

The Investigation of Politeness Strategies in Teacher-Student Interactions: The Use of the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to explore the usage of politeness strategies in teacher-student interactions in the teaching and learning process. The spoken data from the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) were collected using a corpus-based approach. The question was whether the four politeness strategies in the findings were used by both teachers and students or either one. Fourteen transcriptions of academic interactions between teachers and students were analyzed through Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies (1987). Qualitative analysis of the data was used to describe the usage of politeness strategies. Quantitative analysis of the data was used to calculate the frequency and percentage of the politeness strategies. The data revealed that in the classroom interactions, four kinds of politeness strategies – bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record were used. In teacher- student classroom interactions, positive politeness strategies were the most frequently used. Clear instructions were given to students by using bald on record; a close relationship between teachers and students was maintained by using positive politeness; the direct expressions to students were softened by using negative politeness, and off record was used to give hints to get expected answers from students. The effect of using politeness strategies in teacher-student interactions can engage students in classroom activities, inspire students' learning interests, establish a respectful relationship between teachers and students, and create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere.

Keywords: Politeness strategies, teaching and learning process, teacher-student interactions

1. INTRODUCTION

Politeness really needs to be implemented into classroom interactions since it plays an instrumental role in social interaction (Senowarsito, 2013). Maintaining politeness in the class is a good strategy to achieve effective classroom interaction (Mahmud, 2018). Thus, teacher-student interactions should support the teaching and learning process. It means that both teachers and students in their interactions should pay attention to not only the content of their language but also their ways of interaction (e.g., euphemistic expression, elegance in speech, appropriately spoken language). However, there are some issues of impoliteness among teachers and students that occur in their communication. For example, students sometimes do not mention their names or directly state their intention when texting their teachers, which makes the lecturers annoyed and reluctant to reply (Rahmi, 2019). Most teachers are unconcerned about the language that they use inside or outside the classroom (Ceriyantina, 2019). For some students who are sensitive about teachers' words, their self-esteem may be hurt when they get some unfriendly criticism. Dani (2017) further claimed that impoliteness can cause classroom interactions to be less effective and adversely influence the students' achievement in communication.

A classroom is a place for teacher-student interactions. It should be effective, harmonious, and polite. In classroom interactions, the adoption of politeness strategies (e.g., praise, compliment, indirect request) is believed to create a friendly, lively atmosphere, shorten social distance between teachers-students, create respectful communications and togetherness between teachers and students, motivate students in their study and build their self-confidence (Jiang, 2010; Purandina, Seken, Budasi & Lin, 2014; Rauf, 2017). In addition, politeness as a strategy practiced by teachers and students can create a good environment. This type of setting ensures that the teaching and learning process runs smoothly, allowing students to be able to easily absorb the information provided by teachers (Wijayanti, Wijayanto & Marmanto, 2020). Positive interactions are important to contribute to learners' language development and help the learners to get good results as a result. (Consolo, 2006; Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Hall, 2001). Therefore, politeness strategies are very necessary for teacher-student interactions. There are many studies (Arif et al., 2018; Etae et al., 2016; Mahmud, 2018; Peng et al., 2014; Sulu, 2015) have investigated the application of politeness strategies through classroom observation, interviews, and questionnaires, but few researchers have used the corpus to investigate how politeness strategies are used in English academic spoken discourse. Therefore, this research is to bridge a gap in the analysis of politeness strategies used in the corpus.

