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Directness and politeness: Unraveling the paradox of directive speech acts in Javanese lingua-culture

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Abstract

The assumption that high-context, collectivist cultures uniformly favor indirectness has been challenged, yet systematic evidence from Javanese, a quintessential high-context culture, remains scarce. This study aims to identify how politeness is realized in Javanese directive speech acts (DSAs) and to determine the influence of social distance, power relations, and Javanese cultural norms on strategy choices. For this purpose, 525 directive utterances were extracted from 20 short films produced by the provincial government of Yogyakarta (2022–2023), representing approximately 357 minutes of everyday Javanese dialogue across diverse social relationships and settings. The data were analyzed using a qualitative approach supported by descriptive statistics, combining descriptive frequency analysis with culturally grounded interpretation based on Javanese core cultural values. The findings reveal that direct strategies predominate, with weak direct being the most frequent. Weak direct balances clarity with mitigation: warmth markers facilitate intimate/equal interactions, while deference markers are used for upward/formal contexts. Strong direct omits mitigation when intimacy or hierarchy permits directness. Conventional indirectness serves sensitive topics, while nonconventional indirectness is rare, reserved for highly face-threatening directives. Crucially, politeness in Javanese is not a matter of directness versus indirectness but of whether linguistic choices align with social hierarchy, relational intimacy, and cultural values. These findings complicate the equation of indirectness with politeness and suggest a culture-specific model of Javanese politeness, indicating that directness is not inherently impolite when mediated by locally appropriate markers or licensed by social context.

Keywords: *directive speech act, directness, indirectness, politeness markers, politeness strategies, Javanese*

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Прямолинейность и вежливость: раскрытие парадокса директивных речевых актов в яванской лингвокультуре

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Аннотация

Представление о том, что в коллективистских высококонтекстных культурах неизменно отдается предпочтение непрямым способам выражения мыслей, сегодня ставится под сомнение, однако систематических данных по яванскому языку — эталонному примеру культуры с высоким контекстом — по-прежнему недостаточно. Цель данного исследования — выявить способы реализации вежливости в директивных речевых актах и определить влияние социальной дистанции, дистанции власти и культурных норм Явы на выбор коммуникативных стратегий. Материалом послужили 525 директивных высказываний, отобранных из 20 короткометражных фильмов, созданных правительством провинции Джокоьякарта в 2021–2023 гг. (в общей сложности около 357 минут естественной яванской речи, отражающей разнообразные социальные отношения и ситуации). Анализ данных проводился с использованием смешанного метода с преобладанием качественного подхода, сочетающего описательный частотный анализ с интерпретативным, опирающимся на ключевые культурные ценности Явы. Результаты показали, что преобладают прямые стратегии, причем наиболее частотной является стратегия «слабой прямоты» (weak direct). Она позволяет найти баланс между ясностью и смягчением тона: маркеры теплоты способствуют общению между близкими людьми или равными по статусу собеседниками, тогда как маркеры почтительности используются при обращении к вышестоящим лицам или в официальной обстановке. Стратегия «сильной прямоты» (strong direct) исключает смягчение и применяется, когда степень близости или иерархические отношения допускают прямолинейность. Конвенциональные стратегии косвенности применяются при обсуждении деликатных тем, в то время как неконвенциональные встречаются редко и используются лишь для директив, несущих серьезную угрозу «лицу» (репутации) собеседника. Результаты показывают, что вежливость в яванской культуре определяется не противопоставлением прямолинейности и косвенности, а соответствием используемых языковых средств социальной иерархии, степени близости, ситуативному контексту и культурным ценностям. Эти выводы ставят под сомнение отождествление вежливости с косвенностью и указывают на существование специфической для яванской культуры модели вежливости, согласно которой прямолинейность не является проявлением неучтивости, если она сопровождается уместными в данном социокультурном контексте маркерами или оправдана социальной ситуацией.

Ключевые слова: директивный речевой акт, прямолинейность, косвенность, стратегии вежливости, маркеры вежливости, яванский язык

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1. Introduction

Politeness is essential for effective communication, as it facilitates understanding and fosters positive social relationships. As a key determinant of language choice, politeness shapes how individuals negotiate relational meanings in interaction (Locher 2013). Its central role is further emphasized by Brown (2015), who characterizes politeness as the ‘heart’ of social life that enables cooperation and helps mitigate conflict. Although widely recognized as vital for social cohesion, politeness norms and strategies are fundamentally culture-specific and context-dependent (e.g., Bargiela-Chiappini & Kádár 2010, Eslami et al. 2023, Kádár & Mills 2011, Leech & Larina 2014, Locher & Larina 2019, Mugford 2020, among many others). Wierzbicka (2003), criticizing Brown and Levinson’s (1987) universalist framework, argues that interpersonal interactions are predominantly regulated by culturally embedded norms that reflect particular cultural values (Wierzbicka 2003: 69).

For cross-cultural comparison, researchers often contrast Eastern and Western communication styles. Hall’s (1976) distinction between high-context and low-context cultures has contributed to a broad generalization. High-context cultures, where meaning is often conveyed implicitly and indirectly to preserve harmony, tend to favor indirectness, while low-context cultures prioritize explicitness and directness (Adair et al. 2009, Gupta & Sukanto 2020, Ward et al. 2016). Similar tendencies are observed when contrasting collectivist societies, which tend to adopt indirectness and relational sensitivity, with individualistic societies, which are often characterized by directness and autonomy (Cook 2022, Guan & Li 2017, Thovuttikul et al. 2019). These distinctions, however, should be interpreted as general tendencies rather than universal principles. Yet, systematic empirical evidence from Javanese as a high-context culture remains scarce.

The Javanese, the largest ethnic group in Indonesia, is a quintessential high-context, collectivist society that prioritizes group identity, relational harmony and mutual respect over individualism (Gupta & Sukanto 2020, Magnis-Suseno 1997). Their social conduct is shaped by careful consideration of hierarchy and context, requiring individuals to adjust their speech styles to their interlocutor’s social standing (Errington 1988, Koentjaraningrat 1985). Consequently, Javanese language and interaction are frequently compared to an art form, where politeness and appropriateness are achieved not through explicit or rigid rules but through context-sensitive adaptation and adherence to shared norms of respect (Errington 1988).

However, the Javanese commitment to politeness, which reflects a cultural emphasis on social harmony and relational nuance, faces a challenge in DSAs. In

such acts, speakers must influence others, which may infringe on the interlocutor's autonomy or sense of freedom, while simultaneously adhering to cultural expectations of maintaining interpersonal balance. This inherent contradiction makes DSAs a critical site for examining how linguistic strategies navigate the tension between communicative intent and social norms.

