

The Use of Language Politeness to Increase Student's Academic Motivation and Self-Regulated Learning

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of applying the theory of language politeness as the instruction medium in increasing academic the motivation and self-regulated learning of students, especially in the writing class. This is a quantitative study with an experimental approach. This study only involved one experimental group without the control group as a comparison. The participants in this study were 25 students of the foreign language department who took writing course. Data collection techniques consisted of questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The data analysis technique consisted of descriptive and inferential statistics in the form of a paired sample t-test. The results of the comparison of pre-test and post-test data using the paired sample t-test showed that the significance value (0,000) was smaller than the standard value of the significance value (0.05). This proves that the use of politeness theory of language as the language of instruction in the process of learning could increase student academic motivation and self-regulated learning.

Keywords: Academic Motivation, Self-Regulated Learning, Language Decency Theory, Teaching Foreign Language

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INTRODUCTION

There are several factors that can influence the success of the foreign language learning process both in the formal context such as schools or colleges and in the non-formal ones such as in the course. These factors include the learning model used [1]–[6], the language teaching curriculum [7]–[9] and student motivation to learn that subject [10]–[13]. These factors have been proved to have a positive effect on the success of students in the process of foreign language learning by several studies mentioned earlier. In addition, some of these factors relate to each other, for example, student academic motivation can increase when the learning model and teaching materials used are supportive, or the use of learning models is well matched with the curriculum implemented.

Students' academic motivation in foreign language learning can be regarded as one of the important variables because even though the learning model, teaching materials and teaching curriculum used are adequate but students' academic motivation is low, of course, the goal of the learning process will be difficult to fully achieve. The survey that have been given to students regarding their responses to the process of learning for several semesters show that there are several factors that can influence student learning motivation including 1) learning models applied by lecturers 2) learning facilities 3) teaching materials used, 4) the way lecturers communicate or interact with students in the learning process, in this case, whether the type of speech used by lecturers in learning can affect student attitudes.

One interesting thing found from the survey is that many students considered that a lecturer required not only good cognitive abilities but also the ability to explain or the ability to communicate with students in the learning process. The results of interviews with students showed that sometimes some lecturers tended to scold, offend, blame, and isolate a student in front of their peers when the learning process take place, as in the following utterance example:

(1) *Masa soal begini saja tidak bisa?*

Then you cannot solve this too simple question?

(This speech was revealed by the lecturer to one of the students during the learning process when the student cannot do the assignments given by the lecturer well)

(2) *Apakah tidak ada pertanyaan yang lebih berbobot dibandingkan pertanyaan tersebut?*

Isn't there another more meaningful question apart from the one you're questioning?

(This speech was revealed by the lecturer to one of the students who asked the group presenting the paper)

(3) *Kau lupa bawa tugas, atau memang tidak kerja tugas?*

You forgot to bring it, or you didn't do it?

(This speech was revealed by the lecturer to one of the students who forgot to bring his homework)

The above speeches were obtained from the interviews with students, related to the utterances expressed by lecturers in learning which they considered to be offensive

or ostracizing. This certainly had a negative impact on students' academic motivation, because students felt uncomfortable and unhappy about the way lecturers managed the class. In addition, these students also felt afraid to be ostracized or scolded back in the classroom [14], [15]. The lack of academic motivation in the learning process tended to affect students' self-integrated learning which in this case is the desire to actively participate in the learning process in terms of metacognition, motivation, and behavior [16]–[18].

One approach in linguistics that is related to how to communicate with opponents is the politeness strategy. Mantasiah & Yusri in his research entitled *The Influence of Teacher's Language Politeness in Improving Student's Academic Motivation* proved that the implementation of politeness language theories by teachers in the learning process could increase students' academic motivation [19]. This research was conducted in elementary school students. The results of the study showed that students tended to be more motivated to learn when they felt cared for or given awards in the form of flattery. On the contrary, students tended to feel uncomfortable when their teachers scold, offend, blame, or isolate them in front of the class during the learning process.

