



Positive Politeness Strategies in Classroom Interaction Used by The Teacher of English at UPTD SMP Negeri 5 Kupang

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article history Received : Feb, 26th 2026 Revised : April, 13th 2026 Accepted : May, 26th 2026 OPEN ACCESS	This research aimed to find out the positive politeness strategies used by the teacher of English at <i>UPTD SMP Negeri 5 Kupang</i>. The researcher employed a descriptive qualitative method with direct observation facilitated with the video recording as the primary techniques to collected data. The participants of this study were teachers of English at <i>UPTD SMP Negeri 5 Kupang</i>. The were 14 types of positive politeness strategies found. Those strategies were used by the teacher when teachers evaluated students' work by providing corrective feedback, encouraging and motivating students, responding to questions, asking questions to check understanding, facilitating classroom discussions, and delivering explanations of the lesson material and also in opening session, core session, and closing session. These strategies were used by the teacher to create a comfortable and enjoyable classroom atmosphere and to avoid Face threatening act toward the students' positive face.
Keywords:	<i>Positive Politeness strategies, Classroom interaction, Teachers of English</i>

1. Introduction

Classroom interaction is one of the main components in learning process, as it enables teachers and students to exchange knowledge and build positive relationships. According to Asilah (2024) Classroom interaction is a process which students are given the opportunities to share their knowledge through interaction with teachers, who play a controlling role in managing the classroom. Therefore, classroom interaction plays a crucial role in determining the success of learning, and one of the key factors influencing the success of the interaction process is the appropriate use of language.

In this regard, Brown and Levinson (1987) define politeness strategies as communicative strategies used to minimize conflict and show respect and appreciation towards others. In classroom discourse, language is not only used to deliver material but also manage interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. Because teachers hold position of

authority in the classroom, the way they use language reflects teacher-student power relations and can influence students' participation and confidence. In the context of teaching, Positive politeness strategies as the one of types of Politeness which aims to maintain the listener's positive face by expressing approval, appreciation, and solidarity, are important in teaching because they help reduce sosial distance, build raport, and create a supportive learning atmosphere.

From the perspective of language learning, positive politeness is closely related to affective factors such as motivation, self-confidence, and students' willingness to participate. When students feel appreciated and recognized, they are more motivated and actively engaged in classroom interaction. Nurmawati et al. (2019) in Natasia, Imanuela (2021), state that positive politeness strategies functions to make the listener feel happy, maintain the positive face of the listener, and fulfill the needs of the listener and the most important thing is that teachers can create a comfortable learning atmosphere also to motivate students in learning. Based on the researcher's experience during PLP (*Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan*), students in the classroom feel very eager to receive appreciation or praise for their efforts, indicating the importance of positive politeness in classroom practice.

Although several previous studies have examined politeness strategies in classroom communication, most of them discuss politeness strategies in general without specifically focusing on the use of positive politeness strategies in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. Moreover, limited research has explored how English teachers apply different types of positive politeness strategies and in what classroom contexts these strategies are used, particularly in Indonesian junior high school settings.

At *UPTD SMP Negeri 5 Kupang*, where students come from diverse backgrounds, the use of appropriate language strategies is essential to support effective interaction and build students' confidence. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how English teachers employ positive politeness strategies in classroom interaction and to identify the contexts in which these strategies are applied.

2. Research Method

The researcher employed a descriptive qualitative method. This method was used to describe the positive politeness strategies applied by English teachers. The data were collected through direct classroom observation supported by video recordings as the primary

data collection technique. The participants of this study were four English teachers at *UPTD SMP Negeri 5 Kupang*. This research was conducted for one month.

To ensure transparency, the researcher conducted four classroom observations, and each teacher was observed once. The observations were conducted simultaneously with video recording to capture authentic classroom interaction. The researcher conducted four classroom observation sessions. Each of the four English teachers was observed once during their regular teaching schedule. The observations were carried out in Grade 7 and Grade 8 classes at UPTD SMP Negeri 5 Kupang. The duration of each observation followed the teachers' regular teaching hours in accordance with the school schedule. The observations were unstructured, meaning that the researcher did not use a fixed observation checklist but focused on naturally occurring classroom interaction, particularly the use of positive politeness strategies.

For data analysis, the researcher followed the model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). First, the researcher reduced the data by transcribing the video recordings into written form and selecting relevant utterances related to positive politeness strategies. Second, the researcher displayed the data by identifying and categorizing the types of positive politeness strategies and the contexts in which they were used by the teachers. Finally, the researcher drew conclusions based on the identified patterns and findings.

3. Research Findings and Discussion

Research Findings

Types Of Positive Politeness Strategies Are Used By The Teacher Of English In Classroom Interaction

After analyzing and transcribing the transcript of learning and teaching process, the results showed that the teachers used many kinds of positive politeness strategies in their lessons except for joke strategy. These strategies were sometimes said in English and then translated into Indonesian, so that the students could understand the lessons better.

