

COMPLAINT RESPONSES
USED BY JAVANESE LEARNERS OF ENGLISH



PUBLICATION ARTICLE

Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Getting the Bachelor
Degree of Education in English Department

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2014



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Program Studi : Bahasa Inggris

Judul Skripsi : COMPLAINT RESPONSES USED BY JAVANESE LEARNERS OF ENGLISH

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Surakarta, ²⁴Nov. 2014

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ABSTRACT

Andriyani Nidyawati, A320100273. "COMPLAINT RESPONSES USED BY JAVANESE LEARNERS OF ENGLISH." Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. Research Paper. 2014.

This study focuses on the type of complaint responses strategy using the theory of pragmatic strategy by Razekh and politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson. This study aim at (1)describing the pragmatic strategy used in giving complaint responses by Javanese learners of English, (2) explaining the differences between male and female in complaint responsesstrategy used by Javanese learners of English, (3) explaining the politeness strategies which are involved in complaint responses used by Javanese learners of English.

This research applies descriptivequalitative method. The data are the utterances of the forty Javanese students of Department English Education at seventh semester at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The way to collect data is using a questionnaire by giving DCT. The subject consists of twenty male and twenty female participants. The data of complaint responses were analyzed by the coding schema in Eslami and Rasekh (2004) also added by Brown and Levinson (1987) theory as the type of politeness strategy.

The result shows that complaint responses based on the coding schema in Eslami&Rasekh (2004) are various. Both, in direct and indirect complaint, IFIDs was the most appeared strategy used by EFL students, although there were some strategies also used by the participants, for example emotional exclamations, acceptance of responsibility. The different gender influences the complaint responses. In this case, IFIDs has the highest frequency used by both male and female participant in all DCT. However, male used is more frequently than female. As for politeness, positive politeness (PP) was the most appeared strategy which was used by the male and female students in almost every situation given, while, the subtype of PP mostly used was PP 13 (give or ask a reason). Then, negative politeness (NP) was more frequently used by the participants than bald on record. Finally, off record is the least politeness strategy used by the participants. But, the data showed that not all the complaint responses by the participants involved in politeness strategy.

Keyword: complain responses, politeness

A. Introduction

Complaint is one of speech acts which could engender communication breakdown. It threatens the addressee's positive face as a complainer expresses negative evaluations of a situation which is the result of the addressee's past actions. It could also threaten the addressee's negative face as it may contain an implicit or explicit demand to rectify the aforementioned situation (Kraft&Geluykens, 2002). As complaint intrinsically carries threat it often impairs social relationship between interlocutors (Moon, 2002; Olshtain&Weinbach, 1993). Then, when someone complains to another, actually he has an answer to give respond for this complaint.

Along this line, the complaint responses have studied by several researchers with different cultural background in the other countries. For example, in Thailand Prachanant (2006) studied Pragmatic Transfer in Responses to Complaints by Thai EFL Learners in the Hotel Business. In Canada, Laforest (2002) studied scenes of family life complaining in everyday conversation. In Texas, Rasekh (2004) focused face-keeping strategies in reaction to complaint. In Amsterdam, Olshtain and Weinbach (1987) studied the speech act of complaint as produced by native and nonnative speakers of Hebrew. In Berlin, Murphy and Neu (1996) studied the speech act of complaint as produced by American and Korean Learners of English. In America, Moon (2001) studied the speech act of complaint as produced by 129 native and nonnative speakers of English. In English, Tanck (2002) conducts research that aims to compare the pragmatic competence of adult ESL speakers to that of adult native English speakers when performing the speech act of complaints and refusals. In Makkah, Majeed Al-Tayib Umar (2006) studied the speech act of complaint as realized by advanced Sudanese learners of English. And at last, in Indonesia, Wijayanto (2013) analyzed Politeness in Interlanguage Pragmatics of Complaints by Indonesian Learners of English. The previous study about complaint indicated that complaint was intrinsically face threatening act. Nevertheless responses to complaint have been under studied.

The current research to continue the previous study which particularly studies the complaint responses. The only research which discussed complaint responses strategies was Rasekh (2004) entitled Face-keeping strategies in reaction to complaints. This present study is also to develop and to complete their research in Indonesian EFL learning context.

The following is anfor example of complaint responses taken from Wijayanto's study:

Situation 1

"Your close friend borrows your new digital camera. He uses the camera to take seascapes views that he visits. When he returns your camera you find that the lens of your camera is broken. You complaint to your close friend about it."

