

Politeness Strategy of Former British Prime Minister Liz Truss at the Prime Minister's Questions sessions YouTube UK Parliament

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze language politeness strategies used by former British Prime Minister Liz Truss in the Prime Minister's Questions session uploaded by the UK Parliament YouTube account in 2022 according to the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987). The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The results of the analysis show that negative politeness strategies were most often applied by former British Prime Minister Liz Truss during the Prime Minister's Questions session. In the analysis of 30 data, it was discovered that Liz Truss used the most negative politeness strategies (36%) in Prime Minister's Questions. The goal is to maintain a negative face and avoid open conflict. With this strategy, Liz Truss conveys messages subtly, minimizes the risk of conflict, and maintains social relations with interlocutor.

Keywords: British Prime Minister; Prime Minister's Question; debate; politeness strategies Brown and Levinson (1987).

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi kesantunan berbahasa yang digunakan oleh mantan Perdana Menteri Inggris Liz Truss pada sesi acara Prime Minister's Questions yang diunggah oleh akun YouTube UK Parliament tahun 2022 menurut teori Brown dan Levinson (1987). Metode yang digunakan pada penelitian ini adalah kualitatif deskriptif. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa strategi kesantunan negatif paling banyak diterapkan pada mantan Perdana Menteri Inggris Liz Truss pada sesi Prime Minister's Questions. Dari 25 data, diketahui bahwa Liz Truss paling banyak menggunakan strategi kesantunan negatif (36%), dalam Prime Minister's Questions. Tujuannya adalah menjaga muka negatif dan menghindari konflik terbuka. Dengan strategi ini, Liz Truss menyampaikan pesan secara halus, meminimalkan risiko konflik, dan menjaga hubungan sosial dengan lawan tutur.

Kata kunci: Perdana Menteri Inggris; acara Prime Minister's Question; debat; strategi kesantunan berbahasa; Brown dan Levinson (1987).

INTRODUCTION

Expressing opinions is a form of human right that people use to express their voices and thoughts. Expressing opinions is also needed in a group to straighten out the differences between each group member in order to reach a mutual agreement. Anindawati (in Fatimah, 2016) stated that the ability to express opinions must be done rationally without imposing one's own interests.

In conveying an opinion, politeness in speaking is closely related to the process. Politeness strategies can be used to analyze the politeness of language used by former British Prime Minister Liz Truss. Liz Truss is a former British Prime Minister who served for 45 days, making her the fastest former British Prime Minister in the history of British Government.

In the Prime Minister's Questions program, there are language politeness strategies used by former Prime Minister Liz Truss. This strategy can be seen in the context of the choice of language used by former Prime Minister Liz Truss in conveying opinions to the opposition government that are contrary to the vision and mission of her government. Markhamah, & Sabardila, A. (2013) stated that politeness in language is defined as an effort by the speaker and the interlocutor to produce a good interaction process. The choice of a word or sentence can have a very important impact on politeness. Therefore, politeness is very necessary to avoid threats to the face.

In discussion forums, the politeness of what is conveyed by the speaker must be considered. Therefore, it is very possible to conduct politeness research at the Prime Minister's Questions event. The function of politeness strategies in the Prime Minister's Questions event is to find out the language strategies used by the Prime Minister to the Leader of the Opposition to avoid face threats between the speaker and the interlocutor.

Brown and Levinson (1987) introduced the concept of 'face' in an attempt to explain politeness in a broader sense. There are two faces explained in this theory, namely 'positive face' and 'negative face'. Positive face as presented by Brown and Levinson (1987) includes the positive image that a person has about themselves. Negative face is a basic right to protect personal territory, privacy, and the right not to be disturbed by others. Brown and Levinson (1987) state four politeness strategies that are used as an effort to save face there are: direct politeness strategies (bald-on), indirect politeness strategies (off-record), positive politeness strategies and negative politeness strategies.

