

POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN RESPONDING TO COMPLIMENTS IN JAVANESE

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Abstract: Javanese has been studied from many different perspectives. However, no one discusses how Javanese respond to compliments politely. The aim of this study is to investigate the politeness strategies as applied to respond to compliments by the Javanese people in Jember, East Java. The notion of politeness plays crucial role in the realization of speech acts (utterances and verbal communication) in Javanese, such as responding to compliments. As utterances and verbal communications should be interpreted based on the socio-cultural background, the politeness strategies in responding to compliments in Javanese cannot be separated from the concepts of the Javanese culture, such as: *andhap-asor* (lowering oneself, while exalting the others) and *tanggap ing sasmita* (understanding the hidden meaning). First, as a Javanese, one must be able to apply the concept of *andhap-asor* in responding to compliments by denigrating himself. Second, a good Javanese should also have a sense of *tanggap ing sasmita* while responding to compliments. Consequently, failure to apply one of the cultural factors can be detrimental to the speaker, reducing the harmony of the conversation. This paper examines how politeness is manifested and conveyed within the major framework of the Javanese culture. This study is about socio-cultural pragmatics in which utterances are discussed in relation to their situations, and the cultural background which support them. The data are in the form of dialogues among students-teachers, and students-students which show the different social status among the interlocutors. The data of this research were collected by recording, and by note taking (for the parts in which recording is not possible). The data are aimed to generate the strategies used by the Javanese (in Jember, Indonesia) to build politeness strategies in responding to compliments. Finally, the data of this research are examined both from the general theory of politeness, and the Javanese cultural concepts (*andhap-asor* and *tanggap ing sasmita*). This study provides important findings which reveal that responding to compliments in Javanese can be achieved in five strategies: (1) disagreeing and denigrating, (2) disagreeing and raising a question, (3) accepting and turning back, (4) accepting and giving explanation, and (5) accepting only, or accepting and offering.

Keywords: Speech level, *andhap asor*, *tanggap ing sasmita*

Javanese is a member of the Austronesian family of languages which spread from Madagascar to Hawaii Eastern Island and from Formosa in the north of New Zealand in the south (Wolff, and Poedjosoedarmo, 1982: 1). The Javanese speakers are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia and comprise almost half of Indonesia's population which can be found in nearly every part of Indonesia. Mostly they occupy two-thirds of Java (East Java and Central Java). As one of the regencies in

East Java, Jember is also occupied by Javanese, and by some other ethnics (e.g. Madurese, and Balinese).

Many experts have studied Javanese from many different aspects. First, in the aspect of the Javanese grammatical structures, e.g. the sentence segments and word groups, and the Javanese syntax, were respectively conducted by Uhlenbeck (1975, and 1981). Second, in the aspect of the politeness of Javanese had been conducted by some linguists, such as: how

to use the Javanese vocabulary of courtesy (Gonda, 1949), how to use the respect forms in Javanese (Uhlenbeck, 1970), how to use the indirect speech acts in Javanese (Partana, 2006), how to build oral communication strategies between superior and subordinates among the Javanese (Zaid, 1999), and how to use the communicative codes (Wolff and Poedjosoedarmo, 1982). Finally, the studies in the aspect of the performances of Javanese cultures, such as the Javanese puppet shadow, verbal arts performance in wedding narratives, and the Javanese wedding genre had been respectively conducted by Mrazek (1998), Kadarisman (1999), and Sukarno (2008). Those studies indicate that Javanese is so rich in its linguistic and literary uniqueness that many scholars are interested in investigating the language. Although many experts have studied Javanese from different perspectives, no one investigates the politeness strategies in responding to compliments in this language. In fact, Javanese (people) often deliver compliments to the interlocutors to make the conversation more harmonious.

