

# Politeness In German As A Foreign Language Learning Process In Pattimura University

Juliaans E.R. Marantika<sup>1</sup>, Jolanda Tomasouw<sup>2</sup>, Jhoni Lagun Siang<sup>3</sup>

Department of German Language Education, Faculty of Teachers Training and Educational Sciences, Pattimura University, Ambon-Maluku, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Politeness is an important aspect of human interaction. In daily communication, misunderstandings often occur due to inappropriate use of language. This aspect must be taught in teaching and learning so that students are trained to apply it in daily communication. In fact, the teaching and learning process is often more focused on mastering vocabulary and grammar to support language skills rather than politeness. This study aims to obtain a picture of the level of politeness of students communicating in the context of German language and culture. How do they use the strategy to keep the face of their speech partner? When commenting, for example, do they deliver using direct speech acts or are they more likely to choose indirect forms. The results of the study illustrate that the knowledge of students' politeness in speaking needs to be improved. Although they have learned German, including its communication culture, students still use Indonesian patterns in communication. In asking their friends to do an action or by giving some comment, for example they are more likely to use indirect forms, although according to the context of communication actually considered polite if

delivered with a direct pattern. That happened because they lacked in training how to use language in the context of German culture. For this reason, it is necessary to adjust the curriculum of the German department to accommodate politeness training process in speaking skills. Linguistics skills that are taught for certain communication contexts such as asking for help, borrowing something, inviting, answering questions, making comments, rejecting, conveying information, giving opinions etc. must be complemented with an exercise in how that context authentically used in German culture.

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## Correspondence:

Juliaans E.R

Department of German Language Education, Faculty of Teachers Training and Educational Sciences, Pattimura University, Ambon-Maluku, Indonesia

E-mail: [julians.marantika@yahoo.com](mailto:julians.marantika@yahoo.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

Politeness is closely related to behavior. As social beings, people use polite behavior as the norm to maintain good relations and avoid misunderstandings among themselves. This is important to discuss because misunderstandings usually occur in daily interactions due to communication errors, which are caused by cultural gap. Good intentions are not handled properly and can even cause serious problems just because they are written or spoken in inappropriate language or even contrary to applicable norms. This shows that politeness is a complex and important issue and is directly related to different cultures. Coulmas (2013: 85) quoted in Fitriah (2018: 2) notes that politeness is a non-normative theoretical construction that functions to compare the various standards used in different societies to assess language behavior. In this context, the convention of cultural courtesy used to evaluate people's speech behavior refers to social values.

It is important to remember that, every notion of modesty must acknowledge the fact that every society applies normative notions of modesty of their own. In communication practices, normative ideas are not too dependent on the speaker, situation, and culture. Yule (1996), quoted in Mansoor (2018: 16), states that the language used cannot be illustrated without reference to several aspects relating to society. Most of what we say and most of what we communicate can be identified through our social relationships because language interaction is basically related to our social interactions. This means that it is important to maintain relationships with the speaker, to ensure that the communication developed can be well received.

The emphasis on understanding with others shows that communication partners always provide clues about how they feel about each other. That means communication partners also always provide information about how they

relate to each other, how they value certain statements, what awards they bring to each other and what rewards they claim themselves. With a ritual pattern with which they open and close contact, they form the nature of their relationship with each other. Myers (1988), quoted in Luger (1993: 77), explains that the way couples express their mutual respect can be more or less polite, depending on the use of strategy. The intended strategy is important to protect each other between the speaker and his partner. Ratner (1998: 286) believes that politeness means acting to protect the feelings of others, and acting on both the positive face (the desire to be approved) and the negative face (the desire to be free from coercion, without obstacles or left alone). Thus it can be said that conceptually politeness is directly related to the efforts to protect each other between the speaker and his speaking partner. Some theories developed to lead to that meaning. Lakoff (1990: 34) defines politeness as an "interpersonal relationship system" that is designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in human exchange, or what Yule (2010: 135) calls an attempt to show awareness and consideration for people's faces other. Whereas Brown and Levinson (1987), as quoted by Fitriah and Hidayat (2018: 27), propose an influential modesty model that focuses on rationality and face. Faces in Brown and Levinson's terminology have both positive and negative aspects. Positive politeness is oriented toward the positive face and the positive self-image. "Positive politeness is approach-based. It anoints the face of the addressee by indicating that in some respects; the speaker wants the hearer's wants. Negative politeness is oriented mainly toward partially satisfying or redressing the hearer's negative face, which basically maintains the hearer's self-determination. In relation to this type of politeness, Goffman, (1974, 97) emphasizes that basically, two types of linguistic behavior can be distinguished in the field of politeness: (1). an effort

