The Analysis of Command Expressions Employed By Male and Female in the Workplace Based On TV-Series the Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10 (A Pragmatics Approach)

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Abstract - This research analyzes command expressions employed by male and female speakers in the workplace based American TV-Series. The aims of the research are to know the kinds of politeness strategies employed by male and female speakers through command expression in the workplace, to describe how commands are delivered by the characters in The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10 and to find out why male and female characters deliver command expressions differently. There are thirty-one dialogues that contain command expression which are employed by male and female characters in the workplace on TV-series The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10. Based on the analysis, three findings were found. First, three of the four politeness strategies are employed in command expressions in the data. They are Bald on record, Positive Politeness and Off-record strategy. Second, the research shows that male and female characters are different in the way they deliver command expressions. Male characters tend to use more mitigating devices and politeness markers. On the other hand, female characters tend to use more non-verbal actions, such as falling intonation to make command expressions sound assertive. Third, the research finds out that gender influences the choice of politeness strategy. Male characters apply more polite strategies than female do. On the other hand, female characters tend to be more assertive because they employ less mitigating device and use more falling intonation.

Keywords: command expressions, speech acts, politeness, gender, workplace, TV-Series

I. INTRODUCTION

Speaking about gender differences in language use, male style is usually identified as more powerful than female style, because females tend to use powerless style (in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003, p.530). In the workplace situation, one of the stereotypes is created by societally subordinate positions and superior positions between men and women. Based on that explanation, stereotype has correlation with the relative power or status and the social distance. It affects language used among man and women in the institutional area which is clearly influenced by the form of directive (Holmes, 1992, p.294). According to Searle (1979, pp.20-27), a directive is an expression which makes someone do something. It has several forms, such as commanding, ordering, suggesting, advising, requesting and so on. Moreover, one thing that should be understood by the reader is in institutional area, like the workplace situation, it usually does not allow non-compliant response (Alam in Vine, 2004: p.29), meaning no rejection/refusal upon the directive expression uttered by the speaker. Therefore, the speech act or expression which demands obligation from the interlocutors is definitely command expression. However, a command is a stereotypically blatantly directives that gives higher a threatened face towards the speaker (Brown & Levinson, 1987) rather than request or others. By knowing that, one thing that can be used to distinguish is the notion of politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987) state that politeness is a complex system of language used to soften the face threats of the speakers or minimize the face threats.

Beside politeness, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), most researchers also examined politeness strategy in film, commercial brand advertisement, TV show, women’s speech, face-to-face communication and casual conversation. (Kitamura, 2000; Bayles, 2009; Anjarsari, 2011; Behnam & Niroomand, 2011; Hermosilla, 2012; Sung, 2012). Those researchers explained politeness strategy in terms of the use of criticizing, politeness in advertisement, proving ideas of Lakoff’s theory about Women’s Language, and small talk.

In summary, it can be understood that the analysis of politeness strategy has been identified particularly in spoken source data. Although previous studies have always used politeness strategy in spoken language, the interpreting of politeness strategy factors that influence politeness itself has not been discussed yet. Then, in some research studies above, there are no studies that relate between speech acts (particularly commands), politeness and gender differences in the workplace. However, Holmes (2003) started to observe language use among women in the workplace, particularly in directives (commands) and humour.

Due to the research gap from the studies above, I am interested in analyzing how politeness strategy and commands are realized linguistically to differentiate between male and

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female through their speech on dialogues. Furthermore, related theory that elaborates the analysis and relates to language (particularly politeness) and gender will be enhanced in this explanation. In completing the research, TV-series *The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10* created and written by Aaron Sorkin in 2012 are taken to be the source of data. This TV-series are selected as the source of data because they contain context from the workplace and dialogues between men and women, particularly in politeness.

In this research, dialogues in the TV series *The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10* will be analysed based on politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson (1987) including bald-on record, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, off –record strategy and the factors that influence choice of strategy. Finally, there is a conclusion in terms of realizing commands by male and female in the workplace based on TV series *The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10*.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Speech Acts

Based on Yule’s statement (1996), speech acts are the action executed by utterances, such as apologizing, commanding, offering and so on which is showing activity via utterance. According to Searle (1979, pp.20-27), speech act or illocutionary act is divided into five categories. They are Assertives, Directives, Commissives, Expressives, and Declaratives. The one which gets theearer do something is a function from Directive. There are a lot of speech acts in Directive, but the one which cannot be refused is commanding (in Vine, 2004, p.29).

b. Social Dimensions of Communications

Based on Holmes (1992, p.13), there are four different dimensions which are related to the social factors of communication: The solidarity, the status scale, the formality scale, and the function scale. The solidarity has something to do with the participant’s social distance. The status scale has something to do with the status of the participants. Then, formality scale counts how formal or informal the communication between the participants is. The function scale deals with the urgency of the communication and the theme between the participants.

