

Learning and Pragmatic Values: Students' Positive Politeness Strategies in English Learning

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This study aims to identify and explain the patterns and strategies of students' positive politeness in the English learning process. The research data is the utterances of 11 elementary school students who participated in private English courses in August-November 2020. The research is descriptive qualitative. Data were collected using the listening method involving conversation and recording techniques. The data collected in the tape recorder is then transcribed into a transcript of the conversation, which is the final data. Data analysis was carried out by referring to the qualitative analysis stages of Miles and Huberman (2014), which consisted of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The identification of politeness strategies is carried out by referring to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of positive politeness strategies. The results showed that there were seven strategies of positive politeness used by students in the learning process: exaggerate (16 utterances), intensify (23 utterances), presuppose common ground (28 utterances), joke (21 utterances), assert S' knowledge and concern for H's want (42 utterances), offer and promise (33 utterances), optimistic (29 utterances). This study proves that learning English can collaborate with the internalization of pragmatic values in the form of language politeness. Students are not only given learning material but also linguistic values that can build a positive character for themselves in communicating.

Keywords: Pragmatic value; Positive politeness strategies; English learning; Politeness in language.

INTRODUCTION

Language politeness is an important aspect of the learning process. Jiang (2010) and Mahmud (2018) explain that politeness is an aspect that has a positive influence on the elements involved in the learning process. The teacher's politeness has an impact on the politeness of the students' language (Manik and Hutagaol, 2015; Agustina and Cahyono, 2016). Politeness in the language is also a way of establishing a warm emotional relationship between teachers and students (Peng, 2014; Adel, et al., 2016; Pramujiono and Nurjati, 2017). For this reason, language politeness should be thoughtfully developed in the learning process at all levels in schools (Ramadania, 2016).

In the scope of language studies and English education, language politeness in English language learning classes is a sufficient area to attract researchers. At the junior secondary level, this study was conducted by Hartuti (2014), Lestari et al. (2018), and Marpaung (2019). The study

conducted by Hartuti (2014) focuses on the language politeness of teachers in refusing speech acts, showing that there are four types of politeness strategies: bald on record, off record, positive politeness and negative politeness. Lestari et al. (2018) show the same results but focus on different strategies between male and female teachers. Meanwhile, Marpaung (2019) emphasizes positive politeness as the most dominant type of politeness strategy used among the four existing strategies.

At the high school level, a study of language politeness in an English learning environment shows varied results. Kusumawarsih (2018) and Rahayuningsih et al. (2020) explain the findings of the study in the form of four types of politeness strategies used by teachers and students in the classroom. Meanwhile, Jauhari (2017), Mulyana et al. (2019) study only found two types of politeness strategies: positive politeness and negative politeness. Ramadania and Irmayanti (2017), who link politeness with directive speech, explain that politeness affects students' speaking ability. Meanwhile, Mulyono, et al. (2019) focused on studying teachers' and students' communication in the WhatsApp group, concluding that students have a higher level of politeness than their teachers.

Variations in the types of politeness strategies are also found in studies at the higher education level. The study conducted by Mahmud (2019) shows that there are two types of politeness strategies in English class at university. Khusnia (2017) and Gemasih (2018) describe three types of politeness strategies, while Nugrahanto and Hartono (2020) and Handayani (2017) respectively present research findings in the form of four and five types of language politeness strategies for students and lecturers in class. It implies that English education at the university level has higher language creativity. Qualitatively, the study of Indriani et al. (2019) and Husna and Arief (2020) describes the factual findings of the speech of students and lecturers that can be categorized as polite, both in direct speech events and through online communication media.

The studies of politeness strategies at various levels of education above in principle have provided a comprehensive overview of politeness in the English learning environment. However, English learning is not only carried out in formal education spaces, leaves space and gap analysis in these studies. Nowadays, because of the era and technology demands, English learning is also moving in informal areas such as tutoring and courses. This form of learning, in principle, serves to increase the intensity of learning that is deemed insufficient in formal education. Thus, the study of language politeness in learning English needs to be done in tutoring and course areas.

