Maxim

The maxim of praise also appears in the conversation, as shown in the excerpt below:

- (4) Sutrisno: "*Lahap kali aku makan, rasanya ini kayak restoran bintang tujuh, delapan, sembilan, sepuluh.*"
[Every time I eat, it tastes like food in a seven-, eight-, nine-, or ten-star restaurant.]

Excerpt (4) is a form of praise for his wife's cooking. It expresses gratitude, happiness, and appreciation and strengthens emotional bonds within the family. Praise is very important in interactions because it can create a pleasant atmosphere and show appreciation for the roles of others. This is very much in line with the principle of politeness because it maximises praise and avoids criticism.

3.4 Maxim of Humility

In the maxim of humility, the speaker is expected not to elevate themselves, as demonstrated by Sutrisno below:

- (5) Sutrisno: "*Ya memang kayak ngono lah hidupku, Min. Lebih atos bini ketimbang suami.*"
[Yes, that's how my life is, Min. My wife is more dominant than my husband.]

In excerpt (5), it is shown that Sutrisno acknowledged his powerless position in the household by belittling himself. By not standing out, Sutrisno maintained equal and friendly social relationships. He also avoided appearing to be superior or dominant over others, which shows his sensitivity to prevailing social values.

3.5 Maxim of Agreement

The maxim of agreement emphasises the importance of building agreement or at least not overly emphasising disagreement. This is reflected when Beti responded to her mother's accusations about where she got the money from, as reflected in the following excerpt:

- (6) Beti: “*Gak uang haram lo, Mak. Ini uang tabungan awak.*”
[It’s not dirty money, Mum. It’s my savings.]

Excerpt (6) shows that, although Beti was trying to refute the accusation, she did so in a relatively subtle and indirect manner. She did not argue with her mother harshly; instead, she tried to explain the situation from her point of view, which means she still tried to maintain the harmony of her relationship with her mother through indirect agreement.

3.6 Maxim of Sympathy

The maxim of sympathy arises when a speaker shows empathy towards the condition of the interlocutor, whether it be sorrow or joy, as shown in the excerpt below:

- (7) Mak Beti: “*Kalaupun kau bikin aku bahagia pakai uang haram, gak mau aku ya, Bet.*”
[If you make me happy with dirty money, I don’t want it, Bet.]

In excerpt (7), Betty’s mother indirectly showed concern and sympathy for her child’s morals. She did not want their happiness to be built on something illegal. Although her words seemed harsh, this maxim was still reflected through her concern about Betty’s morals and future.

However, not all utterances reflected politeness. Some dialogues violated these principles. For example, when Min said, “*Kura-kura dalam perahu, pura-pura tidak tahu*” [Turtle in a boat, pretending you don’t know] and “*Sutrisno bener-bener licik*” [Sutrisno is indeed cunning], they were the violations of the maxims of agreement and praise, as they directly accused and humiliated the interlocutor. These sentences might cause greater conflict due to the lack of effort to maintain politeness. Similarly, when Along still refused to return the bird by saying, “I don’t want to return this bird. This bird brings good fortune”, it shows stubbornness and disregard for the emotional state of the other person.

Thus, it can be concluded that Leech’s principles of politeness are very relevant in analysing everyday dialogue discourse. Several characters, such as Sutrisno and Beti, demonstrated efforts to maintain social relationships through expressions of apology, praise, and clarification. Meanwhile, the characters such as Along and Min sometimes violated these principles in highly emotional situations. The use of these principles helps to create harmonious, mutually respectful, and empathetic communication in interactions between individuals.

4. Conclusions

This study shows that the principles of politeness in language described by Leech are highly relevant in analysing verbal communication in the digital space, particularly in Arif Muhammad’s YouTube video entitled *Beti Pelakunya* (“Beti is the Culprit”). Through a qualitative descriptive approach, it was found that various characters in the video, such as Beti, Mak Beti, Sutrisno, Along, and Min, used various politeness strategies to build effective and harmonious interactions, even in a humorous and conflictual atmosphere.

Leech’s six maxims of politeness, which include the maxims of wisdom, generosity, praise, humility, agreement, and sympathy, proved to be a good analytical tool for understanding the social and cultural values present in speech. For example, Sutrisno and Beti preferred using the maxims of praise, agreement, and wisdom to maintain

interpersonal relationships, while characters such as Along and Min sometimes violated these principles, especially when emotions ran high, highlighting the complexity of communication.

Overall, the application of politeness principles not only illustrates communication ethics in everyday life but also emphasises that even in digital entertainment media, language ethics remain important in creating messages that are meaningful, inspiring, and respectful of human values. Thus, the analysis of linguistic politeness has linguistic significance while also making a significant social and cultural contribution to shaping the communication behaviour of society.

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