c. The Ethnography of Communications

According to Fasold (1990, p.39), one of the approaches which is related to social and cultural context in terms of speaking activity is called *The Ethnography of Communication*. Fasold states that the founder of this approach is Dell Hymes (1990, p.39). Speaking of ethnography of communication based on Hymes, he obviously concerns with “the situation and the uses, the patterns and functions” of speaking activity (in Fasold 1990, p.39). Dell Hymes states that the unit of interaction which is used to study about communication behaviour within a speech community is mentioned as speech situation, speech event and speech acts (in Fasold, 1990, p.42). Speech situation is the situation associated with speaking rules or it can be called context of speaking rules. Meanwhile, speech event based on Hymes, is the activity consisting of more than one speech acts. Speech acts is the interaction unit. According to Hymes (in Fasold, 1990, p.44), there are eight factors which affect the ethnography of communication. These factors have purpose to examine what is being talked and how the language is constructed in society (Hymes in Fasold, 1990, p.44). To make it short, Hymes used acronym of it as (S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G).

d. Gender, Language and Workplace Theories

Based on West and Zimmerman (in Eckert and Mcconnell-Ginet, 2003, p.10), gender is not something people are born with, not something people have, but something that people do and fight for. They want to show that gender is not as simply as sex where it is biologically existed right after we born. Sex is biological categorization based on reproductive potential while gender grows on biological sex (Eckert & Mcconnell-Ginet, 2003, p.10). It means that gender relates to behaviour, activity, how we act in everyday life as long as we are still alive and always changing. That is why gender always relates to specific environments and contexts (Crawford in Mills, 2003, p.5)

From the explanation above, it can be understood that gender and sex are different, but they have correlation towards people. Sex is a constant thing, but gender is dynamic. Therefore, gender can be studied further in terms of particular things based on specific context, such as gendered language in particular institution or workplace.

Workplace is a place where someone in a group or an individual works. According to Vine (2004), a large proportion of people’s life tend to be spent in workplace. From those facts, Vine assumed that having studied on this context is important, because language and communication between people are always employed.

In the early research, the researcher tends to use doctor-patient interaction and legal language such as in a court room, but in the last thirty the scope of research have broaden in the wider area (Holmes, 2009). Holmes (2009) states that the scope is not only doctor-patient but also the institutional and non-institutional context of workplace. In the workplace, there is diversity in social and language practices by men and women that can be identified (Holmes, 2006, p.1). By now, every workplace can be a domain to find the stereotype between male and female on their language use.

III. METHODOLOGY

The source of data in this research is TV-Series entitled *The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10* and its script. Meanwhile, data of the research were taken from the dialogues which contain command expression uttered by the female and male characters in the TV-Series entitled *The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10*. Then, the data of command expressions from TV-Series entitled *The Newsroom: Season 1,*
Episodes 1-10 were classified into several strategies: Bald on Record, Positive Politeness and Off-Record. [Since there was no data which employ Negative Politeness strategy, this strategy is not included in the analysis]. The analysis was performed on male and female characters that employ command expressions in the workplace.

IV. RESULT

After analysing the data, there are 31 data containing command expressions employed by male and female characters in the workplace in such particular TV-series. The details of the data are as follows:

a. General Findings

Based on the research questions about the kinds of politeness strategy which are used by the characters to employ command expressions in the workplace, the general findings show the followings:

1. Table of Bald on record strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Datum</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Hearer</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Factor*</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Ways of Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Charlie</td>
<td>Reese</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>S &lt; H (Close)</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. The speaker uses the imperative form 2. There is a swearing word, “the fuck” 3. The speaker express command expression in high tone voice 4. No mitigating device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>Maggie</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>S &gt; H (Intimate)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. Use mitigating device: “please” as reinforcer to emphasize the speaker wants 2. The speaker uses falling intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>Maggie</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>S &gt; H (Intimate)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. Use mitigating device: “Please” to reinforce the speaker wants 2. The speaker uses falling intonation 3. The speaker employs imperative form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Maggie</td>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>S &lt; H (Intimate)</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. The speaker uses imperative form 2. The command is used to take the turn on conversation 3. The speaker express command with falling intonation 4. No mitigating device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Maggie</td>
<td>Jim</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>S &lt; H (Intimate)</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. The speaker uses falling intonation 2. No mitigating device 3. The speaker express it with repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Mackenzie</td>
<td>Maggie</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>S &gt; H (Close)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. No mitigating device 2. The speaker uses falling intonation with low tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Don</td>
<td>Elliot</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>S &gt; H (Close)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. The speaker issues imperative form 2. The speaker avoids the use of “I” and “You”. 3. No mitigating device 4. The speaker uses falling intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Don</td>
<td>Elliot</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>S &gt; H (Close)</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Bald On-Record</td>
<td>1. The speaker employs high rising terminal (HRT) 2. The speaker uses mitigating device, such as “please” and “would you” as a reinforcer to emphasize what speaker wants 3. The speaker expresses command using low tone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*Factor of Politeness: The Social Distance (D); The Relative Power (P); The Rank of Imposition (R)*

According to the data above, there are 26 of 31 data using Bald on record strategy. Mostly, the speakers use this strategy to employ the command expressions. Moreover, the factor...
which mostly affects the speaker to execute command expression using Bald on record is The Relative Power (P).