As far as the literature review has been carried out by the author, the new model of study of language politeness in learning English has not yet studied the phenomenon of tutoring or courses. Among the new perspectives examined by several reviewers is the phenomenon of language politeness in online communication media (Lucas, 2007; Najeeb, et al., 2012; Adel, et al., 2016; Esghinejad and Moini, 2016; Etae, et al., 2016; Mulyono, et al., 2019), the relationship of politeness with sociolinguistic factors (Kushartanti, 2009; Bachnam, 2011; Lestari, et al, 2018; Andriyanti, 2020), and the relationship between politeness and gender phenomena (Monsefi and Hadidi, 2015; Arif, et al, 2018). Thus, the study of politeness in the learning process of English tutoring or courses will become a new scope in the landscape of language politeness research and English learning in general.

The study of language politeness in teaching English lessons or courses is focused on positive politeness strategies. Apart from minimizing the scope of the study, this limitation is also based on the role of positive politeness strategies for internalizing politeness values in the learning process. Positive politeness has a positive impact on student development (Sulu, 2015; Widiadnya, et al., 2018). Thus, this research is expected to be able to contribute to the development of politeness education programs in schools, as proposed by previous reviewers (Sauri, 2003; Pratama, 2020).

Language politeness is one of the most popular studies in the pragmatic discipline. Among the researchers who intensively discuss language politeness are Lakoff (1975), Fraser and Nolen (1981), Leech (1983), and Brown and Levinson (1987). Richards et al. (1985) explain that politeness in language studies means how language expresses the speakers' social distance and their different relationships. Politeness also discusses face-saving efforts during conversations in speaking. Politeness does not only involve understanding linguistic aspects but also understanding the social and cultural values of a speech (Holmes, 1992; Chaer and Agustina, 1995).

Brown and Levinson (1987) identified four language politeness strategies used by the speakers in speaking: bald on-record strategy; positive politeness strategy; negative politeness strategy; off-record politeness strategy. Bald on-record strategy is a speaker who chooses not to use any strategy to protect others' feelings. Positive politeness strategy is a way for speakers to show intimacy with hearers who are not close to them. Negative politeness strategy is a speaker's way to avoid hurting the feelings of the other person. Meanwhile, off-record politeness strategy is a way for a speaker to let the hearer interpret an action he is taking.

Positive politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987) are broken down into fifteen sub-categories: 1) giving attention (notice); 2) exaggerate in giving comments or praise (exaggerate); 3) intensify; 4) use markers as members of the same group (use in-group identity markers); 5) seeking an agreement (seek agreement); 6) avoid differences of opinion (avoid disagreement); 7) suggests common ground (presuppose common ground); 8) using a joke (joke); 9) displays the speaker's knowledge and considers the speaker's wishes (assert S'knowledge and concern for H's wants); 10) offer, promise (offer, promise); 11) be optimistic (be optimistic); 12) include speakers and hearer in activities (include both S and H in the activity); 13) give or ask for reasons (give reasons); 14) accept or display reciprocity or mutual (assume or assert reciprocity); 15) give gifts to speakers (give gifts to H).

METHOD(S)

This research design is descriptive qualitative. According to Neuman (2007), the qualitative descriptive value of research is on the involvement of the data analysis stage and detailed interpretation and presenting the results of the analysis. In addition, this research is also categorized as qualitative because data collection is carried out in an actual setting without intervention and treatment from the researcher (Moleong, 2005; Sugiyono, 2011). From the aspect of the place, this research is field research because the research data is in the form of lingual facts

collected in a lively and dynamic atmosphere, not static as in textbooks (Hadi, 2001). Meanwhile, from a scientific perspective, this research is interdisciplinary. It means there is a collaboration between linguistics and pedagogy.

The research data is the students' utterances in the process of learning English in the course. The data source consisted of 11 students at the primary and secondary education levels in Kerinci Regency and Sungai Penuh City, Jambi Province. The utterances as the data were taken during the four months of the learning process, August-November 2020.