This tension is the primary motivation for this study. DSAs inherently risk disrupting harmony, a fundamental value in Javanese culture, and therefore require politeness strategies to mitigate relational conflict. The clash between politeness, which aims to maintain social relationships, and the imposition associated with directives, which threatens individual autonomy (Brown & Levinson 1987), underscores the sustained academic interest in DSAs within politeness research (Flöck & Geluykens 2015, Leech 2014). Nevertheless, existing politeness theories frequently privilege Western linguistic norms and tend to overlook how Eastern cultural values shape directive strategies.

Recent studies on Javanese directives have taken varied approaches, but none have fully addressed this gap. Rahyono (2009) examined the phonetic prosody without considering speech levels or social variables. Rahmawati et al. (2021) focused on impoliteness in online learning without addressing Javanese cultural norms. Budiawan and Fadhilah (2025) linked speech levels to Leech's politeness maxims in a short film but did not systematically analyze power or distance. Surana et al. (2019) investigated community-based request strategies but did not connect them to broader Javanese politeness concepts.

To address this gap, this study aims to determine how politeness is realized in Javanese DSAs. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research questions: 1) What DSA strategies are employed by Javanese speakers in everyday interactions? 2) How do social distance, power relations and Javanese cultural norms shape the choice of these strategies?

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature on directive speech acts and politeness strategies and introduces the Javanese cultural concepts that form the analytical framework for the study. Section 3 describes the dataset and outlines the research approach. Section 4 presents the findings by showing the distribution of directive strategies across social variables and providing illustrative extracts from the films. Section 5 discusses these findings in light of the research questions, linking them to existing literature and applying the Javanese cultural concepts. This section also acknowledges the study's limitations and suggests directions for future research. Section 6 concludes with a summary of the main findings and their implications.

2. Literature review

2.1. Directive speech acts and their realization strategies

DSAs are defined as a speaker's attempt to persuade the addressee to act in a desired way (Searle 1979). As pragmatically significant speech acts, DSAs attract substantial scholarly attention, particularly concerning their politeness strategies

and the social variables that influence them (e.g. Chang & Iûnn 2021, Larina 2025, Terkourafi 2019). Ruytenbeek (2019) identifies three key reasons that make directives a compelling subject of research: (1) their prevalence in daily communication, (2) their potential to infringe upon the addressee's autonomy, and (3) their diverse linguistic manifestations, which indicate context-dependent negotiations of politeness.

To account for these complexities, the classification of DSAs has evolved. Searle's (1979) initial distinction between direct and indirect strategies was later expanded by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989), whose tripartite classification — (1) impositive, (2) conventional indirect, and (3) nonconventional indirect — is influential in cross-cultural and intralingual research (Moessner 2010). However, the proliferation of subcategories within this framework, culminating in nine distinct strategies, risks overcomplicating analysis. To address this, Pablos-Ortega (2019) streamlined the classification of directive acts into five levels of directness: strong direct, weak direct, conventional indirect 1, conventional indirect 2, and nonconventional indirect (hints), arranged along a continuum from most direct to least direct. This framework achieves a balance between analytical depth and clarity.

To accommodate the linguistic and cultural distinctiveness of Javanese, this study modifies Pablos-Ortega's (2019) framework by incorporating Javanese-specific features, such as modality, politeness markers and speech levels (*Ngoko*, *Krama*). Following the two-level classification of Javanese speech levels (Harjawiya & Supriya 2001, Suwadi 2013), this study adopts four levels of directness for analyzing Javanese DSAs:

1) Strong direct

Imperative forms in *Ngoko Lugu* (plain, unmarked, informal style) without explicit subjects and politeness markers. This category excludes *Ngoko Alus* and all *Krama* varieties, as these contain politeness markers constituting mitigation. Example: *Ndang ngombe. (Ngoko)* [Drink it now.]

2) Weak direct

Imperatives softened by one or more mitigating devices, including invitation markers 'ayo' (*Ngoko*) or 'mangga' (*Krama*) [let's/please], honorific vocabulary, *Krama* speech level, softening particles (*mbok*, *ta*), reason/justification, terms of endearment, etc. This category also includes performative statements articulating the speaker's needs, such as obligation sentences. Weak direct retains imperative force but with overt linguistic mitigation. Example: *Ayo ta gek diombe. (Ngoko)* [Please drink it.] or *Mangga dipununjuk (Krama)* [Please drink it.]

3) Conventional indirect

Non-imperative forms (declarative or interrogative sentences) that convey directive force through conventionalized pragmatic inference. These forms may be realized in any speech level (*Ngoko* or *Krama*). For example, stating "*Kok ora gek diombe?*" (*Ngoko*) [Why not drink it soon?] or "*Menika unjukanipun.*" (*Krama*) [Here's the drink.] to tell a guest to drink immediately.

4) Nonconventional indirect

Context-dependent hints or nonverbal cues that imply a directive without explicit linguistic markers. These rely entirely on shared contextual knowledge and inference. For example, stating “*Panas tenan iki mau neng dalan.*” [I felt very hot on the way here.] to request a cold drink.

DSAs serve as a fundamental aspect of cooperative interaction (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen 2016) while also posing potential threats to social harmony (Brown & Levinson 1987). They provide a critical lens through which to examine how Javanese speakers navigate the intersection of cultural values and pragmatic objectives. By refining Pablos-Ortega’s (2019) model to reflect Javanese linguistic and relational norms, this study advances a culturally sensitive framework for analyzing directive strategies in high-context societies, emphasizing the dynamic negotiation of politeness, hierarchy and social balance.

2.2. Factors determining politeness strategies

Politeness strategies are shaped by the negotiation of social norms within specific contexts (Locher & Graham 2010). Brown and Levinson (1987) identify three universal factors that influence the seriousness of Face Threatening Acts (FTA): (1) social distance, including differences in age, gender and socio-cultural background; (2) power dynamics, referring to asymmetrical status or authority between participants; and (3) ranking of imposition, defined as the severity of threat to the interlocutor’s autonomy in a given situation (Brown & Levinson 1987: 74). These three factors indicate that the politeness of an utterance is influenced not only by its proposition but also by the degree of solidarity and friendship between interlocutors and their perceived status differences.

While these variables collectively determine politeness choices, this study focuses exclusively on social distance and power relations. Following Fraser (1990) and Skewis (2003), risk is excluded as an independent variable, as it is largely shaped by the other two. Brown and Levinson (1987) exemplify that when distance and power disparities are significant, speakers may still employ the ‘off record’ strategy, even for trivial requests. This view is reinforced by Jones (1992), who argues that solidarity can often override perceived risk.

