

Bald on Records Used by Aang The Main Character in Avatar: The Last Airbender 2024

Muhammad Zendi Alfarizi¹, Alica Nurmalinda Yasmin², Nadhira Thauriq Fatiha³

Universitas Nasional, Indonesia

¹ muhammadzendialfarizi2022@student.unas.ac.id, ² alicanurmalindayasmin2022@student.unas.ac.id,

³ nadhirathauriqfatiha2022@student.unas.ac.id

Abstract

The purposes of this research are to analyze types of Bald on Record strategies and to investigate factors that influence Aang in the film. The subject of the research is the series of Avatar: The Last Airbender 2024. The researchers used a descriptive qualitative method and the data were analyzed using the theory of Brown and Levinson. This series has 8 episodes. There is a total amount of 30 data obtained by the researchers in Bald on Records strategies and Influencing Factors types. The result for Bald on Records shows that there are 11 Great Urgency, 6 Metaphorical Emphasize, 4 Metaphorical High Valuation, 0 Channel Noise, 2 Task Oriented, 1 Speaker is Powerful, 3 Sympathetic Advice or Warning, 0 Permission That Hearer has Requested, 0 Welcoming, 1 Farewell, and 2 Offer. The types of Influencing Factors, there are 4 Payoffs, 6 Social Distance, 13 Relative Power, and 7 Absolute Rankings of Imposition. The conclusion is that Aang used Great Urgency in Bald on Records more often than others because he faced urgent situations frequently, he used Relative Power in Influencing Factors than others because he is more powerful than other characters.

Keywords: Aang; Avatar; The Last Airbender; Bald on Record; Influencing Factors

INTRODUCTION

This research aims to analyze types of bald on record strategies and to investigate factors that influencing Aang in using bald on record strategies in Avatar: The Last Airbender movie. The majority of individuals find entertainment in viewing films. There are numerous movie genres, including action, romance, horror, and thrillers. In addition to providing entertainment, the film has the potential to educate viewers (Dewi, 2023). Apart from providing entertainment, films can also serve as a means for viewers to acquire new vocabulary and improve their language skills through speaking, reading subtitles, interpreting facial expressions, listening to dialogue, and increasing their vocabulary. One of the films which was released in 2024 on Netflix is Avatar: The Last Airbender that have the main character named Aang.

Aang used bald on record as one of his ways or strategies to explain concisely and unambiguously to his listeners where he does not have to take any action and he does not care about the listeners' image. This strategy utters directly considering the measure of the speaker and listeners relationship. It communicates in a concise, clear, and straightforward manner (Brown and Levinson 1987; Nirhayati 2018, p.42) cited in (Muhammad & Djannurdianti, 2023). As a human, Aang used language to communicate, express ideas, or emotions. Language use can have a significant impact and is closely linked to communication. As stated by (Saragih & Johan, 2020) cited in (Nisha, 2023), humans rely on language to communicate with each other. People would find it difficult to engage, communicate, and express their ideas, emotions, and perspectives to each other without the use of language. People's use of language has a significant impact on them and cannot be separated from communication. The study of interpreting a language used by speakers or listeners is a study of pragmatics, according to

(Yule, 2010), pragmatics focuses on "invisible" meaning, or how people understand meaning when it is not spoken or written. This is how language is used meaningfully for speakers and listeners according to the context, this is also supported by (Siddiqui, 2018) cited in (Setyawati & Rahayu, 2020) this is as important as reference to the underlying meaning of an utterance. This studies the meaning associated with context in linguistics as a component of social perception. When humans converse, they use language to establish communication, and politeness is an important aspect of communication. Politeness is a communication requirement for humans and is essential in creating social order, any theory that addresses this issue is at the same time contributing to the foundations of human social existence (Brown & Levinson, 1987). That is the reason it is so crucial to be polite. According to Yule (1996: 60) cited in (Nur & Rosa, 2019), politeness can be shown through a variety of strategies known as politeness strategies. The implementation of politeness strategies in global society has been a frequently addressed pragmatics issue.

