THE REFUSAL STRATEGIES USED BY THE OLD AND YOUNG FOREMEN IN A BAKERY IN SURABAYA

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Abstract

This study is mainly about the refusal strategies used by an old foreman and a young foreman in refusing request permission made by the workers. Specifically, it focuses on the comparison between how the old foreman and the young foreman employed the refusal strategies in refusing request. The findings show that both the old foreman and the young foreman mostly employed indirect strategy

Keywords: Refusal, Refusal Strategies, Foreman, Worker

The way people communicate with others somehow is not the same from one to another. There are some factors that influence their way to communicate. Those factors are namely participants, setting, topic and function. Participants here include speaker and interlocutor (Holmes, 1992, p. 8). Every participant must have his/her social factors that may influence the use of language. One of the social factors is age. Age affects people's way in using the language, for example, in refusing others. Refusal is defined as a response to an initiating act and is considered as speech act by which a speaker fails to engage in an action proposed by the interlocutor (Chen, Ye and Zhang, 1995, p. 121 as quoted in Brasdefer, 2008, p. 42). Sarfo (2011), for example, conducted his research on refusal among students who have different age level. He found out a person who is old tends to use more direct refusal to the younger person whereas, a person who is young tends to use indirect strategy to the older interlocutor. Hence, age influences people to choose particular refusal strategy.

When someone requests, invites or suggests, s/he expects that the interlocutor will accept him/her. Mostly, when people express certain refusal, it may come up as a problem for the one whom the refusal is addressed to. The refusee might feel disappointed or somehow even feels disrespected because the refuser –the one who refuses- fails to do an action proposed by the refusee. Because of this reason, refuser should apply certain strategy to avoid an insult or misunderstanding and still be able to maintain a good relationship with the refusee. The use of particular strategy to refuse plays an important role in maintaining harmony with others.

Refusal itself is a negative reaction towards an invitation, request or offer. In line with this, Chen, Ye and Zhang (1995, p.121) also defined refusal as "a response to an initiating act and is considered as speech act by which a speaker fails to engage in an action proposed by the interlocutor" (Brasdefer, 2008, p. 42). There are two main types of refusal strategies proposed by Beebe, L. M., Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990, pp. 60-70 as cited in in Flor and Juan pp. 218-219) namely:

Direct

This strategy commonly followed by certain utterances which indicate performative verbs and non-performative statement. Firstly, a direct refusal can be expressed by merely using performative verbs such as refuse and reject. For example: "I refuse". Secondly, it can also be expressed by using non performative verb namely directly saying "no" or showing negative willingness such as: "I can't", "I won't" only. Sometimes, addressor makes a statement which a non-performative verb combined with showing negative willingness in it. For example: "No, I can't make it this weekend" (Beebe et al, 1990, pp.60-70 as cited in Flor and Juan pp. 218-219).

Indirect

These strategies are indicated by:

1. Expression of excuse, reason or explanation

Indirect refusal may be expressed through giving a reason or explanation such as stating a principle as "I do not know how to do it because I never do it before", setting a condition for acceptance like "If it is earlier, I would...." or making a promise which indicates with word "promise" or will . Before saying the reason or explanation, the addressor can express a statement of regret such as: "sorry" or saying word "wish". For example: "sorry that I can't help you because I have a lot of things to do"

2. Using statement of alternatives

To say an alternatives, the refuser can state X, which refers to the alternative that the refuser wants the initiator to do, instead of Y, which deals with the refusee's offers, request towards the refuser e.g: " I prefer going tomorrow than today". Also, the refuser can suggest another option. For example: "you can ask her for a help instead of me"

3. Attempt to dissuade interlocutor.

This type used to dissuade the refusee/interlocutor to do something by stating the negative consequences toward the request. For example: "I will be punished if I do that".

4. Non-verbal

Not only done by words, indirect refusal can be also expressed non-verbally. This non verbal strategy includes certain body gesture such as silence, hesitation and doing nothing.

The use of refusal strategy is often found in the conversation of everyday life in society. One of the phenomena of the use of refusal strategy can be observed in a bakery located in Central Surabaya. Refusing permission often happens in this bakery because the workers frequently ask permission so the owner makes a regulation that all permissions mostly will be refused. The workers have to ask for permission to the foremen. Then, the foremen are the ones who are in charge to refuse the workers' permission. And both workers and foreman vary in ages. Thus, the way the foremen refuse the workers are not the same one to another. The way a young foreman refuses to the older workers is not the same as the old foreman's way to the younger workers and vice versa. This was the reason why the writer was interested to do a research in this bakery.