To analyze the variable of social distance, this study adopts Hoebe’s (2001) four-tiered ranking system, where 0 signifies a very close distance and equal power, 1 reflects low distance and power disparity, 2 indicates moderate distance and power difference, and 3 denotes high distance and power disparity. Power dynamics are analyzed based on three communication directions: downward (from older or higher-status speakers to younger or lower-status addressees), upward (from younger or lower-status speakers to older or higher-status addressees), and equal (between speakers of similar age, status or familiarity). The operationalization of these classifications based on observable cues is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Operational criteria for social distance and power rankings

Variable	Level	Observable cues
Social distance	0 (very close)	Intimate friends, siblings, long-term neighbours
	1 (low)	Non-immediate family, familiar acquaintances
	2 (medium)	Occasional interaction relatives, limited-contact neighbours
	3 (high)	Strangers, first-time encounters
Power	Downward	Older → younger, higher status → lower, parent → child, employer → employee
	Upward	Younger → older, lower status → higher, child → parent, employee → employer
	Equal	Same age, same rank, close friends, siblings, neighbours, romantic partners

In addition to social variables, politeness strategies are also mediated by cultural frameworks. As Culpeper (2011) and Mills and Kádár (2009) point out, (im)politeness must be analyzed through culturally specific norms that define appropriate behavior. In Javanese, these include *unggah-ungguh* (social propriety), *urmat* (respect) and *rukun* (relational harmony) (Magnis-Suseno 1984, Sumekto et al. 2022).

2.3. Politeness in Javanese culture

The Javanese language is deeply linked to cultural norms of politeness and social hierarchy, reflecting a society in which relational harmony (*rukun*) and respect (*urmat*) are central values (Magnis-Suseno 1984, Sumekto et al. 2022). Similar to the Japanese concept of *wakimae* or the use of polite expressions dictated by social conventions rather than interactional strategies (Ide 1989), Javanese culture upholds *unggah-ungguh* (social propriety), a system requiring individuals to position themselves appropriately relative to others based on status, age and familiarity (Magnis-Suseno 1984). The term derives semantically from *unggah* ‘to go up’ or ‘to ascend’ and *ungguh* ‘to sit’ or ‘to position oneself,’ reflecting both respect for higher status and proper self-positioning. *Unggah-ungguh* is the behavioral manifestation of *urmat* and *rukun*. When meeting new people, Javanese speakers first consider the interlocutor’s status to adjust their behavior accordingly (manifesting *urmat*), ensuring exchanges remain orderly and mutually face-saving (manifesting *rukun*). Respect is expressed in several ways: body posture, gestures, tone of voice, terms of address, and, most importantly, speech level.

Javanese employs a stratified linguistic system where politeness is encoded through speech levels, primarily *Krama* (high, formal) and *Ngoko* (low, informal). Each is divided into *Lugu* (plain) and *Alus* (refined). These levels are determined by the interlocutors’ relative status, which is influenced by factors like wealth, lineage, education, occupation, age, kinship, and degree of familiarity. Table 2 presents the classification of Javanese speech levels adapted from Harjawiyana and Supriya (2001) and Suwadji (2013).

Table 2

Speech level classification

Speech level	Sub-level	Situational usage	Key characteristics
<i>Ngoko</i>	<i>Ngoko Lugu</i> (Plain Low)	Between close friends of the same age; parents to children; older to younger (intimate); people with intimate relationships where no formality is needed	No politeness markers; most basic, unadorned form; reflects intimacy and solidarity
	<i>Ngoko Alus</i> (Refined Low)	Younger person to older person (familiar); between same-age acquaintances; people who know each other but maintain some respect	Mix of <i>Ngoko</i> grammar with <i>Krama</i> honorifics (pronouns and verbs); show respect without full formality; still retain <i>Ngoko</i> affixes in verbs
<i>Krama</i>	<i>Krama Lugu</i> (Plain High)	Strangers of similar age/status; formal situations (moderately formal); people with moderate social distance	High, refined vocabulary; still retain <i>Ngoko</i> affixes (-e, -di, -ake) but sometimes use the <i>Krama</i> ones (<i>dipun-</i> , <i>-ipun</i> , <i>-aken</i>); not maximally deferential
	<i>Krama Alus</i> (Refined High)	Younger to older (unfamiliar); lower to higher status individuals; formal ceremonies and official events; addressing superiors with maximum deference	High, formal, refined vocabulary; full <i>Krama</i> affixes (<i>dipun-</i> , <i>-ipun</i> , <i>-aken</i>); most complex and refined form

Crucially for the analysis of DSAs, the two speech levels differ not only in formality but in the range of directive strategies they permit. In *Ngoko*, speakers may use bare imperatives (strong direct strategy), as in ‘*Gek dipangan!*’ [Eat it now!] addressed to an equal or subordinate. In *Krama*, however, such blunt imperatives are sociopragmatically marked. While *Dhahar!* (the *Krama* equivalent) is grammatically well-formed, it is rarely used as a bare directive in natural interaction because it sounds abrupt and overly authoritative. Instead, *Krama* directives typically require mitigation, such as ‘*Mangga dhahar rumiyin*’ [Please eat first,] which embeds the imperative within a politeness marker. This means that *Krama* effectively (but not grammatically) prohibits strong direct strategies in ordinary polite communication, pressuring speakers toward weak direct or conventional indirect realizations.

Despite these grammatical constraints, speech level choice remains socially flexible. While status markers such as age or social rank are significant, familiarity often supersedes them in actual practice. For instance, individuals of higher status may use *Ngoko* with intimate acquaintances to signal familiarity but employ *Krama* with strangers or subordinates to maintain politeness and social distance. This dynamic illustrates that Javanese politeness norms do not rigidly enforce hierarchy; rather, they mediate between hierarchical structures and the flexibility required to manage complex social relationships.

Elaborating these primary principles are several secondary concepts that specify how *urmat* and *rukun* are realized through *unggah-ungguh*. They include *empan papan* (situational appropriateness), *andhap asor* (humility, downplaying oneself while elevating others), *sungkan* (polite reluctance), *tanggap ing sasmita*

(sensitivity to hidden meanings), *grapyak/sumanak* (warmth/friendliness) and *ngemong rasa* (controlling one's own desires to maintain others' feelings) (Sukarno 2018, Wijayanto 2013, 2025). These cultural concepts demonstrate that attending to others' feelings is a primary politeness strategy for Javanese speakers. The imperative to avoid conflict and show respect is essential in regulating social relationships as a means of maintaining harmony.

3. Data and methods

3.1. Research design

Adopting a qualitative approach supported by descriptive statistics, this study integrates interpretive qualitative analysis of extracts with descriptive quantitative analysis of strategy frequencies. The qualitative component provides in-depth, culturally grounded interpretation of directive strategies in context. The quantitative component supplements this by identifying frequency patterns across social variables, allowing the study to observe distributional tendencies within the dataset. The two components were integrated by using the descriptive frequency patterns to guide the selection and interpretation of representative extracts, while the qualitative analysis provided explanatory depth for the observed quantitative patterns. Inferential statistics were not employed, as the study's primary goal is qualitative interpretation rather than generalization to a larger population. Accordingly, all conclusions about the role of social distance and power are framed as patterns observed within this dataset, not as generalizable effects.

