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WORD COUNT CHARACTER COUNT

5022 Words 29369 Characters

PAGE COUNT FILE SIZE

14 Pages 40.0KB

SUBMISSION DATE REPORT DATE

Sep 23, 2024 4:06 PM GMT+7 Sep 23, 2024 4:07 PM GMT+7

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ANALYSIS OF POSITIVE POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED BY ELLEN IN HER INTERVIEW WITH KRIS AND KYLIE JENNER

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Abstract

Talk shows like The Ellen Show often attract significant attention. As the host, Ellen DeGeneres employs politeness strategies to maintain relationships and create a comfortable atmosphere with her guests. In everyday communication, understanding the meaning of sentences is crucial for sustaining good social relationships. Politeness, which is a branch of pragmatics, focuses on the use of polite speech strategies, with positive politeness being the primary strategy to show care and respect for the social and psychological needs of others. This study explores the positive politeness strategies used by Ellen DeGeneres in her interview with Kris and Kylie Jenner, as well as the factors influencing her choice of strategies. The study aims to identify the positive politeness strategies employed by Ellen DeGeneres and the factors that affect them. Data were thered from an interview aired on YouTube on August 10, 2023, and analyzed using Spartley's analysis model domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis). Frown and Levinson's (1987) theory was utilized to identify the categories of strategies and the factors influencing their selection. The results of this study show that out of seventy-one data findings, the strategies of giving attention and exaggerating were the most frequently used, each occurring thirteen times. The strategy of intensifying the feeling of interest appeared eleven times, showing agreement eight times, jokes seven times, giving or asking for reasons six times, understanding desires five times, giving gifts five times, involving the speaking partner once, using in-group identity markers once, and offering/promising once. The most dominant factors influencing the choice of strategies were payoff with forty-one instances and relevant circumstances with thirty instances. In conclusion, the use of positive politeness strategies such as giving attention and exaggerating is driven by the need to maximize the social benefits of interaction. These strategies help strengthen interpersonal relationships and create a positive atmosphere, thereby enhancing trust and emotional satisfaction between the speaker and the interlocutor.

Keyword: Politeness, Strategy Positive Politeness, Factors, Talk Show

Introduction

Many social media platforms today provide spaces for discussion and information sharing, one of which is talk shows broadcast on television. A talk show is a program where several people discuss various topics in a relaxed yet serious atmosphere, guided by a host or presenter (Wahyuni, 2020). In addition to television, talk shows are now also accessible through various YouTube channels, allowing viewers to watch them anytime and anywhere.

In the competitive world of talk shows, the ability to create engaging and entertaining interactions is key to success (Wahyuni, 2020). One of the most popular talk shows is The Ellen Show, hosted by Ellen DeGeneres, known for its relaxed and humorous atmosphere. Ellen DeGeneres is highly skilled at managing conversations with her guests, making the use of language and communication style during interviews extremely important.

This phenomenon is relevant because interviews on television often involve complex interactions, especially with high-status celebrities. In this context, positive politeness strategies are necessary to maintain a friendly and warm atmosphere and to facilitate engaging conversations. Ellen DeGeneres, who has long been involved in the world of interviews, frequently adjusts her communication approach according to her guests. In one episode, the researcher chose to analyze her interactions with Kris and Kylie Jenner, who each have a unique speaking style. Kris is known for her assertive, confident, and formal yet warm communication, while Kylie is more relaxed with a soft tone of voice, relying on honesty and familiarity. These differences allow the researcher to observe how Ellen adapts her communication to each guest.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze the positive politeness strategies used by Ellen DeGeneres in her interviews with Kris Jenner and Kylie Jenner, two highly prominent public figures. The choice of *The Ellen Show* as the research object is based on its informal and relaxed format, which provides an ideal context for analyzing the use of positive politeness strategies. Interviews with well-known guests like Kris and Kylie Jenner add a layer of complexity to the interactions due to their high social status and different communication styles. This situation offers clear insights into how Ellen DeGeneres employs positive politeness strategies to manage relationships and the factors that may influence her choice of these strategies.

