

VERBAL POLITENESS AS A STRATEGY OF APPROACH

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Abstract

Verbal courtesy is one of the star themes of discourse analysis, especially oral. No in vain it is one of the principles that govern interactional dynamics. When interacting interpersonal relationships come into play and without a doubt, of the good progress of these depends on the success of communication. Hence the linguistic activity is also social activity and the courtesy, one of these main social activities that contribute to conversational success.

Keywords: speech act, politeness, courtesy, social norms, concept, context, interlocutors, social status, illocutionary power.

INTRODUCTION

As a social activity verbal politeness is a phenomenon of rapprochement with the other in seeking a social balance, whether understood in relation to the image of the speaker and the listener (Goffman, Brown and Levinson, Bravo), with the costs and benefits that these go to achieve or to suffer (Leech) or with the rights and obligations of both (Fraser and Haverkate, Fant). In any case, approach:

- Either I approach the other with a courteous purpose, because there is a norm of social conduct or a cultural logic that dictates or advises me so (the basic images or what we have called cultural ideomas, in Briz, 2004, 82-83). In part, it is what some authors have called normative courtesy, which often features a high degree of ritualization (In the case of a greeting that responds to another greeting). One is thus simply or essentially courteous.

- Either I approach the other politely as a strategy to achieve a different end of being courteous, that is, one is strategically courteous: the Spanish conversation is a

example of strategic courtesy, or otherwise uses ritual courtesy less than other parts of the Hispanic world.

The linguistic, semantic-pragmatic prototype to express this social approach is called enhancing or pleasing verbal act, often intensifying or enhancing (compliments, compliments, thanks, etc.) and basically ritual. We say prototypical because the linguistic end (the message) and the social one coincide: I approach the other.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to authors such as Helen (2001: i), Escandell Vidal (1996 a: 136-137), Fraser (1990-2002), Casper (1998: 677) or Thomas (1995: 149) as the term is polite in the lexical inventory one of its most common meanings was that it referred to improved behaviors based on adherence to a series of norms and social conventions that each sociocultural group establishes in order to prescribe behavior that is expected in certain contexts, that is, in better ways. This traditional view of politeness

as a social norm (Fraser, 1990) "Courtesy" as Helene (2001: 30) calls it, has been associated with the time for the use of certain registers or linguistic styles, which are a consequence of the fact that behavior based on formality, was considered a polite language.

However, as Kasper (1998: 677) explains, the concept of politeness in pragmatics should not be applied exclusively to the use of language that some social classes or some people do in very specific contexts, but rather it should be extended to include the linguistic behavior of any person.

DISCUSSION

The other linguistic, semantic-pragmatic manifestation of courtesy is the attenuating or mitigating. It is a more complex mechanism, even apparently contradictory. I laugh, as I walk away from the message, softening it, avoiding something I say or do, to get closer or not get too far from the other and thus avoid possible tensions, misunderstandings, threats to one's own image and, above all, that of others. A strategy, then, linguistic distance as well as a strategy of social rapprochement. In the following example the interlocutor S uses the mitigating factor as a relativizer of judgments and opinions, as strategy to avoid responsibility for what is said or done:

S: No sé / por lo que dicen parece que podría haberse hecho de otro modo

The feigned doubts and ignorance (No sé), the impersonalization (from what they say), the use of an attenuating verb by itself (parece que), the verb of possibility and the temporal form conditional (podría), which are extenuating, the verbal tactics used, would be modifying, reducing the illocutionary force of opinion and thus avoiding possible tensions.

Prevenir, curar o curarse en salud - allow me the medical metaphor - are the aims of the mitigating strategies. Prevent threats to one's own image and that of others (I see you chubby. You are a little distracted), the tensions or conflicts produced by the intrusions in the territories and in the personal agendas of the

other (Could you leave me the notes. go to the doctor), repair and heal possible wounds or conditions that will undoubtedly occur. When in an interaction, soften tensions (Yo a mí me parece que no vamos bien porque tú no quieres. Quizás, me he equivocado al decírtelo, perdona), or to heal in health, that is, to take care of oneself (Juan no vendrá, bueno, yo no es que lo sepa seguro. Yo era bastante guapita de joven).

Let us see both types of courtesy, valorizing and mitigating, in the excerpts of conversation. ciyn of (1) and (2), extracted from the Val.Es.Co corpus of colloquial conversations (Briz and group Val.Es.Co. 2002). The transcription conventions correspond to the proposal Val.Es.Co., which we reproduce as an annex before the bibliographical references:

(1) [La dueña de la casa enseña a una amiga, que está de visita, las lámparas que se ha comprado]

V: ¿solamente tienes esta?

