Politeness of Speaking Introduced in Conversation Texts in MTs English Textbook Grade VII

Ulin Nuha

IAIN Kudus, Kudus, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the conversation texts found in grade VII English textbook entitled "EOS English on Sky 1". This study focuses on the issues: social contextual factors approach which analyzes the participants in the interaction and the communicative situation, and politeness which analyzes the respect that an individual has for him or herself and maintains the "self-esteem" in public and private situations. This is a qualitative study conducted in two phases: social contextual factors and politeness phases. The data were analyzed based on the social contextual factors and politeness. In calculating the data and the final result of data percentage, quantification was used to support this study. The result shows that the social distances are intimate and not intimate with their relation is that teacher has higher position than students with the most frequently occurred are informal and in positive politeness.

Introduction

Education includes teaching and learning specific skills, and something less tangible but more profound: imparting knowledge, positive judgment and well-developed wisdom. Education has as one of its fundamental aspects the imparting of culture from generation to generation. Education means 'to draw out', facilitating the realization of self-potential and latent talents of an individual. It is an application of pedagogy, a body of theoretical and applied research relating to teaching and learning and draws on many disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, linguistics, and anthropology.

One of the linguistics branches is foreign language. The development of foreign language especially English in Indonesia is mostly conducted in teaching and learning process. As language education, in Indonesia English is formally taught in the levels of education. The basic rules that regulate the Indonesia's education are government regulation No 22/2003 on National Education System and No 19/2006 on National Standard of Education. The implementation of those regulations is socialized into the curriculum that is conducted in the teaching and learning program in each educational institution from elementary and secondary schools to college.

In many countries, and in Indonesia, English is now being introduced at primary rather than secondary level necessitating considerable new investment in textbooks (Richards, 2001). The models of teaching and learning can be applied into a textbook which is made based on the standard of content.

Textbook is a teaching tool (material) that presents the subject matter defined by the curriculum. A school textbook is required to contain a complete overview of the subject, including the theories and be of a more permanent character. In other words, using and producing of a textbook is related to a "normal" instructional design problems and one can rely on various design methods and instructional design models, based in turn on underlying psychological and pedagogical theory.

Textbooks are usually part of a pedagogical design, i.e. it can be the center piece of a course syllabus, it can be used for self-study (students and professionals), and teachers can assign only parts for reading. Teachers are now able to examine and confront the underlying ideologies of texts and textbooks. Textbooks, no longer seen as indispensable tools, are viewed as controlling instruments, hindering the creativity of the teacher, maintained in place through the pressure of publishers, and may result in the deskilling of teachers through their recycling of old, but tried and tested teaching techniques (Richards, 2001). Functions of a textbook are not the same because there are different purposes of usage.

Recently, there are many English textbooks widely published and distributed both in junior and senior high schools. Those textbooks themselves claim to

have conformed to the culture and politeness of our national life. Many teachers often use the textbooks as handbooks without paying attention to the core of the textbooks. The question is whether the textbooks published and distributed really conform to what the regulation of the Ministry of Education instructs or at least the textbooks contain good readings, proper pictures for the students, and polite conversation.

In reality, there are still many textbooks that do not describe and reflect the Indonesian students‟ life. The content is not proper to the Indonesian students because it contains bad readings, pictures that are not proper to the students, and impolite conversation texts. That is why, I encouraged to analyze the English textbook entitled "EOS English on Sky 1" which was one of the most recommended English textbook for the students of junior high school (MTs) a couple years ago and now it is still used by some junior high schools.

It will be described in this study about the social contextual factors which explain the participants in the interaction and the communicative situation, and politeness which describe the respect that an individual has for him or herself, and maintaining the "self-esteem" in public or in private situations.

Rules of Speaking

The pragmatics dimensions of communication by broadening the perspective of what the participants in a speech event must know are essential in order to communicate effectively. These include knowledge not only of the lexical and grammatical system of the language, but of the communicative system of the language, namely, how it is appropriate to talk to different types of speakers, what it is appropriate to talk about, how different sorts of speech event develop as discourse, etc. Wolfson (1983) focuses on three aspects of rules of speaking, they are address-system, remedial interchanges and interactional strategies, and speech acts such as apologies, invitations and compliments.

