



Politeness Strategies Used by Students to Teachers in Their Communication at Pesantren Salaf Al Quran Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin Malang

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ABSTRACT

This study on politeness strategies used by students to their teacher in their communication at Pondok Pesantren Salaf Al-Quran Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin Malang was conducted to examine the types of politeness strategies employed by both students and teachers in their daily communication. Four teachers or ustadz of Pesantren Salaf Al-Quran Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin and 13 students or santri were chosen as the participants. Further more, a case study qualitative approach by doing observation and interview was employed as the method of the study. To figure out the phenomenon, Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness strategies was applied in analyzing the data. From the analysis, it was figured out that all types of politeness strategies were realized in teachers' utterances. In contrast, only three politeness strategies were performed by students. It was identified that the three social factors of power, social distance and ranking of imposition triggered the students and teachers to perform such strategies. However, another influential factor that was found to encourage the participants to employ those strategies was that Pesantren Salaf Al-Quran Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin's culture that encompasses several values which are based upon the Islamic values declared in Al Quran and Al Hadith.

Keywords: Pesantren, culture, politeness strategies, santri, ustadz

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INTRODUCTION

Politeness appears to be a prevalent concept and an important factor in human interaction. However, a good communication is not only delivering message, but also make interlocutors feel comfortable by the content of the message. It means, maintaining a good social relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor is required in a communication process. In their theory, Brown and Levinson (1987) also confirmed "Basic social role of politeness is in its ability to function as a way of controlling potential aggression between interactional parties" (p.1). This concept then, can be considered as the production of social order, and as a prerequisite for human cooperation that rerealized through the avoidance of conflict and disorder. However, it possibly happens that a certain verbal act can be considered polite in a given society and less polite or even

impolite in another society. This is in accordance with Kuntjara (2004) that politeness is much influenced by the culture in a given society must roommates encompasses several values and norms. It can also happen in a smaller communities such as in *pesantren*, as a 'mini-society' that this society makes religious rules as their basic values and norms. In this institution, politeness is a value that is accuated in every single activity of *pesantren* people – *Kyai*, *ustadz/ustadzah*, and *santri*. One of politeness implementation in *pesantren* is shown by *pesantren* people who always make any attempt to maintain a good relationship between them. The background, encouraged the author to conduct research and to examine *santri* performed politeness toward their *ustadz* from the linguistic point of view in Pondok Pesantren Salaf Al-Quran Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin, located in Malang.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987). “..., it is intuitively the case that certain kinds of acts intrinsically threaten face, namely those acts by their nature run contrary to the face wants of addressee and/ or of the speaker” (p.65). It designs an understanding that every human’s act – verbal or non verbal act – potentially causes face, the action of which the speaker (S) or the hearer (H) tries to threaten each other’s face. Face is a person’s self-image that everyone want it to be satisfied. There are two classifications of face. A person’s negative face is their claim to territories, a freedom of action and freedom from imposition. A person’s positive face is their need for social approval, the want to be appreciated.

To figure out the phenomenon happen between *santri* and *ustadz* in their communication, the author uses the theory of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) who defined it as "Strategies that are developed in order to save the hearer's face" (p.60). There are four kinds of politeness strategies: Bald On-Record, Politeness Positive, Negative Politeness and Off-Record. According to them, Bald On-Record is a politeness strategy which is used more directly and unambiguously. However, positive politeness is strategy is redress directed to the addressee’s positive face, his perennial desire that his wants should be thought of as desirable. This strategy attempts to minimize the threat to the hearer’s positive face and minimize the conflict caused by the imposition of one’s face. There are 15 sub strategies of positive politeness. Another politeness strategies is negative politeness. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) negative politeness is redress action to addressed to addressee’s negative face: his want to have his freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpeded. This strategy orients toward satisfying the listener’s negative face and emphasizes avoidance of imposition on the hearer. In this strategy, there are 10 sub strategies of negative politeness. The last type of politeness strategies is that Off-Record. It uses indirect language and removes the speaker from the potential to be imposing. Therefore, whenever the speaker wants to do FTA while avoiding the responsibility in doing it, he can do it off record and leave it up to the addressee to decide how to interpret it. It has 15 sub strategies.

According to Brown and Levinson, these types of politeness strategies are triggered by factors such as social Several Power (P), Distance (D) and Ranks of imposition (R). Therefore, the different social factors may affect each of the type of politeness strategy. Then the author uses this theory as the tool of interpretation of the data.