3.2. Data and data source

The data in this study were Javanese utterances expressing DSAs, drawn from 20 short films produced by the provincial government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta (2022–2023). These films belong to the social drama and family life genres, ranging in length from 12 to 24 minutes (approximately 357 minutes of dialogue in total). The films are not educational or instructional in the sense of explicitly teaching politeness rules or speech levels. Rather, they aim to introduce government programs and local wisdom using authentic, everyday language as actually spoken by Javanese people. The intended audience extends beyond Javanese speakers to include Indonesian speakers nationwide and English-speaking viewers, as evidenced by the provision of Indonesian and English subtitles. The exchanges in the films include both formal and informal interactions across various participant relationships, with informal interactions (e.g., family, friends, neighbors) constituting the majority of the dataset. The film specification is summarized in Table 3.

Although fictional, such films reflect everyday conversational norms and comply with the pragmatic rules of non-fiction discourse (Searle 1979), thus making them valid sources for analyzing real-world communication (Kizelbach 2017). The dialogues in the films were written by native speakers to approximate

natural conversation, and they exemplify Javanese politeness strategies across various contexts and speaker backgrounds, providing a significant benefit given the limited availability of spontaneously politeness data (Dynel 2017, Félix-Brasdefer 2008). However, as these are scripted, government-produced films, they may reflect normative or idealized politeness rather than fully spontaneous interaction. This potential institutional and normative bias is acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

Table 3

Specification of data source

No.	Title	Year	Length (min)	Primary setting	Key relationships	Dominant speech level(s)	Main theme	Link
1.	<i>Mburu Jatah</i> [Scramble for a share]	2022	19:49	Family home	Husband-wife, neighbors	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Daily routines	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42pGTs6_Pyw
2.	<i>Tanah Kesejahteraan</i> [Land of well-being]	2022	13:58	Office	Colleagues, stranger	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Socioetal welfare	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51bx1_4tOdo
3.	<i>Guyup Ora Nutup, Tuladha Dadi Utama</i> [Harmony is good, but example is essential.]	2022	15:37	Community	Neighbors, parent-child	<i>Krama</i>	Daily routines	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0WdGDS0ewo
4.	<i>Dalan Rejeki</i> [Source of income]	2022	16:11	Community	Peer friends (adults), neighbors	<i>Ngoko</i>	Socioetal welfare	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-r7qV8fGSEw
5.	<i>Ontran-ontran</i> [Commotion]	2022	14:01	Community	Parent-child, government officer — citizens	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Civil unrest	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-87iFmXjHl
6.	<i>TOPI: tindak, tanduk, subasita</i> [to act, to behave, to conduct oneself]	2023	12:39	Family home	Parent-child, siblings	<i>Ngoko</i>	Daily routines	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDMqnR300-E
7.	<i>Satrio</i>	2023	17:41	Basecamp, family home	Peer friends (adolescents), parent-child	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Civil unrest	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TffjiaRWtCE
8.	<i>Semugih</i> [Faking wealth]	2023	22:20	Family home	Husband-wife, parent-child, government officer — citizens	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Family problems	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jj_IXIM8_RM
9.	<i>Prasaja</i> [Modest]	2023	21:25	Market, Community	Seller-buyer, neighbors	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Daily routines	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVCZ9EFbfvg

Table 3 continued

No.	Title	Year	Length (min)	Primary setting	Key relationships	Dominant speech level(s)	Main theme	Link
10.	<i>Omah</i> [Home]	2022	24:34	Community	Peer friends (young adults), government officer — citizens	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Family problems	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTN5IYCsoJ4
11.	Kuliah di Jogja [Study in Jogja]	2023	17:11	Family home	Parent-child	<i>Krama</i>	Daily routines	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hATXCK5vzWI
12.	Membekas [Leave a mark]	2023	12:57	Family home	Husband-wife, siblings	<i>Ngoko</i>	Family problems	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPPSVIXHP0w
13.	<i>Nyawiji Migunani</i> [Unity brings benefits]	2023	23:20	Community	Neighbors, government official — citizens	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Community cooperation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbDDlqqQgMU
14.	Ke Jogja [Go to Jogja]	2023	15:49	Community	Strangers, neighbors	<i>Krama</i>	Community cooperation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_C8W1rOjJA
15.	<i>Ndilalah</i> [Coincidence]	2023	15:59	Food stall	Seller-buyer, peer friends (young adults), government officer — citizens	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Community cooperation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsQoDhAhZDs
16.	<i>Fota-foto</i> [Taking pictures]	2023	19:21	Public space	Young lovers	<i>Ngoko</i>	Family problems	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0prBZLxQE
17.	<i>Bapak</i> [Daddy]	2023	12:24	Family home	Parent-child, strangers	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Family problems	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJ657-avrpA
18.	Seutas Kenangan [A thread of memories]	2023	20:27	Family home	Parent-child, siblings, friends (young adults)	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Daily routines	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wW8DbsWkUOs
19.	Investasi [Investment]	2023	24:17	Food stall, office	Seller-buyer, officer-stranger	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Socioetal welfare	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2S4w4zre38
20.	Menoreh Kuning	2023	17:20	Plantation	Parent-child, fellow farmers	<i>Ngoko</i> and <i>Krama</i> (alternating)	Socioetal welfare	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqiFYyhAas0&t=454s

A total of 525 directive utterances were identified across the 20 films. The films were selected based on the availability of English subtitles, as this study is part of a larger project on the realization and translation of DSAs from Javanese into English. All directive utterances in full Javanese or Javanese with minimal insertions of Indonesian (the national language) were included in the analysis. Utterances were excluded if they were non-directive, predominantly in Indonesian, or pragmatically unclear.

3.3. Data collection and analysis

DSAs from the films were manually transcribed and cataloged in Microsoft Excel to enable systematic categorization and frequency analysis. The analysis consisted of two complementary components. The quantitative component involved descriptive frequency analysis to identify dominant DSA strategies and examine their distribution across social variables (distance and power). The qualitative component involved contextual interpretation of DSA strategies, focusing on politeness markers, social variables, and Javanese cultural norms.

The entire dataset was coded by the research team through discussion until consensus was reached on all exchanges. To ensure consistency in coding uncertain cases, a second rater, an academic specializing in Javanese politeness, independently coded 50 dialogues, representing around 10% of the complete dataset, that had been identified as the most ambiguous or difficult to classify. The purposive selection of only uncertain cases was chosen as a conservative approach to test reliability on the most challenging items, rather than inflating agreement rates with easy or obvious classifications. The second rater classified power and distance rankings as well as DSA strategies by following the same operational criteria. Disagreements were resolved through discussion, and the final classifications reflect consensus across all coders. No formal intercoder-agreement statistic was calculated, as this was a consensus-building procedure for difficult cases rather than a formal reliability test. This is acknowledged as a methodological limitation.

4. Analysis and results

The following sections present the results and discussion in response to the two research questions: 1) What directive speech act strategies are employed by Javanese speakers in everyday interactions? and 2) How do social distance, power relations, and Javanese cultural norms shape the choice of these strategies?

