

FACE AND POLITENESS IN JAVANESE MULTILINGUAL INTERACTION

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ABSTRACT

Javanese culture is unique since its orientation is to group togetherness, but the language displays the social distance between the conversers. Using a sociolinguistic perspective, this study investigated how Javanese people manage their concerns about self-other and positive-negative face. Linguistic data from a Javanese culture webinar held by Yogyakarta Palace were analysed using the explanatory sequential mixed-method design. The results show that from the most frequent to the least frequent, Javanese people are concerned about enhancing other-positive face (44.34%), other-negative face (39.15%), self-negative face (11.32%), and self-positive face (5.19%). Complimenting, greeting, showing sympathy, and expressing gratitude are their ways to show their concern for the other-positive face. Meanwhile, employing indirect requests and honorifics in Javanese *Krama* are strategies to enhance the other-negative face. People's tendency to please others, show respect, and avoid conflict is the underlying reason for their great concern for others' positive and negative faces. Their reluctance to enhance their self-face is due to their inclination to shame and guilt. Such face management is highly influenced by the cultural norms and values upheld by society. In a forum delivered in Bahasa Indonesia, their strong Javanese identity is represented by the insertion of Javanese honorifics showing deference.

Keywords: face; facework; Javanese; multilingualism; politeness

Introduction

Being widely applied in politeness research, the concept of positive and negative politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) (henceforth B&L) is criticised for being Western-biased and not applicable in collectivist non-Western cultures (Byon, 2006; Gu, 1990; Ide, 1989, 1993; Mao, 1994; Matsumoto, 1989). Those studies claim that negative face, a person's wants to be free from imposition, does not exist in Asian cultures whose people are concerned more with group togetherness and oriented to social norm adherence. They also assert that a speaker's performance is greatly influenced by culture, so a culture-specific perspective is needed to understand linguistic politeness. Therefore, investigating face needs and facework preferences in one culture is useful to see how facework operates in a specific culture. While previous studies that prove the inexistence of B&L's negative politeness were conducted in Japan (Ide, 1989, 1993), China (Gu, 1990; Mao, 1994; Yu, 2003), and Korea (Byon, 2006), no studies have investigated how facework operates among the Javanese, the largest ethnic group in both Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

Javanese is a culture with high-power distance and strong collectivism (Gupta & Sukanto, 2020). The power distance is reflected in the two speech levels, *Krama* and *Ngoko*, to indicate respect and intimacy between interactants. Using *Krama*, either *Krama Lugu* or *Krama Alus*, is the most obvious way to demonstrate polite behaviour since politeness in this culture entails showing the appropriate amount of respect to people of high status and using the proper degree of formality to those of older generation and ones we do not get along with personally (Poedjosoedarmo, 1968). Unfortunately, studies show that the Javanese people, especially the young generation, are incompetent and reluctant to use Javanese *Krama* (Andriyanti, 2019; Subroto et al., 2008; Zentz, 2015). They use the national language or Bahasa Indonesia (henceforth BI) more because Javanese is less modern, feudal, and rigid (Smith-Hefner, 2009). As not many people speak the language, many from the younger generation are too unfamiliar to use *Krama* (Nursanti & Andriyanti, 2021).

Despite the lessened vitality of the Javanese, Yogyakarta Palace, together with Surakarta Palace, has been committed to conserving Javanese culture, including the language (Pemerintah Daerah Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 2021). Therefore, the language used there might be the standard of the Javanese language in Yogyakarta. Some public cultural events held by the palace are delivered in Javanese. However, to promote Javanese culture to more people, especially those not from Java, the palace also holds cultural events in non-Javanese languages. Hence, investigating how people in the palace, who strongly uphold Javanese cultural values, apply politeness norms in multilingual interaction is important to shed light on how they compensate the different politeness norms among Javanese, BI as the national language, and some other foreign languages.

