Interpersonal Rhetoric in Social Media Facebook

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Abstract
The research was conducted to describe the politeness in rhetoric social media communication on Facebook. In Facebook, many statements are made in which they frequently contain less decency, less respect for others, and even inappropriate expressions. The prevailing form of politeness used in the communication on social media, especially Facebook, was investigated. The Pragmatic theory of interpersonal rhetoric by using the principle of politeness that consists of six maxims, namely expression of tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy, was employed in this study. These maxims have their respective roles and functions in oral and written communication. The purpose of this study was to describe the use of these six maxims in the communication on Facebook. The method was descriptive method by retrieving data obtained from Facebook, in the form of qualitative ones. Thirty conversations were selected. The collected data were documented in written form and analyzed by using the Pragmatic theory of modesty in interpersonal rhetoric. Based on the results of the analysis, the interpersonal rhetoric based on the principle of politeness is divided into six maxims. The most widely used expression is the expression of Agreement (40%), Sympathy (33.3%), and Approbation (10%)

Keywords: Speech, interpersonal rhetoric, Facebook

1. Introduction

As social beings, humans cannot be separated from their main characteristic of regularly having communication/association with others, especially fellow human beings. The forms of relationship among humans can be classified into the verbal and non-verbal relationships. The noticeable verbal relationship uses language as media. Language becomes one of the tools in the relationship of one human being to others. The role of language becomes very important when a person wants to convey messages or ideas in a communication. The role of language contained in an effective sentence makes the communication work properly. The conveyed idea/message is expected to be accepted equally between communicant and communicator, and vice versa if the message/information is given back from communicator to communicant.

The role of language in communication shows the significance and the genuineness of a person in communication. The character or personality of an individual is implied from his/her words or writings. The process of producing speech, both oral and written form, reflects one's character in communication. In addition, the choice of words or diction also indicates one's personality. When a person selects a word used in having

communication, it will reflect his/her personality. Aside of the elements of a person's ability to produce words or sentences in speech, there are other rules that are equally important in supporting good communication. The principle of politeness becomes an important aspect that must be considered in communication.

The goal of communication is to convey ideas to others. Therefore, when people send messages /ideas/notions to others, they should pay attention to the principle of politeness decency of the communicant. In the form of oral and written communication, this principle of politeness becomes one of the important things, because it will bring a profound impression to interlocutor.

Personal impression as a polite, sympathetic, friendly and noble individual will be gained if one's is good at communicating. Politeness in terms of using language indicates one's attitude and behavior. The attitude of mutual respect towards both peers and elders is the reason of the significance of the principle of politeness in communication. Therefore, human beings as social beings must respect each other, including in having communicating with others. The attitude of mutual respect is imperative for human as a social being.

Furthermore, media are required to conduct communication. Media are the tools used by people to communicate. They serve to deliver messages from the sources to the receivers. The communication media become a tool or a set of facilities used for the continuity process of communication (Suryadi, 2012). The latest development of communication media has shown a very rapid development. The development of communication media can be equated as the growth of mushroom in the rainy season. The growth of communication media from the era of smoke signals to the era of wireless media has grown very rapidly in Indonesia. The rapid development of communication media has brought changes to the community as the users of communication media. If the changes are not followed by the flexible shifting of the principle of politeness in communication, it will bring adverse impact on interpersonal communication within the community. Nowadays, communication media are widely used within the community, and one of them is communication through social media where many people can be invited to communicate at the same time.

The number of internet users in Indonesia shows the magnificence of social media among the Indonesian. According to data obtained from the Indonesia Ministry of Communications and Information (kominfo.go.id), which was published based on research of market research institute, e-Marketer, the Internet users in Indonesia ranked number six of the world. The number is higher than the Japanese who are five times slower in the growth of internet usage. Meanwhile, on the use of social media, Indonesia is ranked fourth of the most active use of social media in the world.

The large number of the users of social media in Indonesia, especially Facebook, becomes the background of this research. Despite many researches on the language on the social media, especially on Facebook, has been carried out previously, research that emphasizes the type of language used in communication particularly from pragmatic point of view is still rarely.

