

POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED BY EFL TEACHER IN CLASSROOM INTERACTION

(Strategi Kesopanan Yang Digunakan Oleh Guru Bahasa Inggris Di Dalam Interaksi Kelas)

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research were to identify the types of politeness strategies which are used by EFL teacher in classroom interaction and to find out the politeness strategies which are dominantly used by the teacher in EFL classroom interaction. The researcher applied descriptive qualitative research in order to get more understanding about phenomena of teacher's politeness strategies. The subject of this research was one of teacher in SMA 21 Makassar who teaches in the classroom. The researcher found that some politeness strategies that the teacher used. It was divided into three types. First bald on record based on what the researcher found in the first until the fourth meeting can be drawn out such as (cases of non minimization of the face threat and case of FTA oriented usage (welcoming), positive politeness based on what the researcher found in the first until the last meeting can be drawn out such as (giving gift to the hearer, noticing attend good to the hearer, exaggerating interest to the hearer, seeking agreement, offering promise, being optimistic, involving both S and H in the activity, giving gift interest to hearer, and making a joke), negative politeness based on what the researcher found in the first until fourth meeting can be drawn out such as (be direct' sub strategy, be pessimistic sub strategy, and apologize sub strategy). And the dominant politeness strategies used found that positive politeness strategies occurred in 59 utterances (54, 2%). Negative politeness occurred in 30 utterances (22, 5%) and Bald on record occurred in 20 teacher's utterances. This type happened because the spontaneous condition in the teaching and learning process. From the result of data analysis shows that, the teacher used positive politeness most dominantly in EFL. Furthermore, positive politeness is used as a communicative strategy to create good communication between the teacher and students.

Keyword: Politeness strategies, Teacher, Classroom Interaction

Introduction

Language and society are bounding each other. Language, which is used by people in certain places, is concerned with social and cultural phenomena (Trudgill, 1983). Moreover, Schiffirin (1994) believes that language is a system whose rules and norms cannot be separated from culture and the major source of culture is knowledge. It means that the language, which is

used in the society, deals with the social values or social norms, which are developed there. Language stays and walks together with culture that influences the language.

Language classroom can be seen as a sociolinguistics environment and a discourse community interaction between teacher and students or students and teacher in the classroom. It has become a familiar view in classroom activity, and it is also a crucial part in learning and teaching process. The interaction should appear to support teaching and learning process in the classroom. In line with this phenomenon, Celce-Murcia (2007) said that interaction or human interaction has been defined as a process whereby two or more people engaged in reciprocal actions.

In interaction, sometimes people speak to their friends, family or someone else. People must constantly make choice of many different kinds: what people want to say, how people want to say it, and the specific sentence type, words, sounds that best unite what and how. It is related to Wardhaugh (1992) who said that how people say something is at least as important as what people say; in fact, the content and the form are quite inseparable, being but two facets of the same object. Besides that, in interaction the conversation sometimes cannot be successful because of misunderstanding between speaker and hearer during the conversation. Thus, politeness is really needed to build a good relationship and to have a good social interaction with other people.

In other word, politeness is the expression of the speakers' intention to mitigate face threats carried by certain face threatening acts toward another. Furthermore, according to Yule (1996), politeness is a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by human interaction by minimizing potential conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange. It is related to Lakoff (1973) who said that politeness is a strategy used by the speaker to avoid conflict with the hearer. It means that problem can be found in a communication process because of different assumptions, conventions or others. As stated by Grice (1975) who said that human communication should be explained as a form of social interaction whose success depends on the interactants' presumption that communicative behavior is driven by certain norms and rules.

Moreover, the concept of politeness is important in classroom teaching of a foreign language. Politeness can have an instrumental role in the classroom interaction. Brown & Levinson (1987) in their theory place politeness as a universal face- threatening strategy. Politeness strategies used by the teacher and students in the class can play an important role in learning and teaching process.

By considering the politeness strategy and the classroom interaction explained, it is obvious that discussing of politeness as strategy used by the speaker is also important in the classroom interaction. Commonly, when someone talks to his/her friends, family, or someone else, he/she does not think about the choice of words and the way that he/she will use during the conversation. It makes the conversation cannot be successful because the hearer cannot understand what the speaker means immediately or there is a misunderstanding among them and the hearer feels uncomfortable with speaker's way in that conversation. Furthermore, the teacher

wants to save the students' face in order to make a meaningful teaching and learning process in the classroom. Besides that, when the teacher feels angry to students, the students will feel scary and the process of teaching and learning will not be successful, it is related to Carniasih (2011) who said that using appropriate politeness strategy will motivate the students. Thus, the interaction between teacher and students in the classroom should be kept in a good relationship.

