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Title:

**Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies in their Oral Discourse
and its Effects on Teacher-Students Interaction: The Case of
the EFL Teachers in the Department of English at MMUTO.**

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Dedication

To my family

My parents Ismail and Dalila

My sister Chahinez and her husband Nassim

My sweet sister Narimane

My brother Walid

My dear Idir

All my friends

Tinhinen

I dedicate this work to:

- *The memory of my father “Hocine”*
- *My dear mother “Fetta”*
- *My beloved husband “Hocine”*
- *My sisters “Nawel, Sihem, Lynda” and my sisters-in law*

“Karima and Farida”.

- *My sweet nieces “Assyl” and “Sidra”*
- *My parents-in law “Akli and Fatima”*
- *My supervisor Aimeur Roza and all my teachers*
- *All my friends*

Sabrina

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Abstract

This dissertation attempts to investigate teachers' use of politeness strategies in their discourse when interacting with their students in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou and its effect on teachers-students interaction. In this study, we adopted Brown and Levinson' Politeness Theory (1987). The study is based on the mixed methods research, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. To collect data, Thirty (30) questionnaires were administered to the teachers and fifty (50) questionnaires were administered to the students. A series of classroom observation sessions were also conducted in order to observe the use of politeness strategies in teachers' oral discourses. For the analysis of the data, we have used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Program to elicit numerical data and Qualitative Content Analysis to explain and describe the qualitative data. The main findings show that the majority of teachers use politeness strategies in their discourse. Indeed, the results of teachers' and students' questionnaires and classroom observations indicated that teachers use politeness strategies when interacting with their students. The majority of teachers use most of the time negative and positive politeness strategies and they do not use bald on record and off record politeness strategies when interacting with their students during the sessions. Besides, the results indicate that teachers' use of politeness strategies has a positive effect on their interaction with their students.

Key Terms: *politeness, politeness strategies, teachers' discourse, teacher-students interaction, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record strategies, bald on record strategies.*

List of Abbreviations

- FTAs: Face Threatening Acts.
- NPSs: Negative Politeness Strategies.
- PPSs: Positive Politeness Strategies.
- QCA: Qualitative Content Analysis.
- SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

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General Introduction

➤ Statement of the Problem

In EFL classrooms, the English language has become an object of learning and a tool of communication during lessons. The classroom can be seen as a sociolinguistic environment where both teachers and students use various functions of language to establish a communication system. When teachers interact with their students in the classroom, they should know how to behave and respond in different situations and contexts. Moreover, teachers in the classroom have to use different strategies and as one of those strategies we have politeness which has an important role in interaction and its knowledge is important in the EFL classroom.

Politeness is one basic concept of human interaction. Many teachers do not take this concept into consideration when interacting with their students in classes and it is assumed that teachers-students interaction is positively affected by politeness (Brown and Levinson, 1978:15). Therefore, teachers cannot leave it aside, they have to use politeness strategies with their students in the classroom, where English is the object and the medium of teaching and learning because it is believed that politeness enhances learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere. In other words, politeness is an important factor which enhances teaching, benefits the students and contributes to the effective interaction in the EFL classroom. It also helps students to have positive feelings towards the lesson and it motivates them to participate more in the class.

➤ Aims and Significance of the Study

The present research work attempts to investigate EFL teachers use of politeness strategies in their discourse when interacting with their students in the Department of English at MMUTO and its effect on teacher-student interaction, and we try to make teachers aware of the

importance of applying politeness strategies in EFL classes. Research on politeness is closely related to Grice (1975) Leech (1983), and Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987). Among them, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is claimed to be universally valid. Since the publication of their politeness research, many later researchers are following their track more or less. That is why we adopt it in our research.

There are many works about politeness strategies that are conducted in our department in the previous years, as the one conducted by our friends Miss Rezki Khadidja and Miss Sebki Lamis their investigation was relevant and the results have brought further research in the zone of their topics. More specifically our intent is to investigate politeness strategies in relation to teachers' discourse; we decided to investigate it since it is an important notion in the teaching process.

➤ **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The overall aim of our research is to answer our research questions that are concerned with identifying whether politeness strategies are used by English Language teachers in the department of English at MMUTO, and to describe the effectiveness of using these strategies to promote students interaction in the classroom.

In order to guide our investigation, we will try to provide answers to the following questions:

Q1: Do English language teachers use politeness strategies in their discourse?

Q2: Which type of politeness strategies do teachers use?

Q3: To what extent does the teachers' use of politeness strategies in EFL classrooms promote an effective teacher-students interaction?

In an attempt to answer these questions, we advance the following hypotheses:

HP 1: EFL teachers in the Department of English use politeness strategies in their discourse when they interact with their students.

HP 2: EFL teachers do not use politeness strategies with their students.

HP 3: EFL teachers use negative politeness strategies.

HP 4: Teachers in the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou do not use negative politeness strategies.

HP 5: Politeness Strategies highly promote interaction between teachers and their students.

HP 6: Politeness Strategies slightly promote interaction between teachers and their students.

➤ **Research Techniques and Methodology**

To conduct the investigation, we adopt the quantitative and qualitative method for data collection and data analysis. EFL classrooms are special contexts for the application of politeness strategies in teachers' discourse. Therefore, the data for this study are collected through questionnaires and classroom observation. On one hand, classroom observation is used to better understand how teachers conduct their classes, to collect data about the whole process of class activity where English is the medium of teaching and learning. Verbal expressions uttered by the teachers, that is, the use of words and sentences or any other linguistic markers will be examined. On the other hand, questionnaires will be distributed for both teachers and students of different levels in the department of English in order to collect more information to identify their attitudes and their opinions on the use of politeness strategies during classes.

➤ **Structure of the Dissertation**

The overall structure of this dissertation follows the traditional complex model. It consists of a general introduction, four chapters and a general conclusion. The first chapter deals with the review of the literature related to the main theoretical concepts as well as definition of terms. The second chapter presents the research design including the procedures

of data collection and data analysis. The third chapter presents the findings of the questionnaires and the classroom observation. The last chapter is devoted to the discussion of the findings in relation to the theoretical framework in order to answer the research questions as well as to confirm or refute the hypotheses. Finally, the general conclusion presents a summary of our work.

Chapter One: Review of The Literature

Introduction

This chapter deals with the review of literature concerning politeness strategies in relation to discourse and interaction; it explores the main theoretical framework and its concepts. At this point, it is worth mentioning that this part will focus on the theoretical bases that will help us to discuss the results obtained of the use of politeness strategies and its effect on teacher-students interaction in the department of English at MMUTO.

I. Definition of Politeness

Politeness is a term that is widely investigated by many scholars from different sides. Geoffrey Leech (1983:43) states in his book that “*politeness in broad sense is a form of communicated behavior found very generally in human languages and among human cultures*”. He also defines it as “*a strategic conflict avoidance, which can be measured in terms of degree of effort and put into the avoidance of conflict, situation, maintenance and establishment of comity. The avoidance is represented as a conscious effort on part of the person to be polite*” (1983:50). That is, politeness is a strategy that people use to avoid conflicts and to establish a good relation with others during serious conversations.

Watts (1993:144) also comes up with the term polite behavior and states that “*behavior, linguistic or non-linguistic, that the participants construct as being appropriate to the ongoing social interaction*”. Participants enter the interaction with a certain knowledge which is based on their prior experience.

In language study, politeness is about how languages express the social distance between the speaker and the hearer and their different roles relationship. In work place, it is the attempt to establish, maintain, and save face during conversations. Languages differ in how they express politeness. In English, phrases like I wonder if I could....can be used to

make request more polite. Many other languages (Japanese and Javanese are examples) need more linguistic resources and require more complex work on the part of the speaker to encode levels of politeness (Richards and Schmidt, 2014: 442).

According to Lakoff (1990:34) “*Politeness is understood in terms of conflict avoidance*”. In other words, the use of politeness makes interaction easy and effective between people and even helps to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings. Another definition that expresses restraining people’s feelings and avoiding conflicts is offered by Hill *et al.* (1986:349) who state that “*politeness is one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider other’s feelings, establish levels of mutual comfort, and promote rapport*”. Hill *et al.* consider politeness as a constraint to our behavior in order to reduce friction and enhance harmony.

According to Yule (1996:40) “*Politeness is an interaction that can be defined as the means employed to show awareness for another person’s face*”. That is, people use politeness consciously to avoid bothering or embarrassing the others’ face. In the same vein, Brown and Levinson (1987:69) argue that:

Politeness is an action serving to mitigate the threat to face involved on some communicative act. To put it in another way, politeness is a device for showing attention to other’s face in situations in which there is a potential danger of its damage due to some communicative need.

Politeness can be expressed verbally through words and non-verbally by using gestures, facial expressions and other non-linguistic markers. In our work, we focus on the verbal way, linguistic politeness since we attempt to investigate politeness strategies in teachers’ oral discourse.

