POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN ONLINE LEARNING INTERACTION: EXPLORING POLITENESS IN WHATSAPP TEXT MESSAGING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to explore the politeness strategies employed by students to their lecturer via WhattsApp. This study applies qualitative research method by describing the phenomenon of the language. To get the purpose of this study, there are some procedures applied. They are collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the narrative data, conducted at English Department Students at Universitas Methodist Indonesia in Indonesia in 2021. There 40 students in WhatssApp Group Application in Introduction to English Poetry Class. The data are then analyzed based on the politeness strategies's theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). By transcribing, selecting, and interpreting the WhattsApp Text Messaging of the students when giving comments to the lecture's instruction, it is found that there are some expressions such as greetings, Address terms, Thanks, and Apologies applied by students in WhatsApp Text Messaging. Those expressions belong to positive and negative politeness strategies. The positive politeness strategies are dominantly applied by students. These strategies are to minimize threat when giving comments for every instruction created by lecturer. It strengthens that students try to minimize the face threat. They treat their lecturer as the superior person who has power in the class. In short, the harmonious relationship is maintaining even in online learning communication.

Keyword: *Politeness strategies, Online learning, Covid-19 Pandemic, WhatsApp.*

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed all aspects of life. Since this pandemic appreared in early Fabruary 2020, all aspects of life have changed increasingly more difficult and unpredictable. Maintaining distance is one effort to prevent the transmission of the virus. In fact, education system that was previously in the class directly (face to face communication) now is being changed into online learning communication, known as Work From Home (WFH). School closure happens around the world. In fact, learning loss due to school closure can not be avoided. As Engzell, Frey, & Verhagen, (2020) reported in their research that students have no progress or made little whilst learning from home.

Learning can not be seperated from polite communication in order to create the harmonious relationship in achieving the learning objectives. The previous researches presented the linguistic politeness by teacher and students during the teaching and learning process directly (face to face) in the class. (Im) politeness emerges by individual in interactional context. School is the place where interaction is found by teacher and student. (Im) politeness varies accros individual as every individual has personal understanding based on knowledge and experience about context (Fukushima & Haugh, 2014; Haugh, 2013; Kadar & Haugh, 2013).

Classroom interaction helps students to involve in communication. It is believed to contribute the language development on students (Consolo, 2006). In clasroom interaction, teacher are guiding students in completing the tasks of linguistic problems and producting language through interaction. Thats why students develop their competences in interaction (Thoms, 2012). More, Jenks & Seedhouse (2015) presented the aspects of language are learnt and taught in language classroom. Here, interaction and education are met.

Researches on politeness in classroom context have been proposed by some writers. Senowarsito (2013) investigated the politeness strategies applied by EFL teacher and students in the class directly. Based on the classroom research, it is found the positive politeness strategy is dominantly used by teacher and students in the class. The social distance, the age, the student's power, and the limitation of the linguistic ability influenced the choice of politeness strategies. They recognized themselves very well. It proved that teacher and students maintain the relationship.

The research is supported by Adel, Davoudi, & Ramezanzadeh (2016) that identified the Iranian EFL learners in the class. The result show that positive politeness strategy is dominantly used by teacher and students to minimize the face threat. As there is no Face Threatening Act (FTA) happens during the interaction, harmonious relationshipis is maintained in the class.

In Indonesia, the politeness strategies applied by lecturer and teacher in the class directly (face to face communication) investigated by Sembiring & Sianturi (2019). The research focused on student to student's interaction during the responding to the point of view in Cross Cultural Understanding class. As students communicated to their friends, no distance between them. They communicate directly. As they are not reluctant to speak, they are polite in words but not in their acts.

The studies explored previously are focusing on seeing the politeness strategies by teacher and students in face to face communication in the class (direct communication). The question rises to the politeness strategies in online learning class as what the education system is being experienced now. How are the politeness strategies applied by teacher and students in online learning? Do teacher and student apply politeness strategies in online learning class?

