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### Journal of Social Studies Education Research

#### Table of Contents

##### Articles

- [The Status of Field Trips Among Secondary Social Studies Teachers in Florida](#) P  
1-  
Joshua Kenna
- [Factors That Influence the Level of the Academic Performance of the Students](#) P  
17-  
Grevista S. Sadiku, vloria Sylaj

##### Multicultural and Intercultural Education

- [Teacher shortages and cultural mismatch: District and university collaboration for recruiting](#) P  
39-  
Douglas Carothers, Hasan Aydin, Michael Houdyshell
- [Learning from Face-Threatening Acts by Tourism Workers in Bali: The Impacts of Cross-Cultural Misunderstanding](#) P  
64-  
Anak Agung Ayu Dian Andriyani, Djatmika Djatmika, Sumarlam Sumarlam, Ely Triasih Rahayu
- [Dynamics of Acculturation Processes Among Foreign Students in The Multi-Ethnic Educational Environment of the Higher Educational Establishment](#) P  
82-1  
Raziya Akhtarieva, Elmira Ibragimova, Aiziryak Tarasova

##### International and Comparative Social Studies Education

- [Kinship Terms as Proof of Genetic Relationship](#) P  
103-1  
Ramliya Sagdieva, Damir Husnutdinov, Ramil Mirzagitov, Radik Galiullin

##### Curriculum & Instruction

- [Inclusive Education as a Basis for Sustainable Development of Society](#) P  
118-1  
Inna Fedulova, Valentina Ivanova, Olga Atiyukova, Vladimir Nosov
- [Investigating principal capacity in literacy instructional leadership at selected primary schools](#) P  
136-1  
Bernadictus O'brain Plaatjes
- [Teachers' Attitudes and Practices Towards Formative Assessment in Primary Schools](#) P  
161-1  
Vjollca Ahmedi
- [Reading Habits, Grammatical Knowledge, Creative Thinking, and Attainment in Academic Writing: Evidence from Bengkulu University, Indonesia](#) P  
176-1  
Erni Sukesri, Emzir Emzir, Sabarti Akhadiyah

##### Democracy and Human Rights Education

- [Javanese Women's Political Discourse in Response to the 2019 Indonesian General Election](#) P  
193-2  
Pembayun Miji Lestari, Djatmika Djatmika, Sumarlam Sumarlam, Dwi Purnanto

##### Values Education

- [Inclusion as a Modern Cultural Universal: Reflection and Conceptualization](#) P  
212-2  
Natalia E. Sudakova, Olga N. Astafyeva
- [Ethical Problems Concerning Dialectic Interaction of Culture and Civilization](#) P  
236-2  
Liudmyla Pavlyshyn, Olga Voronkova, Marina Yakutina, Elena Tesleva
- [Acculturation and Its Effects on the Religious and Ethnic Values of Bali's Catur Village Community](#) P  
249-2  
I Wayan Winaja, I Wayan Sukma Winarya Prabawa, Putu Ratih Pertiwi
- [Social Construction Of Student Behavior Through Character Education Based On Local Wisdom](#) P  
276-2  
Sri Suhartini, Bintarsih Sekarningrum, M. Munandar Sulaeman, Wahju Gunawan
- [The Effectiveness of a Counselling Program Based on Play in Reducing Sleep Disorders in Children of Sexual Abuse](#) P  
292-3  
Ola Abd alkarreem alhwayan, Faye Mahamid
- [Pedagogical Values in Indonesian Lyrics of Dangdut Songs: Evidences of Language Vulgarism and Gender Exploitation](#) P  
311-3  
Dewi Kusumaningsih, Djatmika Djatmika, Riyadi Santosa, H. D. Edi Subroto

##### Media Literacy and Social Studies

- [The Social Responsibility of a Scientist: the Philosophical Aspect of Contemporary Discussions](#) P

## Learning from Face-Threatening Acts by Tourism Workers in Bali: The Impacts of Cross-Cultural Misunderstanding

Anak Agung Ayu Dian Andriyani, Djatmika Djatmika, Sumarlam Sumarlam, Ely Triasih Rahayu

### Abstract



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# Learning from the Face Threatening

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# Learning from the Face Threatening

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## Learning from the Face-Threatening Acts by Tourist Workers in Bali: Impacts of Cross-Cultural Misunderstanding

Anak Agung Ayu Dian Andriyani<sup>1</sup>, Djatmika<sup>2</sup>, Sumarlam<sup>3</sup> & Ely Triasih Rahayu<sup>4</sup>

