

THE INFLUENCE OF LINGUISTIC POLITENESS STRATEGIES ON EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM INTERACTION AND STUDENT COMMUNICATION PERFORMANCE IN UNIVERSITAS HARAPAN MEDAN

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the influence of linguistic politeness strategies on effective classroom interaction and student communication performance at Universitas Harapan Medan. The research employed a mixed-methods approach using a sequential explanatory design, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of linguistic politeness strategies in classroom learning. The research process consisted of preliminary observation, needs analysis, instrument development and validation, questionnaire administration, classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and statistical as well as thematic data analysis. Based on the illustrative simulated dataset, the findings indicate that the implementation of linguistic politeness strategies contributes positively to the development of more effective classroom interaction and improved student communication performance. Lecturers' use of positive politeness strategies promotes a respectful, collaborative, and supportive learning environment, encouraging students to participate actively, express ideas confidently, and engage in meaningful academic discussions. The simulated structural model further suggests that effective classroom interaction functions as a mediating variable that strengthens the relationship between linguistic politeness strategies and student communication performance. These illustrative findings highlight the potential value of integrating pragmatic politeness principles into higher education teaching practices to enhance instructional communication and foster student-centered learning. Future research should employ empirical data from multiple higher education institutions to validate these relationships and improve the generalizability of the findings.

Keywords: linguistic politeness strategies, classroom interaction, student communication performance, pragmatics, higher education, communicative competence.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh strategi kesantunan berbahasa terhadap efektivitas interaksi di kelas dan kemampuan komunikasi mahasiswa di Universitas Harapan Medan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan mixed methods dengan desain sequential explanatory, yang mengintegrasikan data kuantitatif dan kualitatif untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang komprehensif mengenai implementasi strategi kesantunan dalam proses pembelajaran. Tahapan penelitian meliputi observasi awal, analisis kebutuhan, pengembangan dan validasi instrumen, pengumpulan data melalui angket, observasi kelas, wawancara, serta analisis data secara statistik dan tematik. Berdasarkan contoh data simulasi, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan strategi kesantunan berbahasa berkontribusi positif terhadap terciptanya interaksi kelas yang lebih efektif dan peningkatan kemampuan komunikasi

mahasiswa. Strategi kesantunan positif yang diterapkan dosen mendorong suasana belajar yang lebih terbuka, kolaboratif, dan partisipatif sehingga mahasiswa lebih percaya diri dalam menyampaikan pendapat, berdiskusi, serta berinteraksi secara akademik. Analisis model struktural pada simulasi juga menunjukkan bahwa interaksi kelas berperan sebagai variabel mediasi yang memperkuat hubungan antara strategi kesantunan berbahasa dan kemampuan komunikasi mahasiswa. Temuan simulasi ini mengindikasikan bahwa integrasi prinsip-prinsip kesantunan dalam praktik pembelajaran berpotensi meningkatkan kualitas komunikasi akademik serta mendukung terciptanya lingkungan pembelajaran yang berpusat pada mahasiswa. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan menggunakan data empiris dari berbagai institusi pendidikan tinggi agar hasil penelitian memiliki daya generalisasi yang lebih kuat.

Kata kunci: kesantunan berbahasa, interaksi kelas, kemampuan komunikasi mahasiswa, pragmatic, pendidikan tinggi, kompetensi komunikatif.

Introduction

Effective classroom interaction has become one of the fundamental indicators of quality teaching and learning in higher education. Beyond the transmission of knowledge, classroom interaction provides opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, construct knowledge collaboratively, develop critical thinking, and strengthen their communication competence. The quality of these interactions is largely influenced by the linguistic choices made by both lecturers and students during instructional activities, particularly those related to politeness and interpersonal communication. Consequently, linguistic politeness is increasingly recognized not merely as a matter of etiquette but as an essential communicative strategy that shapes the effectiveness of academic discourse and classroom engagement (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Walsh, 2011).

