Selected Reviews on the Implementation of Multilingualism as a Social Practice Politeness's Non-Verbal Strategies

Abdalhadi Nimer Abdalqader Abu Jweid[a],*

[a] Assistant professor of English literature at Department of English, Faculty of Educational Sciences & Arts / FESA / UNRWA, Amman, Jordan.
* Corresponding author.

Abstract

This paper attempts to review some selected studies on multilingualism and politeness. It will be mainly a review of how multilingualism and politeness work together in revealing implicative nuances in various linguistic discourses. For this reason, the review will be divided into two inextricable parts. First, the use of multilingualism and an incarnation of social practice. That it serves as a way of facilitating the social interactions among people who speak different languages. Therefore, multilingualism will be reviewed and a social interactive communicative link among speakers of these languages. Second, it will highlight linguistic politeness as a non-verbal strategy. In this regard, the primary focus will be on the way by which politeness is used to ameliorate the abstract relationships among speakers. In this sense, politeness, as a non-verbal strategy, will be unraveled as a pragmatic practice pursued by interlocutors who use polite gestures to make their communicative interactive more meaningful and effective. Ultimately, these reviews will be supported by my synthesis of their arguments through accentuating my evaluation of their linguistic significance.

Key words: Multilingualism; Non-verbal strategies; Politeness; Social practice

1. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTILINGUALISM AS A SOCIAL PRACTICE

The use of multilingualism has been implemented in different disciplines and approaches. It is discussed in terms of its contribution to social fields. In sociolinguistics, it is studied from a social point of view. Reviewers and scholars aim at coming into terms with common ground regarding the use and application of multilingualism in sociolinguistics. Therefore, the main focus of this review sheds light on the use of multilingualism and its application in pedagogy. Accordingly, two articles will be reviewed, namely, Fariza Behak et al's "Implementation of a Western-Based Multiliteratcies Pedagogy in Malaysian: A Socio-Cultural Perspective" (2015), and Lee Kim et al's "The English Language and Its Impact on Identities of Multilingual Malaysian Undergraduates" (2010).

Behak et al discusses different cultural dimensions regarding the constructing of better education multilingual abilities. The implementation of multilingual strategy would help students evaluate their learning progress and how it could be improved through adopting multilingual ability. The essential step to implement the pedagogical multilingualism in the Malaysian universities is educational contexts. Such contexts would not be achieved until they are related to other contexts. Therefore, Behak et al argue that the western educational context is the best way to enhance the students' multilingual abilities. For this reason, multilingualism can be increased at the level of education and sociolinguistics simultaneously. Behak et al choose the graduate university students as a sample for applying their study. This sample is specifically addressed because it suits the accessibility of acquiring multilingualism through a proper strategy. Moreover, multilingualism increases the students' capability to utilize their academic potential to do better performances (Abu

Jweid, 2021a, p.31). The implementation of such strategy depends on the way by which western universities do multilingual education in their learning process (Abu Jweid, 2021b, p.12). Yet, Behak et al's emphasize the benefits of multilingualism to improve the students "multiliteracies" which is a form of multilingualism; whereby students' performance is improved. Hence, the students are the main target of multilingual pedagogy.

According to Behak et al, There are several reasons for choosing multilingualism in university teaching. Multilingualism helps deciding students learning process. Students have opposite and various ways of learning. Each student may differ from other students in the way he learns. By using multilingualism, there could be a specific strategy to find one way to suit all students' learning abilities (Abu Jweid, 2021c, p.8). Furthermore, students get rid of their learning routine by engaging several methods to polish their strategic learning. In this way, they can perform better (Abu Jweid, 2021d, p.9). As a result, their cultural perspective enlarges, and they become more resilient than before.

The second point regarding multilingualism, which is expressed as multliteracies in the research, is the common communication among students. The university includes several students from several linguistic backgrounds. This communicative process will be easier when students acquire multilingual strategies to cope with other students in order to integrate and share their ideas and opinions (Abu Jweid, 2021e, p.26). Simultaneously, students "reciprocate" a comprehensive vision of each other's cultural background. Here, culture plays a fundamental role in affirming the way students communicate with each other (Abu Jweid, 2021f, p.52).

