

THE INFLUENCE OF INTERPERSONAL SOLIDARITY ON THE
CHOICE OF REFUSAL STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Refusal is a face threatening act because it contradicts with the expectations of the speaker and therefore, is not a preferred speech act. However, the speech act of refusal cannot be avoided as it is part of our daily communication. Therefore, this study is carried out to perceive how Malaysians, a collectivist society, handle refusal. The present study investigates the effects of interpersonal solidarity on the choice of refusal strategies made by Malaysians as well as the most frequently used refusal strategy by Malaysian men and women respectively, with regards to wedding invitations. These objectives are expressed through three research questions. The data, taken from a social network called Facebook, comprises written refusal expressions to wedding invitations. The Interpersonal Solidarity Scale was used to find out the interpersonal solidarity between the participants and the wedding hosts. A total of 200 refusal expressions from five weddings were taken as data for this study and they were analysed and coded according to an adapted framework of refusal strategies that is developed from a combination of the frameworks proposed by Beebe et al. (1990) and Campillo et al. (2009). The findings indicate that interpersonal solidarity does not influence the choice of refusal strategies; and the most frequently used strategy by both Malaysian men and women is REGRET/ APOLOGY. Observations on the use of linguistic forms and patterns of refusal expressions identified in the data are discussed in detail as well.

ABSTRAK

Penolakan adalah lakuan tutur yang kurang disukai dan mengancam wajah kerana ia bercanggah dengan harapan atau keinginan penutur. Walau bagaimanapun, lakuan tutur penolakan tidak boleh dielakkan kerana ia merupakan sebahagian daripada komunikasi harian kita. Oleh kerana itu, objektif/tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti bagaimana warga Malaysia, sebuah masyarakat kolektivis, mengendalikan lakuan tutur penolakan. Kajian ini mengkaji kesan perpaduan interpersonal pada pilihan strategi penolakan yang dibuat oleh rakyat Malaysia serta strategi penolakan yang paling kerap digunakan oleh lelaki dan wanita warga Malaysia, dalam konteks jemputan perkahwinan. Objektif ini dinyatakan melalui tiga persoalan kajian. Data bagi kajian ini, yang diambil daripada suatu rangkaian sosial yang disebut Facebook, terdiri daripada ungkapan tertulis yang bertujuan menolak jemputan perkahwinan. Skala Perpaduan Interpersonal (Interpersonal Solidarity Scale) telah digunakan untuk menilai perpaduan interpersonal antara responden eserta dan pengantin. Sebanyak 200 ungkapan bertujuan penolakan daripada lima jemputan perkahwinan telah diambil sebagai data untuk kajian ini dan ungkapan-ungkapan ini telah dianalisis/diteliti dan dikodkan mengikut rangka kerja strategi penolakan yang telah diubahsuaikan berdasarkan rangka kerja yang dicadangkan oleh Beebe et al. (1990) dan Campillo et al. (2009). Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa perpaduan interpersonal tidak mempengaruhi pilihan strategi penolakan; dan strategi yang paling kerap digunakan oleh kedua-dua lelaki dan wanita warga Malaysia adalah PENYESALAN/ PERMOHONAN MAAF (REGRET/ APOLOGY). Pemerhatian ke atas ciri-ciri

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. ISS - Interpersonal Solidarity Scale
2. DCT - Discourse Completion Test
3. CMC - Computer-Mediated Communication
4. IFID - Illocutionary Force Indicating Device
5. MCD - Membership Categorisation Devices