



# POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED BY STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM INTERACTION

Muhamad Luthfi, Eva Devi Sofyawati

Institut Pendidikan Indonesia  
Garut, West Java, Indonesia  
Email: [Luthfiix@gmail.com](mailto:Luthfiix@gmail.com)

## Article History

Submitted 15 July 2022

Revised 1 August 2022

Published 19 August 2022

## Abstract.

In education, such as classroom teaching and learning, politeness is very important. Students communicate with the teacher during the teaching and learning process using various sayings that demonstrate politeness strategies. Considering politeness consists of methods to create appropriate politeness in communication between students and teachers. But when students use politeness strategies in giving feedback on the teacher's response, not all students can know a good speech. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the politeness strategies used by students and teachers for classroom interaction. There are four politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory. There are bald on record, off record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. Researcher used qualitative descriptive methods to describe the results. The participants of this study were students and teachers in English classes. Researcher used two research instruments, namely interviews and observations. The Data were analyzed by undergoing several processes such as reading, analyzing, interpreting, and inferring. The results showed that the most dominant politeness strategy used by students is positive politeness. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to students choosing the suitability of politeness strategies when classed.

**Keywords:** politeness strategies, classroom interaction, bald on record, off record

## INTRODUCTION

Humans communicate in order to send messages and form social bonds. People require a medium, typically language, to undertake social contact. Language is a means of communication between people (Nurmawati & Weda, 2019). When communicating with others, one must consider the politeness approach because it appears to be a key idea and a necessary part of interpersonal communication, including communication between teachers and pupils in a classroom (Heriyawati et al., 2019). Politeness is a broad phrase that refers to language standards in everyday communication.

Politeness is a pervasive social phenomenon seen as a moral standard in human communication and social relationships. It is one of the most fundamental aspects of human contact (Lestari et al., 2018). In education, such as classroom teaching and learning, politeness is vital. During the teaching and learning process, the instructor communicates with the pupils using a variety of utterances that demonstrate a politeness strategy. Considering politeness consists of a strategy to make politeness appropriate in communication among students and teachers (Purandina et al., 2014).

However, until this point, students might not necessarily act in an impolite manner to be rude, and they may not have a strategic purpose in mind when doing so. Even though they are in a school setting, kids occasionally act solely on their thoughts (Purnomo, 2019). Disrespectful behaviour in class or among students is described as disrespectful comments or acts that disturb the learning environment (Yrisarry et al., 2019). In classrooms, uncivilized behaviour is becoming more widespread. This type of behaviour is frustrating for the instructor and can also be detrimental to the other students in the class. In other words, many pupils can still not conduct themselves appropriately in class.

In relation to this, many studies have been conducted. Some of them focus on classroom interaction by the teacher (Heriyawati et al., 2019; Darong, Kadarisman, & Basthomi, 2020; Purandina et al., 2014). Examining the manners of courtesy employed by male and female educators (Ningrum et al., 2018), (Lestari et al., 2018), and analyze the implications of using politeness strategies in teaching and learning (Risal & Tambunan, 2021).

Following the lines of the research, the present study attempts to extend the scope of politeness research by investigating the politeness strategies used by the English students when joining some feedback sessions with their teachers. The results of the research are expected to shed light on the literature of politeness in the context of EFL learning.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A language is a communication tool that helps people speak with one another and define their goals to continue interacting and presenting new ideas (Marpaung, 2019). Language, society, and culture are inextricably linked terms that cannot be separated or ignored. It has long been a source of fascination and debate among sociolinguists, both in the past and now (Ningrum et al., 2018). Pragmatic understanding refers to the capacity to utilize language appropriately. Pragmatic knowledge is the ability of language users to match utterances to contexts in which they are appropriate. Pragmatics consists of several scopes, one of which is politeness (Purnomo, 2019).

Politeness is viewed as a language representation of saving someone's face during transmission regarding its coverage (Darong et al., 2020). In any language, being nice is a difficult task. It is challenging to learn because it requires knowledge of the language and the community's social and cultural values. Two types of speech are commonly employed in communication and daily conversation: polite and everyday speech. In general, polite speech is utilized in social circumstances such as conversations between strangers or acquaintances (Nurmawati & Weda, 2019).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research utilized qualitative case studies. A qualitative case study is a research methodology that aids in the exploration of a phenomenon within a specific context using a number of data sources (Yin, 2018). The exploration is done through a variety of lenses in order to highlight the phenomenon's many features. A real-time phenomenon is examined in a case study within its naturally occurring setting with the understanding that context will make a difference.