to give polite treatment to others who should show sympathy or respect (possessive politeness), for example, "can I ask for your help? and (2). Procedures that are intended to avoid avoidance and insult, are called threatening actions to the face, and which can be described as negative politeness. Language actions that are formulated indirectly, for example, include a second type of linguistic consideration in a partner. May I make you aware of the smoking? instead of them, they are not allowed to smoke here. As well as certain attenuation techniques e.g. could you speak a little quieter? instead of talking, don't be so loud. Watts (2003: 85-86) emphasizes that politeness strategies aim at supporting the hearer's positive face and at averting transcending of the hearer's freedom of action and freedom from imposition. The participant should choose appropriate strategies to minimize any face threats occurring in any social activities. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) cited in Mu (2015: 106), the theory includes fifteen positive politeness strategies, such as 1) Notice, attend to the hearer; 2) Exaggerate; 3) Intensify interest to hearer; 4) Use in-group identity markers; 5) Seek agreement; 6) Avoid disagreement; 7) Presuppose, raise, or assert common ground; 8) Joke; 9) Assert or presuppose speaker's knowledge of and concern of hearer's wants; 10) Offer, promise; 11) Be optimistic; 12) Include both speaker and hearer in the activity; 13) Give or ask for reasons; 14) Assume or assert reciprocity; 16) Give gifts to hearer. And ten negative politeness strategies, such as 1) Be conventionally indirect; 2) Question, use hedges; 3) Be pessimistic; 4) Minimize the imposition; 5) Give deference; 6) Apologize; 7) Impersonalize speaker and hearer; 8) State the face threat act as a general rule; 9) Nominalize; 10) Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebted to hearer.

In principle of pragmatics, Leech (1983) cited in Jiang (2010: 652) proposed six maxims of the politeness principle to describe the important function of politeness in linguistic communication. They are (1) the tact maxim; (2) the generosity maxim; (3), the approbation maxim; (4) the modesty maxim; (5) the agreement maxim, and (6) the sympathy maxim. In addition to the pragmatic politeness principle above, Ogiermann (2009: 191), assume a correlation between indirectness and politeness, and most empirical work centers on issues of indirectness. According to Leech, indirectness implies optionality for the hearer, and therefore the degree of politeness are often increased "by employing a more and more indirect quite illocution" (1983: 108). In Brown and Levinson's theory, in contrast, the correlation between indirectness and politeness largely stems from viewing politeness as deviant from Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975). They distinguish between three main levels of directness in performing a face-threatening act: Off-record strategies explicitly flout Grice's conversational maxims and focus on face-redress, while on-record strategies combined with redressive action have the advantage of being clear and polite at an equivalent time (Brown and Levinson 1987).

As a part of the campus community, students of the German Study Program always attempt to connect

with other campus communities. they're not only curious about the campus environment, but also strive to enhance their self-competence, especially with reference to their German skills. This curiosity forces students to speak with others like faculty, staff, and other students. The communication patterns developed within the educational community got to focus more on master and self-development efforts that balance knowledge, skills, and attitudes as intellectual candidates and educators. during this context, the utilization of correct and accurate language becomes a crucial a part of presenting the identity of educators and prospective professional educators. In communication, students must have respect when speaking. this suggests that the selection of words, language and grammar must be supported by skills in context and within the communication situation. this suggests that students must maintain their language patterns when communicating within the campus environment.

The knowledge of courtesy routines, including the right use of pragmatism, is never one among the objectives in learning foreign teaching, which is definitely confused. It is, therefore, no coincidence that Ehlich (1986, 51) calculated the utilization of a courtesy formula that was wrong or lost in typical "Xenismen", characteristics that immediately showed oddities despite good language commands. it's therefore important to treat sorts of language behavior that are polite in school systematically and during a language-specific way. To means deviations and sources of error and a minimum of partially develop something like "linguistic nuance competence" (Weinrich 1986, 19).

In addition to those characteristics, improving this linguist nuance competence of the scholar should be prioritized thanks to the changing of the courtesy routines among children today, especially the utilization of vulgar language in social media which will damage the norms of the society. Neuland and Ehrhardt (2009:2) support this argument by saying that the subject of politeness, which for several years was considered unconventional, has come into focus in recent years. it's often discussed that children, politicians or media representatives are not any longer conscious of politeness.

The theoretical and empirical facts above guide this research to seek out the extent of politeness of the scholars in speech. Whether in expressing their opinions, they like to be straight through the utilization of direct act, or they struggle to guard the faces of their interlocutors by using indirect acts. The result is going to be used as a reference for the event of politeness learning strategies within the teaching and learning process in the study program.