II. The Importance of Politeness

According to Watts (2002: 02), *“Being polite is crucial to successful communication with others and impoliteness negatively influences the way a person is perceived, bringing judgment of being “rude”, “uncooperative” or “offhand””*. In addition, Jiang (2010:5) claims that *“In the context of language teaching, it is believed to enhance learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom”*. This means that politeness helps students to have positive feelings towards the lesson and motivate them to participate more in classes.

III. Definition of Discourse

Cook (1989:156) defines discourse and says that *“it is a stretch of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive”*. In other words, discourse is a combination of words to make meaning. He adds that *“as well as something larger that influences why and how a person comes to say certain things”*(Cook, 1994:119). Cook (1994:115) also declares that *“In applied linguistics, the term discourse has been used to describe an instance of language use”*. Another definition is provided by Nunan (1993:6) who says: *“it is the interpretation of the communication event in context”*. This means that discourse is about interpreting language and taking into consideration situation and context.

III.1.Types of Discourse

Discourse can be presented in spoken or written modes which are two modes of communication. Brown and Yule (1983:5) point that there are some differences between speech and writing in terms of language function *“whereas, spoken language is designed to establish relationship with people, so it has initially an interactional function; written language is designed for the transference of information and so has a transactional function”*. In other words, spoken language is used in social interactions; it is used to establish relationships with people, whereas written language is designed to transfer information.

III.1.1. Spoken Discourse

Halliday (1979:114) writes that “*spoken language is characterized by complex sentence structures with low lexical density (more clauses), but fewer high content words per clause*”. In addition, he claims that “*the spoken language is every bit as highly organized as the written language, and is capable of just as a great degree of complexity in a different way*”(1979:87). He adds that “*the spoken language is disorganized, fragmentary, and simple*”. This means that spoken discourse is relatively unplanned and less structured since it is interactive.

III.1.2. Written Discourse

In written discourse, the writer has usually a little time to think about what to say and how to say it and more of the meaning is provided directly by the text. Halliday (1997:114) writes that “*...written language is characterized by simple sentence structures with high lexical density (more high content words per clause), but fewer clauses*”. That is to say, written language the writer use simple sentences with the use of grammatical rules.

Brown and Yule (1983:5) claim that “*In the written discourse, the writer has also the right to modify language where it is necessary, as he has the possibility to check some words in dictionary wherever he needs and to cross others too*”.

Cook (1989:115) expresses very explicitly the difference between the spoken and the written discourse emphasizing their characteristics

Spoken language, as has often been pointed out, happens in time, and must therefore be produced and processed on time. Ongoing back and changing or restructuring our words, as there in writing; there is often no time to pause and think, and while we are talking or listening, we cannot stand back and view the discourse in special or diagrammatic terms.

In other word, the difference between spoken and written language is that, in spoken language the speaker produces the speech on time, there no time to think or to choose the

words he uses, but in written language the writer has time to think about the words he uses, and he has the right to change and modify his written speech.

III.2.Politeness in Classroom Discourse

Politeness is a widely employed strategy to achieve effective communication. Furthermore, politeness can help the speaker to negotiate his/her position in society, eliminate conflicts and facilitate cooperation. Thus, politeness is important for classroom discourse for two main reasons:

- The teacher can create a classroom atmosphere that establishes respectful relationships with his/her student(s).
- The learner can feel respected and trusted, and thus feels unthreatened or embarrassed by his/her own mistakes, facilitating his/her involvement in various classroom activities (Al Fattah, 2010).

Accordingly, the linguistic politeness of the teacher has a great impact on the learner's language achievement and success. On the top of that, learners do not only learn by explicit teaching, but they also adopt politeness strategies that their teacher uses in his/her verbal cues (2010).As Al Fattah (2010: 137) formulatesit:

learning a foreign language involves not only knowing how to speak and write, but how to behave linguistically; therefore, the speaker and users of the language must be equipped with politeness formulas in speaking and must be aware of how to use politeness in different communicative acts in their daily life.

This means that, learners of a foreign language must not learn only how to speak and write a language but also knowing how to use its linguistics rules.

IV. Definition of Interaction

According to David Nunan and Ronald Carter (2006:34), in their book the term interaction refers to the interaction between the teachers and learners, and amongst the learners, in the classroom. Hadfield (2008:105), in their book introduction to teaching

English, the word interaction involves more than just putting a message together; it involves also responding to other people. This means choosing the language that is appropriate for the person you are talking to (interlocutor); it means also, responding to what others say, talking turns in a conversation, encouraging people to speak, expressing interests, changing the topic, asking people to repeat or explain what they say and so on; in order to facilitate communication among them.

The concept of interaction is defined as “*reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions. Interaction occurs when those objects and events naturally influence one another*”(Wagner, 1997:8). In other words, interaction happens between at least two elements and those elements are influenced by each others. Brown (2000:165) defines interaction as “*the heart of communication: it is what communication all is about*”. This means that communication and interaction are interrelated. Interaction has an important role in the classroom; it is a core element in the teaching and learning processes.

IV.1. Teacher-Students Interaction

This type of interaction happens between the teacher and one student or more. That is to say, the teacher takes part in such interaction and negotiates with his /her learners the content of the course, asks questions, gives instructions, and criticizes students’ responses. The students will benefit from the experience of their teachers on how to interact in an effective way. In our work, we opted for this type of interaction teacher-students interaction.

According to Harmer (2005), during teacher-students interaction, students seek to show their abilities in speaking and listening in front of their teachers. This is why students should be careful about their way of interaction because it is very crucial in learning.

Jiang (2010) states in his study that “*Teachers-students interaction such as teachers’ instructions, teachers’ motivation, and teachers’ evaluation in the classroom are important parts of classroom interaction. However, those parts can enhance the comprehension and the*

attention of the students". In other words, these instructions are helpful; enhance students' comprehension and students' attention in the classroom.

IV.1.1. Motivation

"Motivation refers to illocutionary acts aimed at activating students such as their participation, academic questions, and initiative feedback" (Jiang, 2010:10). That is to say, motivation is an instruction used by teachers in the classroom to encourage and make their students participate more during sessions. The following sentences are among the ones which the teacher used frequently to motivate students:

- 1- I think all of you will do well and I think you will like it. It should be fine.
- 2- You will be ok, you can do it.
- 3- Ok, anybody else?
- 4- It will be great.
- 5- Very good!

IV.1.2. Evaluation

As Jiang (2010: 30) states that evaluation is indispensable in English class. It refers to teachers' positive and negative feedback which is very important to students. It can encourage as well as discourage the students. The examples of evaluations:

- 1- Good! You are right!
- 2- Exactly!
- 3- Well done!
- 4- Perfect! Sit down please!
- 5- May be first you should read the directions carefully.

V. Brown and Levinson Politeness Theory

Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson (1987) developed a theory of politeness. It is said that *"perhaps the most thorough treatment of the concept of politeness is that of Brown*

and Levinson” (Fasold, 2000:160). Brown and Levinson were not only inspired by Grice and Austin and Searle’s theory of speech acts but also by Erving Goffman’s conception of face (1955, 1967).

The concept of face was borrowed from Goffman by Brown and Levinson (1987), and is used in their Model Person to illustrate the connection between the use of language and politeness. In their theory, face is two dimensional; they work with the concept of positive and negative face. However, the terms positive and negative are not subject to evaluation; we cannot consider the positive face to be better than the negative one.

V.1. Definition of Face

Brown and Levinson (1987:62) say in their study: *“This aspect of face is therefore the space for, so to speak filling up the autonomous being with personal content; i.e. self-image that the person wants others to respect and appreciate”*. Face represents the way a person is perceived and since it is not a constant value and continually develops, it has to be attended to interaction. Brown and Levinson (1987:61) describe “face” as *“the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself”*. In other words, face is the image that each person creates for himself. Yule (2002:42) writes *“Face refers to our emotional and social sense of self that everyone has an expect everyone else to recognize”*.

The term face is defined by Goffman (1955:213) *“as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact”*. Face then reflects the image of a person and represents the respect which a person can claim for himself from others. People strive to maintain the face they have created in social situations. They are emotionally attached to their face, so they feel good when their faces are maintained; loss of face results in emotional pain. So, in social interactions people cooperate by using politeness strategies to maintain each other’s face.

In the process of maintaining face, every person has two aims: saving their own face (defensive orientation) and saving other's faces (protective orientation)(Goffman, 1967:14) Since any participant's face can be harmed by any other participant, it is every one's interest to show concern for other's faces and thus help to defend one's own face.

According to Goffman (1955), each participant has two needs in every social process: namely the need to be appreciated and the need to be freed (not bothered).The first need is called positive face, while the latter is negative face and he adds that "*face is a mask that changes depending on the audience and the variety of social interaction*" (Goffman, 1967:14).

Brown and Levinson (1987:61) define positive face as "*the positive consistent self-image of personality, crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved by interlocutors*".As for *negative face*; it is "*our wish not to be imposed by others and to be allowed to go about our business unimpeded with our rights to be free and self-determined action intact*". This means that positive face deals with being polite with others and then in return being appreciated by the interlocutors. Whereas, negative face stress on the importance of being free in the way that people show politeness.

