



Teacher and Students' Politeness Strategies in EFL Classroom Interactions

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the use of politeness strategies which occur in EFL classroom interactions in a senior high school. This study applied a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the politeness strategies used by the teacher and the students in their interactions. The participants in this study were an English teacher and 30 students. The data in this study were in the form of utterances which contain politeness strategies. The data were taken from a 90-minutes English lesson which was video-recorded. The findings showed there were a total of 13 excerpts containing three politeness strategies: positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and bald-on-record strategy. The interactions were dominated by the teacher. Moreover, the politeness strategies which occurred in the classroom interactions were influenced by some factors such as age difference, institutional position, power, and social distance.

Keywords: *classroom interaction, politeness, politeness strategy*

1. Introduction

The aim of learning a language is to be communicative, thus the theory proposed by Celce-Murcia (2007) about communicative competence is needed by language learners to communicate the language in a proper way. Providing effective classroom interaction for the students can contribute to the students' language development (Consolo, 2006). The effectiveness can be shown from the interactions that occur in the classroom activity when teachers and students transfer their ideas in communication. However, to achieve the same understanding between the speakers is quite challenging because in speaking language learners such as the EFL students tend to be insufficiently equipped which causes psychological factors such as afraid of making mistakes and fear of criticism (Al-Jamal & Al-Jamal, 2013; Al Hosni, 2014; Shen & Chiu, 2019; Zhang, 2009). As a result their self-confidence to communicate in English is low and they often face some difficulties in transferring their ideas to be well understood by the hearers (Sayuri, 2016; Zhang, 2009). Moreover, both teachers and students have different communication style. Thus, a strategy to communicate in the classroom setting is needed to create effective classroom interactions between teachers and students (Tan et al., 2016).

Kingwell (1993) emphasizes that to communicate means that the speakers do not only transfer their content of information but also the way they transfer it should not hurt the hearers. It means that teachers and students should pay attention to the way they transfer the message in their communication. However, the development of social media which grows very rapidly can influence the use of language by students to interact with their teachers. The language that they use in the cyber world has a chance to be used by the students when they communicate with their teachers. Moreover, in the field teachers tend to create a friendly teaching and learning atmosphere since it is one of the character values that need to be integrated into the classroom activity. As a result, some students will feel spoiled by teachers.

The friendly environment that is built by teachers to create a more pleasant teaching and learning atmosphere might be misinterpreted by the students. Therefore, teachers have to put boundaries in order to avoid misinterpretation. Students also should pay attention to the way they communicate with their teachers. Thus, the occurrence of politeness strategy in the classroom interactions is important. Politeness is a behavior that occurs in society to make them respect each other and reduce the possibility of getting conflict or dispute between members of the society (Holmes, 1995; Lakoff, 1975; Sifianou, 1992). Therefore, politeness strategy can contribute to the success of effective communication in the classroom.

Politeness occurs in the communication in the society however, the use of politeness strategy differs in societies which have different language and culture (Ardi et al., 2018; Huang, 2008; Zhu & Bao, 2010) For instance, positive politeness sometimes is preferred to negative politeness in some countries. However, this case does not apply in all of the countries (Maha, 2014). Ogierman in Maha (2014) states that in some countries like Polish and Russian talking in a direct way is more polite than using indirect speech. On the contrary, Etae et al. (2016) argued that being indirect and showing ambiguity in the speech are considered more polite in the Asian countries.

Studies on politeness also have been conducted by some researchers in Indonesia (Ambarwati et al., 2019; Jeanyfer & Tanto, 2018; Khusnia, 2017; Mahmud, 2019; Umayah et al., 2018; Widiadnya et al., 2018). Some researchers found that students in higher and secondary education showed positive and negative politeness strategies in their classroom interactions (Khusnia, 2017; Mahmud, 2019; Umayah et al., 2018). The university students as investigated by Mahmud (2019) showed the politeness strategies in their presentation activity in the class. He discovered that politeness strategies which were shown in the classroom indicated that students were aware about the formal situation but they still manage to make it friendlier yet respectful towards each other. Thus, the politeness strategies can help to maintain the formality in doing presentation in the class. The study conducted by Khusnia (2017) and Umayah et al. (2018) also indicated that politeness strategies have positive implications in students' attitude on language.