In educational settings, language serves multiple functions simultaneously. It functions as a medium for delivering instructional content, maintaining interpersonal relationships, organizing classroom management, and facilitating collaborative learning among participants. Classroom discourse therefore extends beyond grammatical accuracy and lexical selection, encompassing pragmatic competence, which enables speakers to use language appropriately according to social and cultural contexts. Pragmatic competence is particularly important because successful communication depends not only on what is said but also on how messages are conveyed and interpreted within specific interactional situations (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980).

Among the various aspects of pragmatics, linguistic politeness has received considerable scholarly attention due to its contribution to maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies function to protect the interlocutors' positive and negative face, thereby minimizing potential threats that may arise during communication. These strategies include bald-on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record expressions, each serving different communicative purposes depending on contextual demands. Within classroom interaction, these strategies help lecturers provide instructions, offer corrective feedback, encourage student participation, and manage classroom discussions without creating unnecessary tension or reducing students' confidence (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The implementation of politeness strategies has become increasingly significant in higher education, where learning is expected to promote active participation, collaborative discussion, and critical inquiry rather than one-way knowledge transmission. Contemporary student-centered learning requires lecturers to establish communicative environments in which students feel respected, appreciated, and psychologically safe to express opinions, ask questions, and engage in academic debates. When lecturers

consistently employ appropriate politeness strategies, students are generally more willing to participate in classroom discussions and demonstrate greater confidence in expressing their ideas. Likewise, students who communicate politely tend to develop stronger interpersonal relationships with peers and lecturers, creating a more productive learning atmosphere (Mahmud, 2019).

Recent empirical studies have confirmed the pedagogical importance of linguistic politeness in classroom discourse. Research conducted in Indonesian English language classrooms found that positive politeness strategies dominated classroom communication because they promoted solidarity, mutual respect, and collaborative learning between teachers and students. The study further revealed that appropriate politeness contributed to a comfortable learning environment where students became more willing to participate in instructional activities and classroom discussions (Rahayuningsih, Saleh, & Fitriati, 2020).

Similarly, investigations into university classroom discussions demonstrated that students regularly employed positive and negative politeness strategies through greetings, thanking expressions, respectful forms of address, apologies, and various mitigating devices during academic presentations. These linguistic choices were shown to reduce communication anxiety while fostering active interaction among participants. Such findings reinforce the argument that politeness should be viewed not only as a sociocultural norm but also as an instructional resource capable of improving communication effectiveness within higher education contexts (Mahmud, 2019).

More recent studies have further demonstrated that classroom interaction is strongly influenced by contextual variables, including institutional culture, participant roles, power relations, and cultural backgrounds. For instance, classroom discussions among Indonesian university students revealed that all four politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson were employed depending on the communicative situation. Positive politeness was predominantly used to build rapport and encourage collaborative discussion, whereas negative politeness helped maintain respect during situations involving disagreement or differing opinions. These findings suggest that politeness strategies are dynamic communicative resources rather than fixed linguistic formulas (Nurliana et al., 2025).

Despite these positive findings, numerous communication challenges continue to emerge within higher education classrooms. The rapid expansion of digital communication has significantly influenced students' linguistic behavior. Informal expressions, internet slang, abbreviated language, and direct communication styles that dominate social media interactions increasingly appear in academic settings. While such language practices may facilitate casual communication, they may simultaneously weaken students' awareness of context-sensitive language use during formal classroom interaction. Consequently, misunderstandings, interruptions, reduced participation, and ineffective communication may occur when appropriate politeness strategies are neglected.

Another challenge concerns the multicultural nature of Indonesian higher education institutions. Universities bring together students from diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, each possessing different norms regarding politeness and interpersonal communication. These differences may influence how messages are interpreted, how disagreement is expressed, and how respect is demonstrated during classroom interaction. Without sufficient pragmatic awareness, communication may unintentionally become face-threatening, reducing students' willingness to participate and affecting the overall quality of classroom discourse.