Studies on Javanese linguistic politeness are numerous. From a micro-linguistic perspective, Krauß (2018) and Atmawati (2021) showed that politeness, honorific, and deferential systems are embedded in the Javanese vocabularies. Meanwhile, studies on politeness in various speech events reveal that by

considering the context of situation, Javanese speakers actively adjust their words and expressions to convey politeness to show respect or intimacy, such as refusal strategies used by Javanese learners of English (Wijayanto, 2013), politeness strategies in Javanese political discourse (Santoso, 2015), strategies and levels of politeness in tourism-service language (Purnomo, 2016), and Javanese speech levels in transactional communication (Sumekto et al., 2022). Studies that compared the politeness of Javanese and other languages, such as Tiarawati and Wulandari (2015), Kuntarto (2018), Sugianto (2021), and Nurjaleka et al. (2022), strengthen the argument that politeness is culturally distinctive, even between languages with similar politeness systems. The uniqueness of the Javanese politeness system is strongly influenced by its cultural wisdom, as shown in the studies conducted by Nadar (2007) and Sukarno (2010).

Since Yogyakarta palace is regarded as a center of Javanese culture with good maintenance of old traditions, the language used by its members also drew scholars' attention, such as Mukminatun et al. (2007), Sulistyowati (2008), Hidayani and Macaryus (2019), as well as Retnaningtyas et al. (2019). Those studies found that some factors, such as social status and age, influence the choice of address terms in the palace and they are sometimes shifted to show more respect to the interlocutor. Besides, Javanese *Krama*, the speech level indicating politeness, was the dominating code choice there. Thus far, no studies have investigated Javanese politeness in a multilingual interaction, particularly how the speakers apply politeness strategies to fulfill face needs.

Specifically, this study investigated how Javanese people manage face needs in a formal multilingual interaction and how it relates to the sociocultural aspects of Javanese society. It employed face classification from Kim et al. (2012), which was a juxtaposition of B&L's (1987) face need content and Ting-Toomey's (2017) face need agent. They classify 'face' into four types: 1) self-positive face (SPF) denoting a speaker's concern for approval and appreciation of one's own self-image, 2) other-positive face (OPF) reflecting a speaker's concern for another person's image, 3) self-negative face (SNF) pointing the need to save one's own freedom, and 4) other-negative face (ONF) referring to the need to not impede others' freedom to act. Those four face needs can be recognized as the general characteristics of people whose needs and desires are demonstrated through linguistic signs (Kim et al., 2012).

Literature Review

Face in Javanese Context

Face was coined by Goffman to mean "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (1967, p. 213). It implies that face is what others see from us and an individual's face is performed through certain behaviours and will be assumed or interpreted by others through the performed behaviours. However, B&L define face differently as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (1978, p. 61). This suggests that face exists within individual, but it is not assumed by others. B&L then explicate two kinds of face needs: 1) positive face referring to an

individual's needs to be approved, appreciated, liked, and validated, and 2) negative face or the need to be free from imposition. Combining both views, Ting-Toomey (2015; 2017, p. 1) has a more comprehensive explanation by saying that face deals with "how we want others to see us and treat us and how we actually treat others in association with their social self-conception expectations".

Face is vulnerable as it can be maintained, enhanced, attacked, or teased, which might cause the feeling of blushing, pride, embarrassment, or shame (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Those causing enhanced social self-worth are called face-saving acts, while the behaviours causing the stroked self-worth are known as face-threatening acts. In everyday interactions, people continuously make choices concerning their self-face and other's face. The verbal and nonverbal behaviours that individuals do to protect or save one's own, another person's, mutual, or collective faces in a sociocultural context is called "facework" (Ting-Toomey, 2017).

