

## COMMUNICATION AMONG CLOSE FRIENDS: AN ANALYSIS OF INTERACTION IN 'HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER'

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### ABSTRACT

Communication differs accordingly to some related aspects, such as the context of communication, the level of formality, and the other speakers who are involved in the process of interaction. Communication among close friends is naturally occurring process, and it has high level of solidarity and low level of formality. The aspects of solidarity and formality scale play their roles on the choice of strategies pertaining to the performance of face threatening acts among them. Face-Threatening Act (FTA) is defined as the illocutionary act which is capable of damaging other people's face (Brown, 2007). Coulmas, 2005 (in Cheung, 2009) stated that speakers make many choices when speaking, including the politeness level of their utterances. Eelen (2001) proposed that the notion of politeness is related to the aspect of both strategic conflict-avoidance and social indexing. This study looks into the common politeness super-strategies used in the interactions among close friends, as well as finding out the relationship between social factors, social distance and the choice of super-strategies in FTA performance. The analysis was done by analysing scenes within an episode of an American television series, 'How I Met Your Mother'. Examples of politeness strategies were analysed and discussed based on Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) politeness strategies. The findings of this study would be useful towards the knowledge and competency of pragmatics and the inculcation of pragmatics performance as one of the elements in communicative competence among speakers of English as part of language teaching and learning in classroom setting.

Keywords: Communication, Interaction Analysis, Face-threatening Acts, Politeness Strategies

### Introduction

#### Background Of Research

Communication is a major part in daily life for human beings. We communicate to inquire, provide, and transfer information with other speakers. Generally, the way we communicate differs accordingly to a few related aspects, such as the context of communication, the level of formality, and the other speakers who are involved in the process of interaction. For example, the way we communicate with our lecturer will be different inside and outside the context of classroom formality. We may talk differently with our lawyer friend in workplace setting and informal settings such as in coffee shops and bars. Plus, the way we talk to the persons we are very close to is different compared to when we talk with the persons we barely know.

Coulmas, 2005 (in Cheung, 2009) stated that "speakers make many choices when speaking, including the politeness level of their utterances". Therefore, in our communication, every verbal message that we convey carries around certain degree of politeness. Eelen (2001) proposed that the notion of politeness is related to the aspect of both strategic conflict-avoidance and social indexing. As suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987), with regards to conflict avoidance aspect; it is related to the ability of politeness to control the potential aggression which may occur between the speakers within a process of communication. This aspect is also related to the smoothness of communication, means of avoiding from disruption, maintaining social equilibrium and also friendly relations (Leech, 1983; in Vilkki, 2006). As for social indexing, politeness is deemed as socially appropriate behaviour, and the appropriateness depends on the speaker's social position in relation to the hearer.

Naturally, in communication, conflicts are bound to happen, and the role of social position between the speakers is inevitable. Therefore, speakers use certain set of strategies to deal with the stated aspects during interaction, and the strategies vary in different situation involving individuals of different social relation. This paper investigates the use of strategies with regards to communication among friends in daily interaction within informal context of interaction. In particular, as individuals who are close friends to one another are involved, the aspect of solidarity is also highlighted.

The analysis will be done by analysing scenes within an episode of an American television series, 'How I Met Your Mother'. Examples of politeness strategies will be analysed based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies, and the discussion about some related aspects regarding the patterns of strategies use will also be included.

## Scope of Research

### The TV Series: *How I Met Your Mother*

This study focuses on the friendly interaction between five close friends in their personal and informal settings. The discourse chosen is from the TV series; *How I Met Your Mother*. The five major characters in this series are Ted Mosby, Marshall Eriksen, Robin Scherbatsky, Barney Stinson and Lily Aldrin. Ted, an architect; lives together with his best college-mate lawyer friend Marshall with his wife Lily, a kindergarten teacher in an apartment located somewhere in New York City, just above a bar called McLaren's. Barney, a bank executive and Robin, a media reporter; being close friends to Ted, Marshall and Lily always spend their times together either at the apartment watching television, playing indoor games and sometimes just chilling around, or at the downstairs bar to enjoy their drinks and chatting with each other while checking out random guys and girls in the bar.