Politeness strategies also occur in the social media platform (Ambarwati et al., 2019; Jeanyfer & Tanto, 2018). Jeanyfer & Tanto (2018) had investigated the politeness phenomena in the text messages between people from different ranking power status. While Ambarwati et al. (2019) investigated the politeness strategies used in the Facebook interactions posted by women. Both of the findings showed that in the written form politeness strategies also occurred. Ambarwati et al. (2019) argued that politeness strategies occurred as 'a reflection of humanistic learning'. They elaborated politeness strategies in the social media platform as a process to show how people choose appropriate speech, maintain the power in doing communication and maintain the attitude to save interlocutor's face. In addition, Widiadnya et al. (2018) investigated the implication of politeness strategies used in the classroom interactions. The result showed that the use of politeness strategies in the classroom interactions imply positive results, for instance, it could create effective communication between teacher and students which contain respect value, improve their interactions, and lessen the interference in their communication.

Politeness is influenced by cultural background, social background, historical, and geographical elements. Thus, it is important to pay attention to politeness since we live in a country that consists of different ethnic groups that have their own culture and norms regarding how they should interact with one another. Besides that, the awareness of differences in social power or distance should be encouraged when communicating with other people. Encouraging the students related to the importance of having politeness strategy in communication will develop their awareness not only in communicative competence but also cultural awareness, and build their character values. Especially for students from the senior high school level which tend to get easily influenced by their environment either in the real or cyber world in a positive or negative way. Referring to the phenomenon above, the purpose of this study is to investigate the teacher and students' politeness strategies in the EFL classroom interactions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Politeness

Politeness is a common social phenomenon that occurs in communicating in a society. Politeness is defined by some researchers (Holmes, 1995; Lakoff, 1975; Sifianou, 1992) as a behavior that occurs in society to make them respect each other and reduce the possibility of getting conflict or dispute between members of the society. Moreover, the occurrence of

politeness as a strategy in communication according to Watts (2003) does not only avoid the conflict or differences which might occur in the society but it also develops a good relationship among members of the society. For Yule (1996), politeness is used to show cognition of other people's face which occurred in the interaction between the interlocutors. Moreover, Goffman (1955) elaborates that a person's positive public image that is established in his or her social interactions is defined as face. It can be praise, honor, or self-esteem. Meanwhile, Brown and Levinson (1987) conceptualize face as the people's impression that they need to be free and appreciated in a certain respect. Thus, it indicates that every person tends to keep each other's self-image in the public to avoid getting offended or annoyed by others.

2.2 Politeness Strategy

Politeness strategy is a strategy which has an aim to show polite behaviour in communicating with other people. However, the concept of politeness varies from one expert to another. The following section represents the concept of politeness from several experts (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Lakoff, 1973; Leech, 1983). Lakoff's theory on politeness is integrated to cooperative principle theory which is proposed by Grice. She adopted the framework of cooperative principle and renamed it as the rules of conversation. Moreover, she proposes the rules of pragmatic competence which is the combination between the rules of conversation and the rules of politeness (Lakoff in Watts, 2003). The rule of conversation which is the adoption from Grice's cooperative principles consists of some rules such as providing informative information as required, be honest, be relevant, and conveying clear information in the communication. Meanwhile, the second rule which is the rule of politeness consists of three rules such as avoid imposition, give option, and show a friendly atmosphere in the interactions. However, criticism towards Lakoff's theory appears which mainly addresses that if a speaker follows the second rule which is rule of politeness then it indicates that he or she will violate the rule of conversation in the interaction (Watts, 2003, p. 61). Besides that, the theory proposed by Lakoff could not provide the empirical evidence related to cross-cultural politeness which becomes another criticism of Lakoff's theory on politeness (Shahrokhi and Bidabadi, 2013).