Research on politeness is often an intriguing topic because politeness can vary greatly across different cultures. Studying politeness helps identify differences and similarities in how people from diverse cultural backgrounds interact and express themselves. Furthermore, research on politeness contributes to social and ethical practices that impact social relationships. Many studies on politeness have utilized various data sources, such as films, podcasts, and talk shows. This indicates that politeness can be analyzed from different perspectives. Among the various data sources used in politeness research, there is a gap in studies that utilize talk shows as data sources. This gap encourages researchers to use talk shows as research subjects to provide new insights for readers.

The researcher found several previous studies related to this thesis, which have similar topics but different objects. The first study by Warouw et al. (2023) titled "An Analysis of Positive Politeness Strategy in Moana Movie" aimed to describe the effective politeness techniques used in the film Moana using a descriptive qualitative method. Conversations in the Moana film script served as the data source for this study. This study used the Brown and Levinson theory. The second study by Giraswati (2021) titled "An Analysis of Positive"

Politeness Strategy in the Film 'Freedom Writers' and Its Educational Value" aimed to analyze positive politeness strategies used in the film Freedom Writers. The goal of this study was to identify positive politeness strategies and the educational values in the film, as well as to explore the implications of the film in the field of education. The third study by Thoyyibah et al. (2021) titled An Analysis of Positive Politeness Strategy Used in 'Up' Movie" aimed to identify types of positive politeness strategies and contexts produced in the film "Up". This research focused on the utterances produced by characters in the film "Up" using the Brown and Levinson theory.

Based on the explanations of previous studies, there is a gap in the objects and focus of the research to be conducted. Previous studies largely used films as research objects. In contrast, this research uses talk shows as the research object. Additionally, previous studies focused only on positive politeness strategies and educational values, while this research focuses on positive politeness strategies and the factors influencing the choice of these strategies. Therefore, the reason for choosing this topic is to understand how hosts interview famous actresses using positive politeness strategies to keep Kylie and Kris Jenner's expressions positive, and to identify the factors influencing Ellen DeGeneres in choosing positive politeness strategies. In Ellen DeGeneres's role as a host, it is crucial to maintain a positive and cheerful atmosphere for the guests. One key way to achieve this is by using positive politeness strategies.

Review of Literature

Politeness is a branch of Pragmatics studies. In the context of Pragmatics, politeness manifests in the form of language in communication. When communicating with others, it is important to choose our words carefully to maintain politeness and uphold good relationships. Besides politeness in actions, politeness in language also needs to be considered. Politeness is a fundamental component of social structure. Brown and Levinson (1987) explain that the phenomenon of politeness is essentially reflected in language as a universal principle in human interaction. According to their theory, politeness is divided into four categories: Baldon-Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off-Record.

According to Herlina (2017), a speaker's positive face reflects their desire to be liked, accepted, respected, and valued by others. Every individual has a positive self-image and wants to protect their self-esteem. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), positive politeness is a form of compensation directed at the interlocutor's positive face, which is their

enduring desire for their wishes to be considered desirable. However, within positive politeness itself, Brown and Levinson (1987) identify 15 positive politeness strategies.

a. Giving Attention (interest, desires, needs and goods)

Brown and Levinson (1987), by pointing out that S (speaker) must pay attention to aspects of H (hearer) condition (obvious changes, extraordinary possessions, anything that looks as if H (hearer) wants S (speaker) to notice and approve of it. According to Mawaddah and Cahyono (2022), this strategy is used by speakers to please their listeners, giving the attention and addressing their interest and needs

b. Exaggerating (interest, approval, sympathy, etc)

In this second strategy, speaker will give exaggerated responses, statements and even exclamations to get listener positive face.

c. Intensify the Feeling of Interest

Brown and Levinson (1987), intensify interest in one's wn contribution (S) to the conversation by "making a good story", this can be done by using the present

d. Using Identity in a Group (equating one's Identity)

Brown and Levinson (1987), S implicitly claims similarities with H under the group's definitions, such as address, language, jargon and ellipsis in the group, other address forms used to convey such in-group membership include generic names and terms of address like "mac, mate, buddy, pal, honey, dear, duckie, luv, babe, mom, blondie, brother, sister, cutie, sweetheart, guys fellas...