The presented explanation previously it is hoped to have politeness in both of communication, face to face learning process in the class and online learning class. As the goal of both these communications is to create harmonious relationship, politeness strategies are the ways to save the face both teacher and students in the class. Politeness strategies in face to face communication have been presented many by researchers. Thus, in this study, the writer investigates the politeness strategies by lecturer and students in online learning class, thats via WhatsApp.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Politeness Strategies

Politeness as one of ideology is seen as such a fixed and shared system. Furthermore, as both politeness and ideologies are associated with culture, culture becomes groups of basically like-minded people. Politeness is the term used to describe the extent to which action, such as the way we say something. Politeness means acing so as to take account of the feelings of others (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

In relation to culture, politeness is created in society as the product of culture. As every individual has different culture, for so, the degree of politeness for every individual is also different. Politeness is rule which is created and applied among people during interaction. Politeness is called "manners". It is teaching people how to communicate among their society. People should follow the rule. Thus, when people ignore the rules, there will be social funishment given by the society itself. They will be called as arrogant, selfish even uncivilized (Sibarani, 2004).

It is sthrengthened by Kadar & Haugh (2013), politeness is associated with norm or moral which is made by people in society. By the norm, people are taught to behave in social life.

However, we can not deny that politeness is built in individual. It is affected by culture. Culture influences the individual's way of talking. (Im) polite behaviour based on culture (Sharifian, 2015). For the reason, the scale of politeness depends on person. This is not same for every person. It is based on his/her culture. To see the relationship and to avoid overgeneralisations towards culture which are limited value and treating culture as normative concept, analytical tools of Cultural Linguistic were proposed by Eelen (2001); Garfinkel (1967); He (2012); Mills & Kádár (2001); Sharifian (2015).

Politeness in communication used to achieve one goal. The goal is saving image (face) both speaker and hearer in communication. Image (face) is the self esteem of speaker and hearer. It is believed, when face is saved, both speaker and hearer are maintaining the relationship.

According to (Brown & Levinson, 1987) there are two types of face. They are positive face (the desire to be free) and negative face (the desire to be beneficial). Both these faces are saved to avoid the treat of face as it appears when the speaker and hearer creats the acts which treat the face. Brown and Levinson called as Face Threatening Act (FTA). They sthrengtened both positive and negative faces determine the way of being polite.

The notion of face is sthrengtened by (Spencer-Qatey, 2008) and (Culpeper, 2011). Those two studies added the concept of face. It has a big role in norm created by society. Thus, saving face in interaction is the most important.

Besides those two faces, (Meyerhoff, 2011) sthrengtened that people apply different way of being polite as every individual is different. It depends on the closeness. It means, the way to communicate to someone that we recognize well will be different from someone that we do not know well. Thus, the closeness of relationship affects the way of being polite.

Brown & Levinson (1987) proposed the concept of face as the very important scale in communication. For saving the face, there is a way used to express the utterances as polite as possible. The way is then called as politeness strategy. As the central of the theory, the concept of the face are expected to be maintained by speaker and hearer during the communication. By maintaining the face, it is supposed to minimize the Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) such as disagreement even embarrasing during the communication. in order to achieve the goal of politeness, (Brown & Levinson, 1987) formulated the four types of politeness strategies. They are bald on record strategy, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and off record strategy.

Politeness Strategies in Online Learning

Since covid-19 pandemic has been arised early February 2020, online learning communication appeared to answer the problem faced by education system not only in Indonesia, but also in all countries all over the world. Online learning is set up as the class normally to make the learning process runs well even in pandemic. Online learning proposes some models of learning to help lecturer and students in learning process. Good communication is one of the most important in learning process. For the reason, lecturer and students have to communicate well even this pandemic still creates the difficult ways of communication. One flatform of online learning which students are familiar with it is by communication via WhatsApp. Here, students are easy to communicate to their lecturer by confirming, asking, and so on. This platform is really set up to ease students and lecturer to communicate.