Moreover, Leech (1983) also conceptualizes the concept of politeness. Leech's theory on politeness is under pragmatic framework which consists of textual and interpersonal rhetoric. Leech's theory on politeness is included in the interpersonal rhetoric along with cooperative and irony principle. The politeness principle according to Leech (1983) has an aim to build and keep good feelings in the interactions which occur in a social group. Further, the reason Leech (1983) is setting up his politeness principle with the cooperative principle is to provide the interpretation of the utterances where the cooperative principle is violated. However, the theory on politeness proposed by Leech (1983) also gets criticisms, one of the criticism is that it is not applicable because it is too theoretical (Locher in Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013).

Meanwhile, the most prominent theory on politeness is from Brown and Levinson (1987). They believe that within a person occurs positive and negative face. The urge of a person to be respected and appreciated in social interactions is defined as positive face, while negative face is the freedom of action that is needed by them. Therefore, they propose strategies which the goal is to maintain the face of the hearers. There are four strategies

namely bald-on-record strategy, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and off-record strategy. Through those strategies, the speaker can choose the appropriate strategy which can be used when he or she wants to prevent threatening acts to the hearer's face or at least minimize or soften it.

The first strategy is called bald-on-record. It is used to convey information or message directly to the hearer (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Moreover, they elaborate that this strategy is used to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation between interlocutors since the speaker speaks effectively and directly. Thus, the utterances have to be spoken directly, vividly, unambiguously, and succinctly. Brown and Levinson (1987) declare that direct imperative or direct command is one form of bald-on-record strategy. Further, they explain that there are two cases when the speaker uses this strategy. The first case is the non-minimization of the face threat. There are four conditions when the speaker uses the strategy to not soften the face threat. The conditions are when they are in an urgent situation, the speaker has more power than the hearer, the speaker has the desire to show sympathy, and when the speaker does not want to maintain the face. In addition, they state that the second case occurs when this strategy is 'actually oriented to face'. It occurs in three situations such as welcoming or inviting, farewells and offers.

The second strategy is positive politeness. It is addressed to enhance the hearers' positive face. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 101) elaborate that it can be expressed by satisfying the hearers' face to make them feel that they are appreciated by others. Further, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 102) propose three broad strategies of positive politeness: claim common ground, convey that the speaker and the hearer are cooperators, and fulfil the hearer's wants for some X. In claiming common ground, they state that both of the speaker and the hearer share the same specific wants, goals, or values. Thus, the speaker may perform the claim by stating that he or she also feels interested in the hearer's wants. The second main strategy of positive politeness is conveying that the speaker and the hearer are co-operators. It implies that they are involved in the same interest, so they share the same goals. As a result, this strategy can improve the hearer's positive face. The last strategy on positive politeness is complying with the hearer's wants for some X. Satisfying the hearer's positive face is the form of this strategy. It can be performed by fulfilling the hearer's wants directly such as by showing encouragement or giving items.

The third strategy is negative politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 129) define this strategy as 'redressive action' which is oriented to hearer's negative face. This strategy aims to reduce the interference with the hearer's freedom of action. The speaker can perform this strategy by being indirect, using hedges, conveying pessimism in the utterance to express doubt, reducing the imposition, or giving respect to the hearer, (Brown and Levinson, 1987). The speaker usually uses this strategy when he or she has social distant or feels awkward towards the hearer. Furthermore, the last strategy is called off-record. It enables the speaker to perform FTA indirectly. Thus, the speaker's utterance consists of more than one possible interpretation. Since there are many interpretations that can be drawn from the speaker's utterances, so it is up to the hearer's choice to decide how to interpret it.

3. Research Methodology

A descriptive qualitative research design was used to find out the politeness strategies used in classroom interactions. Descriptive qualitative research design focuses on gaining deeper understanding related to the opinions, feelings, perspective or attitudes of the participants under the study (Lodico et al., 2010; Nassaji, 2015). Moreover, this kind of research has a goal to show a summary of specific event that is experienced by individual or groups of individuals. This study aimed to collect, analyze, and interpret the data that were collected through a 90-minutes English lesson. This study was conducted to investigate the politeness strategies used by an English teacher and the students in their classroom interactions. Therefore, the data in this study were in the forms of utterances which were uttered during the teaching and learning activity.

