

Abstract

The network marketing (multilevel marketing) system is a member-get-member system where products of a certain company are distributed by words of mouth among distributors or distributors directly to customers. Additionally, distributors need to persuade and recruit new members as many as possible in order to increase their sales. Every offer and every imposition that they make to the prospects is considered to be a face threatening act (FTA). Therefore they need to use politeness strategies to redress the FTAs so that the face threatening effects will be minimized.

This research uses qualitative approach with a case study method, to analyze what politeness strategies that the distributors are using and what factors that influence the use of each strategy, based on the Politeness Strategies theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987).

Positive politeness strategies are mainly used in order to minimize the social distance between the speaker and the hearer, while negative politeness and off-record strategies are mainly used to avoid threatening the hearer's negative face. Moreover, the bald-on-record strategy is used to maximize the efficiency of an imposition.

Key terms: *network marketing, multilevel marketing, positive face, negative face, politeness strategies*