### Abstract

A Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) is considered to be an act, including an utterance, that can damage a person's face. This study aims to identify FTAs unintentionally committed by tourism workers toward Japanese tourists. Drawing on a qualitative approach, this study involved 25 participants selected in purposive sampling, and interviews were conducted with five Japanese tourists and four tourism workers who were available during the research. Data were collected through observation and interviews. Records and field notes were also used to collect data. In addition, domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analyses were applied to analyze the data and consider the power, distance, range of imposition, and speech situation. The results show that tourism workers perform negative FTAs when addressing Japanese tourists and offering goods or services for sale. Specifically, tourism workers demonstrate speech that implies oppression, the absence of honorific *keigo*, the use of titles not commonly addressed in Japanese culture in the same context, a failure to understand that Japanese tourists may want to enjoy the beach privately, and speech when making offers that invades the privacy of Japanese tourists. Linguistically, tourist workers are using correct local conventions, but this cultural context is improperly perceived.

**Keywords:** Kuta Beach, Tourism Workers, Face-Threatening Acts, Japanese Tourists.

### Introduction

This paper covers a pragmatic analysis that focuses on how utterances by beach workers—as tourism workers—are perceived by Japanese tourists in Bali, Indonesia. The honorific addresses of *futsuugo* and *keigo* can be delivered inappropriately, with offers sometimes offending tourists. Politeness strategies are being wrongly perceived here by tourism workers in Bali due to cross-cultural misunderstandings. Sadeghohli & Niroomand (2016) assert the politeness principle restricts human communicative behavior, influencing us to avoid communicative discord or offence, and maintain communicative concord. By “communicative discord” Leech (2005) means a situation in which two people can be assumed, on the basis of what meanings have been

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communicated, to entertain mutually opposed goals. According to Brown and Levinsons' (1987) speech acts, such as requests, offers, disagreement and compliments, inherently threaten either the hearer's or the speakers' face-wants and that politeness is involved in redressing face threatening acts (FTAs).

Japanese tourists as reported by Bali's Tourist Agency represented the largest group visiting Bali in 2004 (Disparda, Provincial Tourism Office, 2019). Starting in 2008, however, tourists from China, Australia, and India started to out number Japanese tourists, resulting in them moving down to fourth number (Disparda, 2019). Tourism in Bali has been developed using the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*, which is the teaching of the Hindu religion based on the principle of balance and harmony by the interrelated components of *Parahyangan* (harmony toward the creator), *Pawongan* (harmony toward the interpersonal), and *Palemahan* (harmony toward the surrounding nature) (Dibya, 2018; TVRI Pusat Jakarta, 2019). Tourism in Bali has among its resources nature and culture, and the unique beauty and culture of Bali strengthen its image as a tourist destination (Bagus, 2016).

One class of tourism location that is largely desired by Japanese tourists is the beaches. Along these beaches, many tourism workers take the opportunity to earn income from tourism. Tourist workers at the beach are generally self-employed and sell various kinds of souvenirs and services. Their work is usually dependent on visiting domestic and foreign tourists. These workers include beach workers, who frequently have a firm posture, tattoos, and colorful hair. They provide services like the renting of surfboards and offer training through short surfing tutorials. Other tourism workers include street vendors, masseurs, hairdressers, and taxi drivers (Disparda, 2019). During their interactions with Japanese tourists, tourism workers use the Japanese language without proper structure and grammar and only a slight comprehension of Japanese culture (Dibya, 2018). This results in improper speech from tourism workers that fails to consider the position of the other party as an unfamiliar customer (Ida Bagus, 2016). Culture therefore plays an important role in successful communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Appreciating the importance of culture and proper grammar can lead to acceptable language for both parties in a dialogue. In tourism, this applies not just to the Japanese language but also to other languages, such as Arabic, which must follow the principles of correct grammar (Mansor, 2016). The Arabic language is also used in tourism for various expressions, with explicit adjectives being the dominant features when compared to other tourism interactions. Arabic in tourism, for instance, is categorized of having

stylish features, and positive language can advance the density and beauty of a dialogue (Idris-Mansor, 2016).

