

Negotiating Price in the Elopement of the Sasak Culture: Politeness Acts in Disagreeing

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at how Sasak culture members employ diplomatic techniques to express disapproval when haggling over costs during elopement rites. Politeness gestures are language techniques for reducing face-threatening behaviours, such arguments, in order to preserve good social ties. Price negotiation inevitably happened during recorded discussions, which were analysed qualitatively for the study. The politeness theory developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) was used to assess the transcripts of the discussions. According to the research, interlocutor employ several politeness techniques when disagreeing, depending on the situation and their relationship to the other person. In situations where price of elopement is being discussed, interlocutors prefer to keep the relationship going over minimising face-threatening actions by using more positive politeness and off-the-record politeness techniques. Token agreement, pseudo-agreement, hedging opinions, comedy, and jokes all help to achieve positive politeness. The off-record politeness is realised through presupposing, overstating, metaphor, a rhetorical question, and irony. These findings contribute to our understanding of how interlocutors use language to manage social relationships in the context of disagreement. Findings of the present study may have implications for intercultural communication and conflict resolution, particularly in the context of negotiation skills and strategies involved in the post-elopement event among the Sasak.

Keywords: Politeness; Disagreeing; Elopement; Sasak Culture

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INTRODUCTION

The wedding and its associated rituals serve as a symbolic representation of women's actual place in society through the personal and home duties they play. The wedding process is known as *merarik* [elopement] among the Sasak society, and its various stages have given rise to opposing opinions about the unique cultural norms and traditions. The aim of the present study is to shed light on the negotiation tactics used by the Sasak when negotiating the cost of the post-elopement events. Politeness acts in disagreeing examine how interlocutors use language to express disagreement while maintaining social relationships and avoiding face-threatening acts. Disagreement can be tricky since it might result in losing one's face, which is the good reputation one claims for themselves in a certain engagement. Therefore, interlocutors often use politeness strategies to express disagreement in a way that minimises face-threatening acts (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The politeness acts in disagreeing have provided valuable insights into how language is used to manage social relationships and avoid face-threatening acts (Khammari, 2021; Tracy, 2017). The negotiation process itself can be delicate and complicated, and disagreements between the families of the bride and groom over the amount of *mas kawin* or *dowry* as well as the specific items that are being offered as part of the compensation can occur. For these reasons, it is necessary to conduct the research. In some cases, the bride's family may feel that the amount offered is too low and may push for a higher price or more valuable goods. The groom's family, on the other hand, may feel that they are already offering a fair price and may be reluctant to increase their offer (Yaqin & Shanmuganathan, 2020). Disagreements can also arise over other aspects of marriage negotiation process, such as the payment's timing, the payment method, and the specific cultural traditions involved (Yaqin et al., 2022).

In the Sasak culture, negotiating prices in marriage is considered an important social and cultural tradition. As a result, disagreements over various aspects of the marriage, including as the cost and any relevant cultural conventions, may surface throughout the negotiation process. The Sasak people strongly value respect for others, especially elders and those in positions of leadership, despite any potential conflicts that may arise. This is reflected through indirect communication styles and strategies, which tend to avoid direct conflicts or criticisms. This may take different forms when discussing pricing in the context of an elopement marriage. For example, suppose one party disagrees with the other's offer, they may express their concerns politely and respectfully, using language that acknowledges the other party's position and seeks a mutually acceptable compromise. In some occasions, a negotiation process may also involve a mediator, such as a respected elder or community leader, who can help facilitate the discussion and ensure that both parties are able to express their concerns respectfully and constructively.

Researchers that study politeness have looked at the cultural and contextual aspects that affect how politeness acts are used in conflict. For example, studies have shown that cultural differences in communication styles may affect the use of politeness strategies, with speakers from collectivist cultures tending to use more indirect language and speakers from individualist cultures tending to use more direct language (Decock & Depraetere, 2018; Jones & Adrefiza, 2017; Mohd et al., 2020).