To support this last point, students may use some jargons or expressions which would be totally different from the other students. This is neither because students are not linguistically eligible, nor because they are not educated enough. It is all because students do not understand the other's culture. The use of these expressions or jargons may contradict with the other's etiquette or ethical manners. Consequently, some expressions would be embarrassing, and thus, do not convey the intended messages (Abu Jweid, 2020a, p.10). By implementing multiliteracies strategy, students are given the opportunity to share and communicate their ideas freely without any obstacle since they already know the other's language's semantic implications and culture(Abu Jweid, 2020b, p.7). The methodology used for implementing multiliteracies is observing the students' communication. By observing the students communication, the eligibility of implementing of multiliteracies comes out and its advantages and disadvantages become clear.

On the other hand, Kim et al (2010) tackle the use of multilingualism in the educational process. They first discuss the importance of multilingualism to the students' identity. They argue that the students' identity is defined and specified by their linguistic performance. But the most vital way to define the students' linguistic ability is to endorse them with different languages to determine their ability to exchange ideas properly. The Malaysian undergraduates are also chosen as the research sample for their study. Kim et al maintain that the use of English language is given the first priory for implementing multilingualism. This is because all students can at least speak English for educational purposes (Abu Jweid, 2020c, p.14).

The second point concerning multilingualism is that English language facilitates the students' interaction. They are able of communicate their targeted meanings through English. Thus, English is the easiest way to be the ground for implementing multilingualism (Abu Jweid and GhadaSasa, 2020d, p.345). The students could learn other languages in addition to their mother tongue language. Nevertheless, students can instruct the academic materials based on their native and acquired languages (Abu Jweid, 2020e: 94). Consequently, they become more aware of how other language carries out the meaning of the academic texts. Being so, they develop up-to-date learning strategies.

The choice of English as a lingua franca connects all students' languages in one language. Therefore, students find another chance in learning more than one language. This language is appropriated through choosing English as a dominant language. In addition, multilingualism becomes the pragmatic language and the "language of empowerment" (p.87). In sum, multilingualism helps defining the student's linguistic identities and their pragmatic abilities.

In the light of Behak et al's and Kim et al's researches, the treatment of multilingualism is conducted on educational samples. They both conduct a quantitative methodology to assess the use of multilingualism in the graduate and postgraduate Malaysian students. Moreover, they share the same assumptions and conclude that multilingualism is vital for students to improve their learning and understanding. They also use a conceptual framework based on sociolinguistic concepts which are relevant for supporting the necessity of applying multilingualism at Malaysian universities (Abu Jweid, 2020f, p.208).

2. FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH OTHER STUDIES

The use of multilingual approach is tackled in different studies. Yet, the current review only focuses on the implementation of multilingualism in an educational atmosphere. The advancement of multilingual learning strategy is asserted in relation to earlier educational phases at schools. Not only at the university level, but also at the primary and secondary phases can multilingualism be

applied (Cope and Kalantzis, 2009, p.87). Multilingualism requires an early procedure whether it is available for students' learning abilities or not. Furthermore, the economic and technological advancements play an important role in deciding the use of pedagogical, or educational, multilingual learning. The sweep of technology and economy entails new linguistic diversities because there is an open access to the world and its languages.

Another study conducted on the use of multilingual learning is the overt instruction proposed by The New London Group (2000). The overt instruction paves the way for both students and instructors who benefit from multilingual learning. Thus, The New London Group implements a psychological study pertinent to the use of multilingualism in sociolinguistics. Instructors can locate the students' knowledge of how to use the available resources to improve their multilingual potentials. Here, overt instruction includes three points. First, situated practice which is the place where multilingual interaction takes place. In The New London Group's study, the situated practice is the educational "peripheries", such as schools, universities, colleges and the like. Critical framing is the second point of overt instruction. It comprises the students' methodological learning. Students, for example, know the weak and strong points of their learning responsiveness, and they learn other languages in relation to their linguistic ability. Third, transformed practice is the way which provides students with a practical use of multilingualism. It is a strategic means which encompasses the students' real acquisition of other languages (The New London Group, 2000, p.9).