Brown and Lenvinson's (1987) theory of politeness strategies is used in this research to examine the politeness strategies used by Liz Truss towards British opposition leader Keir Stramer as a form of saving her facial image and the efforts made by Liz Truss to behave politely in terms of language.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in the study of Former British Prime Minister Liz Truss's Language Politeness Strategy at the British Parliament's Prime Minister's Questions YouTube event is a descriptive qualitative research method. This approach involves analyzing Truss's speech to Keir Stramer at the Prime Minister's Questions event using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. The main data source is the transcript of the session broadcast on YouTube in October 2022. This research categorizes Truss' politeness strategies according to Brown and

Levinson's theory and uses techniques such as listening, note-taking, and contextual analysis. This research aims to describe Truss' linguistic politeness strategies in the context of political discourse, by applying a pragmatic approach to linguistic analysis. The findings are presented informally for the reader's understanding.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

A total of 30 data of politeness strategy were found during the 2022 Prime Minister Questions by former Prime Minister Liz Truss to Opposition Leader Keir Starmer. This data was found based on an analysis of language politeness strategies according to Brown and Levinson which were divided into four parts, there are: direct politeness strategies (bald-on), indirect politeness strategies (off-record), positive politeness strategies and negative politeness strategies. The results of analysis are represented in the table below:

Table 1. Overview of Politeness Strategy by Former British Prime Minister Liz Truss during the Prime Minister's Question session.

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Direct (bald-on) Politeness Strategy	8	27%
Indirect (off-record) Politeness Strategy	2	7%
Positive Politeness Strategy	9	30%
Negative Politeness Strategy	11	36%
Total	30	100%

As mentioned in Table 1, There were 30 data identified. There are eight direct politeness strategy (bald-on) with a percentage of 27%, indirect politeness strategy (off-record) with a percentage of 7%, nine positive politeness strategy with a percentage of 30% and 11 negative politeness strategy with a percentage 36%.

Discussions

The results of the data are divided into four parts based on the type of politeness strategy according to Brown and Levinson (1987). The explanation is given in the paragraph below.

Direct Language Politeness Strategy (bald-on)

Data 1:

PMQs 19 Oktober 2022.

Keir Starmer (The Leader of Opposition): *“A book is being written about the Prime Minister’s time in office. Apparently, it is going to be out by Christmas. Is that the release date or the title?” (1:57 – 2:10)*

The Prime Minister (Answering the Leader of Opposition): *“I have been in office for just under two months, and I have delivered the energy price guarantee, making sure that people are not paying £6,000 bills this winter; I have reversed the*

national insurance increase; and I have also taken steps—and we will be taking steps—to crack down on the militant unions. (1) ...” (2:10 – 2:54)

The speaker uses a strategy of minimizing threats to face with speech that aims to discuss things that must be acknowledged by the speaker and the interlocutor. The application of this strategy can be seen in the speaker's speech which expressly conveys his achievements without using excessive words.

In the context of the first data, Liz Truss as a speaker directly expresses the achievements by explaining them in detail. In the words “...I have delivered the energy price guarantee, making sure that people are not paying £6,000 bills this winter; I have reversed the national insurance increase (1)” the use of the phrase "I have delivered" can be seen as a form of direct acknowledgment and responsibility for the results achieved, which is in accordance with the principle of direct politeness which emphasizes clarity and firmness in delivering the message and the information conveyed has become shared knowledge between the speaker and the speaker. interlocutor. By using active verbs, speakers create the impression of certainty and firmness in conveying their message in accordance with the principles of direct politeness explained by Brown and Levinson's theory.

In her speech, Liz Truss used strong and detailed words to convey her achievements, such as guaranteeing energy prices and canceling the increase in national insurance. The impact of this speech can include improving self-image, public trust, and perceptions of effective leadership.

Data 5:

PMQs 7 September 2022.

The Leader of Opposition (Asking the Prime Minister): “I look forward to tomorrow’s statement, but the money has got to come from somewhere. The Prime Minister knows that every single pound in excess profits that she chooses not to tax is an extra pound on borrowing that working people will be forced to pay back for decades to come. More borrowing than is needed—that is the true cost of her choice to protect oil and gas profits, isn’t it?” (7:00 – 7:29)

The Prime Minister (Answering leader of opposition): “The reality is that this country will not be able to tax its way to growth (1) ...” (7:30 - 7:52)

The speaker applies direct politeness strategy sub strategy 1; Minimizing threats to the speaker's face by deliberately not satisfying the speaker's face because the speaker's social position is higher than the speaker's face. The speaker deliberately conveys speech that does not satisfy the speaker by conveying the speech containing facts that actually happened.