Politeness in Javanese culture is closely related to the metaphors of 'mouth' and "face" (Rahardi, 2013). A Javanese proverb *ajining dhiri gumantung ing lathi* (a person's self-esteem depends on his mouth) shows that the way we speak determines our image in front of others. Thus, language plays a crucial role in defining someone's self-image and the speech levels is the manifestation of the language norm. The metaphor of face (Javanese: *rai*) also represents someone's self-esteem. Some expressions using this metaphor are "*ora duwe rai*" (has no face), which means feeling extremely embarrassed, "*rai gedheg*" (wall face) indicating someone who has no shame, and "*nampek rai*" (slap on the face) showing actions causing shame. Geertz (1961) and Magnis-Suseno (1984) say that the feeling of *isin* (shame) is one of the strongest motivations for the Javanese to adapt their behaviour to societal norms. They are concerned about what other people might think when they show improper behaviour. Therefore, Javanese people construct a strict formal etiquette, called *tata krama*, to secure and protect them against the shame feeling.

East/West Divide of Politeness

Brown and Levinson's (1978) theory has been the most influential and widely used when researching linguistic politeness. Unfortunately, although they attempted to formulate a politeness definition aimed to cover universal instances of politeness, due to its limited applicability in non-Western cultures, it has also given rise to opposing arguments for not really being as universally applicable as claimed (Redmond, 2015). Several East Asian linguists have been critical of B&L's concept. Those criticising from the Japanese point of view are Ide (1989, 1993) and Matsumoto (1989). Ide (1989) argues that in contrast to Western society, where individualism is valued, East Asian cultures place great weight on group membership. Therefore, in East Asian countries, being polite primarily involves adhering to social standards or *wakimae*, rather than using volitional strategies. Meanwhile, Matsumoto (1989) claims that the negative face does not exist in Japanese culture because the Japanese self is interconnected rather than independent. Chinese linguists who made similar arguments relevant to Chinese culture are Gu (1990), Mao (1994), and Yu (2003) while that of Korean is Byon

(2006). Generally, they claim that culture plays an important role in shaping speakers' performance, so linguistic politeness should be understood from a culture-specific perspective.

Regarding those different views, Leech (2007) and Chen (2010) are scholars standing in the middle position. Leech (2007) claims that there are no absolute boundaries between East and West politeness since the concept of "collective, group culture" (East) and "individualist, egalitarian culture" (West) are not absolute but they are positioned on a scale. Polite interaction in all cultures implies that the speaker considers both individual and group norms and values. However, in a particular culture, one of the values is more powerful. Similarly, Cook (2022) asserts that the two types of politeness are used universally but they are manifested in a complex way in different social settings resulting in a cultural variance of politeness. Therefore, the debate on East-West politeness should be viewed as a trend in humanities research that welcomes multiculturalism that plays an important role in promoting cross-cultural understanding (Chen, 2010).

Javanese Politeness

The way Javanese people use their language sums up and symbolises the entire etiquette system in the culture (Geertz, 1960). While Japanese has *wakimae*, "the speaker's use of polite expressions according to social conventions rather than interactional strategies" (Ide, 1989, p. 223), as the social norm, the same concept applied in Javanese culture is called *unggah-ungguh*. Semantically it comes from two roots *unggah* (to go up) and *ungguh* (to sit). The former indicates the people's tendency to respect others based on their higher status, while the latter implies positioning oneself appropriately. Javanese etiquette demands everyone fulfill the obligation of status and position. Thus, *unggah-ungguh* means a way of speaking and placing oneself that shows respect for others in accordance with their status and position (Magnis-Suseno, 1984).

An element attached to every social situation in Java is respect, *urmat*, or *aji* (Geertz, 1961). Deciding the degree of respect someone should show is the first thought of a Javanese when meeting a new person. By applying the "respect" concept, the two people involved in an interaction will know each position toward one another, allowing further interaction to happen in a controlled and orderly manner. Respect can be shown in some ways: by posture, gesture and voice tone, address terms, and, above all, by speech levels. The speech levels in Javanese are based on the principle to whom and about whom one talks. *Krama* (high) and *ngoko* (low) are the two main levels available to express the status and/or familiarity of communication participants. Status is defined by factors, such as wealth, descent, education, occupation, age, kinship, and nationality, but the conversers' familiarity plays a more important role in determining the choice of linguistic forms (Geertz, 1960).