## METHODOLOGY

This research may be a qualitative descriptive study. This is often a comprehensive collection, analysis, and interpretation of narrative and visual data to supply insight into certain interesting phenomena (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006, p. 399), as quoted by Mahmud (2019: 599). As a descriptive qualitative research design, this research was conducted together, analyze, and interpret some data

associated with one particular phenomenon, namely student courtesy patterns. This research was conducted at the German, Education, Study Program of Pattimura Ambon University with 38 students as samples with a mean age of 20 years. Only persons with a Moluccan background who had completed the essential skills of German and Pragmalinguistics were used because of the sample. The essential consideration is that they have already got sufficient knowledge of German and knowledge of speech. This makes it easier for them to know and complete the questionnaire as they want.

The research instrument was adapted from the research concept Political Markers in English and German developed by Kaspar / Haus (1981) and investigated differences within the politeness tendency between German and Polish students (Eugeniusz Tomiczek, Anna Debala, Anna Lachm, Agnieszka Mazur 1990 p. 25-28). They compared a series of simulated German and English daily dialogues during which each situation context was clearly defined. The aim of the study is to check the extent to which certain speech acts are directly or indirectly realized. They consciously select speech actions to realize reprimand and demand. Two speech acts which will all right threaten the face of the speaker.

The instrument for data collection may be a questionnaire. Each sample received a questionnaire consisting of six

independent everyday situations with eight possible answers, which were ordered consistent with the act of direct and indirect speaking, counting on the degree of politeness. Preferred situations are: (1) posing for comments or opinions on a specific matter; (2) holding someone liable for certain actions; (3) rejecting uninvited guests; (4) asking others to satisfy their promises; (5) raising objections or reprimands; and (6) refusing to offer unwanted persons.

The choice of responses is such the extent of courtesy of the primary option is comparatively high, as indirect decisions are made. In contrast, the last option shows the utilization of the direct form, which has more impacts on face loss or is a smaller amount of politeness. The data analysis is predicated on a discourse analysis framework that relies on data recording, data transcription, data selection, and data interpretation. Discourse analysis is the study of the language used. The study of the languages utilized in the planet to not only say things, but to try to things (Gee, 2011: 9).

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As already mentioned, this study aims to gain information about the tendency of students to be polite in German as a foreign language. The data collected can be reported in the following table.

Table 1. The Tendency of Student Politeness

No.	Statements	Total	%
Situation 1 Your best friend wants to know if you like her hairdresser. You don't like her hairstyle at all. Your answer is:			
1	Fine (we change the subject)	13	34,2
2	Is this perhaps the new trend? Honestly, it's not your style	7	18,4
3	You used to look better.	1	2,6
4	You know what, it wasn't the best idea.	15	39,5
5	Unbelievable, it couldn't be worse.	0	0
6	Listen, did you still have to pay?	1	2,6
7	Look at you.	0	0
8	What have they done to you?	0	0
Situation 2 You live in a room with your best friend. In your absence, he / she put on your freshly washed sweater and accidentally dirty it. Without saying a word, he / she put him in the old place. You are sure that the sweater is clean, put it on, see the stain and say:			
1	That's weird. Yesterday my sweater was all clean.	1	2,6
2	here's a stain on my sweater	2	5,3
3	I'm afraid that stain will never come out.	1	2,6
4	Were you wearing my sweater?	21	71.1
5	You put the stain on it.	2	5,3
6	You shouldn't have taken my sweater without my permission. You ruined it.	7	18,4
7	You think I'm gonna let you just take my stuff?	1	2,6
8	You're really rude!	3	7,9
Situation 3 You're very busy at home. An unexpected guest has arrived. He has sat down and does not want to go home How do you express yourself?			
1	Forgive me, but I have an important appointment in an hour. Would you come by tomorrow?	8	21,1