This study analyzed the way the old foreman gave refusals to the younger workers and the young foreman to the older workers. The old foreman was fifty nine years old and the young foreman was twenty three years old. They are the oldest and the youngest foremen in this bakery. This study uses the those foremen as the subjects because in order to be able to see a clear difference between the choices of refusal strategies between them. Also, the old and the young foreman, as they have a far level of age, so they used different strategy. Moreover, for the workers, due to they would be the foremen's interlocutor so they have to be either older than the young foreman or younger than the old foreman. The young foreman's interlocutors were those who were between thirty one to fifty three years old. The workers who were twenty one up to forty eight years old to be the old foreman's interlocutors. To make it comparative, each foreman had to refuse eight workers. The foremen were males and the workers who asked for permission were also males. They were Javanese. So, they were merely different in terms of age. Therefore, the study investigated the choice of the type of refusal strategies used by the old foreman to younger workers and those which were used by the young foreman to the older workers. In addition, the study seeks the similarities and/or differences between the use of refusal startegies used by the old foreman and the young foreman.

METHODS

This research was qualitative to be supported by quantitative data. The source of the data of this study was the request of permission expressed by young and older workers and refusal expression uttered by the old foreman and the young foreman. Then, the data of this research was

refusal expression done by the old foreman and the young foreman towards younger and older workers.

This research began with collecting data in which after asking a permission to do a research, the writer stayed in a room where the workers usually asked permission and the foremen refused it and recorded the conversation. Then, to avoid foremen or workers who were out of the study's subjects, the writer had asked those two foremen to help to make notes. The notes concerning three things: name of the foreman, the worker who asked permission, and the reason of the permission. This note was essentially the needed as a mark to eliminate those workers who do not belong to the subject. Hence, when the writer listened to the recording, the writer was able to notice the recording which did not come from either older or younger workers. Then, the next steps were listenimg to the recording, transcribing and translating it into English since the data were taken in Indonesian. Moreover, the writer highlighted each of the refusal expression found in each utterance and began to analyze. The analysis of the data was based on the theories presented on chapter two. In the aim of answering the research questions of this present study, the writer used three tables. The writer wrote down the request-refusal expression in the appropriate sub-column of refusal strategies in first column. The writer identified the data based on refusal strategy theory proposed by Beebe et al (1990) in the second column. Then, in the third column, the writer gave explanations why certain refusal expression belongs to particular type.

Another thing, to help analyze certain refusal expression belonging to a particular type, the writer used the linguistic clues of every type of refusal which were taken from the examples of refusal strategies theory by Beebe et al (1990).

After putting all the utterances into appropriate strategy, the writer calculated the data in the total row. Also, the writer calculated the percentage of the occurrence of the refusal strategies used by the old foreman and the young foreman using the formula below:

$$N\% \quad = \quad \frac{a}{\text{Total}} \quad \times 100\%$$

Note:

N	: The percentage of occurrence of certain type of refusal strategies
a	: The sum of occurrence of certain type of refusal strategies
Total	: The total frequencies of occurrences of refusal strategies

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The finding showed that the most frequently used refusal strategy by both the old and the young foremen was indirect strategy. The findings were summarized in three tables. Table 1 and 2 present frequency of the refusal strategies' occurence used by the old foreman towards the younger workers and the young foreman towards the older workers. Table 3 is used to show the frequency of occurence of the use of refusal strategy used by the two foremen in one table in order to reveal the similarities and differences of the use of refusal startegies between them.

Types of Refusal Strategies Used by the Old Foreman to the Younger Workers

The old foreman employed three types of indirect refusal and one type of direct refusal as follows:

Table 1. The percentage of types of refusal strategies by the old foreman
to the younger workers

Types	The Old foreman to The Younger Workers	
Direct	%	a
Using performative verbs	---	---

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Using Non-Performative Verbs	**14.81%**	**4**
Indirect		
Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation	**25.92%**	**7**
Using Statement of Alternatives	**40.74%**	**11**
Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor	---	---
Combined Strategy		
Direct and Indirect		
Using Non-Performative Verbs and Using statement of Alternatives	**3.70%**	**1**
Indirect and Indirect		
Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation and Using Statement of Alternatives	**14.81%**	**4**

In table 1 the most frequent refusal strategy was Indirect refusal, statement of alternatives with 40.74% produced by the old foreman to the younger workers. An example for Using Statement of Alternatives could be seen in the conversation between the old foreman and a younger worker as follows:

> The old foreman*:* **_Ngene yo sampeyan bisa balik dino senen wae_**
> (Listen you'd better go back here on Monday)

> The younger worker:*: Looh….. pak Sloso iku lak yo sek dino riyoyo pak*
> (Oh, sir I think Monday is still Fiest Day)

There was a younger worker who came to the old foreman to ask permission that he could not come on the following Wednesday because his village was very far from Surabaya. It can be seen that the bold underlined utterance was categorized as Using Statement of Alternatives. The utterance contained the words as *"wae"* or *"coba"* that were consideredto be the linguistic clues for stating an alternative. The foreman refused the younger worker by using Statement of Alternatives that probably the worker could go back to Surabaya on Monday, so he could start his work as soon as possible.

Based on the analysis, the second most frequent refusal type was Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation. The conversation as follows:

> The younger worker*: Ada hajatan e pak*
> (I have a celebration on that day, sir)

> The old foreman: **_Maaf mas gak bisa mas soale sudah ditetapkan e_**
> **_jadwal masuk e_**
> **(** Sorry, you can't make it because the schedule has been
> arranged, you know).

The old foreman attempted to provide the reason why he could not approve the request coming from the younger worker. Before he mentioned the reason, he also expressed a certain excuse by showing a regret that he could not do as the younger worker asked by uttering "*maaf"* which means an apology and showing a certain regret. Then, he stated the reason or explanation why he had to refuse and this was indicated by the word *"soale"* or "because" in English and followed by the reason, *"sudah ditetapkan e jadwal masuk e"*or *"* the schedule has been designated, you know. Here, this kind of strategy makes the refusal sound softer for the interlocutor and this strategy belongs to the indirect one.

The finding also showed that the old foreman used direct strategy, non-performative verb as follows:

> The old foreman*: Ya kalu begitu, **gak bisa mas**
> (If so, you can't make it ,)

> The younger worker*: Ada hajatan e pak*
> (I have a celebration on that day)

The bold expression above is considered Non-Performative Verb because it has word "*nggak bisa*" which is one of the linguistic clues which indicates Non-Performative Verb. The foreman directly said *"nggak bisa"* because he thought that it was clear that the worker got a shift to come on Tuesday.

However, the old foremen also used several combined strategies two of them were Using Non-Performative Verbs - Using statement of Alternatives and Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation -Using Statement of Alternatives. For Non-Performative Verbs - Using statement of Alternatives, here is the conversation:

> The younger worker:: *Looh….. pak Sloso iku lak yo sek dino riyoyo pak*
> (Oh, sir I think Monday is still Fiest Day)

> The old foreman: ***Gak iso leh, nambah libur; coba sampeyan ijol***
> ***prei karo konco liyane***
> (You certainly can't have another day off, you'd
> better look for your friend to exchange your day off)

There was a younger worker who came to the old foreman to ask permission that he could not come on the following Wednesday because his village was very far from Surabaya. Then, he used this combined strategy to refuse.The bold underlined utterance is categorized as using Direct refusal, Non-Performative Verb is marked by word "*Gak iso*" which is a linguistic clue of Non-Performative Verb. Then, it followed by Statement of Alternatives. The utterance also contains, the words as *"wae"* or *"coba"* which are considered as the linguistic clues of stating an alternative. He provided another alternative that the worker might look for another worker who wanted to exchange his day off. Those bold utterances gave a sense that the refusal seemed to be more polite. The refusee may feel that the refusor still have a concern towards his request by giving another option.

This following excerpt also shows the finding that the old foreman used combined strategy to refuse the younger worker. He used Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation combined with Statement of Alternatives.

> The younger worker: *Aku wis kangen pak pingin ketemu*
> (I've been longing for this moment for so long﹒.I
> want to meet him)

> The old foreman: ***Ngene lo Gus saiki sing penting kerjoan disik Seloso***
> ***Iku wayahe nggarap pesenan; tahun ngarep wae***
>
> (The important thing for now, Gus, is our work, we
>   will meet the order on Tuesday; meet him on
>   next year)

Firstly, the younger worker told the old foreman that he could not get back to work on Tuesday because he would have to share times with his family as he had been so long to wait this opportunity. Afterwards, the old foreman used Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation and

followed by Statement of Alternatives to refuse. The old foreman stated a reason why he should refuse which later was followed by a Statement of Alternatives *"tahun ngarep wae"*. Indeed, he did not use any word before a reason such as: "because", yet he explained the reason why he failed to accept his request. The reason was that the bakery had a lot of work on Tuesday that was why he could not allow the worker to be absent. Another thing, he also included a Statement of Alternatives. He used the linguistic clue of Statement of Alternatives, namely *"wae"* So, after he gave the reason why the younger worker could not have a day off, he gave an alternative for the worker to meet his family next year which has an implicit meaning that the old foreman postponed to fulfill the younger worker's request as a refusal because of this year the bakery had a lot of to do. Hence, he also needed to include the reason in order to make the younger worker understand.

