



Women Politeness Strategies from Different Professions on a YouTube Dating Show

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-06-20 Revised: 2026-06-24 Accepted: 2026-06-30 Keywords: <i>Brown and Levinson, dating show, politeness strategies, women</i> DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.11437 Corresponding Author: Siska Ristanti siskaristanti908@gmail.com English Literature, Adab and Humanities, Islamic State University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung	<i>This study examines the use of politeness strategies by women on the YouTube dating show Pop the Balloon or Find Love. This research is grounded in the critical role of politeness strategies in preserving interpersonal relationships and self-image within romantic interactions in digital public spaces. The objective of this study is to identify the types of politeness strategies used by women and to analyze variations in their use based on the participants' professional backgrounds. This study employs a qualitative descriptive method using a directed qualitative content analysis approach based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness strategies. A total of 153 utterances containing politeness strategies were successfully identified. The results indicate that all types of politeness strategies were present in the data, with positive politeness being the most dominant strategy, reflecting participants' tendency to build interpersonal closeness and maintain a positive image of the interlocutor. Furthermore, variations in the use of politeness strategies were found based on profession. These findings suggest that professional background contributes to the tendency to use politeness strategies in digital romantic interactions although the context of interaction and communication goals also influenced strategy selection. The novelty of this research lies in its comparative analysis of the politeness strategies employed by women from various professional backgrounds in the context of digital dating show on YouTube. These findings enrich sociolinguistic research on the relationship between professional identity and linguistic behaviour and provide insights into the communication practices that occur in romantic interactions on digital media.</i>

1. Introduction

The development of digital media has transformed the way individuals build and present interpersonal relationships in public spaces. Romantic interactions, which were once private, are now increasingly showcased on various digital platforms, including

YouTube, in the form of reality dating shows. Online dating shows not only provide entertainment but also represent the dynamics of interpersonal relationships and shape social expectations regarding dating behavior and romantic communication (Boateng, 2023; Ferris, Smith, Greenberg, & Smith, 2007). In the context of digital media, individuals actively construct and present their identities to gain social recognition from the audience (Chen, 2016).

As a result, participants in dating shows not only strive to build rapport with their conversation partners but also maintain their public image. This situation creates romantic interactions in the digital space complex, as participants must negotiate interpersonal relationships while maintaining their self-image in front of the audience. This complexity becomes even more apparent because interactions on dating shows often involve face-threatening acts (FTAs), such as rejection, criticism, and disagreement. In these situations, language serves as the primary tool for maintaining social relationships while preserving self-image. Therefore, politeness strategies play a crucial role in minimizing conflict and preserving the harmony of interactions (Leech, 1983).

According to Brown & Levinson (1987), politeness is associated with an individual's efforts to maintain face. The concept of face itself refers to the public self-image that every individual seeks to maintain in interaction (Goffman, 2017). Brown & Levinson (1987) distinguish face into two types: positive face, which is an individual's desire to be valued, accepted, and liked by others, and negative face, which is the desire to have freedom of action without pressure or interference from others. To protect this face, speakers use various strategies such as positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on-record, and off-record. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), positive politeness is oriented toward building closeness and solidarity with the hearer, while negative politeness aims to minimize imposition and respect the hearer's autonomy. In contrast, bald on record involves performing a face-threatening act directly without mitigation in order to achieve communicative efficiency, whereas off-record conveys meaning indirectly through hints or ambiguous expressions.

In sociolinguistic studies, the use of politeness strategies is often associated with gender, social relations, and communication context. Women are frequently associated with the use of more polite language and interpersonal relationship-oriented language, such as rapport talk that emphasizes emotional closeness (Lakoff, 1973; Tannen, 1990). They also tend to use strategies that support a positive face, such as expressions of empathy or indirect forms. However, in certain situations, women may use a negative face as a form of self-protection, particularly in contexts of unequal power relations (Burrow, 2010).