The concept behind the use of appropriate forms of address is not difficult for language learners to grasp since all languages use address forms in some sense. Indeed, it has been pointed out b y Brown and Levinson (1987) that politeness may itself be universal and that it is likely that all languages make

use of pre-coded routines or what Ferguson calls „politeness formula‟ which speakers are   expected to utter under the appropriate conditions.

The remedial interchange in which speakers attempt to remedy potentially difficulty social situations by offering an explanation or an apology is interested more in the overall patterns of social interaction than in the rules for the use of specific formula. Wolfson (1983) explains the different use between „excuse me‟ and „I'm sorry‟.

As a participant in the speech act, one can change the character of an interaction so that what starts out as a statement of good intention or an opening, can become an actual commitment. The emergent character of the interaction is an important fact since learners must become competent not only in identifying the kind of social formulas which do not result in conversation and are not intended to, but also the sort, the very great majority, where the boundaries between polite formula and statement of good intention are a bit vague but which can nevertheless be changed by the right responses into true social engagements.

Based on specific speech communities and language in use, if communicative competence is the aim for language learners, then people must begin by finding out how they make use of their linguistic resources, how they vary their use of language according to the speech situation, and how they express and create relationships with one another by their choice of linguistic features. Language used must be recognized as being conditioned by factors outside the purely linguistic structure such that there is always a cross-relationship between internal meaning and extra-linguistic factors.

Conversation Text

Conversation text is informal written talk involving two or more people. Written talk is the part of written language. Written language does, in fact, perform a similar range of broad functions to those performed by spoken language, that is, it is used to get things done, to provide information and to entertain. Written language is used for action (for example, public, signs, product labels, ballot papers), for information (for example, newspaper, advertisement), for

entertainment (for example, comic strips, fiction books, newspaper features) (Nunan, 1993).

Communicative Competence Model of Celce–Murcia

Language is means of communication. One can communicate with each other by using language. He can catch our idea after we express it by language, spoken or written but it is not so simple. To communicate in a language, one should know the communicative competence such as the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately.   As quoted by Celce-Murcia, et.al (1995) from Widdowson (1990) and Savignon (1983), communicative competence can be used as the basis of communicative language teaching (CLT) implicitly or explicitly.   The communicative competence model of Celce-Murcia (1995) is described as below:
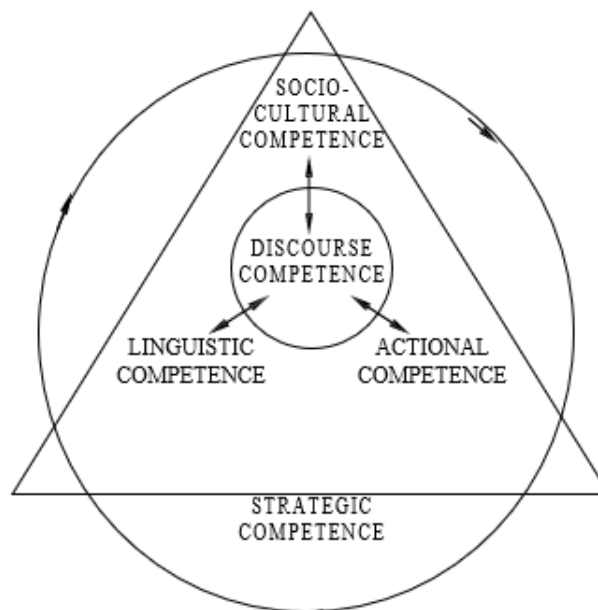
Figure 1. Schematic Representation of Communicative Competence (Celce-Murcia, 1995)

The model of communicative competence is described as a pyramid enclosing a circle and surrounded by another circle. The circle within the pyramid is discourse competence and the three points of the triangle are socio-cultural competence, linguistic competence and actional competence. This latter competence is conceptualized as competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent by performing and interpreting speech act sets. The

construct places the discourse component in a position where the lexico-grammatical buildings blocks, the actional organizing skills of communicative intent and the socio-cultural context come together and shape the discourse which in turn also shapes each of the other three components. The circle surrounding the pyramid represents strategic competence, an ever- present, potentially usable inventory of skills that allows a strategically competent speaker to negotiate messages and resolve problems or compensate for deficiencies in any of the other underlying competencies.

