Sociopragmatic Parameters of Politeness Strategies among the Sasak in the Post Elopement Rituals

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Abstract

Arranged marriages in Asia involve the consent and approval of family members. However, marriages that condone elopement are shared among the Sasak people in Lombok. The elopement entails taking away the bride from her home without knowing her parents, close relatives, or other family members. As such, events that occur after discovering the elopement are the focus of this study. Post-elopement rituals are held to assuage both sides of the families, where the Pembayun (or adat leaders) are nominated to represent the families. The Pembayun were found to be bound by sociopragmatics in their use of politeness strategies. The analysis of sociopragmatics is based on the politeness theories of Brown and Levinson (1987). A qualitative approach that involved interviews and video

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recordings were used to collect data from participants and non-participant observation. The study revealed that sociopragmatics play a significant role in Pembayun's choice of politeness strategies such as social distance, power distribution, rank, situational, and cultural parameters. These factors determine the weightiness of the act and become the basis for politeness strategies in the deliverances of specific acts during the post-elopement rituals.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is culture-specific and is a matter of self-choice, but family involvement is not negligible in arranged marriages. An example and the focus of this study is the marriage among Sasak people, which culturally accept marriage by way of elopement. Elopement among the Sasak is a form of marriage that involves kidnapping the bride from her home without the knowledge of her parents, close relatives, or other family members. The elopement's main reason is the fear that the marriage will not be approved by either side of the family, although both the bride and groom-to-be are interested in getting married (Yaqin et al., 2013). According to Yaqin and Shanmuganathan (2020), to mitigate the problems faced by the community in terms of the customs and culture after marriage, the Sasak conducted a ritual known as the *Sorong Serah* in the post-elopement ritual. Sirajudin (2001) says that the *Sorong Serah* ceremony is culturally steeped, symbolic, and interpreted to neutralize any fraud that arises from elopement. The *Sorong Serah* is a speech event involving the *Pembayun* (or *adat* 'tradition' leaders), and these traditional leaders represent and act as the spokesperson for the bride and groom's families. According to Sirajudin (2001), a *Pembayun* is assigned to initiate and convey the message on behalf of the groom's family as the aggressor of the elopement act.

The discussion between the *Pembayun* in *Sorong Serah* is a confrontational communication that includes emotions and ideas representing families (Yaqin & Shanmuganathan, 2020). Naturally, the message or act to be delivered by the *Pembayun* may contain 'threats' to the addressee's emotions or feelings, or what in pragmatics is referred to as face threats (e.g., Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967). During the *Sorong Serah* ritual, the groom's family would seek the help of the *Pembayun Penyerah* (Ph), who is the primary spokesperson for the bride's family and is assisted by the *Pembayun Pisolo* (Po). There is only one primary representative of the bride's family, the *Pembayun Penampi* (Pi), who would speak to the groom's family.

Pembayun's choice of various politeness strategies is carefully selected, and each strategy has some calculated rationalizations that are considered appropriate for communication. Brown and Levinson (1987) state by considering how face-threatening acts (FTA) are delivered rationally, two types of parameters determined the politeness strategy used for a particular FTA. The first is the payoffs that the speakers calculate from the use of the chosen politeness strategy. The payoffs are substantially related to matters such as its efficiency in terms of message clarity on the one hand and the extent to which the type of face desire must meet. Payoffs are

supposed to include specific face-to-face actions determined at the priority scale of one of these determinants in the sense that particular strategies may be chosen to meet the need for greater efficiency by reducing attention to the face.

Alternatively, to save face and protect the speakers' dignity, a politeness strategy is used in a particular utterance to deliver a clear message efficiently. Therefore, every politeness strategy used is selected by the speakers based on the calculated advantages. However, payoffs as *a priori* parameter to choose a politeness strategy must integrate with the second parameter type, i.e., social parameters. Sociologists (such as Fishman, 1972), anthropologists (such as Hymes, 1964), and sociolinguistic members (such as Bell, 1976) demonstrate some verbal interactions in certain community language speakers. Indeed, most of the linguistic choices expressed in communication are sociable. No communication involving language speakers is discussed without simultaneously discussing the role of the social parameters in such communications.