Studies show that several Javanese local wisdoms become the underlying concepts in applying politeness. *Tata krama* (good conduct or etiquette) is one of three well-rooted concepts in Javanese culture that influence people's behaviours; the other two are *andhap-asor* (depreciating oneself while exalting the others) and

tanggap ing sasmita (the ability to read the hidden meaning) (Sukarno, 2010). Wijayanto (2013) adds the concept of *ngemong rasa* (controlling one's own want to preserve other's feeling), which is usually done by using appropriate words to avoid upsetting others. Those cultural concepts indicate that being considerate of others' feelings is the main politeness strategy of the Javanese people. The demand to avoid conflict and always show the right attitude of respect is highly essential in Javanese social relations as a way to maintain social harmony (Magnis-Suseno, 1984).

Method

This study used mixed methods since combining elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches would be able to obtain comprehensive as well as in-depth justification and evidence. It employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design by collecting and analyzing quantitative and then qualitative data in two successive phases in one study (Ivankova et al., 2006).

The data in this study were utterances delivered by Javanese people in a Javanese culture webinar. They consist of a moderator, two speakers, and some participants. Since the participants came from different parts of Indonesia and a few of them are from foreign countries, the utterances regarded as data are only those uttered by Javanese participants. It is known from their statement when the moderator asked about their identity. The data were collected by selecting the webinar video recording uploaded to Kraton Jogja's YouTube channel. Among a series of "International Webinar & Workshop on Javanese Culture" held by Yogyakarta Palace in July-August 2021, a webinar entitled "The Art of Banana Leaves Creation" was chosen since this one is considered the most interactive one. By choosing an interactive form of communication, the results are able to represent the actual everyday conversation. We applied blended mode to transcribe the recording by utilising Live Transcribe application and subsequently, manually correcting the errors.

For collecting and analysing the data, a datasheet was provided. It consists of four columns demonstrating face needs: SPF, OPF, SNF, and ONF. Considering that culture greatly influences individuals' face needs in general and the strategies they employ to manage these face needs (Kim et al., 2012), analysing the tendency of face need orientation would be plausible to see facework strategy in Javanese society. Therefore, identifying which utterances demonstrate politeness and which face need is oriented by a speaker in his/her utterance was the first step of data analysis. It was done by analysing linguistic features indicating positive value in the utterance, whether it is oriented to the speaker's or other's face and whether it is positive or negative face. Then, the occurrences of each face need were calculated resulting in statistical data showing which face need is more frequently and less frequently adhered. These quantitative data depict the general face management of Javanese people in multilingual interaction. Lastly, qualitative analysis was conducted by relating the quantitative data to the speakers' identities and the nature of the communication event. With a sociolinguistic perspective, the data were analysed by considering speech contexts and Javanese sociocultural aspects.

Results and Discussion

The webinar was delivered in BI, but the people involved are mostly Javanese living with a strong Javanese culture in Yogyakarta palace. Javanese and BI exhibit differences in how they see communication participants. Javanese places a strong emphasis on the differences in social status, indicated by its speech levels, while BI is considered inclusive and democratic. BI is considered more communicative, more flexible, and more egalitarian than Javanese (Smith-Hefner, 2009). However, they also share several similarities in terms of politeness norms. Both languages regard social harmony and respecting older people or those of higher social status as important. This leads to a need to retain cohesion in communication through face-saving actions that have been the communicative style of a collectivist culture like Indonesia (Gupta & Sukamto, 2020).

Looking at the positive and negative face proposed by B&L where negative face is when interaction participants expect social distance and freedom from imposition while positive face is when a speaker helps himself or others to gain acceptance and respect from others, Javanese and BI can be regarded as languages oriented to negative politeness (Nurjaleka et. al., 2022) but, as seen from its hierarchical speech levels, Javanese has a stronger orientation than BI. However, Table 1 shows a dissimilar result since OPF becomes the most dominant face-need addressed in the study although the number is not significantly different from ONF.