The research data were collected using a proficient, engaging listening technique and basic recording techniques (Mahsun, 2005; Kesuma, 2007). In the first stage of data collection, the researcher, who is also the teacher, records all dialogue activities during the learning process. In the second stage, the recording was then transcribed in the form of a text transcript of learning activities and the recording date was written. The researcher sorted out the existing dialogues and separated utterances that concluded positive politeness strategies in the third stage. In the fourth stage, the researcher classifies these utterances into the types proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). After being classified by type, the researcher transferred the speech to the data card and the data collection stage was completed.

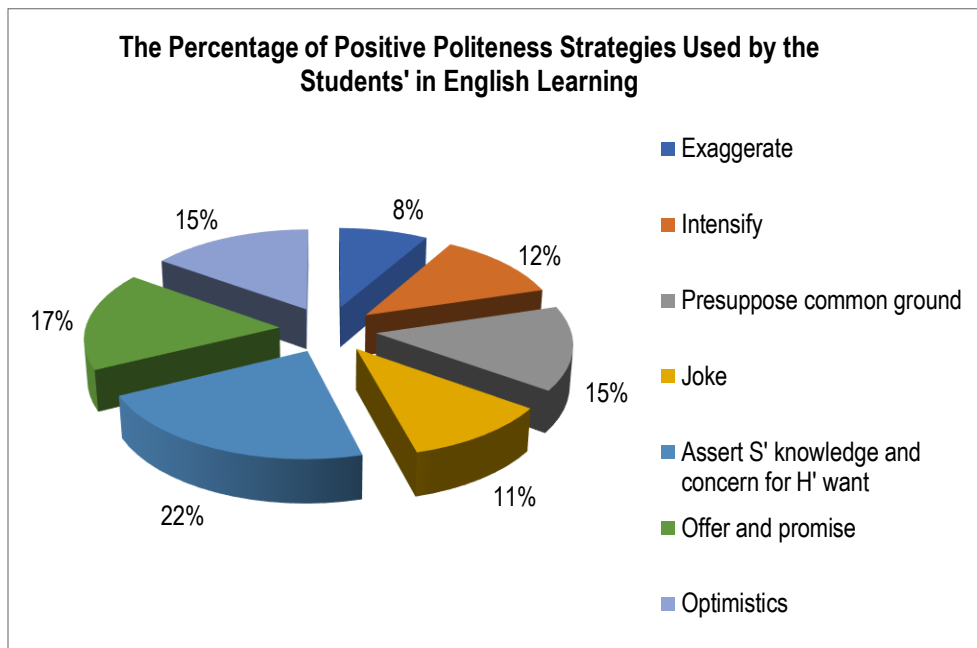
The research data that has been collected were analyzed using the qualitative analysis stages of Miles and Huberman (2009): data collection; data reduction; presentation of data; drawing conclusions. The data collection stage is carried out in the last two data collection stages above (utterances classification based on the type of positive politeness strategy). At the data reduction stage, the researcher separates utterances that were not directly related to the context and the analysis process. At the data presentation stage, the researcher displayed the data and described the context and the types of positive politeness strategies in the data. At the conclusion stage, the researcher emphasized the types of positive politeness strategies that existed in student speech in learning English courses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on the data collected, it was found that 192 student utterances were positive politeness strategies. The speech was divided into seven positive politeness strategies from fifteen strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). The seven strategies are exaggerate (16 utterances), intensify (23 utterances), presuppose common ground (28 utterances), joke (21 utterances), assert S' knowledge and concern for H's want (42 utterances), offer and promise (33 utterances), optimistic (29 utterances). The percentage of each of these positive politeness strategies can be seen in diagram 1 below.

Diagram 1: The percentage of positive politeness strategies used by the students' in English learning



Based on the number of utterances and the percentage of positive politeness strategies found, the relative quantitative numbers do not have a significant distance. The following will describe each of the positive politeness strategies found and data on students' examples of utterances.

a. Exaggerate

Exaggerate is exaggerating comments on a speaker's utterances in order to win sympathy. In this strategy, the hearer gives excessive comments to please the speaker's heart and feelings. Besides aiming to emphasize the contents of his comments, the exaggerated strategy is also used by hearers to confirm their position of agreement with the speaker's idea. An example of a speech that included an exaggerated strategy is data 1 in table 1 below.