According to some experts (Thomas, 1995, p.127; McShane & Von Glinow, 2010, p.302), power has several forms in the workplace; one of them is Legitimate Power. Legitimate power is an agreement between the staffs in which people in particular role (such as, a boss) can have certain behavior of others, usually people who have higher power in the workplace. Here, based on that explanation, the speakers mostly use Bald on record strategy because the speaker has higher legitimate power than others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Datum</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Hearer</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Ways of Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 27    | Charlie | Will   | Formal    | S > H (Close)| P      | Positive Politeness | 1. The speaker points the reciprocal right: “I do this, you do that” for being optimistic  
2. The speaker issues command by using imperative sentence  
3. The speaker employs falling intonation. |
| 28    | Charlie | Jim    | Formal    | S > H (Close)| P      | Positive Politeness | 1. The speaker uses the word “We” instead of “You” as a solidarity form  
2. The speaker employs falling intonation. |
| 29    | Mackenzie | Charlie | Informal  | S < H (Close)| D      | Positive Politeness | 1. She tries to be optimistic, because she uses “I” as a subject  
2. The speaker exploits falling intonation  
3. The speaker uses imperative sentence |

There are three data containing commands expression which use positive politeness strategy. Three of them are employed by two males (6,45%) and one female (3,22%). All of them have greater position or greater legitimate power than the hearer. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: p.70), positive politeness is a strategy which has purpose to get the speakers closer toward their interlocutors. Therefore, the speakers of its strategy give more respect and claim that their interlocutors have the common ground with them, such as S wants is also H’s wants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Datum</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<th>Situation</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Ways of Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
2. The speaker uses falling intonation  
3. No mitigating device |
| 31    | Neal    | Maggie | Informal  | S = H (Close)| D      | Off Record | 1. The speaker uses indirect form by giving hints of the condition: “This isn’t soundproof glass.”  
2. The speaker takes mitigating words: “Excuse me”  
3. The speaker uses falling intonation |
To avoid the responsibility of doing Face Threatening Act (FTA), the speaker chooses this strategy to make the hearer or the interlocutor decide how to interpret the command (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 211). It also shows that the speaker wants to lessen the imposition and the risk of attacking someone’s face. The data on Table 4.3 above pointed out that all of the speakers that utter command expressions to the hearers are male (6.45%).

b. Unique Findings

Table 4. The Use of Mitigating Device

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>The Use of Mitigating Device</th>
<th>Datum no.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>02, 03, 08</td>
<td>01, 07</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2), 12, 19</td>
<td>09, 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2), 20</td>
<td>11, 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14, 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16, 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>21, 25</td>
<td>04, 05</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>06, 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23, 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some mitigating devices are found to support the politeness strategy by both genders. The mitigating devices have different purpose and types. For further analysis, it can be seen in the Discussion.

V. DISCUSSION

a. General Findings

There must be a reason why people use bald on record rather than other strategies. Here they are several reasons which affect the choice of the strategy:

1) In bald on record, the speakers who have more power dominate the workplace, such as the ones who have higher position. Superior (mostly the speakers) and Subordinate (mostly the hearers).
2) The speakers and their interlocutors have an intimate social relation or at least close enough (in the informal situation)
3) The speakers use Bald on record when they are in the highly task-oriented situation.

On the other hand, in details, most of the speakers who utter command expressions using Bald on-record strategy are male characters. From 31 data, 26 data are Bald on record, as it has been stated before, 16 data (51.61%) are uttered by male characters and the other 9 (29.03%) data of bald on record are expressed by female characters. It shows that in this TV-Series, the superior position is taken by male characters rather than female characters. Even though male characters dominated the utterances, it does not mean female characters cannot take a part to dominate on how they command one another. On the following unique findings, it would be shown on how female can take over the position on how they dominate the dialogues or the command expressions in their own ways.

b. Unique Findings

- The use of mitigating devices

From all of the data and the explanation above, it can be seen that the speakers both male and female mostly express command using Bald on record strategy. Based on Brown and Levinson (1987, p.69), Bald on record is the most “direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible” and without any redress to minimize the face threatening act (FTA). But surprisingly, in some command expressions the male speaker and the female speaker try to mitigate FTA by adding Hedges strategy and Mitigating words.