Language on social media, especially Facebook, becomes one of the interesting aspects, particularly in relation with the interpersonal rhetoric, since many users of social media relatively less concern to the interlocutor. They often give or write comments and status without less attention on who will read their posts. From the pragmatic study of the Indonesian language point of view, language politeness is one of the important things to be considered when communicating. Based on the background, the researcher determined to conduct a study entitled '**Interpersonal rhetoric in Facebook Social Media**.

2. Pragmatics in Communication

Language science has several branches. One of them is Pragmatic. Pragmatics is a branch of language (linguistic) which is increasingly well-known. Based on its etymology, Pragmatic comes from the word '*Pragma'* meaning 'action'. The word has an equal meaning with the word 'practice' (practical in nature) (Asher & Simpson *in* Subagyo, 2003). Pragmatic study is a study of language used by people in the daily communication to convey their ideas. Basically, this researcher used pragmatic theory on the research of interpersonal rhetoric in Facebook Social Media.

Pragmatic study discusses about the ethics of language. It is closely related to social norms in the prevailing cultural system within a society. We know that there is ethical culture incorporated in the language that we use, but we rarely apply it in our daily communication. Ethical culture applied in our society is broad, including the way we talk to the elderly in which we are supposed to be more polite and to pay attention on the choice of words and intonation at the same time.

Chaer's ethical language (2010) entail the ethics of language which covers several rules of:

a. What to say to an interlocutor based on time and circumstance in relation with social and cultural status in society.

b. Type of Language or language usage variation used in a particular culture/situation/ time.

c. The ethics used to interrupt other people's speech appropriately.

d. The times people should remain silent, listen to other's utterances.

e. The intonation when making a speech.

We should pay attention to the principle of politeness, particularly on the ethical rules in communication through social media. When a person posts a comment or status in Facebook, it is definitely linked to the respective circumstance or situation, even the social and cultural status of a person is very decisive ethics. Variety or variation of language also affects the choice of words or diction, sentences written in social media. In the process of production of words into sentences, people will select words used to have interaction with others. Words are symbols of sound used to denote a purpose or a condition. The concept symbolized by a symbol of sound is called as meaning. It can be claimed that every word has a meaning (Chaer, 2010: 15). In fact, the Facebook users

also have the ability to choose the right word/diction in communicating with others who will read it directly or indirectly.

The example of choice of words/diction can be found in the word 'die/pass away', in Bahasa Indonesia, there are "*mati, wafat, meninggal, berpulang,* dan *mampus"*. The difference is in the subject matter. The word *"mati"*, the object can be a human, animal, or other creature while "*wafat"* and "*meninggal"* are only for human object. In this context, social factors become the determinant. The users of social media, especially Facebook, frequently overlook the preference of diction to express their thoughts. Moreover, they commonly do not pay attention to the choice of words when posting a status or giving a comment.

3. Interpersonal Rhetoric in Facebook Social Media

The word "rhetoric" comes from the Greek language "*Eirien*" meaning "to say". Everything related to the act of communicating something to someone, both oral and written, can be put into the rhetoric as a field of study: phonetics, grammar, language acquisition, logic, *etc.* (Tarigan, 2010: 74). In the context of social media, especially Facebook, the process of rhetoric is very discernible when "to say" is manifested in written form, either in giving a comment, posting a status, or other activities related with social media of facebook.

In both oral and written communication, there are two elements of language that contain rhetoric. Rhetoric can be divided into two types, namely act of speech and action. Leech *in* Tarigan (2009: 73) suggested the existence of interpersonal rhetoric and textual rhetoric. In this research, interpersonal rhetoric in communication on Facebook was examined. This interpersonal rhetoric is divided into several principles in which each principle is supported by several maxims or expressions.