3.1 Participants

This study was conducted at one state senior high school in Magelang, Indonesia in the academic year 2018/2019. The participants were an eleventh grade English teacher and 30 students from the eleventh grade which were selected purposively. The utterances which were uttered by the participants during the English lesson were recorded and analyzed to investigate the strategies of politeness in their speech.

3.2 Instruments & Data Collection Technique

This study focused on the politeness strategies used by the teacher and students in their classroom interactions. Therefore, this study explored the data that were gathered in the forms of utterances that contain politeness strategies in terms of words, phrases, or sentences. The data obtained from a 90-minutes English lesson and it was recorded using video recording to discover the politeness strategies in their interactions. The total data which were analyzed in this study were 13 excerpts.

3.2 Data Analysis Procedures

The data from the video recording were analyzed by making data transcriptions. The transcriptions which consist of politeness strategies then were selected in the forms of excerpts. In addition, there were four codes used in the excerpts namely T, S, Ss, and U. T is for the teacher, S is for the student, Ss is for students, and U is for utterances. The number which followed the codes was used to mark the order of the utterances after selected into the relevant excerpts. Further, the relevant excerpts were analyzed and discussed according to the theory of politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson (1987).

4. Findings

4.1. Positive Politeness Strategy

The finding discovered that there were 4 excerpts that contain positive politeness strategy used in the classroom interactions. The elaboration of each excerpt is presented below.

Excerpt 1

T. U₁ : *Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*, good morning students

Ss.U₁ : *Wa'alaikumsalam Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh* good morning Ma'am

T.U₂ : Nice day, isn't it? How have you been?

Ss.U₂ : Fine Ma'am

T.U3 : Ok let's start our lesson

In excerpt 1, in the opening part of the lesson, the students used the address term '**Ma'am**' in **good morning Ma'am** (Ss.U1) and **Fine Ma'am** (Ss.U2). The addressing term '**Ma'am**' which was used by the students represented the respect they have to their teacher who has higher position than them. It also indicated they wanted to be polite in interacting with her. Moreover, in excerpt 1, the teacher also showed academic instruction by saying **Ok, let's start our lesson** (T.U3). In this utterance, the teacher wanted to draw a polite interaction by using the expression '**let's**' in her instruction. It indicated that she included herself in the activity so she created an interaction without making the students felt pressured.

Excerpt 2

T.U4 : From this sentence we can make a causative sentence right?

T.U5 : The next one, after the subject you're going to put?

Ss.U3 : To be

T.U6 : Is it to be? Always to be? Come on

Ss.U4 : Causative verb

T.U7 : Correct. Nice.

In excerpt 2, the utterance **Is it to be? Always to be? Come on** (T.U6) used by the teacher to make the students be sure with their answers. The utterance showed an option whether the students' answer was correct or not, which means that she wanted to confirm the students' answer in a polite way. She did not directly accuse that the answer is wrong. Therefore, by giving the option the students would not feel offended by her and they had the time to check their answer again. The teacher also uttered **Correct. Nice** (T.U7), the utterance showed how she evaluated students' performance. This utterance showed complement to the students and also carried encouragement to them. Therefore, the teacher showed a polite interaction through this utterance because it showed a good relationship between her and the students.

Excerpt 3

T.U8 : Any question?

Ss.U5 : No Ma'am

T.U9 : So let's do the group task in 15 minutes

The teacher expressed polite instruction to the students in **so let's do the group task in 15 minutes** (T.U9). The utterance sounded friendly to the students although it indicated instruction. It is because the teacher added '**let's**' in her utterance which made the students did not feel pressured. The use '**let's**' also indicated that the teacher involved in the activity. As a result, the flow of their interactions occurred more politely. Moreover, the students also used address term '**Ma'am**' in their response. They wanted to show respect to their teacher and it caused their interactions happened in a polite way.

Excerpt 4

T.U10 : Who wants to wrap up the meeting? Anyone wants to come to the front of the class. Are you finish your meeting, group 2?