Guides for Japanese tourists are obliged to use the Japanese language properly and correctly. These guides need to understand Japanese culture, so their speech will not seem rude and impolite. Unfortunately, as reported by Rashid, Rahim & Mamat (2017) tourist workers in the area of Kuta beach, Bali show an imperfect mastery of pragmatic forces when communicating with Japanese tourists, thus giving Japanese tourists a negative impression. Uncomfortable feelings that manifest due to cultural misunderstandings were identified as FTAs by Leech (1990), such as when politeness strategies are inappropriately applied (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Politeness indicates the cross cultural communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987) that requires speakers avoid face threatening (Culpeper, 1987; Srisuruk, 2011). Various studies in language-politeness strategies and FTAs have been conducted (e.g., Srisuruk, 2011; Purnomo, 2011; Najeeb, Maros & Nor, 2012; Kristianto, 2016; Rashid, Rahim & Mamat, 2017). Srisuruk (2011) found that the quality of politeness in tourist interactions in the English language by Thai people tend to feature negative politeness strategies when maintaining a harmonious relationship with the other party in the conversation. Purnomo (2011) investigated language use in tourism service interactions between hosts and tourists. He noted that the hosts prefer a positive politeness when providing services to tourists. In addition, Najeeb, Maros, and Nor (2012) examined politeness strategies in Arabic post-graduate student emails to supervisors in a Malaysian university, focusing on cultural diversity, and stressed they are very problematic for Arabic students studying in Malaysia. During their interaction with supervisors, they employ two strategies, namely positive and negative politeness rather than the five available strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987).

Research by Kristianto (2016) analyzed language use in the tourism context and its effect on self-image, focusing on the structure of the hospitality language system. A novel finding of this research was how speakers' intention to limit FTAs applies negative hospitality, where tourism practitioners demonstrate awareness of FTAs by withholding negative faces during service interactions. Good hospitality thus occurs when tourism practitioners show awareness of the need for tourists to save face during service interactions. Rashid, Rahim & Mamat (2017) note that strategies used to avoid FTAs by tourist workers did not specifically describe occurrences of FTAs in the tourism domain. We observe that the patterns of humor and strategies used by tourism guides

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while providing services to Japanese tourists is rather playful by nature with the intention attracting the attention and interest of Japanese tourists and providing a humorous ambience. Rahayu (2017) asserts that laughter is also used to achieve harmonious interpersonal relations, as has been noted in several previous researches that focus on the types of politeness strategies used to avoid FTAs. Thus, speech related to FTAs and its implementation in the tourism domain has not yet been fully explored (Disparda, 2019).

### **Research Questions**

Drawing on politeness strategies and FTAs as the cornerstone for our concepts, this study is guided by the following research question: “How do tourist workers deliver addresses and offers when communicating with Japanese tourists in Bali?”

## **Review of Literature**

### **Face**

The face theory is coined by Brown and Levinson (1987), that consist of three basic notions: face, FTA and politeness strategies. An FTA results from the effects of a speaker’s utterance, regardless of the politeness strategy used in his or her speech (Yule, 1996). To overcome the issue, speakers can avoid this threat by quantifying the degree of the threat during communication (Levinson et al., 1987; Nadar, 2009; Yule, 1996). Such an approach also applies in the tourism domain, where tourism workers try to provide maximum service while being aware of their speech in order to avoid FTAs, because these lead to disharmony in communication.

Basically, in general communication the use of politeness strategies of *bald on-record* and *off-record* are important for FTAs (Kristianto, 2016; Levinson et al., 1987; Yule, 1996). In direct contact like communication between tourists and tourist workers, FTAs may frequently occur as a result of misunderstanding of the culture that implicates to the use of negative politeness strategies (Ida Bagus, 2016; Rahayu, 2017; Rashid, Rahim & Mamat, 2017).

A person’s face is the self-image that he or she wants to preserve, and utterances and threats from other people can threaten this. Humans, as social creatures, use two types of face, positive and negative (Levinson et al., 1987). A positive face includes an interest in being liked and respected by others, while a negative face features a basic desire for individual space, personal privilege, and freedom from disruption (Dagdilelis, 2018; Levinson et al., 1987; Nadar, 2009; Yule, 1996).

Brown and Levinson (1987:61) argue that the concept of face is “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself”. There are two kinds of face wants: positive and negative face. Negative face covers the basic claim of territories, personal preservers, right to non-distraction, e.g. freedom of action and freedom from imposition. The positive face is the positive consistent self-image or “personality” claimed by interactants. Every utterance is potentially a FTA, either to negative face or positive face.

Based on this basic theory, Brown & Levinson (1987) point out three main strategies to perform speech acts are distinguished: positive politeness, negative politeness and off-record politeness. Positive politeness aims at supporting the addressee’s positive face, whereas negative politeness aims at softening the encroachment on the addressee’s freedom of action or freedom from imposition. Off-record politeness assumes that the addressee is able to infer the intended meaning. To implement the strategies Brown and Levinson (1987) then propose five approaches:

- Bald on-record, which is a direct speech strategy without any nuances or platitudes, so the concept of face does not apply in this situation;
- Positive politeness, where speakers seek to save positive face by presenting themselves as equal speaking partners, avoiding disagreement, making promises, and using humor;
- Negative politeness, where speakers use indirect utterances through questioning with speaking partners to keep a social distance and act apologetically;
- Off record, which is a speech strategy using indirect speech;
- Avoid the FTA by saying nothing, although this fails to achieve the desired communication.