Based on the background above, this study aimed to examine how the effect of the implementation of politeness language theory as the language of instruction in learning process to improve academic motivation and student self-integrated learning. One of the language politeness theories which is often referred to by linguists is the one put forward by Leech regarding 6 maxims of language politeness including maxim of wisdom, simplicity, appreciation, generosity, consensus and sympathy [20]. Leech said that a speech is said to be polite when it matches the maxim of the language politeness. However, if a speech violates the maxim of language politeness, then it is categorized as rude. Unlike the case with Leech, Lakoff also formulated 3 rules of the concept of politeness that is "Don't impose", "Give the receiver options", and "Make the Receiver feel good" [20]. Lakoff argued that a speech is considered to be polite when it does not force the speech partner, gives choices to the speech partner and of course to be friendly to the speech partner. In general, both theories actually have similarities. For example, when there is a compelling speech, it automatically violates the language politeness concept proposed by Lakoff, and the speech also violates the maxim of sympathy and agreement in accordance with the language politeness theory expressed by Leech, because the speech seeks to increase the speakers' self-profit and minimize profits other parties in speaking activities.

In this study, the language politeness theory refers to the ones developed by Leech related to 6 language politeness maxims which consist of wisdom, simplicity, appreciation, generosity, consensus, and sympathy [20]. Interventions given to students in this study which were in the form of speeches delivered by lecturers as the language of instruction in the process of learning must follow the six language politeness maxims. Hopefully, the implementation of the language of instruction based on the politeness of the language theory in the process of learning can have a positive effect on students' academic motivation and self-integrated learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of this current research is quantitative with an experimental approach. This study only involved one experimental group without the control group as the comparison. The participants in this study were 25 students of the foreign language department who took writing courses. Interventions were given to participants in the form of the use of the language of instruction in the learning process that applied the language politeness theory, which was conducted during 6 meetings. All participants were given an assent form related to their involvement in this study. Data collection techniques consisted of questionnaires, interviews, and observations. There were 3 topics i.e. language politeness scale, academic motivation scale, and self-regulated scale.

Language politeness scale developed by Mantasiah et al. was used by the lecturer as a guide to communicating during learning processes. This scale consists of 6 indicators based on 6 politeness maxims i.e. tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy [21]. For more details, those maxims can be seen in the following table 1:

Table 1. The Operational Definition of Maxim Courtesy

No	Indicators	The Operational Definition of Variables
1	The tact maxim	The concept of this maxim is to reduce the cost to others and add or enlarge their benefits.
2	The generosity maxim	The concept of the maxim of generosity is to reduce the benefit for yourself and add emphasize expression which implies cost to yourself.
3	The Approbation maxim	The concept of this maxim is to reduce dispraise to others and add their praise.
4	The modesty maxim	This maxim reduces praise to yourself and adds criticism to yourself.
5	The agreement maxim	The concept of this maxim runs by reducing language showing disagreement and strengthening the agreement between you and the ones you talk to.
6	The sympathy maxim	The sympathy maxim has the meaning to minimize the antipathy between oneself and others and strengthen the sympathy between yourself and others.

Academic motivation scale used in this study was developed by Vallerand et al. [22]. The scale includes 28 items and 7 factors which consist of 3 intrinsic motivation factors, 3 extrinsic motivation factors, and one amotivation factor. Researchers used the academic motivation scale developed by Azwar [23]:

Table 2. The Categorization of Academic Motivation Variables

Score Interval	Categorization
$X \leq 56,01$	Very Low
$56,01 < X \leq 74,67$	Low
$74,67 < X \leq 93,33$	Moderate
$93,33 < X \leq 111,99$	High
$X > 111,99$	Very High
M: Hhypothetical Mean (84)	
σ : Hhypothetical Deviation Standard (18,66)	

Academic Self-Regulated Learning Scale used was developed by Magno which contains 54 items and 7 factors [24]. The sub factors of the scale consist of some aspects like memory strategy, goal setting, self-evaluation, seeking assistance, environmental structuring, learning responsibility, and organizing. Magno proved that all aspects showed significant correlations to each other and the correlation coefficients ranged between .25 and .55. As in the case of the academic motivation variable, the categorization of the self-regulated learning scale was taken from Azwar [23]:

Table 3. The Categorization of Self-Regulated Learning Variable

Score Interval	Categorization
$X \leq 108$	Very Low
$108 < X \leq 144$	Low
$144 < X \leq 180$	Moderate
$180 < X \leq 216$	High
$X > 216$	Very High
M: Hhypothetical Mean (162)	
σ : Hhypothetical Deviation Standard (36)	

The data analysis technique used consisted of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the general description of the percentage of each categorization in each variable. Whereas inferential statistical data analysis techniques, in this case, were paired sample t-test used to determine whether there was a significant effect of the intervention given to academic motivation and student self-regulated learning which can be seen based on the comparison of pre-test and post-test data.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Formulating the Communication Guide for Lecturers in the Learning Process

