

# Responses to Caring Speech Acts: The Politeness Strategies of Indonesian Students in Academic Activities

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**Abstract**—This study aims to identify the forms of language-based politeness when interacting with lecturers and other students in academic activities. The basic theory used in this research is the theory of speech acts according to Searle and the theory of politeness according to Leech (2014). This research includes qualitative research using a pragmatic approach. The results showed that in the interaction between students and interaction between students and lecturers through speech acts that implicate an event speech indifferent. Indifference or care is one form of student character that can make stock for himself as a graduate who can be competitive, in the world of work.

**Keywords**—pragmatics; politeness; character; student; competitiveness

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the reformation of 1997, the freedom of the Indonesian people to argue more open, especially cohesive press openness. Criticisms, suggestions, feedback, and satisfied or dissatisfied statements can be presented transparently without fear. Anyone can argue openly. If anyone breaks the law, the act is the law, not power. If anyone breaks the norm rule, the rewards are social sanctions, not hatred against a person. That's the reality that happened.

Furthermore in the world of education. The result of the reforms that took place in 1997 also had an impact on the daily interaction between lecturers and students. Students feel more freedom in expressing opinions or assessment of lecturers. The way of expressing opinions or interactions also shifts slightly compared to the pre-reform era. However, it must be realized that the state of Indonesia is a state of law. In the community, there is etiquette, manners, and morals to be followed. Able to speak good and true also polite is a mirror of a cultured nation and character (Keraf, 2000, p. 64). This is in line with the mandate submitted by RI Law No. 20 of 2003 on National Education System.

In this case, the police role of language is not denied to play a role in realizing the goals contained in the Act. Therefore, whoever we are, speaking politely is a necessity. Moreover, the profession as a lecturer at the spearhead to educate and shape the character of the

nation's children. Speaking and being polite is a necessity of every person, not just an obligation. Someone who speaks and behaves politely is actually intended as a form of self-actualization. If it turns out that self-actualization with the language and behaves politely can be pleasing to the said partner, is actually just an effect and not a goal. Everyone should maintain honor and dignity. This is so that others will appreciate it too. This is the essence of polite language.

The urgency of this research is the phenomenon of the use of language politeness of students who tend to experience irregularities. The result of this research is the form of language politeness that students can use as part of the soft skill supplies in entering the world of work as well as the strengthening of polite character in the academic context.

Similarly, the interaction between students and lecturers in polytechnic. As a social group, the interaction between students and lecturers in academic activities certainly applies certain principles in every conversation. In interaction, the lecturer has the power and control of the students. Students as lecturers in the class have lower status so that they can be arranged within certain limits. Ownership of power and control of the student is a special role of the lecturer when in a variety of academic activities. One of the social rules that must be applied is the principle of politeness.

Through politeness, speakers and hearer who engage in interaction through conversations in the running smoothly because they are able to connect the language with various aspects of social structure. When a student interacts with a lecturer in any academic activity, the student must understand politeness through speech acts as a lecturer, conveys his or her ideas, expresses agreement or disapproval, reveals indifference to a particular situation, and other speech acts.

Previous studies have done similar studies on speech, form, and politeness strategy in the classroom. However, some things that distinguish the emphasis is only on politeness strategies through the act of speech directive in the class (Sari, 2012, Suparno, 2014), politeness strategy through acting speech ask (Alfatah, 2009;

Azhariah, 2010); the level of politeness in academic interaction based on education level (Khani and Darabi, 2014); form of student and lecturer politeness (Gunawan, 2013; Saleh and Baharman, 2016); verbal civility in society (Simpson, 2012); politeness of the studentship language (Prabowo, 2016). This research is more emphasized in the speech study that implies the form of positive politeness and represents caring or indifferent attitude in the interaction pattern between students and lecturers based when the lecturer performs its role in academic activities on campus.

The indication of language polite can be known from the form of verbal and nonverbal politeness. The verbal form of politeness can be known based on the use of language in the process of speech. However, the form of nonverbal language politeness can be studied using the theory of speech events and speech context.

A speech event is a social event in the interaction between a speaker and a hearer in a particular situation to convey a particular idea or purpose. Submission of ideas or objectives in speech events can be done explicitly or implicitly, meaning the intent is presented openly and there is also an implied purpose in a speech. Yule (2006, p. 99) argues that the event speech is an incident when the participants of the speech. A speech event is a social event in the interaction between a speaker and a hearer in a particular situation to convey a particular idea or purpose. Submission of ideas or objectives in speech events can be done explicitly or implicitly, meaning the intent is presented openly and there is also an implied purpose in a speech. Yule (2006, p. 99) argues that speech events are an occurrence when participants of speech interact with the language in conventional ways to obtain a result. In a speech event, the role of speakers and hearers can be alternated. Parties who used to be listeners or hearers, after hearing and understanding utterances spoken by speakers will immediately react to act speech, as a speaker or hearer. Conversely, who originally acted as speakers changed is now a hearer.