Based on the data analysis, the researcher found that the teachers used positive politeness strategies in classroom interaction as follows:

Table 1. Types of Positive Politeness strategies in classroom interaction used by the teachers of English

Types of positive politeness	Teachers' utterance
Notice or attend to the hearer	T1: <i>ada pertanyaan?</i> (any question?)
Exaggerate	T2: Very good. Good job, thank you Vicenso, Bathroom, <i>ada lagi?</i> (Very good. God job, thank you Vicenso, bathroom, any one else?)
Intensify interest to the hearer	T3: Oke good, <i>kalian pernah mendengar kata</i> preposition sebelumnya? (Oke good, do you ever hear about preposition?)
Use in group identity marker	T1: Okey are you ready guys?
Seek Agreement	T2: <i>Apakah semua jawaban ini sudah betul?</i> Is that true for you? (Are all these answers, correct? Is that true for you?)
Avoid Disagreement	T1: Can you make the complete answer. Oke. If you said 17 august, <i>itu langsung pada intinya. Bisakah kamu memberikan jawaban yang lebih lengkap?</i> (Okay. If you just say '17 August', that's straight to the point. Can you give a more complete answer?)
Presuppose /raise/assert common ground	T1: <i>Kemarin kita bahas tentang makanan favorit galang, hari ini kita bahas tentang rumahnya galang</i> (Yesterday (last week) we talked about Galang's favorite food, and today we are going to talk about Galang's house)
Asserts or presuppose the speaker knowledge's of and concern for the hearer's wants	T3: Ohh I am sorry our time is up <i>kalau begitu minggu depan yah yang lain ibu tunggu</i>

	(Oh, I am sorry, our time is up. In that case, we will continue next week. The rest of you, I will wait)
Offer/ Promise	T2: I will help you, don't worry, <i>kalau salah kita perbaiki</i> (I will help you, don't worry. If you make a mistake, we will fix it)
Be Optimistic	T2: I give you only two minutes and then you come in the front of the class to circle the word related to the dialogue.
Engaging the speaker and listener in the activity	T1: According to you when does the game usually happen?
Giving or asking reason	T2: Write well <i>supaya teman-teman yang lain bisa membaca tulisan kalian</i> (Write neatly so that your friends can read your writing)
Assume or assert reciprocity	T1: <i>Di sini kita sudah tahu bahasa inggris dari memanjat dan hadiah</i> (Here, we already know the English words for <i>memanjat</i> and <i>hadiah</i>)
Give Sympathy	T2: <i>okey coba cari pelan-pelan Aldi, be patient please jangan terburu-buru</i> (Alright, take your time, Aldi. Be patient and don't rush.)

The researcher collected all data on teacher utterances in classroom interactions; there's a lot utterance. However, not all data were presented in their entirety; instead, the researcher selected representative data for analysis. Moreover, the results revealed that the use of positive politeness strategies varied across the four teachers. Not all teachers employed the same strategies, indicating individual differences in teaching style, communication preferences, and classroom management approaches.

Context or Situation When Teacher Use Positive Politeness Strategies in Classroom Interaction

Table 2. Context or Situation When the Teachers of English Used Positive Politeness Strategies

Types of Positive Politeness Strategies	Teachers' utterance	Context or Situation
Notice or attend to the hearer	T1: <i>ada pertanyaan?</i> (any question?)	The teacher used this utterance in the End of lesson; teacher want to if there any question from the students
Exaggerate	T2: Very good. Good job, thank you Vicenso, Bathroom, <i>ada lagi?</i> (Very good. God job, thank you Vicenso, bathroom, any one else?)	The teacher applied this strategy during the question-and-answer session, particularly when a student provided a correct response
Intensify interest to the hearer	T3: Oke good, <i>kalian pernah mendengar kata</i> preposition sebelumnya? (Oke good, do you ever hear about preposition?)	This utterance was used by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson when introducing a new topic about prepositions
Use in group identity marker	T1: Okey are you ready guys?	This utterance emerged at the start of the lesson, when the teacher checked the students' readiness to begin learning
Seek Agreement	T2: <i>Apakah semua jawaban ini sudah betul?</i> Is that true for you? (Are all these answers, correct? Is that true for you?)	This utterance appeared when the teacher checks the students answer.
Avoid Disagreement	T1: Can you make the complete answer. Oke. If you said 17 august, <i>itu langsung pada intinya. Bisakah kamu memberikan jawaban yang lebih lengkap?</i> (Okay. If you just say '17 August', that's straight to the	This strategy emerged during the Q&A session, where the teacher invited another student to supplement the answer in order to produce a more accurate and complete response