Brown and Levinson (1978:66) insist on integrating the concept of face in politeness. Goffman also (1955) perceives that face becomes a necessity in social interactions between persons. He considers face maintenance as a condition of interaction. Faces can be damaged in various ways. For that reason, maintenance is an important aspect of social interaction. So, let us look at the concept of Face-Threatening Act.

V.2. Definition of Face Threatening Acts

In the light of face wants, Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) pose a threat to these expectations and therefore require the speaker to choose the most suitable way of managing this communication challenge (Brown and Levinson, 1987:69). Brown and Levinson

(1978:65-67) define FTAs according to two basic parameters: (1) whose face is being threatened (the speaker's or the addressee's), and (2) which type of face is being threatened (positive or negative face). Acts that threaten an addressee's positive face include those acts in which a speaker demonstrates that he/she does not approve of or support the addressee's positive face or self image (e.g., complaints, criticisms, accusations, mention of taboo topics, interruption). Acts that threaten an addressee's negative face include instances in which the addressee is pressured to accept or to reject a future act of the speaker (e.g., offers, promises, or when the addressee has reason to believe that his/her goods are being covered by the speaker). Examples of FTAs to the speaker's positive face include apologies, acceptance of a compliment, self humiliations and confessions. Some of the FTAs to the speaker's negative face include expressing gratitude, accepting thank, an apology or an offer, and making promises.

FTAs intensity is expressed by weight (W), which includes three social parameters. First, the degree of disturbance or rank of imposition (R), in terms of absolute weight of a particular action in a particular culture means how big the act is. For example, the request "*May I borrow your car?*" has a different weight from the request "*May I borrow your pen?*" The second and the third social parameters include the social distance (D) between the speaker and the hearer that refers to how close the interlocutors are (e.g. distant, semi-close, or close) and authority or power (P) which refers to the power of relationship between the person making the act and the person receiving the act owned by the interlocutor (Renkema, 1993:14).

FTAs threaten the stability of the intensity of communication. Politeness in this case can be understood as an effort to prevent or repair damages caused by the FTAs. According to Yule (2002:6), when we perform a face saving act or negative politeness such as apologizing

for imposing or interrupting someone, we are appealing to the person's negative face. On the other hand, when we show solidarity with the speaker we appeal to the person's positive face.

Holmes (1995:5) talks about polite people as:

those who avoid obvious face-threatening acts...they generally attempt to reduce the threat of unavoidable face-threatening acts such as requests or warning by softening them or expressing them indirectly, and they use polite utterances such as greeting and compliments where possible.

In other words, polite people try to avoid acts which threaten others' face also reduce the threat by using request, apologizing and using polite expressions like greeting and compliments to soften the conversations

V.3. Definition of Politeness Strategies

When people interact, they use politeness strategies to soften the threat to each other's face. Watts (2003:86) claims that "*politeness strategies will therefore be those which aim (a) at supporting or enhancing the addressee's positive face (positive politeness) and (b) at avoiding transgression of the addressee's freedom of action and freedom from imposition (negative face)*". That is to say, politeness strategies aim at saving the hearers' face and valorizing their opinions. Brown and Levinson (1987:69) add that "*Politeness strategies are therefore employed to recompense the conflicting goals and then to save face*".

V.3.1. Positive Politeness Strategies

Positive politeness strategies (PPSs) seek to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face. They are used to make the hearer feel good about himself, his interests or possessions, and they are most usually used in situations where the audience knows each other fairly well. In addition to avoiding conflicts, PPSs include statements of friendship, solidarity and compliments (Brown and Levinson, 1987:72).

PPSs are intended to avoid giving offense by highlighting friendliness. These strategies include juxtaposing criticism with compliments, establishing common ground, and using

jokes: nicknames, honorifics, tag questions and special discourse markers (please) (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 69).

Positive politeness can be used freely in the conversation without having mitigated a specific face threat. When the speaker's positive face is intended to throughout the whole conversation, the social distance between the speaker and the addressee is reduced and a potential FTA is thus weaker (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

Brown and Levinson (1987:103) claim that "*in general this output suggests that speaker (S) should take notice of hearer's (H) condition*". That is, the speaker should take into consideration the hearer's situations. They (1987:102) give us examples of PPSs:

- Expressing an interest in and noticing the hearer.
- Using 'in group' language.

E.g.: Come here, buddy!

- Noticing and attending the hearer's desires.

E.g.: What a beautiful case this is! Where did it come from?

- Making small talk.
- Exaggerating interest/approval/sympathy with H.

E.g.: How absolutely incredible!

What a fantastic garden you have!

- Intensifying interest in H.

E.g.: You always do the dishes! I will do them this time.

- Seeking agreement.

E.g.: A: She had an accident.

B: Oh My God, an accident!

- Avoiding disagreement.

E.g.: (1) it's really beautiful in a way!

(2) A: You had your Mom and Dad.

B: Oh, sometimes.

- Showing optimism.

V.3.2. Negative Politeness Strategies

Negative politeness strategies (NPSs) are intended to avoid giving offense by showing deference. Brown and Levinson (1987:66) define negative politeness as “*a redressive action addressed to the addressee’s negative face. That is, the addressee’s wants to have freedom of action unhindered and addressee’s attention unimpeded*”. They stress that “*negative politeness is the kind of politeness used between acquaintances, whereas positive politeness is used between closer friends*”. They include:

- Being conventionally indirect.

E.g.: Could you pass the salt?

- Questioning or hedging.
- Pre-sequences to directives.

- Showing pessimism.

E.g.: Perhaps, you would care to help me.

- Apologizing.

E.g.: I hope you will forgive me.

- Nominalizing.
- Stating FTAs as a general rule.
- Minimizing imposition.

E.g.: I just want ask you if you could lend me a single sheet of paper

- Showing deference. E.g.: Yes, Sir! (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 131).

V.3.3. Bald on Record Politeness Strategies

According to Brown and Levinson (1978:74), “*bald on record strategy is a direct way of saying things without any minimization to the imposition, in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way*”. Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that the primary reason for bald on record usage may be generally stated as whenever the speaker wants to do FTA with maximum efficiency more than s/he wants to satisfy hearer’s face, even to any degree, s/he will choose the bald on record strategy.

There are different kinds of bald on record usage in different circumstances. This is because the speaker can have different motives for her/his want to do FTA with minimum efficiency. The motives fall into two classes; one is where the face threat is not minimized and therefore ignored or irrelevant, and the other is where in doing the FTA badly on record, the speaker minimizes face threats by implication (Brown and Levinson, 1987:160).

Brown and Levinson (1978:100) give an example of bald on record strategy and say that direct imperatives are clear examples of bald on record usage. Imperatives are often softened with hedges or conventional politeness markers e.g., “Please, send us the offers!”, “do” is used with imperative, like in “Do call us!”

V.3.4. Off-Record Politeness Strategies

Off record strategies are like communicative acts which are done in such a way that is not possible to attribute one clear communicative intention to the act. In this case, the actor leaves herself/himself out by providing herself/himself with a number of defensible interpretations. S/he cannot be held to have committed her/himself to just one particular interpretation of her/his act (Brown and Levinson, 1978:216). In other words, Brown and Levinson claim that the actor leaves it up to the addressee to decide how to interpret the act. Off record utterances are essential in indirect use of language. One says something that is rather general. In this case, the hearers must make some inference to recover what was

intended. For example, if somebody says: “It is hot here”, the hidden meaning of the utterance can be a request to open the window or to switch on the air conditioner. This politeness strategy is done in such a way that it is impossible to scribe only one clear communicative intention to the act. The speaker leaves himself/herself out by trying to avoid the direct FTAs (Brown and Levinson, 1987:61).

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the review of literature in which we have defined politeness, discourse and interaction. The review has also clarified the notion of face threatening acts and the different politeness strategies that are employed including positive politeness, negative politeness, bold on record and off record politeness strategies that are introduced by Brown and Levinson (1987). In the next chapter, we are going to deal with the research design and methodology including the procedures of data collection and data analysis.

Chapter Two: Research Design

Introduction

This chapter explains the research design of our study. It aims at describing the procedures followed for data collection, which are a questionnaire for both teachers and learners. In addition to the questionnaire, a classroom observation is used to collect data about teachers' use of politeness strategies in their spoken discourse, a mixed method is used. The quantitative data is analyzed by using statistical method (SPSS), while Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used to analyze and interpret the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the classroom observation.

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part is concerned with data collection. It deals with the way data are gathered for the aim of answering the research questions of the study, including the description of the research instruments that we rely on to collect the needed data. In addition, it identifies the sample under investigation. The second part deals with data analysis procedures.

I. Procedures of Data Collection

This section describes the procedures of data collection that are used during the investigation of our study in order to reach the purpose of this study.

I.1. The Participants and the Setting

Data is collected during the academic year 2015-2016 at MMUTO in the department of English. For enhancing the representativeness of our data and the generalizability of our findings, we have chosen to analyze teachers' spoken discourse during their interaction with their students.

I.1.1. The Students

We have given a questionnaire for students in the department of English at MMUTO, and we have taken (50) students as a sample including both males and females. These students are selected randomly from groups of different levels.