A: no

V: § ¿no? cuenta// la verdad es que es muy bonita ¿se parece a la mía?/ ¿eh? ¿tú has visto la

mía?// ¡OSTRAS! ¡QUÉ MOONA!// ¡QUÉ GRACIOOSA!

A: mira cómo se ((queda))

V: ¿cómo la has encendido↑?

A: tocando

V: ¡ay! pues sí/ sí que [ilumina]

A: [es un mue(ble)]

V: ¡qué cosa más bonita! ¿eh? ¡qué original! Es una monada, es graciosísima/¿qué más? ¿qué más lámparas tienes?

A:(ya/ ninguna más) ¡ah! sí/ las del cuarto

V: ¡ah! ¡ay qué mona! [Briz and Grupo Val.Es.Co. 2002: IH.340.A.1 .: p. 378, lines 4-14 and 42-44]

The mechanisms of intensification of the qualities of the lamps and of the other (by taste

in the election) they are praises towards the interlocutor, they give image, elevate it and enhance it. Also notice the interest shown with collaborative questions such as How did you do it? What more lamps do you have?, which also participate as resources of that. Nice strategy that we have noticed.

And those strategic mechanisms of pleasing enhancement and attenuation appear perfect combined further if any of the images are compromised, as in (2):

(2) [Relación de parentesco. C, Madre, J, hijo de C, y la tía, P. A J le costó mucho aprobar el examen del carné de conducir]

P: ¿qué? ¿cómo va el coche ya↓ Juan?

J: muy bien/ que lo diga la mamá→§

C: ay!/ está hecho un artista ((...)) y le dije Juan/ no te duela lo que estás pagando/ tú es que vas a las clases °(un)° poquito distraído/ porque °(como)° llevaba tantas cosas en la cabeza↑§

P: claro/ claro

C: pues le decían a lo mejor/ la segunda a la derecha// BUENO// y ya no se acordaba/ u-cuando llegaba/ si era en la segunda o era en la tercera/ y eso es lo que fallaba/ mucho// entonces→/ como tampoco tenía nadie/ una vez sacao el carnet/ a quien recurrir↑/ para sacar el coche y hacer unas poquitas más prácticas/ tampoco era cuestión/ de que la chiquita del chalet dee Pili/ a las diez de la noche nos fuéramos a dar una voltereta por ahí/ porque yo tampoco vengo pronto↑§

P: claro

C: entonces/ no era cuestión d'eso/ ¿qué pasa?// que ha hecho→/ tu novia/ por no dejarlo mal/ dice (RISAS) °(en)° LA FAMILIA DICE QUE HA HECHO VEINTICUATRO PRÁCTICAS/ Y HA HECHO CUARENTA Y TANTAS

J: cuarenta y cinco

C: cuarenta y cinco/ pero

P:¿quién↓ tú?

C: sí/ pero bueno§

J: pero→

C: bueno/ atiéndeme una [cosa]

J: [pero] ahora estoy or- or- o sea→§

P: orgulloso§

J: [satisfecho=]

C: [satis-]

J: = de haberlas hecho/ [porque luego no he tenido/ ninguna dificultad// y no he tenido=]

C: [porque ha salido sabiendo del todo//(2'')] todas las pifias]

J: =que recurrir a nadie/[para- para/// ponerme a tono]

C: [todas las pifias las ha hecho en las clases/ todas las pifias]

P: claro [Briz and Grupo Val.Es.Co., 2002: G.68.A.1 + G.69.B.1: pp. 200-1, lines 383-419]

J's image is in question, threatened, at times on the ground, and mother and aunt they try to save her and elevate her at all costs. All together, in the end, collaborate in that washing of image, in the healing of wounds. As tactical resources appear movements concessive-oppositional, justification and reformulation are the minimized mechanisms, mitigating mistakes made, while valorizing strategies emerge, for example, la colaboracion extrema, que refuerzan y realzan la imagen social de autonomia, que en el caso espanol, segun D. Bravo, is that of "showing oneself original and conscious of the good qualities of their own", [as in the case of the Ecuadorian is the maximum respect for ancestors (Placencia, 1996) or the zeal for privacy in the case of Anglo-Saxon culture (Wierzbicka, 1991)].

