Politeness Strategies Used by Mario Teguh in Handling Questions in MTGW Program

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ABSTRACT

Mario Teguh was one of the motivators in Indonesia whose fans are considered the most. He was also issued as the most expensive motivator in Indonesia at this time being. As a great motivator, he must have some strategies to be close and motivate his audience. This research aimed to figure out the strategies he used, focusing on handling questions. The data was collected by observation method and documentation technique. The data was analyzed based on the politeness strategy of Brown and Levinson. From the analysis, The researcher found that at least there were ten strategies used by Mario to share the motivation. These made the audience did not feel to be lectured when he shared it. They feel like a friend to him.

Keywords: *Motivation, motivator, politeness, politeness strategies*

1. INTRODUCTION

Mario Teguh is one of the motivators in Indonesia. His complete name is Sis Maryono Teguh. In 2009, he was nominated as the most influential agent of change by Republika. One of the programs he leads is called MTGW, which stands for Mario Teguh Golden Ways. It is a program of motivation sharing led by Mario Teguh. This program is usually broadcasted by Metro TV every Sunday from 07.30 pm until 09.00 pm. It has some sessions in which Mario will share motivation, polling about the topic of the day, sharing problems by the audience answered by Mario, question and answer session, and closed by the conclusion. In the question-and-answer session, he will invite the audience to ask a question. To answer the question, he usually asks the other audience to participate.

When leading the program, he has to create positive politeness to maintain relationships with the audience. Therefore, the audience gets the answer they need

without feeling being lectured. Besides, the audience will feel that they are accepted. His ability to handle the Audience' questions has been known as the polite but fun and funny style. Thus, he was once invited to be a comic in the Stand-Up comedy program at the end of 2011. Seeing these facts, I am interested in figuring out his strategies as a motivator when communicating with other people. As a motivator, he must have some great ways to encourage and make people interested in listening to his communication style. Thus, I would like to describe his strategies and share the results to apply in my and readers' real life.

In daily communication, everyone, including Mario Teguh and us, will face a social fact in terms of 'face.' According to Yule (1996), the face is people's self-image which each society member claims. There are two concepts of face, positive and negative face. A negative face is addressed to people's wish that what he wants is not impeded by other people around him. A positive face is a face where each member wants his wants to be desirable to other people. In a society, a speaker will say something that may threaten others' face or other people's wish, which is called Face Threatening Act (FTA), when he is communicating to other people. To minimize the threatening of others' faces, we are not separated by the term 'politeness.' Leech (2016) stated that politeness concerns a relationship between two participants that he called *self* and *other*. These two participants are demanded to fulfil the concept of politeness. Therefore the face-threatening acts can be minimized. Politeness itself is not a 'gift of birth' possessed by people when they are born. Watts (2003) stated that it has to be acquired. People should learn and be socialized, and after that, politeness will be acquired.

Brown and Levinson (1987), in their book, "Politeness" classified fifteen strategies for creating positive politeness in our daily life: 1) Noticing, attending to hearer, 2) Exaggeration, 3) Intensifying interest to the hearer, 4) Using in-group identity makers, 5) Seeking agreement, 6) Avoiding disagreement, 7) Presupposition/ raise/ assert common ground, 8) Joking, 9) Asserting or presuppose speaker's knowledge of and concern for hearer's wants, 10) Offering and promising, 11) Being optimistic, 12) Including both speaker and hearer in the activity, 13) Giving (or ask)

reasons, 14) Assuming or asserting reciprocity, 15) Giving gifts to the hearer (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation). These fifteen strategies will be the basis for my research in analyzing the data.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research. The data was collected by finding the recording of this program from www.youtube.com with MTGW as the keyword.

I chose a topic from all video collections of this program, "Hidupku, pilihanku", as the sample. From this recording, I made a script of a conversation between an audience named Dimas and Mario Teguh. After making the script, I will analyze the words used by him to find politeness strategies based on the theories stated by Brown and Levinson (1983).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Having analyzed the conversation, I found that most of the politeness strategies were used by Mario Teguh in handling the question from the audience named Dimas. The result and the discussion will be as follows.

Politeness Strategies in Answering Questions

Mario's first politeness strategy was the 'Notice.' This strategy refers to Mario's taking notice of the aspect of the Audience' condition. This strategy was applied both to Dimas and other audience present in that place.

Here is an example of the strategy applied in interaction with Dimas.

> Dimas : Perkenalkan nama saya Dimas Abdur Syakur. Saya dari Kendal, Jawa Tengah.
>
> *(Let me introduce myself. My name is Dimas Abdur Syakur. I am from Kendal, Central Java)*

Mario : **Dari Kendal**. *(From Kendal)* **(Gave applause)**

Dimas : Yang ingin saya tanyakan mengenai dua anak muda yang berbeda karakter tapi sama-sama mempunyai visi besar.