This model is very important to be applied in teaching language programs, especially in teaching conversation. In my consideration, teaching English is not only how a teacher can give materials to the students but also how the teacher can provide and create situation which can support the teaching and learning process. Teaching speaking in a conversation lesson needs models of conversation. These models are usually provided in text materials. The Celce-Murcia‟s model of communicative competence can help teacher who wants to provide materials of speaking by constructing conversations based on these criteria.

Actional Competence

According to Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995) language functions is that the domain of actional competence, divided into two main components, knowledge of language functions and knowledge of speech act sets. The table categorizes language functions according to seven keys areas; interpersonal exchange, information, opinions, feelings, suasion, problems and future scenarios. They intend it to serve as helpful organizational construct and practical guide for teachers, materials writers, and those designing classroom language tests. And then, in order to be able to use language functions in context, language learners need to be familiar with how individual speech acts are integrated into the higher levels of the communication system. Actional competence also involves knowledge of how speech acts and language functions can be patterned and sequenced in real-life situations.

Those seven keys are used to determine the communicative purposes of participants who are involved in conversation. In the English textbook, there

are communicative purposes which are determined in transactional and interpersonal conversation texts. Some components of Celce-Murcia's actional competence are in the model of speech function introduced in the standard of content.

Socio–Contextual Factors

Socio-contextual factors are part of socio-cultural competence which refers to the speaker's knowledge of how to express messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication, in accordance with the pragmatic factors related to variation in language use. These factors are complex and interrelated, which stems from the fact that language is not simply a communication coding system but also an integral part of the individual's identity and the most important channel of social organization, embedded in the culture of the communities where it is used. Language learners face this complexity as soon as they first try to apply the L2 knowledge they have learned to real-life communication and these first attempts can be disastrous: the "culture-free", "out-of-context" and very often even "meaning-free" L2 instruction (Damen, 1987) which is still too typical of foreign language classes around the world, simply does not prepare learners to cope with the complexity of real-life language use efficiently.

The relevant socio-cultural variable in this study is social contextual factors. They concern the participants in the interaction and the communicative situation. The participants'' age, gender, office (profession, rank and public position), status (social standing), social distance from and relations to each other (both in terms of power and affect) are known to determine how they talk and are talked to Preston (1989) and Brown and Levinson (1987). Situational variables involve the temporal and physical aspects of the interaction (time and duration, location) as well as the social dimension of the situation. The components of socio-cultural competence which is used as a base of the analysis is only social contextual factors. What Preston, Brown and Levinson explained above becomes setting criteria in a conversation text, they are:

1. Participants variables; age, gender, office and status, social distance, relations (power and affective)

2. Situational variables: time, place, social situation.

Politeness

In daily conversation, there are ways to go about getting the things people want. When people are with a group of friends, they can say to them, "Go get me that plate!", or "Shut-up!" However, when they are surrounded by a group of adults at a formal function, in which their parents are attending, they must say, "Could you please pass me that plate, if you don't mind?" and "I'm sorry, I don't mean to interrupt, but I am not able to hear the speaker in the front of the room." They differentiate social situations and they are obligated to adjust their use of words to fit the occasion. It would seem socially unacceptable if the phrases above were reversed.

Politeness is an expression of concern for feeling of others. The term politeness describes behavior which is somewhat formal and distancing, where the intention is not to interrupt or impose. Being polite means expressing respect towards the person you are talking to an avoiding offending them. Goffman (1976) describes politeness as showing concern for people "face".