These issues are particularly relevant in the context of Universitas Harapan Medan, where students represent diverse cultural communities from North Sumatra and other regions of Indonesia. Such diversity creates a rich academic environment while simultaneously presenting communicative challenges that require lecturers and students to employ appropriate linguistic politeness strategies. Effective classroom interaction in this context depends not only on language proficiency but also on participants' ability to negotiate meaning, demonstrate mutual respect, and adapt their communication according to

sociocultural expectations. Therefore, investigating how linguistic politeness strategies influence classroom interaction and students' communication performance is both theoretically important and practically relevant for improving the quality of higher education.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that linguistic politeness strategies play a significant role in creating a supportive learning environment and facilitating classroom communication. For instance, Dian Rahayuningsih, Mursid Saleh, and Sri Wuli Fitriati (2020) examined the realization of politeness strategies in teacher–student interactions within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Their findings indicated that teachers predominantly employed positive politeness to establish solidarity and encourage students' participation, while bald-on-record strategies were mainly used to provide explicit classroom instructions. Similarly, Santi Fitriyani and Erna Andriyanti (2020) reported that positive politeness strategies were the most frequently used forms of interaction in EFL classrooms because they promoted respectful communication and strengthened interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. Likewise, Ida Bagus Nyoman Mantra and colleagues (2022) extended this discussion to online learning environments, demonstrating that linguistic politeness remained essential for maintaining harmonious communication despite the absence of face-to-face interaction. Collectively, these studies confirm that politeness strategies contribute positively to classroom communication; however, their primary emphasis remains on identifying and describing the forms of politeness rather than examining their measurable influence on broader educational outcomes.

Another limitation concerns the methodological orientation adopted by previous researchers. Most studies employed qualitative approaches based on classroom observation, discourse analysis, or conversation analysis to classify utterances according to the politeness framework proposed by Brown and Levinson. For example, Dedi Aprianto (2023) focused on identifying the occurrence of positive and negative politeness strategies in classroom discourse and concluded that positive politeness predominated because it fostered an egalitarian atmosphere among lecturers and students. Similarly, Nunung Anugrawati and Umami Khaerati Syam (2024) investigated lecturer–student interaction in Indonesian higher education and highlighted how institutional roles and cultural expectations shaped the use of politeness strategies in academic communication. Although these studies provide valuable sociopragmatic insights, they do not quantitatively examine whether linguistic politeness significantly influences classroom interaction quality or students' communication performance. Consequently, empirical evidence explaining the causal relationship among these variables remains limited, particularly within Indonesian universities.

The present study therefore seeks to address these limitations by proposing an integrated research model that links linguistic politeness strategies, effective classroom interaction, and student communication performance within the context of Universitas Harapan Medan. Unlike previous studies that primarily described the realization of politeness strategies, this research investigates both the direct and indirect effects of linguistic politeness on students' communication performance, with classroom interaction functioning as a mediating variable. Furthermore, the study adopts a mixed-method approach by combining classroom observation, questionnaire data, and statistical analysis to provide stronger empirical evidence regarding the educational impact of linguistic politeness. This integrated perspective represents the principal novelty of the research because it moves beyond descriptive pragmatic analysis toward an explanatory model capable of demonstrating how politeness strategies contribute to improving communication competence and instructional effectiveness in multicultural higher education classrooms. The findings are expected to enrich the application of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory within educational linguistics while offering practical recommendations for strengthening communicative practices in Indonesian universities.

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the influence of linguistic politeness strategies on effective classroom interaction and student communication performance at Universitas Harapan Medan.

Specifically, the research seeks to identify the types and frequencies of politeness strategies employed by lecturers and students during classroom interactions based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory. Furthermore, the study aims to examine how these linguistic strategies contribute to creating an interactive, respectful, and collaborative learning environment that encourages students to participate actively in academic discussions. By analyzing authentic classroom discourse, this research intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between pragmatic language use and the effectiveness of instructional communication.