During the pandemic, study about online learning has been proposed by the researcher. However, seeing the politeness strategies in online learning is still limited. (Lin, Lang, Xie, Gašević, & Chen, 2020) investigated the role of politeness in online tutoring. It presented the result that tutors had a similar level of politeness at the beginning of all dialogues, while if the students solved the problems, they were more polite at the end. In addition, (Farida & Yuliana, 2019) examined the use of WhatsApp by Sundanese students to their lecturer when sending text messages via WhatsApp. This study found that the four types of politeness strategies are applied by students to lecturer during the communication. Those strategies succesfully

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maintained the good communication between students and lecturer. It is supported by (Yuliawati, Hazma, & Bakhti, 2020). Some expressions such as greetings, apologies, self introduction, message and thanks which are categorized into positive and nehative politeness strategies were applied by students to their lecturer via WhatsApp. More, (Astia, 2020; Hafizah, 2019; Husna & Arief, 2020; Rahmi, 2020; Retnaningsih et al., 2019) explored the use of politeness strategies via WhatsApp could reduce the face threatening acts (FTA) between students and lecturer during communicating via WhatsApp. Negative politeness was dominantly used to achive the goal of maintaining the relationship.

The previous studies explored the use of politeness strategies between students and lecturer. For the reason, the writer would like to examine weather the politeness strategies are also applied by students via WhatsApp. The result is useful for enriching the theory of politeness and for seeing and maintaining the character to educated people which can be seen from the way of being polite in learning process.

METHOD

The descriptive qualitative research is the method applied in this study. It describes the phenomena of the language in society. Having the natural setting as a direct source of data, and the researcher is the principal instrument are the characteristics of this qualitative research. The data of this research is gained from the WhatsApp text messaging by students during giving comments. By giving comments to the instruction, the response of the students are seen clearly. Then those comments are being analyzed to answer the questions related to the politeness strategies applied by students via WhatsApp. The analysis of the data is based on the basic concept of politeness strategies' theory stated by (Brown & Levinson, 1987) which is realized into four types of politeness strategies, namely bald on record strategy, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and off record strategy.

RESULTS

This part of the study presented the extract schrenshots of comments which show that students applied politeness strategies in WhatsApp Group Application. Then, the politeness expressions were portrayed in the forms of Greetings, Thanks, Address Terms, Apologies, and Code Mixing. For detail analysis are explained.

Greetings

Class instruction Good morning all. For meeting 3 of Introduction to English class today, please take a look your google classroom. pay attention to the instruction then fill your online attendance. I ll see you bye.

Class Comments **Good Morning** Mam, Thank you/ Ok Mam/**Hi** Mam, Ok Mam

In comments on responding to the class instruction show that students dominantly gave response to the lecturer's instruction by saying "**Good morning**"Mam; **Hi** Mam. This way of greeting is commonly used to great people. Response of the students toward the instruction given by their lecturer show that students replied the greeting of their lecturer who greet them before. It was applied to get attention from the lecturer that students show their existence in the class. This was also the indicator that students have good manner in google classroom interaction. Students respect to their lecturer as the figure who has higher position in the class.

Thanks

Class instruction Morning everyone. Stay healthy and happy wherever you are and whatever you do. For our class today, last week, your lecturer explained to you about the English Literature in Elizabeth period. You have given your little understanding about that. So, for today, your lecturer is sharing to you the summary of

our topic. Read it more. I ll see you and bye.

Class Comments	**Thank you** Mam/**Thank you very much** Mam.**Thank you** mam, see you

Here, students frequently applied thank to respond the class instruction shared by lecturer. It is expressed by saying "**Thank you** Mam", "**Thank you very much** Mam" stated by every student. These show the politeness of the students to their lecturer. As it is in formal situation, students are aware about their position who really need the presence of the lecturer. Students do not think that this is the responsibility of lecturer as the person who has responsibility to teach. It may be called that student consider their lecturer as a hero then they have to thank to. As there is a proverb that "*Guru adalah pahlawanku*" (my teacher is my hero). Thus, by saying thank, students respect their lecturer very much. In addition, the following extract also show the same case where students say thank in answering question.

Address Terms

Class instruction	Hi all. I am glad to see you again dear students. for meeting 5 of our class today, please answer the questions given by your lecturer in Google classroom. if you have some questions, please don be hesitate to let me know it. take care whatever you do and wherever you go. See you bye.
Class comments	Ok **Mam** / Sure **Mam**/Thank you **Mam** /Thank you avery much **Mam**

This extract demonstrated the use of address terms "**Mam**" frequently. It is used to address to their female lecturer. It is addressed to a respectable person. Students consider their lecturer as their mother and they are the kids. By this expression, students are creating a harmonious relationship as they felt close to their lecturer.

