The Representation of Principle of Politeness at Syntactical Level

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Abstract: *As it is known, in daily life a person unconsciously communicates with others in many ways such as language, gestures and expressions. In the process of speech, he/she has to give or share information with others. In order to make an interesting conversation comprehended by both the speaker and the hearer, there must be the strict structure, in other politer way, general principle of language use, which is called the cooperative principle. The principle indicates that the speaker contributes his active role in the conversation in which the speaker is busy with. In study of pragmatics, Leech will be in favor of the study by means of conversational principles of the kind illustrated by H.P.Grice's cooperative principle and he wants to introduce into pragmatics not only cooperative principle, but other principles, such as a politeness principle including six maxims: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, sympathy. This article is devoted to the deeper analysis of the very maxims of politeness principle and the prior attention is paid to the usage of principles politeness in syntactical level of linguistic area.*

Keywords: Principles of communication, principle of politeness, maxims, syntactical level, mood, imperative, affirmative, negative, impersonal structure.

INTRODUCTION:

Obviously, all adult members in every society which has cultural knowledge are supposed to learn how to behave politely, linguistically and otherwise. Briefly, politeness has not been born as an instinctive mankind property, but it is a phenomenon which has been constructed through sociocultural and historical processes. If we look back the scope of etymology, traces of the English term 'polite' can be found in the 15th century. Historically, however, it derives from late Medieval Latin politus meaning 'smoothed and accomplished'. The term 'polite' was synonymous with concepts such as 'refined', 'polished' when people were concerned. In the seventeen century a polite person was defined as one of refined courteous manners, according to the oxford dictionary of etymology. [2] According to the historical information, upper class people in the Middle Ages, in French, Spanish, German, and Dutch courtesy values such as 'loyalty' and 'reciprocal trust' were used to distinguish themselves from the rest of people. According to the primary purposes behind following courtesy values were achieving success, winning honors and behaving appropriately at court. In Persian, adab (politeness) is defined as "the knowledge by which man can avoid any fault in speech", according to Dehkhoda dictionary. [2] During renaissance period not only people of high social rank but also the rest of people were deal with the unpleasant situation of social manners and social tact as well as a civilized society. The fact that a person needs to another one was of great importance to keep in existence and balance social relation; moreover, the reciprocal obligations and duties among people of all walks of life needed to be made a strong decision. There was a dramatic development in theories of politeness or investigating norms of politeness in the vast various cultures. While studying deeply and discussing broadly the issue of politeness, famous linguist, Leech explained that politeness language basically has to take the six maxim of the politeness into consideration; there are generosity maxim, approbation maxim, tact maxim, modesty maxim, sympathy maxim and agreement maxim. Actually, what is maxim itself? "Maxim is a succinct formulation of a fundamental principle, general truth, or rule of conduct". [7] Maxim also is a concisely expressed principle or rule of conduct, or a statement of a general truth. It is considered as one of the element from the pragmatic material.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

As we told, Leech proposed the Politeness Principle (PP) and worked hard on politeness as a regulative factor in speech by a set of maxims. Politeness, as Leech, found out, is a facilitating factor that influences the relation between 'self', by which Leech means the speaker, and 'other' that is the addressee and/or a third party. To Leech politeness is described as "minimizing the expression of impolite beliefs as the beliefs are unpleasant or at a cost to it". [7] Leech attached his Politeness Principle (PP) to Cooperative Principle (CP) in an attempt to account for the violation of the CP in conversation. The author underlines politeness as the main key, pragmatic phenomenon not only for the utterance of what people mean in communication but also as one of the reasons why people go in a different direction. Leech emphasized the relation between his own Politeness Principle and Grice's Cooperative Principle as follows: "The CP enables one participant in a conversation to communicate on the assumption that the other participant is being cooperative." In this, the CP has the function of regulating what we say so that it contributes to some assumed illocutionary or discoursal good(s). [1] It could be discussed, however, that the PP has a higher and prior role than this to be in the social state of balance and the friendly bonds which limits us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the

first place. While learning this article, the reader can meet 2 methods of inquiry were used in the work: descriptive method is to describe main points of the research work and componential analysis method is beyond the aim of taking component: politeness principle out of the whole principles of communication and syntactical level out of other levels, lexical and stylistic.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Principle of politeness in speaking can analyze in sentence structure from the use by the speaker and hearer. It means that the said by the speaker in this case is classified into pragmatic able to measure the level and propriety of the sentence being said. At syntactical level, pragmatic analysis can be verbalized structure of a sentence which is delivering as message by addresser to addressee.

By the help of the following means, we can analyze Leech's maxims at syntactical level of the language:

1.   Subjunctive mood

The subjunctive mood is the verb form used to express a wish, a suggestion, a command, or a condition that is contrary to fact. Through using subjunctive mood, message can be sent in a politer way due to avoiding directness. Instead of saying: Open the door!

It would be better if you open the door.

Another example, instead of "Help me!"

I would be thankful, if you help me.

Let's look through the following extract from "Of Human Bondage" *by* Somerset Maugham: [4]

"Well, you'd better let me take your temperature," said Griffiths.

"It's quite unnecessary," answered Philip irritably.

"Come on."

Philip put the thermometer in his mouth. Griffiths sat down the side of the bed and chattered brightly in a moment, and then he took it out and looked through it.

"Now, look here, old man, you stay in bed, and I'll bring old Deacon soon to have a look after you."

"Nonsense," said Philip. "There's nothing the matter. I wish you wouldn't bother me."

"But it isn't any bother. You've got a temperature and you must stay in bed. You will, won't you?"

"You've got a wonderful bedside manner," Philip murmured, closing his eyes with a smile.