### The Episode: Spoiler Alert (Season 3, Episode 8)

The chosen episode for this study is the eighth episode from the third season of the series. The three issues in this episode are Marshall's bar examination result, Ted's new girlfriend Kathy, and everyone's bad habit.

Marshall is anxious to find out about his bar exam result, which will determine whether or not he will become a lawyer. However, problems occur when he did not manage to find out his password to login into the website for the result, and have to wait nervously and keep on being disturbed by his friends. Ted is curious about his new girlfriend's bad habit which totally hated by his circle of friends, but he himself did not notice until being told. Once knowing Kathy's bad habit, it leads to Ted pin-pointing Lily's bad habit, Lily's revealing Ted's, and consequently everyone criticizing each others' bad habit. However, in the end it was the critics and fight that lead to Marshall recollected his memories of lost password, retrieve his result and things end on a happy note for everyone.

## Issue of the Research

Communication among close friends is a naturally occurring process and it involves characteristics which are hypothetically different from the interaction among individuals who fairly know each other, or in the context where the level of formality is higher; such as workplace communication which involves those in higher authorities and those who are not. The fact that the individuals in this circle of friends have known each other for significantly long time leads to the high solidarity among them. In addition, the context of the discourse chosen for this paper is low in the formality scale, as the interactions take place mostly in their private settings, such as the living room in their house, as well as the usual booth where they sit and hang out at the bar. Thus, the aspects of solidarity and formality scale play their roles on the choice of strategies pertaining to the performance of face threatening acts among them.

As for the topics being talked about, they are generally very personal topics which are only understood within the circle of friends. The topics are about the issues aroused among them, problems of individuals which are also shared by the others, as well as critics from them towards each other. Therefore, the topics also affect the choice of strategies. Based on the nature of relationship among the individuals involved in the circle of friends in the discourse chosen, certain kind of strategies are hypothetically more frequent to be compared to others, considering the social factors and social dimensions stated beforehand. Consequently, the analysis will provide an account that present about the choice of strategies as well as the reasons reason behind it based on the above stated aspects.

## Research Objectives

The objectives formulated for this study are:

- a) To find out the common politeness super-strategies used in the interactions among close friends.
- b) To find out the relationship between social factors, social distance and the choice of super-strategies in FTA performance.

## Research Questions

Based on the objectives formulated, the findings from this study are accounted to answer these research questions:

- a) What are the common politeness super-strategies used in the interactions among close friends in the TV series 'How I Met Your Mother'?
- b) What are the relationship between social factors, social distance and the choice of super-strategies in FTA performance?

## Literature Review

### Politeness Theory

Politeness is defined in various ways. It is defined by Mills (2003: 06) as “*the expression of the speakers’ intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts toward another*”. The notion of politeness incorporates the notion of ‘face’ (Goffman, 1967); which is “*the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself*”. For example, the individual’s feeling of self-worth and self-image. A related notion, face-saving view; is built on the notion of face and on English folk term, which ties face up with notions of being embarrassed or humiliated, or ‘*losing face*’. The face is emotionally invested, can be lost, maintained or enhanced (Vilki, 2006).

Based on the theory that incorporates face, there are two components of it; positive face and negative face. Prior to that, one fundamental component in the Brown and Levinson’s theory is the Model Person (MP); a willful speaker of a natural language, someone with ‘two particular wants... the want to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respects’ (Brown and Levinson, 1987). **Positive face** concerns the desire by the MP to be associated with, be approved of and be supported by other people when appropriate. **Negative face** concerns the MP’s desire to be free from imposition, social or material debts or obligations.