2	I could chat with you until tomorrow morning, but I have an appointment and have to leave right away.	8	21,1
3	You always look at your watch and said: My God, how time flies.	4	10,5
4	I like to talk with you, unfortunately I have a lot thinks to do.	17	44,7
5	You know, we have to end. It's getting late.	0	0
6	Look, I don't want to throw you out, but go on.	1	2,6
7	Make it short and sweet and go.	0	0
8	Just leave me alone and get out of here.	0	0
Situation 4 You lend your best friend a larger amount for a period of 2 weeks. After four weeks you haven't got anything back and say:			
1	You talk about your financial problems in the hope that he/she knows what you want to get out of it.	22	57,9
2	I would be very grateful if you would give me my money back, because I need it badly.	8	21,1
3	How much longer am I supposed to wait, you know what this is about.	3	7,9
4	Look, you promised to give me the money back two weeks ago.	0	0
5	Listen, are you crazy? How much longer am I supposed to wait?	0	0
6	Hi, how are you? How's my money?	1	2,6
7	When are you gonna give me my money back?	3	7,9
8	If you don't give me the money back, I'll kill you.	1	2,6
Situation 5 You meet up with a friend of yours. You watch TV. Suddenly he / she lights a cigarette. How do you react			
1	I watch TV patiently, put a good face on the matter and say nothing.	3	7,9
2	My God, I almost feel smoked.	1	2,6
3	I have to open the window or I'll suffocate.	9	23,7
4	I feel sick. I'm going to the kitchen.	2	5,3
5	Do you have to smoke in my house? You know that I can't stand the smoke.	20	52,6
6	Why are you smoking without my permission?	1	2,6
7	You know what? You're missing some manners.	0	0
8	Stop poisoning the air at once!	2	5,3
Situation 6 You have a birthday party and you get a present from your friend you don't like at all. You unpack it and how do you react?			
1	Wonderful, I've always dreamed of it!	1	2,6
2	You really hit the nail on the head with that one!	2	5,3
3	You have a good taste, that's really nice	2	5,3
4	Thanks a lot (and I'll put it down).	19	50
5	You're just throwing money away .	4	10,5
6	Oh, was that your idea?	3	7,9
7	Is this honest	4	10,5
8	Oh, I just bought this one, but I can still use it.	3	7,9

It had previously been predicted that as students who had learned German, and their culture, they had also adjusted to German oral culture, especially in expressing their opinions. During this study, students are required to react negatively to express angry, displeased, reject or object to what the other person is presenting. For example, they were forced to: (1) give consideration to the appearance of their friend's haircut that he didn't really like; (2) expressing displeasure because the pullover was worn and littered by his roommate, without permission; (3) refuse unwanted guests during busy times; (4) urging friends to immediately return the debt in accordance with the agreement; (5) expressing displeasure with best friends, who smoke in the living room; and (6) refuse birthday gifts given by people who are not liked. The above context can actually force students to react expressly to show their displeasure by using the form of direct speech acts, as usually appear in the everyday Moluccan people, who are more open in their attitude.

Likewise as students who have studied German culture who are also more likely to be open in expressing their feelings using direct speech acts (Hause / Kasper 1981). However, research findings provide contrary information. Students seem to prefer indirect speech acts. Only for the fifth communication situation, the majority of respondents (60.5%) chose direct speech acts, when they were asked for their expressions of friends who smoke in the living room. Most of them responded using direct speech acts, such as "why do you smoke in the living room even though you know your friend cannot be exposed to smoke (52.6%), or" Stop poisoning the air at once! "(5.3%). only 39.5% of respondents responded using indirect speech acts, such as "I even have to open this window" or "I will suffocate" (23.7 &) and "choose to watch TV patiently, show an honest face and said nothing "(7, 9%). While the use of indirect speech acts, which describe the polite behavior of students, appears in communication

situations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6. Students tend to express themselves more politely, trying to maintain the face of their speaking partners. The results of each situation are explained as follows:

(1) The first situation, students are asked to comment on their friends' new haircuts which are actually not good. Most of them. 97.4% expressed their dislike indirectly like "you know what ,, that's not a good idea" (39.5%). "good" while changing the subject immediately (34.2%) or "is this a new trend? Honestly, it's not your style (18.4%);

(2) The second situation, students must hold roommates responsible for the use of sweaters without asking permission and polluting them. In general (65.8%) students prefer to use indirect speech acts, such as "did you wear my sweater?" (55.3%) or "there was a stain on my sweater, and I feared the stain would never disappear", even if only with a minimum percentage, 6%. But it turns out there are around 34.2%, who choose the pattern directly and even directly accuse and at the same time ask for responsibility, such as "You are really rude!" (7.9%) and "You should not have taken my sweater without my permission. You damaged it" (18.4%).

(3) The third situation, students are asked to determine their reaction when uninvited guests arrive, when they are busy. 97.4%) stated their objections indirectly, and said "I like to chat with you, but unfortunately I have to solve many things" (44.7%), or "I can chat with you until tomorrow morning, but I even have a meeting and must leave immediately "(21.1%) or " I'm sorry, but I even have an important appointment in an hour ". (21.1) and "While always looking at your watch you say: O Lord, how fast time passes" (4%).