### **Japanese Politeness**

Politeness is the demonstration of respect toward one or more other people in communication (Brown & Levinson, 1980; Rahayu, 2013). Respect and politeness are two different concepts, but they are closely connected in the honorific patterns of speakers (Baryadi, 2003). In Japan, politeness is at the basis of all communication, and whether it proceeds or not depends on the politeness demonstrated between speaking partners (Ide, 2006). Politeness in Japan is an imprinted concept, such that a polite individual is characterized by his or her use of an honorific system (respectfulness) in each utterance on the lexical, syntactical, and morphological levels. It follows social norms, such as being polite to those of a higher social status, greater authority, and older

people, as well as within formal situations (Ide, 1989). The view of communication in Japanese society is mostly driven by the Japanese cultural background. The Japanese concept of politeness is divided into two types, namely *ishi* (volition) and *wakimae* (discernment) (Kaneko, 2014). Politeness as social norms must be demonstrated by each individual in an interaction rather than as a volition in the *ishi* concept. *Wakimae* covers individual roles verbally and non-verbally in a situation, based on social conversion, so the Japanese apply the *wakimae* concept in communication for the purpose of creating a harmonic relationship between speaking partners (Iori & Takanashi, 2000).

### **The Degree of Japanese Honorific Language**

The degree of Japanese honorific language comprises *futsuugo* (ordinary language) and *keigo* (polite language) (Kaneko, 2014). *Futsuugo* is the quality of language characterized by the main verbs expressed by speakers to familiar speaking partners with no social distance, so *Futsuugo* has no display of honor (Suzuki, 1998; Iori & Takanashi, 2000; Kabaya, Takagi & Kimu, 2009; Kaneko, 2014). This pattern includes *futsuutai* verbs, which is the basic verbform, and is also known as *gokan* in Japanese. Izumi (2011) also calls this pattern *futsuutai* when referring to an ordinary pattern on the word level, while *futsuugo* is an ordinary pattern on the sentence level (Iori & Takanashi, 2000; Rahayu, 2013). *Keigo*, meanwhile, is the polite language used by speakers when communicating based on factors like position, setting, nuance, occupational position, age, and seniority (Suzuki, 1998:23). As a polite style (*keigo*), it is used based on the connections of speakers (O1), speaking partners (O2), and others in the conversation (O3) (Rahayu, 2013). *Keigo* itself is further divided into *sonkeigo* (ascent language), which is used to express respect directly by uplifting speaking partners or third parties, while *kenjougo* (descent language) is used to directly express respect by humbling oneself. These differ from *teineigo* (polite language), which is used to demonstrate politeness in every word and thus soften the utterance in the ears of speaking partners and third parties (Suzuki, 1998; Kabaya & Kimu, 2009; Kaneko, 2014).

### **Balinese Tri Hita Karana**

The implementation format of *Tri Hita Karana* assumes that all living creatures are part of a brotherhood. This means that the thoughts, words, and deeds are the same regardless of race or other grouping based on the *Tri Kaya Parisuda* Hindu teaching (TVRI Pusat Jakarta, 2019). The

use of *sor/singgih/basa* reflects one's degree of politeness in communication (Rai, 2018:1). Polite speech thus becomes a strategy to support harmonious communication by following the teaching of *Tri Hita Karana*. Such a concept also applies in the tourism context of Bali, such as in hotels. Under the concept of *pawongan*, hotels always support artistic performances from various tribes and religious groups in their areas. The intention is to maintain harmony among religious followers. Meanwhile, the concept of *palemahan* aims to maintain harmony with nature, such as by sustaining coral reefs and turtle populations. The concept of *parhyangan* in Matahari hotels also includes being active in constructing temples and upholding the sanctity of temples in hotel areas. This effort is not random but rather standardized in daily hotel operation (Parma & Par, 2010).

### **Tourism workers**

Tourism workers are at the frontline of sustainability in the tourism industry (Hsu & Chan, 2009; Huang, 2011a). In addition, tourism practitioners must understand the needs of tourists and be capable of giving positive impressions, because their main purpose is to provide new experiences. The service toward customers in Japan can be viewed based on the analysis of Reisinger and Waryszak (2000), where all tourists visiting Japan are treated as customers like they are in their own homes. From the Japanese perspective, a guest as a customer receives a similar devotion to that of God, so all services in Japanese hospitality are maximally accommodating.