The language and the society in which the language is used are closely related. One can affect the other. The interaction of lecturers and students in classrooms also create a particular discourse where both lecturers and students are actively participating in constituting intact communication. A lot of topics about language use in wider society have been discussed by many linguists for years. One of the most exposed topics is the use of politeness. Grundy (2000) says that "politeness principles have been considered to have wide descriptive power in respect of language use, to be major determinants of linguistic behavior, and to have universal status." In respect to language, politeness corresponds to the use of indirect speech acts, addressing others using respectful tone, or utilizing

polite utterances such as please, sorry, or thank you (Watts, 2003).

Mugford (2011) rephrases that students' different characteristics can be altered through classroom interaction. Therefore, a good classroom interaction is necessary for both teacher and student. A good interaction is able to make students develop their abilities in academic or non-academic sense. It is because, inside the classroom, a lecturer does not only provide subject materials but also share moral values that will benefit students outside the classroom. For lecturers, a good interaction enables them to build a positive relationship with their students so that the gap between them can be bridge by good communication skills. This is the reason why carrying out effective communication in the classroom is very important and cannot be underestimated.

The following research questions are formulated: (1) How do students perceive the lecturers' and the other student's utterances? and (2) How the pragmatics role in building the competitive character of the students?

## II. METHOD

The data collection is done by the method of referring note that is by listening at once do recording, observation and documentation. According to Mahsun (2014, p. 92) method is to get data that is done by listening about the use of language. This study was conducted by analyzing the classroom interaction, particularly the speech acts generated by the university student which include face-threatening acts and face-saving acts in speech event. The data in the form of words were the utterances produced by the students during the academic interaction.

This study was conducted in Polytechnic Indonusa of Surakarta, Indonesia. Five active male and female lecturers were designated as the research subjects. The lecturers who were designed for the current study were teaching five different courses. The other participants were 128 (one hundred and twenty-eight) students taught by the selected five lecturers. The needs to observe the students were to see how those students responded to their lecturers' interactive utterances and viewed the relationship between the utterances with the power held by the lecturers in the classroom.

In the current study, the researchers attended the intended classes and recorded the lecturer-student interaction during the teaching and learning process, without interfering the interaction in the classroom. The researchers utilized a video recorder to record the interaction. Without neglecting the whole class interaction, the record focused on the lecturers' and students' speeches recorded during the classroom observation were then transcribed. In this step, the

researchers did the data reduction to sort only the utterances containing awareness by the lecturer toward the students or by the student toward the other student.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To answer the research questions, the researchers represented the speech acts used by the students' and lecturers' utterances and the general students' perception on the lecturers' speech in academic interaction.

#### A. Speech Acts in Practice Lectures

##### 1) Assertive's speech act and giving information

Lecturer:

*"Hari ini kita akan praktik tentang Chasis dan Daya."*

*"Today you will take Chasis and Power practice exams."*

Context:

Lecturers informed about practical exams and some students who were marching neatly to start practice exams in Automotive Workshop that day some of them gave a nod as a sign of understanding the information submitted by the lecturer.

##### 2) The declarative's speech act of the speech decides

Mahasiswa : *"Kalau yang ini sudah selesai, terus dibalik gitu ya, pak?"*

Dosen : *"Iya, silakan".*

Student : *"If this one is finished, keep it behind so ya, sir?"*

Lecturer : *"Yes, please".*

Context:

Students who ask questions after getting the answer from the lecturer's decision, then do what the lecturer said.

##### 3) The directive's speech act of the ordering

Dosen : *"Tuliskan pada sampung kanan atas nama Anda."*

Lecturer : *"Write on the right side on your name."*

Context:

The student immediately writes the name on the theoretical paper sheet according to the instruction of the lecturer.

##### 4) The directive's speech act of the suggesting

Dosen : *"Yang mau maju duluan siapa, saya nggak menentukan."*

Lecturer : *"Who wants to advance first, I do not decide."*

Context:

Students immediately respond to lecturers' comments in the form of questions as well as suggest made a deal in the class, who will advance the exam first. Because

previously been determined two groups that practice exams, namely transmission groups and differential groups.

##### 5) The expressive's speech act of praising

Dosen : *"Wah, Tegar.....joooss!" (Dosen sambil mengacungkan jari jempol kanannya).*

Lecturer : *"Tegar ... good!" (Lecturer while holding up his right thumb).*

Context:

The lecturer gave praise to a student named Tegar who has completed the practice with a faster time and the results are good.

##### 6) The commissif's speech act of challenging

Dosen : *"Di antara kalian yang sanggup menyelesaikan praktik ini dengan waktu yang lebih cepat dari standar, saya beri nilai A."*

Lecturer : *"Among you who can complete this practice with a faster time than standard, I give an A."*

Context:

Lecturers provide such challenges, students feel challenged to practice more quickly than the time given and the results remain good.

