

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN POLITENESS USED BY ENGLISH TEACHER IN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Dian Fathurrohmah¹, Inas Nadifa², M. Ihwan³

^{1, 2, 3} Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Kediri

Email¹: diantfhaa@gmail.com

Email²: inasnadifa341@gmail.com

Email³: muhammadsaudara03@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Communication is a way for people to communicate their thoughts to others. People can refer to their meaning by paying attention to their words conscientiously, but they should notice the manner in which they try to deliver their meaning because it can help other people to read the thought. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness is a way to deliver the expression as politely as possible which this point is needed to reduce contravention with others. Therefore actually being polite is an important thing because it can help to deliver their meaning without offending others. The objective of this research is to analyze politeness used by an English teacher in a language classroom by applying the theory from Brown and Levinson (1978 and revised in 1987). This research uses a descriptive qualitative design by reason of this research explains the kinds of politeness that are used by an English teacher in the language classroom. The results of this study are the English teacher using positive and negative politeness in her teaching while in a language classroom based on the circumstances and also the condition. The politeness that comes up in her speech is positive politeness, as she is often in a comfortable situation and feels enthusiastic in the language classroom.

KEYWORDS: *discourse analysis, politeness, language classroom*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Politeness has been defined by many different experts. Referring to Watts (2003) defines politeness as ‘political behavior,’ which he explains as behavior limited by sociocultural norms that are objective at achieving and/or defending stability in the personal relationship between people in the society in an interaction process. Spolsky (1998) said that politeness definition is the language utterance of the speaker that is used to respect the participants in communication. Politeness is expressed by showing something that caused the participants to feel, it is important to show appreciation for what the participants have done, or by not saying what will make the interlocutors feel insulted. Moreover, as explained by Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness involves an awareness of other people’s facial wants.

According to those definitions, politeness might occur in the language classroom. Then, specifically by an English teacher in a language classroom in SDIP Al Minhaaj are still significant issues to be researched. There are few studies that focused on English teacher strategies in showing politeness, specifically in elementary school. The context of studying politeness proposed in this study brings new phenomena of politeness research. The context of communication, a language classroom between an English teacher and 5th grade in elementary school, becomes the area to be researched politeness strategies and consequently, creates significant results in politeness research, particularly politeness studies in language classrooms.



This research focuses on the use of politeness strategies (positive and negative politeness) by English teachers in the classroom context. The findings of this research are expected to give a contribution to the study of politeness pragmatics in the language classroom. It may also be presented as a useful reference for the next study about politeness used by English teachers in language classrooms.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Politeness

According to Brown and Levinson's model (1978 and updated in 1987), politeness can be defined to be universal only in the sense that every community has some forms of norms for the appropriate culture, even though the norms vary. As also mentioned by Robin Lakoff (1975) that politeness is developed by society in order to minimize friction in personal interaction.

Referring to Watts (2003) defines politeness as 'political behavior,' which he explains as behavior limited by sociocultural norms that objectives at achieving and/or defending stability in the personal relationship between people in the society in an interaction process. In this definition, politeness is a political behavior that is being interpreted conventionally and used to get the social and communicative objectives of the interaction between people or members of the society using natural forms of words in discourse that is appropriate to the purpose of the communication.

Spolsky (1998) said that politeness is the language expression of the speaker that is used to respect the interlocutors in communication. Politeness is expressed by showing something that caused the interlocutors to feel, it is important to show appreciation for what the interlocutors have done, or by not saying what will make the interlocutors feel insulted.

In conclusion, politeness is defined as the application of good manners so as not to insult others.

2.2 Classroom Language

As Brown (2001) stated, classroom language is defined as the language that is used to interact and survive in the classroom without using the mother tongue. Thus, classroom language is teaching English by using English. Hence, Jane Willis (1982) argues that it means speaking and using English in the classroom as often as an English teacher possibly could, for instance when conducting teaching activities. In conclusion, classroom language is a routine language that is used by the teacher in the classroom to give instructions or praise.

3.0 METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative design. This research was conducted at SDIP Al-Minhaaj. The participant was an English teacher. She is the English teacher in SDIP Al-Minhaaj who is teaching the 5th-grade students. The teaching process was recorded by the researchers using mobile phones. The researchers limited the recording focus to the part of the teacher explaining the material.

The data analysis focuses on data recording, transcription, selection, and interpretation. Because the transcriptions were too long, the data were selected in reference to the objectives of the present study. Then, the researchers interpreted and analyzed them in the form of talking extracts. After this, the researchers identified the relevant data, discussed it,

and analyzed it to search the English teacher's politeness used in the language classroom based on the framework of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987).

4.0 FINDINGS

This part shows the politeness expressions applied by the English teacher in the language classroom. The strategies can be known in the forms of greetings, gratitude, address terms, fillers, and apologies. (see table 1). The detail is below.

Features	Expressions	Frequencies
Greetings	<i>Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh</i>	2
	<i>Wa'laikumussalam Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh</i>	56
	Good morning!	58
	How are you today?	1
Gratitude	Thank you	2
	Thanks for today	1
Address Terms	Miss	3
	Bu	14
	Students	5
Apologies	Excuse me?	3
	Sorry	2
Fillers	Well	5

Greetings and Address Terms

Excerpt 1 : Opening the Class

Teacher : *Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*

"peace be upon you"

Students : *Wa'alaikumussalam Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*

"peace be upon you too"

Teacher : *Good morning, Students!*

Students : *Good Morning, Miss (Bu)!*

Teacher : *How are you today?*

In excerpt 1, the teacher wanted to begin the class. Before giving the material, she started to say, "*Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*" (means: peace be upon you). The students then respond by answering "*Wa'alaikumussalam Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*" (means: peace be upon you too). Those examples of greetings are kinds of Islamic greetings which are usually used in Muslim society to wish blessings to interlocutors. The students who are mostly Muslim are influenced by Islamic teaching and because of that, they apply several expressions from their religious teaching to their interaction in order to be polite.