The objective of this research is to find out what types of politeness strategies are used by teachers and students in academic spoken interactions; thus, the investigation of linguistic politeness in the use of the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) is enriched. In practical terms, the proper use of politeness strategies is of great importance to both teachers and students. With the guidance of politeness strategies, students will know how to apply politeness strategies to protect teachers' face to have friendly relationships with them. In addition, being aware of students' needs can protect students' faces and their self-esteem, which can inspire students' learning motivation and create a positive learning atmosphere.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Politeness

Different scholars have given different notions on politeness. Grice's cooperative principle (1975) describes four conversational rules that people should follow in communication: be sincere, be relevant, be clear, and do not say more/less than required. Otherwise, people will misunderstand each other. However, it is very common for people to intentionally violate these principles in their daily conversations. Leech (1983) develops his politeness principle to solve the issues of why people violate the cooperative principle in communication. The core content of Leech's politeness principle is that speakers should try to express the idea that is favorable to others and try not to cause offense to others. Cutting (2002) emphasizes that politeness is concerned with cautious words in order to make others comfortable and pleasant. This is consistent with what Thomas (1995) introduces the "Pollyanna Principle" to some extent, which suggests that a person finds the best way to say something and talk about fun things. Furthermore, concerning language, using indirect speech acts, speaking in a respectful tone, or using words such as "please", "sorry" or "thank you" are all examples of politeness (Watts, 2003). In relation to the concept of face, politeness is the measures taken to express awareness of another person's face during a conversation (Yule, 1996).

2.2 Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies

Politeness is closely related to face in social interaction. The notion of "face" and "face work" were firstly proposed by Goffman (1955). He believes that face exists in human communications and people usually do a lot of face work to avoid threatening others' face and also to save their own face. Based on Goffman's (1967) notion of face, Brown and Levinson (1987) believe that "face" is

the “public self- image that every member wants to claim for himself (p.61)”. In order to protect the hearer’s face and minimize the face-threatening acts, Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed four politeness strategies. The first strategy is bald on record, which conveys the information in a direct, clear, and concise way. The speakers use this strategy because they want to deliver the information efficiently more than satisfy the hearer’s face. The second strategy is positive politeness strategy, which tends to minimize the potential threat to the hearers’ positive face. Positive politeness utterances are shown to save the individual’s positive face by approval or appreciation of the individual’s ideas or performance. The third strategy is negative politeness strategy applying to the negative face, which refers to one’s freedom of action unimpeded. The speakers can perform this strategy by using hedges, being indirect, or giving deference in the sentence to make requests to others. The fourth strategy is off record. It is the use of indirect and ambiguous utterances, which makes the speakers avoid the responsibility for doing FTA.

2.3 Relevant Studies on Politeness Strategies in Teacher-Student Interactions

A study conducted by Jiang (2010) in Chinese EFL classrooms focused on teachers’ politeness, aiming to find out what were the polite lexical items used by teachers and how these polite utterances were applied in teachers’ control speech acts. This study revealed that being polite in the class can help develop mutual understanding and a harmonious connection between teachers and students, improve teaching and benefit the students, and contribute to the successful interaction and a friendly and lively learning atmosphere in EFL classrooms. Marpaung (2019) found that the use of a positive politeness strategy makes the teaching and learning process less dull and strengthens the relationship between teacher and students. Teachers’ usage of positive politeness had gratified students’ faces and the students can minimize the teacher’s face threatening actions by doing this strategy. Plaza and Álvarez (2013) explored the discourse strategies used by MICASE teachers as well as the structure they use when delivering the subject content. The results showed that the use of questions in an informal conversational style like “Why do you_?”, “How do you_?” , and “What do you_?” by teachers with students foster their participation. Students use interrogative forms like “Would you” and “Could/Can you” as requests to overcome a communication breakdown. Another study conducted by Monsefi and Hadidi (2015) found that students were positively affected by the use of more politeness strategies in the EFL context, and female teachers’ employment of more polite strategies had a beneficial effect on the teacher-student interaction and learning process. This study can conclude that there is a direct relationship between using more polite strategies and the learning process.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

In order to explore the types of politeness strategies used in academic spoken interactions, the conceptual framework for this study, as shown in figure 1, was developed based on the literature review.