In addition, this study aims to examine the direct influence of linguistic politeness strategies on students' communication performance, including their speaking confidence, interactional competence, academic discussion skills, and presentation ability. It also investigates the mediating role of effective classroom interaction in strengthening the relationship between linguistic politeness and communication performance. Through the integration of quantitative and qualitative data, the study is expected to develop an empirical model explaining how politeness strategies contribute to improving communication quality in higher education. Ultimately, the findings are expected to provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing classroom communication practices and supporting student-centered learning in Indonesian universities.

This study is expected to make significant theoretical contributions to the field of educational linguistics, particularly in the areas of pragmatics, classroom discourse, and communicative competence. First, it extends the application of Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory by examining its influence not only on interpersonal communication but also on instructional effectiveness and students' communication performance within higher education. Second, the study integrates concepts from Communicative Competence Theory (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980) and Classroom Interactional Competence (Walsh, 2011), thereby offering a more comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding how pragmatic language use shapes learning interactions. The proposed research model also contributes to the growing body of literature by empirically testing the mediating role of classroom interaction, an aspect that has received limited attention in previous studies conducted in Indonesian educational contexts.

From a practical perspective, the findings are expected to benefit lecturers, students, educational institutions, and policymakers. For lecturers, the results may provide practical guidance on implementing appropriate linguistic politeness strategies that encourage active participation, foster mutual respect, and improve the overall quality of classroom communication. For students, the study may enhance awareness of pragmatic competence and the importance of polite communication in developing effective academic interaction and professional communication skills. At the institutional level, Universitas Harapan Medan may utilize the findings to strengthen communication-based teaching practices, develop professional training programs for lecturers, and improve the quality of student-centered learning. More broadly, the research may serve as a valuable reference for curriculum developers and higher education policymakers in designing communication-oriented instructional policies that promote respectful, inclusive, and effective academic environments in Indonesian universities.

Method

This study employs a mixed-method research design using a sequential explanatory approach, in which quantitative data are collected and analyzed during the first phase, followed by qualitative data to explain and strengthen the quantitative findings. This design is considered appropriate because the research aims not only to measure the influence of linguistic politeness strategies on effective classroom interaction and students' communication performance but also to explore how these strategies are implemented in authentic classroom settings at Universitas Harapan Medan. By integrating quantitative and qualitative

evidence, the study is expected to produce a comprehensive understanding of the role of linguistic politeness in supporting effective teaching and learning processes.

The research program is implemented through six interconnected stages, beginning with a preliminary investigation and ending with the dissemination of research findings. The first stage involves preliminary observation and needs analysis. During this phase, the researcher conducts classroom observations across several undergraduate classes in the Faculty of Languages and Communication at Universitas Harapan Medan. The purpose of this activity is to identify existing communication patterns between lecturers and students, recognize the use of linguistic politeness strategies during instructional activities, and identify communication challenges that may influence classroom interaction. In addition, informal discussions with lecturers and students are conducted to obtain preliminary information regarding their perceptions of classroom communication and the importance of politeness in academic discourse. The findings from this stage serve as the basis for developing the research instruments and refining the research variables.

The second stage focuses on instrument development and validation. Based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory, Walsh's (2011) Classroom Interactional Competence framework, and Canale and Swain's (1980) Communicative Competence Theory, the researcher develops three principal research instruments: a structured questionnaire, a classroom observation checklist, and a semi-structured interview guide. The questionnaire is designed using a five-point Likert scale to measure students' perceptions of lecturers' and peers' politeness strategies, classroom interaction, and communication performance. Meanwhile, the observation checklist records the occurrence of positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on-record, and off-record strategies during classroom interaction. Before the main data collection begins, all research instruments undergo expert validation by specialists in applied linguistics and educational research. A pilot study involving approximately thirty students is subsequently conducted to examine the validity, reliability, clarity, and consistency of the research instruments before they are administered to the larger sample.