In this extract, we can see that Philip make his speech politer gradually using subjunctive mood. At first, his saying "Nonsense" is impolite and direct enough. Then, he uses "I wish, you wouldn't bother me" and we can say that Philip is not impolite as he seems at first.

Another illustration can be seen in this dialogue:

A: It looks like rain, I'm afraid.

B: Perhaps it would be better if you stay at home in that case.

Speaker B uses subjunctive mood in order to avoid directness and the idea of A to think as if B wants to order him (Stay at home!) in that case, speaker B holds the politeness in this conversation. Another version to this situation can be "I wish you wouldn't go outside".

2.   Interrogative sentence instead of affirmative one.

An interrogative sentence or question is commonly used to request information. In English grammar, affirmative sentence is a traditional term for any statement that is positive, not negative. It is also known as an assertive sentence or affirmative proposition. According to the principle of politeness, interrogative sentences are considered as politer than affirmatives. [3] We can make us affirms (e.g. commands) sound politer by using either a low rising tone or words, phrases and structures like "please; I'm afraid; I think; perhaps; don't you think; I (don't) want you to...; I (don't) expect you to...; would you like; would you, please; ..., will you; ..., could you; what if...; let's/let's not." Let's see them in examples:

- "Will you write a letter to her?" instead of "You write a letter to her"

- "Will you come with us just now?" instead of "You come with us just now"

- "would you pass me the salt, please?" instead of "Pass me the salt".

'Won't   you   come   down   and   eat?'   the   younger   asked.

'In a moment or two,' Mary replied in a quiet, reserved voice, that forbade anyone to approach her. (from D.H. Lawrence's *Daughters of the Vicar.)*

3.   Affirmatives instead of negatives.

As we above mentioned, affirmatives mean any positive statements. And negative sentences that are formed with can't and won't make the speaker sound particularly negative and unhelpful and can often be rephrased with be able to, or a similar expression:

I am unhappy with this agreement.

I am not entirely happy with this agreement.

I am not totally happy with this agreement.

Here the negative adjective unhappy is replaced with its positive counterpart happy, modified with an adverb such as entirely, totally or completely, and the sentence is changed to the negative form. More examples:

I can't give you a better deal than that.

I am not able to give you a better deal than that.

I am unable to give you a better deal than that.

I am not in a position to give you a better deal than that.

Similarly, affirmative sentences containing words with a negative meaning can be rephrased in order to soften the message and achieve a more indirect effect. More examples:

It was *not possible* to move on because of the rainy season in the tropics.

It was **impossible** to move on because of the rainy season in the tropics.

We could *not* recognize the place after the hurricane *easily*.

We could **hardly** recognize the place after the hurricane.

I do *not agree* with you in this political issue.

I **disagree** with you in this political issue.

4.   Impersonal structure instead of personal structure.

The verbs think, believe, demand, advice, say, report, know, expect, consider, and understand etc. are used in the following passive patterns in personal and impersonal constructions. We often use this structure in news.

Active: People believe that he lied in court.

Passive: 1. It is believed (that) he lied in court. (impersonal)

               It + passive + that-clause

               2. He is believed to have lied in court. (personal)

               Subject + passive + to-infinitive

Active: They expect him to arrive soon.

Passive: 3. It is expected (that) he will arrive soon. (impersonal)

               It + passive + that-clause

               4. He is expected to arrive soon. (personal)

               Subject + passive + to-infinitive

5.   Passive voice instead of Active.

       We mean different grammatical ways of expressing the relation between a transitive verb and its subject and object in voices: active and passive. Using passive voice helps deliver our message in more indirect way. Moreover, the passive voice is a great way to make your sentences sound politer:

You have broken my computer!

This active voice sentence is brutally direct and if your aim is to avoid confrontation then you might consider using the passive voice to lessen the emotional impact of the sentence:

My computer has been broken!

Here we are removing the subject (you) from the sentence completely and focusing on the object (the computer) and the action. The effect here is to de-emphasize personal responsibility for the action. More examples:

"Letters are required to be sent as soon as possible" instead of "Send letters as soon as possible."

"Mobile phones are demanded to be switched off" instead of "Switch off your mobile phones".

       Geoffrey Leech recognizes this, and regards what he calls the politeness principle as "one of the fundamental pragmatic principles that one usually observes when one communicates in language". [6] Before one goes into the politeness principle itself, one must bear in mind the speech act classification given by John Searle, and the Gricean conversational maxims, which we did in the previous paragraph. One difference of terminology between Searle and Leech is Leech's use of the term assertive for Searle's representative, and impositive for Searle's directive. [5]

       Summing up this part, we can say that using of subjunctive mood instead of imperative mood, interrogative sentence instead of affirmative one, passive voice instead of active, impersonal structure instead of personal structure, affirmatives instead of negatives are considered as elements of politeness at syntactical level and all of them serve to be politer the delivering message.

CONCLUSION:

       The study of politeness strategy is basically the study of knowing the way the people use the language while they are having interaction or communication. It preaches how to use the language and conduct the conversation run well and go smoothly. In case of communication, however, everyone wants to be understood and not to be disturbed by others; moreover, he or she does not want to lose his face while communicating. Losing face means the notions of being embarrassed, humiliated or disappointed. That is why face is something that is emotionally invested, maintained, enhanced and constantly attended in an interaction.

So, from the viewpoint of language users´ intentions, their choices from the total pool of resources and the effects upon other participants, the legitimacy of the pragmatic perspective for stylistically-oriented study can hardly be denied. Politeness is the most important part of effective communication and the participants of communication should be aware of the principle politeness and their meaning.

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