Pertaining to the notions of positive and negative face, there are two kinds of politeness. **Positive politeness** orients to preserving the positive face of other people. It is an expression of solidarity that “*emphasizes the speaker and hearer want the same thing, and have common goal*” (Yule, 1996; in Cheung, 2009). **Negative politeness** refers to the act of performing face saving acts oriented to other’s negative face. It expresses minimal interference which tends to “*emphasize the importance of other’s time or concerns, and even include an apology for the imposition or interruption*” (Yule, 1996; in Cheung, 2009).

### Face-threatening Acts (FTAs)

Face-threatening act is defined as the illocutionary act which is capable of damaging other people’s face (Brown, 2007). It is also stated that when MP finds him/herself in the situation where FTA is necessary, they rationalize to assess the situation, and decide to choose how they should perform it, or not perform it at all. It is related to the balance that the speaker would like to have for the maximum efficiency of execution, with the speaker wants to preserve his/her or the hearer’s face to certain degree. Brown and Levinson proposed the following formula to calculate the weight of FTA;

$$W_x = D(S, H) + P(H, S) + R_x \quad (\text{Brown \& Levinson, 1987})$$

Where;

$W_x$ : weightiness of FTA,

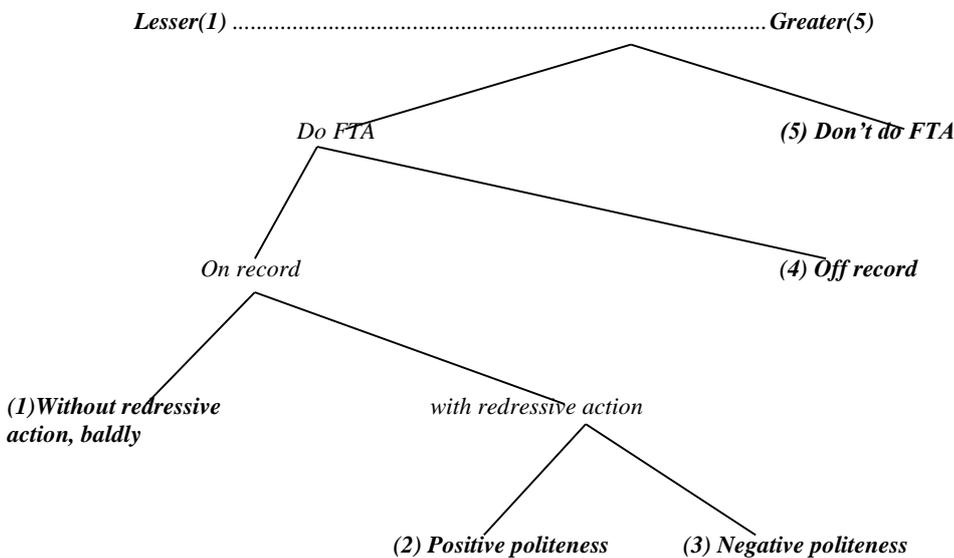
$D(S, H)$ : social distance between Speaker and Hearer,

$P(H, S)$ : power that Hearer has over Speaker,

$R_x$ : Rate of FTA imposition in the given culture of S and H (cultural ranking of the speech act; threatening level within a specific culture).

Figure 1, based on Brown and Levinson (1987) illustrates the strategies numbered according to the increasing weightiness of the FTA, which results in the selection of strategies with decreasing perceived threat to face (Brown, 2007).

**Figure 1: Selection of politeness super-strategies**  
Speaker's estimation of the weightiness  $W_x$  of the FTA $_x$ , (1-5):



“On record” means directly saying something in an unambiguous way, while “off record” means expressing in an indirect way thus it can be interpreted ambiguously as a way to maximize the extent to which the addressee’s face is threatened.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), on record FTAs can be committed with *redressive action*, the action that gives face to the addressee. Simply said, it is the attempt to counteract the potential face damage of the FTA. The speaker can modify the message which has the potential to damage the addressee’s face to show that no such face damage is intended. Speakers may select from five politeness super-strategies regarding FTA performance. Brown and Levinson (in Stubbe et.al., 2003) order these super-strategies according to their relative politeness.