Besides gender, professional identity can also influence an individual's communication style. Holmes & Stubbe (2015) explain that professional environments shape specific communication norms that influence an individual's language, including levels of formality and practices across various social contexts. Individuals with different professional backgrounds tend to have different ways of managing self-image, for instance, teachers tend to adopt nurturing styles, whereas business professionals may show assertive or strategic speech patterns.

These differences can be attributed to each individual's professional identity. Professional identity reflects the values, norms, and communication expectations that have developed within a specific professional environment. Through ongoing engagement in professional activities, individuals tend to internalize communication patterns considered appropriate for the demands of their profession. As a result, women from different professional backgrounds are likely to differ in their use of politeness strategies, particularly in the context of romantic interactions that take place publicly and spontaneously.

Several previous studies had examined politeness strategies in various contexts. A number of studies indicate that the choice of politeness strategies is influenced by social roles, communication goals and the interaction situation. For example, Catrambone (2016) found that women often use off-record strategies to subtly convey risky messages in structured dialogues. Furthermore, Mahmud (2019) demonstrated that in a university setting, female students balance the use of positive politeness to build solidarity with peers and negative politeness to show respect to professors. In line with that, Rosari (2016) found that in competitive contexts, positive politeness dominates to foster teamwork, although direct strategies are still employed in urgent situations.

Other study highlights the influence of cultural background and social identity on the use of politeness strategies. For example, Alqahtani (2024) finds that there are significant cultural differences in the use of politeness strategies between Saudi Arabic-speaking women and British English-speaking women. The study indicates that social factors beyond gender, such as social distance and rank of imposition, also influence the selection of politeness strategies in cross-cultural communication.

Furthermore, several studies indicate that politeness strategies are employed to build and maintain interpersonal relationships across various communication media. Wardoyo (2024) found that Islamic women global preachers on YouTube in the ISO corpus generally have a preference to use bald on record on delivering advice than the men preachers. Moorthi et al. (2024) demonstrate that positive politeness is the most dominant strategy in the film *Joy*, used to express respect and maintain interpersonal relationships within families and in the workplace. Similarly, Yuliani, Wardoyo, & Ardiansyah (2024) examine Paul Pogba's use of positive politeness strategies in *The Muslim Money Experts Podcast*. This study found that the most dominant strategy was intensifying interest in the listener by involving the listener in the topic.

In general, previous studies have shown that the use of politeness strategies is influenced by various factors, such as culture, social relationships, institutional roles, and the underlying communicative context. However, most previous studies tend to focus on comparing the use of politeness strategies between men and women or discuss politeness strategies in general without highlighting variations among women themselves. Therefore, focusing on women as a single subject is crucial to gain a deeper understanding of the patterns of politeness strategy women use. Furthermore, research on the relationship between professional background and variations in women's politeness strategies in the context of public digital romantic communication remains relatively limited.

In this study, women are viewed as a social group that is not homogeneous. In addition to being influenced by gender, the use of politeness strategies can also be influenced by professional identities that shape specific communication norms and styles. Differences in experiences and communication demands within each profession allow for variations in the choice of politeness strategies, particularly when individuals are engaged in romantic interactions that take place in digital public spaces. Thus, gender, professional identity, and communication context are understood as interrelated factors in shaping the choice of politeness strategies used by speakers.

Based on these research gap, this study focuses on the use of politeness strategies by women from different professional backgrounds in the YouTube show *Pop the Balloon or Find Love*. This study aims to identify the types of politeness strategies employed by women from different professions in the YouTube dating show *Pop the Balloon or Find Love* and analyze how these politeness strategies vary among women from different professional backgrounds featured in the show. The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on examining women as a group of subjects and linking their professional backgrounds to

variations in politeness strategies in the context of public romantic communication on digital media, an area that has been relatively under-explored in previous research.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach. Creswell & Creswell (2017) asserted that qualitative research is a method used to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups attribute to a social phenomenon. Meanwhile, the descriptive approach is utilized to provide a systematic description of the reality being studied.