Studies on politeness have emerged in many different countries and Western countries. Studies in this field have been pioneered by Goffman (1967), which were later popularized by Brown and Levinson (1987). In East Asian countries, the stereotype of politeness has also been contested/re-examined (Matsumoto, 1988; Pizziconi, 2003; Zhan, 1992). In Southeast Asia, the politeness study in the Malay context has been studied by Johari and Zahid (2016) and Zahid and Johari (2018). In the Indonesian setting, the study of politeness was investigated by Wouk (2006) and Yaqin and Shanmuganathan (2020).

Furthermore, several studies on the Sasak language in Lombok have been widely studied by many scholars (Mahsun, 2007; Mahyuni, 2004). However, attention seems to be mostly concerned with dialect variations, code-switching, morphology, phonology, and syntax. Recent studies (Nothofer, 2012; Yusra; 2012) appear to follow a similar trend. Although there is tremendous interest in the study of Sasak people, research that deals with politeness study among the Sasak are still left unexplored. In light of this scarcity, there seems to be a need to study the Sasak language in particular events. Notably, there seems to be a need for politeness-based studies to explore the phenomena of real-life social interaction. The language is crucially involved, and the culture of the people seems to play a crucial part. Besides being scarce, such a study is intriguing for other reasons as well. In the first place, it is undeniable that the Sasak, their culture, and the language they speak are interrelated. This interrelationship is reflected in all social activities that characterize these people's lives in a community, which still preserves most of its cultural uniqueness regardless of the vast social dynamism modernization has brought to it. This community, i.e., the Sasak community, still maintains its long-preserved tradition that colors its people's life, which for one reason or another, seems to attract the attention of people from other cultures. The Sasak language has become the essential medium that interweaves all social undertakings of the people within this tradition. It is inseparable from and becomes part of the tradition itself. In this tradition, various aspects of the people's lives, which spring from their culture, interact and interrelate in a way markedly manifested in the Sasak language.

Accordingly, this study specifically tries to answer the following research question:

- What are the sociopragmatic parameters of politeness strategies used by the *Pembayun* (*adat* leaders) in various interactions of the post elopement rituals?

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Politeness Strategies

The most influential model of politeness is the face-saving view proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Concurrently, Goffman's (1967) version of politeness argued that people employ face-saving measures to maintain harmony and relationship (David & Cheng, 2008). Based on the theory of face by Goffman (1967), Brown and Levinson (1987) define face as the necessary will of each individual that is also understood by others. The face is divided into two types, namely, positive and negative faces. A positive face is an image of self or personality demanded by an interactant (in other words, a desire to be accepted in a particular case). In contrast, a negative face is a primary claim to take care of oneself and the right not to be disturbed (in other words, a desire not to be bothered by others). Therefore, a positive face is a matter of culture and social group that involves sharing sociocultural norms and rules and is unique from culture to culture. Brown and Levinson (1987) view the face as an emotional investment problem that can be subjected to loss, maintenance, and improvement. Therefore, it should be the focus and attention as a result of any interaction.

The face requires two-way communication from the parties involved. Brown and Levinson (1987) believe that saving each other's faces has fulfilled the shared expectations between the speaker and hearer and for the benefit of all. Therefore, they propose their theory of linguistic devices as a politeness strategy to save face. Brown and Levinson (1987) divide politeness into positive politeness and negative politeness. Positive politeness shows familiarity, closeness, and a good relationship between the speaker and the speaker.

In contrast, negative politeness is a means to show the social distance between the speaker and the hearer. In general, Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory threatens speakers' positive and negative faces and hearers involved in the interaction. Thus, requests, suggestions, advice, and threats are classified as "face-threatening acts (FTA) that endanger negative face" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 65). The speaker's positive face is threatened by the act of apologizing and receiving praise, according to the politeness theory.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the face is prone to threats arising from specific actions. There are discussions caused by the content or expression that causes the face to be threatened, either the speaker's face or the hearer's face. Brown and Levinson (1987) refer to speech acts like this as face-threatening acts. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), each face-threatening act has a different weightiness, and it is up to the speakers to determine appropriate politeness strategies.