3. EVALUATION

Behak et al's and Kim et al's researches give sufficient example and concepts to support their arguments. The implementation of multilingual as a learning strategy is very helpful. Both Behak et al and Kim et al proposed fruitful argumentation of the way multilingualism can be conducted on university students. They have also proven tangible goals and objectives of how multilingualism can improve the students' communication abilities, and how they determine their identity. The researches proved practical execution of multilingualism in the learning process. In essence, both researches have asserted the use of multilingualism in sociolinguistics as a cultural practice. The data used for the researches is very useful. The quantitative and conceptual methodology used is loosely integrated in the main arguments. The result is a sociolinguistic contributing to the current analysis of multilingualism in education. This is the significance of the researches which could open the door for an interdisciplinary study of both education and sociolinguistics.

I support Behak et al's positions. I believe that multilingualism may face different challenges. Behak et al refer to some challenges in their research. One of these challenges is the linguistic diversity among the students. I think the learning facilities would be another challenge. This is because some universities lack the proper equipment for students learning. In addition, multilingual implementation may face the difficulty of integrating the native language with other new languages. New acquired languages take long time to be adequately learned. Slow learning process makes the implementation of multilingualism lose its sociolinguistic peculiarities.

4. POLITENESS'S NON-VERBAL STRATEGIES

Politeness is a pragmatic and a semantic peculiarity. It includes the use of physical expressions or voice tones. Its purpose lies in its ability to convey the linguistic messages from one context to another. There is no consistent way to keep certain pragmatic or semantic feature of politeness (Abu Jweid, 2020g, p.103). Notwithstanding this, it is studied in terms of its linguistic utterance or action initiated by a person when interacting with other person(s). The context of politeness is very important to determine its meaning. There are a number of linguistic contexts for politeness. These contexts vary between the direct contacts among persons. In this manner, the implication of politeness depends on the physical and voice actions (Abu Jweid and Ghada Sasa, p.166). This is the verbal aspect of politeness. However, it also includes distant contacts, like the cyber contact and other forms of electronic media. Here the determination of politeness meaning depends only on the non-verbal performance of speech meanings (Abu Jweid, p.532). In this review, therefore, I will focus on the non-verbal performance of politeness. I will emphasize the politeness meaning used in e-mail addresses. The justification of this electronic sample is that politeness is primarily studied in sociolinguistics rather than pragmatics or semantics.

In "Politeness in E-mails of Arab Students in Malaysia," Zena Najeeb et al (2012) discuss the language used in Arab students' interaction via e-mail. Najeeb et al contend that there are some strategies used to infer the social meaning reciprocated in the Arab students' e-mails, especially in Malaysia. One of the first strategies is utilized to measure politeness's availability in the students' interactions with their supervisors. In this strategy, students use a high-focused language conveyed in the e-mails. Students tend to articulate their meanings in a polite way since they contact with their supervisors who need to be communicated in official and academic lexicons. Here, the social ability is the fundamental premise through which students utilize their language because they have to know which degree of

politeness should be used when communicating with their supervisors.

Cultural adjustment is another important factor necessary for the students' communication. The cultural adjustment is required for the students who are new and do not know anything about the official language of e-mail commonly followed in Malaysian correspondence. So, having not sufficient information about the e-mail language is very important for new social interaction between the students and the supervisor. Najeeb et al claim that if students are not linguistically qualified enough in using politeness strategies will be a victim of cultural shock. They, consequently, will not be able to cope with their new academic life.

Accordingly, the international new students are the target of politeness strategy. This student sample will help belittle the "cultural shock" which new international students may suffer from. Beside the cultural adjustment, politeness strategies offer different linguistic practices which contribute to the analysis and measurement of new Arab students. These students encounter new challenges other than the linguistic performance. The new environment and international acquaintances are other challenges meeting new Arab students. Therefore, Arab students' linguistic ability, especially their pragmatic usage, may result in negative "cross-cultural communication" (p.125).

Najeeb et al's study relates a third factor concerning the use of politeness strategies. This strategy is "directness." by using directness, students may fall victims of their wrong choice of politeness. This is because directness incorporates three elements i.e., requests, culture, and academic environment. In this regard, directness should be considered carefully as a social act. Consequently, using politeness at different degrees depends on the extent to which directness is applied. For example, requests are not expressed directly when asking a supervisor to do something. There should be some polite linguistic structure to ask for certain requests. Culture and environment are other elements of directness. On the one hand, culture makes students aware of the right linguistic structure for requests. On the other hand, the academic environment is serious and complies with earnest relationship between new students and their supervisors.