I.1.2. The Teachers

The teachers in the Department of English at MMUTO are the participants. To conduct our study, we have opted for a questionnaire and a classroom observation for teachers and we have chosen a sample of 30 teachers.

I.2. Data Gathering Tools

In this study, we have opted for a questionnaire for both teachers and learners. Besides, a classroom observation is used for the elicitation of data that is, attending different lectures of teachers so as to collect data about their use of politeness strategies and how they show politeness differently.

I.2.1. The Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a means of collecting data. It is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions used for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. It is a list of questions asked to respondents, and designed to extract specific information. In Walber's words (1995:10), *"a questionnaire can be self administered and can be used to survey a large group of people at one time and can be distributed by e-mail or by hand"*. Questionnaire items should be clearly stated and the questions can be open-ended where the respondents feel free to answer the way they want, or closed-ended that require from respondents to choose one or more choices that are provided in the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of three sections and fourteen items. The first section elicits about teachers' use of politeness strategies in their oral discourse. The second draw data on teachers' opinions and practices regarding the effect of teachers' use of politeness strategies

during the classes and questions that require yes/no answers as to whether politeness strategies are a helpful strategy for managing classes or not.

The questionnaire was distributed to twenty teachers of English randomly selected from the department of English.

1. The Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire aims at finding out whether the teachers use politeness strategies in their oral discourse with their students during lectures and their effects on teacher- student interaction. We distributed a questionnaire for thirty (30) teachers. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first is concerned with the teachers' use of politeness strategies in their oral discourse and it contains six (06) questions. As for the second section, it is about the effect of teachers' use of politeness strategies on teacher-student interaction and it contains seven (07) questions. The questionnaire contains open-ended and close-ended questions.

2.The Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire aims at findings out whether their teachers use politeness strategies in the classroom when interacting with them. We handed fifty (50) questionnaires for fifty (50) students taken randomly from different levels. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. The first deals with the students' opinions about teachers' use of politeness strategies in their oral discourse and it consists of seven (07) questions. As for the second section, it is about the effect of teachers' use of politeness strategies on teacher-student interaction. The questionnaire contains open-ended and close-ended questions.

I.2.2. Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is a formal or informal observation of teaching while it is taking place in a classroom or other learning environment. It is a method of measuring classroom behaviors from direct observations that specify both the events and behaviors that are to be

observed and how they are to be recorded. Generally, the data that is collected from this procedure focuses on the frequency with which specific behaviors or types of behavior occur in the classroom. For the classroom observation, we have chosen 10 teachers and we attended 02 sessions with each teacher. Each observation session that we have completed takes approximately one hour and a half. These observations took place from May 9, 2016 to May 30, 2016.

I.2.3.The Checklist

A Checklist was provided during each observation to highlight the essential and the required points in our investigation. Besides, we tried to relate these emphasized notes to the way politeness strategies affect teacher-students interaction and the way teachers use these strategies in their classes.

II. Data Analysis Procedures

This section describes the procedures of analyzing the data collected from the classroom observation, and the questionnaires distributed to the teachers and students of the department of English. The data are to be analyzed according to the mixed method approach. This approach involves the combination of both Quantitative and Qualitative methods of analysis.

II.1.The Mixed Method

The mixed method research is used in this study. It involves the combination of two research methodologies: Quantitative and Qualitative. The quantitative method is used to analyze the results obtained from the closed-ended questions that will be shown in tables and diagrams, in addition to the frequency of politeness strategies used by teachers that are presented in numbers in the analysis of the findings. As for the qualitative method, it is used to describe and interpret the results of the open-ended questions of both the questionnaire and classroom observation.

II.1.2.The Statistical Method

For the analysis of the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire, the results are highlighted by means of diagrams and tables which make visible the results and their percentage. We proceeded in the calculation of the percentages using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is a comprehensive system which is used for data analysis. According to Everitt (2004:05), *“SPSS is a package that is mainly used in social sciences. In our case, it is applied to analyze data collected from closed-ended questions which enables us to get precise percentages. The outcomes are shown in tables, pie charts and histograms”*.

II.2.3.Qualitative Content Analysis

There are many procedures that are used by qualitative researchers to analyze data. Zoltan (2007:24) argues that *“qualitative research involves data collection procedures that results primarily in open-ended, non numerical data which is then analyzed primarily by non-statistical method”*. Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is a method to describe and interpret the open-ended questions of the questionnaires of this study and classroom observation. Among the different authors who are concerned with QCA, Mayring’s work is one of the most prominent and is adopted in this study. Mayring (2014:10) defines clearly QCA as: *“a mixed method approach: assignment of categories to text as qualitative step, working through many texts passages and analysis of frequencies of categories as a quantitative step”*. It is, in fact, *“a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of texts through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns”* (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005:2).

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the research design, the context of investigation, the techniques of data collection, and data analysis procedures used to conduct the research work.

The first part has been devoted to the description of the necessary elements that form the data collection part. That is, the useful tools used for the collection of the data related to teachers' use of politeness strategies in oral discourse, and its effects on teacher-students interaction in order to answer the questions advanced in the general introduction and confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses proposed in this investigation. The second part has demonstrated the way the findings will be organized and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. SPSS is used as a statistical technique to analyze the data obtained from the closed ended questions while Qualitative Content Analysis is used to interpret the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the classroom observation.

Chapter Three: Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of our study. It presents the results obtained from the questionnaires we administered to teachers and students of English and from the classroom observation sessions that we conducted. The aim of this chapter is to see whether teachers in the department of English at MMUTO use politeness strategies in their oral discourse and its effects on teacher-students interaction. This part is divided into two sections. The first section is devoted to the presentation of the findings of the questionnaires and the second section deals with the presentation of the results obtained from the classroom observation.

I. Presentation of the Questionnaires' Results

I.1. Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Out of the thirty (30) questionnaires that have been distributed, we have collected only fifteen (15). This number (15) represents the percentage (100%). The answers to the questions from the questionnaires are going to be presented using diagrams and tables.

Section One: Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies in their Oral Discourse

Question one: Do you use politeness strategies during sessions?

	Yes	No
N	12	03
%	80	20

Table 01: Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies during Sessions

From table (01), we notice that 80% of the teachers claim that they use politeness strategies during sessions; however, 20% of them do not.

Question two: How do you start your lectures?

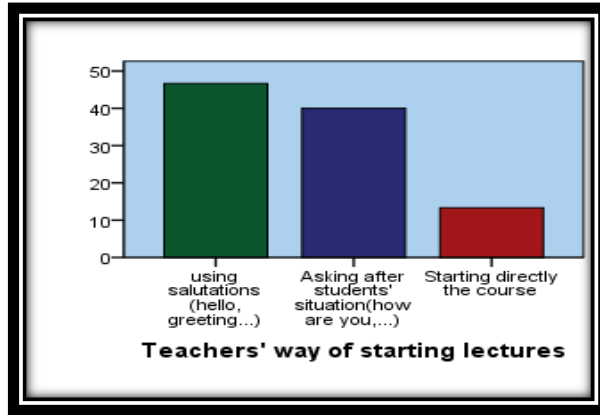


Diagram 01: Teachers' Ways of Starting Lectures

From diagram (01), we can notice that the participants' responses vary from one to another. 45% of the teachers have answered that they start their lectures by using salutations. Then, 40% start lectures by asking after students' situation. Finally, 15% have answered that they start lectures directly.

Question Three: Do you use politeness strategies when interacting with your learners?

	Yes	No
N	12	3
%	80%	20%

Table 02: Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies when Interacting with Students

Table (02) indicates that the majority (80%) of teachers use politeness strategies when they interact with students and only 20% of them do not use politeness strategies.

Question four: How do you show politeness in your discourse?

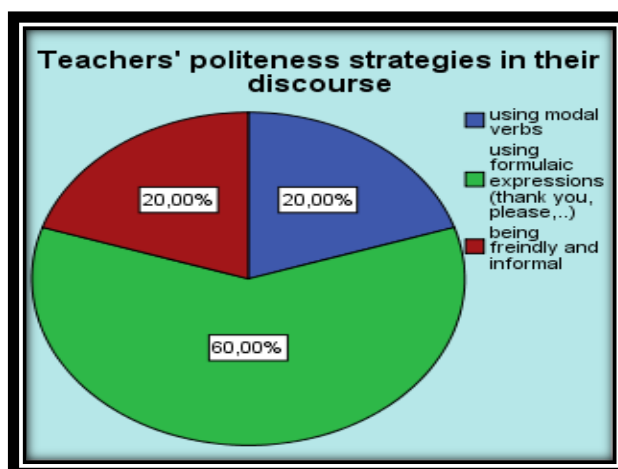


Diagram 02: Teachers' Ways of Showing Politeness Strategies in their Discourse

From the presented diagram, we can notice that the majority of teachers (60%) claim that they use formulaic expressions to show politeness in their discourse, while 20% of teachers use modal verbs and 20% of the participants show politeness in their discourse by being friendly and informal.