The data are taken from *pesantren* which is consider as a community. According to Shodiq (2011) *pondok pesantren* came from Arabic noun “*funduq*” means dormitory. And “*pesantren*” came from javanese “*santri*” means pupil who study Islamic knowledge. It becomes a noun after added by Indonesian prefix and suffix “*pe-santri-an*” become “*pesantren*”. So from the terminology, we can say that pondok pesantren means a place/dormitory for *santri* to study about knowledge, especially

religion. He also claimed that there are three types of *pesantren*, they are : 1) *Pesantren Salaf*, a *pesantren* which is still maintain the Islamic teaching process traditionally. 2) *Pesantren Khalaf*, a *pesantren* which is seeks to integrate the classical system into *pesantren*. General studies are included in the teaching curriculum of *pesantren* and associated with religious knowledge. The last is, 3) Comprehensive *Pesantren*, a *pesantren* which trying to combine both types at traditional and modern as the curriculum.

METHOD

This research is conducted in Pondok Pesantren Salaf Al-Qur'an Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin, which is located in Malang, East Java. It is an area which is dominated by Javanese-spoken people. In this *pesantren*, politeness is deliberately important to use in every single activity, moreover in the communication between students to their teachers. Pondok Pesantren Salaf Al-Qur'an Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin is chosen since it is one of the oldest *pesantren salaf* in East Java which still maintains salaf values as well as welcome several modern insights. In analyzing the data, the author employed a qualitative approach in conducting this study. It is chosen since this study is aimed at examining the daily life of a certain community namely *pesantren* in terms of linguistic phenomenon. In this study, the author attempted to figure out the lived experiences of the participants' daily life, especially their language usage in real situations. It is in accordance with Woods (2006), qualitative research is concerned with life and situations as they are constructed in the daily life. Observing and interviewing some people of Pesantren Salaf Al-Quran Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin is conducted to profoundly explore the values prevailed in this *pesantren*. Since this study is a pragmatic study, context is of importance to be taken into account. Formal and informal contexts were chosen as the setting since the author wanted to know in-depth the use of politeness strategies by students and teachers of Pesantren Salaf Al-Qur'an Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin comprehensively in their daily activities in *pesantren*.

Furthermore, two instruments such as audio recording and note taking also employed in conducting this study. The audio recording is used because the data needed is in the form of utterances. Also, the author takes some notes to write non verbal language used by participants while uttering some utterances, such as facial expression, body language etc.

In getting the most appropriate participants, the author observes several dormitories in this *pesantren*. As the result, there were 13 *santri* from the room *Al-Furqon* in *Al-Umariyah* dormitory. The author took them because they are the most appropriate participant as most of them are *santri* that study in the same grade in *Madrasah Diniyah* – an internal educational institution of a *pesantren* -, even in the same class, in third grade of *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Diniyah*. Besides, most of them are the same grade in first senior high school student in a formal school. Therefore, it make the author easier to observe and collect the data both in formal and informal setting with the same participant. On the other hand, for the participants of *ustadz*, the author takes 4 teachers based on the subject they taught, which are *Fiqih*, *Tauhid*, *Hadits*, and *Nahwu* (Arabic grammar). They were chosen since they taught the most influential subjects concerning to the politeness.

The data is collected for a week. This length of study is carefully considered as this study does not merely examine the type of politeness strategies used by students and teachers, but also the culture of *pesantren* which is assumed to be influential in determining the politeness strategies type. Several steps are undertaken in obtaining the data such as :

1. Asking permission to *pesantren* for conducting the research

2. Doing observation and determining a fix schedule of the research
3. Asking permission to the chosen participants
4. Recording and note taking the activities
5. Informal interview to the participants related to the culture of *pesantren* and the value of politeness believed among them

After the data are collected, the author started to analyze the data by following Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness. After that, the author related the findings as the material of interpretation to the three factors of politeness strategies such as Power (P), Distance (D) and Rank of imposition (R). In short, the step in analyzing the data are :

1. Transcribing the data
2. Identifying the data into four types of politeness strategies
3. Categorizing the data
4. Counting the frequency of politeness strategies mostly used by the speakers
5. Interpreting the data and related it to the culture of Pesantren Salaf Al-Qur'an Sholahul Huda Al-Mujahidin.
6. Drawing a conclusion.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

I transcribed the record to get the detailed data of the polite language that the teacher uses. In this study, any language that is to enhance the process of teaching and to benefit the interaction between *ustadz* and *santri* is classified as politeness. In the following part, the *ustadz*'s politeness will be analyzed from the angles of the different classroom control speech acts mentioned above. Then tables will be given to show the distribution of different strategies, thereby studying the *ustadz*'s politeness in the class.