(I would like to ask about two young men whose characteristics are different, but both of them have a big vision)

Mario : **Super**.

Dimas : Suka belajar sama orang-orang yang telah sukses.
(They love to learn from those who have been successful)

Mario : **Good**.

From the data above, we can see that Mario used some words such as 'Super' and 'good' and non-verbal like repeating the origin of the audience 'Dari Kendal' and gave applause to give notice that the audience comes from a distant place. These two acts made the audience felt being respected by him. Therefore, he did not hesitate to continue asking Mario about his problem. He also applied this strategy to the other audience, like in the example below.

Audience : Berani mencoba.
(*Dare to try)*

Mario : Berani mencoba. **Good.** …. Setuju?
(Dare to try. Good)… Do you agree?

Audience : Setuju.
(Agree)

Mario : **Good**. …

The second strategy used by Mario Teguh was the 'Exaggeration.' This strategy refers to the praise of the audience in the program. This strategy also made the one who talked with him felt that they were respected. An example of this strategy can be seen in the part of the conversation below.

Dimas : Perbedaannya, anak muda yang pertama dia orangnya disiplin….

(The difference is that the first young man is a disciplined

person…)

Mario : **Super Sekali. Ini pertanyaan yang very smart.**

Great. This is a very smart question)

In the example above, we can see that Mario praised the audience by saying 'Super Sekali' and continued by saying another compliment, 'Ini pertanyaan yang very smart'. It made the audience felt that he was accepted since he asked the right question to Mario Teguh.

The third strategy was the 'intensifying interest to the hearer(s).' Mario used this strategy to all of the audience in that room. The example of this strategy is as follows.

Audience : Berani mencoba.

(Dare to try)

Mario : Berani mencoba. Good. **Kenapa berani mencoba lebih sukses?**

(Hening sejenak menunggu jawaban dari penonton). Ambil firman-

Nya. Ambil firman. Tidak akan dimasukkan suatu masalah kecuali

dia mampu menyelesaikan. **Iya?** Berarti Tuhan tidak coba-coba. Kalo

dikasih masalah itu karena dia mampu.

 (Dare to try. Good. Why those who dare to try are more

successful? (Kept silent for a while, waiting for Audience'   answer).

Quote His words. Quote His words. He will not   give a test that is

beyond the person's ability. Don't you   think so? It means that He

does not do a trial. If He gives a   problem to someone it means that

person can overcome it.)

The bold-typed words are showing the application of the strategy. Mario tried to draw the audience to participate with some questions and non-verbal actions from

the example above. It made the audience felt that they were involved in the conversation.

The fourth strategy was the 'usage of In-group identity markers.' In this case, Mario used the word 'we,' 'us' and 'friendship' to make the audience felt that they were close to each other and in the same position and idea. The example of strategy usage can be seen in the parts of the conversation below.

Mario : Super sekali. Ini pertanyaan yang very smart. Yuk sama-sama **kita** jawab…

(Great. This is a very smart question. Let's answer together)

Mario : … Dia kalo berani masuk ke sini akan kesulitan, tetapi kesulitan itu supaya **kita** berontak berenang menolak bernafas air, sekarat, lalu sukses…

(… if he dares to enter this zone, he will get some troubles. But, the troubles make us try to swim and not to be drowned, dying. Then, we succeed)

Mario : … So, **Sahabat-sahabat saya** yang baik hatinya, jangan halangi diri anda dari keberanian karena kalau anda beriman, anda tahu Tuhan yang memelihara kita….

(So, my kind friends, do not make a barrier between you and your courage because if you have faith in Him, you know that He is the One who takes care of us…)

Having read the example above, we can see that he often used the word 'we' and 'us' to make the audience felt that they were in the same shoes. Besides, he also greeted and called the audience using the words 'my kind friends' that created effect if they had a good relationship called friendship. It made there was no gap between him and the audience.

The fifth strategy was the 'seeking of agreement.' Mario's strategy to made the audience felt that they had the same idea and point of view; therefore, he would be assumed not to threaten the Audience' faces. This strategy can be seen in the example below.

Mario   : … **Yang mana kira-kira** akan lebih sukses dimasa depan? *(… Who do you think will be successful in the future?)*

Audience   : B.

Mario   : **Yang mana? B?**

   (Who? B)

Audience : B.

Mario   : B? Kenapa?

   (B? why?)

Audience : Berani.

   (Brave)

….

Mario *….*   : **Iya?** Berarti Tuhan tidak coba-coba. Kalau dikasih masalah itu karena dia mampu. **Setuju**?