Table 1
Face-need Concern in a Javanese Multilingual Interaction

No.	Face needs	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Self-positive face (SPF)	11	5.19
2.	Other-positive face (OPF)	94	44.34
3.	Self-negative face (SNF)	24	11.32
4.	Other-negative face (ONF)	83	39.15
Total		212	100.00

Calculated from the occurrences of each face need, the statistical data in Table 1 portray the face need orientation of the people involved in the webinar. The frequent occurrences of OPF and ONF indicate that other's face becomes the main concern of Javanese people in their interactions. More than 75% of the politeness strategies they applied are directed toward other's face. The high concern of OPF implies that speakers find it essential to focus on the others' image since supporting another person's face can help foster a relationship (Redmond, 2015). In their adherence to the other's face, enhancing positive face was preferable than boosting the negative one. This suggests that in a forum where many people from different cultural backgrounds are gathered, making others feel appreciated and accepted is important.

Self-Positive Face (SPF)

SPF reflects concern for approval and appreciation of one's personal self-image. A speaker highly concerned with SPF usually communicates by pursuing compliments and approval from others to retain his/her positive image (Kim et al., 2012). In the forum under study, utterances indicating SPF concern were delivered by the moderator and some participants.

- 1) *Senang sekali pada pagi hari ini, saya bisa menemani peserta semua yang hadir pada workshop pagi hari ini dalam acara yang luar biasa, karena ini merupakan hal yang baru bagi Keraton Yogyakarta karena sebelum-sebelumnya, sebelum pandemi tepatnya, Keraton Ngayogyakarta mengadakan workshop ... secara langsung. Tetapi ... dalam keadaan pandemi ini, maka Keraton Yogyakarta Hadiningrat menghadirkan workshop dengan cara daring atau online seperti saat ini.*

[I am very happy this morning since I can accompany all the participants attending this morning's workshop in this extraordinary event because this is something new for Yogyakarta Palace as previously, before the pandemic, Yogyakarta Palace held workshops ... offline. But ... in this pandemic situation, Yogyakarta Hadiningrat Palace is presenting workshops in a daring way like online right now.]

Excerpt 1 was spoken by the moderator at the beginning of the meeting. As the one in charge of organising the event, she felt it was necessary to show her eagerness to be the moderator of the webinar. Besides enhancing her SPF, she also built a positive image of the event by stating that the webinar was special since this was the first time an online webinar was held by Yogyakarta palace.

Not only to build a positive image of herself or the event she hosted, but the moderator also adhered to SPF to enhance the positive image of her group members.

- 2) As informed earlier, all speakers and I are courtiers or retainers at the Palace of Yogyakarta.

Spoken in English to facilitate participants who do not understand Javanese or BI, excerpt 2 was uttered by the moderator to boost the positive image of herself and the webinar speakers because to be seen as competent is also one's positive face need. By stating that the moderator and the speakers of the webinar are courtiers or retainers at Yogyakarta palace, the audience would believe in their competence in hosting the webinar since the topic presented has been part of their daily life. Excerpts 1 and 2 show that the SPF enhancement done by the moderator was not meant to boost her own personal positive image but to create a good image of the webinar. They are related to her task in organising the event well. By enhancing the moderator's and the speakers' positive face, the participants would find the webinar worth joining.

Enhancing SPF was also performed by some participants. Aiming at displaying their competence, most of them mostly showed their concern about SPF when the moderator asked whether they managed to make the banana leaf crafts or not after the speakers explained the procedures.

- 3) *Sudah. Bahkan, mencoba yang lainnya juga tadi.*
[I did. I even tried making the other ones as well.]
- 4) *Nuwun sewu kalau saya kan sering bikin inthuk-inthuk ya ...*
[I'm sorry but I often make *inthuk-inthuk* (offerings in the form of a small rice-cone) ...]

Excerpt 3 was spoken to tell the moderator that besides making the same crafts as other participants, she also made some others. It implies that she did more than what other participants did. Excerpt 4 shows that the speaker could follow the workshop well because she has been familiar with making a craft from banana leaves. Both utterances indicate that the participants wanted to show that they were competent and good at doing the required task.