(1) *On record baldly, without redressive action* means the speaker provide no effort to reduce the impact the FTA’s. This strategy is most likely to shock, embarrass, and make the hearer feel a bit uncomfortable. It is commonly found among people who know each other very well, very comfortable in their environment; such as close friends and family. This strategy normally occurs during the time of emergency, task-oriented expression, as well as request, where the information needs to be directly transferred. (2) *Positive Politeness; on record with redressive action* is usually seen in groups of friends, those who know each other fairly well. Usually tries to minimize the distance by expressing friendliness and solid interest in the hearer’s need to be respected, thus the reduction of the FTA). For examples, attending to the hearer, avoiding disagreement, assuming agreement, hedging opinion, make offer, promise, show sympathy, understanding, cooperation, and joking.

(3) *Negative Politeness; on record with redressive action* focuses on the assumption that the speaker will impose the hearer, and intruding their space. There will apparently be some social distance or awkwardness in the situation. For example, indirect statement, apologies, minimizes imposition, show respect and consideration, and indirectness. For (4) *off record strategy*, the speaker removes himself from any imposition. For example: giving hints, being vague, and sarcastic. The super-strategy with the least weight is (5) the *avoidance of FTA*. This is the most polite super-strategy when the speaker chooses to not do the FTA at all.

### Social Factors and Social Dimensions

Holmes (2008) stated that in any situation, linguistic choices will generally reflect the influence of one or more of the following components in social factors:

- a) *The participants* (who is speaking, and who are they speaking to?)
- b) *The setting or social context of the interaction* (where are they speaking?)
- c) *The topic* (what is being talked about?)
- d) *The function* (why they are speaking?)

In addition, she also included four social dimensions which are related to the construction of interaction among speakers. These are:

- a) *Social distance* – emphasizing the level of solidarity, how well we know someone.
- b) *Status scale* – concerned with participant relationship, concept of superior and subordinate.
- c) *Formality scale* – related to the setting or type of interaction, high and low formality aspect in the environment.
- d) *Functional scales* – related to the purposes or topic of interaction; *referential*, high and low informational content, and *affective* high and low affective content.

The aspects of social factors and the scales in social dimensions are referred to in analysing the discourse to find out about the reasons underlying certain characteristics of expression done by the speakers in communication. As politeness is concerned, the differences based on the stated aspects and scales could be the appropriate guideline in for the analysis and discussion of the discourse.

## Findings and Discussion

### Research Question 1 – the most common politeness super-strategies used in the interaction

In general, there are combinations of several super-strategies in the interaction, including positive politeness, off-record, and bald on-record. During the earlier part of the story, when Marshall was stressed out and nervous to check his bar examination result, Lily and Robin were trying to show their understanding and support to him, and keep him feeling optimistic about the result.

#### Excerpt 1:

- |     |          |   |  |
|-----|----------|---|--|
| L12 | Lily     | : | <i>Don't worry baby, I'm sure you rocked it.</i>   |
| L13 | Robin    | : | <i>I mean how many people fail the bar?</i>  |
| L14 | Marshall | : | <i>Half.</i>   |
| L15 | Robin    | : | <i>Oh my God! Half? Only half the people pass?<br/>I mean half the people pass, that's fantastic. Go Marshall.</i> |

In L15, Robin was initially shocked with the fact that only half the people pass the bar, but considering the fact that Marshall was very nervous, Robin countered her surprise of disbelief with positive words to keep on encouraging him.

At one scene, when Ted became intensely curious about Kathy, his new girlfriend's bad habit, a mixed pattern of super-strategies used was used by the group members. They were trying to keep it cool and consider Ted's feeling, but at the same time trying to tell Ted the ugly truth about Kathy.