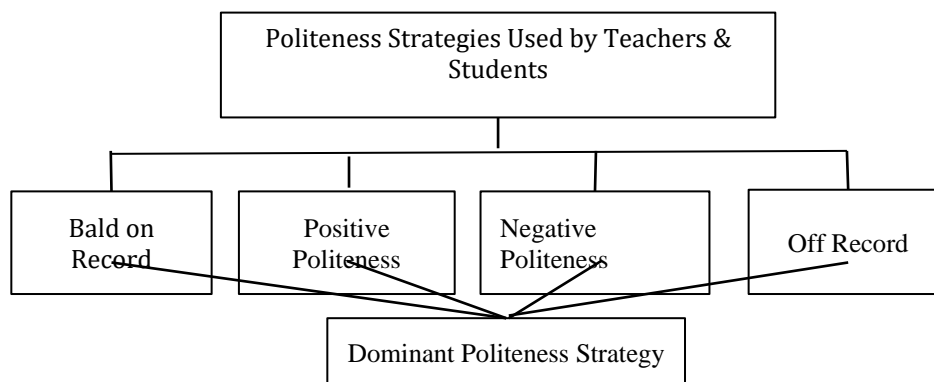


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used a corpus-based approach to explore the use of politeness strategies in the authentic academic lectures in MICASE. MICASE is a spoken language corpus containing 152 academic transcripts recorded at the University of Michigan between 1997 and 2002. Since this research focused on how teachers and students use politeness strategies in their communication, the language should not have changed much even if the data is old. In addition, MICASE provides the full transcripts of conversations between teachers and students, which helps to understand the full setting of the conversation. Each transcript provides information about the speech event type, the subject area of the event, the interactivity rating of interactive or monologic, and also the academic role. The transcripts of this study were limited to three kinds of speech event types (lecture-small, office hours and seminar) with highly interactive. Finally, fourteen transcriptions of academic interactions were selected. The data were collected in the form of utterances containing politeness strategies in terms of words, phrases, and sentences. All the utterances collected were classified into bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record strategies based on Brown and Levinson’s politeness strategies (1987). Quantitative analysis of data was used to present the distribution of each type of politeness strategy. Qualitative analysis of data was used to illustrate the types of politeness strategies that are employed.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Quantitative Results

Table 1 The Use of Politeness Strategies in the Classroom Interactions

Types of Politeness Strategies	Data Coding	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bald on Record	BOR	61	8
Positive Politeness	POS	563	68
Negative Politeness	NEG	193	23
Off Record	OFF	9	1
Total		826	100%

Table 1 showed that there were a total 826 utterances containing politeness strategies produced in the interactions. The data showed that 61 (8%) expressions were classified as Bald on Record, 563 (68%) were classified as Positive Politeness, 193 (23%) were classified as Negative Politeness, and 9 (1%) were classified as Off Record.

Table 2 Overall Politeness Strategies Performed by Teachers and Students

No.	Types of Politeness Strategies	Frequency			
		Teachers		Students	
		n	%	n	%
1	Bald on Record	60	8.5	1	0.8
2	Positive Politeness	491	69.7	72	59
3	Negative Politeness	144	20.5	49	40.2
4	Off Record	9	1.3	-	-
	Total	704	100%	122	100%

Table 2 showed overall politeness strategies performed by teachers and students. It showed that the number of teachers' utterances containing politeness strategies was almost six times higher than the number of utterances produced by the students. Students only produced 122 utterances among fourteen transcripts selected. There were four politeness strategies performed by teachers with 8.5% utterances applied bald on record, 69.7% positive politeness, 20.5% negative politeness, and 1.3% off record, while three politeness strategies were performed by students with a percentage of 0.8% bald on record, 59% positive politeness, and 40.2% negative politeness. The most dominant politeness strategy by teachers and students was positive politeness.

4.2 Qualitative

4.2.1 Results Bald on Record

According to Brown & Levinson (1987), bald on record refers to the speaker not taking the hearer's face into consideration. This strategy can be used when the speaker has more power or higher social status than the hearer. In the context of teaching and learning, teachers give instructions, or commands to students using direct imperatives, giving a clear and concise direction on what students need to do. The use of bald on record in this study was realized through task-oriented instructions, farewells, and welcoming.