The use of politeness strategies is shown to protect the listener's "face", as stated by (Brown and Levinson, 1987) cited in (Nur & Rosa, 2019), the face is used to describe one's "self-esteem" or respect for oneself. The idea has been implemented by protecting the face (Goody, 1996) cited in (Tetenaung & Heryono, 2022). Brown and Levinson (1987) cited in (Shofa, 2022) explain there are two categories for the face: positive faces and negative faces. 1. Positive face is the desire to be accepted or affirmed, understood, admired, or respected. 2. Negative face is the desire to be unbothered or free from burdens. In this context, the speaker wants to be free or avoid interruptions that may hinder the speaker's wishes.

Being impolite carries the potential to damage one's positive or negative face. We frequently put others' faces in danger by making demands, making offers, offering advice, making suggestions, or simply looking at someone aimlessly (Leihitu & Triprihatmini, 2021). Based on (Brown & Levinson, 1987) bald on record is divided into two types, first, the cases of minimization of the threats, which consists of eight strategies, they are great urgency, metaphorical for emphasize, metaphorical for high valuation, channel noise, task oriented, speaker is powerful, sympathetic advice or warnings, and permission that hearer has requested. Second, the cases of FTA-oriented bald on record usage, which consists of three strategies, they are welcoming, farewells, and offers. And also stated by (Brown & Levinson, 1987), the use of bald on record strategies in a person is also influenced by several factors, including payoffs, social distance, relative power, and absolute rankings of imposition.

Therefore, the researchers used Avatar: The Last Airbender as the source of this research object. This movie has several characters but focuses on the character Aang. The character who has various elements from water, fire, earth and air. Various characters speak different languages because they come from different social backgrounds. However, it is different with Aang who has a different style of utterances from the other characters because he has the most power among other characters. The style of utterances in Aang's character resembles direct utterances spoken by people who have more power than others. So, this makes this film series suitable to be studied with the bald on record strategy with Brown and Levinson's theory (1987). The researchers analyze based on the utterances of Aang who used the bald on record strategies towards his listeners. The researcher used Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory to investigate the factors of influence on Aang towards the use of the bald on record strategy he used. These factors include payoffs, social distance, relative power, and absolute rankings of imposition.

METHOD

The method used in this research was qualitative descriptive. According to (Creswell, 2009) qualitative data is presented in the form of words rather than numbers. In order to analyze and comprehend how individuals or groups interpret a social or human issue. This research involved

several steps including the collection of Aang utterances transcription which was released and accessed on Netflix 2024. Hereinafter, the utterances transcript was analyzed by using the theory of types bald on record which consists of two types, the cases of minimization of the threats include great urgency, metaphorical for emphasize, metaphorical for high valuation, channel noise, task oriented, speaker is powerful, sympathetic advice or warnings, and permission that hearer has requested. And also, the cases of FTA-oriented bald on record usage include welcoming, farewells, and offers. The research continued unravelling influencing factors by examining factors such as payoffs, social distance, relative powers, and absolute ranking which ultimately presented what factors influenced Aang throughout the whole story of film.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The result described that the bald on record types used by Aang in his utterances were eleven types. He was influenced by four influencing factors. The results of bald on record and influencing factors are presented below:

Table 1. Types of Bald on Record

Cases of non-minimization of the threats	Frequency	Cases of FTA-oriented bald on record usage	Frequency
Great Urgency	11	Welcoming	0
Metaphorical for Emphasize	6	Farewells	1
Metaphorical for High Valuation	4	Offers	2
Channel Noise	0		
Task-Oriented	2		
Speaker is Powerful	1		
Sympathetic Advice or Warnings	3		
Permission That Hearer Has Requested	0		
Total	27	Total	3