Research Method

This research was conducted in SMA Negeri 21 Makassar. This school was located on Bumi Tamalanrea Permai (BTP) Makassar, South Sulawesi. The participants of this research was an English teacher of SMAN 21 Makassar. The researcher applied the purposive sampling technique in taking the participants of the research. Purposive sampling technique is one of the techniques used to determine the participants by considering something (Sugiyono, 2009). Furthermore, according to Sukmadinata(2011) who said that purposive sampling technique is proposes that purposive sample was selected sample because it is source information of phenomenon that wants to research.

Based on the purposive sampling technique, the researcher chose one out of three English teachers. The criteria for selecting the English teachers as subjects of the research was the English teacher was qualified and certified teacher, polite and had a lot of teaching experience. Unal (2012) in his research finding, indicated that teachers tend to change their belief as they gain experience over the time and they tend to choose the path of interventionism (classroom control). instruments that used in this research were:

Audio Recording

The researcher had observed utterances produced by teacher in the classroom by recording the teaching and learning process as audio file. Audio recording was used to collect data in this research, it is related to Hyland &Paltridge, (2011) who said that audio recorder provided us denser linguistic information than the field note taking did. The researcher used hand phone with mark Samsung to take audio recording. It was used to take picture as a proof during the research. Furthermore, two hand phones were used in each class to record. One of hand phone in the front of the classroom and one at the back to get clear voices. In addition, the researcher used audio recording to record the participant when interview.

Observation Check list

In this research, the researcher used observations checklist to get the data in the classroom. Observation checklist is a list of things that an observer is going to look at when observing a class. Furthermore, Observation checklist gave a structure and frameworks for an observation about the types of politeness strategies were used by the teacher in the classroom. Furthermore, the researcher fulfilled the observation checklist while observing the classroom interaction based on the occurrences of politeness strategies in the teacher's utterances.

Interview

Interview is a good way to obtain subjects' opinions and/or feelings about a certain topic, event or action in a highly personal and detailed level (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In addition,

interview is a way of collecting data by delivering some questions to the informants directly. The researcher used an interview guide to the teacher. It was useful as an instrument to get additional information about the topic of the research. In conducting interview, the researcher used semi-structured interview. Which this interview was called as in-depth interview where in applying was freer than structured interview. It is related to Bernard (1998) who said that semi-structured interview is the best used when you won't get more than one chance to interview someone and when you will be sending several interviewers out into the field to collect the data.

The researcher used qualitative data analysis based on Miles & Huberman's theory (1994) who said that the data was collected then analyzed. The analysis consisted of three steps of activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion and verification.

Data reduction

Data reduction means choosing, focusing attention on simplifying, abstracting and transforming the raw data. In the process of data reduction or reducing data, the qualitative data could be transformed and simplified into several ways; selecting, summarizing, grouping, categorizing, coding or parting. It means data reduction was the process where the researcher identified and chose the most important part which was relevant to the topic. So that, the analysis focused into the data which was suitable to the research questions which had been formulated.

Data Display

After the data was reduced, the next step was displaying the data. The display means a group of information that would lead the researcher to draw the conclusion. The data display showed based on the research focus. By displaying the data, it could be seen what the data should be reduced or taken.

Conclusion or verification

The last step in this process was conclusion or verification. The researcher made conclusion based on the data display like the new theory and it also could answer the research questions above. The researcher concluded the types of politeness strategies used by the teacher and politeness strategies dominantly used by the teacher in EFL classroom interaction.

Results and Discussion

In this research, the classroom observation was conducted to identify the teacher's politeness strategies in classroom interaction. Classroom observation was conducted four times in the 2th semester at the XI IPA grade of SMA 21 Makassar, for English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom interaction. During the observation, the researcher used audio recording in the whole process of teaching and learning activities to investigate the teacher's politeness strategies. The researcher also used observation checklist to identify the politeness strategies that dominantly used by the teacher in the classroom interaction.