2.2   Sociopragmatic Parameters

The sociopragmatic parameters that influence a speaker's choice of politeness strategies in verbal communication comprise three essential variables. These are the social distance (D) between the speakers and the addressee, the power distribution (P) that shows the power of the speakers on the addressee, and the rank of imposition (R). Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that these sociological variables are culturally specific. Society's culture defines the distribution of power and social distance among participants and the imposition associated with an act. Since the D, P, and R at the

same time characterize each FTA, they, along with other variables such as 'setting' and 'scene,' determine the weight of the FTA. The weight of FTA is evident in terms of accumulated values D, P, R, and other variables. Hence, the higher the cumulative value of the higher FTA D, P, and R, the more the need to choose a higher politeness strategy. Note that calculating the result of 'payoffs' of cumulative values for D, P, and R is subjected to the speaker's priority scale to each social dimension with a particular FTA. The value for both D and P is low, and the R-value is quite moderate. The speaker can still choose a higher strategy if he puts a very high R position for some reason.

It should be noted that the submission of values to these social parameters is without a free context. A high-value assignment for P to participants, for example, is a context that is structured in the sense that the context defines it. In other contexts, participants' roles may be clearly defined so that P needs to give different values to him. Although the value of P given to participants in the role is set by its context, there is no guarantee that the value of P will remain stable throughout the event. In this regard, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 79) point out that "other situational sources of power may contribute to or adjust or entirely override such stable social variations". Thus, every social dimension will be assessed based on the situational variables in communication. It was further stated that every social variable is a 'context relative' concerning Brown and Levinson (1987). Thus, with situational factors entering the values for this social dimension, "the values assessed hold only for S and H in a particular context, and for a particular FTA" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 79).

Some experts argue that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory can only be applied to Western cultures and is unsuitable for East Asian language analysis (Ide, 1989; Matsumoto, 1988). Matsumoto (1988) argues that the negative face rescues to preserve one's territory, which differs from the Japanese culture, where individuals are more concerned with adhering to expected behavioral norms in certain social situations. Using the example of politeness in Japanese culture, Matsumoto (1988) shows that politeness is obligatory on many occasions among Japanese people, even without face-threatening acts. On the other hand, some experts argue that aspects of the Brown and Levinson's (1987) model are still relevant for analysts exploring the technical concepts of analysis (see Grainger, 2018; Harris, 2003; Kiyama et al., 2012). O'Driscoll (2007) argues for Brown and Levinson's (1987) work adjustments to be used in cross-cultural interactions. Holmes et al. (2012) find that concepts from Brown and Levinson (1987) were useful in the workplace interaction analysis.

3.   METHODS

3.1   Research Design

The study uses a qualitative approach, as it involves all aspects, including the characteristics and roles concerning the sociopragmatic politeness strategies used by the Sasak *Pembayun* in the post-elopement rituals. The researchers argue that Brown and Levinson's (1987) models can explain the ongoing relationship between the participants in the context of ritual discourse (i.e., the Sasak post-ritual elopement). The current study thus aims to analyze the interaction where politeness strategies of the Brown and Levinson (1987) models can be applied. The politeness strategies are

not considered to contain a predetermined meaning but to establish meaning from various aspects of context. As the phenomenon of politeness does not operate in a vacuum, politeness develops in the socio-cultural context of society.

3.2   Participants

The participants used in this study were six *Pembayun* (*adat* leaders), who were selected from one district in East Lombok regencies. The choice of this district was based on a historically-based that they are still adhering to the Sasak traditions. Another reason for the choice was that this district's standard Sasak language is spoken. The participants were determined based on snowball sampling, i.e., information from acquaintances who knew of families engaged in post-elopement rituals. Each informant-related information served as an addition, a comparison, or contrast to the dissenters' information engaged in a ritual.
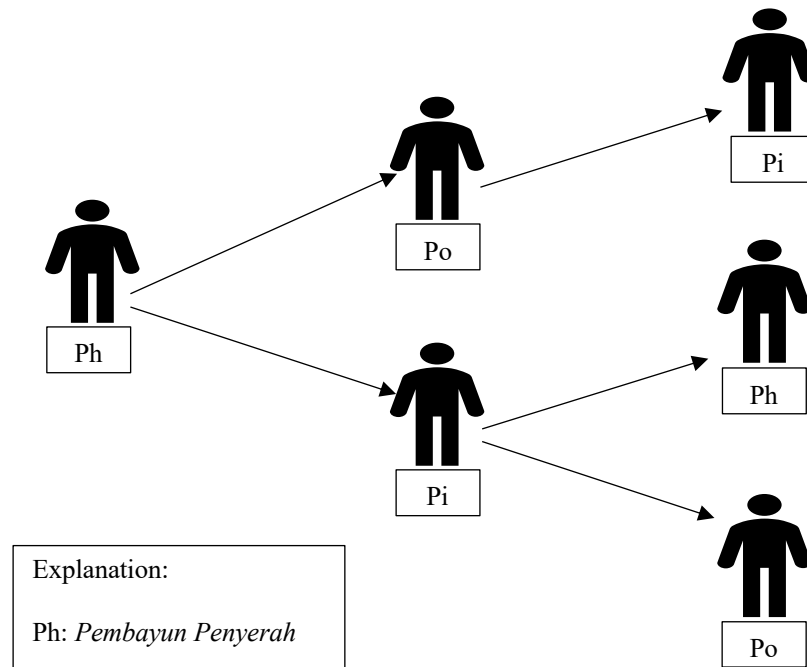

