



INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON LINGUISTICS



ISOL

II
ISBN
978-602-17140-3-4

ISBN 978-602-17140-3-4

PROCEEDING
2nd INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON LINGUISTICS
(ISOL-II)

ANDALAS UNIVERSITY
PADANG, WEST SUMATERA, INDONESIA
AUGUST 12-13, 2015

LANGUAGE AND CIVILIZATION



PASCASARJANA
LINGUISTIK

MLI Masyarakat
UNAND Linguistik
Indonesia

**PROCEEDING
THE 2nd INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON LINGUISTICS
(ISOL-2)**

**PROGRAM STUDI LINGUISTIK PASCASARJANA FAKULTAS ILMU
BUDAYA UNIVERSITAS ANDALAS
DAN
MASYARAKAT LINGUISTIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ANDALAS
LANGUAGE AND CIVILIZATION**

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**ISBN
978-602-17140-3-4**

FOREWORD

On behalf of Postgraduate Program on Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities and the Linguistics Society of Indonesia (MLI) Unand Chapter, we are greatly honoured and pleased to welcome all the keynote speakers and participants of the 2nd International Seminar on Linguistics (ISOL-2), 2015.

ISOL is a biennial international seminar held by the Linguistics Graduate Program of Faculty of Humanity, Andalas University in collaboration with the Linguistic Society of Indonesia (MLI), Unand Chapter. ISOL aims to provide a discussion platform for linguists and language observers across Indonesia. Its main objective is to enhance the exchange of research and new approaches in language studies. The seminar is open to interested people from outside of Indonesia.

The theme of the 2nd ISOL is Language and Civilization. Civilization is the process by which a society or place reaches an advanced stage of social development and organization. It is also defined as the society, culture, and way of life of a particular area. Over time, the word civilization has come to imply something beyond organization. It refers to a particular shared way of thinking about the world as well as a reflection on that world in art, literature, drama and a host of other cultural happenings. Language is itself a social construct – a component of social reality. Thus, like all social constructs and conventions, it can be changed.

A civilization is any complex state society which is characterized by urban development, social stratification, symbolic communication forms and a perceived separation from and domination over the natural environment. To advance civilization is to construct a new social reality which emerges through language. In other words, social reality is the operational expression of words and the meanings of them that society has agreed upon. Language is itself a social construct – a component of social reality. Thus, like all social constructs and conventions, it can be changed.

This seminar aims at facilitating diverse dialogues among scientists, linguists and scholars from different backgrounds about language as a social construct as well a tool to understand social reality.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the seminar key note speakers Prof. Dr. James T. Collins from The Institute of Ethnic Studies, The National University Malaysia (UKM), Dr. Suryadi, from the Southeast Asian Studies, Leiden University, the Netherland, and Tim McKinnon, from Delaware University, USA, and Dr. Khatrina Soekamto, Chief of Linguistics Society of Indonesia and Prof. Nadra. MS, the Director of Postgraduate Program of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities, Andalas University..

We are very grateful to the Mayor of Padang, Ir. H. Mahyeldi, S.P, for his great support to the seminar and for welcoming all the seminar participants at his place in an opening ceremony. Our gratitude also goes to the Rector of Andalas University, the Dean of Faculty of Humanities and our sponsors AIFIS Jakarta, PT. Semen Indarung Padang, PT.Bank BNI and Bank Mandiri.