1. Types of politeness strategies used by the teacher

From the transcript of the data, the researcher found some politeness strategies used by the teacher in classroom interaction from the first meeting until the fourth meeting. Those politeness strategies used by the teacher were positive politeness, negative politeness and bald on record.

a. Positive politeness strategies

Positive politeness is used to satisfy the positive face of another hearer's desire of being liked and accepted, by regarding them as a person who has close relationship with the speaker. In the classroom observation, the learning material was about conditional sentence. The researcher identified kinds of positive politeness strategies in the teacher's interaction in the classroom, those are: Notice attend good to hearer, exaggerate attention to hearer, seeking agreement, offer promise, be optimistic, involves both S and H in the activity, giving gift (good) to hearer, giving gift (interest) to hearer and make a joke. The following extract represents how the teacher's politeness appeared in classroom interaction.

Extract 1: Notice attend (good) to hearer

| Extract 2 | |
|-----------|--|
| T | : Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh. |
| S | : Waalaikum Salam Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh. |
| T | : Oke good morning everybody |
| SS | : Morning sir. |
| T | : <i>Yes, are you good?</i> |
| SS | : <i>yes sir.</i> |

Based on extract above, it presents how the teacher applied politeness strategy in classroom interaction. This situation the teacher gave notice with the utterance *good* to hearer by saying "***Yes, are you good?***" the teacher used this strategy to know the condition of the students in the classroom before the teacher gave material. It indicated that the teacher had a good emotional relationship with their students. This strategy can be realized by the teacher to keep the students' face.

b. Negative politeness

This strategy commonly happens when speaker attempts to minimize the imposition on H's negative face. In other hands, the speaker respects the addressee's negative face and will not interfere with his or her freedom of action. In the classroom observation, teaching process discussed about "conditional sentence" therefore, the researcher identified negative politeness used by the teacher in the classroom interaction. In this situation, the researcher identified kinds of politeness strategies those are *be direct*, *be pessimistic* and *apologize*. The following extract represents how the teacher's politeness strategies appeared in the classroom interaction

Extract 13: Be direct

| Extract 13 | |
|------------|---|
| S | : Assalamualaikum (<i>one of students came late and other students answer and said</i>) waalaikumsalam. |
| T | : excuse me..excuse me |
| SS | : (<i>laugh</i>) |
| T | : <i>don't say anything to me?</i> hallo guys hallo lo guys " <i>please if every think you do like that you just come and have a seat but aa you coming to the class please don't do like that but you have to go to me and say something and after that you go to your seat</i> ". |
| SS | :yes sir |

Based on the extract above, it presents how the teacher's applied politeness strategies in classroom interaction, where this situation, one of the students came late and teacher said "*excuse me excuse me*". In this situation the teacher used *be pessimistic* by saying "***don't say anything to me***" This utterance related with negative politeness. This strategy commonly happens when speaker attempts to minimize the imposition on H's negative face. But actually

the teacher respects to addressee's by saying *“please if every think you do like that you just come and have a seat but aa you coming to the class please don't do like that, but you have to go to me and say something and after that you go to your seat”*.

c. Bald on record strategies

Bald on record happened because the spontaneous condition in teaching and learning process. Using this strategy, it is likely to shock the persons to be addressed, embarrass them or make them feel a bit uncomfortable. This type of strategy is commonly found in the situation where people involved the conversation already know each other well and also very comfortable in their environment, such as close friend or family. In the classroom observation, the teacher taught the students the material about “conditional sentence” In this research, the teacher used cases of non- minimization of the FTA and cases of oriented usage (welcoming). The researcher identified Bald on record appear in the classroom interaction where the teacher did interaction in the classroom.

Extract 21: Cases of non-Minimization of the face threat

| Extract 21 | |
|------------|--|
| SS | : noisy |
| T | : <i>Okey, everybody, everybody oke please...</i> I just want to to to to to challenge the more time to exercises for everyone just talk me. So, event is based on the verbs. The event is always based on verbs. Hello look at me. Don't lok at my action okey. |
| SS | : yes sir |

The preceding extract above presents how the teacher used politeness strategies in classroom interaction. The teacher gave instruction to the students to be quiet and pay attention because, the situation in the class was noisy when the teacher explained what the students should do from the material. So when the classroom was noisy, the teacher has responsibility to make them well regulated because the teacher is the central of classroom interaction. In this situation the teacher said *“everybody, everybody oke please”* it is included with bald on record strategy.