Ss.U6 : Not yet Ma'am

In excerpt 4, the utterance **Who wants to wrap up the meeting? Anyone wants to come to the front of the class** (T.U10) indicated that the teacher gave an option to the students. The teacher employed a polite way in her instruction because she gave the students the option to do something. By doing this, the teacher minimized her action that might offend the students. Moreover, the address term **'Ma'am'** which was uttered by the students indicated that they showed respect to their teacher.

4.2. Negative Politeness Strategy

The finding discovered that there were 8 excerpts of negative politeness strategy occurred in the classroom interactions. The explanation of each excerpt is presented as follow.

Excerpt 5

T.U11 : May I have one?

S1.U1 : Yes

The politeness strategy also showed in the act of asking permission in the utterance **May I have one?** (T.U11). Here the teacher wanted to ask for something in a polite way. The utterance used to create a polite request to a student in an indirect way. This kind of utterance signaled that the teacher wanted to show her good manner which is considered as the indicator of being polite.

Excerpt 6

T.U12 : After causative verb it should be?

S2.U1 : Object

T.U13 : Ok object. Can you correct this?

S2.U2 : Alright Ma'am

The academic instruction occurred in excerpt 6 in the utterance **can you correct this?** (T.U13). The utterance showed that the teacher asked the student to correct her answer in an indirect way. The instruction is considered polite because the teacher did not directly instruct the student to perform her wants. Instead, she performed it indirectly because she did not want to give pressure to the student.

Excerpt 7

T.U14 : Anyone wants to try to solve number 3?

S3.U1 : Me Ma'am, Can I?

T.U15 : Okay thank you

T.U16 : Any students want to solve number 4, 5, 6? Come on, any volunteer?

In excerpt 7, a student offered his volunteer by saying **Me Ma'am, Can I?** (S3.U1). The utterance drew the polite strategy in the interaction between the teacher and the student. The use of the modal **'Can'** indicated the student's indirect request. This strategy showed that he was aware of their different level or power. Thus, by using indirect request he wanted to be polite in showing his response to the teacher's offer

Excerpt 8

T.U17 : How many of you in this class?

Ss.U7 : 30

T.U18 : Ok I will divide this class into 6 groups. So how to decide the groups?

S4.U1 : What about counting Ma'am? Can we count?

T.U19 : Counting? Do you agree all of you?

Ss.U8 : yes Ma'am

T.U20 : Ok please count until 6

In this excerpt, a student expressed politeness strategy in her utterance **can we count?** (S4.U1). Here she indirectly performed a request to her teacher. The indirect request which was shown in the modal '**Can**' indicated that the student showed respect to her teacher which has higher social status than her. The teacher also modified her direct instruction using the word '**Please**' in her utterance '**ok please count until 6**'(T.U20). The polite expression '**Please**' has a function to soften the teacher's instruction to the students.

Excerpt 9

T.U21 : Can I open this? (Pointing at the curtain)

S5.U1 : Yes Ma'am. Should we open all?

T.U22 : Yes, class please open the curtain, we're no longer using the projector. We need the sunlight now.

In excerpt 9, the teacher showed a polite way of requesting to do something to a student. The utterance **Can I open this?** (T.U21) used to create a polite request to a student in an indirect way. The student's response in **Yes Ma'am, should we open all?** (S5.U1) drew a polite request as well because he used an indirect request to the teacher. Here, the student was also aware of their different power, therefore the indirect request was used. Moreover, the utterance **Yes, class please open the curtain, we're no longer using the projector. We need the sunlight now** (T.U22) also indicated polite interaction between them. The teacher modified her direct instruction by using the word '**Please**'. It was used by the teacher to soften her instruction to the students.

Excerpt 10

S6.U1 : Ma'am may I have extra paper?

T.U23 : Sure here it is

A student used an indirect request to the teacher by saying **Ma'am may I have extra paper?** (S6.U1). In this excerpt, the student showed a polite way to request something. She did not directly ask for something to the teacher, but she employed the modal '**May**' in her utterance which indicated indirect request. This strategy was intended by the student to be polite in the interaction with the teacher.

Excerpt 11

S7.U1: Ma'am may I ask?

T.U24: Yes

S7.U2: How many conditions should we write?