One of the earliest and most influential models of politeness is Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (Culpeper & Haugh, 2019; Locher & Watts, 2005). According to this theory, speakers use different politeness strategies to mitigate face-threatening acts, such as disagreeing, criticizing, correcting, or contradicting someone (Brown & Levinson, 1987). These strategies

include positive politeness, such as expressing solidarity or emphasizing common ground, and negative politeness, such as hedging or using indirect language (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Since then, researchers have refined this model, exploring politeness strategies in various cultural, linguistic, and situational contexts (Locher & Watts, 2005; Richard, 2006). For example, research has shown that politeness strategies can vary across cultures and languages, with some cultures valuing directness and others valuing indirectness in communication.

Chiu et al. (2022) explore whether asynchronous, anonymous online debating participants may disagree more freely than face-to-face participants because they are less likely to value their public self-image (face), as well as whether polite disagreements (as opposed to rude ones) help online debating participants win over audience members. Another recent study conducted by Tseronis (2021) examines politeness in conflict talk and disagreement in everyday argumentative interactions and takes various theoretical approaches, ranging from social psychology and interactional sociolinguistics to ethnography and conversation analysis.

Scholars also found that participants used a range of politeness to manage disagreement and negotiate face in different settings (Ben-Menachem & Livnat, 2018; Chan et al., 2018; Mao & Zhao, 2020; Ogiermann 2019). Khammari (2021) for instance, found that Tunisian Arabic speakers used a variety of strategies for disagreement, including direct refusal, suggestion, giving account, request, teasing, unsympathetic advice, challenge, and criticism, some of which were unique to Tunisian Arabic. Additionally, the study highlights the influence of cultural factors on the expression of disagreement and contributes to a better understanding of Tunisian culture.

Many scholars have also examined several studies on the Sasak language in Lombok (Austin, P. K., & Nothofer, 2012; Austin, 2014; Mahyuni, 2004). However, they appear to pay the most attention to dialects, code-switching, morphology, and syntax differences. Although there is a great deal of interests in studying the Sasak people, research on their politeness has yet to be conducted. Due to this dearth, the Sasak language needs to be studied in the context of particular incidents. Notably, there is a need for research that looks at how people act in real life from a politeness point of view.

This study is noteworthy not only because it is uncommon, but also for other reasons. First, there is a connection between Sasak culture and language. This link can be seen in all of the social interactions that take place in the community where these individuals live, even though modernisation has brought about a lot of social change. Second, this community—the Sasak community—continues to uphold the long-preserved tradition that permeates its members' lives and, for whatever reason, seems to draw in visitors from other cultures.

The primary means of communication for this tradition's social activities is the Sasak language. It is integral to the tradition itself and blends with it. In this tradition, the Sasak language makes it evident how various aspects of people's life that stem from their culture interact and relate to one another. This demonstrates how important cultural aspects are in determining politeness methods and their usefulness in handling conflict in various cultural contexts. Therefore, greater research of Sasak's polite behaviour when disagreeing in the setting of cultural events is necessary.

ELOPEMENT OF SASAK CULTURE

Lombok is an island in Indonesia that is situated in Bali's eastern region and is home to several ethnic groups, including the Sasak people. The Sasak society observes many traditional norms, values and beliefs that are unique and interesting. Elopement is a cultural practice where couples run away together to get married without the consent of their families or communities.

Traditionally, elopement wedding among Sasak people in Lombok is considered as a way for couples to overcome social and economic obstacles that prevent them from getting married using traditional methods such as arranged or proposed marriage. Elopement is often viewed as a way for couples to demonstrate their love and commitment to each other and assert their independence (Adithia, 2010; Tahir, 2012; Yaqin, 2020).

In Lombok, the custom of eloping for a wedding is generally recognised, however it is not without controversy. Some families and communities may view elopement wedding as a breach of social norms and traditions, particularly if the couple comes from different ethnic groups or religious backgrounds (Afandi & Rosada, 2019; Tahir, 2012). Elopement in Lombok has become increasingly popular among the younger generation in the recent years. This is partly due to changing attitudes toward marriage and the desire for more personal freedom and autonomy in choosing a partner (Yaqin, 2020). However, it is worth noting that elopement wedding is still not universally accepted and may carry some social stigma, particularly for women who are seen as violating their cultural norms, familial values and traditions (Yaqin & Shanmuganathan, 2020).