In the fifth data context, Liz Truss, as the speaker, delivered her speech directly to the Leader of the Opposition. In the speech "The reality is that this country will not be able to tax its way to growth (1) ..." the phrase "The reality is..." is used to express facts or realities that are considered important or cannot be denied. This utterance shows that the following statement is a fact that needs to be acknowledged, with the aim of providing confirmation and clarity to what the speaker will convey to the interlocutor.

The impact of the speech is strengthening the speaker's image as a realistic person, the potential to influence judgment in society, and creating tension in social interactions. Overall, this speech reflects the speaker's efforts to provide a firm and convincing understanding of reality with significant impact in a political context.

Indirect Language Politeness Strategy (off-record)

Data 9:

PMQs 19 Oktober 2022

The Leader of Opposition (Asking the Prime Minister): “*The Prime Minister is asking me questions because we are a government in waiting and they are an Opposition in waiting. There is no getting away from this. Millions of people are facing horrendous mortgage repayments and she has admitted that it is her fault. She should not have conducted an economic experiment on the British public...*” (6:08 – 6:45)

The Prime Minister (Answering leader of opposition): “*I notice that the right honorable and learned Gentleman is not actually objecting to a single economic policy that the Chancellor announced on Monday. (1) ...*” (6:47 – 7:10)

The speaker applies direct politeness strategy sub strategy 1; Minimizing threats to the speaker's face by deliberately not satisfying the speaker's face because the speaker's social position is higher than the speaker's face. The speaker deliberately conveys speech that does not satisfy the speaker by conveying the speech containing facts that actually happened.

The data above shows Liz Truss, as the speaker, delivered her speech directly to the Leader of the Opposition. In the speech "The reality is that this country will not be able to tax its way to growth (1) ..." the phrase "The reality is..." is used to express facts or realities that are considered important or cannot be denied. This utterance shows that the following statement is a fact that needs to be acknowledged, with the aim of providing confirmation and clarity to what the speaker will convey to the interlocutor.

The impact of the speech is strengthening the speaker's image as a realistic person, the potential to influence judgment in society, and creating tension in social interactions. Overall, this speech reflects the speaker's efforts to provide a firm and convincing understanding of reality with significant impact in a political context.

Positive Language Politeness Strategy

Data 12:

Sesi PMQs 19 Oktober 2022.

The Leader of Opposition (Asking the Prime Minister): “*Last week, the Prime Minister ignored every question put to her. Instead, she repeatedly criticized Labor’s plan for a six-month freeze on energy bills. This week, the Chancellor made it her policy. How can she be held to account when she is not in charge?*” (2:55 – 3:15)

The Prime Minister (Answering the Leader of Opposition): “*Our policy is to protect the most vulnerable for two years. I had to make the decision, because of the economic situation, to adjust our policies. I am somebody who is prepared to front up. (1) ...*” (3:20 – 3:50)

The speaker applies a positive politeness strategy using sub strategy 2; proof of cooperation between the speaker and the interlocutor by stating the speech optimistically. The speaker conveys utterance that creates an optimistic impression by using words that convince the person he is speaking to.

In the data above, Liz Truss, as a speaker, positively expresses her speech optimistically, speech that can convince the person she is speaking to. In the speech "I am someone who is prepared to front up." Liz Truss expressed optimistic remarks and expressed commitment to facing challenges. The phrase "front up" creates the impression of courage and readiness to face problems.

The impact of this speech is that it can strengthen one's self-image and maintain authority. Politeness strategies in speech can shape the dynamics of interaction and perception between speakers and interlocutors. In formal communication situations, such as politics, leaders or speakers often consider the long-term impact of their speech on their image and public support.