#### Excerpt 2:

- |     |          |   |   |
|-----|----------|---|---|
| L62 | Ted      | : | <i>Guys! Just tell me what the hell is wrong with her already.</i>  |
| L63 | Marshall | : | <i>Okay. You wanna know?</i>  |
| L64 | Ted      | : | <i>Yes.</i>   |
| L65 | Marshall | : | <i>You wanna shatter these beautiful illusions you've created for yourself. Fine, here it is. Kathy talks. A lot.</i> |
| L66 | Ted      | : | <i>Oh come on. That's not true.</i>   |
| L67 | Marshall | : | <i>Ted, really really think about that dinner we all just had together.</i>   |

Ted, as curious as he was, bluntly asked his friends to tell him about Kathy's bad habit; in somewhat a demanding tone. Marshall used positive politeness strategies with redressive action upon responding to Ted's queries about Kathy's bad habit. As much as Marshall wanted to tell Ted the truth, he tried to mitigate the effect that the truth would pose on Ted. Thus, he hedged his opinion, and warned Ted in advance before revealing the truth, instead of point-blankly telling Ted about it.

Once Ted has found out about Kathy's bad habit, he could not help but noticing more of it. Thus, he sarcastically blamed Marshall for telling him the truth using off-record strategies. Marshall, in his defence, backed himself up with the fact that it was Ted who was so curious to find out about it.

#### Excerpt 3:

- |     |          |   |  |
|-----|----------|---|--|
| L70 | Ted      | : | <i>Well thank you, pal. You and your little friends, you just had to tell me. You just had to give in to my incessant begging.</i> |
| L71 | Marshall | : | <i>You said you wanted to know.</i>  |
| L72 | Ted      | : | <i>I didn't want to know!</i>  |
| L73 | Marshall | : | <i>You said you wanted to know!</i>  |

- L74 Ted : *Well I didn't know that I didn't want to know!  
You knew, and you know me, and you should have known I didn't want to  
know! You know?*

Ted, being upset from knowing the truth was stressed out and it affected the kind of super-strategies that he used when he interacted with Marshall. From being sarcastically off-record, he switched to more face-threatening super-strategies and directly put the blame on Marshall. Conversely, Marshall did the same to prove the point that he did that just to satisfy Ted's curiosity.

Following that, Ted was trying to accept the fact that Kathy really has a bad habit of talking too much, and tried to claim common ground with Marshall about getting used to the partner's negative habits. He stated Lily's (Marshall's wife) bad habit and connected the situation that he was facing with Kathy.

**Excerpt 4:**

- L78 Ted : *Yeah, i guess. I mean, you got used to Lily's loud chewing,  
right?*  
L79 Marshall : *Lily doesn't chew loudly.*  
L80 Ted : *Dude, come on. This isn't new.  
Why do you think I call her 'chewbacca'?*

Marshall was being defensive to his wife, and bluntly denied Ted's statement. However, Ted used positive politeness strategy instead of using bald, on record strategy to have Marshall think about his statement and the reason underlying it as a way to prove his point and consequently made Marshall agree with him.

Upon the realization that Lily has a bad habit of chewing loudly, Marshall could not help himself from noticing it even more than before. Initially, he used off-record strategy to indirectly signal Lily about the habit, and countered it with negative politeness when Lily asked for reason underlying his sarcastic statement.

**Excerpt 5:**

- L87 Marshall : *Say, what's in the cereal besides dry twigs and small animal  
bones?*  
L88 Lily : *What's that supposed to mean?*  
L89 Marshall : *Lily, I love you. But honest to God, when you eat, it sounds like a  
garbage disposal full of drywall screws.*

In explaining himself about the critics that he made about Lily's loud chewing, it was quite an awkward situation between Marshall and Lily. However, Marshall tried to lessen the awkwardness and saved himself with his statement of affection towards Lily, as a way of reducing the impact and at the same time maintaining Lily's face. The same instance could be seen in Robin's statement about Lily's habit, and she covered her statement with jokingly cute way of saying it to Lily.

