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Negative Impoliteness Strategies Used by Customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit

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Abstract

This research analyzes the negative impoliteness strategies used by customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit through WhatsApp text messages and how the strategies function in delivering the impoliteness between the customers and the employees of Home Credit. The purposes of this research are (1) to analyze the negative of impoliteness strategies used by customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit; (2) to analyze the functions of impoliteness strategies aimed by customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit. The analysis applied Culpeper's (1996) theory on impoliteness strategy and Culpeper's (2011) theory on impoliteness function. The research also applied descriptive qualitative method, with the customers' WhatsApp text messages as the source of the data. The result of this research shows that, (1) there are negative impoliteness (6 data) which occurred in the research; (2) all 6 data of negative impoliteness strategies used by the customers had different functions, which are affective (3 data), and coercive (3 data).

Keywords: Pragmatics, Impoliteness, Muara Bungo Home Credit, WhatsApp

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I INTRODUCTION

In every social interaction, there is a set of rules that society has to follow which is called social norms. These norms rule many aspects of life, including language. People use language to maintain good communication and social interactions. In order to do so, people must be able to follow the social norms by showing good attitude or being polite.

When we talk about politeness and impoliteness in social interactions, we cannot separate them from pragmatics. Yule (1996:59) emphasizes in his book, that using a language is not only about doing linguistic interaction but also social interaction. Robin Lakoff (1989:116) also suggests two fundamental rules of pragmatic competence: be clear and be polite. Therefore the study of impoliteness is closely related to

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pragmatics study. Pragmatically, utterances are considered impolite if they threaten the face of the recipient.

Culpeper et al (2003:1549) state that the key difference between politeness and impoliteness is intention, whether it is to support face (politeness) or to attack face (impoliteness). This impoliteness phenomenon can lead to social disharmony and may cause social conflicts (Culpeper, 2011:19-22).

Impoliteness frequently occurs in many fields of social interaction, such as political and academic fields, and workplace situations. In this modern era, people use social media to communicate and interact. There are numerous social media platforms available to be used as communication tools, such as WhatsApp (WA), Facebook (FB), Twitter, LINE, Instagram, and many others.

Using pragmatic approach, this research aims to identify the impoliteness strategies used by customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit.* According to Culpeper (1996:356-7), there are five strategies of impoliteness : bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, sarcasm politeness, and withhold impoliteness. Unlike the politeness strategies which are used to maintain the face, these strategies are used to attack the face.

Below is another example of data :

Table . Example of Data

Example		
Employee	:	(mengirimkanpenawaranspesialke padapelanggan) (sends a special offer to a specific customer)
Customer	:	Kayaknya Home Credit gakpunyamaluya, pekakalautidakdirespon orang jgnwaterusya, sekaliakuingatkanya *Seems like Home Credit has no shame at all*. Be mindful if people do not respond, don't keep sending messages, I warn you one more time
Employee	:	Karnanamakakakada di database kami kak. Jadiemangsudahtugas kami menawarkankreditkembali☺ We sent it because your name is on our database ma'am. So it is our job to offer another credit ☺
Customer	:	Dakpunyamalu org dakmau di huruterus *You're so shameless*, I do not want it but you keep forcing
Employee	:	Kancumaditawarikak. Kalaukakakndakmauyandak papa. Sayakanhanyamenawarkanbukan memaksa☺ It's just an offer, and if you do not want it then that's okay. We only offered you, not forcing ☺

The text messages above occurred after a Home Credit employee tried to send a special offer for a customer. It shows how the customer kept pointing out the bad sides of the employee. To her, the employee had done something terrible and she threw insult on the employee's so-called wrong doing. By saying 'you're so shameless' and accusing the employee of having no manner, this customer attacked the employee's negative face as well as threatened her by warnings. Culpeper (1996) called this strategy as negative impoliteness.