Question five: How often do you use modal verbs?

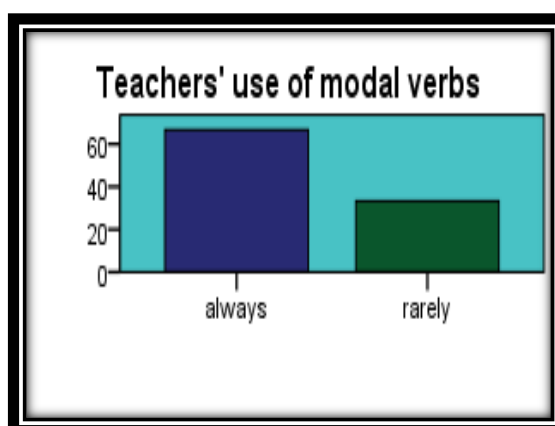


Diagram03: Frequency of Teachers' Use of Modal Verbs

From Diagram (03), it is noticeable that 65% of the respondents claim that they use modal verbs frequently, when 35% use them rarely, which means that the big majority of teachers use modal verbs in classes.

Question six: Do you use politeness expressions when giving instructions?

	Yes	No
N	35	15
%	75%	35%

Table 03: Teachers’ Use of Politeness Strategies when Giving Instruction

Table (03) shows that the majority (75%) of the instructors claim that they use politeness strategies when giving instructions. However, 35% of them do not use politeness strategies.

Section Two: The Effect of Teachers’ Use of Politeness Strategies on Teacher- Students Interaction

Question seven: Does the use of politeness strategies help you to maintain a good relation with students?

	Yes	No
N	12	03
%	80%	20%

Table 04: The Role of Politeness Strategies in Maintaininga Good Relation with Students

It is noticeable from the table that the majority of teachers have picked up the answer “yes” for the question (07). Consequently, 80% of them have confirmed that being polite

helps them to maintain a good relation with students, while 20% of the instructors answered “no”.

Question eight: Do students feel comfortable when you use politeness strategies with them?

	Yes	No
N	12	03
%	80	20

Table 05: The Use of Politeness Strategies in Making Students Feel Comfortable

The data presented in table (12) show that the majority of teachers confirm that the use of politeness strategies make them feel comfortable. In fact, 80% choose the answer “yes”. However, 20% of the participants answered “no”.

Question nine: Do you think that the use of politeness strategies motivates students?

	Yes	No
N	30	20
%	70	40

Table 06: The Use of Politeness Strategies in Motivating Students

Table (06) indicates that the majority of the respondents 70% agreed that the use of politeness strategies motivate students. However, 40% of them think view that the use of politeness strategies motivates students.

Question ten: Do you think that the use of politeness strategies has a Positive Effect on your interaction with your students?

	Yes	No
N	14	01
%	99	01

Table 07: The Positive Effect of Teachers’ Use of Politeness Strategies on Teacher-Students Interaction

From table (07), we notice that 99% of the respondents answered with “yes”, however, 01% answered with “no”. That is, the big majority of teachers agree that the use of politeness strategies has a positive effect on their interaction with students.

Question eleven: Do you think that the use of politeness strategies helps to reduce friction in personal interaction?

	Yes	No
N	09	06
%	60%	40%

Table 08: The Role of Politeness Strategies in Reducing Friction in Personal Interaction

In table (08), we notice that 60% of the respondents choose the answer “yes”, this means that they confirm the idea that politeness reduces friction in personal interaction. However, 40% of the instructors refute the idea.

I. 2. Results of Students' Questionnaire

We have distributed fifty (50) questionnaires to students; we have collected all of them. This number (50) represents the percentage (100%). The answers to the questions from the questionnaire are going to be presented using graphs and tables. The results are going to be discussed in the next chapter.

Section One: Students' Views about Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies in their Oral Discourse

Question one: Do your teachers use politeness strategies during sessions?

	Yes	No
N°	39	11
%	78	22

Table 09: Students' Views about Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies during Sessions

Table (09) indicates that 78% of students claim that their teachers use politeness strategies when they interact with them during sessions. Only 22% of them say that their teachers do not use politeness strategies during sessions.

Question two: How do your teachers start their lectures?

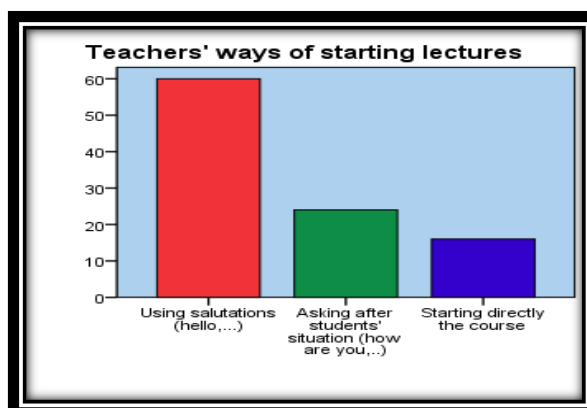


Diagram 04: Students' Opinions about Teachers' Ways of Starting

Lectures

The data presented in diagram (04) show that the majority of students (60%) argue that their teachers start lectures by using salutation, and 25% of them argue that their teachers start lectures by asking after students' situation. However, 15% of students confirm that their teachers start lectures directly.

	Using modal verbs	Using formulaic expressions (thank you, please...)	Being friendly and informal
N°	15	29	06
%	30	58	12

Question three: How do your teachers show politeness in their discourse?

Table 10: Students' Views about Teachers' Ways of Showing Politeness in their Discourse

From Table (10), we notice that the majority of teachers with the percentage of 58% use formulaic expressions in their discourse to show politeness with their students. Other participants claim that their teachers use modal verbs to show politeness with the percentage of 30%, and others with the percentage of 12% confirm that their teachers express politeness by being friendly and informal with them.

Question four: How often do your teachers use modal verbs?

	Always	Rarely	Never
N°	19	29	02
%	42	52	42

Table 11: Students’ Opinions about Teachers’ Use of Modal Verbs

From table (11), we notice that the participants confirm in their responses that the majority (52%) of their teachers rarely use modal verbs in the classroom. Some of them confirm that their teachers always use modal verbs in the classroom with the percentage of 42%. Finally, some of them claim that their teachers never use modal verbs in the classroom with the percentage of 06%.

Question five: Do your teachers use politeness strategies when giving instructions?

	Yes	No
N°	35	15
%	85%	15%

Table 12: Students’ Views about Teachers’ Use of Polite expressions when Giving Instructions

From the table, we notice from the responses of the students that the majority of teachers do not use politeness strategies when giving instructions. In fact, 85% of students argue that teachers do not use politeness strategies when giving instructions, they answer with No. Only, 20% of them argue that their teachers use politeness strategies when giving

instructions and they choose to answer with Yes. We notice that the majority of teachers use politeness strategies only when they start lectures.

Section Two: Students Opinions about the Effect of Teachers’ Use of Politeness Strategies on Teacher-Students Interaction

Question six: Teachers being polite with you, it leads to maintain a good relation with them?

	Yes	No
N°	40	10
%	90	10

Table 13: Students’ Opinions about the Role of Politeness Strategies in Maintaining a Good relation between Students and their Teachers

Table (13) indicates that 90% of the participants argue that when teachers use politeness strategies it leads to maintain a good relation with them. However, 10% of them do not agree with that teachers’ use of politeness strategies leads to maintain a good relation with them.

Question seven: Do you feel comfortable when your teachers use politeness strategies?

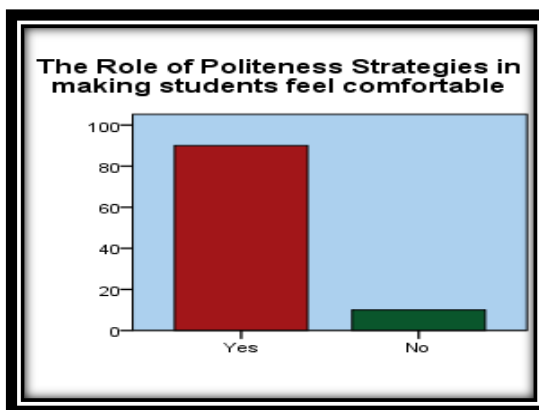


Diagram 05: Students’ Views about the Role of Politeness Strategies in Making them Feel Comfortable

Diagram (05) shows that the majority of participants (90%) have answered with 'yes' and only 10% of them have chosen to answer 'no', which means that students feel comfortable when their teachers use politeness strategies when interacting with them in the classroom.

Question eight: Do you think that your teachers' use of politeness strategies motivates you?