Chairperson

Dr. Rina Marnita AS, MA

TABLE OF CONTENT

FORWARD.....	i
TABLE OF CONTENT	ii
QUESTION AND ANSWER TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING ENGLISH: <i>IS THIS STILL FAVORED OR NOT?</i> Abdul Halim.....	1
ICT MEDIA IN ENGLISH TEACHING OF CHARACTER-COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT Adzanil Prima Septy.	7
LINGUISTIC SIGNS ON CHILD ABUSE ARTICLES IN THE JAKARTA POST ONLINE NEWSPAPER Amelia YuliAstuti	14
INDONESIAN PHRASAL INTERFERENCE FOUND IN AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY FACULTY STUDENTS, ANDALAS UNIVERSITY IN LEARNING ENGLISH Al Maghvira Chan	22
POLITICAL LANGUAGE AND THE FUTURE OF INDONESIAN CIVILIZATION AnangSantoso	28
THE USE OF HONORIFIC PERSONAL PRONOMINAL DEICTIC IN THE CAMPAIGN OF REGENTS ELECTION IN GOWA REGENCY SOUTH SULAWESI PROVINCE Asriani Abbas.....	34
THE IDEOLOGY IMPACTS ON EACH OF THE LEVELS OF CONTEXT IN THE <i>KABA:PUTINILAMTJAJODENGANDANG TUANKUGOMBANGALAM</i> Ayendi	40
VIOLATION OF MORAL VALUE IN THE IMPOLITENESS OF INTERACTION FROM THE STUDENTS TO THEIR LECTURERS Ayumi and Ike Revita	46
A CLOSER LOOK ON POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN MALAYSIAN ECONOMIC JOURNAL BudiantoHamuddin and Faridah Noor Mohd Noor	52
SEMANTICASSOCIATION OF BUSINESSPERSON IN INDONESIAN ONLINE PRESS CondraAntoni, Hilda Widyastuti and Irene OssiWidyastuti	64
SEMANTIC GENERALIZATION OF INDONESIAN WORDS AS SEEN ON TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS DiyahAyuRizqiani.....	76

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND NATURE IN YUNI NURMALIA'S <i>ANAK BAKUMPAI TERAKHIR</i> AND EDWARD ABBEY'S <i>FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN</i> : AN ECOLOGICAL COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS Eva Najma and Donny Syofyan.....	84
GOOD AND TERIBBLE DAYS SYMBOLS IN <i>PANANRANG MANUSCRIPT: A CULTURAL LINGUISTICS APPROACH</i> FahmiGunawan	94
THINKING STYLES ON EFL LEARNERS' LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES Febria Sri Artika.....	102
MOST COMMON MISPRONOUNCED WORDS OF SEGMENTAL PHONEMES AND LETTER COMBINATIONS OF ENGLISH FitraElia, JohariAfrizal, Khulaifiyah.....	108
WORD FORMATION ON TRANSGENDER SLANG WORDS IN THEIR COMMUNITY IN PADANG Fitrawati and Indah Shinta Masni Ari.....	115
USE OF <i>-LA</i> IN SIMPLE SENTENCES: WITH REFERENCE TO TAMIL ETHNIC IN MALAYSIA Franklin Thambi Jose S.....	122
BIOACOUSTICS ANALYSES WITH SPEECH ANALYZER SPECTOGRAM AS A TESTING METHOD FOR SPEECH ABILITY IMPROVEMENT: Case study of Dyshartia Patients in Dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo and Dr. M. Jamil Hospitals Gusdi Sastra, Ike Revita, Hendra Permana, Yoffie Kharisma Dewi.....	126
THE LANGUAGE OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING: FROM PERSUASION TO DECEPTION Handoko, Dwi Anggreini Waskito Putri, Gusdi Sastra, Ike Revita	136
IMPROVING STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL BY USING GRAPHIC ORGANIZER Herdi.....	143
PRAGMATIC FORCE BEHIND THE PROPER NAME OF <i>BATU AKIK</i> IN PADANG Herlin Triana and Ike Revita.....	155
LANGUAGE USE IN CLASS DISCUSSION: STUDY CASE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ON LINGUISTICS Ike Revita	161
THE VERSES OF LANGUAGE:EXPLORINGHUMAN LANGUAGEISSUES INTHE VERSES OF GLORIOUS QUR'AN Irwandi,NurAzmiAlwi, Albert.....	166
LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS:MALAY AND SOUTHEAST ASIA'S MARITIME CIVILIZATION James T. Collins	172