Responding to compliments belongs to one of the tenets of pragmatics (indirectness and politeness). The notion of indirectness and politeness plays a crucial role in the negotiation of face during the utterance and communication (Felix-Brasdefer, 2005). Following Blum-Kulka (1997), and Kasper and Rose (2001) utterances and communication in general should be interpreted based on the socio-cultural context. In other words, context plays an important role to understand language (Becker et al., 1989). Therefore, responding to compliments in Javanese cannot be separated from the socio-cultural background of the Javanese people. These socio-cultural backgrounds are much influenced by the Javanese cultural concepts which are well-rooted to the Javanese people, such as: *andhap-asor*, *tata krama*, and *tanggap ing sasmita*. This

paper examines how politeness is manifested and conveyed within the major framework of the Javanese culture. It is strongly believed that the techniques by which the Javanese people use to express politeness (especially being polite to respond to compliments) are mostly influenced by some concepts of the Javanese culture. Therefore, these concepts will play a great role in examining politeness in this language, particularly in responding to compliments.

Politeness Theory

Brown and Levinson (1987) distinguish politeness strategies on the basis of the illocutionary transparency by which 'face threatening acts' (FTA) are carried out. The organizing principle for their polite theory comes from the idea that some acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require softening ... (1987: 24). This means, to Brown and Levinson, that 'face' is the essential element of politeness. To be polite is to be face-caring (Gu, 1990). In addition, politeness theory can be used to protect the hearer's 'face' or self-images through various strategies (Pitt et al., 2013).

However, politeness may differ cross-culturally (Holmes, 1988; Watts et al., 1992; Chen, 1993). In Javanese, for example, it is necessary for the speech partner (the listener) to be able to interpret the hidden meaning that will be delivered by the speaker. As suggested by Grice (1981), what the speaker meant, or implied in his utterance can be distinct from what he really said. It means that indirectness plays an important role to be polite in Javanese, as required by the concept of *tanggap ing sasmita*.

Javanese Cultural Concepts

In their daily lives, Javanese people are greatly influenced by some concepts which are well-rooted in the Javanese culture, namely: *tata krama*, *andhap-asor*, and *tanggap ing sasmita*. *Tata krama* means

the arrangement of *bhasa* or speech levels. As for speech levels, Poedjosoedarmo (1979) and Errington (1988) claim that there are three levels: the lowest level, *Ngoko* (Ng), the middle level, *Krama Madya* (KM), and the highest level, *Krama Inggil* (KI). In the speech levels, each level expresses the levels of politeness. That is, the lowest level (Ng) expresses the least polite and the highest level (KI) indicates the most polite. In addition, each level is different from one to another in their lexical items which can be demonstrated by the following examples.

- (1) KI: Menopo panjenengan sampun dahar?
- (2) KM: Nopo sampeyan sampun nedho?
- (3) Ng: Opo kowe wis mangan?
(Have you had breakfast/lunch/dinner?)

Sentences (1) and (2) are classified as *bhasa* or *krama* (KI and KM respectively) because they contain non-ngoko lexical items, such as: *panjenengan* and *sampeyan* which are from the ngoko lexicon *kowe* 'you'. Since the Ng level is the basic level, every concept which can be expressed in Javanese will be expressed in a word or phrase of the Ng lexicons. By contrast, not every Ng word will have a counterpart among the KM or KI words. In cases where the KM and KI levels do not possess equivalent to the Ng words, the Ng words are used. The cardinal numbers, such as: *nem* 'six', *pitu* 'seven', *wolu* 'eight', *songo* 'nine', which belong to Ng can also be used both in KI, and in KM.

Knowing the speech styles requires mastering the principal factors to determine the style choice. Otherwise, we may choose the wrong styles which can have a disagreeable effect on the listener. For instance, a student uses the Ng or KM style while he is speaking to his teacher (since the appropriate one is the KI style). However, it is not easy to choose the appropriate level in practice because there are no clear-cut rules which can guide us to

use the right level. Some Javanese linguists (Horn, 1992; Poedjosoedarmo, 1979) put forward two main factors- the level of formality and that of the social status of the speaker and the hearer-which may help us to select the levels. The relationship between the Javanese speakers is also influenced by the purpose, the situation of the conversation, and the profession (Susanto, 2014: 141).