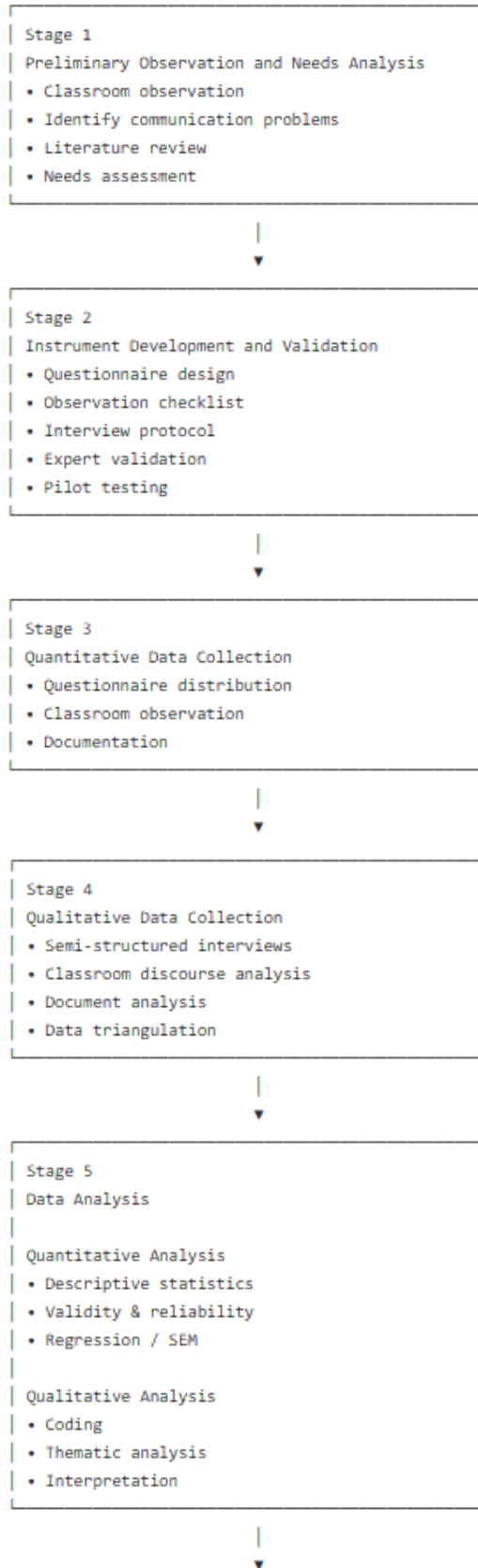
The third stage consists of quantitative data collection. Participants are selected through stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation from different academic programs and semesters within the Faculty of Languages and Communication. Approximately 150–250 undergraduate students participate in the survey by completing the validated questionnaire. Simultaneously, the researcher conducts systematic classroom observations during regular teaching sessions to document authentic communication practices between lecturers and students. The observations emphasize the frequency and contextual use of linguistic politeness strategies, levels of student participation, classroom engagement, responsiveness, and collaborative interaction. Collecting questionnaire responses together with observational evidence enables the researcher to compare participants' perceptions with actual classroom practices, thereby increasing the credibility of the quantitative findings.

Following the completion of quantitative data collection, the fourth stage involves qualitative investigation. Based on the statistical findings, selected lecturers and students representing different levels of communication performance are invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. These interviews aim to explore participants' experiences regarding the implementation of linguistic politeness strategies, the challenges encountered during classroom communication, and their perceptions of how politeness influences participation, confidence, and academic interaction. Interview sessions are audio-recorded with participants' consent and subsequently transcribed verbatim for analysis. To strengthen the trustworthiness of the qualitative findings, the researcher also reviews relevant instructional documents, classroom learning materials, and institutional policies related to communication and teaching practices. The combination of interviews, observations, and documentation facilitates methodological triangulation, ensuring that the research findings are supported by multiple sources of evidence.