3.1 Interpersonal rhetoric and textual rhetoric

Interpersonal rhetoric and textual rhetoric are supported by the principles, and these principles are supported by maxims or expressions. In this research, the theory of interpersonal rhetoric and the principle of politeness containing of six maxims were employed (Tarigan, 2010: 74)

A. Interpersonal rhetoric has three principles, namely:

4.1 Principle of Cooperation with the maxims of:

a) Quantity Expression

b) Quality expression

c) Expression of relation

d) Phrase method

4.2 Principle of Politeness with the maxims of:

a) The expression of tact

b) The expression of generosity

c) Expression of approbation

d) The expression of modesty

e) The expression of agreement

f) Expression of sympathy

4.3 Principle of Irony

B. Textual rhetoric has four principles of:

4.4 Principle of Convenience with the maxims of:

a) Expression of destination center

b) Phrase weight of purpose

4.5 Principle of Clarity

4.6 Economic Principles

4.7 Principles of Use

In this study, the principles used were the six maxims of the Principle of Politeness (Leech *in* Chaer 2010: 56). Furthermore, these maxims can be explicated as follow:

a) The expression of tact

The expression of tact is one type of the aspects of politeness. In daily life, an utterance that is perceived by the listener as impolite might be perceived by the speaker as polite, and vice versa. Essentially, politeness seems to be unequal. A technique to improve the politeness level can be done by using more indirect type of illocution. Indirect illocution tends to be more polite. The following examples show different levels of politeness:

> *(1) Sahut telephon itu* (Answer the phone)
> *(2) Saya mau Anda menjawab telephon itu* (I want you to answer the phone)
> *(3) Maukah Anda menjawab telephon itu?* (Would you answer the phone?)
> *(4) Dapatkah Anda menjawab telephon itu?* (Can you answer the phone?)
> *(5) Apakah Anda tidak keberatan menjawab telephon itu?* (Would you mind to answer the phone?)
> *(6) Dapatkah kiranya Anda menjawab telephon itu?* (Would you like to answer the phone?)

The more illocutions emerge, the more polite it is in communication. The maxim of tact suggests that every participant of the conversation should minimize the disadvantages of others, or maximize advantages of others. It implies that: 1) the longer the duration of conversation, the higher the communicator's desire to be polite to the interlocutor, 2) the indirect statement is relatively more polite than the direct ones; 3) to ask something by using narrative sentences or interrogative sentences are relatively more polite than the imperative sentences.

b) The expression of generosity

The principle of generosity maxim is each participant's utterance to minimize the harms to others and to maximize the benefits for others. When each party performs this maxim in everyday life, they will avoid to envy and hurt each other.

c) The expression of approbation

The main point of this maxim is to reduce the possibility of disrespecting others and to appreciate others. In a broader sense, this maxim can be interpreted to avoid saying unpleasant things about others and to listen to others. It requires the communicator to

make effort in maximizing the respect to others and in minimizing the disrespect to others.

d) The expressions of modesty

To diminish self-esteem and to strengthen self-criticism are the subjects of the maxim of modesty. It requires every party to maximize self-criticism and to minimize self-esteem.

e) The expression of agreement

The expression of agreement requires both communicator and communicant to maximize the agreement and at the same time, to minimize the disagreement among them.

f) The expressions of sympathy

The expression of sympathy requires all parties of the conversation to maximize sympathy and to minimize a sense of antipathy. When the communicator utters contentment or happiness, the communicant is expected to give congratulations. On the contrary, if the communicator utters grief or misfortune, the communicant should properly express grief or condolences to show the sympathy.

4. Research Methods

Pragmatic analysis approach was employed in this study to reveal the pattern of speech in communication on Facebook. The method was descriptive technique in the form of qualitative research. It provides an overview of the individual, the state of language, symptoms, or a group by describing the words or writings of others that are observed previously (Moleong, 2006: 4).

This research involved the speeches posted on Facebook. The source of the data was in the form of written speeches obtained from the statuses of the users of Facebook. Data collection was done through several steps that are described as follows:

1) The first step

The researcher determined the Pragmatic Theory used in this study, i.e. the theory of interpersonal rhetoric with the principle of politeness with its six maxims. Once the theory was determined, researchers began to conduct library research.

2) The second step

To obtain the data, which were the conversation or status posted by the users, the researchers selected fifty conversations or statuses. Subsequently, the data were recorded in the observation sheet.

3) The third step

Based on the transcribed data in the form of notes, the researchers classified them and associated them with the principle of politeness with the six maxims.

4) The fourth step

After the analysis results was obtained, the researchers formulated them in the form of table and analyzed them based on the principle of politeness with the six maxims. The final step was to draw conclusions.