Complainer : *"I am sorry girl, I want to ask you, why my lens is broke after you borrow it? Can you retell for me?"*

Responses : *"I am sorry, but there was a little accident. I do really don't mind to broke your lens."*

Based on the situation above, the response is *"I am sorry, but there was a little accident. I do really don't mind to broke your lens."*The sentence of *"I am sorry"* concludes IFIDs or illocutionary force indicating devices (an offer of apology), then the sentence *"but there was a little accident"* concludes the explanation when the participants are complained, the last sentence *"I do really don't mind to broke your lens"* concludes acceptance of responsibility (lack of intent). So, the formula is (IFIDs (an offer of apology) + explanation + acceptance of responsibility (lack of intent)).

The writer would to analyze the complaint responses strategies that certainly contain of politeness strategies and the effect of different gender on complaint responses by Javanese English learners. From those backgrounds, the researcher would like to conduct an analysis entitled "COMPLAINT RESPONSES USED BY JAVANESE LEARNERS OF ENGLISH."

B. Research Method

In this research, the writer uses descriptive qualitative research. It aims at describing the complaint responses in the utterances used as the complaint responses by the students of Department English Education at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

The subjects of this research are 40 the Javanese students of the English department of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in during the periode of 2014. They were classified into two groups based on their gender. The former included 20 males and 20 females. The age of the students ranged between 18-20 years old, with the average age being 19.5 years. They reported that they have previously studied English for six years in secondary schools and two years at the English department.

The object of this research is complaint responses and their politeness strategies used by the students of Department English Education at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, especially for the Javanese English learners.

The data of the research are the utterances used as the responses to complaint. The source of data in this research is the utterances of the Javanese students of Department English Education at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

In collecting data of the students of Department English Education at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta utterances in complaint responses, the writer uses a questionnaire by giving DCT.

In this research, the data analysis is conducted as follows:

1. Analyzing the pragmatics strategies which are used to respond complaining by Javanese learners of English by referring to Rasekh's (2004) classification.
2. Comparing the strategy of complaint responses based on Rasekh's (2004) between men and women according to the frequency of their uses.
3. Classified the politeness strategy according to Brown Levinson theory (1987).

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Finding

From the situation in all DCT scenarios, the writer found that the complaint responses strategy mostly used by the participants in direct complaint and indirect complaint was IFIDs (an offer of apology) 70% and 50%. For example: **“I am sorry, I don't know.” (01/13A/CE/FM)** From the scenario in direct and indirect complaint responses above, in fact the participants had different complaint responses based on the situation given the most strategy used by the participants was IFIDs especially in subtype of an offer of apology, although, some participants used similar complaint responses strategy, for example expression of appeal in indirect complaint in DCT 03.

This research shows that the different gender influence the complaint responses. In this case, IFIDs has the highest frequency used by both male and female participant in all of the situation in DCT. However, male used is more frequently than female. In direct complaint, the differences complaint responses strategy between male and female could be found in scenario 2, 3, 5, and 9. While, in indirect complaint, there were some differences strategy of complaint responses could be found in scenario 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9.

Although there were differences complaint responses strategy between male and female, the writer found similar strategy of complaint responses, for example IFIDs in DCT 01A (female and male 35%), acceptance of responsibility in DCT 02A (female and male 5%), expression of appeal, emotional exclamations and concern for hearer in DCT 06A (female 7,5%, male 10%), and IFIDs and emotional exclamations in DCT 07B (female and male 5%).

According to the nine DCT in data analysis, there are four politeness strategies used by Javanese learners of English. In this case, positive politeness (PP) was the most appeared strategy which was used by the male and female students in almost every situation given, while, the subtype of PP mostly used was PP 13 (give or ask a reason).

Negative politeness (NP) was as the second highest frequency which was the subtype mostly appeared used by the participants was NP4 (apologize), then there were BOR as the third highest frequency in all of DCT complaint responses. Whereas OR was the lowest politeness strategy which was the writer only found it in DCT 03 and 06 in indirect complaint. But, the data showed that not all the complaint responses by the participants involved in politeness strategy.

2. Discussion

Complaint responses were different from one situation to another situation. In this case, the situation of the scenario influences the complaint responses. It related to the theory of sociolinguistics which showed that the language used was influenced by the context.