Pi
Po
Ph
Pi
Ph
Po

Explanation:

Ph: *Pembayun Penyerah*

Figure 1. Participants of a snowballing chain.

3.3   Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data in the study was obtained through audio/video recordings with a total duration of nine hours of conversation recorded at fifteen elopement rituals. The entire exchange between the *Pembayun* was presented as it was and was not edited nor revised. Each stage in the *Sorong Serah* marriage ceremony ritual was between 50 and 70 minutes. The length of each data varied as the negotiations differ according to how fast the family relented to accept the settlement. The researchers used two kinds of observation methods, namely, participant and non-participant observation. Both methods required the researchers to conduct video recordings and notetaking in a particular location while interacting with the participants (i.e., family members and the *Pembayun*). Semi-structured interviews were carried out to allow the participants

to talk and provide information about the conversation concerning particular rituals, the *Pembayun's* roles, the strategies used to negotiate, and any other information about elopement practices in the analysis and discussion.

4. RESULTS

The results of the sociopragmatic parameters of politeness strategies used by the *Pembayun* in various interactions of the post elopement rituals are shown in Figure 2. In the rituals, sociopragmatic parameters, such as social distance, power distribution, rank, situational, and cultural characteristics, play an important influence in the *Pembayun*'s choice of politeness strategies. These elements govern the significance of the act and serve as the foundation for the politeness strategies used throughout the post-elopement rituals.
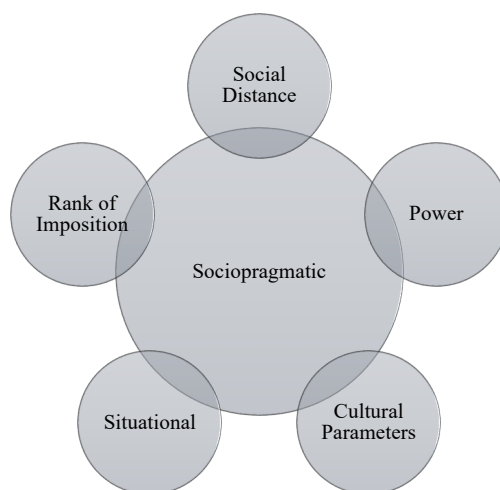

Figure 2. Sociopragmatics of politeness strategies in the post elopement rituals.

Each of the sociopragmatic parameters of politeness strategies found in the post elopement rituals is described in the following subsections.

4.1 Social Distance

The difference is related to the reciprocal social distance; if the participant is socially distant, they will defer to each other. This social distance is indicated using the refined speech level, as shown in the following Extract (1). In the extracts, Po to *Pembayun Pisolo*, and Pi to *Pembayun Penampi*.

(1) Po: *Alhamdulillahirrabilalamin,sekewenten dewek titian pacing maring ragendane sami ring, pengarse agung, sekewenten dewek titiang puniki pendikayanan tuk dane Pembayun dewek titiang hingkang mangsih suksame kebaos punang, sekewenten dewek titiang nunasan kenapa kanundang-undangan, ulem-uleman. Yen sampun napak utawi durung ngantos pangandike dawek.* [Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Universe, as a wise spokesperson, I just told you all. However, I'm only a delegate entrusted by *Pembayun Penyerah*, who is still outside the area, to ask about the completeness of the invitation. If you have the answer, you are welcome to answer.]