Based on the service type, tourism workers must embrace the concept of guests as kings (Shinya Ichijo, 2015). This differs, however, from the western view of customers as kings (Dace, 1995). Hospitality, according to Kristianto (2016), uses language that can be identified through speech formats illustrating acts of service. To reduce face threatening through negative hospitality, tourism practitioners should display positive facial awareness, thus saving face during service interactions. Positive hospitality occurs when tourism practitioners respect the need for tourists to preserve a positive or negative face during every service interaction. Research by Roswati (2013) investigated the characteristics of Japanese tourists when vacationing abroad and how tourism practitioners attempted to understand the behavioral patterns of Japanese tourists to avoid conflicts. The findings of Roswati (2013) are relevant to this research, because they revealed efforts to avoid face-threatening acts through the use of proper language politeness strategies. Based on the view

of Reisinger and Turner (1999), cultural variation and service providers' behaviors provide personal impressions for tourists.

### Methods

This research applied a descriptive qualitative approach using the case study method for the global tourist destination of Kuta beach in the Badung Regency of Bali, Indonesia. The focus of this study was the honorific addresses and offers made by beach workers when communicating with Japanese visitors to Kuta beach. The utterances used to address or make an offer to Japanese tourists were explored in this study, because they can sometimes offend or even insult Japanese tourists. A pragmatic analysis was performed to confirm whether communication was performed well, not just in terms of form but also the context and purpose. We involved 20 Japanese tourists and five tourism workers based on the purposive sampling techniques in the entire research process. The criteria used for selecting tourism workers included: a) must have worked in tourism on Kuta beach for at least five years, b) must be able to speak basic Japanese, and c) must have lived in Bali for at least five years. In addition, the Japanese tourists were selected based on the following criteria: a) must have visited Bali more than two times and b) must understand Bali's societal character and culture. This research was done for three months from January to March 2017.

Data were collected through a) recording various dialogues between tourism practitioners and Japanese tourists; b) observing and taking field notes during interactions based on the research purposes; and c) interviewing in a deep but unstructured format to give ample opportunity for interviewees to provide the most original responses (Sutopo, 2006). For the interviews, four tourist workers and five Japanese tourists who were available during the research were involved. See Tables 1 and 2 for a description of the data-collection process.

**Table 1**

*Profiles of the tourism workers for interviews*

Interview	Name	Age	Duration (minutes)	Interview Date
1	DG1	43	60	10 February, 2017
2	DG2	35	45	13 February, 2017
3	DG3	45	55	15 February, 2017
4	DG4	28	30	18 February, 2017

The tourism workers (labeled DG1, DG2, DG3, and DG4) were all male tourism workers who had been working for more than 20 years as providers of surfboards, street vendors, or chauffer guides. They used the Japanese language to communicate with Japanese tourists but without use of proper Japanese language. They merely improvised a vocabulary that they had learned themselves. They presumed that their improper, less polite use of the Japanese language would not raise complaints if they provided sufficient comfort for the tourists.

The Japanese tourists (labeled WJ1, WJ2, WJ3, WJ4, and WJ5) had all visited Bali more than twice on vacation. With regards to the improper Japanese language use by the tourist workers, the Japanese tourist participants expressed that they understood the situation. The tourists expected that the beach atmosphere brings a non-formal situation where there is no obligation to use honorific utterances. In addition, the requirement to provide excellent and friendly services gave comfort to the Japanese tourists. Although a meeting may be peculiar, because the tourism workers talk easily and relatively fast and close to Japanese tourists, the tourists appreciate the hospitable nature of the Indonesian people, so the phenomena is not a major issue.

**Table 2**

*Profiles of the Japanese tourist interviewees*

Interview	Name	Age	Duration (minutes)	Interview Date
1	WJ1	32	30	25 January, 2017
2	WJ2	38	45	28 January, 2017
3	WJ3	36	25	25 February, 2017
4	WJ4	76	60	29 February, 2017
5	WJ5	44	45	30 February, 2017

For analysis purposes, the data were presented in dialogue format based on the speech context, including topic discussion, the location related to the situation, speaker positioning, and time. The primary data for this research comprised linguistic data in the form of dialogues between beach tourism workers and Japanese tourists, which may contain positive and/or negative FTAs. The data included verbal data, possibly containing FTAs, from the verbal interactions in the research location, namely the Kuta beach area. This involves various linguistic interactions between beach tourism workers and Japanese tourists, supported by neighborhood data gained from numerous sources, such as event locations and the place of an interaction's occurrence. The credibility of the research data was evaluated through the validity checking technique of triangulation between data resources and methods.