Elopement can sometimes lead to conflict within families, communities, or even between different ethnic or religious groups (Adithia, 2010). In many cultures, marriage is seen as a social and cultural institution involving the couple and their families and communities. Therefore, when a couple elopes, they may be seen as disregarding their families' and communities' expectations and traditions, which can lead to conflict (Adithia, 2010; Afandi & Rosada, 2019; Tahir, 2012; Yaqin & Shanmuganathan, 2020). In some cases, the dispute arising from elopement wedding can be resolved through negotiations. For example, the families may eventually accept the marriage if the couple agrees to certain conditions, such as accepting the prices offered by the bride's family. However, in other cases, the conflict may escalate, resulting in violence or even the threat of violence. In some cultures, elopement wedding can also be seen as a form of rebellion or defiance against traditional values and social norms (Yaqin et al., 2022). This can result in social ostracism or other forms of punishment for the couple, including shunning, disinheritance, or even physical harm. Furthermore, in some countries, elopement wedding can be illegal or carry legal consequences. For example, in some Indian states, eloping with someone from a different caste or religion is illegal and can result in criminal charges or imprisonment (Chi, 2018; Marsden, 2007).

POLITENESS ACTS IN DISAGREEING

Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson developed the politeness theory to explain how people use language to maintain and negotiate social relationships. The theory proposes that speakers use politeness strategies to mitigate potentially face-threatening acts and demonstrate concern for the hearer's face (Jucker & Kopaczyk, 2017; Redmond, 2015). Even though there is some disagreement about whether politeness theory applies to everyone, it has been used in many studies to examine different kinds of communication, including disagreement. In the context of disagreement, politeness theory posits that speakers use language to minimise potential face-threatening acts and maintain social relationships, even when expressing disagreement (Ishihara, 2016; Khammari, 2021; Ramani et al., 2017; Tracy, 2017). Studies shown that speakers employ different politeness strategies when disagreeing, depending on the context and their relationship with the hearer.

Many pragmatics studies have focused on how to disagree politely (Lopez-Ozieblo, 2018). Even while voicing disagreement or criticism, politeness methods allow interlocutors to preserve social connections and refrain from face-threatening behaviours (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Recognising that politeness is a complicated and dynamic phenomenon that differs across cultures, settings, and individual speakers is one of the politeness methods in disputing. Research has revealed that various speakers and audiences may interpret politeness methods differently, and that different cultures and languages have distinct norms and conventions for expressing disagreement.

Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed three types of politeness strategies: bald-on-record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. Bald-on-record strategies involve stating disagreement directly and without hedging, which may be perceived as impolite or face-threatening. Positive politeness strategies, on the other hand, involve emphasising common ground and showing empathy for the hearer's perspective, while negative politeness strategies involve hedging, apologising, and using indirect language to minimise the potential threat to the hearer's face. Other researchers have expanded Brown and Levinson's framework to include additional politeness strategies, such as hedging, softening, and indirectness (Locher, 2015; Locher & Watts, 2005). Studies have also shown that the use of politeness strategies when disagreeing can vary depending on cultural and contextual factors. For example, a study by Lopez-Ozieblo (2018) suggests that disagreements are indeed preferred options in this context and that the salience of the act itself is reduced by avoiding negative gestures or head movements. Since this attitude was observed by all participants involved in the study, it is hypothesised that the act has become conventionalized within this community of practice.

Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that politeness theory provides a useful framework for understanding how speakers use language to maintain social relationships and manage face in disagreement. However, there is an ongoing debate about the universality of politeness theory and the extent to which it can be applied across different cultures and contexts (Gyllenhaal & Zimmermann, 2016; Kádár, 2017; Kádár & House, 2021; Locher & Watts, 2005). Further research is needed to explore the complex interplay between politeness, culture, and social relationships in the context of disagreement.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This qualitative study uses a purposeful sampling technique to collect data and investigate how the Sasak people use politeness strategies to demonstrate disagreement when negotiating prices during the post elopement events. A set of naturally occurring conversations was recorded and transcribed. The data was analysed using Brown and Levinson's (1978) politeness theory as shown in Figure 1.

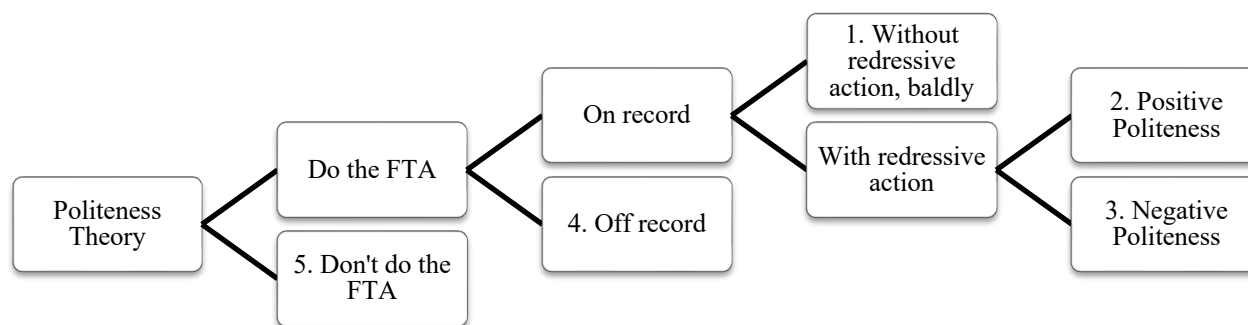


FIGURE 1. Brown & Levinson's Politeness Theory (1978)

PARTICIPANTS

The study involved eight participants, and data was gathered through a seven-hour of audio recordings from six different elopement events. The unedited exchange between participants was gathered and compiled whereas most negotiations lasted between 50 and 60 minutes with varying data lengths. The details of the participants are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Demographic details of the interlocutors for Data 1, 2, & 3

Data	Groom's Family Representative	Bride's Family representative
Data 1	Y: Male 47 years old (Head of Village)	K: Female 50 Years Old (bride's mother)
Data 2	M: Male, 42 Years Old	I: Male, 45 years old (chairman of the neighbourhood)
Data 3	Z: Male, 40 Years Old	B: Female, 41 Years Old
	S: Male, 45 Years Old	H: Male, 40 Years Old

The research was conducted in the Sakra district of the east of Lombok, located in the West Nusa Tenggara Province. This district was chosen because it is one of the oldest in east Lombok and has been able to maintain its customs and culture.

DATA COLLECTION

The researchers recorded audio and took notes at a specific location while family members conversed there using participant and non-participant observation techniques. In order to understand more about the precise words used, the players' roles, and the negotiation techniques employed, semi-structured interviews were also conducted. The participants were interviewed at their residences. The researcher made individual appointments with each informant prior to conducting interviews. Prior to the interviews, consent was obtained and signed. A tape recorder was then used to record the interview. Every interview lasted between 30 and 50 minutes.

FINDINGS

Acts of disagreeing are FTAs that particularly threaten the addressee's positive face. This type of competitive act has a high chance of hurting the addressee's "positive face," which is his wish to meet his wants. That is, to disagree is to convey the opposite of the addressee's "perennial desire that his wants (or the actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable (Brown & Levinson, 1987:101). Therefore, unless sufficiently redressed, acts of disagreeing can conflict with the addressee's face wants and tend to offend. The degree of face damaging potential of these acts varies according to contextual factors within which these acts are made to occur. Unless the interlocutor intends to offend (for which he is purposefully being rude), acts of disagreeing are mitigated to the extent required by the context of communication. Besides, like other kinds of FTAs, acts of disagreeing are redressed depending on the interlocutor's intent to invest in the occasion.