That's right, when the image is threatened in the interaction, these mechanisms, on the one hand, valorizing, that enhance the positive and, on the other, those mechanisms We have mitigators that minimize the negative. And that seems universal in all languages, as we already said. What is most relative and this is what is important ⊃ is the content of the images and content of the threats both in terms of ideas of what is there to protect as well as language

resources. We have already said that, for example, Spaniards flatter and like to be flattered; the Dutch. It seems, according to Haverkate (1994), that he is not so prone to it, since he understands it as undervaluation and thus as a threat to his image. Also, as a verbal resource, the imperative not attenuated can express an act of threat to the image of the other and, by therefore, be coded as impolite, although its interpretation is not identical in Spain and in Hispano-America. Thus, for example, the Mexicans, Curcy and De Fina (2002) affirm, avoid the use of the unattenuated imperative to ask for a job more than Spaniards who perceive it as impolite.

In short, if we accept that the ultimate goal of any conversation is to reach an agreement, we accept it. *ciyn* (even if only social), a lot of land has won who manages properly both types of courtesy and mitigation strategies. Therefore, more and more, the programs about language teaching, be it a mother tongue or a foreign language, what is called Spanish for specific purposes, language mediation, image consultancy, etc., insert so matters related to this topic. The importance of teaching how to manage these strategies courtesy as well as the resources of expression of the same is fundamental to efficient and effective communication.

Someone recently told a news outlet about business failures that had a Spanish company in its expansion through some Latin American countries, in particular in Chile, due to the "aggressive and impolite" negotiating style for Chileans from Spanish executives, to whom they had to give accelerated courses of courtesy and Chilean interactional dynamics or, more exactly, of actions that please and of actions that threaten in Chile and how to avoid them.

Definitely, the mode of negotiation, but also the expression of courtesy is different in the different societies: "We speak the same language, but not the same speech", a good Chilean friend. What makes us remember certain types or cultural stereotypes.

It is true that on the other side of the Atlantic it can be heard that the Spanish is aggressive

when speaking, that shows arrogance, that his speech is anarchic, opinions that could well give Mexicans, Chileans, Peruvians, etc. And these other stereotypes could be heard from this side: when they speak, the Mexican is slow or the Chilean cries, etc.

Let's analyze (3) a fragment of conversation, extracted from the work of D. Bravo (2002: 149 and 153), among four academics from the Universidad de la Plata (Argentina), Antonio (38 years), Beatriz (55 years old), Carlos (38) and Dora (37):

(3) CARLOS: bueno en México yo me quedaba tranquilo cuando después de un tiempo me decían/ ah pero TÚ no pareces argentino/ entonces ya/ estee

DORA: es un piropo eso

CARLOS: decía bueno era un piropo/ era un elogio

DORA: sí sí

CARLOS: o sea (...) no les sonaba soberbio o así estee// que sé yo estaba pensando en parte tiene que ver con que hay muchos argentinos que son muy muy soberbios y que andan- UNO los ve. Estás en Mexico en cualquier lugar donde hay/ turistas argentinos†/ y los ves los reconoces.

CARLOS: pero también tiene que ver con la pura forma de hablar†/ que es mucho más frontal más directa más así como más cortante†/ que eso a los mexicanos les choca muchísimo↓ porque ellos hablan de otra manera... yo a veces por ahí decía una ironía o un chiste o una cargada respecto a alguien/ y se queda - o a algo y se quedaban así mirándome como que les parecíaa muy duro algo como muy→

ANTONIO: no es falta de humor

CARLOS: no no es falta de humor es claro ess ess otra cosa y además bueno claro ahí↓ eh la manera de hablar y de discutir- por eso yo decía cuatro personas discutiendo a cuatro argentino y a cuatro mexicanos debe dar un resultado muy contras TANTE allá

DORA: vos cómo te imaginás que discutirían cuatro mexicanos?

CARLOS: cuatro mexicanos discutirían/ con una/ mm todo cuidando cada palabra/ y con una amabilidad extrema y sin pelearse (...) una chica mexicana el otro día este contaba que alguien había dicho algo así comoo este bueno/ a diferencia de lo quee usted acertadamente acaba de decir o yo no coincido con lo que usted acertadamente acaba de decir o sea quee

DORA: mm/ no concuerdo con la idiotez que acaba de decir

CARLOS: exactamente/ en cambio allá es todo/ con vueltas y todo muy matizado→ y lleno de amabilidades

ANTONIO: ¿en lo académico será eso o es en la calle?

What the Argentines say about the Mexican seems to be applicable, according to J. Puga (1997), also to Chileans. The author affirms that "the attitude of the Chilean speaker in Conversation is determined by greater deference to the interlocutor. The Spanish speaker, on the contrary, is characterized by a greater predominance of his ego "(p. 111), which could explain, according to the author, the greater attenuation in Chile. Although we are not sure that the word is deference or, more generally, courtesy, we believe that in the In general, Chilean interaction is more attenuated than in the Spanish peninsula.