From the table above, the data show that male speakers apply more mitigating devices than the female speakers do. There are 8 data found which contain mitigating devices on male speaker and 2 data on female speaker when they express the command expressions. On the other hand, 11 data are found on the male speaker who do not use mitigating device and 8 data are found on the female speaker. It can be concluded that male speaker tends to use mitigating devices when they utter command expression.

The use of mitigating device in both male speaker and female speaker, is interpreted differently. Also, the mitigating devices which are used by both speakers are different. Male speaker employs politeness marker and hedging devices. Mostly, politeness marker which is used by male speakers is “please”, while the hedging device which is used by them is “just”. Based on theory, mitigating device has function to mitigate the utterance. Nevertheless, the function of those mitigating devices are not only mitigating but also reinforcing what speaker wants. According to Martinez-Flor (2009, p.50), “‘please may also be used as a reinforce to emphasize what speaker wants.’. Therefore, it may conclude that the politeness marker of mitigating devices can have function as a reinforcer. And most of the speakers use politeness marker “please” as a reinforcer. It can be said that male speakers can also employ mitigating devices more than female speakers.

If it is compared to Lakoff’s theory of woman’s language that discusses about Hedges, it has significant differences (in Holmes, 1992, p.314). This differences were also stated by Wilamova (2005, p.89) that female speakers tend to use mitigating devices for its real function as the softener or ‘downgrader’. Moreover, Carli (in Thimm et. al., 2003, p.532) said that hedges and softener are female style instead of male style. However, the result proved the different statement that male can use that female style in different purposes.

- The use of High Rising Terminal (HRT) and falling intonation

According to previous thesis review which takes a setting of American Family written by Wikandhita (2013), the male
speaker tends to be more assertive than the female speaker. High Rising Terminal (HRT) is mostly used by the female characters to convey command expression towards their interlocutor. Based on Eckert and Mcconnell-ginet (2003, p.176), HRT is viewed as “characteristic of the powerless, with the powerlessness and the feminine being closely linked”. Although it means that HRT shows the characteristic of women language which contains of powerlessness and feminine side, this characteristics are not found in the American workplace setting based on this TV-Series.

On the other hand, female speakers mostly convey command expression using falling intonation in this TV-Series. They avoid using HRT when they command their interlocutor. Both male and female speakers tend to use falling intonation at the workplace. According to Wikandhita (2013), the use of falling intonation sounds more intimidating because it is fully-covered with self-assertion. It shows their superiority, even though it is expressed by female speakers. From the falling intonation which is employed by female speaker, they seem to be superior and powerful in the workplace when they are being assertive with their command expressions. They tend to be direct to others using falling intonation rather than being less direct by using HRT.

In contrast, the finding has significant differences if it is compared to Ogunsijii et al. (2012, p.206) who stated that male speaker tends to be assertive and female speaker tends to be more polite by adding some interrogative sentence. Moreover, this statement is also supported by other researcher (Mohindra and Azhar, 2012, p.27) who issued that male and female has different communication style indeed. Male shows ‘competitive and hierarchical’ and female searches for ‘similarities and value cooperation’. Furthermore, female speakers usually avoid order and command, they prefer to choose indirect request. On the other hand, male speakers tend to employ ‘canonical power-oriented strategies such as commands’ (Thimm et al., 2003, pp.544-545).

According to different experts who agree with the finding and disagree with the statement of several experts above, Holmes (2003, p.422) claimed that female speakers give ‘direct orders and instruction when appropriate’. This statement shows that female can be that assertive and very self-centred side when they do command expressions or make someone do something. It is proved by the finding above that female characters use less mitigating devices and tend to be more assertive.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results, it can be concluded that there are three findings. First, the characters use Bald On-Record, Positive Politeness and Off-record, without Negative Politeness strategy. The characters mostly use Bald On-Record to express commands. Furthermore most of the characters that use Bald On-Record strategy are male: sixteen males use it compared to only nine females.

Second, the thesis shows that male and female characters are different in the way they deliver command expressions. Male characters tend to use more mitigating devices and politeness markers. On the other hand, female characters tend to use more non-verbal actions, such as falling intonation to make command expressions sound assertive.

Third, it shows that the gender of the command speakers influence the choice of politeness strategy. Male characters apply more polite strategies than female do. On the other hand, female characters tend to be more assertive because they employ less mitigating device and use more falling intonation.

In summary, it is proved that there is a significant difference between male and female speakers in this TV-Series entitled The Newsroom: Season 1, Episodes 1-10 when they utter command expressions in the workplace to their interlocutors based on the results above.

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