Apologies

Class instruction	Good morning eveyone. For meeting 8 (Mid test) for our class today, please open your google classroom for getting the instruction. I ll see you.
Risfa	*Maaf mam, apakah pertanyaan itu kami tuliskan kembali atau langsung dijawab saja mam? Maaf mam* and thank you.
Irfan	**Sory** mam, is our work by pdf or *boleh pake jpg mam? Soalnya di google classroom mam tidak mengatakannya mam.* Thank you mam.

This extract show that student are really polite to ask their questions. They want to clarify the instruction stated by lecturer, then by asking the questions politely, they want to make it sure. Student (Risfa) said "*Maaf mam* **(Sorry mam)** first, before raising the question. The second comment/question by student (Irfan) said "**Sory mam**" for taking time of her lecture then made sure about the instruction. Those ways of being polite minimized the face threat of lecturer. It created harmonious interaction because lecturer was respected and felt good towards her students.

Code Mixing

The extract above also presented the use of Code mixing of English and Bahasa Indonesia. It seems that students want to clear the instruction by lecturer. The way of clarifying the instruction is done politely. By using the mixing language both English and Bahasa Indonesia, those student show their ability in language. It also presented the closeness of studenst and lecturer where the students are not reluctant toward their lecturer. This is also included the politeness strategies.

DISCUSSION

Classroom interaction helps students to involve in communication. It is believed to contribute the language development on students (Consolo, 2006). It is sthrengtened by (Thoms, 2012) that language learners develop their

competences in social interactions and relationships via participant in communication with more experienced, knowledgeable, and competent participants, such as teacher and/or peer. More, (Jenks & Seedhouse, 2015) supported that the aspects of language such as language learnt and taught, method, syllabus and material are can be found in the classroom interaction. In this study, students built their language by applying the politeness strategies. Thus, it increased students' competence in language.

Astia (2020); Hafizah (2019); Husna & Arief (2020); Rahmi (2020); Retnaningsih et al., (2019) presented the use of the four types of politeness strategies applied by students during communicating to lecturer via WhatsApp. The politeness strategies are potrayed in some expressions such as greetings, thanks, apologies, etc. This study presented the use of some expressions such as Greetings, Thanks, Address Terms, Apologies, and Code Mixing which are categorized into positive and negative politeness strategies. Thus, this study supported those previous studies.

Classroom interaction is normalyy done is the class. lecturer and students communicate face to face. Lecturer and students are free to express themselves. By interaction, lecturer and students share and learn together. Sembiring & Sianturi, (2019) investigated the politeness strategies among lecturer and students in the class directly (face to face communication). The result presented that bald on record strategy is dominantly used by students in expressing themselves. There is no limitation and they are free to ask and share. This study proposed the positive and negative politeness strategies where students respect their students as the superior person in the class. Thus, these two types of politeness save the face of lecturer.

CONCLUSION

From the result presented previously, we come to the conclusion that lecturer and students communicate to develop their language competence, especially language competence. So, both learning processes, coomunicating directly (face to face communication) and communicating virtually (online learning process) are necessary to apply the politeness strategies. As the goal of learning process is to create the harmonious relatinship between lecturer and students for achieving learning objectives.

Two types of politeness strategies stated by (Brown & Levinson, 1987) applied by English Letters Faculty of Universitas Methodist Indonesia. The strategies are positive politeness strategies, and negative politeness strategies. In addition, new finding of using code mixing contributes a new strategy of politeness.

More, findings from this study contribute significant contributions to English learning process in Letters Faculty of Universitas Methodist Indonesia specifically, and to all universities in Indonesia as the inputs in teaching English as a foreign language generally. Politeness strategies are indicated to use language as polite as possible. For the reason, it contributes to teacher and students how to use language in WhatsApp Text Messaging interaction in order to achieve an effective class especially during this pandemic. The findings also contribute to the literature of politeness studies in enriching the theory of politeness. At last, as this study focused on university students' politeness strategies in WhatsApp interaction, it is suggested to further researchers to conduct in terms of politeness strategies by lecturer in WhatsApp interaction.

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