Table 1: Exaggerate strategy in student utterance

Data 1	
Teacher (hearer)	How was the film? Do you like it?
Student (speaker)	I really like this film. The film was so good.
Context	<i>The teacher invited students to watch a short animated film as an English learning material. After the film was finished, the teacher asked the student's opinion, whether he liked it. The student replied that he liked the film that had just been shown. He further commented that the film was so good.</i>

In data 1 above, students use the exaggerated strategy in their speech to show high appreciation for the teacher. With this high appreciation, the utterance he uses has the value of courtesy and saves his teacher's face. The exaggerated strategy is seen in the exaggeration of comments. In data 1, this is reflected in the utterance "I really like this film" and "this film was so good." The students' utterances uses superlative markers to show their excessive comments in appreciating the film shown by the teacher.

b. Intensify

The intensify strategy is to intensify the attention of the hearer by dramatizing facts and events. In this strategy, the speaker tells the events he experienced by adding drama to attract the other person's attention. Data 2 in table 2 below is an example of student speech to the teacher using the intensify strategy.

Table 2: Intensify strategy in student utterance

Data 2	
Teacher (hearer)	Wow, this puzzle is beautiful. Did you compose it by yourself?
Student (speaker)	Of course, Miss. I spent a lot of time compiling it. I did not play with my friends in order to solve this puzzle.
<i>Context</i>	<i>The teacher was amazed by a neatly arranged Hello Kitty puzzle and asked whether the student composed the puzzle. The student replied that he composed it. He spent a lot of time and did not play with his friends in order to solve the Hello Kitty puzzle.</i>

In data 2 above, students used the intensify strategy in his utterance to attract the teacher's attention. The politeness value of the strategy he used was proof that he has high enthusiasm in talking with his teacher. With this method, the teacher becomes sympathetic and pays attention to the students' speech. From his speech, the intensive strategy is reflected in the sentence, "I spend a lot of time and I did not play with my friends." With the two sentences, it can be seen that the students dramatize the events of their activities in composing the Hello Kitty puzzle.

c. Presuppose common ground

The common ground presuppose strategy is a speaker's attempt to position himself the same as the other person. In this strategy, a speaker looks for presuppositions and assumptions that he builds about the hearer's speech from the facts he sees. Through the common ground presuppose strategy, speakers show that the hearers have friends in the same group. It is intended to make the hearer feel comfortable and not lonely. In the students' utterances, the common ground presupposes politeness strategies can be seen in data 3 in table 3 below.

Table 3: Common ground presuppose strategies in student utterances

Data 3		
Student (Speaker)	1	Do you like blue, Miss? Me too, do you know, my bag and blanket are blue.
Student (speaker)	2	Me too, my clothes and my pencil case are blue.
Teacher (hearer)		Wow, great.
Context		<i>The teacher has worn a blue dress while teaching. Students spontaneously commented on this by guessing that the teacher likes blue. They later revealed that they also like the same color and have a lot of blue items.</i>

The common ground presupposition strategy used by students in data 3 above is seen in two sentences: "Me too, do you know, my bag and blanket are blue". The speakers showed objects with the same color as the teacher's favorite color through this sentence. The student also did the same thing in the second speech: "Me too. My bag, clothes and pencil case are blue." Through the common ground presuppose strategy speech, students intended to provide comfort to the teacher. In addition, students also want the teacher to know that they have the same favorite color. Thus, it becomes easier for them to get close.

d. Joke

The joke strategy is to present jokes to make the other person laugh and be entertained. The use of joke strategy in speech usually starts with humorous stories that are both understood by both speaker and hearer. The joke strategy builds language politeness by providing comfort in communicating between speakers and hearers. With the joke strategy in utterance, communication becomes warmer. In the student's utterance, using the joke strategy to build language politeness can be seen in data 4 in table 4 below.