Extract 1 (Strategy of task-oriented/paradigmatic form of instruction)

T1: [...] okay, next one, sixteen-three. this isn't that awful, (omnis virum is it?) no not yet okay, good. Tanya. sixteen-three deus_ **read the whole thing aloud in Latin.**
 <PAUSE:07>

S7: deus superbis resistet humilibus autem dat gratiam.

In this extract, the teacher gave the instruction directly to the student, for instance, "read the whole thing aloud in Latin". It was clear that the teacher did not attempt to minimize the threat to the student's face, since the teacher did not ask about the student's willingness to answer her question. However, the teacher's intention was to deliver the information efficiently to the student, so that the student can respond to the teacher's instruction. This sub-strategy – a task-oriented form of instruction created cooperation between teacher and students. Such task-oriented instruction is very common in classroom interactions. This strategy is used when the

speaker has higher power than the hearer. It is in line with this context, teachers are guides in the classroom activities, with the asymmetrical power relationship in the classroom context, they enjoy more authority over their students and power than students.

Extract 2 (Strategy of farewells)

S4: I'll see you tom- I'm not gonna be here Thursday so can i turn in my Thursday responses tomorrow? T1: yes, and let's see, you do, you do know that it's going to be posted the final, [S4: yes] exam questions are gonna be posted on the web and you have a way of, of logging in, [S4: mhm] from wherever you're gonna be okay.

S4: yes [T1: okay] okay T1: alright. **see you.**

S4: I'll see you tomorrow **have a good day.** T1: you too.

S4: oop, i missed it <LAUGH>

In excerpt 2, the respect behavior used is leave-taking by using bald on record. This scene happened when the teacher and the student were finishing their meeting. As leave-taking expressions, "see you" and "have a good day" indicated an ending of conversations between the teacher and the student. In addition, "see you" showed that there will be the next meeting between teacher and student. In turn, the student gave a positive response to the teacher's farewells. The farewells serve to structure the conversation in a polite way. The use of farewells reflects good manners and respect between the teacher and student in order to create a positive relationship between themselves. This strategy is actually oriented to face. It is the need to save face that both the teacher and students should respect each other.

Extract 3 (Strategy of welcoming)

S5: Nan?

T2: **hi.**

S5: **hi** it's your office hours right now right?

T2: yeah nobody's here [S5: okay] **come on in.** I'll be right with you. [S5: okay] um, **how are you doing Silvi?**

S5: pardon me?

T2: **how are you doing?**

S5: **uh I'm okay, how'bout you?**

T2: oh keeping busy. um. lemme just brush this up and we'll be fine. <PAUSE:21> there were some students here, earlier.

Excerpt 3 is an example of welcoming. When the student came to the teacher's office, they greeted each other by saying "hi", "how are you doing", and "how about you?". Such greetings express a caring and respectful behavior in teacher-student interpersonal communication and encourage a positive relationship between themselves. Then, the teacher made an invitation "come on in" to the student, which appears to be approachable to the student. Such invitations "come in" are bald on record imperative. But the firmer invitation, the more polite is, provided that no other face wants are infringed.

4.2.2 Positive Politeness

Positive politeness has the function to claim common ground with other people, to treat both the speaker and the hearer as members of a group and friends, to satisfy others' face wants (to be liked, admired, cared about...). This strategy expresses appreciation and approval of others' performance in order to save their positive face and minimize the threat to theirs, which is to flow the social relationship smoothly with others.

Extract 4 (POS 15: Give gifts to H – goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)

T1: i think **your descriptions are really good**, you just need to be careful that you separate out what you're imagining about these [S3: mhm] people from, you know what you can, what you observe.

S3: okay. **thank you very much**. T1: you're very welcome.

