

## Research Article

# “Pak SUSNO cerdas banget” Compliment as a Realization of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategy in Netizen Responses on YouTube

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**Abstract.**

In interacting, speakers will try to build harmony with their speech partners so that their speech is polite and not face threatening. Likewise with netizens when responding to uploads on YouTube. Even though based on surveys by Microsoft, Indonesian netizens are said to be uncivilized, but there are many netizens who maintain politeness in interacting. One strategy used is to compliment. This phenomenon is interesting to describe through research. The research aimed to describe and explain the use of compliments as a realization of the Brown and Levinson netizen's politeness strategy in responding to uploads on YouTube. This research was a descriptive qualitative research using a cyberpragmatic perspective. The research data were utterances that realized Brown and Levinson's compliment strategy. Research data sources: (1) Pidato pertama Moeldoko usai terpilih sebagai ketum Demokrasi versi KLB Deli Serdang ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH\\_LeUYEtkk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH_LeUYEtkk)), (2) SBY soal KLB Moeldoko (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAtliAnUxEU>), (3) ILC-Suhu politik semakin memanas (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDUwkJJSCA4>), dan (4) ILC-Di balik polisi tembak polisi ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_4bjW51ef3Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4bjW51ef3Y)). The data were taken by the documentation method using the technique of “simak bebas libat cakap (SBLC)”. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using descriptive techniques following the stages of the interactive model. Based on the results of data analysis, it can be found that the realization of compliments as a politeness strategy includes (1) compliment for attitude, (2) compliment for character, (3) compliment for behavior, (4) compliment for speech, (5) compliment for intelligence, (6) compliment for academic achievement, and (7) compliment for work performance. The results of this research strengthens the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson, enriches the study of cyber pragmatics, and can also be implemented in learning, especially in building the character of students.

**Keywords:** compliment, netizen response, politeness strategies, youtube

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## 1. Introduction

In interacting, speakers will try to build harmony with their interlocutors so that their speech is polite and not face threatening [1,2]. Likewise with netizens when responding to uploads on YouTube. Even though based on surveys, Indonesian netizens are said to be uncivilized [3,4] but there are still many netizens who maintain politeness in interacting. One strategy used is by using compliment. This phenomenon is interesting to describe through research. Many studies have been conducted that apply Brown and Levinson's [1] theory of politeness [2,5–9] but those that focus on the sub-strategy of giving compliments have not been conducted.

In this study, Brown and Levinson's [1] theory of politeness is used. Politeness is a way to maintain and save face. This is based on the assumption that most speech acts always threaten the face of the speaker and the person being said. Politeness in language is an effort to mitigate this face threat. The concept of face was adopted from Goffman's (1967) view of the Person Model which is actually taken from local wisdom values originating from Classical Chinese culture, namely about *mianzi* and *lian*. *Mianzi* represents the social perception of a person's self-worth which is built through *lian* as a person's morality. The concept of face was first introduced by a Chinese anthropologist named Hsien Chi Hu in 1944 with his article entitled *The Chinese Concept of "face"* which was published in *American Anthropologist*. This concept was then applied by Erving Goffman in his studies of interpersonal communication [1,10].

There are two main things in Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness, namely rationality and face. These two things are stated as universal characteristics possessed by all speakers and speech partners which are personified in a universal model person (MP) [1,2].

Brown and Levinson [1] state that in carrying out an FTA a model person can use one of the five strategies offered, namely (1) performing speech acts directly (bald on record), (2) performing speech acts using positive politeness strategies, (3) performing speech acts using negative politeness strategies, (4) performing speech acts covertly/indirectly (bald off record), and (5) speaking silently or not performing speech acts.