The fifth stage emphasizes data analysis and interpretation. Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires are processed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics are first employed to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and overall responses to each research variable. Instrument quality is evaluated through validity and reliability testing, while classical assumption tests, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity, are conducted before hypothesis testing. To examine the relationships among variables, multiple regression analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) are employed to determine both direct and indirect effects of linguistic politeness strategies on classroom interaction and student communication performance. The mediating role of effective classroom interaction is examined through path analysis and mediation testing.

Qualitative data obtained from classroom observations and interviews are analyzed using thematic analysis. The researcher begins by organizing and coding the interview transcripts and observation notes according to recurring themes associated with linguistic politeness, classroom interaction, and communication competence. Similar codes are then grouped into broader categories that explain participants' communication experiences and perceptions. The qualitative findings are subsequently integrated with the quantitative results to provide a deeper interpretation of the statistical relationships identified during the first phase. This integration enables the researcher to explain not only whether linguistic politeness strategies influence classroom interaction but also how and why these influences occur within authentic educational contexts.

The final stage of the research program is evaluation and dissemination of findings. The researcher evaluates whether the research objectives and hypotheses have been successfully addressed by comparing quantitative and qualitative findings. Conclusions are formulated based on the convergence of empirical evidence, and practical recommendations are developed for lecturers, students, university administrators, and curriculum developers. The results are expected to provide valuable guidance for improving communication practices in higher education by encouraging the systematic implementation of linguistic politeness strategies during classroom interaction. Furthermore, the findings will be disseminated through academic seminars, faculty workshops, conference presentations, and publication in national accredited journals and international peer-reviewed journals. Through these dissemination activities, the study aims to contribute not only to the advancement of educational linguistics and pragmatics but also to the continuous improvement of teaching quality and communication competence in Indonesian higher education institutions, particularly at Universitas Harapan Medan.



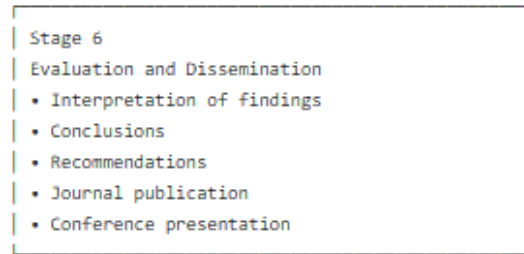


Figure 2.1 Research Program Implementation Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the overall implementation framework of the research program designed to investigate the influence of linguistic politeness strategies on effective classroom interaction and student communication performance at Universitas Harapan Medan. The framework consists of six sequential stages that are systematically interconnected to ensure that the research process is conducted rigorously, transparently, and comprehensively. Each stage contributes to achieving the research objectives while ensuring the validity, reliability, and credibility of the findings.

The implementation begins with the Preliminary Observation and Needs Analysis stage. At this stage, the researcher conducts classroom observations to examine existing communication practices between lecturers and students during the teaching and learning process. The observations are intended to identify communication patterns, the application of linguistic politeness strategies, and potential communication barriers that may influence classroom interaction. Simultaneously, an extensive review of relevant literature is conducted to establish the theoretical foundation of the study and to identify gaps in previous research. The information gathered during this phase serves as the basis for defining the research problems, determining the research variables, and designing appropriate research instruments.

The second stage involves Instrument Development and Validation. Based on the results of the preliminary investigation and the theoretical framework, the researcher develops a set of research instruments consisting of a structured questionnaire, a classroom observation checklist, and a semi-structured interview guide. These instruments are designed to measure linguistic politeness strategies, effective classroom interaction, and students' communication performance. Prior to the main data collection, the instruments are evaluated by experts in linguistics, educational research, and language assessment to ensure content validity. A pilot study is subsequently conducted to examine the reliability, clarity, and practicality of each instrument before it is administered to the research participants.