In relational to formality, the selection of the styles may concern with the situation where they make a conversation. For example, some people who have known one another well (and therefore normally using Ng or KM) will change the level of the language into KI as soon as they come into a formal situation such as: in a meeting, in a speech of a wedding party, or in delivering a sermon. Regarding this factor, KI as the mutually respectful speech which is used between strangers or comparative strangers will be used. In contrast, people who speak to each other in KI, may gradually begin to use KM even Ng, if they become closer friends or become more intimate.

The next principle of choosing the speech style can also be determined by the social status of the speaker (S) and hearer (H). This status may be obtained from various ways such as: the age, the education, the position (rank), and wealth. In relation to the age, the Javanese norms dictate the younger should respect the older. This respect is indicated by the use of the right speech levels, e.g. the younger (such as a son/daughter) chooses the KM or KI level when (s)he is talking to the older (his/her parent, uncle/aunt). The age factor, however, may be violated by the other factors, such as position. For example, the S who is older than H chooses the KI level simply because he realizes that the H's social status is higher than his, e.g. an employee or servant who speaks to his/her employer who is much younger than him.

The next concept of the Javanese culture is *andhap-asor*. The term is lexically composed from two words *andhap* 'low' and *asor* 'humble'. Thus, to conduct the *andhap-asor* concept in Javanese means lowering oneself while exalting others. This concept can be seen from the choice of lexical items in a speech level, as demonstrated by (4).

- (4) Menopo (KI) **Bapak** kalian **Ibu** (KI) sampun (KI/KM) dahar siang (KI)?
(Have you (Father and Mother) had lunch?)

Kolo wau (KM/KI), **kulo** (KI/KM) nedha wonten ing kantin(KM).
(I have already done it at the canteen)

Both the words *dahar* (KI) and *nedha* (KM) in (4) have the same referential meaning with 'to have a meal', but they are different pragmatically. In the first clause, the speaker chooses the verb form *dahar* (KI) because it refers to the subject (or the addressee) *panjenengan* 'the exalted you'. However, when the speaker refers to himself 'kulo', he does not use the verb *dahar* any more; he chooses the word from the KM lexicon *nedha* for the same verb. The reason of using different verb forms for the same meaning (*dahar vs. nedha*) is motivated by the concept of *andhap-asor*, that is the speaker must humble himself and exalt the other (the hearer/addressee). In other words, the concepts of *andhap-asor* are expressed by the agreement between the subject and its verb-form, as well as the verb choice according to the object (see no. 6 below).

Although we can find a KM lexicon in (4), such a sentence is still considered as KI style. Similarly, we may also use a KI word in a Ng level if the context (pragmatically) requires it, as demonstrated by sentences (5) and (6).

- (5) Apa Bapak-bapak dosen wis **dahar**(KI)?
(Have all the lecturers had breakfast/

lunch/dinner?)

- (6) Aku wis **ngaturi** (KI) Pak Dekan.
(I have invited Mr. Dean)

Both (5) and (6) are considered Ng level although we can find some KI lexicons. In (5) the word *dahar* (KI) is used to show 'respect' for the subject *Bapak-bapak Dosen* 'the lecturers' the persons whom we usually respect, and so is the verb *ngaturi* (KI) 'to invite' is chosen to indicate that the addressee (or the object of the verb) is the person whom the speaker respects 'Pak Dekan' (Mr. Dean). Violating the agreements may cause impoliteness or disagreeable effect on the listener. For example, to use the verb *mangan* (Ng) or *nedha* (KM) for a highly respected person is a serious affront, as demonstrated by (7), and speaking 'up' in the wrong cases is ridiculous as indicated by (8).

- (7) *Menopo (KI) panjenengan (KI) sampun (KI/KM) mangan (Ng)?
(8) *Aku (Ng) wis (Ng) dahar(KI).