The primary data source in this study was a video from the YouTube dating show *Pop the Balloon or Find Love*, specifically episode 45, published on March 6, 2025. This episode was purposively selected because it features female participants from diverse professional backgrounds, thus aligning with the research focus of examining variations in politeness strategies by profession. Furthermore, this episode contains a relatively long, spontaneous, and intense interaction between participants, thus generating sufficient speech data to identify patterns of politeness strategy use and enable comparative analysis across professions. The research subjects consisted of seven female participants: Morgan (insurance), Briana (finance), Janiah (business coach), Sade (aesthetician), Hager (nail technician), Hannah (veterinary technician), and Nailah (track coach). This diversity of professional backgrounds allowed the study to identify and compare the use of politeness strategies in the context of romantic digital interactions.

The research data consisted of verbal utterances containing politeness strategies based on the classification by Brown & Levinson (1987). The unit of analysis in this study was utterances containing communicative acts such as making evaluations, rejecting a partner, showing interest, maintaining the conversation, or responding to the interlocutor. Data was collected through non-participant observation techniques by repeatedly watching videos, transcribing utterances, identifying relevant data, and selecting data using purposive sampling. The main research instrument was the researcher as a human instrument who plays a role in the process of identifying, classifying, and interpreting the data.

Data analysis was conducted using a directed qualitative content analysis technique based on Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. After the transcription process was completed, each utterance containing politeness strategies was identified and coded into four main categories: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. The entire coding process was carried out by the researcher as the main research instrument, referring to the indicators for each strategy outlined in Brown and Levinson's theory. To ensure coding consistency, the researcher repeatedly cross-checked the transcripts and classification results and compared each data item with the definition of the strategy used.

After the coding process was completed, the data were grouped based on the participants' professional backgrounds. Patterns in the use of politeness strategies were then identified by comparing the frequency and percentage of each strategy's occurrence in each profession. Microsoft Excel was used to assist in the coding process, data grouping, and frequency and percentage calculations. The findings were then interpreted by considering the communication characteristics displayed by each participant within the context of romantic interactions on the show.

3. Result

Types of Politeness Strategies Employed by Women in Pop the Balloon or Find Love

This study analyzes the politeness strategies used by women in the show *Pop the Balloon or Find Love* based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory. Based on the analysis of 153 utterances, it was found that participants employed all types of politeness strategies as we can see in the table below:

Table 1. Types and Frequency of Politeness Strategies Used by Female Participants

Speaker	Profession	PP	NP	OR	BoR	Total
Sade	Aesthetician	8	8	1	2	19
Janiah	Coach for Business	12	6	2	1	21
Briana	Finance	7	6	-	2	15
Morgan	Insurance	10	11	2	-	23
Hager	Nail Technician	17	21	4	2	44
Nailah	Track Coach	9	6	2	-	17
Hannah	Veterinary Technician	7	6	1	-	14
Grand Total		70	64	12	7	153

Notes: PP= Positive Politeness, NP= Negative Politeness, OR= Off Record, BoR= Bald on Record.

As shown in Table 1, positive politeness is the most frequently used strategy, with a total of 70 occurrences. This strategy is followed by negative politeness, with 64 occurrences. Meanwhile, off-record and bald on-record appear far less frequently, with 12 and 7 occurrences, respectively. The high frequency of the use of positive and negative politeness strategies suggests that, in the context of online dating show, women tend to express their evaluations, preferences and refusals clearly, while maintaining interpersonal relationships and taking into consideration the feelings and self-image of the person they are speaking to.

To illustrate how each strategy was showed in the interactions, representative examples of each politeness strategy are presented below:

Positive Politeness

Data 1 [7:21 - 7:47]

Host: But apart from the cats, I think you had your balloon on pop before he said that, right?

Janiah: *Yeah I think you're very also well spoken, seem very intelligent, you look like you have a personality*

This utterance demonstrates the use of compliment as a form of positive politeness. Janiah attempts to build interpersonal closeness by highlighting the positive qualities of the interlocutor. Compliments such as "well spoken", "very intelligent", and "you look like you have a personality" reflect the strategies of notice or attend to the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987), as the speaker explicitly demonstrates appreciation for the other person's personal qualities, helping to keep the interaction positive.