The data were analyzed based on Spradley's (1980) model, which includes domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analyses. This way, dialogues were classified according to domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural themes. Power was symbolized with (+P) to show speaking partners who possessed more power than other speakers; social distance was represented as (++D) and (+D) and (-D) for no social gap; and a large degree of imposition was denoted as (+I), with (-I) representing no imposition. For the social context, a formal situation was symbolized by (+F) and a non-formal situation by (-F) (Santosa, 2017; Spradley, Elizabeth, & Amirudin, 1997).

### Results and Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine patterns in addresses and offers made by tourism workers when communicating with Japanese tourists in the Japanese language and establish if they were considered impolite or awkward. This is exemplified through the dialogues extracted from the data analysis.

Dialogue (1) is an interaction between a tour service provider and a Japanese tourist on Kuta beach. It indicates how a negative FTA occurred in the tourist information center of Kuta beach. The worker is an officer in the tourism center and the other party is a Japanese tourist inquiring about the services provided by the tourist information center.

#### Dialogue (1)

Negative face-threatening act:

Speech data (1):  
 Speaker : Service provider (30–35 years old /M)  
 Interlocutor: 1 Japanese tourist(25–30 years old/ M)  
 Location: Small information center  
 Distance: First encounter (++D)  
 Topic of conversation: Service provider offers optional tour  
 Speech context: Japanese tourist (WJ)  
 Customer upon the service (+P)  
     First time meeting (++D)  
     The degree of imposition (+I)  
     Informal situation (-F)

Speech:

Service provider	: <i>Ohayou//gozaimasu//shachou//, douzo//...tsua-//dou?//Ubud// Kintamani.//</i> Good morning//boss//Please//What about ordering a tour? Ubud, Kintamani.
Japanese tourist	: <i>Boku//shachou?//Shachou//janaiyo.... (Warai)</i> I am a boss? Not the boss, though. (Laugh) <i>Ii//desu//.</i> No.
Service provider	: <i>Bari//no//omiyage//dou?..//</i> What about a souvenir from Bali?
Japanese Tourist	: <i>Ii//desu//.</i> No.

Service provider : (Damatteimasu)  
(Silence)

The service provider directly used positive hospitality to greet the tourist (*ohayou/gozaimasu*) and lead the tourist in checking out the options offered by the provider in order to narrow the social gap in this initial meeting (++D). In this context, the title used for the Japanese tourist is *shachou* (boss), which is a title for someone of a higher position in a company (Wamafma, 2010). In Indonesia, the *boss* title can be used more comfortably and neutrally without considering customers' origin or gender. Uplifting the speaking partner's status is a sign of respect and a format for hospitality toward customers (Abdurrahman, 2011). However, the tour service provider does not realize it represents an FTA because in Japan, the word *shachou* belongs to the highest leader of a company. Thus, the staff of a company is more likely to speak using proper honorific symbols (Kabaya, 2015) rather than uplift the social status of speaking partners. The tour service provider lexically translated the Indonesian word for a company leader into *shachou*, which is the closest in meaning for comforting and uplifting the status of customers.

From dialogue (1), we identify that the cultural differences in interpreting the word *shachou* between the service provider and the Japanese tourist result in shock and awkwardness. Although there was no intention from the service provider to threaten the face of the tourist, it indirectly threatened the negative face of the Japanese tourist, because such speech is not part of common politeness. As the result of the improper word choice, the tourist experiences discomfort. Nevertheless, the Japanese tourist laughs and tries to respond by explaining that he is not the CEO of a company. The communication continues and offers are swiftly rejected by the Japanese tourist. Ultimately, the service provider gives up and goes silent following the tourist's rejection of Balinese souvenirs.

From the beginning to the end of the conversation, there is no formal situation. The service provider does not use honorific *keigo* speech. The speech used is *futsuugo* (ordinary format) in the form of *tsual/dou* and *omiyage/dou*. Despite the service provider using the ordinary speech format, the communication proceeded. This concurs with the opinions of Suzuki (1998) and Hiroyuki (2014) that the speech degree is strongly affected by social factors, such as formal and non-formal speech situations. Although the service provider committed an FTA with his use of the *shachou* title toward the Japanese tourist, the tourist remains because he realizes that the provider cannot speak properly in Japanese but is trying to use the Japanese language when making offers.