There is a contradiction in (7). The speaker addresses the listener with *panjenengan* 'respected you' (KI) means he respects him, but he chooses the verb *mangan* (Ng) instead of *dahar* (KI) to describe the addressee's action which means humbling or disrespecting him. Similarly, in (8) the speaker uses the Ng style which is signaled by the use of the Ng lexicons *aku* 'I' and *wis* 'already'. However, the speaker makes himself higher than the listener by choosing the KI lexicon *dahar* to describe his own action (self-exaltation). Thus, the use of the word *dahar* in this sentence is in the wrong place, and so means the speaker may be ridiculed by the listeners who know the style better.

Finally, as a good Javanese, we also should have a sense of *tanggap ing sasmita* which can be translated as the ability to interpret the hidden will of the speaker. Grice (1981) introduces the term

'implicature' for the case in which what the speaker meant, implied, or suggested is distinct from what the speaker said. In other words, a speaker may express his idea indirectly to the listener because expressing his will directly to interlocutor can be considered less polite or it may hurt the addressee's feelings. In Javanese, it is not always necessary for the speaker to express his or her feeling directly because we have the culture of *tanggap ing sasmita* or *implicature* according to Grice, as presented by the utterances between a teacher (T) and a student (S) below.

- (9) a. (T): "Wah untung aku durung budhal, jathukno rak ora ketemu" (Ng)
(Lucky me, I didn't leave yet, otherwise I missed your coming)
b. (S): Menopo badhe tindhakan to Pak? (KI)
(Are you going to go out, Sir?)
c. (T): "Ah ora, mung arep mlaku-mlaku" (Ng)
(Oh no, I just want to take a walk)

In (9a), the teacher welcomes the student with an ambiguous utterance. This is ambiguous because on the surface it means that he is happy to have the student in his house, but implicitly it means that "I must go now, even, I should have gone by now". Although the teacher then neglects his utterance (9c), as a good Javanese, the student should be able to understand the implied meaning delivered by the teacher. Therefore, the expression of *untung aku durung budhal* should be interpreted as "the host indirectly asks the visitor to leave immediately".

Compliments

According to Holmes (1988), a compliment is a speech act which explicitly attributes to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some good (possession, characteristic, skill etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer. Responding to a compliment, then,

may vary from one language to another because of the difference in the socio-cultural background of the languages. For example, to an American, according to Brown and Levinson (1987: 68), self-humiliation which is close to self-denigration almost always does damage to his/her own face. Therefore, when faced with compliment, s/he seldom humbles him/herself, although there may be a need to do so. By contrast, self-denigration is mostly used by a Javanese to respond to any compliment (Errington, 1988: 35). Self-denigration in Javanese follows the cultural concepts: *andhap-asor* and *tanggap ing sasmita*. In other words, Javanese has its own ways to respond to compliments, which may differ to English, and any other languages. So far, there is no literature which discusses and presents the politeness strategies of Javanese in responding to compliments, especially for the Javanese speakers in Jember, East Java.

METHOD

There are about twenty students, and ten teachers of the Faculty of Letters, Jember University participating in this research. The students as well as the teachers are from many different places: Blitar, Kediri, Madiun, Lumajang, Banyuwangi, who had been in Jember for average of three years at the time of this study (for the students), and for twenty years for the teachers. They all grew up in Javanese area and were native speakers of Javanese language.

The data of the research were collected by recording and note taking the conversations among the Javanese people (students and teachers) in Jember, East Java. In general, the conversations among the participants happen in two different situations, formal and informal. Therefore, there are two types of data, formal dialogue and informal (casual) one. Both types of data are appropriate for the purpose of the analysis. In term of the number of sentences, there are totally about 50 pairs of sentences in the dialogues. However, not

all the sentences were analyzed. The collected data were selected based on the pairs of sentences which contain delivering and responding to compliments. Therefore, particular attention is paid only to the utterances where delivering and responding to compliments took place. Based on the selection, the relevant data for the purpose of this analysis is 15 pairs of sentences out of 50 sentences, or it is about 35% of the total data.