The first step taken in this research was to develop an instrument or communication guide that could be used by lecturers when interacting with students in the learning process. This language politeness instrument was adapted from Teacher's Language Politeness Instrument developed by Mantasiah et al. [21]. Every lecturer's speech in teaching must at least follow politeness maxims as follows:

Table 4. The Instrument of The Way Lecturer Doing Communication In Tefl Based On Language Politeness

No	Indicators	Operational Definition of Variables	The Example of their application in TEFL
1	The tact maxim	The concept of this maxim is to reduce the cost to others and add or enlarge their benefits.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will not blame the students when they are not doing their homework. 2. I will not blame the students when they are late coming in to the class. 3. When there are students getting bad grades in my course, then I will not reprimand or scold them. 4. I will not scold students in front of other students when they make a noise in the classroom.
2	The generosity maxim	The concept of the maxim of generosity is to reduce the benefit for yourself and add emphasize expression which implies cost to yourself.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. When a student misunderstands the Homework instructions that I gave, I will say <i>“No worry, may be yesterday I did not give you a clear instruction”</i>. 6. When there are students saying that they don't understand the subject matter I explained, then I will say <i>“All right, I will re-explain it, maybe just now, I explained it too fast”</i>. 7. When a student forgets to bring his textbook or forgot to bring his homework, I will say <i>“No worry, may be yesterday I forgot to remind you, tomorrow please do not forget to bring the book”</i>.
3	The Approbation maxim	The concept of this maxim is to reduce dispraise to others and add their praise.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. I have never rebuked or scolded students directly even though they made mistakes or violated lecture contracts. 9. I have never scolded a student in front of his friends even though he did not do/collect their homework. 10. I always praise students who dare to do a task on the board. 11. I always praise students who are often well-dressed and behave politely.
4	The modesty maxim	This maxim reduces praise to yourself and adds criticism to	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. I have never mentioned my achievements in front of students in the learning process or outside the classroom.

		yourself.	13. I have never praised myself in front of the students. 14. I will apologize and admit wrong when I explain too quickly to students. 15. I will apologize and admit wrong when I am late coming into class.
5	The agreement maxim	The concept of this maxim runs by reducing language showing disagreement and strengthening the agreement between you and the ones you talk to.	16. When students are slow to understand the material, I will try to explain the subject more slowly. 17. When there are students enjoying to be accompanied to speak, I will try to accompany them to speak. 18. I will always be friendly and greet all my students every day I meet them without exception.
6	The sympathy maxim	The sympathy maxim means to minimize the antipathy between oneself and others and strengthen the sympathy between yourself and others.	19. When there are students often late, I will not say "I do not like students who like being late" 20. I always try to directly ask about the conditions of my students. 21. When my students seem to have a problem, I try to ask the cause of the problem and try to give a solution.

This instrument used by lecturers at each meeting was an interaction guide with students in the learning process. At the end of each meeting, researchers and lecturers always reflected and evaluated the type of speech delivered by the lecturer in accordance with the maxims of language politeness. In addition, reflection was also conducted to provide input so that improvements could be made for the next meeting.

Student Academic Motivation Measurement Results

The application of language politeness theory by lecturers to communicate in the learning process is expected to increase students' academic motivation. Academic motivation, in this case, consists of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. However, in this study data presented in general are not based on indicators of academic motivation variables. In table 5, it can be seen the comparison of pre-test and post-test data on student academic motivation variables:

Table 5. Pre-Test And Post Test Data of Academic Motivation

Score Interval	Categorization	Pre Test		Post-Test	
		Total	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)
$X \leq 56,01$	Very Low	5	20	0	0
$56,01 < X \leq 74,67$	Low	7	28	2	8
$74,67 < X \leq 93,33$	Moderate	11	44	4	16
$93,33 < X \leq 111,99$	High	2	8	15	60
$X > 111,99$	Very High	0	0	4	16

M: Hypothetical Mean (84)
 σ : Hypothetical Deviation Standard (18,66)