In direct complaint, based on the analysis coding schema of Eslami & Rasekh (2004), the mostly appeared strategy used by the participants was IFIDs, especially strategy of an offer of apology, for example **“I’m sorry my friend, I broke it.”** (01/01A/CE/M) The second highest complaint responses strategy used by the participants was acceptance of responsibility. For example: **“It’s OK honey.”** (03/19A/CL/M) It indicated that the participants showing her mistake by accept when they are complained. The third highest percentage was emotional exclamation, for example **“Oh, sorry. I don’t know if you are studying.”** (04/19A/FE/FM) the less percentage of complaint responses strategy was expression of appel, for example **“You must be need exercise more.”** (06/08B/FL/M)

In indirect complaint, the strategy mostly used by the participants was also IFIDs (an offer of apology). For example, **“Sorry dear, I come late.”** (02/05B/CH/M) The second highest frequency was an expression of appeal and acceptance of responsibility. The last strategy mostly used was concern for hearer, for example **“Did you check all of your score aspect?”** (06/3A/FL/M) It indicated that the participants give concern for the hearer.

Prachanant (2006) found that the three most frequently used strategies among the four groups were “Offering repair”, “Expression of apology”

and "Acknowledgement of responsibility", respectively. But the writer found IFIDs (an offer of apology) was complaint responses strategy mostly used by the participants in all DCT scenarios. The word "sorry" always shows as an offer of apology. The participants were directly showing mistake. It might be used because the participants want to show satisfying positive face. It is also because of the Javanese culture of this object of this research which is when they do mistake, they as the speaker will ask an apology to the hearer soon. It is the way to avoid the danger because of the misunderstanding.

According to analysis above, the researcher found different complaint responses between male and female. Female had more various complaint responses than male. In this case IFIDs has the highest frequency used by both male and female participant in all DCT in direct complaint and indirect complaint. However, male used is more frequently than female. For example "**I'm sorry my friend, I broke it.**" (01/01A/CE/M) The word "sorry" always shows as an offer of apology. The second highest frequency was acceptance of responsibility, which is male is more frequent than female. For example: "**Yes, I know that. I'm sorry.**"(01/02B/CE/M) It indicated that the participant accept their mistake by using the subtype of admission of fact. The third highest percentage was emotional exclamations, for example "**Oh, sorry. I don't know if you are studying.**" (04/19A/FE/FM) Conclusion is male and female used different types responses, although some of responses were similar between male and female. It can be found in DCT scenario 1A, 6A, and 7B.

In complaint response found politeness strategy to express what kind of politeness used the participant mostly. Here, PP was mostly appeared strategy used by the participants in all of the context of DCT. The example is "**Because I like the television.**"(09/14B/UL/M). This example included as PP no 13 which is by uttering the word "because" the participants give reasoning for the speaker about the condition. NP also used by the

participants in direct complaint in DCT 08. For example: “**Pardon me, but please listen to some beautiful song first, sir.**”(08/07A/UH/M). Here, the participants used NP 4 these are apologizing type, by uttering the word “**pardon me**”. The others politeness strategy also found such as the example of BOR is “**Tell it by calm down. I have human right, here I work too.**” (08/09B/UH/FM) The participants used the word “**Tell it by calm down**” indicated that give advice to complaint by calm down. The last is OR “**Please ask to yourself.**”(06/13B/FL/M). By uttering the word “**please ask to yourself**” the participants indicates so that the students do the introspection.

Wijayanto (2013) found Bald on record and Positive politeness were the most pervasive strategies used across status levels and social distances. But, the writer found PP was politeness strategy mostly used by the participants in all DCT scenarios. And mostly it was found as PP no 13 (ask, give reason). It might be that the respondent wanted to make the hearer to be respected calm and more friendly with the speaker by giving the reason. Brown and Levinson (1987:129) stated that by including hearer thus in his practical reasoning, and assuming reflexivity (hearer want a speaker want), hearer. NP is thereby led to see the reasonableness of speaker’s FTA. NP was the second highest politeness strategy of complaint responses used by the participants. In the third place, there was BOR , in the last position, there was OR which is only found in DCT 03B and 6B.

D. Conclusion

After analyzing the data and discussion the research finding, the researcher draws some conclusion according to research problems. This sub chapter would answer three questions of problem statement. There were complaint responses which are used by Javanese learners of English, the differences in complaint responses given by male and female EFL students,

and politeness strategies are involved in complaint responses used by Javanese learners of English.

From the analysis of complaint responses used by Javanese english learners, in direct complaint and indirect complaint, IFIDs was the most appeared strategy used by EFL students, especially the strategy of an offer of apology. For example: *"I'm so sorry, I don't know why your lens broke."* (01/06A/CE/M).

This research shows that the different gender influence the complaint responses. In this case, IFIDs (an offer of apology) has the highest frequency used by female participant in all DCT. While, acceptance of responsibility was the highest frequency used by male participants in all DCT.

There are four politeness strategies used by Javanese learners of English. In this case, positive politeness (PP) was the most appeared strategy which was used by the male and female students in almost every situation given, while, the subtype of PP mostly used was PP 13 (give or ask a reason).

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