A. Academic Instructions

This refers to the teacher's academic presentation, answering students' academic questions, and supportive and corrective feedback. Look at the following sentences:

- 1) *Monggo di milai, buka halaman 6*
- 2) *Pelajaran sakmangke badhe diterangaken masalah I'rob*
- 3) *Monggo diwaos sak mantun e kulo*
- 4) *Kok katah sanget kata enggal, cobak kendel riyen.*
- 5) *Cobak nopo artine "dzhoroba"*
- 6) *Cobak nopo maksude Fi'il Madhi*
- 7) *Saget diterusaken nggeh?*
- 8) *Cobak wonten sin saget nulis ten papan?*
- 9) *Cobak nopo bedane Madhi kalih Mudlori'?*
- 10) *Buka halaman 9, nopo maksud e Jazm?*
- 11) *Alhamdulillah, minggu ngajeng kito bahas I'rob Rofa'. Coba dikerjakan soal niki damel PR.*

These are the very sentences that are frequently used in teaching a new lesson. Every *ustadz* won't feel unfamiliar with them. In these sentences, a number of politeness strategies are employed. The following is the analysis:

The first two sentences show a positive politeness strategy. Within in Brown and Levinson's theory, when you speak to someone, you may orient yourself towards that individual's positive face, and employ positive politeness, which appeals to the hearer's desire to be liked and

approved of. Here, one of the positive strategies—in-group marker is used, that is, the teacher includes herself in the learning process, which will shorten the distance from the *santri*.

Sentences 3-6 appear in the form of imperative sentences. This is a direct strategy of politeness. In such kind of strategy, the illocutionary act is expressed clearly through language forms. In forms, imperative sentences are often used, or other similar sentences like performatives (S4, 5), obligation statement (S6), want statement(S3), etc. And this can also be classified as one of the negative politeness strategies.

Sentences 7-9 show another of the negative politeness strategies—conventionally indirectness. Negative politeness is oriented towards a hearer's negative face, which appeals to the hearer's desire not to be impeded or put upon, to be left free to act as they choose. In classroom, modal verbs such as shall, would, can, etc are often used to maintain the *santris*' negative face. Sentence 10 and 11 appear to be very common sentences, but actually they show another politeness strategy—bold on record. This type of strategy is commonly found with people who know each other very well, and are very comfortable in their environment, such as close friends and family. There are also occasions when external factors constrain a person to speak very directly, for example, there is an emergency of some sort, or where there is a major time constraint or where there is some form of channel limitation. Under such circumstances, the speaker is likely to focus on the propositional content of the message, and pay little attention to the interpersonal aspect of what is said. This strategy is employed often in the teaching process in the classroom. On one hand, teachers usually try to establish a harmonious relationship with the students, try to be “close” to students; on the other hand, time is limited in class, teachers have to finish the teaching task in prearranged time, and, especially before the class is over, students are eager to go and time for teachers to assign homework is limited, so this strategy is often employed in these circumstances. In this classroom, things are just the same.

B. Motivation

Motivation refers to various illocutionary acts aimed at activating students such as their participation, academic questions, and initiative feedback. The following are the Examples:

- 12) *Mas, pripun niki, kok kadosé podo ngantuk?*
- 13) *Ahmad, cobak sampean jelaskan niki nggeh.*
- 14) *Cobak, Fahmi, sampean terangkan masalah I'rob Jazm.*
- 15) *Jelasaken sak paham e sampean, ndamel kata sampean dewe. nggeh*
- 16) *Niki penting damel santri memahami Nabwu. Mpun mendel mawon nggeh*
- 17) *Kirang sae menawi ngafalaken makno saking kitab. Dados betabaken kamus.*

Sentence 12 is an expression of positive politeness. Because the *ustadz* here is trying to minimize the distance between himself and the *santris* by expressing friendliness (Mas) and solid interest in the hearer's need to be respected (minimize the FTA). (Ask the students what they are doing, why they are so sleepy instead of scolding them for their distraction and their sleepiness) In sentences 13-15, “Nggeh” are used. Such words are called “filler”, one of the strategy of mitigation according to Fraser, who holds that politeness is closely related to mitigation, and it can be said that only when the speaker is polite, mitigation exists. This can also be a kind of positive politeness strategy which finds close parallel in Leech's politeness principles: seek agreement, avoid disagreement (agreement principle), maximize praise of the listener (approbation principle) and give sympathy (sympathy principle).