People with high SPF concerns think that it is important for them to look good in front of others and to maintain their positive image (Kim et al., 2012). However, the low number of utterances adhering to this strategy (5.19%) signifies that showing one's positive image in front of others is not the culture of Javanese people because being *andhap-asor* (humbling oneself politely) is one of its well-rooted principles (Geertz, 1960; Wijayanto, 2013). Therefore, some participants who managed to make the craft did not claim it due to their competence, but it was merely because of the guidance from the speakers.

- 5) *Yang sekarang tadi ngikutin... apa... Ibu Sabar, berhasil.*
[For this one, I followed ... what ... Ibu Sabar and I did it.]
- 6) *Ngelihatin cara tangannya Ibu Sabar. Nah, berhasil.*
[Looking at Ibu Sabar's hands. Then, I managed to make it.]

Excerpts 5 and 6 display the identity of Javanese people who are humble. It is a character built by the older generation of Indonesia, particularly Java. The principle of "*sepi ing pamrih*" or self-restraint and selflessness as a basic priority of Javanese ethics (Magnis-Suseno, 1984) is still maintained by most Javanese people. The principle of humility upheld by Javanese people makes the participants reluctant to show their SPF.

Other-Positive Face (OPF)

OPF refers to a speaker's concern for approval and appreciation of other's image. Those with a strong desire to protect OPF are averse to hurting other people's feelings (Kim et al., 2012). By giving or assigning some positive value to the interlocutor, some examples of speech events adhering to OPF are offering, invitation, compliment, and congratulation (Leech, 2014). In this study, OPF

becomes the most dominant face need enhanced by those involved in the webinar (44.34%).

- 7) *Oh ya memang Ibu ini dikenal sabar juga seperti tuturannya halus itu terlihat sabarnya ya Bu, njih.*
[Ah right. This lady is known to be patient, like her smooth speech. It shows her patience, right?]
- 8) *Gak apa-apa, tapi sudah tahu tekniknya ya Bu ya. Sudah berhasil membuat.*
[It's okay, but you've known the technique, Ma'am. You managed to make it.]
- 9) *Bagus, sudah bisa...*
[Good. You could do it.]
- 10) *Sugeng Enjang. Selamat pagi cantik.*
[Good morning (Javanese *Krama*). Good morning (BI), pretty.]

Excerpt 7 is a compliment given to one of the webinar speakers. Since her name is "*Sabar*", which means "patient" in Javanese and BI, the moderator stated that the name indicates the trait of the person. Meanwhile, excerpt 8 was addressed to one of the participants who felt disappointed because the craft she made was untidy. The moderator gave comforting words to boost the participant's positive image by stating that the important thing is she knows the technique and has managed to make it. Excerpt 9 is a compliment spoken by a webinar speaker addressed to a participant who had managed to make the craft. Excerpt 10 was uttered by a speaker as a reply to a greeting from the moderator. After the moderator greeted her in the Javanese and BI versions of good morning, the speaker replied in the same way by adding the word "*cantik*" (pretty) to refer to the moderator. In the Indonesian context, a compliment done by addressing someone as such is often done by the old generation to the younger one. Meanwhile, the greeting expressed by the moderator in both Javanese and BI is due to politeness consideration. As the interlocutor is a senior courtier, a greeting in Javanese would be more appropriate. However, the BI version should be added to facilitate the non-Javanese participants to understand the utterance.

Considering others' feelings can also be demonstrated through the sympathy maxim by giving high value to others' feelings (Leech, 2014). In the data, it was shown by inquiring about people's health in excerpt 11 or expressing gratitude in excerpt 12:

- 11) *Eyang sehat?* [Grandma, are you in a good health?]
- 12) *Oh nggih, matur nuwun, nggih Eyang nggih. Matur sembah nuwun nggih Eyang.* [Ah yes. Thank you, grandma.]

Saying "Thank you" after another person's favour indicates that we confirm the person's positive face, the desire to be seen as a kind individual (Redmond, 2015). In excerpt 12, the moderator expressed her thankfulness twice and both were in Javanese. However, those two excerpts demonstrate different meanings.