e. Show Agreement

Brown and Levinson (1987), Raising a safe topic" allows S to emphasize his agreement with H and therefore satisfy H's desire to be right or to have his opinion confirmed

f. Avoid Disputes

In this collision avoidance strategy, S must maintain good interaction with H without any collisions with H.

g. Confirm Equality

Brown and Levinson (1987), Discussing the same general interests as H, has many opportunities to emphasize the common interests shared with H and the same attitude towards the event of interest.

h. Jokes

Brown and Levinson (1987), joking is a basic technique of positive politeness to make H comfortable

i. Understand Desires

Brown and Levinson (1987), potentially put pressure on H to cooperate with S by asserting or implying knowledge of H's desires and willingness to adapt his desires to those desires

j. Offer/Promise

Brown and Levinson (1987), offers and promises are a natural result of choosing this strategy

k. Be Optimistic

Brown and Levinson (1987), S assumes that H wants S desires for S and will help him obtain them.

l. Involve Speaking Partner

Brown and Levinson (1987), use the inclusive form that we form, whereas this means that you or I can use cooperative assumptions and still maintain a positive face

m. Give or Ask for Reason

Brown and Levinson (1987), By including H in practical reasoning and assuming reflexivity

n. Repay Kindness

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), The existence of cooperation between S and H can also be demanded or urged by providing evidence of reciprocal rights or obligations obtained between S and H

o. Give Gifts

In this explanation, what is meant by gifts is not only material gifts, but also forms of attention, sympathy and being listened to.

In this study, the selection of strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory is influenced by several key factors. The social relationship and status between Ellen DeGeneres and her guests, Kris and Kylie Jenner, play a crucial role in determining the positive politeness strategies used to strengthen their relationship. When employing positive politeness strategies, there are several factors that influence the speaker's choice of strategy. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), two main factors affecting the choice of politeness strategies are Payoff and Relevant Circumstances.

a. Payoff

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), they compiled a comprehensive list of the benefits associated with various politeness strategies, based on a priori considerations. These strategies include: Bald On-Record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record.

The Positive Politeness strategy is beneficial for strengthening relationships with the listener, making them feel accepted and appreciated. It is typically used when the speaker wants to build a better relationship. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), this strategy also helps to avoid or minimize the negative impact of FTAs, such as requests or offers. Speakers choose this strategy because it can reduce the impact of FTAs while also demonstrating appreciation and liking for the person they are speaking to.

b. Relevant Circumstances

In this situation, several factors influence it. Therefore, various elements determine the seriousness of an FTA, including sociological factors and the level of politeness. However, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), the seriousness of an FTA itself is influenced by factors such as: a social Distance (D), b) Relative Power (P), and c) Absolute Ranking (R). These factors will be discussed further in the following sections:

1. Social Distance (D)

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the assessment of D primarily involves measuring stable social distance, which reflects general social closeness in terms of giving and receiving positive face.

2. Relative Power (P)

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), P is a value attached to roles rather than to individuals themselves. This condition typically appears in hierarchical structures such as the military, courts, and government, where levels of politeness are applied to those with full authority. This value depends on social conditions rather than on the individual personally.

3. Absolut Ranking (R)

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the ranking of burdens is based on how much these burdens are perceived to interfere with an individual's desire for self-determination or obtaining consent. Thus, it can be interpreted that the size of the burden in R can be influenced by existing conditions.

Method

The researcher used several steps to collect data. First, the researcher watched the talk show video multiple times to observe the participants' conditions and transcribe the conversations. Second, the researcher carefully reviewed the video and transcript, focusing on Ellen DeGeneres' words as the subject of the research. In the final stage, the researcher analyzed Ellen DeGeneres' speech to identify and classify the positive politeness strategies used. The theory of positive politeness strategies and the factors influencing strategy selection by Brown and Levinson (1987) were used to analyze the collected data. Additionally, the

researcher applied Spradley's (1980) model as the data analysis technique, which includes four steps: domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme of analysis.

Results and Discussion

Results

A. Giving Attention

D011/1:52

Suddenly, you were here four years ago just launching the cosmetics line (1:52)

This statement falls into the "giving attention" strategy category, as it highlights the history, achievements, and career development of the interlocutor and provides explicit recognition and appreciation for their contributions. In a public conversation context, such attention helps guests feel more comfortable and open in sharing their stories, which enriches the interview and interaction with the audience. Thus, Ellen DeGeneres's use of positive politeness strategies is influenced by "Payoff", creating a warm and engaging conversational atmosphere and strengthening the social bond between Ellen and Kylie.