Data 2 [16:30 – 16:49]

Host: All right, so you did have your balloon unpopped for quite some time, why so?

Nailah: *Um, you seem like a cool person, and like I love humor as well, so and like I saw your personality as you were going by, um, most of your answers were really good, so I didn't like have an issue with it.*

The utterance demonstrates the use of the positive politeness strategy as Nailah offers positive evaluations of the interlocutor through compliments such as “you seem like a cool person” and “most of your answers were really good.” Additionally, she highlights a shared interest in humor “I love humor as well”, which serves to create closeness and express agreement with the interlocutor. Through these compliments and the emphasis on shared interests, the speaker seeks to build a closer relationship and preserve the interlocutor’s positive face.

Negative Politeness**Data 3 [1:12:51 – 1:13:01]**

Host: So, you're not open to long distance?

Morgan: I'm open, it's just, um, Oklahoma like, sorry, *if I would have had to go there, I don't want to go to Oklahoma, sorry.*

This utterance demonstrates the use of negative politeness, as Morgan seeks to minimize the threat to the interlocutor’s face when expressing her refusal to consider a relationship that would require her to move to Oklahoma. The word “sorry” is used as a way of apologizing to mitigate the negative impact of her statement that could potentially offend the interlocutor. In addition, the use of the hypothetical form “if I would have had to go there” makes the refusal sound more indirect and cautious.

Data 4 [10:14 – 10:30]

Trey: Sometimes, I can be a bit too sincere, um, you know, sometimes too honest but

Hager: Not gonna lie, I'm a super honest person too, and *I think there's a big difference between honesty and comments like that. Um, I think you could be honest without pinpointing, maybe, physical features about people especially women*

This utterance demonstrates the use of negative politeness as Hager conveys criticism and suggestions to the interlocutor indirectly. The expressions “I think” and “maybe” function as hedges that soften the criticism, while the statement “you could be honest without pinpointing physical features” contains an implicit suggestion regarding how the addressee should behave. The use of these hedges demonstrates the speaker’s effort to reduce pressure and minimize the threat to the interlocutor. This aligns with Mills (2003) that explains that women tend to use mitigating strategies to maintain social harmony and avoid interpersonal conflict.

Off-Record**Data 5 [18:57 – 19:04]**

Host: Okay, nice to meet you, why'd you end up popping your balloon?

Janiah: *Just have my type I go for, you know, just wasn't physically attracted, when I see my man, I want to be like, yes.*

This utterance demonstrates an off-record strategy as it demonstrates an effort to mitigate the threat to the interlocutor's face by using implications and indirect cues. The interlocutor must infer for themselves that the reason the balloon popped was due to physical attraction that did not align with the Janiah’s preferences.

Bald on Record

Data 6 [1:07:55 – 1:08:02]

Host: Okay, okay, but is he someone that's your type?

Sade: *Um, not. First impression not my type.*

This utterance demonstrates the use of the bald on record strategy, as Sade directly expresses a negative evaluation of the interlocutor without using mitigating strategies such as hedging, apologizing, or indirect expressions. By saying “not my type,” she is stating that the interlocutor does not match her ideal type. As this rejection is expressed clearly, the intended meaning is clearly understood by the interlocutor.

Variation of Politeness Strategies Across Professions of Women in Pop the Balloon or Find Love

To address the second research question regarding variations in the use of politeness strategies by profession, the frequency data in Table 1 were converted into percentages. The results of the percentage distribution of politeness strategy use across each profession are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Percentage Distribution of Politeness Strategies by Profession

Speaker Code	Profession	PP	NP	OR	BOR
Sade	Aesthetician	42.1%	42.1%	5.3%	10.5%
Janiah	Coach for Business	57.1%	28.6%	9.5%	4.8%
Briana	Finance	46.7%	40.0%	0.0%	13.3%
Morgan	Insurance	43.5%	47.8%	8.7%	0.0%
Hager	Nail Technician	38.6%	47.7%	9.1%	4.5%
Nailah	Track Coach	52.9%	35.3%	11.8%	0.0%
Hannah	Veterinary Technician	50.0%	42.9%	7.1%	0.0%

Notes: PP= Positive Politeness, NP= Negative Politeness, OR= Off Record, BoR= Bald on Record.