In this research, the writer analyzes the negative impoliteness strategies used by the

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customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit* in the work-related conversations. Furthermore, the writer also looks into the purpose or functions of those strategies and the reasons that make the customers behave in such impolite behavior through their written communication via WhatsApp text messages. By applying the theory of impoliteness proposed by Culpeper (1996, 2011), the writer intends to find the impoliteness strategies and how the customers use them in their responses.

The writer chooses Impoliteness by Customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit* to be analyzed in this research for several reasons. First, because impoliteness is an important element in verbal and non-verbal communication. Without a knowledge of politeness, people will create conflict with their poor communication norms and create damage to many people's lives with their words. Therefore, it is very important to learn about impoliteness in communication.

Second, the writer is concerned about the rise of impoliteness in the society these days. It occurs almost in every social circumstances regardless of the social status, age, or financial situations. With the rise of impoliteness, the writer hopes that this research can improve the awareness of people to communicate in a better manner in order to maintain good relations with each other. Third, the writer believes that by conducting this research, it will help contributing into the field of linguistics, as there are not many researches out there that focus on the topic of impoliteness through the lens of pragmatics.

Based on the reasons above, the writer is interested in conducting this research with the title "*NEGATIVE IMPOLITENESS STRATEGIES USED BY CUSTOMERS OF MUARA BUNGO HOME CREDIT*".

II RESEARCH METHOD

In conducting this research, the writer uses qualitative descriptive method. According to Hancock (1998:267), qualitative research focuses on developing explanations of social phenomena. Qualitative research tends to analyze the data inductively. In this case, the writer uses this method to describe the expressions that were used by customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit* that show impoliteness, as well as the purpose or functions of those strategies.

To analyze the data descriptively, the writer uses the impoliteness strategy by Culpeper (1996) on impoliteness strategies. Furthermore, the writer uses Culpeper (2011) theory of impoliteness strategy function to understand the purpose of those strategies.

1. Data Source

The term source of data refers to the location in which the data is obtained from. Sugiyono (2010:40) divides source of data into two types:

a. Substantial Data

The substantial data sources in this research are written text messages sent by customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit.*

b. Locational Data

In this research, locational data are obtained from screenshots of WhatsApp text messages by customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit.* The writer also uses various books related to impoliteness, journals and trusted internet websites to obtain more information on the topic.

2. Technique of Collecting the Data

Patton (2002:4) proposes three kinds of data collection techniques in qualitative research, they are in-depth open ended interviews, direct observation, and written documents. It is also supported by Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009:224) who suggest that the analysis of language and nonverbal language are involved in a qualitative study using written document method. In this case, the written sources are in the form of WhatsApp text messages by customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit.

The process of collecting the data was started with collecting WhatsApp chats from *Home Credit* customers that contain impoliteness strategies in the form of screenshots. The process took about a month, from May 7th 2023 to June 28th 2023. Then observing the utterances used by

the customers. Continued by reading all documented text messages from the chatrooms. Finally, classifying the data into different categories based on the theory of impoliteness and processes each data using the written document techniques.

3. Technique of Analyzing Data

In order to analyze the data accurately, an effective technique is needed. The writer uses referential identity method proposed by Sudaryanto (1993:90). This method is compatible with the research as it determines impoliteness in language using customers' manner in communication as a determinant.

The steps in analyzing the data started with analyzing the impoliteness strategies using Culpeper's theory of impoliteness and categorizing them into five different types. Then, typing the documented data into Microsoft Word in order to make it easier to proceed. Making additional analysis on each collected data on the research discussions. Finding out the functions of each impoliteness strategy based on Culpeper's theory of impoliteness function (2011). Lastly, Making a final conclusion of the research after finishing the analytical process.

4. Technique of Presenting Data

The writer uses both formal and informal methods to present the results of the analysis. The formal method includes tables to present the content of text messages by customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit*. The informal method includes descriptive and narrative explanation of each strategy and some screenshots from the actual WhatsApp chat room to reveal the direct communication between the employee and the customer.