The data in table 5 shows that before the learning process (pre-test) started, most students, 11 of them were in the moderate category with a percentage of 44%, and there were 5 students with a percentage of 20% in the very low category. Students who had very low or low academic motivation certainly did not have a desire to have better academic achievement. After the learning process (post-test), it can be seen there was an increase in student academic motivation. The post-test data shows that most students, 15 people were in the high category with a percentage of 60%, and there were 4 students with a percentage of 16% in the very high category. For more details, data about the increase in student academic motivation, in general, is presented in table 6:

Table 6. Paired Samples Statistics of Academic Motivation Variable

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	98,16	25	13,710	2,742
Pre-test	72,00	25	14,221	2,844

Table 6 shows that the average pre-test score was 72.00 and post-test was 98.16, so there was an increase of 26.16 related to student academic motivation before and after the learning process. To find out whether the increase that occurs was significant or not, a paired sample t-test analysis was carried out, which can be seen in the following table:

Table 7. Paired Samples Test of Academic Motivation Variable

	Paired Differences				t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	n		Mean	Lower	Upper			
POSTTEST - PRETEST	26,16	9,642	1,928	22,180	30,140	13,56	2	,000

The results of the paired sample t-test analysis showed that the significance value (0,000) was smaller than the standard value of the significance value used (0.05). Other data, namely the t-count value of 13.56 is greater than the t-table value of 1.711. This proves that increasing student academic motivation after the learning process is significant.

The Result of the Students' Self-Regulated Learning Measurement

One of the variables improved through the implementation of language politeness theory through the communication conducted by lecturers in the learning process is the self-regulated learning variable. The increase in self-regulated learning variable led students to direct themselves in facing academic situations. In addition, students can also actively participate in the learning process through metacognition, motivation, and behavior. Similarly, to the case of academic motivation variables, in this study, the self-regulated learning data, in general, was not based on indicators of these variables. In table 8, it can be seen the comparison of pre-test and post-test data of student self-regulated learning variables:

Table 8. Pre-Tet And Post Test Data of Self-Regulated Learning

Score Interval	Categorization	Pre Test		Post-Test	
		Total	Percentage (%)	Total	Percentage (%)
$X \leq 108$	Very Low	3	12	0	0
$108 < X \leq 144$	Low	15	60	2	8
$144 < X \leq 180$	Moderate	5	20	10	40
$180 < X \leq 216$	High	2	8	10	40
$X > 216$	Very High	0	0	3	12

M: Hypothetical Mean (162)
 σ : Hypothetical Deviation Standard (36)

Table 8 shows that before the learning process (pre-test) took place, there were only 2 students with a percentage of 8% who had self-regulated in the high category, most students with a percentage of 60% were in a low category, there were even 3 students with 12% percentage in the very low category. The low self-regulated learning was certainly shown by student inactivity in the sense that they were passive in the learning process. After the learning process, it can be seen from the post-test that there was an increase in student self-regulated learning. Post-test data shows that most students, 10 people were in the medium and high category with a percentage of 40%, and there were 3 students with a percentage of 12% in the very high category. For more details about the increase in student academic motivation in general, please look at table 7:

Table 9. Paired Samples Statistics of Self-Regulated Learning Variable

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	179,28	25	26,416	5,283
Pre-test	137,12	25	23,486	4,697

Table 9 shows that there was an increase of 42.16 related to student self-regulated learning, from the pre-test data of 137.12 increased to 179.28. To find out whether the increase was significant or not, a paired sample t-test analysis can be seen in table 8:

Table 10. Paired Samples Test of Self-Regulated Learning Variable

	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower				Upper
Posttest - Pretest	42,16	9,763	1,953	38,130	46,190	21,59	2	,000

Table 10 shows the results of a paired sample t-test analysis of the comparison of pre-test and post-test data. Data shows that the significance value (0,000) was smaller than the standard value of the significance value used (0.05). Other data, namely the value of t-count (21.54) was greater than the value of t-table which was (1.711). This proved that the increase in students' self-regulation after the learning process was significant, in the sense that the application of lecturer language politeness in the learning process had a significant impact on increasing student self-regulated learning variables.