Diagram 1 presents the frequency of the four directive strategies: (1) strong direct, (2) weak direct, (3) conventional indirect and (4) nonconventional indirect.

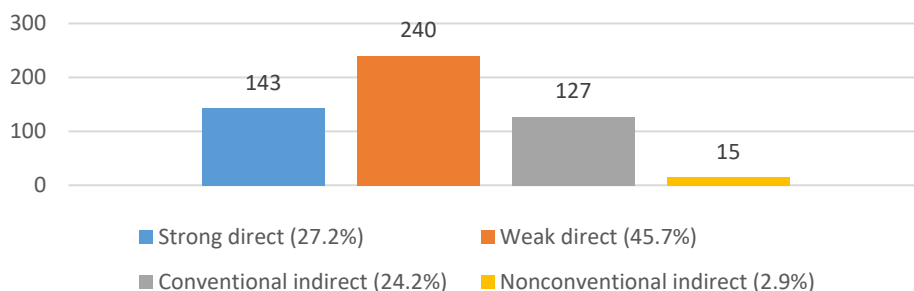


Diagram 1. Frequency of DSA strategies

As shown in Diagram 1, direct strategies (strong direct and weak direct) account for 72.9% of all directive utterances, with weak direct being the most

frequent (45.7%). Indirect strategies comprise only 27.1% of the dataset. This finding suggests a preference for directness in the dataset, which may be attributed to the predominance of informal, intimate interactions among family members, friends, and neighbors in the films, where directness is socially acceptable. Although Javanese is classified as a high-context culture, directness appears to be the norm in these everyday contexts.

Diagram 2 illustrates the distribution of the strategies across social distance (low, medium, high) and power direction (upward, downward, equal).

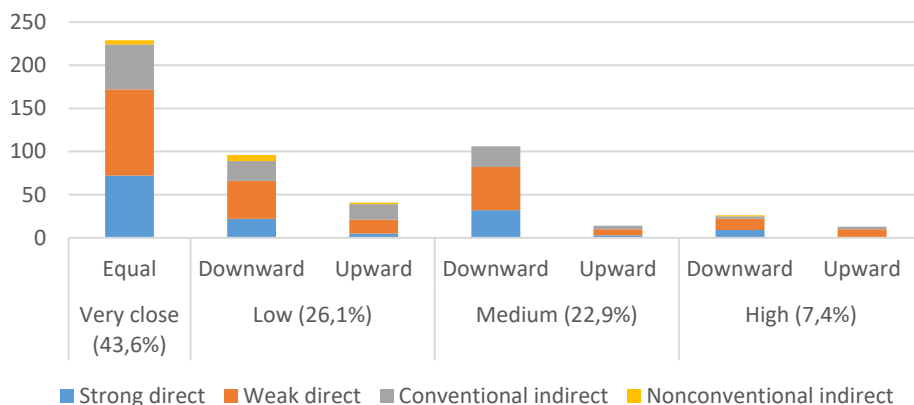


Diagram 2. Frequency of DSA strategies across social variables

Weak direct strategies are employed across all social distances, while strong direct strategies are concentrated in very close relationships and downward interactions. This is because weak direct offers a flexible balance of clarity and mitigation suitable for any context, whereas strong direct relies on intimacy or hierarchical authority to license unmitigated directness. Although less frequent, the conventional indirect strategy is distributed relatively evenly across all levels of social distance, suggesting it functions as a compromise strategy that is neither too direct nor too vague. Nonconventional indirect strategies are rare across all categories, indicating that speakers tend to avoid ambiguity that could risk misunderstanding.

4.1. Strong direct strategies

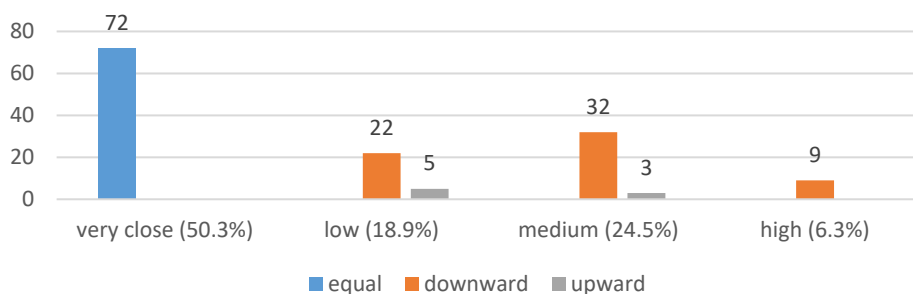


Diagram 3. Frequency of strong direct strategies across social distances

The strong direct strategy, comprising 27.2% of all directives, is realized as bare imperatives in *Ngoko Lugu* without any politeness markers. As shown in Diagram 3, they are concentrated in very close relationships (72 out of 143 utterances, 50.3%) and downward interactions (98 out of 143).

- (1) *Haiyo kana balia.* (303/9)
[Just go home then.] (between two young female neighbours)

The interaction (1) occurs between two young female neighbours. They are in an equal relationship with a very close social distance. The strong direct strategy is used without politeness markers. Despite its seemingly apparent rudeness, akin to an expulsion, the utterance is not intended to offend, nor is it perceived as impolite by the hearer. This illustrates that strong directness is acceptable in intimate peer relationships, where familiarity neutralizes potential face threats.

- (2) *Séléhna méja kana.* (306/9)
[Put it on that table.] (a middle-aged man to his niece)

This utterance (2), delivered by a middle-aged man to his niece (whom he regards as his own child), exemplifies the strong direct strategy in hierarchical Javanese relationships. The imperative lacks politeness markers. This demonstrates that in hierarchical Javanese relationships (parent–child), direct commands are socially sanctioned as expressions of authority.

Although strong direct strategies are common in parental speech, their perceived politeness is often modulated by non-verbal cues to soften impositions as in (3)

- (3) *Wis, rasah susah. Rapapa, ditampa.* (379/7)
[Okay, no need to worry. It's okay. Accept this.] (mother to son after a job rejection)

Despite the absence of politeness markers, the utterance is softened by non-verbal cues (gentle tone, back caressing, physical proximity). This shows that politeness can be conveyed multimodally. Strong direct forms are not inherently impolite when accompanied by empathetic gestures.

While the strong direct strategy is permissible in downward relations, its appearance in upward interactions, though rare, merits attention:

- (4) *Pak, njaluk limang atus éwu.* (284/8)
[Dad, give me five hundred thousand rupiahs.] (son to father)

This upward use of strong direct (4) is unexpected because traditional Javanese norms require younger speakers to use *Krama* when addressing parents. Example (4) illustrates a son addressing his father using *Ngoko Lugu* with a coercive tone. This pattern indicates a declining adherence to *Krama* among some youth, particularly in lower-middle-class families where practicality overrides formal speech norms.