Based on the percentage distribution in Table 2, the business coach profession has the highest percentage of positive politeness at 57.1%, followed by track coach at 52.9%, veterinary technician at 50%, and finance at 46.7%. Conversely, the insurance and nail technician profession showed the highest percentage of negative politeness at 47.8% and 47.7%. Meanwhile, the aesthetician profession showed a balanced percentage between positive politeness and negative politeness, each at 42.1%.

To provide a clearer visualization of the percentage distribution of politeness strategies across professions, the data presented in Table 2 are illustrated in Figure 1 below:

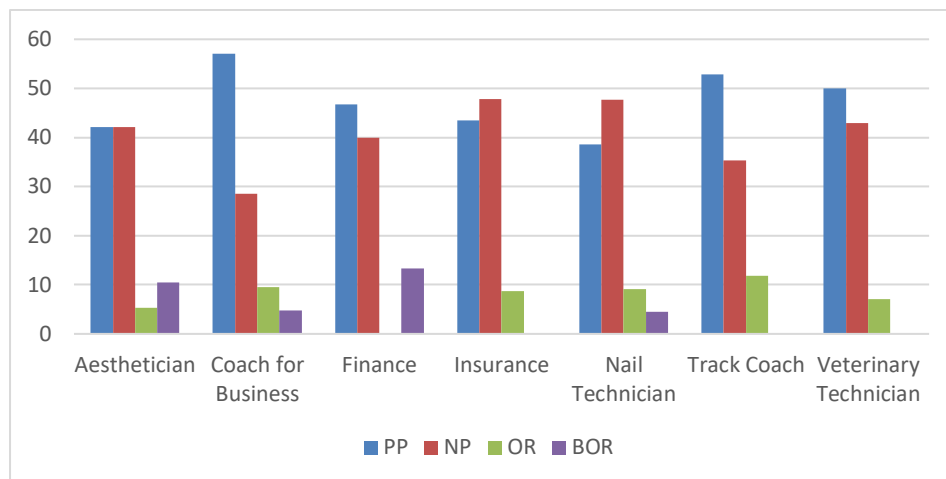


Figure 1. Percentage Distribution of Politeness Strategies Across Professions

These findings indicate that although all professions employ various politeness strategies, there are differences in the tendencies of strategy use across each profession. Based on the data, professions such as business coach, track coach, veterinary technician, and finance show a tendency toward the more dominant use of positive politeness compared to negative politeness. This tendency is likely related to the communication characteristics required in each profession. Although this study did not directly examine the relationship between profession and the choice of politeness strategies, professions such as business coach and track coach, for example, generally involve interactions focused on support, motivation, and building interpersonal relationships.

Meanwhile, professions such as veterinary technician and finance also require the ability to build positive relationships with clients or other involved parties. This tendency aligns with the characteristics of positive politeness, which focuses on maintaining interpersonal relationships through expressions of support, agreement, and social closeness. To provide a more detailed overview of how this strategy is manifested in the participants' utterances, examples of data from each profession are presented below:

Coach for Business

Data 7 [45:52 -45:57]

Host: Okay alright. So prior to, that you did have your balloon unpopped though, why?

Janiah: So, just wanted to hear more about him. *I love fashion and I like what you have on, so yeah*

This utterance demonstrates the use of positive politeness through "notice and attend to the hearer," as Janiah shows attention and appreciation for the other person's appearance by saying, "I love fashion and I like what you have on." This utterance serves to create a sense of familiarity and maintain a positive atmosphere during the interaction.