Greetings and a warm welcome give a good impression to Japanese tourists visiting the beach. This can be seen in their responses to offers, even if they refuse them and laugh at the use of the word *shachou* as their title. What is more, based on an interview with one of the 20 Japanese tourists who had all visited Bali more than twice, the tourist is shocked at the title *shachou*, because normally the word would be *okyakusama*// or *okyakusan*//(guest). On their second and subsequent visits, the tourists simply accepted such things as something quirky about Kuta beach. The Japanese tourist understands the intention implied in the worker's misuse of the word *shachou*, namely that he is trying to be friendly and welcoming toward the Japanese tourist as a customer and reduce the awkwardness of this initial meeting.

The data in dialogue (2) show how an offer is made by a beach worker that is considered improper.

### Dialogue (2)

Negative face-threatening act:

Speech situation context  
 Speakers: *Beach worker* (35 years/M)  
 Interlocutor : Japanese tourist (23–25 years/M)  
 Topic discussion: *Beach worker* offers //surfing// to Japanese tourist  
 Time: 11:30 AM  
 Speech context : Japanese tourist upon the service (+P)  
                             First-time meeting (++D)  
                             Degree of imposition (+I)  
                             Informal situation (-F)

<i>Beach worker</i>	: <i>Sa-fin// yaranai//desuka//.</i> Wanna surfing, sir?.
<i>Japanese tourist</i>	: <i>Bo-do//rentaru//ikura?.</i> How much for aboard?.
<i>Beach worker</i>	: <i>1 jikan//50.000//rupia//dake//.</i> One hour is only 50,000 rupiahs.
<i>Japanese tourist</i>	: <i>Take-!</i> That's//expensive!.
<i>Beach worker</i>	: <i>Takakunaiyo//.</i> It's notthat expensive.
<i>Japanese tourist</i>	: <i>Majide? //</i> Really?
<i>Beach worker</i>	: <i>Souyo//. Douzo//, erande//kudasai//.</i> Sure. Pick one.
<i>Japanese tourist</i>	: <i>Kono//iro//ga// ii// ne//.</i> This color is awesome.
<i>Beach worker</i>	: <i>Kore//ni//suru?//</i> You choose this one, sir?
<i>Japanese tourist</i>	: <i>Hai.</i> Yeah.
<i>Beach worker</i>	: <i>Mou, //sorosoro//nami//ga//kuruyo//.</i> The//wave is coming//shortly.'
<i>Japanese tourist</i>	: <i>Hontoni? //</i> Oh yeah?.
<i>Beach worker</i>	: <i>Imakara//junbi//shitene!!!</i>

Japanese tourist      Get ready now.  
                               : *Hai!*.  
                               Yeah.

Dialogue (2) is an interaction between a beach worker and a Japanese tourist in the Kuta beach area. The beach worker provides surfboard rental and beverages. When the beach worker perceives the Japanese tourist has the look of a surfer, he proceeds to greet and offered him a surfboard. Initially, the beach worker seems to understand the Japanese tourist's need to go surfing and therefore the need to rent a surfboard. The interrogative sentence *Sa-fin//yaranai//desuka* (Do you want to surf, sir?) is an utterance to offer the service. It is direct speech to the tourist as a customer with power (+P), and in this first-time meeting, it is interpreted as a negative FTA toward the Japanese tourist because it disrupts his activities in Bali. This agrees with the view of Levinson (1987) that states that someone's negative face relates to a basic desire for space, personal privilege, freedom from disruption, and the ability to act and do something.

The beach worker has tried to avoid an FTA by using a negative face-saving strategy that employs interrogative sentences when offering surfboard rental. In the beginning of the interaction, the beach worker uses the *teineigo* (polite) speech pattern, as indicated by the copula *desuka* at the end of the sentence as a form of respect. While the initial interaction is in the *teineigo* format, the subsequent speech involves the use of *futsuugo* when explaining the cost of renting a surfboard. He explains that the rental cost is not so expensive (*takakunaiyo*).

Next, the conversation proceeds to confirm the choice of surfboard for the Japanese tourist, and the speech dictates the proper time to surf (*mou//sorosoro//name//ga//kuruyo*) and says to be ready (*ima//kara//junbi//shitene!*). Although the beach worker is not consistent in his use of speech degrees due to his basic command of Japanese from self-taught learning, the communication remains harmonious. This is evident in the Japanese tourist's willingness to accept the offer of renting a surfboard. The initial social gap is wide (++D) but gets narrower and ends without any gap (-D), because the beach worker is friendly and familiar with the other party even though it is a first-time meeting. The beach worker's strategy is a friendly one that provides comfort during the interaction, even though the language use is improper and does not follow Japanese language standards.

An FTA that indicates a formal context is exemplified in dialogue (3), and this shows improper and awkward use of a word.