Table 2. Types of Influencing Factors

Influencing Factors	Frequency
Payoffs	4

Social Distance	6
Relative Power	13
Absolute Rankings of Imposition	7
Total	30

Discussion

Cases of Non-Minimization of The Face Threat

In order to avoid the threat of a disparaging face, this is a condition in which the repair of the face or self-image is negligible or excessive. When the situation is very urgent, the improvement will reduce the urgency communicated (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 95) cited in (Shofa, 2022). Speakers use this strategy directly without considering the speaker's image for the sake of the effectiveness of the meaning of the message to be conveyed. This type includes several strategies. For the further explanation will be explained below:

1. Great Urgency

A condition when speakers emphasize to their listeners. When the speaker speaks louder than the listener, this strategy is used. Additionally, facial repair is not necessary in this kind of situation because this effectiveness does not happen in the face-threatening act. In order to effectively communicate the meaning of the message to the listener, the speaker uses high efficiency. Based on the interaction between two participants, great urgency is used. The effect can be ignored by the listener when the two participants already know each other. Since they can both manage it, the listener can reduce the speaker's time. On the other hand, the listener will be greatly affected when the participants are strangers. The listener may feel surprised, annoyed, or even offended. This strategy is usually used in situations involving authority figures, criticism, requests, or statements. When something important needs to be said, the speaker emphasizes it loud and clear. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *Leave him alone*

Prince Zuko: *Can't be* (S1; E1, 44.15)

The conversation between Aang as the airbender and Prince Zuko as a fire bender prince who wanted to catch Aang. This happened when Aang saw that his adventurous friend Sokka was helpless against the Fire Nation. They would fight Sokka once again even though he was helpless. In addition, the Fire Nation would level the Wolf Core, Southern Water Tribe. Aang said "*Leave him alone*" by releasing one of his powers which made Prince Zuko look surprised. Aang's utterances were highly emphasized to his listener, Prince Zuko. This situation is used among others in command situations accompanied by high emphasis and urgent situations. Aang is doing an FTA to Prince Zuko, which might make the listener feel uncomfortable or lose face.

2. Metaphorical for Emphasize

The condition is what speakers use to attract their listeners' attention. Moreover, speakers use it to highlight the urgency or importance of a particular circumstance. Certain expressions convey urgency which is used to draw the listener's attention. The speakers use this type to highlight the listeners. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *Katara something's wrong with your bag* (S1; E2, 03.03)

This situation happened when Aang noticed something strange about Katara's bag. Aang saw something moving around in Katara's bag. When Aang said “*Katara something's wrong with your bag*” Aang uttered to emphasize Katara's attention to look at her bag. It was an emergency attention when Aang saw something wrong in Katara's bag, and the strangeness happened suddenly.

3. Metaphorical for High Valuation

Bald on record strategy that indicates a close relationship between speakers and listeners. This condition happens when the speakers are asking the listeners to pay heed to what they want. That is, speakers ask the listeners to understand what they want. It is used straightforwardly and sometimes speakers give connotations in some words to emphasize what they need from the listeners. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Katara: Wait!

Aang: *It's okay, Katara. No one has ever fought me before. I think you're the bravest person I've ever met.* (S1; E1, 45.01)

Aang's utterances when he was giving himself to Prince Zuko, the Prince of Fire Tribe and fire-bender, and his troops because Aang was overwhelmed when fighting Prince Zuko back and his increasing troops. Katara, his adventurous friend who's a water-bender, saw Aang gave in to Fire Tribe and went to him. That way, Aang talked about Katara's bravery in trying to protect him from Fire Tribe as a form of friendship. This situation happened due to the closeness between Aang and Katara. The speaker, Aang, said, “*It's okay, Katara.*” This showed how Aang is asking for Katara to pay attention to what he wants. Aang also emphasizes, “*No one has ever fought me before. I think you're the bravest person I've ever met.*” This strategy emphasizes the listener to understand what the speaker wants.