Furthermore Brown and Levinson [1] describe 15 strategies that can be used by a Model Person. These strategies are as follows. (1) Paying attention to the interlocutor's preferences, desires and needs, (2) Increasing attention, approval and sympathy for the interlocutor, (3) Intensifying the interlocutor's attention by dramatizing events or facts, (4) Using group identity markers (forms of greeting, dialect, jargon or slang), (5) Seek agreement with a general topic or repeat part/entire speech. (6) Avoiding disagreement

by pretending to agree, pseudo-agreement, deceiving for good (white-lies, hedging opinions), (7) Showing things that are considered to be similar through small talk (small talk). talk) and presuppositions, (8) Using jokes, (9) Expressing understanding of the wishes of the interlocutor, (10) Making offers or promises, (11) Showing optimism, (12) Involving the speaker and interlocutor in activities, (13) Providing questions or asking for reasons, (14) Expressing a reciprocal relationship, and (15) Giving gifts (goods, sympathy, attention, cooperation) to the interlocutor [1,2,10,11]. Compliment is also in the part of 15th position of positive politeness strategy of Brown and Levinson.

This research also used a cyberpragmatics perspective. This research also used a cyberpragmatics perspective. Cyberpragmatics was introduced in 2001 for cognitive pragmatic studies of internet-mediated communication [12,13]. The main interest is the analysis of how information is produced and interpreted in the internet environment. Cyberpragmatics is also interested in how users access contextual information (often limited when compared to other contextual situations). The main goal of analysis in Cyberpragmatics is to determine the extent to which the qualities of these cybermedia influence estimates of relevance, that is, how they influence the assessment of the cognitive effects that may be derived and the mental effort required in return. In this sense, a number of “shifts” of relevance can be produced by different qualities for internet-mediated communication [12,13].

The focus of this research was the use of compliments by netizens in responding to uploads on YouTube as a realization of Brown and Levinson’s [1] language politeness strategy. The aims of the research were to describe and explain the use of compliment as a realization of the Brown and Levinson netizen’s politeness strategy in responding to uploads on YouTube.

## 2. Method

This research used a qualitative approach because it was closely related to natural phenomena [14,15]. This type of research was descriptive research. In this research, the phenomenon of using compliment strategies as a realization of Brown and Levinson’s [1] politeness strategy by Indonesian netizens was described. A cyberpragmatic perspective is also used in this research because netizen interactions in responding to uploads on YouTube are mediated by the internet [13,16]. The research data was utterances of netizens that realize Brown and Levinson’s compliment strategy. Research data sources: (1) Pidato pertama Moeldoko usai terpilih sebagai ketua Demokrasi versi KLB Deli Serdang ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH\\_LeUYEtkk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH_LeUYEtkk)), (2) SBY soal

KLB Moeldoko (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAtliAnUxEU>), (3) ILC-Suhu politik semakin memanas (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDUwkJJSCA4>), and (4) ILC-Di balik polisi tembak polisi ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_4bjW51ef3Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4bjW51ef3Y)). The data were taken by the documentation method using the technique of simak bebas libat cakap (SBLC) [17,18]. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using descriptive techniques following the stages of the interactive model of Miles and Huberman [19]

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1. Results

Based on the results of data analysis, it could be found that the realization of compliment as a politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson includes: (1) compliment for attitude, (2) compliment for character, (3) compliment for behavior, (4) compliment for speech, (5) compliment for intelligence, (6) compliment for academic achievement, and (7) compliment for work performance. Each phenomenon will be explained as follows.

##### 1. Compliment for Attitude

The used of attitude compliance strategies by Indonesian netizens can be seen in the following data.

(1)

Papa Muda

Ga nyesel dulu pilih bapak SBY 2 periode, bapak **sangat bijak & berwibawa**. bapak juga **amanah** dalam menjalankan tugas presiden ☑

(2)

Baihaki Almalik

salut buat **bang Rocky yg sabar** menghadapi orang yg seluruh tubuhnya mulut semua.

(3)

cebong\_bipang

@Oppa Arif Susno Duadji membongkar kasus simulator SIM di kubu polri. Makanya dia di geser.. Beliau itu **orang jujur**.