4.2. Weak direct strategies

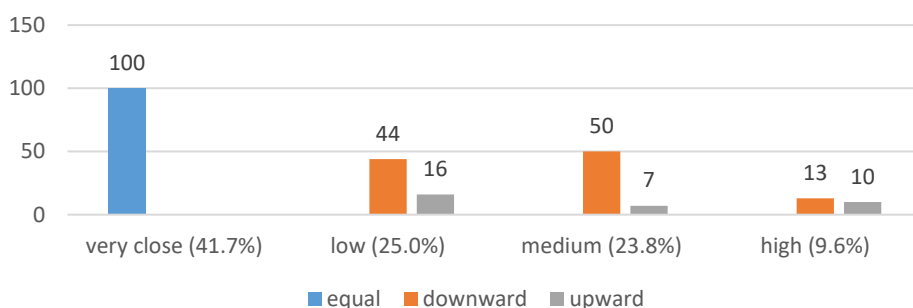


Diagram 4. Frequency of weak direct strategies across social distances

Unlike the strong direct strategy, the weak direct, the most frequent category (45.7%), employs one or more mitigating devices while retaining imperative force. As shown in Diagram 4, weak direct appears across all social distances, with notable frequency in very close relationships (100 utterances), significantly outnumbering the strong direct strategy in such contexts. Beyond its prevalence in intimate contexts, the weak direct strategies serve a significant function in hierarchical interactions, particularly in downward communication. In fact, their frequency in such unequal social distances exceeds that observed in very close relationships.

- (5) *Kowé sésuk libur pa ora é, Yang? Ayo rene.* (40/16)
 [Are you off tomorrow, honey? Let's go there.] (between romantic partners)

This interaction (5) takes place between romantic partners with an equal relationship. In proposing a trip to her boyfriend, the girl employs the weak direct strategy with two mitigating devices. The pre-request question checks availability before issuing the directive. It is followed by the invitation marker '*ayo*' [let's], framing the directive as a collaborative act. This illustrates that weak direct strategies mitigate imposition and avoid forceful directness to preserve mutual respect and relational equity, even in an intimate relationship.

Weak direct strategies balance authority with relational harmony in hierarchical family contexts.

- (6) *Iki wis jam têlu lho, Ndhuk. Aja lali mêthuk adhimu. Lés'é ki lé rampung jam papat é.* (71/3)
 [It's already three o'clock, dear daughter. Don't forget to pick up your sister. The lesson ends at four.] (mother to daughter)

In (6), the mother and daughter occupy a medium social distance because they are from a well-off family, where hierarchy is emphasized. Despite the urgency of the reminder, the mother avoids coercion through layered mitigation, including an endearment '*Ndhuk*' [dear daughter], invoking familiar intimacy and care,

justification (the time, the lesson schedule), and gentle intonation, which further softens the directive through relational warmth.

Unlike the strong direct strategy, Diagram 4 also confirms that the weak direct strategy is used effectively in high social distance and upward-directed interactions.

In (7), a middle-aged female officer addresses a female customer in the same age range.

- (7) *Mangga tindak mlêbêt kémawon.* (511/19)
[Please do come in.]

In service encounters, a customer is conventionally accorded a higher status regardless of their actual position, reflecting the principle ‘the customer is king.’ Mitigation includes *Krama* speech level and the politeness marker *mangga* [please], reinforced by a door-opening gesture and a friendly tone. This combination of directness in imperative structure and deference markers (*Krama*, *mangga*, polite gesture) exemplifies how weak direct achieves an optimal balance of clarity and respect in upward/high-distance contexts.

4.3. Conventional indirect strategies

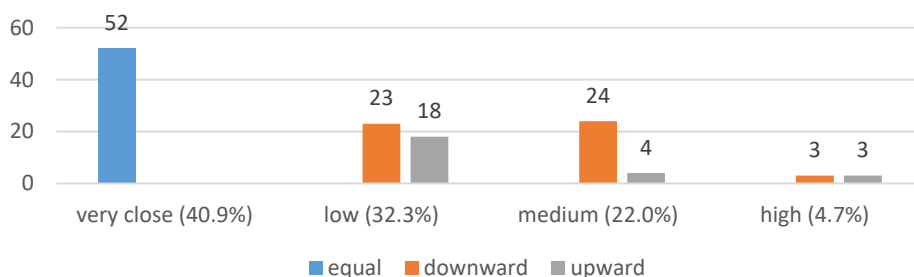


Diagram 5. Frequency of conventional indirect strategies across social distances

A different pattern emerges with conventional indirect strategies (24.2%), which use declarative or interrogative forms to convey directive force through pragmatic inference rather than imperative structure. As shown in Diagram 5, they are distributed relatively evenly across social distances, with a notable peak in very close relationships (52 out of 127 utterances), where hierarchical structures are loosened, and indirectness can serve to soften face threats without sacrificing clarity.

- (8) *Tapi nganu é, Yang... jam'é mau ngêshift'é saya. Piyé? Bali saiki pa?* (60/16)
[But, um, Honey... I'm about to go to work. What do you think? Do you want to go home now?]

In (8) a young couple, in a very close and equal power relationship, is walking at a tourist destination. The man is about to start his work shift and needs to leave. He wants his girlfriend to go home as well. Instead of issuing a direct command, he

frames the directive as questions about her preference. The interrogative forms are not genuine questions seeking information. They are conventional indirect directives. The directive force of “go home” is inferred from the context (he needs to go to work soon). By framing the directive as a question, the speaker respects the hearer’s autonomy and transforms a potential face-threatening act into a collaborative exchange.

- (9) *Wis. Iki udu urusanmu, Mar.* (144/1)
[Enough. This is none of your business, Mar.] (between two neighbours)

Extract (9) exemplifies a paradox where an indirect structure is used to deliver direct face-threatening acts. This utterance occurs between two neighbours who are intimately acquainted, as indicated by the use of *Ngoko Lugu* and the nickname ‘Mar.’ The face threat arises from the propositional content, where the speaker explicitly rejects the hearer’s involvement, and from the implied directive “stop interfering.” The utterance is classified as conventional indirect because the directive force is inferred from a declarative statement rather than encoded in imperative structure. However, it illustrates that conventional indirectness is not inherently polite. Its politeness depends on content and context. In this case, the declarative structure does not mitigate the face threat.

Example 10 illustrates how a father uses conventional indirectness, specifically an interrogative form “Don’t you want...,” to criticize his son’s lack of a stable career and implicitly direct him to find a better job while mitigating the face threat through empathetic softening.

- (10) *Kowé ki ra péngén pa kêrja kaya wong liya-liyané kaé? Mangkat éruk, nganggo sêragam ngono. Kaya Pandu kaé lho, sêragaman, sawangané mapan.* (385/5)
[Don’t you want to work like those other people? Leave in the morning, wear a uniform. Like Pandu, wearing a uniform, looking established.]
(father to son)

By avoiding a direct command, the father asserts his authority while preserving his son’s autonomy, thereby managing the power dynamic in a hierarchical Javanese family. This suggests that conventional indirectness enables superiors to express criticism while preserving the hearer’s dignity.