5. Results and Discussion

After the former data collection of conversations taken from Facebook, a number of 30 conversations or statuses were obtained from Facebook. The researchers recorded the data in the written form, and analyzed them in accordance with the ethics of interpersonal rhetoric by using the principle of politeness that is divided into six maxims. The data analyzed in this stage were those that indicated the maxims. Not all of them were analyzed, only three maxims with the highest frequency were involved in this stage, namely the expression of agreement, sympathy, and approbation.

A. Conversation that shows the Expression of Agreement

1) A : *Jangankan merangkai bunga, merangkai katapun aku tak sanggup* (let
alone arranging flowers, I can even think a word)
   B: *Ah yang benar?* (Are you sure?)

In the above sentence, it is a form of utterance in which A expresses a feeling of hopeless in facing a problem. The expression of "*Jangankan merangkai bunga, merangkai katapun aku tak sanggup* (let alone arranging flowers, I can even think a word)" demonstrates the hopeless feeling of the speaker (A). In the expression of agreement, the communicator and communicant are required to optimize the agreement between them and to diminish disagreement between them.
Speaker B expresses the expression of a sense of denial/expression of disagreement. The expression of "*Ah yang benar?*" implies a feeling of disagreement of speaker B for statement made by speaker A.

2) A : *Habis mandi gerah* (It is stiflingly hot even after taking a bath)
   B : *Hujan deres begini gimana gerah sih* (How come, it rain heavily)

In the above conversation, the speaker (A) commented about the weather in which she feels stiflingly hot even after taking a bath, instead of feeling fresh. The condition in which speaker (A) does not experience what a person should feel after bathing. Speaker (B) expresses an expression of disagreement. In a situation of heavy rain, speaker (B) states that the weather is cold. In the context of this conversation, it is certainly related to the situation that occurs when the conversation occurs.

3) A: *Syukuri yang ada itulah bahagia* (be grateful is a kind of happiness)
   B: *ya benar* (Yes, it is)

In the above conversation, speaker (A) claims that being grateful and thank for God's gift is a form of happiness. Speaker (B) expresses an expression of agreement for speaker (A) by affirming the statement conveyed by speaker (A).

B. Conversation that shows the Expression of Sympathy

4) A : *Subuh tadi baru sampai Yogya lalu langsung mengajar di kampus, blm sempat pulang hrs brgkt lg ke Jkt ya udah deh mengejar flight akhirnya order ojek online eh ga nyangka ternyata drivernya mahasiswa*

sendiri.. Makasih mas.. sudah mengantar sampai bandara dgn lancar dan selamat ((Just arrived Yogya at dawn and had to give lecture right away. No time to go home, had to chase a flight to Jkt and finally ordered an online taxibike and surprisingly the driver is one of my student. Thank you for taking me to the airport punctually and safely)

B : *Wahh hebatttt, jaga kesehatan juga penting pak…* (Marvelous, stay healthy Sir..)

The above conversation is a form of speech in which A revealed a story/ experience when he has just arrived from Jakarta to Yogya and had to give lecture and must immediately returned to Jakarta by plane. It is demonstrated by the sentence "*Subuh tadi baru sampai Yogya lalu langsung mengajar di kampus, blm sempat pulang hrs berangkat lg ke Jkt ya udah deh mengejar flight*". In the next sentence, he told his fortune when he was in rush heading to the airport and ordered an taxibike (*ojek*) and found out that the driver is one of his student. Speaker A also expressed his gratitude that he arrived in the airport punctually and safely.

The expression of sympathy is expressed by the speaker B. *"Wahh hebatttt, jaga kesehatan juga penting pak…"* Speaker B stated the expression of sympathy to speker A by stating *"wahh hebattt"*, and at the same time the message to always maintain his health amid the busy schedule.

5) A : *Jika aku harus menyebut satu nama yg sungguh berpengaruh dalam hidupku.*
Jika aku harus memilih satu tokoh idola dalam hidupku
Jika aku harus menceritakan kisah indah dalam hidupku
Aku akan menyebutkan namanya Bapak Paulus Ari Subagyo.., guruku, kakakku, sahabatku. Selamat Jalan.....Beristirahatlah dalam keabadian, dalam rengkuhan Kasih Tuhan. Biarlah kami menjaga nilai nilai yg kau wariskan utk kami, Terima kasih utk segala yg boleh kami terima darimu Kasih sayang, perhatian, pengabdian, dukungan. Terima kasihku kucapkan padamu guruku. (If I had to mention one powerful person in my life, If I had to choose one idol figure in my life, If I had to tell the mesmerizing story of my life. I will mention his name, *Bapak* Paulus Ari Subagyo, my teacher, my brother, my best friend. Farewell,..... Rest in eternity, in the embrace of God's Love. Let us keep the value that you left for us, Thank you for everything we may receive from you. Love, compassion, devotion, support. Thank you, my teacher).