In (1) a netizen named Papa Muda praised SBY's attitude by stating: bapak **sangat bijak & berwibawa** (Mr Sby is very wise and authoritative). The word **amanah** is also used in statements, bapak juga **amanah** dalam menjalankan tugas presiden (You are also trustworthy in carrying out the duties of the president). In (2), a netizen who calls

himself Baihaki Almalik praised Rocky Gerung's patient attitude in dealing with people who don't like him. The netizen stated, salut buat **bang Rocky yg sabar...** (Brother Rocky, who is patient), while in (3) a netizen who calls himself cebong bipang praised Susno Duaji by stating: **Beliau orang yang jujur** (He is an honest person).

### 1. Compliment for Character

The used of character compliance strategies by Indonesian netizens can be seen in the following data.

(3)

Akhyar Akhyar

@Sri Hartono pak Susno dari dulu **memang konsisten** waktu masih aktif.. Sampai diberhentikan karna membongkar simulator sim dlm kubu polri

(4)

### 3.1.1. Life Boy

Benar, **pak sby itu orang baik**. Dia sdh sering difitnah tpi gak pernah melawan rakyatnya sendiri **bijaksana sekali...** walaupun namanya d hancurkan sehancur2nya oleh pihak2 yg menghalalkan segala cara...tentunya dengan cara2 mereka yg sangat memalukan..tp.... pak SBY...selalu menghadapi segala problem dengan **wajah dan tutur kata bijaksananya** dan **nggak pernah berpaling atau kabur dr masalah...tetap tenang....** dan dalam hati terdalam kami... ada doa terselip untuk pak SBY

(5)

santo cang

@Andri andri jozzzzz ini baru laki bener. bukan hanya bs curhat sambil mewek". udah g laku lagi politik mewek" lebay ya kan bro.

In (3) a netizen named Akhyar Akhyar praised Mr. Kusno with the words **memang konsisten** (it's consistent), while in (4) Life Boy praised SBY's character with the following statement. **Pak sby itu orang baik, bijaksana sekali, wajah dan tutur kata bijaksananya, nggak pernah berpaling atau kabur dr masalah, dan tetap tenang** (Mr. Sby is a good person, very wise, his face and words are wise, he never turns away or runs away from problems, and remains calm). In (5), saint Cang praised Moledoko's character with a statement, **jozzzz ini baru laki bener** (jozzzz this is just a real man).

### 1. Compliment for Behavior

The used of behavior compliance strategies by Indonesian netizens can be seen in the following data.

(6)

budi purnomo

PAK SUSNO ADALAH **ORANG HEBAT DAN BERSIH** SEMOGA INSTANSI KEPOLISIAN SEKARANG ADA YANG MENGIKUTI JEJAKNYA. SEHAT TERUS PAK SUSNO. TUHAN SELALU BESERTAMU.

(7)

### 3.1.2. Jasta Jasta

Ini baru mantan PRESIDEN cerdas cakap bijak dan bikin adem serta sistematis pidatonya....bukan kayak yg itu...

In (6) Budi Purnomo praised Mr. Kusno as **ORANG HEBAT DAN BERSIH** (GREAT AND CLEAN MAN) which was continued with the hope that the Police would follow suit, while in (7) Jasta Jasta praised SBY as **mantan PRESIDEN cerdas cakap bijak, bikin adem, dan sistematis pidatonya** (The former PRESIDENT is intelligent, wise, calm and systematic in his speeches).

#### 1. Compliment for Speech

The used of speech compliance strategies by Indonesian netizens can be seen in the following data.

(8)

Rubi anyah

Salam hormat Komjen Susno Duadji, **penjelasan anda luar biasa... sangat mudah di pahami..** semoga kasus ini secepatnya terungkap dan pelaku nya segera d tangkap

(9)

Edi Santoso

Penguasaan bahasa Indonesia SBY **benar-benar nomer wahid. Baik sekali.**

In (8), a netizen named Rubi Anyah praised Komjen Susno Duadji for his ability to speak with stated, **penjelasan anda luar biasa, sangat mudah di pahami** (Your explanation is extraordinary, very easy to understand). In (9), Edi Santoso praised SBY's speech by stating, **benar-benar nomer wahid dan baik sekali** (really number one and very good).