Researchers chose topics based on their experience in teaching practice. Many teachers complain that their students are less able to speak politely in class because students previously studied online, resulting in less of their attitude education. Students have difficulty and lack of understanding how to speak good and correct words. It was proven when researchers do teaching practice there are still many students who do not understand how to be polite to the teacher and they do not know what speech can be categorized well to say to the teacher.

This study was conducted at a Senior High School in Garut, West Java. The samples of this study were 2 English teachers and 73 students in 2 classes. Seventy-three students were selected based on their ability to use English, especially their mastery of English speaking and vocabulary. Several factors led to the selection of this institution, i.e., choosing a public school can get students from various regions. These

schools previously did online learning, resulting in students not knowing each other and not being very familiar with their teachers.

Observation and interviews are employed as research instruments. In terms of observation, participant observation is used to monitor the actual and factual conditions of classroom learning interaction. Observation tells researchers about the fundamental significance of behavior. First, the researcher examined two distinct high school classes. Second, the researcher gathered information about the teaching and learning process in the classroom and interviewed the instructors of both courses. Finally, the researcher assessed their politeness strategy.

The researcher used several steps to collect data. First, the researcher prepared 20 questions for the interview and a checklist observation table that would be used as a research instrument. Second, after all is ready, researcher asks permission from the school that will be used as research places. The following day, after receiving permission from the school, the researcher began observing the first class. When the observation was carried out, the researcher used an audio recorder as a tool to transcribe data. Then the researcher also used cell observation to observe students' politeness toward the teacher.

After the observation had been completed the next day, the researcher continued his research by interviewing two teachers on the topic of discussion of student politeness strategies to teachers. This interview also used an audio recorder for ease for researcher transcribing data. Finally, after all the observation and interview data had been obtained, the researcher identified and transcribed the data.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher explains the research findings of this study based on the objectives mentioned in Chapter 3, the research instruments used by teachers are observation and interview. It is used to collect as detailed information as possible from the participants to get a better answer to the student's politeness strategy to the teacher. The researcher selected the teachers who taught English in different classes as study participants. There are 10th and 11th-Grade high schools.

Moreover, before the researcher explains the research findings, the researcher would like to review the research objectives revealed in Chapter 1. The research problem is "How do students implement the politeness strategy in the classroom?" According to the research question, this study aimed to investigate what kind of politeness strategies that are used by the students and to find out how the politeness of the students in the classroom to the teachers. The researcher conducted observations in class on April 20 until 21, 2022. And for the interviews were conducted on June 10, 2022, with the teachers directly at the school.

Based on observations, it can be explained that the students' politeness strategy to the teachers when interacting in the classroom. The tenth Grade used positive politeness strategies such as in-group identify markers, asserts knowledge of H's wants, and intensifies interest in H in class. For negative politeness in the form of questions, hedge and give respect. In contrast to the eleventh Grade, using positive politeness strategies such as using the group identifies markers, being optimistic, giving or asking for a reason, jokes, and negative politeness strategies such as using questions, hedge, and apologies. Therefore, it can be said that students emphasize using politeness strategies in class in teaching and learning English, such as getting grades, praise, and appreciation, apologizing, and others.

In addition, the outcomes of interviews with 10th and 11th-grade instructors are intended to yield the results that teachers desire so that students can use their civility in the classroom. The 10th-grade teacher, who became an English instructor, observed the students' courtesy beginning with their facial expressions and tones of voice. This teacher advised the student to pay attention to his tone of voice when speaking to her. Students are expected to be courteous and participate more actively in class. Students are expected to understand the limits of acceptable speech, including what can and cannot be said. For instance, raising hand before questioning or responding to the material. The most important thing for students to remember is to eliminate those behaviors they consider warm outside but not in school. Teachers always pay close attention to their students in class. When counseling students, teachers focus on the development of their conduct. This matter must be addressed concerning students' application of classroom courtesy.

### **1. Positive Politeness**

Positive politeness is a practice aimed to bring a smile on the listener's face. To establish rapport with individuals, the speaker expresses his gratitude, approval, interest, and acquaintance with them. Using FTA, speakers offer the sense that they share the same desire as the other speaker, demonstrating their friendliness. Typically, this approach draws closer to someone by expressing familiarity and approbation. In reality, there are fifteen sub strategies of politeness. However, the study identified just four sub-strategies adopted by students, namely use in-group identify markers, assert's knowledge of H's wants, give or ask for reasons, and jokes. Here are descriptions of the four sub strategies employed by pupils:

#### **1) Use in-group Identity Marker**

Teacher: *Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.*

Students: *Walaikumsalam warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.*

(Students employed their group's customary greeting phrase to demonstrate that they are Muslim.)

**2) Give or ask for reason**

Teacher: Yeah, it is the same idea. Any else?