B. Exaggerating

D017/2:37

I would think and Travis probably like just walk around with wads of cash right (2:37)

This statement exaggerates Travis, Kylie Jenner's husband, by describing him as always carrying "wads of cash," which is rare in reality, especially in the digital age where electronic payments are more common. This term implies an extremely large amount of money, adding a dramatic and exaggerated effect. It is a form of hyperbole meant to emphasize how rich and successful he is. This strategy fits the conversational context because Ellen DeGeneres knows that her guest, familiar with the world of celebrities and luxury, will understand that the statement is part of her joking style. "Relevant Circumstances" play a crucial role here, as Ellen DeGeneres tailors her statement to the situation and social relationship, creating a warm and relaxed conversational atmosphere without causing discomfort.

C. Intensify the Feeling of Interest

D041/7:18

And lets talk about the birthday thing because there were pictures and they're beautiful pictures (7:18)

The speakers invite the interlocutor to discuss the birthday event by highlighting the beauty of the photos from the event. By mentioning the "very beautiful" photos and the birthday event, they create interest and anticipation, providing a positive effect that increases the attention of both the interlocutor and the audience, encouraging Kylie and Kris Jenner to share more about the celebration.

This statement employs the "intensify the feeling of interest" strategy by focusing on interesting details and using positive, enthusiastic language. The key factor in this strategy is the "payoff," referring to the benefits gained by the speaker from showing genuine interest in the topic. The strategy aims to create a comfortable and friendly atmosphere, making guests more open to sharing personal stories. As a result, Ellen DeGeneres achieves richer and more engaging conversations for her audience.

D. Show Agreement

D03/1:00

That easy because you're always on the show somebody is on the show (1:00)

The statement falls into the **"show agreement"** strategy as the speaker seeks approval from Kylie and Kris Jenner. By saying "it's easy because you're always on the show," Ellen DeGeneres expects them to agree and acknowledge their frequent appearances on the show. This helps gain approval and reinforces engagement in the conversation.

Ellen DeGeneres adjusts her communication style by recognizing the important role of the Jenner family on the show, creating a positive and appreciative conversational atmosphere. The "Relevant Circumstances" factor facilitates the application of this strategy by fostering a friendly and respectful dialogue, strengthening the relationship between Ellen DeGeneres and her guests. Stating that they are 'always on the show' emphasizes their involvement and demonstrates a close and accepted relationship with the audience.

E. Jokes

D034/5:57

Like, what you forget your children's name? (5:57)

In this situation, Ellen DeGeneres jokingly teased Kris, whether based on a real event or just for fun. This shows that the speaker and the interlocutor feel comfortable enough to joke about personal matters. The humor successfully grabs attention and keeps the conversation lively and engaging.

Overall, these two sentences fall into the "jokes" strategy category because humor is used to make the situation more relaxed and interesting. Kris and Kylie Jenner's smiles and

laughter indicate that the communication afterward became warmer and helped everyone feel more comfortable. Ellen's choice to use humor as a positive politeness strategy was influenced by the "Relevant Circumstances," given her close relationship with Kris, a mother from a well-known large family.

F. Give or Ask for Reason

D025/4:01

But do you feel has it changed you? (4:01)

The speaker inquires about the impact and reasons behind the changes experienced by the other person, using the strategy of 'Giving or Asking for Reasons.' The goal is to understand how significant these changes are in their personal life while demonstrating empathy and deep interest. The "payoff" of this strategy is to elicit emotional and profound responses, enriching the quality of the conversation. Ellen DeGeneres employs this approach to create more meaningful discussions and strengthen her connection with guests, making them feel valued and heard.

G. Understand Desires

D09/1:42

So Kylie says to you that she's interested in makeup (1:42)

This sentence falls under the "understand desires" strategy because the speaker demonstrates an understanding of Kylie's interest in makeup. By expressing this, the speaker shows care and empathy toward what is important to Kylie. The factor influencing this strategy is "Relevant Circumstances," which is evident in the relationship between Ellen DeGeneres and Kris Jenner. Ellen considers the close relationship between Kris and Kylie, as well as the public's attention to Kylie, and adjusts the conversation to create a supportive and intimate atmosphere. This also strengthens Ellen's relationship with her guests by showing attentiveness to their personal interests.