Pi: *Nggihdane agung, patuthikang dados rage same rauh maring genah puniki, nggih sadurung dewek titiang puniki atur piatur hikang yugye pacang piware nggih, dewek tiang pacang ngatur ruwiyen ajikrame puniki semapan sane wonten hingkang ring kiwetengen.* [Yes, Sir, the noble spokesperson (polite) who had just arrived at the place. Before I answer this question, I will first introduce the people who have been in this *ajikrame* (customary meeting) event, both right, left, and behind (me).]

The exchange in (1) is between Po (for the groom) and Pi (for the bride) in the *Sorong Serah* ceremony. The social distance between them was reflected in the use of refined speech. The Po saluted Pi as a 'wise spokesperson,' giving him due deference while humbling himself as 'only a delegate.' In reciprocation, the Pi paid equal respect by stating the *Pembayun Penyerah* (Ph), who was also the main representative of the groom's family, was waiting to be invited into the premise where the discussion was taking place by the Pi and the bride's family as a 'noble spokesperson'' In this instance, the social distance was great, and the language was refined. It would be inappropriate to use plain language by any of the *Pembayun* under such circumstances to offend the addressee because it was considered rude and improper. As the groom's family was considered the aggressor, refined language was highly expected. Furthermore, social distance also indicated the 'status' of the families and should be given priority. Although the *Pembayun* may be friends or acquaintances and maybe close in an informal social setting, such proximity may be reduced when they are in such formal settings as the post-elopement rituals.

When speakers are from the same side or are close acquaintances, the language used is less formal when addressing each other. For example, consider how Ph delivered a request to Pi, as shown in the following extract (2).

(2) Ph: *Nugrahe sane pacang maparing ragendane antuk sareng sami dawek nugrahe tiang ngiring aruan bian niki.* [Sorry, I am telling you to make haste because it is already very late (afternoon).]
Pi: *Nggih sesampun dewek ugi puniki jagi napakin arep ragen, silak rapetan, silak.* [Well, I have finished talking; please do move forward.]
Ph: *Silak, embe aik nao no?* [Please, have some palm water?]

(3) Pi: *Ampure, nunasan tang. Ape jaminan niki sampun pas keloek bekek kesepakatan? Ampure.* [Sorry, I beg you. Does an agreement guarantee this deposit?]
Ph: *Nggih sampun.* [Yes, it's done.]

The exchange in extracts (2) and (3) involved participants Ph and Pi, who were a part of the discussion in the *Sorong Serah* ceremony. The use of plain language in extract (2) reflected how the participants placed their social closeness as a high priority. In this case, the friends' status dominated the conversation during the ceremony. In (3), the participants, in turn, acted in their respective roles in the formal ceremony of the *Sorong Serah* ceremony so that the friendship status was virtually absent. Social distance value among them was higher because of the circumstances surrounding the communication between them in a formal situation.

4.2 Power Distribution

Theoretically, when a speaker has higher power than the addressee, there is no politeness strategy in communicating the face-to-face action required by the speaker. However, age and event formality may need the speaker to use specific politeness

strategies irrespective of their authority over the addressee. The study also found that certain factors could increase the cost of FTA to the addressee until the speaker, regardless of its power to the addressee, would use a specific politeness strategy in communication.

(4) Pi: *Sampun sah paripurna kang ajikrame. Kang sapungkure benjang sape sira tan onang wicara malih.* [After *ajikrame* has been validated and completed, then you have no right to speak anymore.]

Ph: *Antuk jero Pembayun, yen sampun putus ajikrame, tan onang wecana malih.* [As stated by *JeroPembayun*, if *the ajikrame* has been implemented, then we have no right to speak.]

The discussion in extract (4) was part of the conversation between Pi and Ph, which occurred at the bride's home in the *Sorong Serah* ceremony. Pi (as the host) had power over Ph in matters relating to the marriage rituals. The difference in power was represented by the asymmetry of speech used in it, where Ph used the refined level of Sasak language. In contrast, Pi used the plain level Sasak language. In extract (4), the rules of the language held by the Sasak community limited the refined language levels from Ph to Pi and justified the use of normal levels. These norms included Pi or any other person in the same situation of being a *perwangse* (honorable). The position of a *Pembayun* in the Sasak marriage in Lombok is such that all people in this community should speak refined languages (Mahyuni, 2004; Yaqin et al., 2013; Yusra, 2012). Admittedly, the speech-level case used in the discussion between Pi and Ph in (4) above appeared to require specific clarification beyond what is held in the theoretical model of linguistic politeness.