**Excerpt 6:**

- L92 Lily : *Can you believe Ted? What a lame thing to say, that I'm a loud  
chewer.*  
L93 Robin : *Yeah, that's crazy. Maybe enough with the pretzels.*  
L94 Lily : *Oh my God, do I really chew that loudly?*  
L95 Robin : *No, no, no. Okay. Now that you pointed it out,  
maybe it does sound slightly like someone put a screwdriver in a pencil  
sharpener, but in a cute way.*

Towards the end of the story, everyone's bad habit was pointed out by the one to another member. And it became quite intense as everyone was trying to deny their bad habit and at the same time tried to divert the focus to other's bad habit. This is when the super-strategies used by all five individuals in the circle of friends became more face-threatening. Everyone was vengeful and tried hard to prove the point that the others are wrong about their accused bad habits, and backfired by pointing others' bad habit; thus the face-dropping, bald and on record super-strategies used.

**Excerpt 7:**

- L119 Ted : *You guys want a drink?*  
L120 Robin : *I'll just have a water.*  
L121 Ted : *Mm, technically, water is a drink.*  
L122 Robin : *Really professor? You drink it? Is that how water works?  
Because I was just gonna smear it on my skin and hope that I absorbed it.*  
L123 Barney : *Or you could, you know, pour it over your shirt.*

- L124 Ted : *What's with you?*  
 L125 Robin : *You're always correcting people.*  
 L126 Barney : *You totally do that!*  
 L127 Marshall : *That's absolutely right.*  
 L128 Robin : *Right? I never noticed it before, but now it's literally driving me crazy.*  
 L129 Ted : *Figuratively. Okay, maybe so, but it's no worse than you using the word "literally" in every other sentence.*  
 L130 Barney : *Don't they teach vocabulary in Canada?*  
 L131 Marshall : *They literally don't. They literally don't.*  
 L132 Robin : *Shut up Marshall. That's nothing compared to your thing of singing what you do all the time.*  
 L133 Marshall : *What?*  
 ...  
*Oh, come on! What about you "Barney"? Okay, you... always...*  
 L136 Barney : *Interesting, interesting. Everyone has annoying habits but me.*  
 L137 Marshall : *Oh, got it. Okay, you sometimes talk in a weird high-pitched voice.*  
 L138 Robin : *And, you're constantly using lame catchphrases.*  
 L139 Ted : *And sometimes you space out and don't even pay attention to what we're talking about.*  
 L140 Barney : *I'm sorry, what? Oh see? You can't think of anything cause I'm awesome!*  
 L141 Robin : *All three, right there.*  
 L142 Ted : *Well, technically "awesome" wouldn't be a catchphrase if anything, it's more of a catchword.*  
 L143 Robin : *I literally want to rip your head off.*  
 L144 Ted : *You mean "figuratively"!*  
 L145 Robin : *No, I literally mean "literally".*  
*Literally, literally, literally.*  
*Oh my God. Lily, what are you eating, gravel?*  
 L146 Marshall : *Oh, I know right? It sounds like cufflinks going up a vacuum cleaner.*  
 L147 Lily : *Well, why don't you sing about it?*  
 L148 Marshall : *Because I don't sing about everything I do (melodically)*  
 L149 Robin : *No, no, sometimes you just sing nonsense sentences like stroke victim. And what's worse, they're catchy.*  
*Apple, orchard, banana, cat, dance, eight six six three (melodically).*  
*See we know that one because once you sang that for, like, three hours. What the hell is that?*

Initially, Ted started the conflict by correcting Robin. Provoked by the correction, Robin sarcastically replied to Ted by using the word 'professor' and satirically suggest the consumption of water, and ended up blatantly pointing out Ted's bad habit, followed by agreement from the others. Ted reacted furiously by pointing out Robin's bad habit of overusing the word "literally". Robin countered the accusation by directly stating Marshall bad habit of singing what he does all the time. Naturally, Marshall tried to distract the accusation by pointing out Barney's bad habit. Thus everyone's bad habits were revealed, and all of them used the points to face-drop others in saving their own by using bald, on record politeness super-strategies which apparently have the least weight of politeness and consideration towards saving other's face.