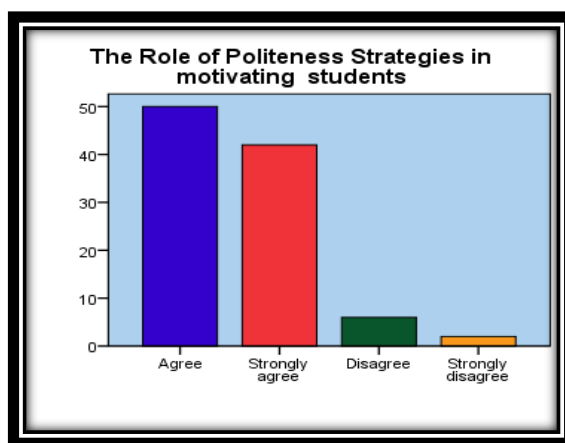


Diagram 06: The Role of Politeness Strategies in Motivating Students

Diagram (06) indicates that the participants have answered differently. In fact, 50% of them have answered by 'agree'. They agree that their teachers' use of politeness strategies this motivates them. Then, (40%) of the them strongly agree and other participants with the percentage of (5%) have chosen to answer with 'disagree', that is, when their teachers use politeness strategies they do not feel motivated. Finally, (02%) of them answered with 'strongly disagree'. We can say that the big majority of students agree that when their teachers use politeness strategies this motivates them, they feel motivated.

Question nine: Do you think that teachers' use of politeness strategies has an impact on your interaction with them?

	Yes	No
N°	47	03
%	94	06

Table 14: Students' Views about the Impact of Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies on Teacher-Students Interaction

It is noticeable from table (14) that the majority of the participants have picked up the answer 'yes'. Consequently, 94% have confirmed that their teachers' use politeness strategies during lectures has an impact on their interaction with them. Only 06% have answered with 'no'.

Question ten: Does your teachers' use of politeness strategies during lectures provide a lively and friendly atmosphere?

	Yes	No
N°	30	20
%	80	20

Table 15: Students' Opinions about the Role of Politeness Strategies in Providing a Lively Atmosphere in the Classroom

Table (15) indicates that the majority of the participants (80%) confirm that teachers' use of politeness strategies enhances their learning in creating a lively and a friendly atmosphere, but other participants 20% do not agree.

II. Results of the Classroom Observation

The other data collection tool we have used in conducting our research is Classroom Observation. After getting teacher's approval, a total of twenty (20) attendances have been assured with ten (10) teachers of different levels and we have attended two sessions with each teacher of first, second and third year of different modules, sociolinguistics, phonetics, reading and writing, comparative literature.

The observations took place from May 4, 2016 to May 30, 2016 and they are described in a checklist presented in the form of a table (See Appendix 3). The latter contains (10) items that we find fostering politeness strategies. These items are observed in terms of Yes and No questions.

Question One: Do teachers use politeness strategies in EFL classes?

From the observation session, we conclude that eight (8) of the observed teachers in the department of English at MMUTO often use politeness strategies. Besides, each teacher uses his/her politeness expressions to be polite with his/her students in the class during sessions.

Question Two: Do teachers use politeness strategies all along the session?

From the observation sessions, we conclude that out of ten (10) teachers, six (6) of them use politeness strategies all along the session, from the beginning until the end of each session, whereas four (4) of them do not.

Question Four: How do teachers start their lectures?

From the results obtained from the observation sessions, we have noticed that five (5) teachers start the lectures using salutations and asking after students' situations, while three (3) of them start using salutations and the others start directly the course.

Question Five: How do teachers give orders during sessions?

From the observation phase, eight (8) teachers give orders to students by using formulaic expressions as the word “please”. That is to say, they give orders indirectly in a polite way to maintain students’ positive face. The two others give orders using complex expressions such as “if you don’t mind...”

Question Six: Do teachers show politeness when motivating and giving feedback during sessions?

From our observation, we notice that many teachers of the department of English motivate their students and give feedback. Most of the time, they use the word ‘OK’ which is a positive politeness. For example, I think all of you can do well.....You will be ok, you can do it.

Question Seven: Do teachers motivate students during sessions?

From the observation conducted, seven (7) teachers encourage students to do better and to improve their abilities by using expressions like, “Good, good job, great....”

Question Eight: Do teachers use politeness strategies when performing requests?

From the classroom observation, we notice that most of teachers show politeness most of the time through performing requests in the classroom they always use modal verbs e.g. could you..., would you like....I like to request you.....etc. That is, they show politeness when they give request to students.

Question Nine: Does teachers’ use of politeness influences students’ interaction?

During the observation, we have concluded that students do like teachers who use politeness strategies. As a result, they interact fluently and spontaneously with their teachers.

Question Ten: Does teachers' use of politeness strategies has a positive effect on teacher-students interaction?

During the observation sessions, we were noticing that when teachers use Politeness Strategies with their students, the interaction was efficient and good. The students appreciated the teacher and even his/her way of speaking.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results obtained from the classroom observation sessions and the questionnaires answered by the participants, teachers and students from the department of English at MMUTO. The results provided in this chapter are in the form of diagrams (tables, pie charts and histograms) which show and describe the different percentages that each answer delivered. The results were sorted out in forms of diagrams by the use of the statistical software called **SPSS** and the **QCA** method is used to describe and interpret the open-ended questions of the questionnaires and classroom observation.

Chapter Four: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the discussion of the findings obtained from the questionnaires designed for both teachers and students of English and from the classroom observation sessions. The results are going to be interpreted in relation to Brown and Levinson politeness Theory.

I. Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies in their Discourse

The results obtained from the questionnaires handed to teachers and students, and those of classroom observations show that the majority of teachers use politeness strategies during lectures. Indeed, either through greeting, or through using formulaic expressions and modal verbs when giving instructions and interacting with their students. It is noticed that teachers start lectures through salutation such as: Good morning or asking after students' situations for instance, how are you? These are considered as politeness strategies. Even when interacting with their students, teachers show politeness by using formulaic expressions such as 'please' and 'Thank you' and also through using modal verbs for example, could you close the door.

The results obtained from students' questionnaires confirm that English Language teachers use politeness strategies during sessions. In the same point, the findings show that the majority of students (78%) confirm that their teachers use politeness strategies during sessions. That is, teachers are polite with their students in the classroom and politeness helps them to maintain a good relation with their students. Jiang (2010:5) stresses the importance of politeness; he says "*In the context of language teaching, it is believed to enhance learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom*". This means that politeness helps students to have positive feelings towards the lessons and motivates them to participate more

in classes. The use of politeness strategies makes interaction easy and effective. In line with this, Lakoff (1990:34) states that “*politeness is understood in terms of conflict avoidance*”. In other words, politeness helps people to avoid conflicts and misunderstanding. Watts (2002:2) adds “*Being polite is crucial to successful communication with other*”.

From the results obtained from the questionnaires, students confirm that teachers show politeness by using polite expressions such as the use of formulaic expressions: “Please” “Thank you”.

The results obtained during our investigation in the department of reveal that the majority of teachers (80%) use politeness strategies during sessions and these strategies help them to maintain a good relation with students and to soften the threat to each other’s face. As watts (2003:86) claims, “*politeness strategies will therefore be those which aim (a) at supporting or enhancing the addressees’ positive face (positive politeness) and (b) at avoiding transgression of the addressee’s freedom of action and freedom from imposition (negative face)*”. That is, politeness strategies aim at saving the hearers’ face and valorizing their opinions.

Politeness is important to build a good interaction; it makes interaction easy and effective. It also helps to avoid conflicts and misunderstanding. In line with this, Hill et al. (1983:349) claim that “*politeness is one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider other’s feelings, establish levels of mutual comfort, and promotes rapport*”. Hill et al. consider politeness as a constraint to our behavior in order to reduce friction and enhance harmony.

The results of the classroom observation show that some teachers are polite with their students all along the session from the beginning until the end of sessions. We notice that

(84%) of teachers start lectures by greetings and asking after students' situation which is demonstrated in the following utterances: good morning, good afternoon, how are you?

The findings demonstrate that teachers during sessions use politeness expressions and give orders to students in a polite way by using the word "please" as a positive politeness strategy. These utterances demonstrate the point: "Stop talking, please! Please, before leaving, you sign, silence, please! Be quite, please! Please, your attention, hurry up please! Please don't throw words just like this, I need sentences".

Teachers of the department of English most of the time express requests through using modal verbs as a strategy to show politeness and these utterances demonstrate it: could you explain it? Could you remind us about the last point? Could you open the window? Could you close the door? Could you give us an example, you should stop talking. Could you think about another discipline? Besides, teachers in the observed sessions motivate and encourage students by using some marks of politeness such as: good! Clear! Ok! These utterances show the point: Good, you can do better, good job, it is a kind of translation ok! Ok, but you should go further try to say it in other way, point on the idea, ok you see that are you tired, ok. These utterances are considered as positive politeness strategies.

It is noticeable that teachers during sessions use the word "sorry" in each time for example, sorry, let me see how, sorry, could you repeat what you have said, Sorry, I forget something I will be back to go out it is a kind of permission. These are examples of negative politeness strategies. Thus, the results obtained from the questionnaires and the classroom observations confirm the first hypothesis which states that EFL teachers in the department of English use polite strategies and answers our first research question.

II. Types of Politeness Strategies Used by Teachers in Oral Discourse

In this section, we will discuss the types of politeness strategies used by teachers to show politeness in the classroom with students. Almost all the respondents make use of different types of politeness strategies when interacting with students so as students feel comfortable and closer to teachers. It is claimed by Brown and Levinson (1987:69) that *“Politeness strategies are therefore employed to recompense the conflicting goals”*.