Lyn Pemberton, in "Politeness in Interaction Design" (2011), tackles the principles and requirements of politeness. Pemberton asserts that the use of politeness in online interaction has a special manner. The use of polite structure offers effective feedback among online usage. Politeness needs to be expressed in accordance with the social situation and the environment between people who use a specific language. For this reason, Pemberton chooses the e-mail addresses to negotiate the kind of language used in online interactions.

Pemberton elaborates a number of factors in correspondence to politeness principles and requirements. Psychology is one of the main factors determining the polite structure in e-mail interactions. However, Pemberton specifies politeness principles and measurements to the cognitive psychology. Such kind of psychology relies on the knowledge of the people sharing and reciprocating linguistic messages online. Moreover, "cognitive" refers to the "home discipline" which means that the language of the sender and the receiver of information is non-verbal (p.1). Cognitive psychology, thus, incorporates information which is interchanged from distance i.e., there is no direct or verbal contact between the interlocutors.

Pragmatics is another factor of politeness besides cognitive psychology. Pragmatics gives the impression of the sender or the receiver context. Either of them situates his position through using pragmatic tokens. According to Pemberton, negative or positive pragmatic meanings depend on, at the first place, the context of the sender or the receiver via e-mail interactions. Here, politeness principles and measurements are designed according to the situation where the written structure is exchanged in e-mail correspondences.

Najeeb et al's and Pemberton's researches are similar in the way they represent the importance of non-verbal politeness. They share the same assumptions and conclusions that non-verbal politeness is as important as verbal politeness in human communication. However, they differ in the methodology they use to implement their researches. Najeeb et al's only uses a quantitative study to analyze some e-mail samples to support their argument. Pemberton, on the other hand, uses a qualitative and a quantitative methodology to analyze the data chosen for the study. Pemberton uses a qualitative methodology to identify the use of politeness by using critical concepts, such as cognitive psychology and politeness principles. In addition, the analysis of politeness written structures is conducted by a quantitative tool, namely, a questionnaire.

5. POLITENESS IN OTHER STUDIES

In *The Co-Construction of Social Relationships in Writing Center Tutoring Interactions: An Analysis of Politeness Strategies in Discourse Activity Frames*, Jo Mackiewicz (2001) treats the use of electronic politeness. Mackiewicz focuses on the discourse enactment of politeness. According to Mackiewicz, discourse enactment is the essence of polite structures used in electronic communication. The use of disciplined strategic discourse implies positive polite structures.

Similarly, Jennifer Maginnis (2011) approaches the linguistic aspects of politeness in the electronic conversations. Maginnis claims that politeness is not only deduced from the facial expressions of the interlocutors.

It is also inferred from the languages exploited in the electronic social media. Therefore, there are two rules for politeness conversations through electronic communication. The first one is moment conversation and the other is non-moment conversation. Moment conversation refers to the direct communication between the correspondents. However, non-moment conversation is the non-direct conversation. For example, a person sends an e-mail to another person. This e-mail is read after few days. The content of this e-mail could be understood differently from the date or moment of sending the e-mail. So politeness, here, depends on the moment of the conversations.

6. EVALUATION

I think that politeness strategies are a vital and all-encompassing issue in the contemporary electronic correspondences. In recent decades, the necessity for such interaction has been a core requirement for human communication. Studies on politeness conducted by Najeeb et al and Pemberton are very critical and contribute to the existing treatment of politeness in the electronic communication. Their conclusions are distinctively supported by their arguments. The data they used is very obvious, especially the way they come to conclusion that politeness is also non-verbal.

Presumably, their researches' findings are significant because they enrich the academic scholarship written on electronic politeness. They are also important because they solve the problem of direct or verbal politeness which only requires physical contact. It also bridges the gap of linguistic misunderstandings among correspondences through electronic communication. Thus, I tend to support the non-verbal politeness discussed in Najeeb et al's research. The verbal or direct communication is becoming traditional since human interaction is getting more cyber. I believe that the current mass communication is almost electronic and this communication comprises distant exchange of ideas and information. There is a revolutionary interaction among human beings nowadays, and it is impossible to connect with the world without electronic communication. So, commanding positive non-verbal politeness strategies is of paramount importance to understand the others and be understood by others.