While extract (10) exemplifies the downward use of conventional indirectness, extract (11) demonstrates its upward function from wife to husband, reflecting traditional patriarchal hierarchy.

- (11) *Napa njênengan ki botên péngin ngaruhké tén nggéné Pak Dukuh mrika?* (147/1)
[Don’t you want to ask the village head?] (wife to husband)

This reversal can be seen to highlight the dual significance of indirectness in Javanese hierarchy: it allows superiors to manage subordinates and enables subordinates to influence superiors without overt imposition (11). Because there is

an issue that requires the village head's attention, but the husband has not yet taken action, the wife wants him to ask the village head. The utterance is not a genuine question seeking information about the husband's desires. Rather, it is a conventional indirect directive. The interrogative form pragmatically implies the directive "You should ask the village head." The *Krama* speech level signals deference to the husband as household head, and the indirectness enables the wife to influence her husband's action without issuing a direct command, thereby preserving his autonomy and their relational harmony. This case suggests that indirectness provides speakers with covert but effective influence. When directness may violate norms or social propriety, conventional indirectness can be an accepted mode.

4.4. Nonconventional indirect strategies

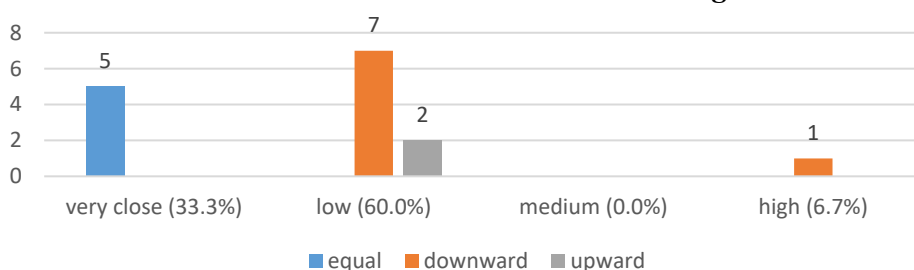


Diagram 6. Frequency of nonconventional indirect strategies across social distances

In the high-context Javanese culture, where harmony and relational nuance emphasize implicit communication, hints may appear ideally appropriate. Paradoxically, the least frequent strategy (2.9%) is nonconventional indirect, which heavily relies on contextual hints rather than explicit linguistic forms. In contrast to the direct strategies that are prevalent in intimate relationships, Diagram 6 shows that nonconventional indirectness, despite its low overall frequency, is most frequent in low social distance within downward interactions, in contexts where directness would typically be expected. This paradox may point to a key feature of Javanese cultural logic where hints tend to emerge primarily in sensitive topics, as exemplified by Extract 13.

- (13) *Ibu péngin momong putu.* (461/18)
[I want to hold a grandchild.] (mother to son)

This utterance (13) is addressed by a mother to her unmarried adult son. While parents generally favor direct commands, this may not apply to sensitive topics. Here, a mother addresses her unmarried adult son about marriage, a socially delicate issue where direct speech would breach norms of appropriateness, by using a nonconventional indirect strategy. The hint "hold grandchild" euphemizes pressure to marry. A further example of this strategy in low social distance and downward interaction within a spousal hierarchy is illustrated in Extract 14, where a husband uses indirect language to prompt his wife to prepare drinks for a guest.

- (14) *Bu, ana Bu Lurah ki lho.* (281/8)

[Ma'am, the village head's lady is here.] (husband to wife)

The contextual cue implies “prepare drinks for the guest” without a direct command, avoiding public commands that might appear demeaning. The wife's prompt compliance demonstrates a shared contextual understanding. This shows that nonconventional indirectness can elicit action among people who share routine-tacit knowledge. This strategy enables efficient communication without explicit imposition.

Besides serving downward directives, especially when dealing with sensitive issues, it can also facilitate upward communication when directness may threaten the hearer's face (15). It also demonstrates how hints become essential tools for managing power asymmetries in public contexts.

- (15) *Bapak ki lho, bocah lagi waé tékan Jogja wis dituturi.* (128/11)

[Sir, this child has just arrived in Jogja and you're already lecturing her.] (wife to husband)

Interaction 15 takes place in front of the couple's niece, who has just arrived in Yogyakarta after a long journey. The husband is extensively lecturing her. The wife intervenes, as the niece is tired and needs rest. Her utterance, although delivered in a friendly tone, functions primarily as a criticism of the husband's behavior, and it pragmatically implies a directive act “Stop lecturing her. She needs rest.” Such blurring is characteristic of nonconventional indirectness, where illocutionary force is inferred from context rather than encoded in linguistic form. Her utterance combines a declarative cue with a bodily gesture. The backslap, combined with the address term *Bapak*, a respectful yet affectionate way to address one's husband, expresses recognition of the husband's higher household status while softening the upward imposition through a warm, playful touch. The friendly tone and gesture further mitigate the face threat, transforming what could be a direct confrontation into a gentle reminder. Since a direct command in the presence of the niece would shame the husband, the hint, framed as a playful criticism, enables her to redirect his behavior while preserving his public image.

5. Discussion

In this dataset, direct strategies are employed more frequently than indirect strategies in Javanese DSAs, particularly in informal, intimate interactions. This finding challenges the broad generalization that high-context cultures tend to favor indirectness (Hall 1976), suggesting that politeness is shaped more by specific norms of hierarchy and relational harmony than by broad East-West generalizations alone. However, as the findings are drawn from 20 short films from Yogyakarta (2021–2023), generalization to all Javanese speakers requires further research with larger and more diverse samples. In Javanese, *unggah-ungguh* (social propriety), the behavioral manifestation of the core values *urmat* (respect) and *rukun* (relational harmony), does not prescribe indirectness in all contexts. Rather, it requires

speakers to assess the situation and choose the linguistically appropriate form, whether direct or indirect.

In this study, weak direct is the most prevalent strategy across all social distances and power directions. This prevalence can be explained from two complementary angles. First, weak direct balances clarity with mitigation, allowing speakers to issue directives efficiently while softening imposition through politeness markers. The choice of these markers aligns systematically with power and distance. In close intimate relationships, where social distance is low and power is equal, speakers favor devices that enhance intimacy and warmth, such as the invitation marker *ayo* [let's], softening particles *mbok/ta*, and terms of endearment. These reflect *grapyak/sumanak* (warmth/friendliness) value that serves relational harmony. In upward interactions where the hearer has higher status or power, mitigation takes the form of deference, marked by the obligatory *Krama* speech level, honorific pronouns (*sampeyan/panjenengan*), passive construction (*didhahar* [eaten] instead of *dhahar* [eat]), politeness marker *mangga* [please/let's], and multimodal cues, such as bowing the head or upper body while walking, using the right thumb to point or offer, or looking downward to avoid direct eye contact. These devices manifest the core value of *urmat* (respect). Consequently, when combined with these latter mitigations, a direct utterance is highly deferential. This means weak direct achieves the optimal balance by offering clarity and efficiency alongside intimacy or appropriate respect.