Data 15:

PMQs 19 Oktober 2022.

The Leader of Opposition (Asking the Prime Minister): "Last week, the Prime Minister stood there and promised absolutely no spending reductions. Conservative Members all cheered. This week, the Chancellor announced a new wave of cuts. What is the point of a Prime Minister whose promises do not even last a week?" (3:54 – 4:10)

The Prime Minister (Answering the Leader of Opposition): "I can assure the right honorable and learned Gentleman that spending will go up next year and it will go up the year after, but of course, we need to get value for taxpayers' money (1) ..." (4:12 – 4:36)

The speaker applies a positive politeness strategy using sub strategy 2; proof of cooperation between the speaker and the interlocutor by stating the speech optimistically. The speaker conveys the speech optimistically by convincing the speaker of the policy that will be implemented.

As seen in the data above, Liz Truss as a speaker expresses her speech positively by acting optimistically that her policies will provide benefits to the British people. In the words "I can assure the right honorable and learned Gentleman that spending will go up next year and it will go up the year after, but of course we need to get value for taxpayers' money." The phrase "I can assure" in this speech shows that the speaker confidently states or guarantees something to the person he is talking to or the party he is talking to. In this case, the speaker convinces the interlocutor that spending will increase in the following year and also in the year after that.

The impact of Liz Truss' speech is to create trust and confidence in the policies being promoted. The speaker optimistically expressed his belief that the policies implemented would provide benefits to the British people. This can increase public confidence in the speaker's ability to manage policies and provide hope that the policies implemented will be effective and beneficial to society as a whole.

Negative Language Politeness Strategy

Data 20:

PMQs 12 September 2022

PMQs 12 September 2022

The Leader of Opposition (Asking the Prime Minister): “Avoiding the question, ducking responsibility, lost in denial—it is no wonder investors have no confidence in her government. This is why it matters: a few weeks ago, Zach and Rebecca from Wolverhampton were all set to buy their first home. Then the Government’s borrowing spree sent interest rates spiraling and their mortgage offer was withdrawn. I met them last week. They are back to square one: unable to buy, devastated and sick to their back teeth with excuses and blame shifting. Does the Prime Minister understand why Zach and Rebecca are completely furious with her?” (4:25 – 5:08)

The Prime Minister (Answering the Leader of Opposition): “The fact is that when I came into office, people were facing energy bills of up to £6,000 per year—[Interruption.] Well, I am sorry; Labour Members are shouting, but the right honorable and learned Gentleman is opposing the very package that we brought in with the energy price guarantee. (1) ...” (5:09 – 6:25)

The speaker implements negative politeness strategy sub strategy 6; apologize. The speaker states the speech to redeem the face of the person he is speaking to.

As evident above, Liz Truss, as the speaker, expressed her speech negatively by apologizing to the audience who witnessed the event. The words “... Well, I am sorry; Labor Members are shouting (1), but the right honorable and learned Gentleman is opposing the very package that we brought in with the energy price guarantee. That was the major part of the mini-Budget that we announced.” The utterance “I am sorry” is said to convey regret or annoyance regarding the disturbance or discomfort caused by the shouting of members of the Labor Party. The speaker then went on to explain that the Labor Party members opposed the policy package they were proposing, especially regarding the energy price guarantee in the announced mini-budget program.

The impact is that the speaker tries to show a responsible attitude and respects the presence of the audience. Then, the speaker can help maintain a conducive discussion atmosphere by reducing the tension that arises. In addition, by explaining that Labor Party members oppose the proposed energy policy, the speaker can strengthen the argument presented.

Data 21:

PMQs 7 September 2022.

The Leader of Opposition (Asking the Prime Minister): “Thank you, Mr Speaker. May I congratulate the Prime Minister on her appointment? When she said in her leadership campaign that she was against windfall taxes, did she mean it?” (4:10 – 4:27)

The Prime Minister (Answering the Leader of Opposition): “I thank the right honorable and learned Gentleman for his welcome. I hope that we will be able to work together, particularly in areas we agree on. (1) ...” (4:28 – 4:27)

The speaker implements negative politeness strategy sub-strategy 4; by minimizing

coercion or pressure on the interlocutor.