T.U25: Oh it should be more than 5

S7.U3: Thank you Ma'am

In excerpt 11, a student showed negative politeness in the form indirect speech act in her utterance '**Ma'am may I ask?**' (S7.U1). The student performed her request indirectly because she uttered her utterance to her teacher whom she respect and has more power

than her. Therefore, by using this kind of strategy the student performed a polite interaction to her teacher.

Excerpts 12

S8.U1 : Ma'am could you give us extra time, please?

Ss.U9 : Yes ma'am please

T.U26 : Alright, 5 minutes more, deal?

Ss.U10 : Alright ma'am thank you

In this excerpt, a student performed negative politeness by saying '**Ma'am could you give us extra time, please?**' (S8.U1). In this utterance the student tried to negotiate with her teacher but he turned it politely by using indirect request and the word '**Please**'. Using indirect request will minimize the imposition of the request to the teacher. In addition, since the teacher has more power than the rest of the students so the indirect request was used to create a polite interaction.

4.3. Bald-On-Record Strategy

There was only one excerpt that contained bald-on-record strategy in the classroom interactions. This strategy only employed by the teacher. The explanation of the strategy is presented below.

Excerpt 13

T.U27 : Ok listen so that there will be no repetition. Are you ready?

Ss.U11 : Yes Ma'am

In excerpt 13, the teacher used academic instruction but it was more directive. In the utterance **Ok listen so that there will be no repetition** (T.U27) the teacher gave the instruction to the students to pay attention to her. Even though the teacher directly instructed the students to do something, but it did not give pressure to the students. It is due to the fact that the teacher has institutional power in the classroom so her instruction was acceptable.

5. Discussion

All the excerpts which are shown in the finding section demonstrate the politeness strategies performed by the EFL teacher and the students in their classroom interactions. The findings revealed that there were three politeness strategies occurred in their interactions, namely positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and bald-on-record strategy. Based on the theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), the writer found that the strategy of positive politeness occurred in the use of address term in the teacher and students interactions. The address term such as 'Ma'am' according to Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 107) is categorized as a strategy 'use in-group identity marker'. Hyakawa (1978) in Gan et al., (2015) explains that address term is used to define or classify the interlocutors in a definable category. Therefore, the address term 'Ma'am' which was mostly used by the students in their interactions showed that they wanted to address their teacher who is considered as a respectable person in an honorable term. This strategy leads them to create a polite and respectful communication with the teacher.

The use of positive politeness strategy also happened in the praise utterance like in excerpt 2. The teacher uttered 'Correct. Nice' to give praise to a student. Such expression can be categorized as exaggerate approval with the hearer (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 104). It is used to appreciate the hearer and make the hearer feels satisfied. Further, positive politeness strategy also occurred in the academic instructions which mostly uttered by the teacher such as shown in excerpt 1 and 3. The utterances that include the expression 'Let's' have a function as positive politeness because the expression includes the speaker and the hearer in the activity (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 127). They elaborate that the expression 'Let's' is considered as 'we' form, further they explain that using such expression indicates that the speaker can 'call upon the cooperative assumption and thereby redress FTAs'. Thus, the academic instructions which contained the expression 'Let's' employed positive politeness strategy because both of the interlocutors are engaged in one activity and it reduces the gap between them.

The positive politeness strategy also happened when the teacher giving the students feedbacks or correcting their mistakes. In correcting the students' mistakes, for example, the teacher can use many possible ways such as asking for clarifications, asking for peer help, pausing, and giving them the chance to think more about the answers or even help them implicitly (Karimnia and Khodashenas, 2018). In excerpt 2 the teacher asked for confirmation or clarification from the students. The strategy drew positive politeness in their interaction. The confirmation was used to avoid disagreement between them. Therefore, the teacher did not directly respond to their answer by stating a direct disagreement, instead, she asked for confirmation so that the students had time to refine their answers again. Being indirectly stating disagreement helped the teacher to not threaten the students' face which leads to the strategy of positive politeness. Moreover, Senowarsito (2013) argued that by giving chances to the students in the classroom participations could reduce the teacher's power in their interaction which leads to positive politeness.