IMPLICATURES IN <i>KOPISTARBUK</i> BOOK BY ARHAM KENDARI Joko Ariyanto, Betty Sailun, Afrizal.....	189
EMPOWERING WEST SUMATERA RUBBER FARMER BY STRENGTHENING LOCAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP MODEL AND REVITALIZATION OF LEXICALLY LOCAL WISDOMS Josefino S, Ahmad Iqbal Baqi, and Fislal Wirda	195
GRAMMATICAL PROPERTIES OF SERIAL VERB WITH <i>BAE</i> AND <i>KANA</i> IN MINANGKABAU: A Syntactic-Semantic Preliminary Study Jufrizal.....	202
A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSES BETWEEN ENGLISH PREFIXES I{N}- AND INDONESIAN PREFIXES ME{N}- : A GENERATIVE PHONOLOGY STUDY Kamsinah Darwis	209
TEACHING AND LEARNING MALAY LANGUAGE AND MALAY CULTURE USING COMPUTER: THE EXPERIENCE OF TEACHING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA KELANTAN, MALAYSIA Khuzaiton Binti Zakaria and Thana Binti Abdullah	220
THE FRIDAY SERMON IN <i>SOUTHEAST ASIA</i> (INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE, AND BRUNEI): A STUDY OF THE FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE Kundharu Saddhono, Muhammad Rohmadi, and Chafit Ulya.....	225
GENETIC RELATIONSHIPS LANGUAGE MUNA, KAMBOWA, AND BUSOAIN SOUTHEAST SULAWESI (LINGUISTIC HISTORICAL COMPARATIVE STUDY) LA INO, Akhmad Marhadi and La Ode Syukur	232
VAGUENESS MEANING IN <i>KABHANTI'S MUNA</i> LYRICS (Semantics Field in Oral Tradition of Muna in Southeast Sulawesi) Lilik Rita Lindayani, Wa Kuasa, and Wa Ode Sitti Hafisah.....	238
HOW CAN LITERATURE CIRCLES BE USED TO SUPPORT SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS? Luli Sari Yustina	246
IMPLEMENTING AN INTERCULTURAL VIRTUAL EXCHANGE Mari Yamauchi.....	255
GRAMMATICAL DEVELOPMENT AND SYLLABUS DESIGN Melyann Melani	260
WORD AND LEXEME IN INDONESIAN Muhammad Yusdi.....	266
LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY: SOME CASES IN MINANGKABAU LANGUAGE	

Nadra.....	271
CONNOTATION IN THE ADVERTISEMENTS OF MARIA SYAILENDRA BEAUTY AND INTIMATE SKIN CARE IN KARTINI 2014	
NeansyNurhandayani	275
REDUPLICATED COMPOUND WORD IN KERINCI LANGUAGE, DIALECT OF TANJUNG PAUH MUDIK BASED ON THE PARTS OF SPEECH	
NelyArif	279
THE LANGUAGE USE OF SIGNS' EFFECT TOWARD CIGARETTE ADVERTISEMENT	
Nidya Fitri	289
<i>LIAISON AND ENCHAÎNEMENT</i> IN FRENCH PHONOLOGICAL SYSTEM AND IT'S PROBLEM FOR FRENCH LEARNERS	
NorbertaNastitiUtami.....	293
CHANGING OF MEANING IN TRANSLATION	
Novalinda.....	298
PROMOTING MANDARIN CHINESE LEARNING FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH ONLINE COMICS AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING	
NuningCatur Sri Wilujeng.....	305
DRACULAIN THE INDONESIAN CONSTELLATION	
Nurhadi and Dian Swandayani.....	315
THE STUDENTS' LIVED EXPERIENCE IN USING PECHA KUCHA	
Patricia Angelina Lasut.....	324
THE BEAUTY OF ROMANCE AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHTS IN HAMKA'S NOVELS	
Qaziah Fatimah Berhanuddin, Mohammad Affiq Kamarul Azlan and Irfan Saumi.....	330
DEVELOPING THE SPIRITS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP: SPEECH ACTS ANALYSIS ON TEACHER TALKS AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL OF EDUCATION	
Ramadhani, Verinita, Lucy Suraiya, Laily Martin.....	338
THE VIOLENCE OF COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE IN AUTISTIC CHILDREN'S INTERACTION: A Case Study	
Ratih Purwasih and Purwanti	347
THE DISCOURSE SMS SCAMS IN INDONESIA: AN ANALYSIS OF PRAGMATICS	
RetyaElsivia	355
THE LANGUAGE USE OF PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN IN YOGYAKARTA	
Riani	361

PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS IN RESPONDING TO COMPLIMENT IN ENGLISH Rina Marnita AS	372
POSITIVE POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN EFL CLASSROOM Rita Erlinda and Meiva Mutia Rahmi	378
INSERTIONAL CODE MIXING IN JUSTALVIN SHOW ON METRO TV: A Sociopragmatic Perspective Robby Satria.....	384
AN ANALYSIS OF A SHORT CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO PARTICIPANTS IN A COMEDY MOVIE <i>WALK OF SHAME</i> : A PRAGMATICS STUDY Sadam Husein.....	391
ESTABLISHING AND OCCUPYING ‘NICHE’ IN THE INTRODUCTION SECTION OF INDONESIAN RESEARCH ARTICLES IN MULTIPLE DISCIPLINES Safnil Arsyad.....	395
POSTDISCOURSE e135: A CRITIQUE ON OTHER CRITICAL DISCOURSE STUDIES Sawirman.....	406
FACEBOOK STATUS UPDATES OF THE ROLLING BLACKOUTS: A Sociopragmatic Study Shally Amna.....	417
CODE SWITCHING BY ENGLISH TEACHERS AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 3 PADANG PANJANG IN ACADEMIC YEAR OF 2013/2014 Siska Oktawidya Wati.....	433
SONG AS REFLECTION OF CULTURE BECOMES THERAPY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OF MALAY LANGUAGE Siti Khariah Mohd Zubir, En. Mohd. Ra’in Shaari, and Nor Hasimah Binti Ismail	442
ACQUISITION OF CLAUSE COMPLEXES BY INDONESIAN KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT MOTHERS’ SOCIAL CLASS. Siti Nurhayati, Arief Muadz, Endah Christiana Nora Ginting, Sri Utari, Syarah Aisha	449
IMPERATIVE UTTERANCES OF FRENCH LANGUAGE IN THE TEXTBOOK “ <i>CAMPUS 2</i> ” (AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIOPRAGMATICS) Siti Perdi Rahayu.....	457
READING SKILLS LEARNING IMPROVEMENT OF COMPREHENSION ECRITE IV LECTURE USING COOPERATIVE LEARNING MODEL OF STAD IN FRENCH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF FBS UNY Siti Sumiyati, Alice Armini, Siti Perdi Rahayu, Noberta Nastiti Utami, and Herman.....	466

FROM WATCHING FILM “ THE LIFE OF BUDDHA : THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONNECTING STRATEGY TO IMPROVE LITERARY APPRECIATION IN ONE PRIVATE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN SOUTH SUMATRA, INDONESIA SulaimanGiriviryand Sutarno.....	473
REFLECTIONS ON INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS’ WRITINGS: A RHETORICAL POINT OF VIEW VIA SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH Syayid Sandi Sukandi	485
LOAN WORDS IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE –THE FACT OF GLOBALIZATION IN JAPAN- Vera Yulianti.....	495
THE INDIGENOUS AKIT MALAY VARIATION IN RIAU PROVINCE Yanti Riswara.....	500
EFL/ESLLEARNING PROCESS FOR LIMITED-ENGLISH-PROFICIENT AND ANKYLOGLOSSIACHILD:A NEUROPSYCHOLINGUISTICS STUDY YoffieKharismaDewi, GusdiSastra.....	507
PHONOLOGICAL ABILITIES OF SPEECH DELAYED CHILDREN (A Case Study : Faruq’s Utterances) Yulianita, Gusdi Sastra.....	515

POSITIVE POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN EFL CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

Learning a foreign language involves not only knowing how to speak and write well, but also how to behave linguistically. Therefore, the teacher-student interaction in class is influenced by their pragmatic knowledge, how to behave and respond in different situations and contexts. This study approaches teacher-student interaction in EFL classroom from pragmatic perspective. It focuses on linguistic politeness; that is, the ways the teacher expresses politeness verbally through teachers' use of language. This study explores positive politeness strategies used by teacher in three 90-minute English lessons in a senior high school. The data were video-recorded from three different classroom settings where English is the object and the medium of teaching learning process. The analysis is based on Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies. The result shows that there are six strategies that emerged in the teacher-student interaction namely, strategy 2, Exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy with hearer; strategy 4, use in-group identity markers; strategy 5, seek agreement; strategy 10, offers, promise; strategy 12, including both speaker and hearer in activity and strategy 13, giving or asking a reason. The age difference, institutional setting, power, and the limitation of the linguistic ability of the students has contributed to the different choices of positive politeness strategies.