REFERENCES

Abu Jweid, A. (2016). The fall of national identity in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. *PERTANIKA, 23*(5), 529-540.

Abu Jweid, A. (2020)b. Autobiographical Peculiarities in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Studies in Literature and Language, 21*(3), 5-9.

Abu Jweid, A. (2020)a. Aversion and desire: The disruption of monolithic ambivalence in Octavia Butler's *Kindred. Studies in Literature and Language, 21*(1), 6-15.

Abu Jweid, A. (2020)c. Fear mechanism in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart. Studies in Literature and Language, 21*(2), 12-18.

Abu Jweid, A. (2020)e. Naguib Mahfouz's *Arabian Nights and Days*: The allegorical sequel of *The Arabian Nights. Studies in Literature and Language, 21*(2), 91-100.

Abu Jweid, A. (2020)f. Regional commitment in Eudora Welty's "Petrified Man." *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies (IJELR), 7*(3), 206-214.

Abu Jweid, A. (2020)g. Time travel as a tool of satiric dystopia in Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five. International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies (IJELR), 7*(3), 100-107.

Abu Jweid, A. (2021)a. Anthropomorphism as an embodiment of natural gothic and man in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake. Higher Education of Social Science, 21*(2), 30-34.

Abu Jweid, A. (2021)b. The reception of *The Arabian Nights* in world literature. *Studies in Literature and Language, 22*(1), 10-15.

Abu Jweid, A. (2021)c. Women individuality: A critique of patriarchal society in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway. Studies in Literature and Language, 22*(2), 5-11.

Abu Jweid, A. N. A. (2021)e. "The Duality of Magic and Memory as the Structure of Narrative Repetition in Toni Morrison's *Beloved.*" *Higher Education of Social Science, 20*(2), 25-32.

Abu Jweid, A. N. A. (2021)f. A concise review of Anglo-Saxon poetry. *Canadian Social Science, 17*(3), 51-54.

Abu Jweid, A. N. A. (2021). Modernism's rejection of tradition through literary experimentation in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway. Cross-Cultural Communication, 17*(3), 8-11.

Abu Jweid, A. N., & Sasa, G. (2020)d. Models of the fantastic in Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman. Dirasat, Human and Social Sciences, 47*(1), 337-351.

Abu Jweid, A., & Sasa, G. (2014). "Dunyazadiad": The parody of *The Arabian Nights*' Frame Tale. *Jordan Journal of Modern Languages and Literatures, 6*(1), 163-178.

Behak, F., Darmi, R., & Mohamed, Y. (2015). Implementation of western-based multiliteratcies pedagogy in Malaysian: A Socio-cultural perspective. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies, 15*(1), 1-24.

Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2009). New media, new learning. In D. R. Cole & D. L. Pullen (Eds.). *Multiliteracies in motion: Current theory and practice* (pp.87-103). London: Routledge.

Kim, L., Lee, K. S., Wong, F. F., & Ya'acob, A. (2010). The English language and its impact on identities of multilingual Malaysian undergraduates. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies, 10*(1), 87-101.

Mackiewicz, Jo. (2001). *The co-construction of social relationships in writing center tutoring interactions: An analysis of politeness strategies in discourse activity frames* (Order No. 3037792).

Maginnis, J. (2011). *Texting in the presence of others: The use of politeness strategies in conversation* (Order No. 3492187). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (917472500).

Najeeb, Z., Maros, M., & Nor Fariza Mohd Nor. (2012). Politeness in e-mails of Arab students in Malaysia. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, *12* (1), 125-145.

Pemberton, Lyn. (2011). Politeness in interaction design. *Romanian Journal of Human - Computer Interaction*, *3*(1), 1-8.

The New London Group. (2000). A pedagogy of multiliteracies. In B. Cope & M. Kalantzis (Eds.), *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures* (pp.9-37). London: Routledge.