Sentences 16 and 17 contain the bald-on record strategy mentioned above as in “*Mpun*

mendel mawon”, “*Dados betabaken kamus*”. The other strategy employed in them is one of the negative politeness strategies—impersonalize speaker and hearer. Here, no specific student is mentioned, the teacher is activating all the students by maintaining the students’ negative face—don’t impede them.

C. Evaluation

Evaluation is indispensable in *Madrasah Diniyah* class. It refers to teacher’s positive and negative feedback which is very important to students. It can encourage as well as discourage the students. Therefore, politeness in evaluation is particularly important to both learning and teaching.

18) *Alhamdulillah, Sae!*

19) *Leres!*

20) *Sampun, sip!*

21) *Sae, terusaken!*

22) *Sampean kirang tepat katane.* (hint to change a word)

23) *Ahmad, sampun pinten jam pelajaran niki?* (hint to the other students not to speak)

24) “*Dzboriba Zaidun Amron?*” (hint at a grammar mistake)

25) *Kulo ragu ten kalimat niki*

26) *Oh, nggeh leres mas.*

27) *Cobak menawi ndamel kata sampean piambek*

28) *Dados cobak diwaos kata-katanipun rumiyen*

29) *Ngapunten, maksud e di terjemahaken ten basa Jawi*

30) *Ngapunten, kados kulo sin klintu, kirang jelas pas nerangaken*

Sentences 18-21 are praises often generously given by the teacher. It’s easily seen that in saying this the teacher is employing the positive politeness strategy, the approbation principle, agreement principle and sympathy principle to maintain the *santris*’ positive face.

Another politeness strategy is employed in sentences 22-26: off-record, a kind of indirect politeness strategy. In this strategy, the speaker is removing himself from any imposition whatsoever. Usually, giving hints, using metaphor, being ambiguous or vague, using ellipsis are ways to carry out this strategy. In Sentences 22-24, the teacher is not criticizing *santri* directly; instead, she uses the indirect way to hint at the mistake or the improper performance of the students, thus maintaining their face. While in Sentences 25-26, *ustadz* is being ambiguous by using “*Kulo ragu*”, “*Oh*” to show indirectly that there’s something wrong with the *santri*’s answers. And here, the tact principle and agreement principle is reflected.

“*Menawi*” in sentences 27 and 28 are markers of another negative politeness principle—hedge. *Ustadz* maintains the student’s negative face by using these words. The similar expressions are: I think, I hope, I suggest, etc. Of course, the strategy of hint is also reflected in them, which is often the case in many other examples: not only one strategy is employed. Here, the tact principle and sympathy principle are applied.

In sentences 29 and 30, one of the negative politeness strategies—admit the impingement is employed. The teacher here is trying to admit her own fault in order to save the student’s negative face. Besides, the tact principle, generosity principle, and modest principle are used here.

D. Classroom Management

This refers to discipline instructions, discipline directives (orders, requests, questions, and calls), procedural instructions, and procedural directives.

31) *Tulung tenang!*

- 32) *Pun ngomong piambek!*
 33) *Cobak dibahas kalian rencang sampean*
 34) *Dibagi dados kalih kelompok, monggo*
 35) *Nopoo mboten lenggah jejer mawon?*
 36) *Kulo seneng menawi sampean saget jawab pertanyaan niki*
 37) *Ayo cepetan, kirang 5 menit.*
 38) *Sampun cekap. Waktune sampun telas.*

In sentence 31 and 32, the teacher is using the bald-on-record strategy by ordering the students directly to maintain classroom order in the shortest possible time. In sentences 33-35, the direct strategy is used once again. Sentences 33 and 34 appear in imperative sentences and Sentence 35 use an interrogative sentence. Sentence 36 reflects a negative politeness strategy: go on record as incurring a debt. In assigning this task, the teacher is using this strategy to be polite for this is a kind of help from the *santri*. In sentences 37 and 38, several politeness strategies are used together. First, imperative sentences of the direct politeness are used; then, one of the positive politeness strategies—in group identity marker is used; next, a kind of mitigation strategy is also used: supportive moves. “*kirang 5 menit*”, “*waktune sampun telas*” can be looked on as the supportive moves here which present the reasons for the central moves. The purpose of *ustadz*’s using this is to get the *santris*’ understanding and cooperation.