Keywords: *positive politeness strategies, teacher-student interaction, EFL classroom*

I. INTRODUCTION

In English language teaching as a foreign language classroom, English is not only the target language for students to learn, but also a medium for teachers to teach English. English teachers are the models for the students to provide language exposure for the students. It is also the most important source for students to gain the knowledge of the language. The aim of communication in English classroom is not only delivering a message but also achieving the goal of learning. The goal of learning can be achieved through particular classroom activities. Jiang (2010:652) explains that classroom activities can be classified as four categories: 1) academic instructions, which shows how teachers direct students' learning activity, for example: the teacher's academic presentation, answering students' academic questions, and supportive and corrective feedback; 2) motivation, which refers to various illocutionary acts aimed at activating students such as their participation, academic questions, and initiative feedback; 3) evaluation, referring to teachers' positive and negative feedback which can encourage as well as discourage the students; and, 4) classroom management, which refers to disciplines of instructions or directives (orders, requests, questions, and calls), procedural instructions, and procedural directives). The teacher performs his ability in doing communication in these categories of classroom interaction. Therefore, the ability of teacher to communicate communicatively and use the language appropriately in different learning situation is crucial.

O'Sullivan (2007:48) claims that language learners need to understand culture, context and politeness to be able to function and communicate appropriately in the target

language. Regarding to the term of politeness, Senowarsito (2013:88) explain that politeness is the use of an appropriate word or phrase in the appropriate context, which is determined by the rules that are prevalent in society. The concept of positive politeness is saving the face of the addressee by indicating that in some respects, speaker wants is hearer's wants. As explained by Brown and Levinson (1987:101), positive politeness is designed to repair directed to the addressee's positive face, his perennial desire that his wants should be thought of as desirable. Moreover, Brown and Levinson (1987:103) promote fifteen strategies of positive politeness which divided into three board mechanisms, namely; claim common ground, convey that speaker and hearer are cooperators and fulfill hearers' wants. Each mechanism covers several strategies of positive politeness strategy that sometimes used by the speaker and hearer in transferring a message in communication.

The participants in the classroom which are teacher and students have different level of power, distance and relationship. Brown and Levinson in Pen, Xie and Cai (2014:11) argue that there are three factors that influence the strength or weightiness of a particular FTA (e.g. a request, an invitation, or a refusal). First factor is social distance (D) between speaker and hearer. It refers to the degree of familiarity and solidarity they share. Second factor is relative power (P) of hearer over speaker in respect to hearer. It means the degree to which the speaker can impose his/her will on speaker. The last factor is absolute rating (Rx) of imposition in the culture. It includes the terms of the expenditure of goods or services by hearer, the right of speaker to perform the act, and the degree to which the hearer welcomes the imposition. These factors influence strategy choice. Consequently, the lesser the imposition, the less powerful and distant the interlocutor, the less polite one will need to be.

Teacher has more power than students that shows there is still distance in their relationship. During the interaction in classroom, participant's positive face may be threat by Face Threatening Act (FTA) which means there is onecommunicationparticipant who is notappreciatedthatadvancepositivethreatened. Yule (1996:61) explains that Face Threatening Act (FTA) happens when the speaker says something that represents a threat to another individual's expectations regarding self-image or face. If this is the case, communicationcertainlycannotrun properlyas expected. In classroom context it will cause a problem in learning as well. Therefore, the teacher should consider how to build good communication with the students without threatening their positive face. In reducing threats on someone's face, any rational speaker or hearer will select an appropriate strategy to counterbalance the expected face threat. Brown and Levinson (1987:91) propose four strategies namely; Bald-On-Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off - Record. In order to avoid the positive face from being threatened by some FTAs, the use of positive politeness strategies need to be concerned. Yule (1996:64)states that positive politeness strategy leads the requester to appeal to a common goal, even friendship. In other word positive politeness strategy used to show intimacy, closeness, and relationships.

This present study aims at describing positive politeness strategies used by the teacher in teacher-students interaction in EFL classroom context. Positive politeness is designed to redress the hearer's positive face. It is frequently employed in groups of friends, or where people in the given social situation know each other fairly well. They usually attempt to minimize the distance between interlocutors by expressing friendliness and solid interest in the hearer's need to be respected, in other words to minimize the Face Threatening Act. Therefore, positive politeness strategies function as a kind of social accelerator.