As regards the types of politeness strategies used by teachers, we notice from the results that (47%) of the respondents use modal verbs as a positive politeness strategy to show politeness, whereas 40% use complex expressions “if you don’t mind to explain by giving us examples, if you don’t mind, write a short summary, if you don’t mind bring it with you next session” which are considered as a negative politeness strategies used to show distance and deference between teachers and students. As Brown and Levinson (1987:66) assert, negative politeness is *“a redressive action addressed to the addressee’s negative face. That is, the addressee’s wants to have freedom of action unhindered and addressee’s attention unimpeded”*. It is clear that negative politeness is the kind of politeness used between acquaintances, whereas positive politeness is used between closer friends.

In addition, we notice that 14% of teachers use positive politeness strategies including jokes so as to make students at ease closer to the teachers. As it is pointed by Brown and Levinson in their politeness theory (1987), *“positive politeness strategies are intended to avoid giving offense by highlighting friendliness. These strategies include juxtaposing, criticism with compliments, establishing common ground, and using jokes: nicknames, honorifics, tag questions and special discourse markers (please)”*.

The results obtained from students' questionnaires confirm this point. They confirm that teachers use different politeness strategies. In fact, (60%) of the students agree that the majority of teachers use positive and negative politeness strategies most of the time, whereas few of them use 'Bald on record' and 'off record' politeness strategies and these two strategies are rarely used during sessions. When people interact, they use politeness strategies to soften the threat to each other's face. Brown and Levinson (1987:61) define face and they claim that "*it is the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself, consists in two related aspects: negative and positive face*".

In addition, The findings indicate that eight teachers most of the time use positive and negative politeness strategies with their students in the classes while they do not use bald on record and off record politeness strategies. We notice that two teachers use bald on record and off record politeness strategies during sessions but rarely.

Even from the observation sessions, we have noticed that only two teachers use bald on record politeness strategies and they are rarely used during sessions. Brown and Levinson (1987:74) state that "*bald on record strategy is a direct way of saving things without any minimization to the imposition, in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way*". Brown and Levinson (1978:100) give an example of bald on record politeness strategy and say that direct imperatives are clear examples of bald on record usage. Imperatives are often softened with hedges or conventional politeness markers e.g., please, close the door. That is to say, bald on record strategies are related to directness, utterances with imperatives such as, speak up, and stop talking are examples of bald on record politeness strategies.

Teachers rarely use 'off record' politeness strategies which are strategies related to indirectness. Brown and Levinson (1987:216) claim that in the 'off record' strategy, the actor leaves it up to the addressee to decide how to interpret the act. Off record utterances are

essential in indirect use of language. That is, teachers do not express politeness in an indirect way during sessions. For example, utterances like what about the door? It is hot here, the hidden meaning of the utterances can be a request to close the door or to open the window.

The results obtained from the questionnaires and the classroom observations confirm the hypotheses and the question that teachers use negative politeness strategies in their discourse when interacting with their students.

III. Politeness Strategies in EFL classrooms

Based on the Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategy as stated above, there are four types of politeness strategies. But, four types of those strategies are too general to be applied in the classroom interaction. And there are two strategies that are more appropriate than other strategies to the classroom interaction context; they are positive politeness strategy and negative politeness strategy. Because both of these strategies are most frequently used by the teachers in the classroom and most related to the classroom interaction context.

In addition, it is supported by Peng, Cai, and Tan (2012:05) who conducted the other research about teacher's politeness in EFL classroom are highly aware of politeness strategies and often used negative politeness and positive politeness as their strategies in classroom.

IV. The Effect of Teachers' Use of Politeness on Teachers-Students Interaction

Politeness is one basic concept of human interaction with which human beings have to deal and it is assumed that teacher-students interaction is positively affected by politeness. Politeness enhances learning by providing a lively and a friendly atmosphere and it helps students to have positive feelings toward the lessons.

The results obtained from the questionnaires confirm that politeness strategies have a positive effect on teachers-students interaction. We notice that the majority of teachers (70%) agree that politeness strategies help them to maintain a good relation with students, and even provide a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom. Jiang, one of the scholars who studies politeness strategies, (2010:5) claims that *“In the context of language teaching; it is believed to enhance learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom”*. That is to say, using politeness strategies helps to maintain a good relation with others and permit to save others' face

According to the results obtained during our investigation in the department of English, we conclude that teachers' use of politeness strategies has a positive effect on teacher-students interaction. Infact, when teachers use politeness strategies this attracts students' attention and raises their interest to the lectures and makes them appreciate their teachers. In the same point, teachers' use of politeness strategies makes students feel motivated and comfortable even when they make mistakes they do not feel afraid or shy. Accordingly, teachers' use of politeness strategies motivates and encourages students to participate and interact easily.

In other words, using politeness strategies helps teachers to construct a good and strong relationship with their students and it creates a lively and friendly atmosphere in classes and it is helpful to motivate students and encourages them. From the results of the classroom observation, we conclude that students are motivated. However, students feel disappointed when their teachers show distance and use strategies to show deference, that is, students feel that the teacher is far from them and superior.

According to the results obtained during our investigation in the department of English, we can say that the majority of teachers (80%) use politeness strategies during the classes and

these strategies help them to maintain a good relation with students and to soften the threat to each other's face. These results go as hand in hand with what has been claimed by watts (2003:86) who says "*politeness strategies will therefore be those which aim (a) at supporting or enhancing the addressees' positive face (positive politeness) and (b) at avoiding transgression of the addressee's freedom of action and freedom from imposition (negative face)*". That is, politeness strategies aim at saving the hearers' face and valorizing their opinions. The findings show that (8) teachers always use positive and negative politeness strategies with their students in the classes while they rarely use bald on record and off record politeness strategies.

The classroom observation results demonstrate that teachers are polite with their students all along the session from the beginning until the end of sessions. Politeness is important to build a good interaction; it makes interaction easy and effective. It also helps to avoid conflicts and misunderstanding. In line with this, Hill et al. (1983:349) claim that "*politeness is one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider other's feelings, establish levels of mutual comfort, and promotes rapport*". Hill et al. consider politeness as a constraint to our behavior in order to reduce friction and enhance harmony. Politeness benefits the students and contributes to the effective interaction in the EFL classroom. As Watts (2002:02) claim, "*Being polite is crucial to successful communication with others*".

The results also show that teachers of the department of English most of the time express requests through using modal verbs as a strategy to show politeness and these utterances demonstrate it: could you explain how...., could you remind us about the last point, could you open the window, you should stop talking. Besides, teachers in the observed sessions motivate and encourage students by using some marks of politeness such as: good! Clear! Ok! These utterances show the point: Good, you can do better, good job, it is a kind of translation

ok! That are considered as positive politeness strategies which are likely to encourage interaction between students and their teachers. Thus, the results confirm the hypothesis and the question that teachers' use of politeness strategies has an impact on teacher-students interaction; it promotes interaction by maintaining a good relation between teachers and their students.

V. The Importance of Politeness Strategies in the EFL Classroom

Politeness is a show of respect and good manners toward others. As defined by Lakoff (2013:494), "*politeness is good manners and rules of etiquette*". Therefore, politeness is of crucial importance in the EFL classroom. Students generally learn the language in order to be able to communicate, and to express themselves when performing apologies, requests, thanks....that are essential for the topic of politeness. Politeness is a part of communication and therefore plays a vital part in the process of language learning in the EFL classroom. As stated by Watts (2002:02), "*Being polite is crucial to successful communication*".

Politeness is not only a universally valued virtue, but also a widely employed strategy to achieve tactful and effective communication. Furthermore, politeness can help the speaker to negotiate his/her position in society, eliminate conflicts and facilitate communication. As defined by Lakoff (1990:34) "*Politeness is understood in terms of conflicts avoidance*". Jiang (2010:05) adds: "*In the context of language teaching, it is believed to enhance learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom*".

From the results, we notice that almost all the respondents stress the necessity and the importance of Politeness strategies in the classroom and they confirmed that politeness is important in the classroom because they see that by using PS, the teacher can create a classroom atmosphere that establishes congenial and respectful relationship between the

teachers and the student(s). In such a polite atmosphere, the learner can feel respected and trusted and thus feel unthreatened or embarrassed by his/her mistakes, facilitating his/her involvement in various classroom activities. In line with this, Hill et al. (1986:349) offered a definition. They claim that *“Politeness is one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider other’s feelings, establish levels of mutual comfort, and promote rapport”*.

The results show that politeness of the teacher has a great impact on the learners’ language achievement and success. Teachers use politeness strategies to manage the class using those strategies allow them to maintain, control and invite students to explore pure knowledge the polite questions are as an invitation for the students to participate.