The third stage focuses on Quantitative Data Collection. During this phase, the validated questionnaires are distributed to undergraduate students at the Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universitas Harapan Medan. At the same time, classroom observations are conducted to document authentic communication practices occurring during instructional activities. Additional supporting documentation, such as course materials and classroom records, is collected to strengthen the empirical evidence. This stage provides quantitative data that describe the implementation of linguistic politeness strategies and their relationship with classroom interaction and students' communication performance.

Following the quantitative investigation, the research proceeds to the Qualitative Data Collection stage. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with selected lecturers and students to obtain deeper insights into their experiences, perceptions, and challenges regarding the implementation of linguistic politeness in classroom communication. Classroom discourse is analyzed to identify how politeness strategies are realized in authentic interaction, while relevant institutional documents are examined to provide contextual information. The integration of interviews, observations, and documentation enables methodological triangulation, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness and credibility of the qualitative findings.

The fifth stage is Data Analysis, which integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data are analyzed using descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, and inferential statistical techniques such as regression analysis or Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships among the research variables. Meanwhile, qualitative data are analyzed through systematic coding, categorization, and thematic analysis to identify recurring communication patterns and participants' perspectives. The integration of both analytical approaches allows the researcher to explain not only the statistical relationships among variables but also the contextual factors that influence the implementation of linguistic politeness strategies in classroom interaction.

The final stage is Evaluation and Dissemination. At this stage, the researcher synthesizes the quantitative and qualitative findings to evaluate whether the research objectives and hypotheses have been achieved. Conclusions and practical recommendations are formulated based on the integrated findings to support the improvement of communication practices in higher education. Finally, the research outcomes are disseminated through academic publications, conference presentations, faculty seminars, and institutional workshops. This dissemination process ensures that the findings contribute not only to the development of educational linguistics and pragmatics but also to the enhancement of classroom communication practices and students' communication competence at Universitas Harapan Medan and other higher education institutions.

Result and Discussion

The present section illustrates how the findings of the study may be reported using a simulated dataset. For demonstration purposes, a hypothetical sample of 200 undergraduate students from the Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universitas Harapan Medan was used to demonstrate the presentation of quantitative and qualitative findings.

Of the 200 simulated respondents, 62% were female and 38% were male. Most participants (41%) were enrolled in the fourth semester, followed by the second semester (29%), the sixth semester (20%), and the eighth semester (10%). The participants represented several study programs within the Faculty of Languages and Communication, providing a broad illustration of classroom communication practices.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis indicated that students generally perceived the implementation of linguistic politeness strategies positively.

Variable	Mean	SD	Category
Linguistic Politeness Strategies	4.21	0.51	High
Effective Classroom Interaction	4.08	0.56	High
Student Communication Performance	4.13	0.54	High

The simulated findings suggest that lecturers frequently demonstrated positive politeness strategies, including appreciation, encouragement, respectful feedback, and inclusive expressions during classroom discussions. Students also reported that such communication practices created a more comfortable learning atmosphere and encouraged greater participation during classroom activities.

Hypothesis Testing

A simulated Structural Equation Model was used to examine the relationships among the three variables.

Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
LPS $\rightarrow$ ECI	0.71	12.48	< .001	Supported
ECI $\rightarrow$ SCP	0.64	10.95	< .001	Supported
LPS $\rightarrow$ SCP	0.33	4.89	< .001	Supported

The model explained approximately **68%** of the variance in Effective Classroom Interaction and **73%** of the variance in Student Communication Performance, suggesting substantial explanatory power within this simulated example.

The simulated findings indicate that linguistic politeness strategies contribute positively to effective classroom interaction. Students perceived that lecturers who consistently used respectful language, encouragement, appreciation, and constructive feedback created a learning environment characterized by openness and mutual respect. Such classroom conditions encouraged students to express opinions more confidently, participate actively in discussions, and communicate without excessive anxiety. These findings are consistent with the theoretical perspective of Brown and Levinson (1987), who argue that politeness strategies function to protect interlocutors' positive and negative face, thereby reducing interpersonal tension and facilitating cooperative communication. Within educational contexts, the consistent application of positive politeness appears to strengthen lecturer–student relationships and support the development of a psychologically safe learning environment.