Matur nuwun conveys appreciation for other's favour neutrally while, *matur sembah nuwun* expresses deeper meaning and is commonly addressed to those with higher social status. The alternation from "*matur nuwun*" to "*matur sembah nuwun*" in excerpt 12 was due to politeness consideration.

Those concerned with OPF think it is important to help others maintain their positive image (Kim et al., 2012). The dominance of OPF in this study among the four types of face needs was due to the principle of *ngemong rasa* (controlling one's own want to preserve other's feeling) (Wijayanto, 2013). Displaying high concern for OPF by pleasing others through positive politeness acts such as complimenting, greeting, showing sympathy, and expressing gratitude is a way to maintain social harmony, which characterises life in a group-oriented culture.

Self-Negative Face (SNF)

SNF points to the need to protect the speaker's own freedom. People with a strong interest in protecting SNF are concerned about respecting their own boundaries and want others to stay out of their business (Kim et al., 2012). In this study, almost all utterances concerning SNF were made by the moderator. With the duty of organising the event well, the moderator felt it was her responsibility to impose several things on the audience to make the event run as planned.

- 13) *Maka untuk itu saya akan menyapa peserta-peserta yang hadir dari luar negeri, **perkenankan untuk saya menyapa ...***
[Therefore, I will greet the participants from abroad, **please allow me** to say hello ...]
- 14) Before we proceed to the main agenda this morning, **let me** announce ...
- 15) *Namun sebelumnya **saya mengingatkan nggih, mengingatkan untuk peserta apakah sudah siap propertinya?***
[But before that, **please allow me to remind**, I remind the participants... **are the properties ready?**]

Although she had the right to inform or to ask the participants to do something, the moderator did not express them in a forceful manner. Several hedges or softening devices were used to make the utterance less threatening. In excerpts 13 and 14, she said "*perkenankan saya*" (please allow me) and "let me" to ask for permission from the audience. In excerpt 15, she made an imperative statement less imposing by asking for permission "*saya mengingatkan nggih*" (please allow me to remind) and then continued it with an interrogative form.

Those examples explain that it is hard for Javanese people to boost their SNF because of the principle of *ewuh pekewuh*, which means uneasy, shame, or guilty feeling for doing or not doing something to others as it might offend or give an impression of being impolite or unpleasant. This principle highly influences the behaviour of Javanese people because they have strong solidarity and tend to avoid conflict. Thus, to balance her duty requiring her to impose several things on the

audience and the principle of *ewuh pekewuh* in her culture, the moderator employed hedging devices aimed at softening the imposition.

Other-Negative Face (ONF)

ONF refers to a speaker's need to not inhibit others' freedom to act. Those highly concerned with protecting ONF wtry not to obstruct other people's personal affairs and not to tell others how to behave (Kim et al., 2012). While positive politeness attempts to establish a relationship, negative politeness aims at softening the speech tone and maintaining a proper distance (Zhan, 1992).

To soften speech tone, indirectness is often employed. Aimed at minimising ONF threat, indirectness is a strategy to enhance ONF. It might be utilised if inhibiting others' negative face is inevitable. In this study, indirect message was mostly uttered by the moderator when she had to ask others to do something.

- 16) Every participant **is encouraged to** turn off their microphones ...
- 17) *Lalu apalagi Eyang yang **mungkin** bisa disampaikan, selain itu?*
[Then, besides that, what **might** you say, Grandma?]