Types of Refusal Strategies Used by the Young Foreman to the Older Workers

From the findings, the young foreman employed all those two main strategies. Nevertheless, not all sub-categories were applied by him in refusing request of permission coming from younger workers. For direct strategy, he employed the strategy that used Non-Performative Verb while for indirect strategy, he applied Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation; using Statement of Alternatives, Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor strategies. For the detail, it can be seen through the table 2 below:

Table 2.   The percentage of types of refusal strategies by the young foreman
               to the older workers

Types	The Young Foreman to The Older Workers	
Direct	%	a
Using performative verbs	---	----
Using Non-Performative Verbs	**19.23%**	**5**
Indirect		
Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation	**34.61%**	**9**
Using Statement of Alternatives	**26.92%**	**7**
Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor	**7.69%**	**2**
Combined Strategies		
Direct and Indirect		
Non-Performative Verbs and Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation	**7.69%**	**2**
Indirect and Indirect		
Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation and Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor	**3.84%**	**1**

Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation is one of the Indirect refusal by mentioning the reason why the speaker should refuse. The example of the conversation is shown below:

   The young foreman: ***Ngene pak , pabrik iki wis akeh garapan***
                                    butuh tenogo sampeyan
                                    (For your information sir, this bakery has a lot of
                                    works to do, we also need your work)

   The older worker: *Walaaaaah pak aku iki perlu banget*
                                    (Oh come on, sir...This is urgent)

There was a older worker who came to young foreman asking that on the following Wednesday he would be absent. Then, the young foreman began to refuse. The bold underlined utterance is categorized as an Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation. That utterance began

with *"ngene pak"* which must be followed by the reason. He used this strategy, Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation in order to make the worker understand that the bakery had a lot of work to do, it needed his work so he was not supposed to be absent.

The second type was Using Statement of Alternatives with the percentage of 26.92%. Using Statement of Alternatives is a type of refusal which deals with stating an alternative as found in the following conversation:

The young foreman*: **Sampeyan pulang ke Surabaya lebih awal ae**
            (You'd better go back here sooner)

The older worker*:   Aduh pak setaun pisan ae apa gak oleh*
            (This moment is once a year.. Am I not allowed to?)

An older worker wanted to ask more days off, on 22nd when his holiday ended. The bolded utterance contains the linguistic clue of Statement of Alternatives namely *"ae"*. The old foreman refused the worker using offer another alternative that the older worker could go back to Surabaya earlier so he did not have to be absent.

The third type was Direct refusal, Non-performative verb with the percentage of 19.23%. Non-Performative verbs was marked by using word such as: "gak" etc, for example:

The young foreman*:   **Gak iso …. gak iso pak** *……*
            *(*You cannot do so.)

The older worker*:   Tak ngganteni prei minggu ngarep yo .. pak*
            (I substitute it with next week's day-off)

An older worker wanted to ask permission to be excused on Wednesday. The bold utterance included the linguistic clues of Non-Performative Verbs namely *"gak iso"* (you can't). That's why that bold utterances belong to Non-Performative Verb. However, the young foreman used this direct strategy to the older interlocutor because the worker was essentially needed on that day so refusing his permission directly was to emphasize more that it was a must.

The next type was *Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor*. It is a type of refusal by saying the negative consequence of the request that the speaker proposed. The conversation is shown below:

The young foreman*: **Tak kandani pak sampeyan nek mekso mengko**
             sampenyan   keno sangsi loooh
            (I tell you if you insist on being absent I am afraid
             you may get the sanction)

The older worker*:   Mosok ngono pak*
            (Really?!)

In addition, the older worker wanted to ask permission to be absent on Wednesday. Looking at the excerpt above, it is obviously seen that the bold utterance contains an Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor. The foreman stated that if the worker kept insisting on being absent, he could get a sanction. The young foreman used this strategy to make the worker finally not to insist on him to approve his request anymore.

The same thing as the old foreman, the young foreman also employed several combined strategies. First combined strategy was Non-Performative Verbs and Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation (7.69%). Here is the conversation:

The young foreman:. ***Ora iso pak**, **sesuk sik mlebu sampeyan yo**
             jatahe dino jumat to
            *(T*omorrow is still a work day, you get your

day off on Friday)

The older worker: *Opo nggak bisa dimajukan ta pak?*
(Can I make it sooner?)