II. METHOD

This study describes positive politeness strategies used by teacher and student in four categories of classroom interaction category namely, academic instruction, motivation, evaluation and classroom management. This study explores positive politeness strategies used by teacher in

three 90-minute English lessons in a senior high school. The data were video-recorded from three different classroom settings where English is the object and the medium of teaching learning process. The data analysis was based on Brown and Levinson's theory (1987). The data were analyzed based on the model analysis introduced by Miles and Huberman (1994) which involved reduction of the data, data display and interpretation. This analysis focused on the teacher's and student's use of positive politeness strategies for dealing with Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) during the interaction in the classroom. The interaction is divided into four based on theory introduced by Jiang (2010) namely academic instruction, motivation, evaluation and classroom management.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this research, the object of the study was the verbal utterance that convey by teacher and students during the interaction in the classroom. The interaction is built in three languages, English, Indonesian and Minangkabau. The findings show that positive politeness strategies were generally performed by teacher and students during classroom interaction in form of ten strategies. These strategies were explained as follow:

1. *Strategy 2 (Exaggerate interest, approval and sympathy with hearer)*

Following excerpt is an example of interaction between teacher and student in the classroom

- Teacher : **"Ok, very good"**. *Horee...mereka kegirangan, Wisnu dan Elsi pergi ke Ramayana yesterday. Pernah ke sana?*
Student : *Ya.*

It can be identified that through this utterance the teacher performs strategy 2 of positive politeness strategy. The teacher gave positive feedback toward students work by saying *"Ok, very good..."*. It shows that the teacher use an exaggerate intonation by stressing her positive feedback toward her students' work. She used modifier, *"very good"* to convey that the students have done their best during classroom activity. This strategy used by the teacher to softens the impended of Face Threatening Act, because the teacher tries to create a friendly environment during the classroom interaction. Brown and Levinson (1987:104) this strategy is often done with exaggerate intonation, stress and other aspect of prosodic as well as with intensifying modifiers. The use of this strategy found mostly in categories of evaluation where the teacher conveys her positive or negative feedback toward the student's work. It is useful in avoiding student from being humiliated even their work is not too good but the teacher can convey his positive or negative feedback without destroying students' positive face.

2. *Strategy 4(Using in-group identity markers)*

According to Brown and Levinson(1987:107) use in-group identity markers include in group usages of address forms, of language or dialect, of jargon or slang and of ellipsis. The sample of this strategy is shown by following fragment:

- Teacher : **"Ok guys,** you can see in the white board, our topic today talking about expression of relief, pain, pleasure and sadness. Ok!, what will you get in this occasion (Write down on the white board some expressions about the topic in that day).
Student : (Silent)

From the utterances above, the use of group identity markers in term in-group usages of address include the use of generic names and terms of address, *Guys*. Such forms may be used to soften the Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) because it indicates that speaker, in this case the teacher, considers relative power between himself with and the addressee which are

the students, to be small. So, although power, distance and relationship of both participant in different level, the environment that created during the interaction, especially academic instruction, shown the closeness between participants and do not threat someone's positive face. This strategy mostly found in almost all categories of classroom interaction in both teacher-students interaction and students-teacher interaction.

3. *Strategy 5 (Seek Agreement)*

This positive politeness strategy deals with an effort to seek the agreement without threatening someone's positive face during the interaction. Brown and Levinson (1987:112) explain that there are two ways to get the addressee agree without threatening their face, namely, safe topic and repetition. In classroom interaction, especially in presenting the material of the lesson, the teacher performed some utterance to get the agreement of the students about the material that being taught. From the data the researcher found the way teacher seek the agreement by saving the topic, or in other word seek the topic that possible to agree with.

Teacher : Now, let come to the second, write the body of the letter. *Yang body nya itu nah tell your reason. Pertama take salutation, salutation nya the teacher khan?* **Dear Mrs. Linda misalkan ya. Me is teacher, right?**

Student : *Ya*

From the data above, the positive politeness strategy that is used by the teacher is seeking agreement. The excerpts of utterance above show way of claiming common ground with hearer. Here, the teacher seek topic in which it is possible to agree with. The raising safe topic in classroom interaction allows teacher to stress his agreement with hearer. In the example, the teacher asking his students' agreement about how to compose a good letter which begins with salutation by considering to give an example that the students easy to agree. Here, he promotes the example of himself as the teacher. This strategy allows the teacher to invite his students' understanding without threatening their positive face. The use of this strategy mostly found in teacher-students interaction in four categories of classroom interaction.