#### 1. Compliment for Intelligence

The used of intelligence compliance strategies by Indonesian netizens can be seen in the following data.

(8)

Rajin Komen

Bapak SUSNO **cerdas banget**

(9)

Kang Ovan

SBY itu di militer dulu **dikenal sebagai perwira pintar. Mungkin salah satu prajurit terpintar** yang pernah ada di Indonesia. Ga main2, beliau itu **seorang Doktor (S3)**, bahkan sekarang (saya liat di mbah google) **beliau sudah menjadi Profesor**. Saat menjadi Presiden, beliau sering berpidato tanpa teks dengan tatanan bahasa yang sangat baik, terstruktur dan jelas, baik bahasa Indonesia maupun English, menggambarkan kecerdasan beliau.

Pada (8) netizen yang menamakan dirinya Rajin Komen memuji Bapak Kusno dengan menyatakan, **cerdas banget** (very smart), sedangkan pada (9), netizen yang menamakan dirinya Kang Ovan memuji kecerdasan SBY dengan beberapa ungkapan berikut. **dikenal sebagai perwira pintar, salah satu prajurit terpintar, seorang Doktor (S3), beliau sudah menjadi Profesor** (known as a smart officer, one of the smartest soldiers, a Doctor (S3), he has become a Professor).

### 1. Compliment for Academic Achievement

The used of academic achievement compliance strategies by Indonesian netizens can be seen in the following data.

(10)

the logok

@Abung Tara **peringkat no 1 SMA TN**, peraih adhi makayasa AKMIL (mental, fisik, dan akademis) dan **nilai nya blm ad yg menyaingi, masuk ke program future leader dari TNI** diambil dri angkatan 1990-2004 yg terbaik.....

At (10) a netizen who called himself the logok responded to Abung Tara who questioned AHY's achievements as General Chair of the Dekokrat Party. The logok praised AHY using the following expression: **peringkat no 1 SMA TN, nilai nya blm ad yg menyaingi**, and **masuk ke program future leader dari TNI** (ranked number 1 in SMA TN, his grades have not yet been matched, and entered the TNI's future leader program).

### 1. Compliment for Work Performance

The used of work performance compliance strategies by Indonesian netizens can be seen in the following data.

(11)

Yoh\_ana

PAK SUSNO **MANTAN RESERSE HANDAL ILMU YANG DIMILIKINYA MUMPUNI TIDAK DIRAGUKAN** LAGI TERBUKTI DARI **ANALISA DAN DATA-DATA SANGAT AKURAT STRUKUR TERARAH**, HINGGA **SAMPAI SECARA DETAIL KRONOLOGI YANG DIPAPARKANYA. MUDAH DIPAHAMI**. SUARAKAN TERUS KEBENARAN SAYA ANGKST JEMPOL BUAT PAK JENDRAL SUSNO.

(12)

### 3.1.3. Dewi Anggraini

**Di zaman kepemimpinan pak SBY rakyat gak se sengsara ini kayak sekarang.** kangen dipimpin oleh orang seperti bapak. **Pintar, bijak, sayang dan cinta rakyat** sampai gak terasa 10 tahun rasanya sangat singkat.

In (11) a netizen who calls himself Yoh ana praised Pak Susno by stating, **MAN-TAN RESERSE HANDAL, ILMU YANG DIMILIKINYA MUMPUNI TIDAK DIRAGUKAN, ANALISA DAN DATA-DATA SANGAT AKURAT STRUKUR TERARAH, SAMPAI SECARA DETAIL KRONOLOGI YANG DIPAPARKANYA, MUDAH DIPAHAMI** (former reliable research, the knowledge he has is undoubted, the analysis and data are very accurate with directed structure, to the detail of the chronology which he exposes, it's easy to understand), while in (12), Dewi Anggraini praised his era of SBY's leadership which succeeded in making the people less miserable. Dewi Anggraini praised SBY's performance by stating, **Di zaman kepemimpinan pak SBY rakyat gak se sengsara ini kayak sekarang** (During the era of Mr. SBY's leadership, the people were not as miserable as they are now). The netizen also praised SBY's character as: **pintar, bijak, sayang dan cinta rakyat** (smart, wise, dear and love the people).