Acts of disagreement primarily pose a threat to the addressee's positive face, therefore any appropriate reparation or mitigation aims to lessen or eliminate that danger. Naturally, the kind of redressive mechanisms utilised in disagreements are frequently applied in positive politeness tactics. Speaking when expressing disapproval, then, fundamentally employs positive politeness techniques to prevent, to some measure, the acts as such from ultimately hurting the addressee's face. Another approach the interlocutor can take is to express these acts off-record, which will allow him to effectively communicate with the addressee while separating himself (the addressee) and himself from the acts.

Discussions of politeness strategies relating to acts of disagreement exclude negative behaviours because they are unrelated to such strategies. As a result, discussions about participants' modes of disagreement will only be constructive and off-the-record. The extract followed by a number is referred to as "E" in the data display of this study. The Sasak language transcriptions, meanwhile, are italicised.

POSITIVE POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN THE ACTS OF DISAGREEING

In conveying acts of disagreeing, the interlocutor employs two types of positive politeness strategies: asserting commonality and communicating closeness and solidarity. The output strategies are, respectively, 'avoiding disagreement' and 'using jokes.' To convey an act of disagreeing, the interlocutor may use a strategy that gives the impression that he agreed or did not disagree with the addressee regarding a previously presented state of affairs. This strategy may be realised in token agreement, as exemplified in (E1).

Data 1.

- (E1). K : *Niki sampun pade aji bekek semeton ne*
(This already the same price with sister)
The prices (dowry) are the same with her sister
Y : *Nggih, lagu niki sak mame dengan biase-biase*
(Yes, but this man people simple)
Yes, but the man (groom) is from ordinary background

The exchange is between (K) and (Y) during a *selabar* ritual to negotiate dowry prices in the post-elopement. K commented about the dowry received by the bride's sister, expecting a similar amount be given to the bride.. The comment as such was made when the bride's representative was bargaining the dowry prices. Y responded to it with a minor agreement as if he

agrees to the comment while, in fact, he actually disagrees with K. Judging from what his interlocutor faces, he avoids openly disagreeing with him by saying 'Nggih' (yes) while putting afterward what looks like a 'minor' by saying 'lagu' (but) concerning the prices. In other words, Y's utterance conveys acts of disagreeing packed (I.e., redressed) in a token agreement. Immediately after the minor agreement, Y provided a justification as to why the groom could not afford the dowry requested as he is from ordinary background, thus explaining the actual disagreement.

The interlocutor also conveyed an act of disagreeing with a redress done through 'pseudo agreement,' which is another manifestation of the disagreement avoiding positive politeness strategy. Like 'token agreement,' 'pseudo agreement' does not express the interlocutor's 'entire agreement.' example (E2) shows this.

Data 2.

- (E2). I : *Lamun lek desa niki memang ajian-ajian niki, Ye dek ne lebih lalok
ance dek ne kurang lalok, sampun biase*
(if at a village here indeed prices here, Yes not more or not less,
already common)
Indeed, this is the price in this village. Not too much or too little is the
norm
M : *Tetu kenak lalok ne niki*
(alright, true very this)
Alright, this is very true

This exchange between two representatives of the groom's and bride's family, (I) and (M), shows another technique of avoiding disagreement while conveying 'about the norm of prices (dowry) in the village,' which does not seem to be quite appealing to M. Instead of blatantly disagreeing on the idea, M says 'alright, this is very true' – conveying a feigned agreement while the fact is that he disagrees with I's talks. Therefore (M) utterance in (2) conveys an act of disagreeing in the disguise of pseudo-agreement, a manifestation of the avoiding disagreement strategy used by the interlocutor to rescue the addressee's face from being damaged by the FTA. A similar reason seems to motivate the use of a hedged opinion demonstrated in the following extract (E3).

Data 3.