From excerpt 4, the teacher appreciated the student's English composition by saying "your description are really good". The positive feedback toward the student's work with an exaggerated intonation of "really" not only encouraged the student's motivation to learn but also maintained her positive face, which softened the impending of a face-threatening act. The thanking expression "thank you very much" showed the student's gratitude for the teacher's suggestion on her work, which avoided a face-threatening act. In this excerpt, it can be seen that both the teacher and student try to create a pleasant atmosphere in their conversations by giving a compliment and expressing gratitude.

Extract 5 (POS 4: Use in-group identify markers)

T1: okay um... okay **guys** um, like to get back, back together. and just to to poll where you **guys** got to in your deliberations, did you, did you **guys** come up with a with a, with a best answer?

From the above excerpt 5, it was shown that the address form "guys" conveys in-group membership. Calling "guys" instead of "students" indicates that the teacher considered the relative power or status difference between herself and students to be small, reducing the threat of face of students and not threatening the student's positive face in their academic interactions. Therefore, students felt that there is a closeness with the teacher.

Extract 6 (POS 12: Include both Speakers and Hearers in the activity & POS 13: Give (or ask for) reasons)

T1: did you were you able to do a draft for the previous paper?

S7: yeah.

T1: okay um, I should've liked to ask Chris uh Eric that too. um, okay. **Let's do Chris's**. <PAUSE0:08> tell you what, um, since I'm getting, kinda tired of just reading the whole thing myself, <LAUGH> **why don't we go around and we'll take paragraphs**, and I'll hold you responsible for talking about that paragraph. okay?

In excerpt 6, when the teacher uttered "let's do Chris", "we go around", and "we'll take paragraphs", he employed the No. 12 strategy – include both S and H in the activity. By using inclusive forms "let's" and "we", the teacher included himself and the students in the activity, which emphasized the cooperation relationship of the teacher with the students when engaging in the instructional activity. Using such inclusive forms not only implies the teacher belongs to the group of students in order to shorten the social distance between them, but also lessens the pressure on students. Thereby, it redresses face-threatening acts. Another aspect of including H in the activity is for the speaker to give a reason as to why he wants what he wants (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The teacher gave the reason why he was getting tired of reading the whole thing himself, therefore, the utterance "why don't we go around and we'll take paragraphs" showed that he needed students to participate in the classroom activity. The expression "why not" is an indirect suggestion, which demands rather than gives reasons. The teacher used "why not" to assume whether students were cooperative to follow his request.

4.2.3 Negative Politeness

Similar to positive politeness, negative politeness is to save others' negative face. The speaker wants to maintain the hearer's right to refuse when making a request of the hearer, which gives the opportunity to the hearer to say no. This strategy shows a social distance between people. The function of negative politeness is to minimize the particular imposition that the face-threatening act unavoidably affects (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In teacher-student interactions, negative politeness is mostly used to request others to do something, and to give students suggestions, avoiding offense by showing respect.

Extract 7 (NEG 1: Be conventionally indirect)

SU-f: (you can have) a bunch of old ones. can_ like this is the homework i brought [T1: mhm] **can you correct that?**

T1: you bet.

SU-f: or, i have the translations (on) back, so

T1: okay, yeah if anybody wants me to look at_ if you wrote out your stuff on the, uh, golden apples thing and you wa- you'd like me to take a look at it just hand it in.

In excerpt 7, the student made a request indirectly to her teacher. The utterance "can you correct that?" indicated that the student realized that there was a different power, therefore, an indirect request was used to show deference to the teacher.

Extract 8 (NEG 2: Question, hedge)

T1: um [S2: every] yeah. You're_ so you need to find another way to say this [S2: mhm] because it sounds like it's the very same thing you just said in the previous paragraph before.

S2: mkay. or maybe i should shorten it? or

T1: um, how long is your paper supposed to be? S2: um i think four to five

T1: well you **might** be able to shorten it and take out some of those, p- [S2: mhm] parts you know where you've where you've said those things [S2: okay.] before.

