



Politeness Strategies of Teacher-Student Interaction: Implementation Social Aspects in Shaping Politeness Strategies

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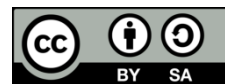
ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dinamika strategi kesantunan dalam kelas Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris (ELL), khususnya berfokus pada interaksi guru-siswa di SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana faktor sosial dan budaya memengaruhi pemilihan strategi kesantunan di antara siswa dari latar belakang etnis yang berbeda, termasuk Jawa, Lampung, Minang, dan Palembang. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi kelas dan wawancara dengan siswa dari berbagai etnis. Analisis tematik diterapkan untuk mengidentifikasi tema dan pola yang berulang dalam data. Temuan tersebut mengungkapkan penggunaan strategi kesantunan yang beragam—kesantunan positif, kesopanan negatif, dan terang-terangan—masing-masing memiliki fungsi berbeda dalam komunikasi kelas. Kesantunan positif menumbuhkan hubungan yang harmonis, terang-terangan meminimalkan kesalahpahaman dan menyampaikan urgensi, sementara kesopanan negatif mengurangi beban dalam situasi sensitif. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti pemahaman dan penerapan strategi ini yang terus berkembang, yang dibentuk oleh dinamika kekuatan sosial, jarak sosial, dan norma budaya. Penelitian ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya konteks budaya dalam pemilihan strategi kesopanan dan berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang komunikasi dalam lingkungan pendidikan.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the dynamics of politeness strategies in English Language Learning (ELL) classrooms, specifically focusing on teacher-student interactions at SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung. Employing a qualitative approach, this research investigates how social and cultural factors influence the selection of politeness strategies among students from different ethnic backgrounds, including Javanese, Lampungnese, Minangnese, and Palembangnese. Data collection was conducted through classroom observations and interviews with students of varying ethnicities. Thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring themes and patterns within the data. The findings reveal a diverse use of politeness strategies—positive politeness, negative politeness, and bald on-record—each serving distinct functions in classroom communication. Positive politeness fosters harmonious relationships, bald on-record minimizes misunderstandings and conveys urgency, while negative politeness mitigates burdens in sensitive situations. The study also highlights the evolving understanding and application of these strategies, shaped by social power dynamics, social distance, and cultural norms. This research underscores the significance of cultural context in the selection of politeness strategies and contributes to the broader understanding of communication in educational settings.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesian culture, politeness is closely related to language expression and is an important aspect of education. As stated by [1] being polite is an important component of education in Indonesia. This is consistent with the Merdeka Curriculum's teaching standards, which include developing students' characters, one of which is to be noble. To build positive interactions between teachers and students, politeness plays an important role in the teaching and learning process. The aspects of politeness and noble character in the P5 curriculum help develop individuals who are able to interact positively [2]. A consistent level of politeness contributes to creating a polite environment for learning in classroom interactions [3].

Interactions between individuals and the science of pragmatics are closely related to the interpretation of language in social contexts [4]. A pragmatics focuses on how communication is handled in the context of interaction, the elements that influence message comprehension, and how language meaning develops [5]. The importance of understanding pragmatics in interpersonal communication relates to accuracy in interpreting speech and actions. It involves the use of tact techniques that are essential for maintaining harmonious harmony in communicating as well as building personal relationships. Linguistic and pragmatic competence is a requirement for communicating with different speakers and cultures [1].

Individuals often use language in different ways to show politeness and build good relationships. According to [6], politeness strategies are ways people use language in social contexts to promote cooperation, respect, and avoid conflict. Brown and Levinson also state that the concept of politeness strategies asserts that being polite to others requires strategies to avoid conflict and maintain one's dignity or self-esteem. Several factors, such as cultural and social factors also affect politeness [7]. Ethnic differences affect the choice of politeness methods in social interactions within the Indonesian cultural environment. Levels of imposition, social distance, and power all affect how people behave politely [8]

Regional ethnic differences within the scope of English Language Learning (ELL) classes at SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung affect the choice of politeness strategies based on social and cultural factors. Social and cultural factors contribute to all complex relationships among humans, including communication and behavior, mass media communication, and lifestyle [9]. The importance of analyzing politeness strategies used by teacher and students gives preference to building positive relationships between teachers and students. In addition, understanding the factors that influence the selection of politeness strategies in different ethnicities contribute to how the dynamics of communication in the classroom are created [10]. In Indonesia, the different ethnicities have their preferences in implementing politeness strategies.