4.3 Rank of Imposition

Face-threatening acts (FTAs) to addressees are determined by the natural factors of FTA, power distribution, the social distance between participants, and situational factors. It was found that FTAs such as demand has high imposition, but depending on the social factors and the circumstances that affect them, different politeness strategies were used.

The factor of the situation determined the magnitude of FTA for the addressee. Situational factors such as the level of imposition and social distance between participants and the situation variables can increase the cost of FTA. By request, for example, it is naturally possible, and it may have a higher impact than others. However, the height of the impact of the request seems to be the speaker's prerogative to assess it based on the evaluation of all contextual variables on the medium of action. Consider, for example, the following requests presented in the context of other communications.

(5) Pi: *Pelungguh tang, ketaon tiang napi niki adat sakral adat* Sasak *pewaris kang adiluhung. Ampure pak kadus, sadurung dewek titiang niki ketampi sekadi pengandike-pangandike wonten ubaye dawek kebaos maring kadus. Kembekne dek te jauk tande aji niki?* [You know that this is a sacred Sasak custom and a good legacy from the time of our ancestors. Before that, I wanted to apologize to the village chief. As mentioned earlier, there is an agreement (*ajikrame*) with the village chief. Why you don't bring that precious symbol?]

(6) Pi: *Enggih alhamdulillah wassyukurillah sekali pangandike sampun tependikayang pinak hajat sampun kantong ring akse ring arep sami penglingsir-penglingsir enggih manggederes jeles dawek adeqsak pedas penggitan adek dendek arak meong dalem karung tang.* [All right,

praise to God. As has been said, I hope all those who are here are well informed. To make it clear, please open it so it does not look like buying a cat in a sack.]

(7) Pi: *Ampure ape arak tande adat* Sasak *ajikrame niki?* [Sorry. Is there a custom symbol of the *krame*?]

Extracts (7), (8), and (9) were requests for action. In (7), the 'request' required a positive politeness strategy where the addressee submitted an *'aji'* or price symbol (a penultimate *Pembayun*, a female representative). Extract (8) presented the use of hedging or gratuitous strategies; negative politeness strategy (represented by having 'as said'). This demand required the addressee to open the *harte berana*, the girder (groom). In this case, the speaker conveyed the request to bring 'signaling' as an off-record politeness strategy. Some of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies used by the speakers could be seen in the utterance of the request of extract (8) by using the direct strategy with positive politeness while demand in extract (9) used the direct strategy with negative politeness. Request in extract (9) used an off-record politeness strategy. In other words, the request in extract (9) was the highest weight on the addressee due to an off-record politeness strategy. At least that could be deemed as the consideration of each speaker about the weightiness of the request.

Thus, in those extracts (i.e., 7, 8, 9), speakers were more compelling than addressees, indicating the value of the power (P). The social distance, only in extract (8), indicated some degree of social distance as suggested by the refined language level, which may be associated with the event's formality. However, the highest value of the distance in demand in extract (8) was corrected with the lowest politeness strategy. Therefore, how demand in extracts (7, 8, 9) was interchangeable but was not attributed fundamentally to the distribution of power or social distances between speakers and addressees.

The social dimension remaining with politeness strategies used in each request may be associated with the rank of imposition, respectively. This R is the discussion of how much damage the request will cause to the addressee's face. These judgments should be based on their assessment of situational factors and other social dimensions.

4.4   Situational Variable

The situational variable broadly defines the context and thereby determines the value of the social parameters based on which politeness selection strategy is made to a specific FTA. In this concept, the choice of politeness strategy is not associated with only 'who is presenting FTA to whom' but with 'who delivers FTA to whom under what circumstances.' In this view, the distribution of power, social distance, and imposition are subject to specific circumstances and, together with it, determine the weight of FTA and be the basis for choosing the politeness strategy required to reduce it accordingly.

In certain communicative events, a state variable may be very dominant, overcoming the social parameters. For example, a particular action must be conveyed in specific circumstances that consider where the communication occurs, for example, the request in extract (10).

(10) Ph: *Suruk ne becatan, dengan sak iak milu menserah no! Mobil uah nganteh ne!* [Ask people who will join in the *Sorong Serah* ceremony! The car has been waiting for a long time!]