This chapter provides all findings and discussions from the two research questions:
1) the negative impoliteness strategies used by customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit*;
2) the functions of impoliteness strategies by customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit.*

1. Negative Impoliteness Strategies Used by Customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit

The results of this analysis shows that there are 6 negative impoliteness data in interactions between *Home Credit* customers and its employee. There are 6 of data are categorized

as negative impoliteness, Below is the complete result of the analysis :

Tabel 1. Types of Impoliteness Strategies Used by Customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit

No.	Impoliteness Strategies	Frequency	Datum
1	Negative Impoliteness	6	1, 4, 10, 13, 14, 19
	Total	**6**	

From the table above, it can be seen that negative impoliteness have the 6 occurrence, followed by sarcasm which occurred 4 times. This result gives off the conclusion that the customers had no intention to show the slightest respect to the employee. It is which are considered the most harsh types of impoliteness. From the result of the analysis, we can see that the customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit* preferred to attack the negative faces of the employees (negative impoliteness) and they did it in a very straight forward manner (bald on record impoliteness).

2. Functions of Impoliteness Strategies aimed by Customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit

The result shows that most of the strategies were aimed to show coercive impoliteness to the employee, with the purpose to make themselves feel superior in the interactions. As Culpeper (2011:277) argues that coercive impoliteness is more likely to occur in situations where the speaker with higher status has more freedom to be impolite.

Take a look at the result of the analysis below:

Tabel 2. Functions of Impoliteness Strategies Aimed by Customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit*

No.	Functions of Impoliteness	Frequency	Datum
1.	Affective Impoliteness	3	1, 4, 14
2.	Coercive Impoliteness	3	10, 13, 19
	Total	**6**	

The result above shows that the customers of Home Credit mostly aimed for coercive impoliteness in their interactions, which means that they mostly used impoliteness strategies to display their superiority over the employees, as the customers believed they had higher status than the employees.

III   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

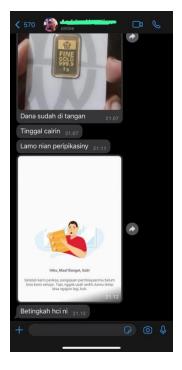This chapter discusses all data findings of impoliteness strategies used by customers of *MuaraBungo Home Credit*.

Conversation
Customer   :   Mbaksayamaunanya.. ***Inikenapaya   orang pusatnelfonterus.*** Bosansayaditelfonin. Sayanijatuh tempo masi lama tapisudahditelfonin.   Lebih-lebihdari   bank. ***Hutanggabanyak!!!!***   Miss, I want to ask. ***Why do the people from HCI Center keep calling me?*** I'm so sick of being called. My payment is not due around this time, but I am   already   getting   calls. Especially from the bank. ***My debt is not that huge!!!!***

In addition to that, the customers also used the impoliteness strategies to express their anger toward the employees. This can be seen from the high amount of affective impoliteness which occurred 3 times.

The interaction above occurred when a customer sent a complain on March 22nd 2023, at 04.22 pm. The customer complained about how the people from HCI (Home Credit Indonesia) Center kept calling her number during her work hours. The customer felt disturbed by the calls and claimed that her debt was not that huge to deserve such treatment from HCI Center. In his comment, the customer showed his annoyance and anger toward the supposedly bad behavior of the employees at HCI Center and took the anger out on *Muara Bungo Home Credit* employee who had very little relations to the problem.

From the data above, it can be seen that the customer used **negative impoliteness** to display his impolite remark toward the employee. The comment, *"Why do the people from HCI Center keep calling me?"* showed how the customer associated the people at HCI Center as a group of annoying employees who disturbed his work hours. Which means that the customer associated those employees with a negative aspect explicitly. This type of impoliteness strategy is called negative impoliteness.