Although there has been studies on teachers' and students' politeness strategies across different cultural and educational contexts, there is a gap in understanding how social and

cultural factors influence students' politeness strategies in Indonesia. For instance, the study which conducted by [11]. The results of these studies generally aimed to investigate how politeness strategies are used in the classroom by teachers and students during the learning process. There is less of investigating the specific socio-cultural dynamics that shape politeness strategies among Indonesian students. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing effective communication strategies in Indonesian educational settings, as they can differ significantly from those observed in other cultural contexts [12].

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the dynamics of politeness strategies used in English as a Language Learning (ELL) classrooms, particularly focusing on teacher-student interaction. In addition, this research also explores the influence of social aspect on the selection of politeness strategies by teacher and students from different ethnicities. The influence of social context on the selection of politeness refers to the socio-pragmatics aspect which is the study of how social and cultural contexts influence pragmatic elements [13]. It involves an awareness of how social structures, power relations, cultural norms, and other societal factors influence how people use language to communicate meaning in specific situations.

The phenomenon investigated in this study is related to [8] idea of politeness strategies. This theory provides a key foundation for understanding social interaction and interpersonal communication. Politeness strategies are critical for studying how people interact and communicate in different circumstances because they help maintain social balance and regulate face-threatening behaviors. According to Brown and Levinson's theory, politeness methods are utilized to reduce risks to the interlocutor's face, or public image. These strategies are classified into two types: positive politeness, which strives to strengthen the interlocutor's positive face by showing warmth and solidarity, and negative politeness, which seeks to respect the interlocutor's desire for autonomy and avoid compulsion.

Research has demonstrated the significance of politeness strategies across cultures and situations. According to studies, the choice of politeness methods varies substantially based on cultural norms, social rank, and the nature of the relationship between communicators [14]. In professional situations, using appropriate politeness strategies may enhance communication and prevent misunderstandings [15]. Furthermore, modern research has expanded Brown and Levinson's original approach to accommodate the challenges of digital communication. In online encounters, when nonverbal cues are limited, strategic language use becomes increasingly critical in maintaining politeness and effective communication [16].

In conclusion, politeness strategy theory remains a valuable tool for studying social interactions. It sheds light on the methods humans employ to negotiate social interactions and maintain good communication in a range of settings.

2. METHOD

This research aimed to analyze the use of politeness strategies in student-teacher interaction as well as the influence of socio-cultural aspects on politeness. Thus, this research used a qualitative approach to accomplish the purpose of the research. As stated by Meriam and Tisdell [17], the purpose of the qualitative approach is to comprehend the meaning that individuals have created, or how they interpret the world and the experiences they have had in it. To collect the data, this research implemented observation to investigate the use of politeness strategies in interactions between teacher and student. In addition, interviews were conducted to get a

perception of how social and cultural factors influence the selection of politeness strategies among participants of different ethnicities.

Observation was conducted in English class with a total of 33 students in SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung. This observation was documented by recording all the activities during the teaching-learning process to investigate how politeness strategies were used. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with two students of different ethnicities. Based on the pre-observation, the class consists of four different ethnicities: Javanese, Lampungnese, Minangnese, and Palembangnese. The purpose of the interview is to find out how social and cultural factors influence the selection of politeness strategies among different ethnicities.

Observation was conducted in two meetings during the class by taking videos of the whole teacher and student activities. On the other hand, interviews were conducted to support the observation of whether the utterances that students made were true as the choices of politeness strategies in their culture. It was also confirmed by selecting different participants with the same ethics to make sure that the data was valid. The data was analyzed by implementing thematic analysis to identify the theme and interpretation of the phenomenon under research. Thematic analysis is defined as a method for identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset in relation to a research question.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pragmatic linguistics is a significant area of study for understanding the various levels of language use that go beyond simple information transfer [19]. It investigates the mechanisms by which people use language not merely to deliver messages, but also to negotiate social encounters with delicacy and decency. This subject examines the many ways in which different cultures use linguistic devices such as honorifics and indirect speech acts, highlighting the cultural intricacies that impact language use. For example, whereas some cultures use extensive honorific systems to express respect, others rely on tiny nuances of indirect speech to communicate politeness. Pragmatic linguistics emphasizes the importance of understanding language not just as a tool for communication, but also as a reflection of social dynamics and cultural norms.

On the other hand, Socio-pragmatics broadens the field by investigating how social context influences the pragmatic features of language use [13]. It acknowledges that language is not employed in isolation but is inextricably linked to social institutions, power relations, and cultural standards. This field investigates how sociocultural influences influence language use in certain events and places. For example, socio-pragmatics studies how social hierarchies in the classroom influence teachers' and students' linguistic practices. Socio-pragmatics sheds light on the complicated relationship between language use and society dynamics by examining the interaction of language, culture, and social context.