H. Give gifts

D027/4:33

She's great (4:33)

This statement directly praises Kris Jenner, the mother of the interlocutor, as a form of recognition for her positive qualities and contributions. By saying 'great,' the speaker expresses sincere appreciation for Kris, reinforcing the positive image of the interlocutor.

This sentence is influenced by "Relevant Circumstances," where the social context and the relationship between the speaker and the listener affect the effectiveness of the compliment. Due to the close relationship between the speaker and Kris Jenner or her family,

the compliment becomes relevant and appropriate. This statement reflects the speaker's appreciation of Kris's important role and understanding of the social values appreciated by the listener. The compliment also strengthens social bonds by enhancing familiarity and respect, creating a more positive and supportive atmosphere.

I. Involve Speaking Partner

D055/10:45

But why don't you come out here so we can talk? (10:45)

This statement uses the 'involve Speaking Partner' strategy by inviting the interlocutor to physically join the conversation. The phrase 'But why don't you come out there' removes physical barriers, allowing for a more natural interaction and showing appreciation for their presence.

The phrase 'so we can talk' further encourages personal engagement, creating a closer and more familiar atmosphere that enhances communication. The choice of this strategy is influenced by the "Payoff" factor, as the speaker expects benefits such as increased engagement and stronger relationships. This approach aims to create a more dynamic and positive conversation, fostering long-term improvements in interaction.

J. Using Identity in a Group

D054/9:56

So we flew in Samantha and 10 members of Nest of love (9:56)

Ellen DeGeneres, as a speaker, employs the strategy of "using identity in a group," which is reflected in her statements. "Nest of Love" is the name of an organization that highlights group identity and indicates the collective involvement of its members. The mention of "Samantha," the founder of the organization, along with 10 other members, signifies that they all belong to the same group. By utilizing group identity, Ellen DeGeneres successfully strengthens the sense of solidarity and closeness among members.

The factor influencing the use of this strategy is "Relevant circumstances," as the speaker is aware of the emotional connection the audience has with the individuals or groups mentioned. Through this strategy, the speaker can reinforce social bonds and demonstrate that they are part of the same group or at least understand and appreciate the existence of that group.

K. Offer/Promise

D071/16:08

I'll see you tomorrow be kind to one another (16:08)

The speaker's statement above indicates a "**promise**" or commitment to the interlocutor. The phrase 'I'll see you tomorrow' demonstrates the speaker's willingness to continue the interaction the following day. This provides assurance that the existing relationship will continue.

This strategy is driven by the factor of "Payoff," which refers to the benefits that can be gained by employing positive politeness. By making a figurative promise, Ellen DeGeneres creates a warm and friendly atmosphere, which can strengthen the relationship with Kris and Kylie. Guests who feel appreciated are more likely to return or continue maintaining a good relationship with Ellen.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that only eleven out of fifteen categories of positive politeness strategies were identified. The strategies of "giving attention" and "exaggerating" each appeared thirteen times, indicating that Ellen DeGeneres focused heavily on these strategies to show attentiveness and enhance emotional engagement in conversations. The strategy of "intensifying interest in the hearer" appeared eleven times, which supports the findings of this study, showing Ellen's efforts to increase interest during interviews. Other strategies, such as "seeking agreement" (eight times) and "giving or asking for reasons" (six times), were also used frequently, emphasizing the importance of agreement and providing explanations in building positive relationships with interviewees. Conversely, strategies like "using in-group identity markers" and "offering/promise" appeared only once, indicating that Ellen preferred other strategies more relevant to the interview context.

The dominance of the "giving attention" and "exaggerating" strategies reflects Ellen DeGeneres's effort to create a warm and friendly atmosphere. These strategies help maintain positive relationships with interviewees, ensuring that they feel valued and engaged. The significant use of the "intensifying interest in the hearer" strategy shows how Ellen aims to express deep interest in what the interviewee says, reinforcing the interviewee's sense of importance. Positive politeness strategies aim to build close and positive relationships, particularly in direct communication contexts like television interviews, where these strategies help interviewees feel appreciated and important, ultimately enhancing the quality of interaction and response. These findings suggest that strategies that boost attention and engagement are crucial in establishing positive relationships during interviews. Communication practitioners, especially in media, can leverage these strategies to improve interaction and elicit better responses from interviewees.