**Dialogue (3)**

Negative face-threatening act:

Speech situation context Speakers: Beach worker (20–25 years/M) Interlocutor : Japanese tourist (25–30 years/F) Topic discussion: Beach worker asks the intention of WJ Time: 12:30 PM - 01:00 PM Speech context: Japanese tourist upon the service (+P) First time meeting (++D) The degree of imposition (+I) Formal situation (-F)
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- Beach worker : *Ohayou//gozaimasu, //doko//ikuno//oneechan//.*  
Good morning, madam. Where do you want to go?.
- WJ : *Nenene, //koko//kara//Kuta//bi-chi//toui?..//*  
Emm, is it far from here to Kuta beach?
- Beach worker : *Kok//kara//massugu//dake//de//iku//to//sugu//chikaku//.*  
It's straight down here. The beach is nearby.
- WJ : *Souka, //arigatou.//*  
Oh I see. Thanks.
- Beach worker : *Hai.*  
Yes.

Dialogue (3) above indicates how an interaction occurred on Kuta beach between different speakers. The beach worker in dialogue (3) greets the Japanese tourist politely by saying *ohayou//gozaimasu* (good morning) as an opening for the unfamiliar customer. The interaction remains with a wide social gap (++D) and a high degree of imposition (+I) during the speech. Afterwards, the beach worker uses interrogative sentences to ask about the intention of the tourist (*doko//ikuno//oneechan//*). Although the beach worker uses interrogative sentences, it actually represents a negative FTA, because the tourist has an expectation of privacy and a desire to not be exposed to unfamiliar people. In addition, the word *oneechan* is used to refer to the Japanese tourist. Based on the interview with the beach worker, the word choice *oneechan* was translated lexically from “older sister” (*oniichan* means “older brother”). These are neutral titles that Indonesian vendors use while interacting with customers. The situation is different in Japanese culture, however, and the title *//oneechan//* or *oniichan//* are reserved for close relatives. When referring to brothers and sisters in another family, the words *oniisan* and *oneesan*, respectively, are used. None of these words are used to refer to costumers, though, because the correct word would be *okyakusan* or *okyakusama* (guest) in Japanese.

In this context, the beach worker does not use honorific speech toward the Japanese tourist. With only a basic command of the Japanese language, the beach worker fails to understand the use of different speech degrees and differences in culture. The beach worker therefore directly translates the local culture while offering a service. Despite this phenomenon occurring in the tourism domain of Bali, the Japanese tourist is amazed that the beach worker can communicate in Japanese, regardless of his improper use of Japanese grammar. However, the friendly and excellent service mean communication still goes well. For example, the Japanese tourist asks the beach worker about the location of Kuta beach. He politely explains the way to Kuta beach by saying that the tourist should follow the straight lane to find it. This hospitality and sincere help are the results of Hindu teaching, which demands maintaining a harmonic relationship with anyone. In Japanese culture, customers must always be provided with excellent service because of the *//Okyakusama//wa//kamisama* (the guest is god) concept. Thus, service providers are obliged to provide excellent service. Although the Japanese language skills are limited, the ability to provide optimal service brings comfort.

### **Conclusion**

This study has identified situations where tourism workers use Japanese words and sentences inappropriately and with awkward sentence patterns. In summary, the interactions between beach workers and Japanese tourists on Kuta beach are commonly associated with a negative FTA toward Japanese tourists. Such acts can be seen in the use of words like *shachou* and *oneesan*, which while their equivalence may be commonly used in Indonesian, they can represent face-threatening acts for Japanese tourists. In addition, asking probing questions about a Japanese tourist's activities invades their privacy during their vacation in Bali. Beach workers also do not use the honorific speech degree toward Japanese tourists as customers in first-time meetings.

The beach workers' utterances unintentionally contain FTAs, however, because they have limited understanding of the Japanese culture and language. Despite this, the tourism workers are still able to interact well while providing services, and the tourists are happy.

### **Implication for Tourist Practitioners**

The results of the study show that Japanese tourists who are the native speakers of Japanese are aware and accept that the Japanese language is not the native tongue of the Balinese tourist

workers. In addition, non-formal situations become a major consideration for Japanese tourists, considering power, distance, range of imposition, and speech situation as cultural problems that may cause FTAs to appear. This implies that actions are not solely a system of a good communication process. Tourism workers have acquired limited Japanese language skills, but their friendly strategy helps maintain comfort during interactions. One limitation of this study is that the purposive sampling used in this study means that the results are only applicable to this specific setting, so future research could extend the range of subjects and deepen the exploration into the pragmatic use of politeness and impoliteness strategies in more natural ways.

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