Having been selected, the data were transcribed and translated into English. The relevant utterances (the selected data) were mainly evaluated and analyzed based on the Javanese cultures, particularly the concepts of *andhap-asor*, *tata krama*, and *tanggap ing sasmita*. In addition, the analysis was also supported by the politeness theories of Brown and Levinson (1987) especially in the basis of the illocutionary acts by which FTA are carried out, and of Grice (1981) particularly on the analysis of understanding the intended meaning (*implicature*). The goal of this study is to build the politeness strategies in responding to compliments in Javanese politely, so the conversation among the tenors will run harmoniously.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion of the research findings is based on the statement that politeness (responding to compliments) may differ cross-culturally (Chen, 1993; Watts et al.; 1992, and Holmes, 1988). This section presents the pragmaticlinguistic strategies to respond compliments in Javanese. In these strategies, a compliment may be rejected or accepted. However, it is very common that the responder raises a question, turns the compliment back, gives some explanation about the compliment, and offers the object of the compliment to the interlocutors. In fact, these ways were used as a device to humble himself as required by the concept of *andhap-asor* and to be sensitive as required by the concept of *tanggap ing sasmita*.

Disagreeing and denigrating

Firstly, it is very common to make a compliment response by disagreeing and denigrating the compliment. In this strategy, the responder will say *mboten* 'no' to the compliment. He disagrees with the compliment. Then, he will provide with some explanation to lower himself, for example by saying *sampun dangu* 'it is already old' for his possession, as presented by the following dialogue.

Context: the compliment deliverer (CD), one who delivers a compliment, is socially higher than the responder (R), one who receives a compliment.

Speech levels: CD is using Ng level, and R is using KI/KM level.

- (10) (CD): Montormu kok apik banget,
anyar to?
(Your motorcycle is very good,
is it new?)
(R): Mboten, meniko montor tua.
(No, it is an old (used)
motorcycle)

In responding to the speaker's compliment in (10), the responder does the second evaluation which stands in disagreement with the compliment. These two conflicting evaluations can be seen from the positive evaluation of the speaker about *montormu kok apik banget* (your motorcycle is very good) and the negative one from the responder (R) *sampun dangu* 'it is an old one'. However, this negative assessment is used to avoid self-praise (by lowering himself) as motivated by the concept of *andhap-asor*. In contrast, such strategy (the negative assessment or self-denigration in responding to compliments) in another language (e.g. English) as suggested by Brown and Lavinson (1987: 68) may be interpreted that the responder does not appreciate the CD's assessment about the compliment object, and this strategy can be considered as an impolite

way of responding to a compliment (in English).

Disagreeing, and raising a question

The second way of responding to compliments for Javanese is to make disagreement with the CD, and to raise a question to observe whether the speaker really gives a compliment, as demonstrated by (11).

- (11) (CD): Omahmu kok resik banget.
(What a clean house, it is!)
(R): Menopo inggih? Panjenengan rak dereng mirsani kamaripun lare-lare.
(Are you kidding? You have not seen the kids' rooms)

In (11), the responder delivers a question *menopo inggih* which literally means 'is it right?' Then, (s)he presents an argument by locating an intended exception *kamaripun lare-lare* 'the kids' rooms'. As in (10), this response also implies a disagreement and is indirectly used to humble the responder himself in responding to a compliment in Javanese as motivated by the concept of *andhap-asor*, which is again in contrast to the general theory of politeness as suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987).

Accepting and turning back

Thirdly, the responder can also accept the compliment (positive assessment), but it will be immediately followed by 'turning it back' to the CD. The strategy of returning a compliment can be seen as a direct result of the indebted nature of the compliment. This strategy, returning the achievement to the CD, will help the responder to get out of the debt.