In this study, the choice of positive politeness strategies was influenced by the factors of Benefits and Relevant Circumstances. The Benefit factor appeared forty-one times, and the Relevant Circumstance factor appeared thirty times. Benefits refer to the advantages expected from using certain strategies. Sari and Sutopo (2024) state that using positive politeness strategies can offer several benefits to the speaker, such as eliciting positive responses from the interviewee and improving the quality of interaction. The Relevant Circumstance factor, as explained by Retnowaty (2015), includes social distance between the speaker and the hearer, which affects the choice of communication strategy. In interviews, the social context and interview objectives strongly influence which strategies are chosen to create and maintain a positive communication environment.

This study compares its findings with previous research by Warouw, Samola, and Sanger (2023), who analyzed positive politeness strategies in the film *Moana*. Their study found that the most dominant strategy was "intensifying interest in the hearer," used thirteen times, followed by "exaggerating" and "offering/promise," each used four times. Their focus was more on enhancing audience engagement, while this study highlights "giving attention" and "exaggerating" as the most frequently used strategies, each used thirteen times, with "intensifying interest in the hearer" also appearing significantly. Additionally, this study considers the factors of Benefits and Relevant Circumstances, providing a more comprehensive view of the motivations behind the choice of strategies. While Warouw et al.'s study did not cover these factors, this research shows a more varied use of strategies.

Another study by Riraswati (2021) on politeness strategies in the film *Freedom Writers* found that "giving or asking for reasons," "avoiding disagreement," and "giving gifts" were the most commonly used strategies, with a focus on educational values. In contrast, this research identified "giving attention" and "exaggerating" as the dominant strategies and also considered the factors of Benefits and Relevant Circumstances, which provide additional insights into the motivations behind the strategies. This study also shows more varied use of strategies in the context of interviews, differing from Riraswati's focus on educational values.

Moreover, the research by Toyyibah et al. (2021) on the film *Up* reveals that the strategy of "using in-group identity markers" was the most frequently used, differing from the focus of this study. They found that nine out of fifteen positive politeness strategies appeared in the film's dialogue, while this study identified more varied strategies in the context of interviews. The factors of Benefits and Relevant Circumstances were also not discussed in Toyyibah et al.'s research.

Overall, the findings of this study, when compared with previous research, show variations in the use of positive politeness strategies depending on the context and situation. While other studies focused on enhancing engagement or emphasizing educational values, this research underscores the importance of "giving attention" and "exaggerating" in building positive relationships in interviews, while also considering the factors that influence strategy choice.

Conclusion and Suggestion

This study highlights the importance of applying positive politeness strategies in television interviews and how contextual factors influence the choice of strategies to build positive relationships and enhance engagement. Additionally, it emphasizes that factors such as "Payoff" and "Relevant Circumstances" play a key role in shaping strategy selection, despite the study's focus being limited to television interviews. The research provides further insights into how positive politeness strategies can be applied in direct communication.

Although there are differences in the application and focus of positive politeness strategies across various situations, this study underscores the significant role of these strategies in improving and managing social relationships. The strategies of giving attention and exaggeration have been proven effective in increasing engagement and maintaining harmonious interactions during interviews.

Future research should expand its focus to include the use of positive politeness strategies beyond television interviews, such as in business discussions or online interactions. Further in-depth studies are also needed to explore how contextual factors like "Payoff" and "Relevant Circumstances" influence the effectiveness of these strategies in different situations. Media practitioners can utilize the strategies of giving attention and exaggeration to enhance the quality of interviews, while also adjusting strategies based on the interviewee's responses and the dynamics of the conversation.

Moreover, future studies should explore how cultural differences influence the use and perception of positive politeness strategies, and how different cultural norms impact the application and reception of these strategies. Experimental or survey methods can be employed to test the effectiveness of various positive politeness strategies in controlled situations, providing deeper insights into their effectiveness in different communication scenarios.

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