POLITENESS AND INTERACTION

Pragmatics 5C
Ella Wulandari, M.A.
wulandari.ella@uny.ac.id
Things to discuss:

• Politeness
• Face wants
• Negative and positive face
• Self and other: say nothing
• Say something: off and on record
• Positive and negative politeness
• Strategies
• Pre-sequences
Why do we need to learn it?

• Linguistic interaction = a social interaction.
• For interaction to be successful (i.e. what is said is understood) the interactants need to consider and (sometimes) negotiate factors related to social distance and closeness.
• External & internal factors
• Social distance ➔ an external factor (determined prior to the interaction (as being known to both interactants).)
  ➔ power, age, ‘being a Haji/Hajjah’, ‘Ustadz/Ustadzah’? e.g. Title + last name
• Closeness ➔ an internal factor (negotiated during the interaction)
  ➔ degree of friendliness/familiarity
E.g. First name
Politeness

- the means employed to show awareness of another person’s face.
- **Face**: the public self-image of a person
- Politeness associated & marked linguistically with the assumption of relative social distance and closeness.
- **Face wants**: people’s expectation concerning their public self-image.
- **Face-threatening act:**
- **Face-saving act:**
- E.g.

  [2] Him: I’m going to tell him to stop that awful noise right now!
  Her: Perhaps you could just ask him if he is going to stop soon because it’s getting a bit late and people need to get to sleep.
Politeness strategies:
Negative and Positive Faces & Off and On record

- **Negative face** ➞ the need of to be independent, freedom of action and free of other’s imposition ➞ **negative politeness**
- **Positive face** ➞ the need to be accepted, even to be liked by others, to be treated as a member of the same group, and to know his or her wants are shared by others (‘to be connected’) ➞ **positive politeness**

- **Say or not to say**
  - Off record
  - On record
  - Bald on record

      b. Hmm, I wonder where I put my pen.

  [8] a. How about letting me use your pen?
      b. Hey, buddy, I’d appreciate it if you’d let me use your pen.

      b. Lend me your pen.
Bald on record & mitigating device

- Bald on record ➔ often happen when the speaker assumes to have power/control over the other (military) & can control the other’s behavior with words.

- Mitigating devices ➔ to soften ‘the bald on record’ by using ‘please’ or ‘would you like to’.

- Negative politeness ➔ deference strategy

- Positive politeness ➔ solidarity strategy
# Pre-sequences

- **Pre-request**

  \[13\]
  
  **Her:** Are you busy?  
  **Him:** Not really.  
  **Her:** Check over this memo.  
  **Him:** Okay.  

  (= pre-request)  
  (= go ahead)  
  (= request)  
  (= accept)

- **Pre invitation**

  \[17\]
  
  **Him:** What are you doing this Friday?  
  **Her:** Hmm, nothing so far.  
  **Him:** Come over for dinner.  
  **Her:** Oh, I’d like that.  

  (= pre-invitation)  
  (= go ahead)  
  (= invitation)  
  (= accept)

- **Pre announcement**

  \[19\]
  
  **Child:** Mom, guess what happened?  
  **Mother:** (Silence)  
  **Child:** Mom, you know what?  
  **Mother:** Not right now, Jacy, I’m busy.  

  (= pre-announcement)  
  (= pre-announcement)  
  (= stop)
Pre sequences project specific next activity and precede a particular base sequence

- They are used to project actions such as pre invitations, pre offers, pre request sequences
- Preliminaries: pre-sequences that project first pair part and make relevant a second pair part
- They have a specific structure
- Pre-invitations: “are you doing anything tonight?”
- Pre-requests: “have you got X?”

1 Allen: Hello?
2 John: Yeah, is Judy there?
3 Allen: Yeah, just a second.
4 ((silence))
5 Judy: Hello,
6 John: Judy?
7 Judy: Yeah,
8 John: John Smith.
9 Judy: Hi John.
10 John:-> Ha you doin-<say what ‘r you doing.
11 Judy:-> Well, we’re going out.
Examples

• Pre invitations: go ahead, blocking or hedging
  • They are question answer sequences
  • It is done by the inviter to determine availability of invitee
  • They are used to avoid for the invitee having to do a dispreferred action

• Prerequest can sometimes achieve the request
  • Have you got Malboro Lights please?
  • Yes dear (provides)
  • (brand of cigarettes)
  • Prerequest can be followed by offer
  • A: Do you have a pecan Danish today?
  • B: Yes we do. Would you like one of those?
  • C: Yes please
  • D: okay
Pre-announcement & pre-offer

• a) they serve as an alert to recipients that what is to follow is built to be an informing or a telling of news;
• b) they may offer a characterization or assessment of the news (good/bad news) or a permeation of the topic which helps recipient’s recognition;
• c) they may give evidence of the recency of what is to be reported
• d) they make the actual telling a contingent next step by formulating it as an offer or request to tell (“Y’wanna know who...”) (Schegloff, 1995)

They are used as go ahead or blocking offers in the same way as invitations
• N: so:: have you got a lift?
• J: yeah. I’m going with Jodie.
• N: Ok