4. *Strategy 10 (Offers and promises)*

In order to reduce the potential threat of some Face Threatening Act (FTAs), the speaker may choose to stress his cooperation with hearer in various areas of god will. Brown and Levinson (1987:125) states that there are two natural outcome of choosing this strategy, namely; offers and promises, because both demonstrate speaker's good intentions in satisfying hearer's positive face.

Teacher : *Lah...? Belum ketemu? Nah, tambah satu lai!*

Student : *Eee... iko ajo lun salasai, lah batambah lo.*

Teacher : **Satu lagi lah, satu lagi. Kalau lah siap bolehlah rest time.**

Student : *Yes!*

From the excerpt of utterance above, the teacher stress future cooperation in which to distract the students from potential face threat. The promise that conveyed by the teacher in utterance above shows that the teacher offers some cooperation to the students to make them have a willing to do what the teacher wants them to do. The requirement that the teacher convey makes the students do what the teacher asked. Offering and promising also found in almost four categories of classroom interaction. It was in both teacher-students interaction and students-teacher interaction.

5. *Strategy 12 (Including both speaker and hearer in the activity)*

In reducing the dominant power of the teacher in the classroom, strategy 12 of positive politeness can be worked out. As stated by Brown and Levinson (1987:127) that using inclusive 'we' instead of 'I' and 'You' can call upon the cooperative assumption and repair Face Threatening Acts (FTAs). From the data, it is found that this strategy is mostly showing up during interaction that happened in academic instruction.. The example is shown as follow:

- Teacher : *Evan sama fikri bisa masa resa sama adit nggak bisa. Mungkin tadi membuat pr-nya sama disekolah bukan dirumah kali.* Now, it is time to show your writing. **We need to bacakan hasilnya. Oke, we invite, Dika! Ha,,** please listen! *Yang lain tolong dengar ya!*
- Student : *(Dika read his writing)*

The example above shows that the utterance is conveyed by considered the strategy of positive politeness, namely including both the speaker and hearer in activity. It is aimed to reduce the domination role of teacher in giving command to do particular activity. By using an inclusive form, the teacher seems include in any activity that he created to be acted by the students. The sample shows that when conveying the utterance "*we need to bacakan hasilnya*", the teacher himself seems like included in the activity, but actually this utterance is aimed to ask the students to do the activity. The teacher use 'we' form to soften his request. Therefore, the students will do the activity sincerely. The use of this strategy appears mostly in teacher-students interaction. It is related to the role of the teacher in classroom is not only to deliver the material to the students but also the way teacher threat the students which consider the protection toward their positive self image is important to be concerned.

6. Strategy 13 (Giving or asking for the reason)

According to Brown and Levinson (1987:128) another aspect of including hearer in the activity id for speaker to give reason s as to why he wants what he wants. By including hearer in his practical reasoning and assuming reflexivity, hearer is thereby led to see the reasonableness of speaker's FTA. From the data, the researcher found utterances that used this strategy in teacher and students interaction. The strategy of politeness is shown as following fragment:

- T : Pleasure? *Ha senang?* What expression can you use, **lets' show your pleasure, tegar you are the chairman of OSIS, what you said at the time?**
- S : "Yeaahh..I am the winner".

From the excerpt above, the teacher includes the students in the activity and gives a reason why he wants what he wants. The utterance "*let's show your pleasure*", indicates that the teacher included in the activity as well as the students and giving the reason why he wants the students so the activity in the utterance "*Tegar, you are the chairman of OSIS, what you said at time?*". This utterance shows that teacher gives practical reason why he wants the students to answer the question. It also relate to the way teacher motivate the students by including himself and giving the reason why he need to let the students taking a part in classroom activity.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research shows thatthere are six strategies of positive politeness foundin teacher-student in English classroom Interaction. These strategy are: strategy 2, Exaggerate interest, approval, sympathy with hearer; strategy 4, use in-group identity markers; strategy 5, seek agreement; strategy 10, offers, promise; strategy 12, including both speaker and hearer in activity and

strategy 13, giving or asking a reason. These strategies appear in four classroom categories namely, academic instruction, motivation, evaluation and classroom management.

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