In the twenty-first data context, Liz Truss as a speaker conveys negative speech which conveys hope to the interlocutor and minimizes pressure on the Leader of the Opposition. In the words "I thank the right honorable and learned Gentleman for his welcome. I hope that we will be able to work together, particularly in areas we agree on. (1)" in the speech "I hope" by using this phrase, the speaker does not place direct pressure or express high demands. On the other hand, the speaker conveys hope with the word "hope" to create a lighter atmosphere and open up space for cooperation. This reflects the speaker's efforts to minimize tension or conflict that may arise with the person he is speaking to, thereby creating more polite and open communication.

The impact is the creation of a more polite and open communication atmosphere between the speaker and the interlocutor. By conveying expectations and avoiding direct pressure, speakers can reduce tension and conflict that may arise in the interaction. This can strengthen the relationship between the two parties and facilitate cooperation in achieving common goals.

Data 24:

PMQs 7 September 2022.

The Leader of Opposition (Asking the Prime Minister): "Thank you, Mr Speaker. May I congratulate the Prime Minister on her appointment? When she said in her leadership campaign that she was against windfall taxes, did she mean it?" (4:10 – 4:27)

The Prime Minister (Answering the Leader of Opposition): "I thank the right honorable and learned Gentleman for his welcome. I hope that we (1) will be able to work together, particularly in areas we agree on..." "I am against a windfall tax. I believe it is the wrong thing to be putting companies off investing in the United Kingdom, just when we need to be growing the economy." (4:28 – 5:10)

The speaker implements speech using the negative politeness strategy sub-strategy 7; personalization of the speaker and interlocutor by using the pronoun we.

The context in the twenty-fourth data is that Liz Truss as a speaker conveys speech using the pronoun we. In the speech "I know that we have strong support from the Opposition in opposing Vladimir Putin's appalling war in Ukraine, and I want us to continue to stand up to that appalling Russian aggression, which has led to the energy crisis we face now" said "we" is used to express solidarity between the speaker and his group in responding to the serious issue of the war in Ukraine and Russian aggression. By uniting their voices together, the speaker tries to show unity in opposing events that are considered terrible and to provide support for the stance taken by his group regarding the energy crisis currently being faced.

The impact of using the pronoun "we" in speech is to create an impression of solidarity between the speaker and the group, strengthening unity in responding to important issues such as the war in Ukraine and the energy crisis. This can inspire listeners to become more involved and support the actions taken by the speaker group in response to the problem at hand.

Melati (2028), more comprehensive understanding of interactional competence has the potential to complement available descriptions of interactional skill in assessment scales of

speaking and aid learners and teachers in communicative classrooms. As the members of society, humans are totally dependent on the use of language to interact in everyday life

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

From the four types of data presented, negative politeness strategies are the most frequently applied type by former British Prime Minister Liz Truss towards the Leader of the Opposition during Prime Minister's Questions. Negative politeness strategies are used by speakers to maintain negative face towards the interlocutor. Negative face in communication refers to the honor or self-image that is threatened during communication interactions. The purpose of using negative politeness strategies is to ensure that the interlocutor does not feel intimidated or faced with situations that could harm the relationship. In the context of Prime Minister's Questions in the British Parliament, Liz Truss used negative politeness strategies to maintain her negative face and reduce the potential for conflict. Speakers use this tactic to avoid open confrontation, deliver messages or criticism in a more subtle manner, and minimize the risk of conflict between the speaker and the interlocutor. By employing negative politeness strategies, speakers aim to maintain socially acceptable relationships with their interlocutors while conveying messages or criticism without damaging the relationship. The dominant use of negative politeness strategies in this research is consistent with the political context that is often tense. In the Prime Minister's Questions situation, it allows speakers to criticize opponents subtly without threatening the relationship. However, the difference in the use of negative and positive strategies is not significant, indicating the speaker's attention to maintaining positive relationships. Negative politeness strategies help keep communication harmonious and avoid conflicts that could harm the speaker's and interlocutor's face.

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