Track Coach

Data 8 [47:14 -47:27]

Host: Yeah, okay, so, you did have your balloon unpopped, why so?

Nailah: *He's very handsome, very handsome*

Steve: Thank you

Nailah: You're welcome, *um, and yeah I like the hair, the outfit, um, and I kind of like shy guys, a little bit too, so, so yeah that's why.*

This utterance demonstrates the use of positive politeness as Nailah compliments the appearance and character of the interlocutor. Expressions such as “very handsome”, “I like the hair,” and “the outfit” reflect the strategies of noticing or attending to the hearer and exaggerating (Brown & Levinson, 1987), as Nailah explicitly notes and emphasizes the interlocutor's positive qualities. Furthermore, the statement “I kind of like shy guys” also demonstrates an attempt to build closeness by emphasizing shared preferences and personal interests.

Finance

Data 9 [49:26 – 49:31]

Host: And Brianna, why'd you end up popping your balloon?

Briana: It was just the outfit, um, that was the only reason. *I really liked your answers though.*

This utterance demonstrates positive politeness as Briana expresses appreciation for the interlocutor's response despite previously expressing rejection. This appreciation serves as a form of interpersonal mitigation to maintain a positive relationship and reduce potential threats to the interlocutor's face.

Veterinary Technician

Data 10 [15:34 – 15:56]

Host: Okay, we'll be right back. Okay, why' you end up popping your balloon?

Hannah: Um, *he seems like a genuinely nice guy, um, straightforward with everything, like, I can relate in some aspects to him,*

This utterance demonstrates the use of a positive politeness strategy, as Hannah continues to emphasize the interlocutor's positive qualities while expressing her refusal. The phrases “genuinely nice guy” and “he is physically attractive” serve as compliments that show appreciation for the interlocutor. Furthermore, the statement “I can relate to him in some ways” indicates a similarity or common ground between the speaker and the interlocutor. Through these compliments and by emphasizing these similarities, Hannah seeks to spare the interlocutor's feelings and maintain a good relationship even though she has no romantic interest in him.

On the other hand, the professions of nail technician and insurance agent show a higher proportion of negative politeness usage compared to other professions. This tendency is likely related to the communication characteristics required by both professions, which demand caution in interactions and attention to interpersonal comfort, in line with the function of negative politeness, which is oriented toward preserving the interlocutor's face and minimizing potential discomfort in interactions. The use of negative politeness in each profession can be seen in the following data:

Insurance

Data 11 [5:29 – 5:36]

Host: Okay, so why did you end up popping your balloon?

Morgan: He seems really sweet, *um, I would say the height, um, and that's just it.*

This utterance demonstrates the use of a negative politeness strategy, as Morgan carefully explains the reason for her refusal. The phrase “I would say” serves as a hedge that softens the judgment regarding the interlocutor's height, making the refusal sound more indirect and less likely to offend the interlocutor's feelings.

Nail Technician**Data 12 [9:05 – 9:27]**

Host: Okay, and why did you end up popping your balloon?

Hager: Um, I know that we're honest on this show, *but I do feel like there's a little bit of grace or maybe just like, um, some way where you can say things without being, maybe incredibly specific about physical features. I mean, if you're comfortable with that, then that's definitely okay, but I just wouldn't prefer that in a man myself.*

This utterance demonstrates the use of a negative politeness strategy, as Hager conveys criticism and suggestions indirectly. The statements “there’s a little bit of grace” and “some way where you can say things without being incredibly specific about physical features” contain implicit suggestions regarding a more appropriate way to express opinions. This criticism and suggestions are then softened through the use of hedges such as “I do feel like”, “maybe,” and presents this criticism as a personal preference, rather than an absolute judgment, in order to minimize the risk of offending the interlocutor.