3.1. Politeness strategies used in teacher-student interactions

According to Brown & Levinson [8], the term of politeness strategies can be defined as a certain way of communicating or acting that are employed to be polite in a particular situation. These techniques are used to control interpersonal relationships, prevent conflicts, and guarantee effective communication. In their notion, politeness divided into 4 aspects related to the concept of face theory developed by Geffman which can be described as the public self-

image that every member of the society aspires to have and maintain. The four aspects of politeness strategies according to their theory are implemented in teacher-student interaction below:

3.1.1. Positive politeness

Positive politeness promotes a positive atmosphere and a strong anticipation among the message recipients that the requests will be respected [20]. In addition, Dowlatabadi et al. [21] claimed that, according to Brown and Levinson, all parties involved in communication exchanges utilize similar methods in the same situation. Speakers utilize a variety of strategies to create positive politeness, including expressing thanks, greeting the person warmly, and introducing themselves. In terms of the social element of power, positive politeness is frequently employed to acknowledge or increase the interlocutor's status or power [22]. For example, in the interaction between teacher and students in an ELL classroom, the application of the power element in discourse is shown in the following dialogue and various strategies.

Table 1 Teacher-student's interaction in Positive Politeness

Speaker	Utterances	Type
Teacher	Well my students, before we start our class today, let's pray together. For the leader, could you lead for us to pray, please. <i>(transcript of meeting 1)</i>	Intensify the hearer
Student 1	Oke my friends, silent please! Before we start our lesson, let's pray together. Praying start! <i>(transcript of meeting 1)</i>	In-group identity maker
Teacher	<i>Oke, seperti yang dijadwalkan minggu lalu, hari ini kita akan praktik procedure text. Where do you want to make it? Here or outside? (transcript of meeting 1)</i>	Seek agreement
Student 4	Kalau menurut saya lebih baik buat di luar, sir. Tempatnya lebih luas. Tapi saya kembalikan kesepakatan teman-teman. <i>(transcript of meeting 1)</i>	Avoid disagreement

The teacher-student interaction in the given transcript from a tenth-grade class at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung can be analyzed using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, which outlines various strategies to manage face-threatening acts (FTAs). The teacher begins by using the "intensify the hearer" strategy, asking the class to pray together and appointing a student to lead. This approach not only sets a respectful and communal tone but also softens the imposition on the student being asked to lead, demonstrating sensitivity to their "positive face," or the desire to be appreciated and included.

Student 1 responds using an "in-group identity maker" strategy, which reinforces group solidarity and shared identity by addressing peers as "friends" and taking charge of organizing the prayer session. This choice reflects a desire to foster a sense of unity and mutual respect among classmates, appealing to the collective identity of the group. The student's approach also aligns with the positive politeness strategy, aiming to create a warm and inclusive atmosphere, thus mitigating any imposition of requesting silence or directing the group's actions.

When the teacher seeks agreement on the location for a practical exercise, they employ a strategy aimed at minimizing imposition and promoting democratic participation by offering students a choice ("Here or outside?"). This approach respects the students' autonomy and input, aligning with the "seek agreement" strategy to avoid imposing a unilateral decision. Student 4's response, using an "avoid disagreement" strategy, suggests a preference for conducting the activity outside while deferring the final decision to the group. This politeness strategy avoids

potential conflict by showing openness to group consensus, highlighting the student's awareness of the social dynamics and the importance of maintaining harmony within the group. Overall, these interactions reflect a nuanced application of politeness strategies to manage social relationships and communication effectively in an educational setting.

3.1.2. Negative politeness

According to Brown & Levinson (1987), negative politeness involves strategies that reduce potential threats to the face or autonomy of the hearer. It is confirmed by [23] that negative politeness is essential for maintaining positive social relationships. Negative politeness is culturally sensitive, as different cultures may have different expectations of directness and politeness [24]. Adhering to negative politeness rules can improve cross-cultural communication and build positive relationships in interactions. Fitria et al. [25] stated that Negative politeness is closely related to social power and social distance, used to manage interaction by considering social distance and social power. In implementing, negative politeness used in teacher-student interaction which shows a power and distance between teacher and student.