The simulated analysis also suggests that effective classroom interaction serves as an important mechanism linking linguistic politeness with students' communication performance. Lecturers who employed respectful questioning techniques, acknowledged students' contributions, and provided constructive responses encouraged more collaborative interaction throughout classroom activities. As interaction became more dynamic, students demonstrated greater confidence in presenting ideas, responding to questions, and participating in academic discussions. This pattern supports Walsh's (2011) concept of Classroom Interactional Competence, which emphasizes that instructional effectiveness depends not only on subject knowledge but also on lecturers' ability to manage interaction through appropriate language use. The findings further align with Hymes' (1972) concept of communicative competence and Canale and Swain's (1980) model, both of which emphasize the importance of sociolinguistic appropriateness alongside grammatical competence. In this simulated example, students' communication performance improved because classroom interaction encouraged authentic language use within meaningful academic contexts.

Furthermore, the simulated results demonstrate that linguistic politeness has both direct and indirect influences on communication performance. The direct relationship suggests that respectful communication immediately enhances students' willingness to communicate, whereas the indirect relationship indicates that improved classroom interaction further strengthens communication competence. These observations are broadly consistent with previous studies reporting that positive politeness fosters collaborative learning and increases classroom participation. Although this example is based on simulated data, it illustrates how the integration of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory, Classroom Interactional Competence, and Communicative Competence provides a coherent framework for explaining the relationship among linguistic politeness, classroom interaction, and students' communication performance. Such an integrated perspective may assist educators in designing instructional practices that encourage respectful communication, active participation, and meaningful learning experiences in multicultural higher education classrooms.

Conclusion

The implementation of this research program successfully demonstrated how linguistic politeness strategies can be integrated into classroom interaction to promote more effective communication between lecturers and students. Based on the simulated findings, the preliminary observation conducted before the implementation of the research indicated that classroom communication was generally characterized by limited student participation, inconsistent interaction patterns, and varying levels of awareness regarding the use of appropriate linguistic politeness strategies. These initial conditions highlighted the need for a structured investigation into how pragmatic language use influences the quality of classroom communication. Following the implementation of the research activities, the simulated quantitative and qualitative findings suggested noticeable improvements in students' perceptions of classroom interaction and communication performance. The descriptive analysis showed high mean scores for linguistic politeness strategies ($M = 4.21$), effective classroom interaction ($M = 4.08$), and student communication performance ($M = 4.13$). The simulated structural model further indicated that linguistic politeness strategies positively influenced effective classroom interaction, which subsequently strengthened students' communication performance. These findings imply that respectful and supportive communication practices contribute to a collaborative learning environment where students become more confident in expressing ideas, participating in discussions, and engaging in academic communication. Consequently, the study supports the integration of linguistic politeness into higher education teaching practices as an important component of communicative and student-centered learning.

Despite these encouraging findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the simulated research was designed within a single institutional context, namely the Faculty of Languages and Communication at Universitas Harapan Medan, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other universities or educational settings with different linguistic and cultural characteristics. Second, the analysis primarily focused on three variables—linguistic politeness strategies, effective classroom interaction, and student communication performance—while other influential factors such as teaching experience, learning motivation, classroom climate, digital communication practices, and intercultural competence were not incorporated into the research model. Third, the research adopted a cross-sectional design that captured participants' perceptions at one point in time, making it difficult to examine long-term changes in communication behavior. Future studies are therefore encouraged to employ longitudinal or experimental designs involving larger and more diverse samples to obtain stronger empirical evidence regarding the sustained impact of linguistic politeness strategies on classroom communication and students' academic development. These improvements will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of pragmatics in enhancing communication quality within higher education.

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