Second, the prevalence of the weak direct strategy can also be explained from the perspective of speaker perception. This study adopts an etic (analyst) perspective, classifying utterances as 'weak direct' when they retain imperative force with overt politeness markers. However, it is found that the relationship between linguistic form and perceived directness is not uniform across all mitigating devices. In Javanese, the combination of *mangga*, which carries both 'please' and 'let's' nuances, with the *Krama* speech level may transform an utterance such that it is perceived as indirect by native speakers. For instance, "*Mangga tindak mlebet kemawon*" [Please do come in], in Extract 7, may be interpreted as an invitation or welcome rather than a directive to enter. This suggests that the perceived directness threshold for '*mangga* with *Krama*' may be higher in Javanese than in languages like English.

This perception shift does not apply to other weak direct mitigating devices. Utterances in *Ngoko* softened by warmth markers, such as *mbok*, *ta*, or *ayo*, like "*Ayo mlebu ta*" [Come on in] or prohibition in *Krama* with confirmation question, such as "*Ampun dibaleni, nggih?*" [Don't repeat it, okay?], retain clear directive force and are perceived as weakly direct, not indirect. The discrepancy between our classification and the speaker's perception is therefore limited to a specific subset of weak direct strategies. This is acknowledged as a limitation of the present study, and future research employing perception experiments is needed to determine how Javanese speakers perceive each type of mitigation.

After weak direct, the strong direct strategy is the second most frequently used directive strategy. Realized in *Ngoko Lugu* imperatives without any politeness marker, it is concentrated in intimate and downward contexts, such as between close friends, siblings, or parents and children. Its prevalence in informal and hierarchical contexts reflects underlying cultural logic. First, relational familiarity mitigates face threats, allowing directness without being perceived as rude. As Ronan (2022) observes, speakers who are well-acquainted often forego politeness in their interactions. Second, Javanese culture, characterized by a high-power distance dimension (Hofstede 2011), often normalizes direct commands from those in positions of authority, such as elders. It is culturally acceptable because young children are socialized into a hierarchical world where obedience is both expected and regarded as a moral duty (C. Geertz 1960). Direct commands from parental figures are thus regarded as an enactment of proper hierarchical roles. Third, the relatively high frequency of strong direct strategies is also explained by the fact that the absence of politeness markers does not necessarily indicate impoliteness. Non-linguistic cues, such as tone of voice, physical proximity, and gestures, can soften impositions even when verbal markers are absent (Brown & Prieto 2017).

Example (4) illustrates a broader sociolinguistic trend in contemporary Javanese society, supporting the high frequency of strong direct strategies. While the son's use of *Ngoko Lugu* to his father violates traditional *unggah-ungguh*, which requires *Krama* to parents, such violations have become normalized, particularly among lower-class families, where *Krama* is perceived as complex, impractical, and less relevant to daily life (Pertiwi et al. 2017, Sugiri et al. 2001). They shift to *Ngoko* because "it is the most natural and spontaneous form of verbal expression" (Errington 1988: 49). Middle-upper-class families share this perception of *Krama* as impractical, but they shift in a different direction to Bahasa Indonesia, the national language, which is perceived as 'more modern' and 'more communicative' (Smith-Hefner 2009). Both paths signal a declining adherence to the conventional honorific system due to urbanization, economic constraints, and weakened intergenerational transmission (Andriyanti 2019, Subroto et al. 2008, Zentz 2015).

The conventional indirect strategy, often regarded as the highest level of politeness (Blum-Kulka 1987), plays unique functions in the Javanese directive landscape. Realized in declarative and interrogative forms, this study identifies the latter as its primary form, especially when speakers prioritize relational harmony over communicative efficiency. It is the third most frequent strategy, distributed relatively evenly across all levels of social distance, particularly in sensitive topics such as marriage pressure (13). This strategy reflects a 'safe' middle ground, polite but not excessively ambiguous, minimizing demand for contextual interpretation on the addressee (Ackermann 2023). However, its lower frequency compared to direct strategies could be interpreted as a tendency among these Javanese speakers to prioritize clarity and efficiency over traditional notions of politeness in their daily interactions.

The rarity of nonconventional indirectness, identified as the most indirect strategy of DSAs, across different levels of social distance reveals that Javanese speakers reserve ambiguity for contexts requiring heightened facework and relational sensitivity, contexts where even interrogative indirectness may be insufficient (as shown in 13, 14 and 15).

When indirectness is employed, whether conventional or nonconventional, it reflects the value of *sungkan* (polite reluctance) and relies on the hearer's ability to be *tanggap ing sasmita* (sensitive to hidden meanings) to infer the intended directive without explicit imposition. This preserves relational harmony by avoiding direct confrontation while still achieving the speaker's pragmatic goal. Nevertheless, the overall rarity of nonconventional indirectness challenges the assumption that high-context cultures favor implicit communication and can be interpreted as a preference for clarity to avoid misinterpretation. Strategies that rely heavily on contextual inference are often avoided due to the risk of misunderstanding. Thus, this study recognizes that indirectness does not necessarily correlate with politeness, a finding that problematizes universalist models of politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987).

6. Conclusion

This study examined how politeness is realized in Javanese directive speech acts (DSAs), complicating the assumption that high-context, collectivist cultures uniformly favor indirectness. Analyzing 525 directive utterances from 20 Javanese short films (2022–2023), the study investigated the distribution of directive strategies in terms of directness levels and the influence of social distance, power relations and Javanese cultural norms on strategy choice.

The findings reveal that Javanese speakers achieve politeness not through indirectness but by adjusting to the context and situation. In informal, intimate interactions, directness is the norm, either unmitigated, when social contexts alone permit, or softened by warmth markers. In upward or formal interactions, directness is preserved but marked by deference devices. Indirectness is reserved for specific contexts, such as sensitive topics or strategic facework. More broadly, in most interactions, Javanese speakers avoid ambiguity by favoring direct or weakly direct strategies.

In sum, politeness in Javanese lingua-culture resists a simple direct-versus-indirect binary. Instead, it demands that speakers align their linguistic choices with social hierarchy, relational intimacy, and cultural values. By separating politeness from indirectness, the study advances a culture-specific model in which directness is perfectly compatible with politeness, as long as it is either mediated by appropriate markers (deference or warmth) or licensed by the social context itself.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Emi NURSANTI: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Writing — Original Draft, Writing — Review & Editing. **SUHANDANO:** Methodology, Validation, Supervision, Writing — Review & Editing. **SULISTYOWATI:** Methodology, Validation, Supervision, Writing — Review & Editing.

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