Several types of negative politeness have occurred in the interaction between teacher and student. Based on the observation and transcribing process, the strategies include:

Table 2 Teacher-student's interaction in Negative Politeness

Speaker	Utterances	Type
Student 1	<i>Pak, boleh saya menggambar nya pakai pena? Soalnya saya tidak bawa pensil. (transcript of meeting 2)</i>	Minimize the imposition
Student 2	<i>Pak, saya gak bawa pensil. Gambarnya boleh pake pena? (transcript of meeting)</i>	Be conventionally indirect

The interaction between the students and the teacher in the provided transcript showcases distinct politeness strategies as described by Brown and Levinson's theory. Student 1 employs a strategy to "minimize the imposition," which involves softening the request by adding justification. By saying, "*Pak, boleh saya menggambar nya pakai pena? Soalnya saya tidak bawa pensil,*" Student 1 acknowledges the imposition of asking to use a pen instead of a pencil and mitigates it by providing a reason. This approach reflects a higher degree of politeness, aimed at reducing the potential inconvenience to the teacher. It indicates the student's awareness of the social hierarchy and respect for the teacher's authority, as well as an effort to avoid being perceived as demanding or inconsiderate.

Conversely, Student 2's utterance, "*Pak, saya gak bawa pensil. Gambarnya boleh pake pena?*" exemplifies a more direct yet still polite request. This strategy, labeled "be conventionally indirect," relies on the conventional norms of polite interaction without the additional mitigating language seen in Student 1's request. By stating the problem directly and then making the request, Student 2 maintains a level of politeness that is socially acceptable but less deferential. This type of politeness strategy is often used when there is a degree of familiarity or comfort between the speaker and the listener, or when the speaker perceives the request as relatively minor. Both strategies reflect different levels of politeness tailored to the context and the perceived relationship between the student and the teacher.

3.1.3. Bald on-record

According to Brown and Levinson's theory, the speakers' use of the bald-on politeness strategy could have a single meaning for their expressions. Direct strategies are frequently linked to this strategy as well. According to Aulia et al. [26], the strategy establishes a strong emphasis on urgency, maximum efficiency, the hearers' non-cooperation, the speakers' concern for the hearer, offering permission, and even being required.

Bald on-record in teacher-student interactions were shown in transcript 1. The interactions indicate the openness and clear instruction or responses from speakers and hearer.

Table 3 Teacher-student's interaction in Bald On-record

Speaker	Utterances	Type
Student 1	<i>Bawain itu kompornya ke luar, Bin. (transcript of meeting 1)</i>	Bald on-record
Student 2	<i>Itu Raiqa aja, gua udah bawa bahan-bahan. (transcript of meeting 1)</i>	Bald on-record

In the interaction provided, both students employ bald on-record politeness strategies, where they communicate directly without softening their requests or responses. Student 1 asks Student 2 to take the stove outside in a straightforward manner, while Student 2 directly suggests that another student should handle the task since they have already carried the other materials. In the context of teacher-student interaction, these bald on-record strategies could indicate a relationship where direct communication is acceptable and expected, possibly reflecting a more casual or familiar environment. The students do not seem to feel the need to employ more polite or indirect strategies, which might suggest a comfortable or equal dynamic among peers.

3.2. Teacher-student's preferences in implementing politeness strategies

By conducting an interview to withdraw the preference of teacher and student in implementing politeness strategies, this study explores on the 3 social contexts. These social contexts which are outlined by Brown and Levinson including, power (P), social distance (D), and rank of imposition (R). The interview was involving the teacher and students with different ethnicities which come from Javanese, Sundanese, Lampungnese, Minangnese, and Palembangnese. Here are the following interview results of teacher student's preferences in implementing politeness strategies:

3.2.1. Talking to peers

The interviews reveal a prevalent use of bald on-record strategies among peers, characterized by direct and unambiguous communication. This approach, where speakers express their needs or intentions plainly without concern for social niceties or indirectness, suggests a communication style grounded in urgency and clarity. Specifically, Javanese (S1) and Lampungnese (S2) informants emphasized their preference for delivering messages and requests straightforwardly, bypassing any potential for misinterpretation. Similarly, Sundanese (S3), Palembangnese (S4), and Minangnese (S5) informants echoed this sentiment, underscoring that this strategy is common across different cultural backgrounds. The consistent use of bald on-record strategies in these interactions reflects a broader cultural value of trust and transparency, where clear and honest communication is prioritized in both personal and professional relationships. This observation is further supported by a teacher's statement, which

highlights that this direct approach is employed to minimize ambiguity and prevent misunderstandings among peers, reinforcing the importance of clarity in effective communication.