In another case in this extract, the teacher also uses the term "Students". It means that the teacher applied a polite address to keep the communication more polite when asking the students some questions.



Gratitude and Address Terms

Extract 2 : Opening the Class

Students : I am good, and you?

Teacher : I am very well, thank you. Today we will learn about ...

Extract 3 : Question and Answer Session

Teacher : Ada pertanyaan?

(Any questions?)

Students : Tidak, **Miss. Thank you..**

(No, **Miss. Thank you..**)

The students expressed their gratitude by saying “Thank you”. ”Thank you” was used as the thanks of the students for the teacher explanation is clear enough, and it is the politeness used by the students in the formal situation in the classroom to respond the teacher. In addition, the students also expressed their politeness by expressing “Miss” as the address of their teacher.

Apologies

Extract 4: Do the Exercises

Teacher : **Excuse me?** We will do the exercise on page...

Students : **Sorry, Miss..**

The teacher expressed the prohibition by saying “Excuse me?” because she wanted the students to do the exercises on the textbook. This utterance was meant to be polite in her teaching. She could be less polite if she directly asked the students to stop talking to their friends. Hence, the students than answered by saying “Sorry, Miss.” as an apology to be polite after being busy with friends.

Fillers

Extract 5: Filler in Asking Question

Teacher : Well, the meaning of book in Indonesian is?

The expression “Well...” was used by the teacher to ask to the students related to the material that she had explained before.

5.0 DISCUSSION

All of those five excerpts are explained to show the use of politeness by English teachers that used in the language classroom. According to Brown and Levinson’s framework of politeness, two important strategies are known as positive and negative politeness.

Findings show the use of positive politeness strategies in the form of greetings (excerpt 1). The kind of expressions was used as a way to be polite in the conversation and moreover, the condition of the class is more formal. Brown and Levinson (1987) said that positive politeness was proposed to “reduce the gap between speaker and interlocutors and to minimize the interlocutors’ disappointment by using the expression of politeness”. In this research, greetings are used by the teacher to be closer and more polite to her students, and vice versa.

These gratitude expressions (excerpt 2) aimed well as a polite expression to begin the class. The strategy is also in line with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) statement, that states, expressing gratitude is classified as a polite device that evades face-threatening acts (FTAs). Hence it could be used to show solidarity.

Address terms were classified as positive politeness strategies of the students (excerpt 3, 4). They used “Miss/ Bu”. Using the reference of Brown and Levinson (1987), which purpose is to reduce the gap between the speaker and interlocutors and to minimize the interlocutors’ disillusionment?

Based on Susanto (2014) also conducted research and the result said that the address term is utilized “to designate the interlocutors”. The students in this research used these address terms to respond to the teacher with their politeness.

The negative politeness could be known in the utterance of apology (excerpt 4). As mentioned by Brown and Levinson (1987), apologies purpose mostly to show respect rather than solidarity. Apologies certainly hold important purposes such as politeness strategies. In this research, apologies are used by the students to reduce the impolite situation bring by their expressions like talking with their friends when the teacher explaining the material.

The use of fillers in classroom activities could help the teacher to be formal and therefore can show the politeness used (excerpt 5), since the formality of the situation in the classroom. As claimed by Fraser (2010) are “words and expressions in the forms of models, fillers, tag questions, that can express the levels of uncertainty towards the propositions in the expressions”.

Focusing on learning in class is examined as polite whereas coming late to class is examined as impolite behavior. All of the results of this research ensure that politeness is valuable in language classroom communication. Hence, some politeness used can be applied by the English teacher that aimed to create the contribution to effective classroom communication.

6.0 CONCLUSION

There are types of politeness of Brown and Levinson (1987) applied by the English teacher in SDIP Al-Minhaaj in her teaching activities in the classroom; positive and negative politeness. This result explains that the idea of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) is applicable in the language classroom, specifically in SDIP Al-Minhaaj. The results show that the politeness used by the English teacher in SDIP Al-Minhaaj is proved to be affected by several aspects of the people she is talking to.

The results of this research are an important contribution to English language teaching in SDIP Al-Minhaaj. The results might also be a reference for the teacher in how to behave towards others when in the class with the purpose to achieve the effectiveness of communication in the language classroom. The results of this research are hoped to give its contribute to the politeness literature research in the language classroom in general. However, the next research needs to be held especially about politeness used by teachers and students that are affected by factors like age and gender, specifically about the language that will be used to conduct communication.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, Susanto. (2014). *Teori Belajar dan Pembelajaran di Sekolah Dasar*. Jakarta: Kencana Predan Media.
- Brown, P. & S. Levinson (1987). *Politeness. Some universals in language use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Fraser (2010). *Propensity Score Analysis: Statistical Methods and Applications*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Lakoff, Robin. (1975). *Language and Women is Place*. New York: Harper and Row.

Mahmud, Murni. (2019). The use of politeness strategies in the classroom context by English university students. *Indonesian Journal Of Applied Linguistics*: Vol. 8 No. 3.

Richard J.Watts (2003). *Politeness*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Spolsky, B. (1998). *Sociolinguistics. Oxford introductions to language study*. Oxford Oxford University Press.

Wilis, Jane. 1996. *A Framework for Task Based Learning*. London: Longman.