  (It means that He does not do a trial. If He gives a problem to someone it means that person can overcome it. Agree?)

Mario   : … Anak-anak berani **kan** begitu? Mendekati harimau sedang tidur. **Ya? Begitu toh?** Dibuka pelan-pelan, itu ditabok pintunya ditutup. Ayo, **boleh diulangi nggak**?... *(The brave kids are like that, right? Getting closer to a sleeping tiger. Right? Don't you think so? Opening the door, hit the tiger and closing it again. Right? Can he repeat it again?*

Audience : Bermasalah.

(Having problems)

Mario : Yang bermasalah. Oke, betul. Saya bermasalah. **Termasuk yang berani atau penakut?**

(Having problems. Okay. I was. Was I brave or cowardly?)

From the examples above, we can see that Mario looked for an agreement many times. It made the audience feel they were having the same idea and just helped them think more systematically. It made the gap between him and the audience are small.

The sixth strategy applied by Mario in the question and answer session was the 'joke' strategy. It made him and the audience felt that they were close and made the gap smaller. It also made the people assumed that he was friendly and easy to close. In the conversation, he used two long jokes that I took as an example of this strategy. The first joke was when he gave an example of a brave kid who opened a cage door, hit the tiger inside, and then closed it again. It resulted in the laugh of the audience. The second was when he told a story about himself when he was young. He said that if he disagreed with other people, he would say let us meet in the yard. Brave. However, in front of women, he was weak. He said that fortunately, no woman ever rejected him – any woman. They just disobeyed him. It also made the audience laughed and felt closer to him.

The seventh strategy applied was 'being optimistic.' Mario showed the optimistic by presenting the greatness of God's promises. It made the audience trusted him since the source of what he said was from Qur'an, which does not doubt it since Indonesian are well known as religious people. He uses this strategy is every time he gives motivation. The examples of this strategy can be seen in the parts where he gave motivational words like "… Kalau orang dikasih masalah itu karena dia menyelesaikan…" *(If He gives a problem to someone, it means that person can overcome it).* It is just like what we can find in Qur'an that He will not give a test

beyond our ability to handle. The other example is when he said that we would be brave if we had faith in God. He takes care of all of us.

The eighth strategy applied in this conversation was the 'including of both speaker and hearer in the activity.' Therefore, the audience did not feel that he was the only important person in the conversation. He often invited the audience to the discussion and solved the problems. One of the examples is as below:

Mario : Super sekali. Ini pertanyaan yang very smart. Yuk **sama-sama** kita jawab…

(Great. This is a very smart question. Let's answer together)

In the example above, he tried to make the audience think that he was not the only person who can solve the problems or the center of the discussion in the sharing. He said 'together' to tell the audience about this.

The ninth strategy was the 'asking and giving reasons.' This strategy tells that the audience had the same ability to see a problem and give clues on how to solve it. We can see this strategy in the examples below.

Mario : … **Yang mana** kira-kira akan lebih sukses dimasa depan? *(… Who do you think will be successful in the future?)* Audience : B.

Mario : Yang mana? B?

(Who? B)

Audience : B.

Mario : **B? Kenapa?**

(B? why?)

Audience : Berani.

(Brave)

In the example, we can see that he asked the audience to explain why they decided and how that choice could stand strongly. By doing this, the emotional relationship between the audience and him can be maintained better.

The tenth strategy used by Mario in the program was 'giving the gift' to the audience. In this case, he often gave an appraisal to the audience. The words he used were like *super sekali (great), smart,* and *baik hatinya (kind-hearted).* Besides using words, he also used non-verbal activity like giving applause to the audience when they were from far places or gave the right answers.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

As a motivator, Mario Teguh understands that his position is not as a center or the only one who can solve the problems. If he is against those points, the people will not listen and consider him not to follow. Besides, one of the most important things in sharing motivation is that the motivator should make the audience not feel being lectured by him. When the audience understands and follows the advice given, then the motivator is considered as successful. Based on the analysis, we can see that he succeeded in doing his role as a great motivator.

In sharing motivation, the relationship between the motivator and the audience should also be maintained. In the conversation, we can see that Mario did this by giving an appraisal, involving the audience in solving the problem, calling the audience with nice words such as *sahabat saya yang baik hatinya*, sharing stories about his life in the past, and telling some jokes. It made the audience felt no big gap and felt that he is so close to them.

Suggestion

It is suggested to the next researcher interested in the same field as the one I did to see the problems from other views. For example, seeing the politeness strategy by seeing the *Curhat* session or the Polling session. Therefore, the strategy used by

Mario Teguh can be described completely based on the whole activities of the program named Mario Teguh Golden Ways.

5. REFERENCES

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