3.2.2. Talking to someone with higher authority

Differences in social distance and power significantly influence the choice of politeness strategies in communication. In social contexts where individuals interact with those of higher authority, positive politeness strategies are often preferred. This preference is evident in interviews, where all informants unanimously agreed on the importance of using positive politeness in such interactions. They believe that this approach is essential for demonstrating respect and fostering mutual appreciation, ultimately contributing to a conducive and harmonious environment. This perspective is further supported by an analysis of interactions between teachers and students, as seen in the transcript of the first meeting. The consistent use of positive politeness in these exchanges not only underscores the importance of mutual respect but also helps maintain a harmonious atmosphere, reinforcing the overall effectiveness of communication in hierarchical settings.

3.2.3. Asking for helps and burdens

In the study, it was observed that some respondents employed negative politeness strategies, particularly through the use of conventionally indirect language when asking for help. This approach is indicative of a conscious effort to maintain politeness while respecting the autonomy and independence of others. For instance, Student 1, who is Javanese, and Student 2, who is Lampungnese, both expressed a preference for using more indirect language rather than directly requesting assistance. Their reasoning was to avoid imposing on their classmates, thereby showing a deep respect for their peers' privacy and personal boundaries. This tendency to use indirect requests is also evident among teachers, particularly those of Javanese background, who adopt this method to maintain a polite and respectful tone in professional interactions. By doing so, they aim to respect the time and efforts of others, avoiding any perception of being overly authoritative or demanding. In contrast, other students such as Student 3 (Sundanese), Student 4 (Palembangnese), and Student 5 (Minangnese) employed a different strategy known as "minimizing the imposition." This strategy involves the speaker intentionally downplaying the actual burden they are placing on the listener, as observed in the transcripts of meeting 2. This method reflects a nuanced understanding of interpersonal dynamics, where the speaker seeks to lessen the perceived obligation or inconvenience for the interlocutor, thereby fostering a more harmonious interaction.

Table 4. Teacher-Student's preferences based on social context

Situation	Social Context
Talking to peers	Bald on-record
Talking to someone with higher authority	Positive Politeness
Asking for help and burdens	Negative Politeness

3.3 DISCUSSION

This research highlights the use of politeness strategies in the interaction between teachers and students in the ELL class of SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung. Based on the observation, it

was found that various types of politeness strategies were used, including positive politeness, negative politeness, and bald on-record. The use of these strategies indicates a complex communication between teachers and students. As outlined in the discussion, positive politeness is widely used in interactions between students and teachers, demonstrating its role in building harmonious and mutually supportive relationships in formal settings. Bald on-record serves to minimise misunderstandings and show urgency, while negative politeness is used to reduce significant burden when asking for help or in stressful situations. This finding is in line with the theory proposed by [8] regarding the principles of politeness strategies.

In addition, the results of this study also show that the understanding and application of politeness strategies in the educational environment continues to evolve. The selection of politeness strategies considers the context of social power, social distance, and size of imposition, as proposed by [11], which state that these factors influence the selection of politeness strategies. This study also involves preferences from various cultures in Indonesia, such as Javanese, Lampung, Sundanese, Palembang, and Minang cultures, which shows that politeness strategies are influenced by cultural norms. In situations of interacting with peers, bald on-record is often chosen to reduce misunderstandings and show urgency. In addition, in situations interacting with higher authorities, positive politeness is chosen to build harmonious communication and show mutual respect. Meanwhile, in situations that require assistance, negative politeness is used to avoid or reduce the impact of threats to the interlocutor's negative face by showing respect and maintaining distance.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of this study highlight the importance of using politeness strategies in ELL classroom interaction at SMA Negeri 9 Bandar Lampung to create effective and harmonious communication. The use of these strategies, especially positive politeness, proved to play a significant role in building supportive and respectful relationships between teachers and students. Positive politeness is often used by both parties to express respect and warmth, which ultimately strengthens interpersonal relationships in a formal learning environment. Meanwhile, bald on-record is used effectively to minimise misunderstandings and show urgency in communication, ensuring that important messages are conveyed clearly and directly. In addition, negative politeness is chosen in situations that require requests for help or when there is a certain burden, to maintain the balance of the interaction and reduce the potential threat to the interlocutor's sense of self-worth or 'negative face'.

This research also confirms that the choice of politeness strategy is strongly influenced by cultural norms and social context, including factors such as social power, social distance, and size of imposition. The cultural diversity in Indonesia, which includes Javanese, Lampungnese, Sundanese, Palembangnese, and Minangnese, also influences the preference of using these strategies in daily interactions. Thus, the results of this study not only provide insight into the importance of politeness strategies in educational contexts, but also show how these strategies continue to evolve and adapt to changing social and cultural contexts. This conclusion reinforces the view that a deeper understanding of politeness strategies can contribute to the creation of a more effective, harmonious and inclusive learning environment.

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