- (12) (CD): Kabare anakmu wis lulus saka sekolah kedokteran.
(I heard that your son/daughter has already graduated from the Fac. of Medicine)

(R): Inggih, saking pangestunipun panjenengan.
(Right, it is because of your blessing and prayers)

- (13) (CD): Aku yakin kuliahmu bakal rampung tahun iki.
(I am sure that you will be able to graduate your study this year)
(R): Matur nuwun, pangestunipun.
(Thank you, I hope your blessing and prayers)

The returning of the compliment is achieved by a simple utterance *pangestunipun* which means 'thanks to your blessing/prayers'. In this way, one implies that in fact the wishes and prayers of the speech partner contributed to his success (illustrated by data (12)) or it will make it come true (as demonstrated by data (13)), even if the addressee has nothing to do with it whatsoever.

Accepting and giving explanation

Next, the strategy of responding to a compliment is to accept it and then to give an explanation of the achievement. In this strategy, the responder explains either the effect of the compliment, the cause of the compliment, or the source of the object of the compliment obtained from. This strategy can be demonstrated respectively by the following examples.

- (14) (CD): Kabare anakmu wis lulus saka sekolah kedokteran.
(I heard that your son/daughter had graduated from the Fac. of Medicine)
(R): Leres, sapunika piyambakipun sampun saget *ceker* piyambak.
(It is alright, and now he/she has been able to earn money for himself)
- (15) (CD): Aku melu seneng kowe kepilih dadi mahasiswa teladan.
(I share your happiness that

- you are appointed to be a distinguished student)
- (R): Maturnuwun, sedayapunika namung amargi kulo sregep sinau.
(Thank you, I can achieve it, merely because I studied diligently)
- (16) (CD): Waduh klambimu anyar ya?
(Wow ... your shirt is new, isn't it?)
- (R): Inggih, Si mbah ingkang numbasaken.
(Yes, it was my grandma/pa who bought it for me)

This kind of explanation may have a double function. It implicitly indicates that the responder agrees with the CD about the compliment and simultaneously it denigrates him/herself. For example, instead of the verb phrase *pados arto* 'to earn money for his/her own living', the responder in (14) chooses the verb *ceker* 'to scratch'. The word *ceker* is commonly used for birds. The responder chooses this word simply because he does not want to praise himself as the parent of a doctor of medicine (since to be a doctor of medicine in Java suggests high prestige).

The explanation of the responder in (15) is used to indicate that the achievement *dadi mahasiswa teladan* 'to be a distinguished student' is easy to obtain, or to emphasize that hard-work, or conscious effort rather than natural talent or inborn quality, is the cause of the achievement. In other words, every student can be a distinguished student if he/she wants to work hard.

Another device to humble himself can also be done by providing an explanation of the possession which is given by someone as demonstrated by (16). However, it is not necessarily someone else (grandma/pa) who bought the address (it is very often the speaker himself who bought it). He refers to grandma/pa, in this

strategy, because this statement suggests that grandma/pa is the one who more deserves to receive the compliment rather than the responder.

Accepting only, or accepting and offering

Finally, one can also respond to a compliment in Javanese by accepting it only, or accepting the compliment and offering the object of the compliment to the CD. In this strategy, compliments can be regarded a face-threatening act (Brown and Levinson, 1987) to the extent that they imply the complimented envies of the addressee in some way or would like to have something belonging to the addressee. In Samoan culture, as illustrated by Holmes (1988: 448), an expression of admiration for an object imposes an obligation on the addressee to offer it to the CD. This phenomenon to some extent applies to the cultural context of Javanese, with two conditions:

- (17) a. the CD is socially higher than the responder, and
- b. the object is not considered too expensive for the CD.