RESULTS

In any case, the views or perceptions of the Argentine teachers in the fragment above could have a linguistic explanation or motivation and it would be of a great interest to see if really so it is. Certainly, in many parts of America a great tonal variability, great contrast of peaks and valleys typical of singing, as described Álvarez (2005) for the case of Venezuelans, and which are also characteristic, for example, in the Canary Islands and Galicia, which makes the discourse more courteous. Even kinesics sometimes intervenes, the gesture; in fact, there

are elements gestural, polite paralinguistic elements, which are also distinctive of the different societies (in some cultures, such as Chinese or Japanese, gestural courtesy is fundamental mental); laughter is, for example una estrategia en las negociaciones cotidianas y en las transaccionales (D. Bravo, 1996), which is undoubtedly accentuated in some Asian cultures. All these are questions little studied until now. On the other hand, that mitigators or mitigating factors are more frequent in the interaction of Chileans and Mexicans could explain let your speech advance more slowly, in addition, of course, to that kindness or, in principle, that courtesy referred to by the interlocutors in the previous example, as well as like Puga (1997). And, without a doubt, once again we must resort to the so named, but little concrete, attenuated and courteous tone of some Spaniards, for example, Canaries and Galicians and Latin Americans.

Returning to the fragment of conversation between the Argentines, one of the interlocutors, Antonio, pointed out the possibility that this deferential way of interacting was the academic, but not the one used in the street. That is, the more or less polite way linked to the communication situation. The everyday or communicative immediacy of one's conversation favors a different kind of courtesy, even interpreting different from what is coded as polite or impolite.

The aforementioned points to keywords or, otherwise, centers of interest of this study: verbal courtesy, be it mitigating or pleasing, conversation and cross-cultural differences regarding courtesy activities.

We have presented the concept of courtesy and the two types of courtesy: enhancing and attenuating. dora. In relation to this term, it should be noted that, on the one hand, the colloquial specifier refers to the register of use a linguistic modality that is favored by the characteristics of the situational context, by a communicative situation in which there is a relationship of greater equality between the interlocutors of experiential relationship of proximity between these (shared knowledge), a

framework of interaction, family or daily life, also from the thematic point of view; a speech level characterized in turn by absence planning, its communicative socializing purpose (talking for the sake of talking) and its informal tone. It is obvious that, for example, at home or with friends is used colloquial register; on the other hand, in a class or when talking to a teacher is used more formality. The situation in each case determines the change of record.

And the conversation is only the kind of oral discourse in which, given its immediacy, communicative or current character (face to face, me, here, now and before you), the least control of the speech production and non-predetermined turn alternation, more authentically manifests that colloquial register.

CONCLUSION

In this work we have tried to reconcile the pragmalinguistic approach with the sociopragmatical, that the presentation of certain strategies and verbal politeness tactics to get closer to the other and achieve the planned goal, as well as an explanation of the intercultural differences of expression or modalization of courtesy based on the distinction between cultures of more or less rapprochement, understanding by mentioned rapprochement the greater or lesser communicative immediacy in the interaction and, socially, the degree of more or less confidence (that is the value of the approach, at least in Spain).

Let's recall the perception of some Spanish speakers:

"Spanish is direct when he speaks, so much so that sometimes he borders on rudeness, when he is not really rude."

This perception is the one that some speakers come to have belonging, above all, to cultures of distancing or of approaching (or that of those who in Spain strongly criticize that membership).

Spanish, especially peninsular, according to the empirical analyzes carried out and that we are

doing together with Dr. Marta Albelda, belongs to a culture of greater approach, of solidarity which has as linguistic correlates, even more if the conversation is colloquial, the lower frequency of attenuators in the conversation and the increased frequency of pleasing appraisals, such as flattery, colliding overlaps, all-repetitions, etc. (i.e. there are too many mitigators - only when it is convenient - and, on the contrary, there are numerous pleasant acts, perhaps to compensate). But it is not a rude culture at all. Spaniards are not rude, only that the cultural and social code of courtesy does not coincide with that of other languages, neither does its verbal and non-verbal discursive realizations.

From these pages we encourage that, in the same way that studies are being developed contrastives between Spanish from different areas of Spain and America, studies are contrast the strategies of verbal and non-verbal courtesy between Spanish and other languages guides, especially the language of those who study it as a foreign language or as second language. The applied interest is unquestionable for Spanish learners to achieve successful, efficient and effective communication. And since the recommendation is made from the Cervantes Institute in Beijing and from the forum of these E/LE teachers in China, we wonder why not start these contrastive analysis Uzbek or some other Asian culture.

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