Student's Respond Related to The Learning Process

To identify the students' response about the learning process, at the end of the meeting an open questionnaire distributed to them about **“What aspect do you like about the way your lecturer teaching?”**. The use of the open questionnaire has allowed students to write their own answers more freely without influence from any predetermined options. In general, there were various responses given by students, but the most interesting one was that most students had the same response regarding the way the lecturer speaking in the learning process. For more details, the data can be seen in the following table:

Tabel 11. Student's Respond Related To The Learning Process

No	Student Reasons	Percentage
1	Always giving appreciation to students	96%
2	Always asking for news/ attention to each student	88%
3	Never issue expressions of anger to students despite being late in class	85%
4	Always calling students politely	83%
5	Always asking apologize when being aware of explaining too quickly	80%

The data obtained from the questionnaire showed that most students liked the way the lecturers teach in the classroom because of the language of instruction or the communication strategy applied by lecturers in the learning process. For example, 96% of students liked the way the lecturers teaching in the class because the lecturer often gave expressions of appreciation to students, as in the following speech:

- (1) *Terima kasih finza, telah membantu bapak untuk menjelaskan materi ini. Penjelasannya sangat jelas dan tidak ada yang keliru*
 “Thank you, Finza, for helping me explaining this material. The explanation is very clear and there is nothing wrong”
- (2) *“Wah, pekerjaan rumah kalian bagus-bagus, pasti kalian sudah kerja keras untuk menyelesaikan tugas ini”*
 Wah, your homework is so good, you must have worked hard to finish this task.”

Speeches (1) and (2) were expressed by lecturers to students in the learning process. Speech (1) was expressed when one of the students dared to re-explain the learning material that had been delivered by the lecturer. The speech is certainly in accordance with the approbation maxim in language politeness theory because in the speech the lecturer gave awards to students *“The explanation is very clear and there is nothing wrong”*. Similarly, the second utterance also shows that lecturers used the approbation maxim in interacting with students *“Wah, your homework is so good,”*, although, in fact, not all students had good homework. In addition, there were still many examples given by participants regarding expressions of appreciation delivered by lecturers in the learning process.

Other data shows that 88% of participants enjoyed the way lecturers teaching in the class because they always asked for news and showing attention to each student in the class, as in the following speech:

- (3) *“Sandy minggu lalu tidak hadir karena sakit yah? Sandy sakit apa? Sekarang sudah merasa lebih sehat?”*
 “Sandy (you) did not come last week because you got sick? What kind of illness? Are you feeling better now?”
- (4) *“Hari libur kemarin, Yosfita tidak balik ke kampung halaman”*
 “In the last holiday, did not Yosfita (you) go back to your hometown?”

Speeches (3) and (4) were also expressed by lecturers to students in the learning process. Both speeches are in accordance with the sympathy maxims of the politeness theory because the lecturer seemed to give attention or sympathy to students. Asking students about their condition and about their activities is a form of concern for students, and this is in accordance with the maxim of sympathy. When students get attention and care in the classroom, they would also feel they had a role in the classroom so that they felt responsible to actively participate in the learning process, which of course can be one factor to increase their academic motivation and self-integrated learning.

The findings of this study are in line with previous research which proved that the implementation of politeness theory in language as the language of instruction in the

learning process could increase pleasure, comfort, and the desire to actively participate in the learning process [19]. This can lead to an increase in academic motivation and student self-integrated learning [14], [15]. So far, many researchers have previously focused on the implementation of learning models or strategies, teaching materials and particular types of the curriculum to improve the quality of learning. The results of this study proved that the way the instructor communicates or the type of speech expressed by the teacher to students in the learning process also had an important role in achieving the learning target.

CONCLUSION

The language of instruction used by the lecturer in the learning process affects several aspects related to the student. The kind of language that can be well accepted by students will certainly have a positive impact on student attitudes, and vice versa when the language of instruction in the learning process is not well received by students, it will have a negative impact on their attitudes. Attitudes, in this case, can be in the forms of academic achievement, academic motivation, self-regulated learning, and several other attitudes. This study shows that the implementation of politeness language theory in the process of learning, especially in writing classes can increase academic motivation and student self-regulated learning. This is evidenced by the results of paired sample t-test analysis after comparing the pre-test and post-test data for each variable. One important aspect of the language politeness theory is how a lecturer can always give sympathy to all students through their speech. This is considered to be a factor stimulating students perceiving themselves as an important part of the group, which will automatically have a positive effect on their academic motivation and self-regulated learning.

One of the limitation in this study is the absence of the control class, so we could not compare between the classes given the intervention and those not. Therefore the future research should involve a control class as a comparison. In addition, this research was only conducted for 6 meetings. Although the impact of the intervention has been possible to see, e.g. the increase of academic motivation and self-regulation, the future study should lengthen the duration e.g. for 1 semester considering that those two aspects tend to decrease in the last meetings.

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