Students: Because if she says honestly to the classmate or teacher, she will get attention and special treatment to solve her difficulty so that can be easy to learn or to study again.

**3) Jokes**

Teacher: What do you propose since Sania doesn't want to help her mother? I want to hear your most brilliant recommendation, so tell me?

Students: Sania will help her mom if she can, but if she can't, well, huh I don't know, hehe.

(The student made a joke by providing Sania the option of helping her mother or not. Sania was responsible.)

**4) Notice, and attend to the hearer (his interest, wants, needs, goods)**

Teacher: What Is Simple present tense? Do you know what the simple Present tense is?

Students: To explain at the present time, Mrs.

**2. Negative Politeness**

Negative Politeness is a tactic aimed at appeasing the hearer's negative attitude about respect conduct and avoiding imposing on the hearer. In this method, the speaker should emphasize the relative power of the listener to maintain social distance. There are ten sub-strategies of negative politeness, but the researcher identified only three sub-strategies employed by students: conventionally indirect, using a question, and hedging.

**1) Use question or hedge**

Teacher: "So, what solution do you propose for this issue?"

Students: "I think she should not adopt the lifestyle of her wealthier friends. She must prudently manage her pocket money."

**2) Be conventionally indirect**

Teacher: "So, what do you propose?"

Students: "In my opinion, she should work hard at school, not be shy, and not waste her time."

**3) Apologies**

Teacher: "Hemat is judgement? Really?"

Students: "Oh... sorry, perhaps her parents have to ask her to be economical, and her parents have to ask her not to be extravagant, and try to be grateful for her money."

**3. Bald on Record**

The term 'bald on record' refers to a statement in which the speaker states simply, plainly, and immediately what they want or intend. The speaker states or speaks the truth, avoiding saying less or more than is necessary, being pertinent to the matter at hand, and avoiding ambiguity. It is meant to minimize misunderstanding and achieve efficiency, but it poses the greatest harm to the face of the hearer. For the example:

Teacher : "Like watching Youtube?"

Students : “Yes and watching movie.”

## **CONCLUSION**

In the findings part, the researcher provides a brief summary of the study's results, whereas in this section, he or she will provide a detailed explanation of the results. This section deals with how students implement politeness strategies in the classroom. Yule (1983), said that modesty is an attitude that shows an awareness and public self-consideration image of others. Thus, this study is expected to determine the politeness of language and actions taken by students in class interaction. This study is expected to help students to behave politely toward their teachers in the classroom.

As we know that student is a child who develops according to their stage of development, so they must find many politeness strategies to make the teacher enjoy the class and get good grades from the teacher. To be a polite student is certainly not easy. They must know how to be a good student in the eyes of their teachers. From the interview results, the teacher advised his students to speak politely, experiment, and pay attention to their tone. According to Yule (1983), it specifies that a face threatening act (FTA) is anything that threatens the self-esteem expectations of others, while a face-saving act (FSA) is something that is viewed as a threat to the faces of others. However, the speaker tries to mitigate the danger. Students are expected to understand the limits of acceptable speech, including what they can and cannot say. Apart from that, teachers' pay attention to not only the students' speech but also their appearance is assessed politeness by the teacher. Appearance following the rules applied by the school can be evaluated as politeness by the teacher. Therefore, the results of students who apply politeness in class can be rated as good behaviour by their teachers.

This study aims to investigate how students implement politeness strategies in the classroom. After analyzing the data in the previous chapter, conclusions can be drawn. The study found sayings containing politeness strategies used by students. There are four positive politeness strategy sayings (use in-group identity mark up or ask for a reason, jokes, Notice, and attend to the listener), three negative politeness strategy sayings (use question or hedge, be conventionally indirect, apologies), and bald on record strategy sayings. Students favored positive politeness tactics above other strategies, according to the data. Then, researcher found negative politeness strategies in communicating with teachers in the classroom as a form of respect furthermore, bald on record politeness strategy speech in class when students briefly answer questions from the teacher.

In essence, the application of politeness methods is determined by the requirements. The findings of the study revealed that students employ various politeness tactics in this situation. It is not a huge concern because the pupils have not studied pragmatics or English politeness methods; therefore, they were unaware that their utterances contained a particular type of politeness strategies.

Based on the conclusions, the study suggests that the teaching of pragmatics in which the concept of politeness is introduced should be incorporated in the curriculum coverage. Considering the importance of the pragmatic knowledge in both communication and language proficiency, thus, the teachers should make sure that the pragmatics is taught explicitly. In addition to practice, the study also suggests future research to investigate the influence of such an explicit teaching of pragmatics knowledge including politeness strategies on students' pragmatic competence in general.

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