In excerpt 8, the teacher used the hedge word in the form of modal auxiliary "might" to soften the face-threatening acts of suggestions on the student's composition, making her statement less direct. In this way, the teacher's suggestions toward her student are expressed in a more neutral and polite way.

Extract 9 (NEG 4: Minimize the imposition)

S15: I was just gonna say I think that the mainstream approach is not only, is not only, erotica usually gendered as, female and pornography [T1: mhm] is gendered as male but like I feel like, there's also an assumed class difference? (xx)

T1: mhm yeah that's, yeah that's good. um, meaning what? say **a little bit** more (xx)

S15: meaning meaning something like, it's okay that we're getting off because it is artistic, [...]

In excerpt 9, the teacher tried to modify her direct instruction with polite expression in order to attempt to avoid a great imposition on the student. She used the expression "a little bit" to lessen the imposition by implying that the student was not asked to do very much. By saying "a little bit", the teacher saved the student's negative face and reduced the threat of imposition, which increases the degree of politeness in the teacher's utterance.

Extract 10 (NEG 6: Apologize)

S3: Can I check one answer? [T1: mhm.] when_ do you have time to check T1: I have to go teach at eleven and I'm already a little late **I'm sorry**.

S3: okay never mind.

In excerpt 10, the teacher apologized to the student by giving an overwhelming reason – “I have to teach at eleven and I'm already a little late”. By giving an overwhelming reason, the speaker can claim that he has compelling reasons for doing the FTA, thereby implying that normally he would not dream of infringing the hearer's negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The teacher used this strategy to explain why she did not have time to check the answer for the student, which shows that the teacher was aware of the imposition of the negative face on the student and thereby partially redressed infringement.

4.2.4 Off Record

Compared to the bald on record strategy, off record uses an indirect and ambiguous language to convey information to others, which allows the speaker to avoid the responsibility for doing potentially FTA interpretations. In this case, it depends on the hearers to decide how to interpret it and how to take actions to respond to the speakers.

Extract 11 (OFF 1: Give hints)

T1: [...]but um, but Jim what were you going to say? **We only have a, a couple minutes left.**

In excerpt 11, the teacher attempted to use giving hints strategy to finish her lecture. She reminded the student through an indirect statement “we only have a, a couple minutes left”, implying that the student should finish his talk as soon as possible. For the sake of the student's face, the use of off record strategy by the teacher can decrease the face threat to the student, which protects the student's face from embarrassment.

Extract 12 (OFF 15: Be incomplete, use ellipsis)

T1: ... now we're gonna go on and talk about the materials of sculpture, and again remember when we talked about painting we divided, it into water based paint and oil based, um pigment oil mixed pigment, we're gonna divide sculpture equally into these two huge categories. um, one is what um, Taylor calls, um additive, that is sculpture that's made up with a building up of forms so additive, **A D D I T I V E, and the other is...?**

SS: subtractive

T1: excellent. <LAUGH> you got it. subtractive....

This sub-strategy of being incomplete, using ellipsis is legitimated in answers to questions. In excerpt 12, the teacher used an incomplete statement with the ellipsis “and the other is...?” to leave the implication “hanging in the air”. The teacher chose to do that because she wanted to let the students answer another huge category called by Taylors, which gives students participation in the teaching process.

5. DISCUSSIONS

The above results showed that teachers play a dominant role in academic interactions. Teachers' utterances containing politeness strategies were seven times as many as the students' utterances production. Teachers have more authority than students because teachers have a higher social status than students. This phenomenon resulted in the employment of bald on record. The findings showed that teachers used this strategy particularly to give instructions directly to students, which does not minimize the threat to students' face. According to Senowarsito (2013), using direct speech acts imposes and creates pressure on the students, because the threat to students' face is not minimized by the teachers. The fact that teachers choose to give instructions to students in this way also showed that there is an asymmetrical power relationship between them and students. However, these direct and clear expressions are reasonable and acceptable used by teachers since they have to complete teaching tasks within the limited time for teaching (Elisdawati, Husein & Setia, 2018).