B: *RIP Pak Ari Subagyo. Beristirahat dengan tenang di sisi-Nya. Semoga keluarga yang ditinggalkan ikhlas dan tabah. Amin*. (RIP Pak Ari Subagyo. May you rest in peace in God's side. May the families left behind stay sincerely and steadfastly. Amen).

The above conversation is a form of speech in which speaker A expresses a profound sense of sorrow. Speaker A conveys the sense of loss of someone who became an idol, a role model, a person who is very valuable in the life of speaker A. Speech A in sentence 5) is a form of speech in which A expresses a profound sense of sorrow. Speaker A conveys the sense of loss of someone who becomes an idol, a character, a person who is very valuable in the life of speaker A. The figure a teacher who became

a brother and best friend at the same time. The expression of prayer is also expressed by speaker A. In the series of prayer, speaker A revealed the figure is Mr. Paul Ari Subagyo.

The expression of sympathy is accompanied by speaker B who gave prayer for Mr. Ari Subagyo, and a prayer for the persistence of the family left behind. Although the expression of grief of speker A is not addressed directly by speaker B, but the prayer for the late and the family left behind implies a similar message to the expression of grief from speaker A. It is an indirect response from speaker B as a form of sympathy.

C. Conversation that shows the Expression of Approbation

> 6) A : *kebahagiaan seorang guru tatkala siswanya berhasil meraih prestasi, pahit awalnya manis akhirnya* (It is such a happiness for teachers to see their students reach an achievement, bitter at the beginning and sweet at the end).

B : *Wouw congrats buat tim kimia LC selamat buat pak Jack....semakin nyata karya2nya...*(Congratulations for chemical team LC, congratulations for Mr. Jack..for the realization of their works…)

In the above conversation, Speaker (A) expresses a feeling of happiness over the achievements attained by the students. "*Pahit awalnya manis akhirnya"* implies an reinforcement that it is uneasy to get such an achievement. It requires heavy struggle and exercises. The expression of approbation is also expressed by speaker B. Speaker B conveys an expression of appreciation for the accomplishments accompanied by the statement made by speaker A. By giving congratulations and showing appreciation for the works in preparing the contest.

The central point of this maxim is to reduce the disrespect to others, and to give more appreciation to others. In a broader sense, this maxim is intended to avoid saying unpleasant things about others, and to listen to others. It requires the speaker to make effort to maximize respect for others and to minimize disrespect for others.

> 7) A: *Membatik tak hanya sebatas pada kain, pada bambu tampah pun bisa*
(Batik is not solely done in fabric, it can be on bamboo winnowing)

B*: Hebattttt* (That's cool)

In the above conversation, speaker A discloses that batik is not solely done on the fabric. Speaker A discloses that the creativity of batik can also be done on bamboo media. Speaker A shows a feeling of happiness that the students can perform batik activities on bamboo media. Speaker B expresses an appreciation for the achievement of speaker A, by responding *"hebattt"*.

Based on the analysis of thirty conversations as obtained from Facebook, the frequency of statements in accordance with the principle of politeness can be formulated in the following table:

Table 1. Analysis of the sentences obtained from Facebook based on the principle of politeness.

No	Principle of Politeness	Number of sentences	Percentage
1	The expression of tact	2	6.7%
2	The expression of generosity	2	6.7%
3	The expression of approbation	3	10%
4	The expression of modesty	1	3.3%
5	The expression of agreement	12	40%
6	The expression of sympathy	10	33.3%

6. Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis of conversations obtained from Facebook, the interpersonal rhetoric in accordance with the principle of politeness can be divided into six maxims. The most widely used expressions are the expression of Agreement (40%), Sympathy (33.3%), and Approbation (10%).

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