4. Task-Oriented

Bald on record strategy when speakers give direct commands to listeners without making facial expressions. The interaction-oriented approach, in which speakers express their desires directly, is less concerned with facial healing. In a situation where hearers carry the conversation, speakers feel unimportant or disconnected. Speakers therefore do not worry about making up their faces when they give commands or clear directions. Stated differently, speakers engage in FTA. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *Make sure he gets seaweed. Lots of seaweed.* (S1; E7, 05.50)

It happened when Aang, Sokka, and Katara headed to the Northern Water Tribe, with Aang's pet, Appa. At that time, Aang had the task of being a guardian and fighting the Fire Nation, Aang gave instructions by emphasizing to Hahn, an aide to the tribal chief, to feed seaweed to his pet Appa.

5. Speaker is Powerful

A bald on record strategy with the situation happens when there is a difference between the speaker and the listener, which means that the speaker has more power than the listener, when they have a difference of opinion. The speaker is rude and does not care about facial repair or listeners' face-threatening act (FTA). Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *This battle, it'll be like nothing we've ever faced before. People are gonna get hurt and die.* (S1; E7, 10.50)

This situation happened after an argument between Katara and Master Pakku, the senior water-bender teacher, who says there is a tradition that women should not fight. However, Katara did not accept this and complained to Aang, who Katara thought would be on her side, but instead Aang argued that "*This battle, it'll be like nothing we've ever faced before*" by talking like that Aang has more power in the disagreement, then Aang continued by emphasizing "*People are gonna get hurt and die*". This shows that Aang really does not care about the opinions and faces of his listener. Therefore, the speaker feels more powerful and does not care about the lack of cooperation from the listeners.

6. Sympathetic Advice or Warnings

One of the bald on record strategies, when the speakers care about the listeners, this shows that the speakers use a positive face, so there is no need for any compensation, it happens because of the sympathetic advice or advice form. People normally use sympathetic advice when the speakers and the listeners know each other and have a very close relationship and both care about each other. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *Sorry, buddy. You can't come this time. You too Momo. It's too dangerous. Keep them safe for me, okay?* (S1; E5, 44.28)

This is when Aang wanted to say goodbye to them to save his friends and go to the Crescent Island Fire Temple, a temple in the Fire Nation, where the region is very dangerous, so Aang said "*Sorry, buddy. You can't come this time.*" That shows Aang cares about his listeners, and shows his positive face so there is no face repair for him. Followed by "*It's too dangerous.*" Explaining that the Fire Nation was too dangerous, Aang was concerned about Appa and Momo not going with Aang.

Cases of FTA-Oriented Bald on Record Usage

Generally, this strategy is used by speakers to make FTA implicitly. The speakers speak directly to the listener but implicitly improve the speaker's face. This type explains how to respect face which includes "a reciprocal orientation in which participants try to guess what the other participant wants" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 99) cited in (Shofa, 2022). Means, speakers use non-abusive utterances to repair the speaker's face.

1. Farewells

One of the bald on record strategies with conditions where the speakers want to separate from the listeners, namely by emphasizing efficiency in order to shorten the time in communication. The speakers insist that the listeners can violate their positive faces by using this strategy. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Princess Yue: Aang, don't do this. You'll be lost forever.

Aang: *I should have been lost a hundred years ago. This isn't my time or my world. I couldn't save my word, but I can save this one.* (S1; E8, 19.45)

This happened when Aang and Princess Yue, the daughter of the moon spirit and water-bender, saw all the people of the Northern Water Tribe, who were increasingly overwhelmed by the killing of the moon spirit that made the Fire Nation stronger. Aang eventually entered the moon spirit pool to gain his strongest power to fight the Fire Nation and free the Northern Water Tribe's citizens, but was prevented by Princess Yue, but Princess Yue could not prevent Aang for long. Aang utterances, "*I should*

have been lost a hundred years ago. This isn't my time or my world. I couldn't save my world, but I can save this one." It is a reference that Aang wanted to separate with his listener by shortening the time of communication.