- (E3). B : *Ye sik te pegawek ne, sik te jamu kadangjari sak dateng*
(that use ceremony this, use receive family come)
It is used for the ceremony at family gatherings.
Z : *Ya, begawe belek*
Yes, ceremony big
Yes, a big ceremony

The exchange in (E3) is part of a dialogue between the bride's representative (B) and the groom's representative (Z) in a *Selabar* of negotiating prices. In this exchange, Z disagrees with B on a proposed idea concerning 'the big ceremony.' Z's response to B's proposal is a disagreement with the proposed idea, but the utterance does not precisely say it. Instead, it presents a hedged opinion, that is, an opinion that is different from the proposed idea, which is hedged as if he was not sure about it. The hedged opinion is used to suggest that the interlocutor is not to make such a big ceremony. This gives the impression that the addressee's proposed idea is not opposed by the interlocutor's opinion, in which case the addressee's positive face is saved from the threat of the disagreeing act.

A disagreeing act redressed with a joke by which the interlocutor communicates closeness and solidarity is shown in the following extract (E4).

Data 3.

- (E4). S : *Adek sak becat inggas, lime likur ye taok aji krama endah niki*
 (order quick finish, twenty-five also include *aji krama* ceremony)
 In order to finish quickly, twenty-five is also included in the *aji krama* ceremony
 H : *Nggih, niki selae, lime likur jari ne...*
 Ya, twenty-five, twenty-five, so this
 Yes, twenty-five, twenty-five, this will be

Exchange (E4) is part of a formally situated conversation between (H) and a member of the groom's representative of *selabar* in negotiating prices. The exchange is concerned with the amount of dowry required. H's contribution presents a joke instead of an explicit disagreement. The expression *selae* (twenty-five) *lime likur* (twenty-five) in his contribution, uttered mockingly, is interpretable as a rude criticism of S's way of thinking. This, however, is a common way to jest in Sasak culture. This ritualised rudeness by which the joking strategy is realized is a redress with which the disagreeing act is conveyed without harming (or minimally harming) the addressee's face.

TABLE 2. Positive Politeness in Acts of Disagreeing

Type	Sub-Type
Asserting commonality	Avoiding disagreement
Communicating closeness and solidarity	Joke

OFF-RECORD POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN ACTS OF DISAGREEING

The off-record politeness strategies by which participants of their interlocutors implicate acts of disagreeing include three categories. The first category, associated with violation of relevance, is represented by 'presupposing' as the sole output strategy used. The second, related to the violation of quantity, is solely defined by 'overstating' as its output strategy. The third, associated with the interlocutor's flout from the maxim of quality, is represented by three output strategies: 'using metaphor,' 'using rhetorical questions,' and 'using irony.'

To avoid threatening the addressees' face with a direct disagreement, interlocutors may choose to convey the FTA through a presupposition. The use of 'presupposing' strategies to implicate acts of disagreeing can be seen in the following example.

Data 2.

- (E5). M : *Silak tebulatan jari sepuluh jute, semaek niki.*
 (please, fit it to ten million enough this)
 Please, let us fit it into ten million, this is enough
 I : *Ajin sebiye bawang nani wah bek taek*
 Price chilies and onions already up)
 Now, chilies and onions are more expensive.

This exchange among the groom's and bride's representatives in the bride's home is concerned with dowry prices. M's contribution, which looks like a comment concerning the prices, implies a disagreement on the plan. The interlocutor uses an upcoming expression, *semaek* "enough" which at the same time is an overstatement to attract the addressee's attention to a presupposition that implicates the act of disagreeing. I, one of the persons involved in the negotiating prices, said chilies and onions are now expensive, as well as a disagreement with M's offer of the dowry (prices). Similarly, I's in exchange (E6) below uses an overstatement to cover his disagreement.

Data 3.