What was specific in this request was bald on record, in plain speech level, but the speaker delivered it in one shout. The speaker addressed an invitation to a young man (who would take part in the *Sorong Serah* to the bride's house), about twelve meters from him. Therefore, in such a situation, shouting was a temporary requirement of the expressions that carry the act as efficiently as possible, a case that has room for correction. Thus, the minimum correction used in the request did not necessarily indicate that the action was not severe. On the contrary, it was due to the establishment of communication (spatial distance between the speaker and the addressee), which caused the speaker to place communication efficiency over the precedence of weight control. From another point of view, such a setting lowers the rank of the imposition of the act so that it poses a minimum threat to the addressee's face.

4.5   Cultural Parameter

Concerning polite or impolite behavior, cultural parameters relate to the values held by the people on what is considered polite behavior and what is not. In other words, such values are the sources of any cultural parameters that come out and are used to guide and, in some ways, control their politeness behavior, for example, the discussion between the Pi and Ph in extract (11) below.

(11) Pi: *Angkak kesak lupak pikun lalok, lek jelon side nyunata neno.* [Why am I so naive on the day you held the circumcision.]
   Ph: *Dek ne loek sik kebadak, aran jak roah kodek-kodek.* [I didn't tell many people, because it is not a special ceremony.]
   Pi: *Dekke lek bale waktu no, tiang le Lombok tengah.* [I was not at home at the time; I was in Central Lombok.]
   Ph: *Insya Allah lamun tebegawe malik jak, pasti tiang dateng bebadak, ance teleto endeng nyiur.* [God willing, if there is a ceremony later, I should tell and ask for coconuts.]

In (11), Pi delivered an apology and empathized with excessive statements because he could come to his son's ceremony. In the Sasak culture, such an excuse is unacceptable without the addressee asserting that there is nothing to apologize for, which is expressed in respect of the addressee's face and, more importantly, to show politeness. Ph's responded, "*dek ne loek sik kebadak aran jak roah kodek-kodek*" (I didn't tell many people because it is not a special ceremony), which seems to justify why the addressee could not come because he did not invite many people. Thus, the addressee did not lose face because of his apology. However, the politeness shown by Ph was not only that but he was also shown as humble (line 2).

In line with (4), Ph indicated the repetition of the previous utterance in which he reinforced what has been said in line (4). The utterance in line (2) seems to justify the negativity that caused him to be absent in his circumstance. By saying, "*Insya Allah lamun tebegawe malik jak, pasti tiang dateng bebadak, ance teleto endeng nyiur*" (God willing, if there is a ceremony later, I should tell, and will come to ask for coconuts), the speaker reported that his absence did nothing because in the future he will be invited to attend the event. The following phrase, "*ance teleto endeng nyiur*" (and will come to ask for coconut) this utterance was an excessive utterance showing that the speaker was very humble. Keep in mind that this utterance may also contain the addressee's power distribution, which is the speaker's mode of showing simplicity. Extract (11) was an essential parameter of politeness because, in

some instances, the speaker would choose the politeness strategy in which politeness is a culture embodied in the Sasak community.

5.   DISCUSSION

The study's findings revealed that sociopragmatics play a significant role in *Pembayun*'s choice of politeness strategies such as social distance, power distribution, rank, situational, and cultural parameters. These factors determine the weightiness of the act and become the basis for politeness strategies in the deliverances of specific acts during the post-elopement rituals (see Figure 2).

Social distance is positively associated with the degree of deference used (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The more socially farther, the more respect the reciprocal social distance. This means that those socially distant people are more inclined to defer from one another. Social distances are also found to be the determinants of speech-level choices. The higher the social distance, the more conducive it is to use, and the more exceptional is the Sasak language. The more diminutive social distance is, the more the need to use plain language becomes. Concerning Matsumoto (1988), honorifics in such situations also determine politeness. Therefore, the refined language indicates social distance and respect, while plain language is associated with social closeness and acceleration.

Concerning the power distribution within the social parameters, the study found that the distribution of power between speakers related to deference, options (level) speech, and politeness strategies in one event, speeches involving participants with different powers are characterized by respecting speech-level choices. Unlike social distance attributes, the respect associated with power distribution is essential with no counter-feedback. Deference is given by the less powerful to the more powerful. In this case, the less powerful speakers use a higher, refined speech while the more powerful may likely use plain language. However, Mahyuni (2004) suggests that they must use appropriate language, especially concerning a person's status in the 'hierarchy.' Matsumoto (1988) also suggests when a person of higher status is involved, distance and power are given markedly higher values. Age and event formality was also specific factors that influenced a politeness strategy in communication.