2. The dominant politeness strategies used by the teacher

To know calculating of the occurrences and frequently the dominant types based on the previous chapter. The researcher used observation checklist to identify the types of politeness strategy used by the teacher in the classroom interaction. The results of the observation checklist are performed in the following table:

Table 4.1 The Use of Politeness Strategies in Classroom Interaction

| No. | Politeness strategies | Meeting | | | | Total |
|-----|-----------------------|---------|----|-----|----|-------|
| | | I | II | III | IV | |
| 1. | Positive politeness | 19 | 11 | 13 | 16 | 59 |
| 2. | Negative politeness | 8 | 6 | 4 | 12 | 30 |
| 3. | Bald on record | 7 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 20 |
| 4. | Off record | - | - | - | - | 0 |

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Total | 109 |
|--------------|------------|

Table 4.1 above showed that the teacher shows 109 utterances containing types of politeness strategies within in four meetings in classroom interaction, the teacher only used three of politeness strategies, namely bald on record, positive politeness and negative politeness. The teacher did not used off record. The researcher found that the types of politeness strategies used by the teacher in classroom interaction at the XI grade of SMA 21 Makassar, occurred in 109 utterances.

In the 1st meeting, the teacher used three types of politeness strategies; positive politeness was used by the teacher in 19 utterances. Negative politeness was used in 8 utterances. Bald on record was used 7 utterances.

In the 2nd meeting, the teacher used three types of politeness strategies; positive politeness was used by the teacher in 11 utterances. Negative politeness was used in 6 utterances. Bald on record was used 3 utterances.

In the 3rd meeting, the teacher used three types of politeness strategies; positive politeness was used by the teacher in 13 utterances. Negative politeness was used in 4 utterances. Bald on record was used 4 utterances.

In the 4th meeting, the teacher used three types of politeness strategies; positive politeness was used by the teacher in 16 utterances. Negative politeness was used in 12 utterances. Bald on record was used 6 utterances.

More specific, the researchers present the table that shows the percentage of the occurrence of politeness strategies in the teacher's utterance in classroom interaction from the first meeting until the four meeting. The following table shows the percentage of politeness strategy used by the teacher.

Table 4.2. The Percentage of Politeness Strategies Used by the Teacher in Classroom

| No | Types of politeness | Example | Frequency | Percentage |
|----|---|---|-----------|------------|
| 1. | Positive politeness (giving gift to hearer) | saying " <i>kalau tidak ada pertanyaan silahkan pelajari di rumah harus yang rajin jangan malas malasan.</i> [if there is not question, you have to be diligent and don't be lazy to study this lesson at you home] | 59 | 54,2 % |
| 2. | Negative politeness (Be pessimistic) | Saying " <i>Maaf saya takut kalau saya terangkan ini akhirnya bosanka, ini terus saya ajar adedeh..berhentima saja ngajar jadi petani maka</i> " [I'm afraid, if always explain this lesson for many times and then I feel bored maybe good I stop to teach better if I wanna be a farmer] | 30 | 27,5 % |
| | Bald on record | <i>Don't be affraid to me saying that you wrong, sir you wrong. I don't</i> | 20 | 18,3% |

| | | | | |
|----|-------------|------------------------|-----|------|
| 3. | (welcoming) | <i>agree with you.</i> | | |
| | Total | | 109 | 100% |

The table 4.2 shows that the teacher produced 109 utterances containing three types of politeness strategy within four meetings of classroom interaction the table also shows that positive politeness occurred in 59 utterances (54,2%), Negative politeness occurred in 30 utterances (22,5%), and Bald on record occurred in 20 utterances (15,0%).

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that in the classroom interaction at the XI grade of SMA 21 Makassar, it has been found that the teacher used three types of politeness strategies. They are Positive politeness, Negative politeness and Bald on record. The data shows that positive politeness strategies occurred in 59 utterances (54, 2%). The teacher used it in giving gift to the students, noticing attend good to the students, exaggerating interest to the students, seeking agreement, offering promise, being optimistic, involving both S and H in the activity, giving gift interest to hearer, and making a joke. The teacher used this type to minimize the hearer's FTA. Negative politeness occurred in 30 utterances (22, 5%). The teacher used 'be direct' sub strategy, be pessimistic sub strategy, and apologize sub strategy. Bald on record occurred in 20 teacher's utterances. This type happened because the spontaneous condition in the teaching and learning process.

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