Behavior which avoids imposing on others (avoid their „threatening their face") is described as evidence of negative politeness, while sociable behavior expressing warmth towards an addressee is positive politeness behavior. Positive politeness generally involves emphasizing what people share, thus minimizing the distance between them, while negative politeness avoid intruding, and so emphasizes the social distance between people.

e.g.   "It's very hot in here. Would you mind if I open a window."

    "I'm sorry to disturb you but I think you may be in the wrong seat."

In the examples above, the speaker uses elaborated, qualified and indirect ways of making request to stranger or people they don't know well. Politeness as a real-world goal is interpreted as a genuine desire to be pleasant to others, or as underlying motivation for an individual's linguistic behavior

(Brown & Levinson, 1987). Deference is connected with politeness, it refers to the respect we show to other people by virtue of their higher status, greater age, etc. It is an obligatory choice among variants reflecting the speaker's sense of place or role in a given situation according to social conventions and relationship. People cannot assess politeness reliably out of context, it is not the linguistic form alone that renders the speech act polite or impolite, but the linguistic form + the context of utterance + the relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies are developed in order to save the hearers' "face." Face refers to the respect that an individual has for themselves and maintains that "self-esteem" in public or in private situations. Usually, you try to avoid embarrassing the other person, or making them feel uncomfortable. Face Threatening Acts (FTA's) are acts that infringe on the hearers' need to maintain his/her self-esteem, and be respected. Politeness strategies are developed for the main purpose of dealing with these FTA's. The examples below are the analysis of politeness from Brown and Levinson (1987).

What would you do if you saw a cup of pens on your teacher's desk, and you wanted to use one, would you …

a. say, "Ooh, I want to use one of those!"

b. say, "So, is it O.K. if I use one of those pens?"

c. say, "I'm sorry to bother you but, I just wanted to ask you if I could use one of those pens?"

d. Indirectly say, "Hmm, I sure could use a blue pen right now."

There are four types of politeness strategies, described by Brown and Levinson (1987), that sum up human "politeness" behavior: Bald On Record, Negative Politeness, Positive Politeness, and Off-Record-indirect strategy.

If you answered **A**, you used what is called the Bald On-Record strategy which provides no effort to minimize threats to your teachers' "face."

If you answered **B**, you used the Positive Politeness strategy. In this situation you recognize that your teacher has a desire to be respected. It also confirms that the relationship is friendly and expresses group reciprocity.

If you answered **C**, you used the Negative Politeness strategy which is similar to Positive Politeness in that you recognize that they want to be respected however, you also assume that you are in some way imposing on them. Some other examples would be to say, "I don't want to bother you but..." or "I was wondering if ..."

If you answered **D**, you used Off-Record indirect strategies. The main purpose is to take some of the pressure off of you. You are trying not to directly impose by asking for a pen. Instead you would rather it be offered to you once the teacher realizes you need one, and you are looking to find one.

Politeness strategies are „culture-dependent‟ which means that what is felt to be appropriate vary across cultures. Politeness in conversation is also „culture-dependent, because the conversation texts made up in the English textbook can be seen as culturally speaking which is a conversation text that focuses on the importance that cultural elements play in communication. The text is designed to develop conversational fluency in a variety of situation.

Frame of the Ideas

For social contextual factors, the approach of Celce-Murcia et.al's (1995) variables is used. They are concerned with the participants in the interaction and the communicative situation. The participants‟ age, gender, office (profession, rank and public position), status (social standing), social distance from and relations to each other (both in terms of power and affect) are known to determine how they talk and are talked to. Situational variables involve the temporal and physical aspects of the interaction (time and duration, location) as well as the social dimension of the situation. I did not use the age and status in participants variable and time in situational variables because their variables are not found and known in the conversation texts.

For politeness analysis, the approach of Brown and Levinson's strategies is used. There are four types of politeness strategies, described by Brown and Levinson (1987) that sums up human "politeness" behavior: Bald on

Record, Negative Politeness, Positive Politeness, and Off-Record-indirect strategy.