Moreover, the study can be clearly shown in the following two tables (As for those sentences which employ more than one strategies, only one major strategy is counted in the table.):

TABLE 1	Bald-on-record	positive	negative	Off-record	Total
number	15	26	20	10	71
percentage	21.1%	36.6%	28.2%	14.1%	100%

TABLE 2	academic	motivation	evaluation	management	total
Speech act strategy					
Bald-on-record	3 13.6%	3 25%	1 4.3%	8 57.2%	15
positive	8 36.4%	4 33.3%	11 47.8%	3 21.4%	26
negative	10 45.5%	4 33.3%	3 13.1%	3 21.4%	20
Off-record	1 4.5%	1 8.4%	8 34.8%	0 0%	10
total	22 100%	12 100%	23 100%	14 100%	71

A. Table 1

In the process of this class, I altogether got 71 of *ustadz*’s sentences that have something to do with politeness. From Table1, it can be easily seen that in this class, *ustadz* employs all the four strategies, with the positive strategy making up the greatest proportion: 36%, and next negative strategy 28.2%, then bald bald-on-record strategy 21% and lastly off-record only 14.1%. The numbers show that the teacher is quite concerned with the students’ need to be liked or approved of, and he is trying not to hinder or obstruct the *santris*’ thought as well as their activities. That the off-record instead of bald-on-record is the least used strategy is a little bit surprising. I had thought

the bald-on-the record would be the least because this strategy is often used between friends or people who know each other well. In this class, the teacher is a young girl and she has quite harmonious relationship with the students. This can be easily seen through my interview with his and his *santri*. So this is one reason why the bald-on-record strategy is used in his class more than I had thought. The second reason may be that the time when I did the research is near the end of the term. *Ustadz* is hurrying to finish the prearranged teaching task, so off-record strategy such as hint, vagueness, metaphor, etc is used less while bald-on-record which is direct is used more.

B. Table 2

I also found it was interesting to analyze the distribution of the different strategies in the different speech acts. From Table2, we can see in academic instruction, negative strategy occupies the most part: 45.5%. This shows that in teaching, *ustadz* is trying to give *santri* the most possible freedom to act as they choose in class. She doesn't want to impede them by her acts. Positive strategy occupies 36.4% in this speech act, which means the teacher is trying to take the *santri*'s desire to be liked or approved of into full consideration in her teaching process. Off-record is used the least in this speech act because the teaching method in this class can hardly be called "student-centered", so it is the teacher who speaks the most in class. He needn't use much hint or metaphor in carrying out her teaching.

As for the motivation act, positive and negative strategies have equal proportion and are the most employed strategies in this speech act. As is mentioned above, in activating the student, the teacher is also taking into account the *santris*' desire to be approved and need to be unimpeded. Like in the academic instruction act, off-record strategy is used the least here because time is limited and the close relationship allows more bald-on-record strategy.

In the evaluation act, positive strategy still occupies the most proportion: 43%. This tells us the teacher is making great efforts to encourage the students: giving the most possible approval and agreement, which will contribute to *santris*' interested learning and active participation. Here, bald-on-record is used the least, because the teacher doesn't want to embarrass the *santri* by his comment. So this strategy is only used occasionally with a proportion of 4.3%, while off-record strategy is more frequently used for the teacher is trying to point out the students' mistakes or shortcomings indirectly.

Contrary to this, in the management act, bald-on-record is used most with the proportion of 57.2%. *Ustadz* doesn't want to spend much time in managing the class, so she uses the direct way to maintain the discipline and give procedure orders. In this act, positive and negative strategy again makes up the same proportion: 21.4% while no off-record is found maybe because there is no need to be so indirect in managing a class.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis above, also from my observation and interview with the teacher and the students, a conclusion can be drawn that politeness does exist in this *Madrasah Diniyah* class; politeness does promote the mutual understanding and harmonious relationship between teacher and students; politeness does enhance teaching and benefit the students; politeness does contribute to the effective interaction and friendly, lively atmosphere in *Madrasah Diniyah* classroom. Moreover, this institution is under *Pesantren* which is an Islamic institution that always employ religion teaching in the daily life. This is also contribute a big deal to the implementation of

teaching method that done in the classroom.

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