Meanwhile, the aesthetician profession shows a balanced distribution between positive politeness and negative politeness. This finding suggests that participants use both strategies relatively equally depending on the context of the interaction. This tendency is likely related to the nature of communication in the aesthetician profession, which not only requires friendly and supportive communication with clients, but also the ability to convey advice or evaluations carefully to maintain interpersonal comfort, as can be seen in the following data:

Aesthetician**Data 13 [20:55 – 21:12]**

Host: Why' you end up popping your balloon?

Sade: *Um, just first impression, um, I thought the pants were kind of flashy, um, just not my style.*

Joff: Okay.

Sade: *Just personally, just not my style, um, but you have a nice haircut.*

Joff: I appreciate it. See the way, come on, come on.

Sade: *Nice haircut and nice smile.*

These utterances contain a combination of negative politeness and positive politeness. In the phrases “I thought the pants were kind of flashy” and “just not my style,” Sade uses hedges such as “I thought,” “kind of,” and “just” to express her disapproval more cautiously, so that her criticism of the interlocutor’s appearance does not sound too direct. Meanwhile, in the parts “you have a nice haircut” and “nice haircut and nice smile,” Sade uses positive politeness by offering compliments to the addressee. These compliments serve to spare the interlocutor’s feelings and mitigate the negative impact of the rejection that has been expressed.

4. Discussion*Types of Politeness Strategies Employed by Women in Pop the Balloon or Find Love.*

The predominant use of positive politeness in professions such as business coach, track coach, veterinary technician, and finance indicates that participants tend to strive to build closeness and maintain positive relationships during interactions. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), this strategy can be realized through various sub-strategies that emphasize familiarity and solidarity between the speaker and the interlocutor. In this study, the most frequently observed sub-strategies are notice or attend to hearer (his interests, wants, needs, and goods), and claim common ground, which are manifested through compliments, expressions of appreciation, and an emphasis on shared experiences

or interests. The use of these sub-strategies help create a positive interactive atmosphere and preserve the interlocutor's feelings, even when participants expresses rejection. In the context of a dating show, these strategies are important as participants strive to make a good impression on both their conversation partners and the audience.

In addition to positive politeness, negative politeness also occurs with considerable frequency. This finding indicates that participants tend to be cautious when expressing refusal, criticism, and disagreement. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), negative politeness can be achieved through various sub-strategies designed to minimize threats to the interlocutor. In this study, the use of hedges, apologizing and being conventionally indirect was the most dominant sub-strategy. This tendency can be explained by the format of the show, which required participants to provide personal evaluations openly. Consequently, participants preferred to convey refusal, criticism, and disagreement indirectly in order to reduce potential threats to the interlocutor's self-esteem while maintaining their own image as polite and respectful individuals.

Meanwhile, off-record strategies are found less frequently. According to Brown & Levinson (1987), off-record strategies are used when a speaker conveys an intention indirectly, leaving the final interpretation to the interlocutor. This strategy allows the speaker to avoid taking full responsibility for the meaning of the utterance and reduces the risk of threatening the interlocutor's face.

On the other hand, bald on-record is the least frequently used strategy. Brown & Levinson (1987) explain that the bald on-record strategy is used when the speaker delivers the utterance directly, clearly, and without attempting to soften any potential threat to the interlocutor. This strategy typically occurs when communication efficiency is prioritized over face preservation. These findings suggest that the female participants in this study prioritized maintaining interpersonal relationships over communicative efficiency. Given that the interactions took place in public spaces and could be observed by a wide audience, the use of direct strategies could potentially give the impression of being impolite or lacking in empathy.

Overall, the predominance of positive politeness indicates that female participants tend to strive to build closeness and maintain interpersonal relationships with their conversation partners. This finding is consistent with Brown & Levinson (1987), who state that positive politeness is used to fulfill the need for acceptance and solidarity, and supports the views of Lakoff (1973) and Tannen (1990) that women tend to use language oriented toward interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, the high frequency of negative politeness indicates that female participants not only focus on building closeness but also consider their conversation partners' autonomy and feelings.