The purpose of the first condition (17a) is to save face. Since face is considered as a way of referring to a personal self-image, it is closely linked to status or prestige (Watts et al, 1992: 9). Therefore, 'face' is counted as the essential element of politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

In Javanese, unlike in English, a genuine compliment for a small thing such as: food or drink is almost never found. The reason for this is that the most likely interpretation of this compliment is as a request (the CD wants to have the object). However, if the CD is socially much higher than the responder, we have to respect him by receiving the compliment of a small thing as if it were a genuine compliment. An attempt to offer the admired object of the compliment to the CD means that we

do not respect her/him in giving a compliment. This action, in turn, can destroy the CD's face (s/he loses her/his face because the illocutionary acts may threaten the speech partner's face, or FTA according to Brown and Levinson, 1987). In a short, the motivation of accepting the compliment only (without offering it to him) is to save his face. The application of these conditions can be seen from the following data.

Context: the speaker (CD) is a lecturer, and the addressee (R) is a student.

Speech Levels: the speaker (CD) using Ng, Responder(R) using KI

(18) (CD): Wah jeruke gembel banget, lan ketoke wis tuek-tuek.
(Wow ... your orange tree is full of fruit, and it seems to turn ripe)

(R) : Oh inggih.
(Yes, it is right)

Context: The CD and the responder are close friends (both are students), both using Ng speech level.

(19)(CD): Wah jeruke gembel banget, lan ketoke wis tuek-tuek.
(Wow ... your orange tree is full of fruit, and it seems to turn ripe)

(R): Oh ya. Tunggu-nen sedelok ya, tak-pek-no.
(That's right, Wait a moment, I'll take some for you)

The response of the compliment of (18) is simply a short answer *Oh inggih* 'Yes, it is right'. This means that the addressee agrees with the CD. He respects the CD by appreciating the compliment as if it were a genuine compliment because he has a higher social status (a lecturer) than the addressee (a student). In this context,

an attempt to immediately offer the admired object (although the object is not too expensive for the addressee) to the CD will violate rule (17a) above. Consequently, it can damage the CD's face, e.g. to be greatly embarrassed, and denigrate him. Such an action will be constrained by the concept of *andhap-asor*. In other words, politeness can also be used to protect the hearer's face as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). As a good Javanese, however, we should also have a sense of *tanggap ing sasmita* which can be translated as to be able to interpret the hidden will of the speaker. Therefore, the compliment in (18) should be interpreted not only as a compliment but also as a disguised request from the CD (to have the orange fruit), as suggested by Grice (1981) what he meant in this context is distinct from what he said. So, later in the evening, for example, the responder will send some orange fruit to the CD's house.

In contrast, the addressee in (19) can directly offer the object of the compliment to the CD. It is possible to do so because both the CD and the responder are equal (both are students, or they are close friends). Therefore, offering the object of the compliment in this context will not humble the CD.

CONCLUSION

In summary, there are some strategies to respond to compliments in Javanese politely. They are: (1) by disagreeing and denigrating, (2) by disagreeing, and raising a question, (3) by accepting and turning it back to the CD, (4) by accepting and giving an explanation, and (5) by accepting it only, or by accepting and offering. These politeness strategies can be examined mainly through the concept of Javanese cultures, especially *andhap-asor* and *tanggap ing sasmita*. First, one must be able to apply the concept of *andhap-asor* in responding to compliment by denigrating himself. Consequently, whether the responder disagrees or accepts the

compliment is followed by an explanation which is used to humble him/herself. Second, a good Javanese should also have a sense of *tanggap ing sasmita* while responding to the compliment. Therefore, s/he is able to interpret the hidden meaning, for instance by sending the intended object to the CD. The ability to demonstrate these two factors tends to epitomize politeness in the eyes of the discourse partners. Consequently, failure to apply one of the factors can be detrimental to the speaker, reducing the harmony of the conversation.

The results of this study imply that languages may vary cross-culturally. In relation to politeness, for example, what may be polite in one language can be impolite in another language. An important lesson that can be drawn from this study is that to be able to communicate in a language properly does not only depend on how many words which are mastered, and how good the knowledge of the grammar of the language, but also depends on how good our knowledge at the socio-cultural background which supports how the language operates. The lesson also suggests that teaching a (second or foreign) language which belongs to different language family from the first language requires not only teaching the vocabulary and the grammar but also teaching the socio-cultural background of the language.

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