	point. Can you give a more complete answer?)	
Presuppose /raise/assert common ground	T1: <i>Kemarin kita bahas tentang makanan favorit galang, hari ini kita bahas tentang rumahnya galang</i> (Yesterday (last week) we talked about Galang's favorite food, and today we are going to talk about Galang's house)	This utterance appeared at the start of the lesson as the teacher introduced the topic to be discussed
Asserts or presuppose the speaker knowledge's of and concern for the hearer's wants	T3: Ohh I am sorry our time is up <i>kalau begitu minggu depan yah yang lain ibu tunggu</i> (Oh, I am sorry, our time is up. In that case, we will continue next week. The rest of you, I will wait)	This utterance was produced by the teacher during the closing phase of the lesson. Although the learning activity had to be concluded, some students still wished to present.
Offer/ Promise	T2: I will help you, don't worry, <i>kalau salah kita perbaiki</i> (I will help you, don't worry. If you make a mistake, we will fix it)	This utterance emerged during the instructional process when the teacher assured the students that assistance would be provided if they made errors in completing the task.
Be Optimistic	T2: I give you only two minutes and then you come in the front of the class to circle the word related to the dialogue.	This utterance appeared when the teacher assigned a task to the students by giving them a time limit
Engaging the speaker and listener in the activity	T1: According to you when does the game usually happen?	This utterance appeared during the learning process in the question-and-answer session, when the teacher asked for the students' opinions
Giving or asking reason	T2: Write well <i>supaya teman-teman yang lain bisa membaca tulisan</i>	This utterance occurred while students were writing answers

	<i>kalian</i> (Write neatly so that your friends can read your writing)	on the board
Assume or assert reciprocity	T1: <i>Di sini kita sudah tahu bahasa inggris dari memanjat dan hadiah</i> (Here, we already know the English words for <i>memanjat</i> and <i>hadiah</i>)	This utterance occurs when the teacher is reviewing with students, specifically the English vocabulary words "climbing" and "gift"
Give Sympathy	T2: <i>okey coba cari pelan-pelan Aldi, be patient please jangan terburu-buru</i> (Alright, take your time, Aldi. Be patient and don't rush.)	This situation occurs when a student appears to be having difficulty or rushing to open a dictionary to look up vocabulary given by the teacher.

Discussion

This section presents the discussion in line with the research findings, namely the use of positive politeness strategies in classroom interaction by English teachers and the contexts in which these strategies are applied. Based on the findings, the researcher identified fourteen types of positive politeness strategies used by the teachers in their interactions with students. These strategies were employed to show care, appreciate students' work, and build harmony and familiarity with students.

For example, the use of the *notice and attend to the hearer* strategy is reflected in the utterance "*ada pertanyaan* (any questions?)." Through this strategy, the teacher shows concern for students by asking whether they have any questions, thereby ensuring that students understand the material being taught. In addition, the *exaggeration* strategy is illustrated by the utterance "Very good, good job, thank you Vicenso. Bathroom, ada lagi? (Very good, good job, thank you Vicenso. Bathroom, anyone else?)." In line with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, positive politeness refers to strategies employed by the speaker to attend to the hearer's positive face, namely the desire to be appreciated. This utterance demonstrates that the teacher appreciates students' responses through the use of exaggeration.

Another positive politeness strategy used by the teachers to build harmony and familiarity is the use of *in-group identity markers*, as shown in the utterance "Are you ready,

guys?” The word *guys* indicates that the teacher creates a sense of closeness with the students. Overall, the findings indicate that the use of positive politeness strategies by teachers helps create closeness with students and fulfills their positive face, in accordance with Brown and Levinson’s theory.

These strategies were used in various classroom interactions, such as evaluating students’ work by providing corrective feedback, encouraging and motivating students, responding to and asking questions to check understanding, facilitating classroom discussions, and delivering explanations of lesson material. They were applied during the opening, core, and closing sessions of the lesson. Therefore, the positive politeness strategies identified in this study are appropriate for use in classroom interaction at all stages of teaching to create effective learning. Furthermore, the findings of this research may be useful for other researchers and English teachers in considering the use of appropriate language when interacting with students.

4. Conclusion

Brown and Levinson (1987) classified positive politeness strategies into fifteen types; however, based on the research findings, the teachers employed only fourteen types of positive politeness strategies. These strategies were used in classroom interaction to create a comfortable and effective learning environment, encourage students’ active participation, fulfill students’ needs, and show appreciation toward students. The strategies were applied at the beginning, during, and at the end of the lesson, as well as to motivate students.

The findings of this study imply that the appropriate use of positive politeness strategies can support more effective classroom communication and enhance students’ motivation and participation in English language learning. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to develop greater awareness of politeness strategies through teacher professional development programs and apply them consciously to improve classroom interaction and build positive teacher–student relationships.

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