This aligns with Burrow (2010) view that women tend to use strategies that support "positive face," such as expressions of empathy or indirect forms of speech, however, in certain situations, they may employ "negative face" as a form of self-protection to minimize potential discomfort in interactions. Furthermore, the low use of off-record and bald on-record communication across all professions suggests that participants avoid strategies that are either too vague or too direct. Strategies that are too direct can be viewed as harsh, whereas those that are too implicit may cause ambiguity in communication.

Variation of Politeness Strategies Across Professions of Women in Pop the Balloon or Find Love.

The results of the study indicate that women from different professions tend to employ specific politeness strategies in their interactions during the show. Differences in the tendency to use politeness strategies amongst participants suggest that variations in professional background may be linked to differences in how interpersonal relationships

are established and maintained in romantic interactions. Holmes & Stubbe (2015) explain that professional environments shape specific communication norms and practices which may ultimately be reflected in the way individuals use language. Therefore, the tendencies in the use of politeness strategies found in this study are likely related to communication characteristics often associated with the participants' professions. Nevertheless, this relationship must be interpreted with caution, as this study did not directly examine the participants' professional experiences or communication practices within their work environments. Consequently, the findings are best understood as indicating a tendency that may be related to professional identity rather than as a definitive cause-and-effect relationship.

In addition to professional identity, the choice of politeness strategies is also likely to be influenced by the context of the interaction, the purpose of communication, and the need to maintain interpersonal relationships. This is in line with the view of Brown & Levinson (1987) that the choice of politeness strategies is highly dependent on the communicative situation and potential threats to the speaker's or interlocutor's face. Thus, the use of politeness strategies in the show cannot be explained solely on the basis of professional background, but it is also necessary to consider the dynamics of the interaction that takes place during the conversation.

Furthermore, the public and performative nature of the *Pop the Balloon or Find Love* show may also be a factor influencing participants' language choices. As a show broadcast via YouTube, the interactions that take place are not only directed at the conversation partner but also occur in the presence of a wider audience. These conditions enable participants to simultaneously build interpersonal relationships and maintain their self-image within the digital public space. In other words, the use of politeness strategies in this study is likely related not only to professional identity but also to the participants' efforts to present themselves positively and ensure the comfort of the interaction in front of the audience. Therefore, the variety of politeness strategies identified in this study appears to be the result of the interaction of various factors, including professional identity, communicative goals, the context of the interaction, and the characteristics of digital media as a performative public space.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of 153 utterances produced by seven female participants from different professional backgrounds on the YouTube show *Pop the Balloon or Find Love*, it can be concluded that all types of politeness strategies according to Brown and Levinson are found in the research data. The most dominant strategy used is positive politeness followed by negative politeness while off-record and bald on-record were used less frequently. These findings suggest that women in digital romantic interactions tend to build interpersonal closeness and maintain a positive image of their conversation partner while minimizing potential threats to the other person's face.

This study also reveals variations in the use of politeness strategies based on professional background. Participants working as business coaches, track coaches, veterinary technicians, and finance professionals are more likely to use positive politeness, whereas participants working as insurance agents and nail technicians more frequently use negative politeness. Meanwhile, the profession of aesthetician shows a relatively balanced use of positive politeness and negative politeness. These findings indicate that professional identity can influence the tendency to use politeness strategies, although factors such as the context of the interaction, communication goals, and the characteristics of digital media as a performative public space, also play a significant role in determining the choice of strategies used.

This study has limitations because it focuses only on a single episode and involves a limited number of participants. Therefore, future research is recommended to use a broader dataset, such as multiple episodes or other online dating programs. Additionally, future research could examine other factors influencing the use of politeness strategies, such as age, ethnicity, or social status, to enrich sociolinguistic studies on politeness in digital communication.

6. Acknowledgement

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to Mr.Cipto Wardoyo, Ph.D., and Mr.Erfan Muhamad Fauzi, M.Hum., as the research supervisor, for the guidance, valuable suggestions, and support provided throughout the research and writing process. The author also extends appreciation to all parties who have contributed to the completion of this study.

7. References

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