Table 4: Joke strategy in student utterance

Data 4	
Student (speaker)	Miss, do you know when is Barack Obama's birthday?
Teacher (hearer)	Hmmm. When is it?
Student (speaker)	Barrack Obama's birthday is on his birthday.
Context	<i>Students asked the teacher a question about Barack Obama's birthday. The teacher who didn't know the answer gave up and couldn't answer the question. The student was actually making a joke. The student replied that Barack Obama's birthday is on his birthday.</i>

In data 4 above, students were building comfort communicating with the teacher through the joke strategy. This strategy is reflected in the existence of a punch which is the climax of a

joke. The punch to the student's speech is the sentence "Barrack Obama's birthday is on his birthday." The sentence was an unexpected answer by the teacher who thought that the question was serious to test his insight. With this joke strategy, students created a comfortable atmosphere in communicating with their teacher. In the end, students and teachers can build emotional relationships and closeness in the learning process.

e. Assert S' knowledge and concern for H's want

The assertion strategy for S 'knowledge and concern for H's want is the speaker's statement that he understands well what the other person wants. This strategy is proof of politeness because in addition to saving the face of the hearer's speech. The speaker also convinces the hearer that the hearer's wishes can be understood well. Data 5 in table 5 below is a student's utterance using the assertion strategy S 'knowledge and concern for H's want.

Table 5: Strategy assert S' knowledge and concern for H's want in student utterance

Data 5	
Teacher (hearer)	Okay, do you understand the task to be done?
Student (speaker)	Of course, Miss. My task is to match this thing with its color, right?
<i>Context</i>	<i>The teacher gave assignments to students to match the pictures of some objects with the colors of these objects. Then the teacher confirmed whether the student understands the instructions she gave. The student confirmed that he understood by repeating the instructions thoroughly.</i>

In data 5 above, the speaker used the assertion strategy S 'knowledge and concern for H's want to show that he understood well the wishes of the other person. This strategy in speech is reflected in the speaker's attempt to reconfirm the hearer's instructions. It's like in the sentence. "My task is to match this thing with its color, right?" Through these sentences, the speaker provided a comprehensive overview of his understanding and knowledge of the hearer's wishes. Using this strategy, speaker built positive politeness in the form of understanding between themselves and hearer. Thus, communication and interaction between the two are believed to run well and be cooperative.

f. Offer and promise

The offer and promise strategy is a speaker's attempt to make offers and promises in exchange for subtle rejection of the hearer's request. In this strategy, the speaker tries to divert the hearer's request through the offers and promises he makes. The offer and promise strategy principle is to avoid rejection of the hearer's request that cannot be fulfilled at that time. Through the offer and promise strategy, speaker gradually understands and fulfills the hearer's request. The speech of students who used the offer and promise strategy can be seen in data 6 in table 6 below.

Table 6: Offer and promise strategies in student utterance

Data 6	
Teacher (hearer)	Okay. Then can we start doing the work?
Student (speaker)	What if I try to work on one example first, Miss?
Context	<i>The teacher gave some assignments for the students to do. The students who was not very familiar with the assignment offered to answer one question first. If the answer is appropriate, then he feels ready to answer another question.</i>

In data 6 above, the speaker provided an offer as an effort not to reject the hearer's request. The offer is reflected in the phrase “what if” in the sentence, “what if I try to do an example first”, Miss? By using the offer and promise strategy, students built politeness by avoiding rejection. With this strategy, students have the opportunity to understand the assignment given by the teacher by explaining one more example. Thus, the students have saved the teacher's face by not giving direct rejection.

g. Optimistic

Optimistic strategy is a speaker's effort to convince the hearer that he can meet the hearer's expectations. In this strategy, speakers give optimistic expressions to eliminate doubts about themselves in the hearer. The use of optimistic strategies in building language politeness is closely related to overcoming the worries of hearer. By providing calm through optimism, speakers have kept the hearers' faces threatened because of fear and anxiety. Data 7 in table 7 below is an example of student speech using the optimistic politeness strategy.