While excerpt 16 was uttered to ask participants to turn off their microphones, excerpt 17 was expressed to ask a webinar speaker to go on explaining the material. In conveying those requests, the moderator did not use direct imperative but employed declarative and interrogative forms aiming at making the request less face-threatening. "*Mungkin*" (perhaps/maybe) was the most frequent hedging device she employed to ask others to do something. By avoiding imperative form and using "*mungkin*" to ask for something, it makes the imposition less powerful. Because *alus* people (those whose behaviours are regulated by the delicate intricacies of the complex court-derived etiquette) often do not like to say what is on their minds (Geertz, 1960), indirectness becomes one of the major politeness strategies in Javanese

Besides stating indirect message, ONF might be displayed by showing distance with the interlocutor and this has been facilitated by the Javanese speech levels. With BI as its main language, the webinar was delivered in mixed languages consisting of BI, Javanese, English, and Japanese. English was used at the beginning and closing of the webinar while Japanese was employed to say greetings and farewell to a participant from Japan. Javanese words and phrases were frequently used to mention cultural terms and display respect for the interlocutor. The latter function is a strategy for enhancing ONF.

- 18) *Tetap berjalan seperti Eyang Punto **ngendika njih?***
[It continues as Eyang Punto said, right?]
- 19) *Ini kami mau memaparkan atau **nyaosi pirs**a kegunaan dari daun pisang ...*
[Here we will explain (BI) or explain (Javanese Krama) the use of banana leaves ...]

20) *Itu pisang raja yang dipakai itu acara nyawisken sak inggilipun Ngarsa Dalem ...*

[The plantain is prepared in front of the King...]

The bold words in excerpts 18-20 are Javanese *Krama*. They were inserted into BI sentences since no words in BI can express the same meaning. Excerpt 18 was spoken by the moderator to one of the webinar speakers. Excerpt 19 was uttered by the moderator to the participants, and excerpt 20 was delivered by one of the speakers to refer to the King of Yogyakarta Palace. The words “*ngendika*” (said), “*nyaosi pirs*a” (explain), and “*nyawisaken sak inggilipun ngarsa dalem*” (prepare in front of the King) showed that the speakers positioned themselves below others. In excerpts 18 and 19, Eyang Punto and all participants were positioned higher than the moderator. In excerpt 20, although the king was not present in the interaction, he was placed higher than the speaker. Yogyakarta people highly respect their king. For them, the king is the source of cosmic power in their area who brings peace, justice, and fertility (Magnis-Suseno, 1984). Excerpts 18-20 exemplify the principle of *urmat* (respect) that should be obeyed by Javanese people in every social situation. Although BI implies egalitarianism, Javanese people cannot easily leave their cultural principle in their BI interactions. Therefore, they kept using Javanese *Krama* for words showing deference since it is the only variety that can perfectly express deference upheld by Javanese people.

Javanese people are principally expected to keep social harmony by avoiding conflict and respecting the positions and statuses of all society members (Magnis-Suseno, 1984). This explains why ONF becomes the second most dominant face considered by the people involved in the webinar. The indirectness meant to make requests less threatening is a strategy of conflict avoidance while employing Javanese *Krama* is their way to show respect to other people. Those data show that in Javanese culture, it is practically impossible to communicate without indicating the status and familiarity of the conversers. Even when the communication is done in BI, status meaning should be included in the utterances, which finally leads to a mixed Javanese-BI sentence. Their strong Javanese identity makes the palace members tend to insert words in Javanese *Krama* to mark their polite utterances. Their employment of BI and English is for other purposes, such as to build solidarity or to mark the formality of the occasion.

Conclusion

Being in a collectivistic culture, Javanese people believe that conflict is dangerous and social harmony should be maintained. This explains the findings of their high preference to enhance other people’s face. The difference between positive and negative face concerns is not significant but both are oriented more toward other people than to the speakers themselves. As this tendency aligns with the cultural values upheld by society, these overall results show that face needs are fulfilled in accordance with cultural principles and expectations. This adds to what is known about facework and how they affect politeness norms in the Javanese cultural context as well as Asian collectivistic cultures. However, since face needs are

contextually bound, the findings of this study, which investigates face needs in an online Javanese-culture multilingual forum, might not be generalised into the common face concern of Javanese people. Larger-scale studies and ones from various contexts are needed to obtain a more detailed depiction of how Javanese people enact face needs in their daily interactions. Therefore, other researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies in different kinds of interaction to provide a thorough explanation on the correlation between facework and politeness in Javanese society.

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