- (E6). Z : *Selapuk jaminan niki, nek jauk sik nine malik*
(All delivery money will bring back by the women)
The women will bring back all of this delivery money
B : *Adek sak dek ngangur bebulan-bulan penganten niki*
So not unemployed for months, this wedding
so as not to be unemployed for months on this wedding

This is an exchange between the Groom's (Z) and Bride's (B) representative, taking place in the living room on the occasion of the *selabar* stage of Sasak marriage. The subject of their conversation is dowry. In this exchange, Z's contribution is a justification that the dowry will be bequeathed by the woman to her husband, hence there should be no concerns of the amount). To B, the utterance seems to presuppose that it is too long for this bride not to get a wedding ceremony if the price is still too high. B's response implies that he disagrees with this interlocutor, which is conveyed indirectly through overstating the consequence of the high-priced dowry. This is obvious in his expression 'unemployed for months,' which violates quality.

Participants' disagreement may also be implicated in metaphorical expressions, by which the interlocutor avoids direct involvement in the FTAs as much as dissociating the addressee from them. Example (E7) is cited to illustrate the phenomenon.

Data 3.

- (E7). S : *Adek sak becat inggas, lime likur ye taok aji krama endah niki*
(order quick finish, twenty-five also include *aji krama* ceremony)
In order to finish quickly, twenty-five is also included in the *aji krama* ceremony
H : *Berat tan te bandak niki, peres batu darak aik.*
heavy burden head, like squeezing- rock, no water
With this heavy burden on the head, like squeezing a rock, there is no water

The metaphorical expression *Berat tan te bandak niki, peres batu darak aik.* (heavy burden on the head, like squeezing a rock, there is no water) highlights the interlocutor's act of disagreeing expressed in a metaphor. This metaphor literally means forcing a burden on someone to make a futile effort, as you can never squeeze out any water from a rock. It indicates that the act of disagreeing launched by the interlocutor (H) is actually implicated through metaphor strategies of off-record politeness. However, it is the metaphor that accentuates the most focal point of the intended message (i.e., the disagreement) so that, in this case, the use of metaphor can be

considered more dominant than other utterances, the utterance cited in (E7) is H's disagreement to the high price of the bride's dowry.

Therefore, S as a groom's representative use implicates disagreeing acts, further illustrated by the following example.

Data 3.

- (E8). S : *Melen tebegawe belek belak, laguk brembe ntan te?*
 (order quick finish, twenty-five also include *aji krama* ceremony)
 We want to have a big wedding, but how?

The groom's representative, who is the interlocutor of the utterance in (E8), conveys a disagreement on what has been proposed previously by another groom's representative member in a negotiating price meeting chaired by S. With the rhetorical question, the interlocutor sees the proposed ideas as impossible,' which implies that he disagrees.

Using irony as an off-record politeness strategy is also adopted by the interlocutors in their acts of disagreeing. Like the other off-record strategies, using irony manifests the interlocutor's avoidance of being directly associated with the FTA that he intends to convey. It is the addressee, upon being exposed to the irony, who will interpret and recover what it is all about. In the following exchange, S (bride's representative) and H (groom's representative) first echo the previous interlocutor's expression and then express an opposing statement, signifying the ironical disagreement on what the interlocutor has said.

Data 3.

- (E9). S : *Aji krame niki sanget sakral dalem adat Sasak*
 (aji krame very sacred in custom Sasak)
 Aji krame is very sacred in Sasak custom
 H : *Nggih, ajik krame niki sanget sakral, laguk kembali malik ke kemampuan*
 Yes, aji krame very sacred, but it returns to ability
 Yes, aji krame is very sacred, but it returns to ability

H's irony that conveys a disagreement in (E9) concerns an assertion concerning the 'sanctity of *aji krame*' issued by S, the bride's representative. Using irony, H saves herself to a certain extent from the risk of damaging her interlocutor's face by disagreeing. Note that, as in the case of (E9), irony used as an off-record politeness strategy is commonly expressed with a humorous or joking nuance embedded in it.

TABLE 3. Off-record politeness strategies in Acts of Disagreeing

Type	Sub-type
Violating Relevance	Presupposing
Violating Quantity	Overstating
Violating Quality	Metaphor
	Rhetorical Question
	Irony

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that positive politeness and off-record politeness strategies are used by interlocutors in negotiating prices in the elopement of Sasak culture to convey acts of disagreeing while minimising the damage to the addressee's face. The positive politeness strategies include asserting commonality and communicating closeness and solidarity, while the off-record politeness strategies include presupposing, overstating, using metaphor, using a rhetorical question, and irony.