From the observed sessions, we notice that students appreciate teachers’ use of politeness strategies in classroom, because these strategies create a lively and friendly atmosphere between them and their teachers. We also notice that students tend to appreciate one precise politeness strategy which is the positive politeness strategy (PPS), that is, through the use of politeness strategies students feel more comfortable when interacting with their teachers and they speak fluently without any humiliation or fear. We also note that the use of positive politeness strategies in the classroom omits any distance or deference between students and teachers and creates compliments and friendship between those members as it is claimed by Brown and Levinson (1987:72), *“in addition to hedging and attempts to avoid conflicts, PPS include statements of friendship, solidarity and compliments”*.

Teachers in the department of English most of the time use this strategy because it lets them to maintain good relationship with their students, motivates them, and even develop the interaction quality during sessions. It is also noticeable from the results that teachers’ use of polite expressions while interacting with students is seen as a vital, and core element. The

majority of teachers affirm that it is important to use politeness strategies in the classroom when interacting with students, when asking students, giving clarifications or help concerning an educational topic. This is explained by Watts, Ide and Ehliche (2005:05) who state that *“politeness is a set of strategies to achieve social goals with a minimum of social friction”*.

The results of students’ questionnaires show that (80%) of students emphasize the importance and the vital role played by politeness strategies to avoid rudeness and misunderstanding in the classroom, since their use aims at saving each others’ face and minimizing the threat degree of the positive or negative face of both the senders and receivers. In order to avoid rudeness with others and to conduct a smooth discussion without hurting others feelings, it is important to use politeness expressions.

Conclusion

This chapter has permitted us to interpret the results obtained from the teachers’ and the students’ questionnaires and the classroom observation. It has allowed us to answer the research questions and the hypotheses stated in the General Introduction. In fact, we have confirmed that Politeness Strategies are helpful strategies in Language teaching, they help teachers to encourage and motivate students to interact easily and fluently in the classroom. In addition, politeness strategies have a positive effect on teachers-students interaction because they maintain a good relation between teachers and their students and provide a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom.

General Conclusion

Politeness makes interaction easy and effective between people and even helps to avoid conflicts and misunderstanding. Its purposes are to consider other's feelings and establish good relationships and promote rapport between people. In fact, language is a means of communicating ideas, emotions and establishing social relationship. And language systems have within them the means of conveying politeness. So, this last phenomenon cannot be seen outside of verbal language. In the context of language teaching, it is believed that the use of politeness enhances learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom.

A considerable literature on teachers' use of politeness strategies has been written by several researchers, it has helped us in our investigation by providing information about the subject, and answered questions such as: Do teachers use politeness strategies when interacting with students in the classroom? What are these politeness strategies? And do they have an effect on teachers-students interaction?

Our study examines the notion of politeness strategies in teachers discourse and its effect on teachers-students interaction in the department the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University. Through this work, we attempted to investigate the effectiveness of these politeness strategies as a means to help teachers establish a good interaction with students to avoid conflicts and misunderstanding even to motivate and encourage students to participate and interact easily.

Our study has been carried out using teachers' and students' questionnaires and classroom observation. We administered fifty (50) questionnaires for students and (30) questionnaires for teachers, and a total of twenty (20) attendances for classroom observation sessions have been assured with ten (10) teachers of different levels. We have used a

statistical method (SPSS) and Qualitative Content Analysis to explain the facts and information obtained from the investigation. In addition to this statistical method, Brown and Levinson' Politeness Theory (1987) was adopted as a frame work to interpret the data gathered from teachers' and students' questionnaires and the classroom observation.

This dissertation has assigned two main objectives. The first is to explore teachers' use of politeness strategies and the second consists in finding its effect on teachers-students interaction. The descriptive statistical analysis of teachers' questionnaire show that most of teachers (80%) use politeness strategies when interacting with their students in the classroom. They claim that the use of politeness strategies has a positive effect on their interaction with their students during the sessions; it helps them to maintain a good relation with their students and to motivate and encourage them to participate and interact easily. It also makes students feel comfortable with their teachers in the classes. Teachers stress the importance of politeness strategies in language teaching since they have a positive effect on their interaction with students.

The results of students' questionnaire confirm that the majority of teachers use politeness strategies in the classroom. Most of them maintain that when their teachers use politeness strategies they feel respected which make them feel more comfortable even when they make mistakes they do not feel afraid then they interact easily and fluently. They also feel motivated. This encourages them to participate during sessions and raises their interest in lectures. The results indicate that politeness strategies are seen as important strategies which have a positive effect on teachers-student interaction.

The results obtained show that teachers use four politeness strategies in the classroom. It is clear that positive and negative politeness strategies are dominant in most situations; these two strategies are used more by teachers.

Our research findings have confirmed that teachers use politeness strategies when interacting with their students in the classroom. All teachers use most of the time negative and positive politeness strategies and they do not use bald on record and off record politeness strategies, while few of them rarely use 'bald on record' and 'off record' politeness strategies. Politeness strategies are helpful strategies used in teachers-students interaction in Foreign Language classes. Politeness strategies help teachers to maintain good relations with their students and motivate and encourage students to participate and interact easily. In addition, teachers' use of politeness strategies has a positive effect on teacher-students interaction, it makes students feel comfortable then it promotes an effective interaction between teachers and their students.

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Appendices

Appendix 1:

The Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a research study on “EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in oral discourse and its effect on teacher-students interaction”. Please, take few minutes to answer the following questions. This questionnaire is anonymous and your responses will be held in the strictest confidence.

We would thank you in advance for your precious collaboration

Section One: Teachers’ Use of Politeness Strategies in their Oral Discourse

1. How do you start lectures?

- Using salutations (hello, greeting....)
- Asking after students’ situation (how are you, ...)
- Starting directly the course

2. Do you use politeness strategies when interacting with your learners?

- Yes
- No

If yes, which of the following strategies do you use?

- Modal verbs
- Complex expressions (using jokes, nicknames, honorifics....)
- Negative politeness (hedging, presenting disagreement or opinions...)

3. How do you show politeness in your discourse?

- Using modal verbs
- Using formulaic expressions (thank you, please, ...)
- Being friendly and informal

4. How often do you use modal verbs?

- Always
- Rarely
- Never

5. Do you use politeness strategies when giving instructions?

- Yes
- No

Section Two: The Effect of Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies on Teacher-Students

Interaction

6. Does being polite help you to maintain a good relation with students?

- Yes
- No

Explain.....
.....

7. Do you feel comfortable when you use politeness strategies with your students?

- Yes
- No

Why?.....
.....

8. Do you think that the use of politeness strategies motivate students?

- Agree
-

- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. Do you think that the use of politeness strategies has positive effect on your interaction quality with your students?

- Yes
- No

Why?.....

10. In your opinion, does the use of politeness strategies with students enhances learning and provides a lively and friendly atmosphere?

- Yes
- No

How?.....

11. To what extent is the use of politeness helpful?

.....

12. Do you agree that politeness aims to reduce friction in personal interaction?

- Yes
- No

If yes how?.....

Appendix 2:

The Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a research study on “EFL teachers’ use of politeness strategies in oral discourse and its effect on teacher-students interaction”. Please, take a few minutes to answer the following questions. This questionnaire is anonymous and your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. We would thank you in advance for your precious collaboration

Section One: Students' Views about Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies in their Oral

Discourse

1. Do your teachers use politeness strategies during sessions?

- Yes
- No

2. How do your teachers start their lectures?

- Using salutations (hello, ...)
- Asking after students' situation (how are you....)
- Starting directly the course

3. How do your teachers show politeness in their discourse?

- Using modal verbs
- Using formulaic expressions (thank you, please, ...)
- Being friendly and informal

4. How often do your teachers use modal verbs?

- Always
- Rarely
- Never

5. Do your teachers use politeness strategies when giving instructions?

- Always
- Rarely
- Never

**Section Two: Students' Opinions about The Effect on Teachers' Use of Politeness Strategies on
Teacher-Students Interaction**

6. Teachers being polite with you, does it leads to maintain a good relation with them?

- Yes
- No

Explain.....
.....

7. Do you feel comfortable when your teachers use politeness strategies with you?

- Yes
- No

Why?.....
.....

8. Do you think that when your teachers use politeness strategies motivate you?

- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Why?.....
.....

9. Do you think that teachers' use of politeness strategies has an impact on your interaction with them?

• Yes

• No

Why?.....

.....

10. Does your teachers' use of politeness strategies during lectures enhances your learning and provides a lively and friendly atmosphere?

• Yes

• No

How?.....

.....

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix 3: Classroom Observation Checklist

	Yes	No
1. Do teachers use politeness strategies in EFL classes?		
2. Do teachers use politeness strategies all along the sessions?		
3. Do teachers use politeness strategies when giving instructions?		
4. Do all teachers use politeness strategies when motivating and giving feedback during sessions?		
5. Do all teachers encourage students during sessions?		
6. Do teachers use politeness strategies when performing requests?		
7. Does teachers' use of politeness strategies influences students' interaction?		
8. Does teachers' use of politeness strategies has a positive effect on teachers-students interaction?		
9. Does teachers' use of politeness strategies enhances students' learning		

and makes them interact easily and fluently?		
10. Do teachers' use of politeness strategies creates a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom?		