#### **Research Question 2 – The relationship between the aspects of social factors, social distance and the choice of super-strategies in FTA performance**

From the analysis of excerpts, the common super-strategies chosen by the speakers are off-record, positive politeness, and bald on record; with the latter being more prominent towards the end of the story where the conflict was arisen. Earlier in the story, positive politeness strategies with redressive actions are more prominent, as the interaction involved normal topic between close friends (Marshall, Lily, and Robin) without any provocation from anyone. Thus, it is consistent with the common traits of positive politeness strategies which is normally occurring among friends, and the distance was minimized by expressing friendliness and solid interest in the hearer's need to be respected hence the minimization of FTA. Plus, the topic which was Marshall's bar exam result caused Robin and Lily to show their understanding and empathy towards him.

As the story progress, the function and topic of interaction also evolved; namely when Ted demanded the others to tell him about Kathy's bad habit. The pressure caused the choice of super-strategies became more direct, and the desire to maintain other's face became lesser. Following that, Ted blamed Marshall, and by then both parties used bald on-record super-strategies towards each other. Once they tried to reconcile and accept the fact, Ted attempted to gain Marshall's agreement to his notion about Lily's bad habit, hence the retraction of super-strategies towards positive-politeness.

The dynamic between the two ends of politeness super-strategies continuum could also be seen in the usage of sarcastic tone of expression among them. For example, when they tried to point Lily's bad habit of chewing loudly, or trying to stop her from keep chewing and distracting them, they used various way of stating it, especially in humorously sarcastic way. Initially, it is deemed as an off-record strategy, but in time the strategy choice leaned more towards positive politeness with less hedging, considering the fact that they were actually criticizing Lily without directly saying it to her face, as Lily is their friend. Finally, when the situation became more intense with everybody was trying to save their own face and dropping others, the strategies were oriented towards bald, on record with redressive action. However, as proposed in the theory, it is normal for people who are very close to each other and very comfortable in their environment.

As environment is concerned, the interaction in the story mainly happened in the personal, intimate setting of the circle of friends; namely the apartment shared by Ted, Marshall and Lily, which is also the usual hang out spot for Barney and Robin. Apparently, they are very comfortable in that setting and the level of formality between them as close friends are lowered down. Thus, the setting as one of the social factors also plays its role in determining the choice of strategies.

## Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion of the excerpts taken from the TV series "How I Met Your Mother", the common politeness super-strategies found are off-record, positive politeness with redressive action, as well as bald, on record. The choice of strategies were varied mostly according to the function and topic of the interaction, as the factor of participant, setting, social distance and formality are stable. Topics which carry more sensitive issues caused the movement of the strategies choice to lean more towards the performance of FTAs with higher impact. The same goes with the aspect of interactional function, where showing understanding and sympathy caused more face-saving strategies choice, while blaming and pointing others negative habits caused more face-dropping strategies among the speakers.

An implication from this analysis is the importance of knowledge and competency of pragmatics among language learners. Pragmatics is the study of how language is used in context to express such things as directness, politeness, and deference (Lightbrown and Spada, 2006). Similar message could take place in different ways considering the social factors such as the participants, setting, topic and function of communication; as well as the social dimensions which include the aspect of social distance, status scale, formality scale, and also functional scale relating to the interaction. The importance of pragmatics competency is highlighted by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) in the concept of communicative competence; specifically under the aspect of sociolinguistics competence (Bagaric, 2007).

As educators, we should consider the aspect of pragmatics, and highlight the importance of context in language use to the learner. The learners will not achieve the objective in being a competent language user if they fail to use the language properly in certain context. For example, communication between the learners with their friend will be different from the ones that they have with the teacher, neighbour, or even other individuals with various kinds of background; regardless of the fact that of the similarities underlying the message to be conveyed. Therefore, the inculcation of pragmatics performance as one of the elements in communicative competence among the language learners is significant as part of the language teaching and learning in classroom setting.

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