(4) In the fourth situation, students must request debt repayment, which is lent by a good friend, and who has exceeded the time of excavation. Most of them prefer indirect patterns, for example, by "explaining financial problems that arise and are in dire need of cash. Hope that friend will understand" (57.9%) or "try begging by saying I might be very grateful if you pay back my money, because I really need it ". (21.1%). As for those who are very demanding returns using direct speech acts, which threaten faces, such as "When will you return my money?" (7.9%) or "If you don't give my money back, I'll kill you". (2.6%).

(5) For the sixth situation, students were asked to express their expressions of the birthday gifts that were given that they did not like. Most expressed resistance in an indirect pattern, such as "many thanks (and directly put it down) (50%) or with a touch of cynicism like" honestly this is very good material "(5.3%). But there are also students who prefer to express their dislike with direct speech acts, such as "Is this sincere? (10.5%) or "hey, it's just a waste of money" (10.5%) or maybe the most direct and threatening face, like "Oh, I just bought this one, but I can still use it" (7 , 9%).

## DISCUSSION

As explained, it was previously believed that our investigation would produce almost the same results as Kaspar / House, that German speakers tend to be more open and direct, so that German department students who have learned German will also use the same pattern in expressing

themselves in oral communication, which is open and direct. However, from the above data exposure, it seems that students prefer indirect procedures. They like to be more polite in most situations with one small exception, in the fifth situation. The results show that, despite having studied German with their culture for quite a long time, students still use the context of Indonesian culture which tends to prefer indirect procedures to express their feelings. The reason is they respect the other person more so they try to be more polite. This finding shows that German is because the second language in the Unpatti German Language Study Program is more focused on mastering language skills and has not touched cultural aspects. Linguistics is more taught in language skills and has not touched the cultural aspects. The result is a negative transfer of ulama speeches.

This study is only an attempt, for example, a theoretical consideration with empirical examples. It was not considered representative and binding because it was only done among 38 students of Pattimura University in Ambon. This must be repeated and in any case include a much higher number of students. However, it cannot be ruled out that students also act pragmatically in situations that threaten their faces, so that they are more inclined to complete procedures indirectly. These results also encourage study programs to embrace teaching and learning with material about foreign cultures, norms, values from the start. Students must be familiarized with the peculiarities of oral communication, especially everyday routines in German culture. Blaszkowska (2000. P. 25) says knowledge of politeness routines, including their pragmatic use, is one of the most important, if not easily achieved, goals for teaching foreign languages. The importance of studying polite behavior is emphasized by Rampillon (1994. P. 191). He said that learning to systematically treat the kind of polite language behavior in schools is very important, to emphasize specific language deviations and the resulting errors.

The question is whether the training process in the classroom has accommodated the practice of familiarizing students with polite language-type tools so that they are ready to apply them automatically in verbal expressions. With regard to Hüllen (1981), most German textbooks still ignore the practice of courtesy in communication. Learning is more aimed at educating students to speak German in the context of daily communication. Teaching materials related to politeness must be an important part of teaching. Hüllen's opinion is strongly supported by the reality in most German study programs in Indonesia, especially at Pattimura University. The teaching materials used have not even explicitly discussed decency. Most of the learning process still focuses on the use of language, grammar and vocabulary needed to strengthen four basic language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

To overcome this weakness, it is important to develop a learning process that allows students to practice and improve their knowledge and skills regarding the cross-cultural context between Indonesia and Germany, and their communication needs. The intended development must begin by identifying trends in student communication styles, especially regarding linguistic politeness. This can

facilitate strategic decision making in reorienting study programs. Specifically for subjects with language skills, to supply prospective German language teachers who not only prioritize mastery of pedagogical and professional skills, but also care about the social skills process that is also committed to politeness

## CONCLUSION

Some conclusions related to the findings of this study include (1). In expressing negative expressions from interlocutors, students prefer indirect procedures to avoid threatening the face. (2) Violation of norms in the behavior of foreign languages, especially German students, are still within the limits of tolerance, without causing misunderstanding. (3) In teaching modern foreign languages, especially German as a foreign language, students must be prepared to open, connect, and complete oral statements adequately. They need skills to behave in certain situations that are consistent with the situation (ie, with the right knowledge, situation and partners), for example in asking for something, making comments, giving opinions, judging, opinionating, rejecting etc; (4) It's time for politeness to be part of the skills students must have. That means learning foreign languages, especially German, is not only focused on mastering linguistic abilities, but also skills in using oral culture, politeness routine in communication. Therefore, foreign language learning curricula, especially German, must accommodate forms of communication training politely in an authentic context

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