The older worker came to the young foreman to ask an earlier Fiest day holiday. He firstly used direct refusal, Non-Performative Verb, and it was indicated by the use of "*ora iso pak*" as Non-Performative Verb linguistic clue but then he included a reason that the following day was still a work day and the old foreman got his turn to start his holiday on Friday. Indeed the young foreman did not include any linguistic clue that indicates an excuse, reason or explanation yet it is clearly seen that his statement in the first bold utterance presents a reason or explanation.

The second combined strategy was Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation and Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor (3.84%), for example:

The young foreman*: **Soale awakmu iku wes sering ijin, <u>Yen terus-
terusan ngene sampeyan iso iso disangsi</u>***
(You've already been absent too often, if you keep doing like this, you will get a sanction)

The older worker *:*   *Moso ga ole mas iki perlu e*
(Cant' I? It's important, sir)

There was a worker who wanted to be excused on Tuesday.Then, the young foreman refused. However, he firstly stated the explanation why he had to refuse and then used the Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor that was by saying if the worker being absent for many times, he would get a sanction. The use of reason is marked by the linguistic clue *"soale".* For Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor, it showed throuh the use of word "*yen"* of "if" and a conditional sentence which is included in linguistic clue of Attempt of dissuade the interlocutor.

The Differences and/or Similarities between the Type of Refusal Strategies Used by the Old foreman and the Young foreman.

Throughout the findings, the writer found that there were differences and similarities between the use of refusal strategy by the old foreman and young foreman towards request of permissions made the laborers. The old foreman and young foreman had performed some of the refusal strategies as shown in the following table:

Table. 3. Refusal strategies used by the old foreman and the young foreman

Refusal Strategies	Old foreman to the younger workers		Young foreman to the older workers	
	%	a	%	a
Direct				
Non-Performative Verbs	**7.54%**	**4**	**9.4%**	**5**
Performative verb	**--**	**---**	**---**	
Indirect				
Expression of excuses, reason or explanation	**13.20%**	**7**	**16.98%**	**9**
Statement of Alternatives	**20.75%**	**11**	**13.20%**	**7**
Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor	**-**		**3.77%**	**2**
Combined Strategies				
Direct and Indirect	**1.88%**	**1**	**3.77%**	**2**

Indirect and Indirect	7.54%	5	1.88%	1

The first difference that the old and young foremen performed was that the old foreman only used 3 strategies, whereas the young foreman only applied 4 strategies. Specifically, the young foreman used direct strategy such as Non-Performative Verb; indirect strategy including Expression of excuses, reason or explanation, Statement of Alternatives and Attempt to dissuade interlocutor while old foreman did not use Attempt to Dissuade the Interlocutor. Furthermore, if they were compared, the young foreman performed direct strategy, Non-Performative Verb more often meanwhile the old foreman applied that strategy with the percentage of (7.54%) only. Another thing, there was also a difference in the most frequently used indirect strategy. The old foreman preferred to use Statement of Alternatives (20.75%), while the young foreman used Expression of Excuse, Reason or Explanation more (16.98%). The third difference was when they applied combined strategies, the young foreman performed direct-indirect combined refusal more often than the old foreman did.

Moreover, when applying refusal strategies, there was also a similarity between the old foreman and young foreman. They both mostly used indirect strategy in refusing request permission coming from the workers. The writer thinks that this research shared an interesting finding since according to Sarfo (2011, p.13), someone who is older, refuse more direct than the one who was younger and vice versa, but in this bakery, the phenomenon showed another thing. This research's finding was also supported by Kartomihardjo. Kartomihadjo (1993, p.151) had an observation in East Java society. He pointed out that the society feel hesitant to refuse or tell something which was not good to someone directly. They preferred to add some reasons or even an apology in their refusal. Therefore, in refusing request permission, the old foreman when refusing the younger worker and young foreman refusing older worker, they used indirect strategy since those two foremen were members of East Java society so they may feel hesitant to refuse directly.

CONCLUSION

From the findings, it could be concluded that age did not really influence the way the old and young foremen refused. They both used Indirect refusal. However, this study shows that the young foreman used direct refusal more to the older workers than the old foreman to the young workers.

Hopefully, the study can give another contribution in understanding the use of refusal strategies, especially in the conversation between the old foreman to the younger workers and the young foreman to the older workers.

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