In the positive politeness strategies, the interlocutor avoids disagreeing with the addressee using token agreement, pseudo agreement, hedged opinion, and humour (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The token agreement is a strategy in which the interlocutor appears to agree or not disagree with the addressee's statement while conveying the opposite. The pseudo-agreement is a strategy in which the interlocutor seems to agree with the addressee's statement but does not agree with it. The hedged opinion is a strategy in which the interlocutor presents an opinion different from the addressee's statement but hedges it to suggest uncertainty. Humour is a strategy in which the interlocutor conveys the act of disagreeing by joking, often using ritualised rudeness.

The off-record politeness strategies are used to implicate acts of disagreeing indirectly (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Presupposing is a strategy in which the interlocutor implicates the act of disagreeing by presupposing a fact that contradicts the addressee's statement. Overstating is a strategy in which the interlocutor exaggerates the consequence of the addressee's statement to convey disagreement indirectly. Metaphor is a strategy in which the interlocutor uses a metaphorical expression to highlight the disagreement. The rhetorical question is a strategy in which the interlocutor poses a question that implies the impossibility of the addressee's statement. The irony is a strategy in which the interlocutor conveys the opposite of the addressee's statement, using a tone that suggests the interlocutor does not really mean what he is saying.

Thus, these politeness strategies are to avoid "face-threatening acts (FTA)" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 65). According to the politeness theory, discussions are caused by content or expression that threatens the face, either the face of the interlocutor or the face of the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), each face-threatening act carries a unique weight, and it is the responsibility of the interlocutors to employ the most suitable politeness strategies, especially in the elopement practice in *Sasak*, which is also indicated as the act of bride stealing by the groom-to-be. It is perceived as an element of chance, risk, danger, and desire contrasted against ordinary, everyday elements of social control, but in the main, the choices made are not threatening to the stability of the family and a more comprehensive basis of interwoven kin connections may be gained not insignificant in a culture where the primary economic and social exchange is based on the kinship network. Elopement is a cultural proof of prowess and ability to cope with unforeseeable circumstances, but its danger and alarm are more show than substance (Yaqin & Shanmuganathan, 2022). Therefore, politeness acts in disagreeing in negotiating prices in the elopement practices of Sasak culture is employed in light of the Face Threatening Acts (FTAs).

Furthermore, the findings revealed that cultural values seem to be substantially manifested in the people's verbal behaviours, that is, in the politeness they show in communication. This seems to suggest that politeness is a virtue in the *Sasak* community and is critically observed by the people of this community in their social interaction. Politeness, in essence, underlies communicative behaviours and is embedded in verbal and non-verbal forms of communication among members of this speech community, a 'speech community' defined as a group of people

living within a shared culture (Saville-Troike, 1982). The verbal forms of communication are the utterances that people in this community produce and understand within certain contexts in their social interaction (Kádár, 2011; Kádár, 2017b; Okamoto, 2010). These utterances carry (or, in certain types of communication, implicate) speech acts packed up in various modes of communication they have chosen based on the social norms they adopt and their intent of communicating.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, this study concludes that negotiating price in an elopement is a cultural practice with deep Sasak cultural roots. Politeness acts of disagreeing in negotiating price refer to the use of various linguistic strategies to express disagreement in a way that is respectful to maintain positive relationships between interlocutors. The findings also show that the exchanges used positive and off-record politeness. The positive politeness strategies include asserting commonality and communicating closeness and solidarity, while the off-record politeness strategies include presupposing, overstating, using metaphor, using a rhetorical question, and irony. The study found that in the Sasak culture, politeness is not solely motivated by the desire to save face but rather by moral requirements in accordance with the community's cultural values. In addition, the Sasak community's politeness strategies reflect how cultural values and norms are ingrained in the social activities of its people, with language serving as the medium for these activities.

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