2. Offers

Where the speakers offer something to the listeners. In this condition the speakers can emphasize that the listeners can give his negative face to the speakers. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *I'll go with you, just leave them alone. I'm the one you're looking for.*
Zuko: Get him. (S1; E1, 44.57)

This happened when Aang was overwhelmed by Prince Zuko, so Aang offered to go with Prince Zuko and his troops. So that Aang said "*I'll go with you, just leave them alone*" shows that Aang ultimately had to offer himself to go with Prince Zuko and his troops. The utterances "*I'm the one you're looking for.*" Means that Aang wanted only himself to go with Prince Zuko and his army without involving his friends. He also emphasized on "*just leave them alone*" to the listeners to give a negative face to stop his war with the citizens of Wolf Core.

Influencing Factors

In accordance with (Brown & Levinson, 1987), there are some factors that influence people's use of bald on record strategies. There are payoffs, social distance, relative power, and absolute ranking of imposition. For the further explanation will be explained below:

1. Payoffs

One of the factors that influence the use of the bald on record strategy where people use it to get benefits. First, listeners can ask speakers to help them speak honestly and clearly about the importance of the information to be communicated. The second speakers receive recognition for their directness because this shows their confidence in the listeners of the message. The third speakers receive recognition for their coherence from concise and understandable utterances. Fourth, the speakers avoid the risk of being misinterpreted or misrepresented by the listeners. Lastly, the speakers have the opportunity to make an upfront payment, which could result in a Face Threatening Act (FTA). Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *We need to stop Zhao. He's trying to kill the ocean and moon spirits.*
Princess Yue: He can't. That would mean the end of our people.
Sokka: We can't let that happen. (S1; E8, 19.45)

Aang was influenced by the payoffs factor. It happened when Aang was in the Northern Water Tribe, who wanted to stop Zhao, the Fire Nation commander, who was going to kill the moon spirit to exterminate everyone in the area. Upon knowing of this, Aang told Sokka and Princess Yue to stop Zhao. Aang's utterances "*We need to stop Zhao. He's trying to kill the ocean and moon spirits.*" shows that he's asking them to stop Zhao from killing the moon spirits. His utterances are clear: he wants to stop Zhao, and there are no manipulative utterances to the listeners. The listeners also get the clarity of the meaning of Aang's words. This refers to the payoffs factor which focuses on the advantage of the speaker speaking clearly, and the listener agreeing from the clarity of the meaning spoken.

2. Social Distance

Referred to the relationship between the speakers and the listeners. When the speakers

and listeners are engaged in an action, social distance relates to the same social dimension of similarity and difference. Low social distance happens when there is a close relationship between the speakers and the listeners. Low social distance indicates unrestricted utterances, with both speakers and listeners free to voice their thoughts without considering the potential consequences of the Face Threatening Act. In contrast, formal language will be used because of the uneasiness that results from a great social gap between the speaker and the listener. Age, status, cultural background, gender, and other criteria are taken into this factor. When determining the appropriate level of social distance between speakers and listeners. This is done to get how well the utterances are received by the listeners. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *I haven't learned any of the other bending skills and I'll probably continue messing up, but at least I'll be able to do it with my friends by my side.*

Katara: That's right. Team Avatar. (S1; E7, 04.54)

This happened when Aang shared his power to control the elements with Sokka and Katara as they ride Appa, a flying bison that serves as both Aang's pet, on their journey back to the Northern Water Tribe. He is constantly accompanied by Sokka and Katara as they acquire new skills. The statement "*I haven't learned any of the other bending skills, and I'll probably continue messing up*" is an example of how low social distance is used by Aang, the speaker, to communicate with Sokka and Katara, the listeners. Because of their close friendship, Aang is able to freely express his opinions without worrying about FTA. Aside from age, status, and cultural background, social distance also incorporates things like "*but at least I'll be able to do it with my friends by my side.*" Aang having faith in his two buddies demonstrates a low social distance since there is no awkwardness.

3. Relative Power

The urge for others to respect those who have authority or control over them. It refers to the notion where the social component is asymmetrical of power itself. The power of the listeners over the speakers is the subject of the status of the listeners over the speakers, which implies that the listeners' power influences the speakers' methods. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Gyatso: Koh will have taken them to his lair. Koh will hold them there until he's ready to feed. When this happens, their souls will be lost forever.

