



Jurnal Hata Poda:
Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, dan Sastra Indonesia
<https://jurnal.uinsyahada.ac.id/index.php/hatapoda>
Vol. 05 No. 01 (Juni 2026)
E-ISSN : 2964-6928



Teachers' Politeness Strategies in Building Educative Interaction in Elementary Schools

Irma Desni^{*1}; Erna Ikawati²

Pendidikan Dasar Pascasarjana Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary
Padangsidempuan

^{*1}irmadesnimi7179@gmail.com, ²ernaikawati@uinsyahada.ac.id

Abstract

Polite language plays an important role in the learning process because it helps teachers build positive relationships with students in elementary schools. As language role models, teachers need to use polite, friendly, and easy-to-understand language so that the learning atmosphere becomes comfortable and enjoyable. This study aims to describe how teachers apply language politeness when interacting with students and to explain its influence on the learning process. This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, and documentation, and then analyzed in stages to draw conclusions. The results show that teachers use various polite language strategies, such as giving instructions in a gentle manner, choosing positive words, addressing students warmly, and providing verbal praise and encouragement. These language practices make students feel respected, more confident, and willing to participate actively in learning activities. In addition, the use of polite language helps develop students' polite behavior, mutual respect, and positive character. Therefore, teachers' language politeness functions not only as a means of communication but also as an important element in character education and in creating effective educational interactions.

Keywords: language politeness, teacher, learning interaction, elementary school.

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a central role in the teaching and learning process, especially in elementary schools where students are still developing their cognitive, social, and emotional abilities. In this context, teachers are not only responsible for delivering subject matter but also for modeling appropriate language use in daily interactions. The way teachers speak to students can influence students' attitudes, learning motivation, and willingness to participate in classroom activities. Polite language, therefore, becomes a key element in creating a supportive and respectful learning environment that encourages positive educational interaction.

Language politeness refers to the use of language that respects others, maintains harmony, and avoids threatening the listener's feelings. In classroom settings, polite language can be reflected through gentle instructions, positive word choices, respectful forms of address, and supportive feedback. When teachers apply polite language strategies consistently, students tend to feel valued and safe, which in turn helps build mutual respect between teachers and students. Such interactions are particularly important at the elementary level, as students often imitate the language and behavior demonstrated by their teachers.

However, in practice, classroom communication does not always reflect polite language principles. Teachers may sometimes use harsh words, high intonation, or direct commands that unintentionally create fear or discomfort among students. These forms of communication can hinder effective interaction and reduce students' active involvement in learning. Therefore, understanding how teachers apply language politeness strategies in real classroom situations is essential to improve the quality of teacher–student interaction.

Based on this background, this study focuses on teachers' language politeness strategies in building educational interaction in elementary schools. The study aims to describe the forms of polite language used by teachers during classroom interaction and to explain their role in supporting students' engagement and character development. The findings of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically, particularly in providing insights for teachers to develop more humanistic and effective communication in the learning process.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to explore teachers' language politeness strategies in building educational interaction in elementary schools. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate because the study focuses on understanding language use, communication patterns, and meanings within natural classroom settings rather than measuring variables numerically. The research aims to describe in detail how teachers apply polite language during instructional interactions with students.

The participants of this study consist of elementary school teachers who actively engage in classroom teaching. The research setting is an elementary school, where data are collected during regular teaching and learning activities. Data collection techniques include classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Classroom observations are

conducted to record teachers' verbal interactions with students, focusing on forms of polite expressions, types of directives, and feedback used during lessons. Interviews are carried out to gain deeper insights into teachers' understanding, intentions, and considerations in using polite language. Documentation, such as lesson plans or teaching notes, is used to support and strengthen the data obtained from observations and interviews.

Data analysis is conducted through several stages, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. During data reduction, relevant data related to language politeness strategies are selected and organized. The data are then presented in descriptive form to identify recurring patterns and themes. Finally, conclusions are drawn by interpreting the findings to explain how teachers' language politeness strategies contribute to the development of educational interaction in the classroom. To ensure data credibility, triangulation of data sources and techniques is applied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that elementary school teachers consistently apply various language politeness strategies during classroom interactions to build positive educational relationships with students. Based on classroom observations, teachers frequently use polite directives, such as soft commands, requests, and suggestions, rather than direct or forceful instructions. Expressions like *"please," "let's try,"* and *"could you help"* are commonly used to reduce pressure on students and create a more supportive learning atmosphere. In addition, teachers tend to choose positive and encouraging words when correcting students' mistakes, which helps maintain students' self-esteem and motivation.

Another important finding is the use of respectful forms of address and verbal reinforcement. Teachers often call students by their names, use friendly greetings, and provide praise or encouragement for students' efforts, not only for correct answers. This practice strengthens emotional bonds between teachers and students and fosters mutual respect in the classroom. Such interactions encourage students to participate more actively, ask questions, and express their opinions without fear of being judged. These findings support the view that polite language functions as an effective tool to build harmonious and meaningful educational interaction.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with language politeness theories proposed by Brown and Levinson, which emphasize the importance of maintaining the listener's "face" in communication. Teachers' efforts to soften directives and provide positive feedback reflect strategies to minimize face-threatening acts in classroom discourse. Similarly, Leech's politeness principles, such as tact and approbation maxims, are evident in teachers' efforts to show respect and appreciation toward students. In the context of elementary education, such strategies are particularly important because students are still developing their social and emotional skills and tend to imitate their teachers' language behavior.