Table 7: Optimistic strategy in student utterance

Data 7	
Teacher (hearer)	Becoming a doctor is a very good and noble goal.
Student (speaker)	My mother said I can become a doctor if I study hard
Context	<i>The teacher commented on the student dream who wanted to become a doctor by saying that the dream was very good and noble. The student replied to the teacher's comment by telling his mother's message that he can achieve his dream as a doctor if he studies hard</i>

In data 7 above, the speaker used the optimistic strategy to convince the hearer to meet the existing expectations. The use of the optimistic strategy is reflected in the phrase "I can in the sentence “I can become a doctor if I study hard." By using the optimistic strategy, students built politeness by not disappointing the hearer. Speaker appreciated the expectations that the speaker has and answer her by giving promises of optimism.

In this way, the speaker has saved the hearer's faces, who could potentially be disappointed if their expectations are not met or are not responded to adequately.

Discussion

As explained in the findings and analysis section above, there were seven positive politeness strategies used by students in the English learning process. Based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, eight positive politeness strategies were not found in student utterances. The eight politeness strategies that were not found were due to the learning context between teacher and students. In addition, sociolinguistic factors such as age, gender, and social status also influence students' type of politeness strategies. The age range of students who are still in primary and junior high school education does not allow them to use other politeness strategies, students' knowledge factors and the topics used by the teacher also influence the types of politeness strategies found.

To review the positive politeness strategies found in the study, Table 8 below describes the order of the number of utterances and the percentage of these politeness strategies.

Table 8: The order of the number of utterances and the percentage of positive politeness strategies used by students

Number	Strategy	Utterance	Percentage
1	<i>Assert S' knowledge and concern for H's want</i>	42	22%
2	<i>Offer and promise</i>	33	17%
3	<i>Optimistic</i>	29	15%
4	<i>Presuppose common ground</i>	28	15%
5	<i>Intensify</i>	23	12%
6	<i>Joke</i>	21	11%
7	<i>Exaggerate</i>	16	8%
Total		192	100%

From the order in table 8 above, it can be seen that the strategy of assert S 'knowledge and concern for H's want is the most dominant strategy used. This situation is caused by the interaction in learning, which provides learning material from teachers to students. Thus, students come up with many strategies to express their understanding of the teacher's instructions. In the second place, the offer and promise strategy is also seen quite widely used by students. It reflects the learning atmosphere of the tutoring and course models that are more fluid and dynamic than classroom learning. The offer and promise strategy proves that students negotiate a lot in carrying out instructions given by their teachers.

Positive politeness strategies optimistic, common ground presupposition, and intensify reflect that students build interaction patterns that try to make their teachers comfortable in teaching. Students avoid interactions that can upset the teacher and worry. The existence of this politeness strategy showed that the learning process opens opportunities for students to initiate more speech in building a comfortable communication atmosphere. Meanwhile, the joke and

exaggerate politeness strategy showed that students try to liven up the learning atmosphere and emotional closeness to the teacher. Through stories that bring laughter and show concern for one another, students and teachers can have closer relationships in the learning process.

The study's findings indicate that the positive politeness strategies adopted by students have a positive effect on the learning process. The learning atmosphere becomes more comfortable and conducive so that students are more flexible in expressing their unique ideas and thoughts. In addition, the research findings also show that the English learning model for tutoring and courses is more effective in introducing and educating students' language politeness competencies. It is because the atmosphere of learning tutoring or courses is not the same as the atmosphere of learning in class, which tends to be rigid and not dynamic. In a tutoring learning environment, students' language politeness competencies are not internalized in one direction by the teacher but are more often initiated and created by them.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis and discussion above, there were seven positive politeness strategies most used by students in learning English. The seven strategies were found to be relatively close in the number of the result. Students use these strategies to build learning comfort and emotional closeness with the teacher. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that politeness has a positive impact on the learning atmosphere. It becomes a new field of research for future researchers. Thus, research on politeness and learning English as a combination of pragmatic and pedagogical can continue to develop and respond the demands of the times.

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