##### 7) The directive's speech act of persuading

Dosen : *"Dalam rangkaian pengisian itu ada arus yang dimulai dari baterai untuk menghidupkan lampu indikator. Ketika di-on-kan, lampu akan menyala."*

Lecturer : *"In the charging circuit there is a current that starts from the battery to turn on the indicator light. When it's on, the light will go on."*

Context:

Although there is no command command, but the lecturer's speech is able to influence the student to do according to the statement given by the lecturer.

##### 8) The expressive's speech act of the reprimanding

Dosen : *"Ini siapa yang ngecas aki? Tahu tidak, prosedur ngecas aki itu gimana?"*

Lecturer : *"Who is charging batteries? Do you know what the battery ngecas procedure is?"*

Context:

There are students who have violated the procedure when the electrical practice, ie the battery menyai by not opening the cell cover. Otherwise, it will cause the battery to explode. This is very dangerous for safety. Therefore, the error of this procedure makes the lecturer angry.

##### 9) The directive's speech act of the addressing

*Dosen* : "Siapa yang meletakkan logam di atas aki ini?"

*Lecturer* : "Who put metal on this battery?"

Context:

The lecturer gives a reprimand to the student who has placed the metal object on the battery. This will cause danger, is blasting battery.

10) *The directive's speech act of the criticizing*

*Dosen* : "Baru kemarin sudah dijelaskan dan dipraktikkan to, masak sih sekarang ujian kok lupa cara mempraktikkan."

*Lecturer* : "Just yesterday has been explained and practiced to, cook is still the exam how to forget how to practice."

Context:

The lecturer examined the students who had forgotten to operate a tool in the automotive workshop, whereas only a few days ago it was put into practice.

11) *The directive's speech act of the satiring*

*Dosen* : "Yusuf, kamu kok ganteng sendiri to, yang lain pake wearpack. Kamu kok pake kaos."

*Lecturer* : "Yusuf, you're handsome yourself to, others wear wearpack. You're wearing T-shirts."

Context:

The lecturer quipped to a student named Yusuf because he was not wearing a uniform for practice in the workshop. This led to the acts of perlocution on Yusuf's friends who gave cheers, "Huuuuu ...."

After analyzing the data, the researchers found that lecturers menggunakan empat jenis tidak tutur dengan berbagai subtindak tutur yang memiliki implikasi pada sikap acuh atau sikap peduli. Hal itu ditunjukkan melalui teguran, sindiran, dan marah. For the politeness in classroom, the researchers found various uses strategies. The researchers noted the use the positive face-saving view, the lecturers made use of particul expressions (e.g. you know), appreciative expression (e.g. thank you, good), mentioning the students' name, and polite markers (e.g. please).

#### B. *Pragmatic Role in Building Student Character*

Activity speak is an actual event that someone does in his daily life. In a pragmatics study, the utterance is the smallest unit of verbal interaction that expresses action. All verbal communication involves speech acts. Language will be meaningful when used as a social tool that aims to communicate. In this case, the speech has a relation to the politeness of language because speak is a reflection of politeness in communicating. Language politeness as a form of language use is always paired

with social relations and social roles in society and culture.

The diversity of the formal form and the pragmatic function of language courtesy is conveyed through various language-politeness strategies. This is in line with Wijana's (2010) view which suggests that speech acting strategy can be manifested through imperative, declarative, and interrogative, meaningful literal or nonliteral, and direct or indirect. Language politeness through various formal forms of linguistics and its various pragmatic functions can't be separated from the context of its use. The context includes (a) knowledge, (b) situations and knowledge, (c) situations and texts, and (d) knowledge, situations, and texts. Sociopragmatically, the context of language politeness can be classified into three parts. First, the context of the speech situation is the context of the conversation that occurs in certain situations with the use of language according to the situation. Second, the context of the speech event is the context of the occurrence or the ongoing linguistic interaction in one form of speech or more involving two parties, namely the speaker and the hearer with a single subject in a particular time, place, and situation. Third, the context of speech acts is the basic unit of communication as a tool of analysis. Illokutif, the context of this speech act can be assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion in this research is student character can be built by using polite language through various speech events in the interaction between student and lecturer in academic activity. In the speech event, are various types of speech acts. Speech actions that have implications on the attitude of ignorance or care about a mistake is a form of politeness in the language that reflects the character of students who have competitiveness.

For future researchers who are willing to conduct similar research, they need to include a larger amount and variety of data so that generalization can be made more reliable. Further studies are expected to consider the non-verbal expressions such as tone, mimics, and gestures to see how those expressions complementing the utterances are generated by lecturers. The future studies are also recommended to involve more research subjects, in this case lecturers with various backgrounds for comparison to figure out how far actually the different backgrounds of the interlocutors can affect their language.



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