Moreover, the nature of the FTA determines the imposition of FTA as some FTA is naturally higher than the others, either universally or culturally specific. For example, the form of commands generally can be considered more impactful than demand. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the threats to the negative face are higher than the threat to the positive face, giving a higher figure in negative politeness than those given to positive politeness. However, faces, particularly the difference between positive and negative faces, are ignored in this case (Ishiyama, 2009; Pizziconi, 2003). This strategy may be a problematic view because it is not clear if the request, or order, for example, is more of a result of criticism. Demand may not be as beneficial in some cultures as in some other cultures. In certain cultures, people may be tolerant of open criticisms more than those in different cultures, where criticisms are seen directly as a form of rudeness.

On the other hand, the situational variable plays an essential role in choosing a politeness strategy. This situational variable affects the distribution of power and social

distance between speakers and addressees and the imposition of FTA. For example, the degree of formalities of communication events to enhance the imposition of FTA, which in turn requires a higher politeness strategy to use in such circumstances. It has also been revealed that the dealings of specific audiences can cause the speaker to be indebted to the addressee. This case resulted in the increased power of the addressee in subsequent communications between them. Discussions in previous sections also revealed that the absence or presence of the public affects the imposition of the FTA.

The data further revealed that utterances and speech acts they take or relate to the cultural environment affect the communication's meaning and benefit. The cultural environment defines the purpose of the utterances in it. Therefore, the command act stated at the refined speech level in a plain imperative, indicating the use of a bald on record politeness strategy, should be decoded and interpreted in the cultural setting of the 'only post elopement marriage ritual' in which it occurs. It seems logical or reasonable to see the relationship between utterance or speech act in this case (i.e., the 'command'). Therefore, in this context, the cultural environment limits the occurrence of the behavior in the same way as all its meanings and significance attached. Concerning this, the cultural environment serves as a cultural parameter that hinders the people in the culture from behaving in a certain way under certain circumstances. Meanwhile, Ide (1989) argued to favor more culture-specific politeness examples in Japanese, but Matsumoto (1988), on the other hand, advocated a universal framework that includes cultural variability, both scholars stressing the importance of recognizing relationships. Concerning polite or impolite behavior, cultural parameters relate to the values held by the people on what is considered polite behavior and what is not. In other words, such values are the sources of any cultural parameters that come out and are used to guide and, in some ways, control their politeness behavior.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the data, this study showed that the sociopragmatic parameters of politeness strategies used by the *Pembayun* (*adat* leaders) in various interactions of the post elopement rituals included social distance, power distribution, rank, situational, and cultural parameters. These factors ascertain the weightiness of each act by the *Pembayun* and thus became the basis for their politeness strategies in conversations during the post-elopement rituals.

The politeness strategies of the Sasak *Pembayun* (*adat* leaders) are used to show the following. First, the relationship between language and culture is such that the Sasak community's linguistic behavior conforms to that community's culture and reflects how cultural values and norms are embedded in the social activities of its people in which language acts as the vehicle for such activities. Second, politeness is a manifestation of Sasak's community cultural values. It is one of the virtues they sought and critically observed in their lives as manifested in their communicative behaviors. Third, the notion of politeness and the strategy in which it is achieved in communication is culture-bound and culture-specific. Although this position departs from Brown and Levinson's (1987) universal postulate, it does not necessarily imply that such a postulate is ignored in the present study. Fourth, politeness reflects Sasak culture, which pervades the people's social interaction, verbal and non-verbal. In verbal interactions, politeness is embedded in the speech acts of the participants, which are delivered according to the underlying strategy chosen, depending on the degree of

politeness intended and the kind of intensity of the effect it is meant to produce. Fifth, the notion of politeness is in corollary to the principle of balance and harmony held by Sasak people in their life. They hold that communication involves affecting other people's emotional states and negatively threatening other people's feelings is against their cultural and social norms.

Despite this research has answered the research question on the politeness strategies among *Pembayun* (*adat* leaders) of Sasak people in the post elopement ritual, thus, future research is recommended to investigate the politeness strategies, particularly concerning the level of education of the *Pembayun* in the post elopement rituals. Furthermore, there are still other pragmatic and semantic issues, also sociological factors influencing the choice of politeness strategies, that can still be investigated in this ceremony.

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