## 3.2. Discussion

Based on the research results, it is known that the strategy of giving praise is the realization of positive politeness sub-strategies. Brown and Levinson [1] found seven sub-strategies, namely (1) compliment for attitude, (2) compliment for character, (3) compliment for behavior, (4) compliment for speech, (5) compliment for intelligence, (6) compliment for academic achievement, and (7) compliment for work performance.



The results of this research are different from previous research which examined the full application of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies [9,11] or only partial realization of Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness strategies, for example positive politeness strategies or only negative politeness strategies or realization of negative and positive politeness [2,20–22].

In Widiadnya, et al. [20] stated that in the interaction between teachers and students in the classroom, language politeness strategies are applied. They avoid face-threatening acts so that communication runs efficiently by using bald on record. There are four aspects of teacher and student communication in the classroom, namely respectful communication between teacher and students, cooperative interaction between teacher and students, less imposition and indirectness in the teaching and learning process and togetherness between teacher and students. In this research, the bald on record strategy used for teacher communication with their students was not explained.

Mahmud [21] found the use of negative and positive politeness strategies in student interactions at universities, especially in Makassar, for example the strategy of apologizing and giving greetings as a realization of negative politeness strategies, while the positive politeness strategy found was the use of forms of greeting as group markers. This research also does not explain in detail Brown and Levinson's (1987) negative and positive politeness strategies used in student interactions in class. Mahmud concluded several strategies of politeness of Brown and Levinson (1987) were used by the English students in their presentation both positive politeness and negative politeness. This finding shows that the idea of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) is applicable in Indonesian EFL classroom context, especially in Makassar. The findings from this study also show that a cross-cultural context study of politeness is required in order to examine the cultural influence in practicing politeness in the class. Practices of politeness by English university students in Makassar are proved to be influenced by religious and cultural aspects of the interlocutors. Mahmud's research (2019) used data sources from Makassar students in interacting in class. This is different from this research which uses data sources from Indonesian netizens who responded on YouTube.

Senowarsito [22] conducted an in-depth study of the use of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies on student-lecturer interactions in ESL classes. The politeness strategies used include positive politeness strategies, negative politeness strategies, and bald on-record strategies. Positive politeness strategies are carried out mainly by reducing facial threats using group identity markers and expressions of sympathy, showing respect and establishing close relationships, and friendly and enthusiastic facial expressions. The negative politeness strategies was applied in making imperative

expressions, softening the direct expressions with the conventionally polite expression 'please', lessening the imposition and the power of the message, using the affirmative form to satisfy a request, and creating an impression of options. These strategies include hedging and presenting disagreements as opinions. While bald on record strategy was mainly employed by the teachers in giving commands and instructions, and making requests. This strategy was applied by using direct speech acts, not trying to minimize the threat to the students' face, and imposing and creating pressure on the students.

The results of this research can be used to develop Brown and Levinson's [1] politeness theory, especially the fifteenth positive politeness substrategy, Giving gifts (goods, sympathy, attention, cooperation) to the interlocutor. Giving gifts can take the form of giving praise to the person you are talking to, which includes seven sub-strategies for giving compliments.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be found that the realization of compliment as a politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson included: (1) compliment for attitude, (2) compliment for character, (3) compliment for behavior, (4) compliment for speech, (5) compliment for intelligence, (6) compliment for academic achievement, and (7) compliment for work performance. The results of this research strengthen the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987), enrich the study of cyberpragmatics, and can be implemented in learning, especially in building the character of students.

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