Overall, the discussion shows that teachers' language politeness strategies play a significant role not only in facilitating effective communication but also in supporting character education. Polite language helps create a safe and respectful learning environment, encourages active student engagement, and promotes values such as respect, empathy, and cooperation. Therefore, integrating language politeness awareness into teachers' professional practice is essential to enhance the quality of educational interaction in elementary schools.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that language politeness strategies used by elementary school teachers play an important role in building effective educational interaction. Teachers apply polite language through gentle instructions, positive word choices, respectful forms of address, and verbal praise or encouragement during classroom activities. These strategies help create a comfortable and respectful learning environment, allowing students to feel valued and confident in participating in the learning process.

Furthermore, teachers' polite language use contributes not only to effective classroom communication but also to students' character development. Through daily interaction, students learn attitudes such as respect, empathy, and mutual appreciation by observing and imitating their teachers' language behavior. Therefore, language politeness should be viewed as an essential component of teaching practice in elementary schools. This study suggests that increasing teachers' awareness of polite language strategies can enhance the quality of educational interaction and support the development of positive learning environments.

REFERENCES

- Wijayanti, W., Wijayanto, A., & Marmanto, S. (2020). *Native English Teacher's Politeness Realizations in EFL Classroom Interaction*.
- Jayanti, N. E., Mahmud, M., & Salija, K. (2024). *Politeness Strategies in EFL Classroom Interaction: Teacher–Student Strategies*.
- Wati, S. O., Wahyuni, I., Hayati, A., Syaveny, N., et al. (2025). *Politeness Strategies in EFL Classroom Interaction: A Pragmatic Perspective on Pedagogical Implications*.
- Mantra, I. B. N. (2024). *Linguistic Politeness Strategies Used by Language Teachers for Effective Classroom Communication*. *Media Bina Ilmiah*, 18(9), 169–178.
- Jayanti, N. E., Mahmud, M., & Salija, K. (2024). *Politeness Strategies in EFL Classroom Interaction: Teacher–Student Strategies*. *International Journal of Business, English, and Communication*, 2(3), 83–88.
- Diana, R. E., & Manaf, N. A. (2024). *Prinsip Kesantunan Berbahasa dalam Tindak Tutur Direktif Guru Bahasa Indonesia*. *Jurnal Basicedu*.
- Armadani, A. K., Usman, U., & Wijayanti, T. (2025). *Kesantunan Berbahasa dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Siswa Kelas VII*. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature*, 3(1), 8692.
- Fitriatun, Y., Erwin, E., & Supratman, S. (2025). *Kesantunan Berbahasa Guru dan Siswa pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SMP Negeri 2 Pemenang*. *Jurnal Konfiks*, 10(2), 12661.
- Chen, X. (2020). A relevance-theoretic approach to politeness and face: Revisiting Brown and Levinson's model. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 167, 50–60.
- Han, J. (2023). The pragmatics of teacher talk in EFL classrooms: Politeness and instructional discourse. *System*, 114, 102985.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chen, X. (2020). A relevance-theoretic approach to politeness and face: Revisiting Brown and Levinson's model. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 167, 50–60.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2020.05.060>
- Diana, R. E., & Manaf, N. A. (2022). Prinsip kesantunan berbahasa dalam tindak tutur direktif guru Bahasa Indonesia. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 6(3), 2759–2768.
<https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i3.2759>

- Fitriatun, Y., Erwin, E., & Supratman, S. (2025). Kesantunan berbahasa guru dan siswa dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia. *Jurnal Konfiks*, 10(2), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.26618/konfiks.v10i2.12661>
- Han, J. (2023). The pragmatics of teacher talk in EFL classrooms: Politeness and instructional discourse. *System*, 114, Article 102985. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2023.102985>
- Jayanti, N. E., Mahmud, M., & Salija, K. (2024). Politeness strategies in EFL classroom interaction: Teacher–student strategies. *International Journal of Business, English, and Communication*, 2(3), 83–88. <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijobec.v2i3.3006>
- Leech, G. N. (2014). *The pragmatics of politeness*. Oxford University Press.
- Mantra, I. B. N. (2024). Linguistic politeness strategies used by language teachers for effective classroom communication. *Media Bina Ilmiah*, 18(9), 169–178. <https://doi.org/10.33758/mbi.v18i9.763>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Rahardi, K. (2005). *Pragmatik: Kesantunan imperatif bahasa Indonesia*. Erlangga.
- Wati, S. O., Wahyuni, I., Hayati, A., & Syaveny, N. (2025). Politeness strategies in EFL classroom interaction: A pragmatic perspective on pedagogical implications. *Journal of English Language and Education*, 10(4).
- Wijayanti, W., Wijayanto, A., & Marmanto, S. (2020). Native English teacher's politeness realizations in EFL classroom interaction. *ELS Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 3(1), 31–40. <https://doi.org/10.34050/els-jish.v3i1.9524>
- Yule, G. (2010). *The study of language* (4th ed.). Cambridge University Press.