The dominant strategy was positive politeness used by both teachers and students. The finding was consistent with the studies of Marpaung (2019) and Purnomo (2020). One possible reason is that all the teachers and students were native English speakers, therefore, their exposure to western culture made them highly use positive politeness strategies. This is consistent with what Brown and Levinson (1987) observed. American culture is generally referred to as a culture with high use of positive politeness. This strategy in this study was achieved by noticing students' needs, showing appreciation towards the students' good performance like "very good", using in-group markers "guys" to reduce the gap, using the inclusive form "Let's" to call for cooperative assumption, expressing thanks for the help, and avoiding disagreement with the expression "but" rather than "no" and so on, which protects students' positive face. Although these are simple polite expressions, it makes both teachers and students feel comfortable and respected in their interactions. Through the use of positive politeness, students' learning motivation is encouraged when receiving praise from teachers (Elisdawati, Husein & Setia, 2018). What's more, the social distance between teachers and students can get closer, which contributes to a good relationship between them.

Negative politeness was the second used frequently in this study. The reason for the use of negative politeness by teachers was to soften the commands to students and to avoid a great deal of imposition on students, which was to protect students' negative face. It was achieved with the conventionally indirect expression "can", the hedge word "might", apology, and minimizing the imposition on the students, lessening the power of the message. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), negative politeness is the heart of respect behavior. The use of "can" by students showed that they give deference to teachers when asking a request, which is clearly seen that there is a different social status between teachers and students.

Off record was the least frequently used strategy in this study, which was in line with the study of Wijayanti et al. (2020). This strategy was usually characterized by indirect speech, which requires the hearer to interpret the speaker's real intentions. The findings showed that this strategy was accomplished by means of using the ellipsis strategy and giving hints. Maybe the reason why teachers rarely use off record strategy could be the fact that it is difficult for the students to interpret the real messages (Purandina et al., 2014). A misunderstood communication sometimes happens if students fail to comprehend the message. Therefore, teachers have to give explanations again, which may waste time in class.

6. CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis of data, it can be concluded that politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) were applied to teacher-student interactions, namely bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. The results showed that there were four politeness strategies employed by teachers, with 8.5% of bald on record, 69.7% of positive politeness, 20.5% of negative politeness, and 1.3% of off record, while students used three politeness strategies with 0.8% of bald on record, 59% of positive politeness, and 40.2% of negative politeness. These strategies were performed by giving instructions, showing appreciation, encouraging, showing gratitude, requesting, showing respect, and so on. The most dominant politeness strategy used by teachers and students was positive politeness. The effect of using politeness strategies in teacher-student interactions can engage students in classroom activities, inspire students' learning interests, establish a respectful relationship between teachers and students, and create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere.

One implication of this research is that both teachers and students should adopt more positive politeness strategies in their interactions to promote teaching and learning, and to increase students' learning motivation. It's very normal for westerners to use this strategy. In the Chinese EFL classroom, teachers and students need to use more positive politeness, too. Chinese teachers and students can learn the use of positive politeness from native speakers. Chinese culture is collectivist, with an emphasis on harmonious relationship management (Hofstede, 2001). Therefore, Chinese teachers can use positive politeness to notice students' learning needs, cooperate with students, praise, seek agreement, and avoid disagreement with students. Thus, students are motivated to engage in classroom activities and the effective interaction between teacher-students is created. Through the use of positive politeness, the distance between teachers and students is decreased and a harmonious connection between teachers and students is developed.

This study has a few limitations. First, this study only focuses on three genres of small lecture, seminar, and office hours interactions in MICASE Corpus. Second, the participants in these three genres are native speakers. Related to this, it is suggested that further studies can consider more different genres and compare the use of politeness strategies between the native and non-native speakers to investigate the application of politeness strategies in teacher-student interactions.

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