The customer also aimed the strategy as an **affective function**. The remark*, "My debt is not that huge!!!!"* implied how he believed that he did not deserve such embarrassing treatment from HCI and that HCI employees were to blame for his emotional reaction. As Culpeper (2011:223) states that affective impoliteness is the targeted display of heightened emotion. In this case, the customer blamed the employee for his anger and annoyance in the situation.

Conversation		
Customer	:	Dana sudah di tangan. Tinggalcairin ***Lamonianperipikasinyo*** ***Betingkah HCI ni*** The money is already in hands. Just need to withdraw. ***The verification takes so long*** ***This HCI is acting up***

The interaction above took place on March 26th 2023 at 9 pm, when the customer was trying to purchase a credit at *Muara Bungo Home Credit*. In order to make a purchase in credit, a customer had to get through some administrative steps, which was necessary and could not be skipped at any cost. However, in the process of purchasing the item, the customer complained about how the verification process took so long to get done and threw rude comments about the service and how HCI was acting up on her.

The data above showed how the customer used an impoliteness strategy called **negative impoliteness**. In this interaction, the customer complained about the verification process that took so much of her time. The utterance *"The verification takes so long"* implies that the customer was annoyed at how Muara Bungo Home Credit served their customer. The utterance then followed by another comment saying, *"This HCI is acting up"* which pointed a finger at HCI for the seemingly 'negative' behavior and horrible service for the customer.

This type of impoliteness strategy is called negative impoliteness, because the customer attacked the negative face of the employee and HCI as a company. Her utterance significantly implied that HCI had the worst service in the world, as if HCI had no professionalism as a company.

Furthermore, the customer used this negative impoliteness strategy as a function of **affective impoliteness**. This means that the customer applied the strategy by blaming the employee for her anger and annoyance at the service. She blamed the employee for not being able to speed up the verification process, which then led her to throw rude comments at HCI. With this impoliteness, the customer blamed Muara Bungo Home Credit for making her angry with the service and that the impolite behavior she showed was the result of HCI itself.

IV CONCLUSION

After finishing the research analysis, the writer created some conclusions as followed: (1) There are 6 negative of impoliteness strategies found in WhatsApp text messages between *Muara Bungo Home Credit* employee and its customers. (2) Out of the   data of negative impoliteness strategies, 3 strategies functioned as coercive impoliteness which occurred for the reason of displaying their social status over the employee.

Below is the final result of the analysis:
Tabel 3. Conclusion of the Research

No.	Impoliteness Strategies	Frequency	Datum
1.	Negative Impoliteness	6	1, 4, 10, 13, 14, 19
	Total	**6**	

The result of the research shows that the customers of Muara Bungo Home Credit negative impoliteness in their text messages on WhatsApp.

Negative impoliteness attack the face of the recipient in a very rude manner compared to the other three strategies that are a little bit passive and less attacking.

From the final result above, the writer concludes that the customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit* preferred to use the negative impoliteness strategies because they are more powerful and effective in showing the disrespect that they were directing towards the employees. The customers attacked the face of the employees and Home Credit with strong impolite statements and ruined the image of the employees and the company. This means that the customers of Home Credit did not care about the face of the employees and had no respect for *Muara Bungo Home Credit.*

In addition to that, the data also showed that the customers used negative impoliteness strategies for various purposes. The coercive function occurred the most in the data, which shows that the customers thought very highly of themselves and it somehow justified their impolite behavior towards the employees. As Culpeper (2011:277) said, coercive impoliteness is more likely to occur in situations where there is an imbalance of power in which the speaker with higher status has more freedom to be impolite. In this case, the customers had higher status than the employees, which is why the coercive impoliteness occurred in the messages.

Based on the result of the analysis, the writer concluded that the customers of *Muara Bungo Home Credit* tend to use direct ways to show their impoliteness by negative impoliteness to criticize the bad faces of the employees. The writer also concluded that the main motive of using these impoliteness strategies was coercive function, because the customers' higher social status made them feel superior and less polite toward the employees who had lower social status.

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