Method

Analysis is conducted to social contextual factors and politeness. Text describing participant's exchange was used to analyze the politeness. There are four types of politeness strategies as described by Brown and Levinson (1987). They are Bald on Record, Negative Politeness, Positive Politeness, and Off-Record-indirect strategy. Then, context of the conversation texts is the unit of social contextual factors analysis based on the components of socio-cultural competence described by Celce-Murcia (1995).

Qualitative analysis is designed to be consistent with the assumptions of a qualitative paradigm as Cresswel (1994) explains that this study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting. In other words, in terms of qualitative analysis, it is an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication following analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification. Qualitative analysis in this study as explained above was applied to describe social contextual factors and politeness. In calculating the data and the final result of data frequency, quantification was used to support this study

The data of this study are the total number of the written conversation texts were taken from 7 chapters presented in the textbook, EOS English on Sky 1 for junior high school students, grade VII. In quantitative research, the total number of data analyzed is usually called population.

The units of analysis of this study are texts. Text is the unit which can show the participants or speaker in order to exchange information and their relationship. Text can be analyzed to describe the politeness of the participants or speakers. Text is the unit of analysis that can be analyzed to describe the social contextual factors of the conversation.

UNIT	TEXT NUMBER	PAGE NUMBER
I, II, III, IV….VII	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,…..	1, 2, 3, 4, 5……2002

Tabel 1. Code of Data

Suppose, a text is coded   I.1.5 .It means that the text is derived from chapter I, text number 5 and on page 5 or V.6.32 means that the text is derived from chapter V, text number 6, and on page 32.

The set variables of social contextual factors concern the participants in the interaction and the communicative situation. The participants are, gender, office (profession or occupation), social distance and relations (both in terms of power and affect). Situational variables involve place and social situation.

CODE	Participant Variables
_	Gender : female
+	Gender : male
ST	Office : Student
TC	Office : Teacher
I	Social distance ; Intimate
N	Social Distance : Not Intimate
A / P	Relation : Affect / Power

Tabel 2. Codes of Social Contextual Factors

CODE	Situational Variables
O / V	Social situation : informal / formal

Tabel 3. Situational Variables

In this study, the analysis was conducted in two phases. They are social contextual factors and politeness phases. The data were analyzed based

on these steps; for Social Contextual Factors, the texts were classified into each number of conversation texts. Each number of the conversation text was analyzed based on the picture setting which becomes the background of the conversation texts. From the picture background, it was known the participants like gender, office (profession, rank and public position), social distance from and relations to each other (both in terms of power and affect) and situational variables like place and social situation. The results of the analysis then were described in qualitative and quantitative ways. For Politeness, the texts were classified into each the number of conversation texts. Each number of the conversation text was analyzed based on the picture setting which becomes the background of the conversation texts. From the picture background, it would be known office, social distance from and relations to each other (both in terms of power and affect). From these data, then they were provided with the texts which have the criteria of politeness analysis. The provided texts then were analyzed based on politeness strategies. The results of the analysis then were described in qualitative and quantitative ways.

Discussion

After having conducted the analysis on speech function and linguistic features in *EOS English on Sky 1*, some conclusions can be presented as follows; There are 75 conversation texts which consist of 419 clauses in the English textbook. There are 30 texts presented in the transactional conversations; 4 texts presented the interpersonal conversations; and 41 texts presented in both transactional and interpersonal conversations. There are 419 moves where 305 moves or 73 % are compatible with the indicators introduced in the standard of content and 114 moves or 27 % are not compatible with any indicators introduced in the standard of content. There are 11 mood types in the transactional and interpersonal conversation texts and declarative full type is presented at most in the clauses. There are 19 sentence patterns in a set of basic clause constituents and the pattern, Subject + Finite + Complement, is mostly occurred.

The participant variables in the conversation texts are male and female whose occupations are student and teacher. The social distances are intimate

and not intimate, and the relation shows that teacher has higher position than student. The places of conversation are school yard, classroom, party, home, field, garden, studio music and library. School yard is the place where mostly becomes the setting of the conversations. The social situations in the conversation texts are formal and informal and informal situation is mostly occurred.

There are two politeness strategies in the conversation texts. They are positive and negative. Positive politeness is presented most often in the conversation texts.

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