Furthermore, the other academic instruction which was uttered in the classroom interactions such as shown in excerpt 4 indicated that the utterance led to the strategy of positive politeness because the teacher did not directly order the students to do the task. Instead, she provided an option in her utterance to the students to do something. Karimnia and Khodashenas (2018) further stated that the academic instructions which were mostly in the question forms show a function to lessen the imposition and it is helpful to maintain the students' face.

The finding also revealed that negative politeness strategy occurred in the classroom interactions. This strategy can be seen in the indirect requests which were uttered both by the teacher and the students. The use of the expressions 'May I', 'Can I', 'Can you', 'Can we', or 'Could you' which are considered as asking for something according to Brown and Levinson (1987) has a purpose to express indirectness in their speech. Further, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 132) explain that being conventionally indirect means that the speaker has conveyed his or her actual wants without interfering with the hearer's negative face because the utterances are performed in the phrases or sentences which have unambiguous meanings. Thus, the occurrence of this strategy in the classroom interactions showed that teacher and the students uttered their speech respectfully to prevent being offensive.

Accordingly, it could minimize the effect of FTA (Rahayuningsih et al., 2019; Senowarsito, 2013).

The indirect requests which were uttered by the students also indicated that they were aware of the different age and power between their teacher and themselves. Therefore, they performed their requests indirectly to show politeness to their teacher who is older and has a higher institutional position than them. Moreover, the negative politeness also occurred in the use of a polite expression 'please' in excerpt 8 and 9. This expression could soften the direct instructions which were directed to the students. The use of the word 'please' is used to transform the request to create a polite instruction (Senowarsito, 2013).

Another strategy that was used in the classroom interactions was bald-on-record strategy. It was shown in excerpt 13 when the teacher gave a direct instruction to the students. The teacher showed her institutional role in her utterance 'Ok listen so that there will be no repetition'. Senowarsito (2013) believed that direct instruction causes pressure on the students as the hearers, because the face-threatening act is not avoided or reduced by the teacher. In line with Senowarsito's opinion, Karimnia and Khodashenas (2018) also shared the same opinion that direct instruction which is commonly in the form of imperative sentences could negatively threaten the hearer's face. Consequently, it may be affected and damaged negatively because his or her freedom of action is restricted. Related to this case, Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 97) argue that the speaker emphasizes face threatening acts to the hearer because the speaker has more power. Moreover, in the classroom interactions, the teacher has the authority to control her students because she has power in the class. Therefore, she can use bald-on-record strategy in her instructions.

The result of this present study which revealed that the politeness strategies occurred in the classroom interactions was in line with some previous studies on politeness (Khusnia, 2017; Mahmud, 2019; Rahayuningsih et al., 2019; Senowarsito, 2013). Moreover, in this study, the finding also revealed that negative politeness strategy was mostly used in the classroom interactions with 8 out of 13 excerpts found. Negative politeness occurred to be the most used strategy in the classroom interactions because the interactions occurred between the teacher and the students who have many differences such as their age, power, or institutional position. Moreover, since this strategy is used to redress the negative face of the hearer, thus it was occurred the most to show the respect behavior or actions from the speaker to the hearer.

6. Conclusion

This study revealed that the teacher and the students used three strategies of politeness by Brown and Levinson (1987) in the classroom interactions. Those strategies were positive politeness, negative politeness, and bald-on-record strategy. The strategies were performed mainly in the situation of giving instructions, encouraging, asking for something, requesting, asking for confirmation, and addressing. In addition, the use of politeness strategies in their interactions were influenced by some factors like age difference, institutional position, power, and social distance between them. Those factors influenced their interactions mostly occurred using negative politeness strategy. Moreover, the occurrence of negative politeness strategy in the majority of the data signified that the students were aware of the differences that occurred between them and their teacher. Their awareness also showed that as Indonesian people they chose the strategy in the

communication that would not interfere with their teacher who has a higher position than them. Therefore, the findings indicated that Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies were suitable to be applied in the classroom interactions in the Indonesian EFL classroom context. Furthermore, the findings of this study could be a contribution to other EFL teachers to teach their students how to show polite behaviour in communication in the class to achieve effective classroom interactions.

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