Aang: *I have to save them!*

This conversation happened when Aang entered the Spirit World, but Sokka and Katara were also pulled in, which would be dangerous. Sokka and Katara were caught by Koh, a centipede spirit that captures a person to enter the spirit world so that they cannot escape. In the Spirit World Aang met the spirit of Gyatso, his teacher and close friend, he told Aang that Koh would hold them until they were ready to be eaten, if that happened his two friends would disappear forever, so with persistence Aang tried to save them. Aang said loudly to Gyatso "*I have to save them!*" as a form of response to what Gyatso said about the possibility of his friend being under Koh's power, it was an urgent situation, Aang as the speaker had more power than the listener, so the politeness strategy used was also lower.

4. Absolute Ranking of Imposition

A communication's level of difficulty factors. There exist two classifications of imposition: low imposition rank and high imposition rank. rankings that are low

correspond to modest requests or favors, whereas those that are high correspond to substantial requests or favors, whereas those that are high correspond to substantial requests or favors. The politest to make a request; this is why imposition ranking is crucial in determining the best approach to make a request. However, Absolute Ranking of Imposition has two factors that contribute to the use of FTA. First is the rank of imposition that demands goods (including immaterial goods like information), the second is the rank of imposition that requires goods. Here is an example of the datum:

Datum: Aang: *Please just let me do what I have to do, and I swear I'll come back. My friends are in danger, and I'm the only one who can save them. If I don't return soon, I'll lose them forever.* (S1; E6, 15.12)

This conversation happened when Ty Lee, a thug hired by Prince Zuko and his uncle Iroh, was paid to find Aang in the Fire Nation, home of the firebenders and where Prince Zuko hails from. Prince Zuko received Aang when he was apprehended by Ty Lee. "*Please just let me do what I have to do, and I swear I'll come back,*" Aang begs Prince Zuko to allow him to go save his buddies. He made Prince Zuko comprehend that his friends were in danger by saying, "*My friends are in danger.*" However, Prince Zuko refused to let him leave, so Aang reiterated, "*I'm the only one who can save them. I will lose them forever if I don't come back soon.*" Since only he is capable of freeing his two friends, Aang underlines and argues that "*I'm the only one who can save them.*" He concludes by saying, "*If I don't return soon, I'll lose them forever.*" Order for the audience to comprehend and grasp Aang's meaning.

CONCLUSION

The researchers concluded everything that have been analyzed, according to the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) about politeness strategies, it is found in the 8 episodes of the movie series Avatar: The Last Airbender 2024 there are 30 data of Bald on Records and 30 data of Influencing Factors. In details, the result for Bald on Records shows that there are 11 Great Urgency, 6 Metaphorical for Emphasize, 4 Metaphorical for High Valuation, 0 Channel Noise, 2 Task Oriented, 1 Speaker is Powerful, 3 Sympathetic Advice or Warning, 0 Permission That Hearer has Requested, 0 Welcoming, 1 Farewell, and 2 Offer. As for the types of Influencing Factors, there are 4 Payoffs, 6 Social Distance, 13 Relative Power, and 7 Absolute Ranking of Imposition. The data that Aang used is Great Urgency in Bald on Record strategy more often than others because he faced urgent situations frequently, and he also used Relative Power in types of Influencing Factors more often than others because he is more powerful than other characters in the movie series.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, we would like to express our highest gratitude to Allah SWT. Alhamdulillah rabbil 'alamin. All praises to Allah, The Almighty, for bestowing His blessings upon us and grant us health and the ability to finish this project by the title of "Bald on Records Used by Aang the Main Character in Avatar: The Last Airbender 2024". Without His will, we could not possibly have this project done. A great deal of thankfulness to IKIP Project Siliwangi for providing us this honorable chance of publishing our project. Next, we would like to thank Mrs. Evi Jovita Putri, who had given a lot of her time and energy in supporting our project from the scratch.

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