FATCHUL MU'IN (EDITOR)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

A Critical Review of Research Reports



Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Lambung Mangkurat Banjarmasin

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A Critical Review of Research Reports

Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat Banjarmasin

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Part 4

Strategies of Cultivating Politeness Character through Teaching Speaking Skills at Junior High School

Nanik Mariani

Introduction

Education is an effort to realize learning activities carried out so that students can actively learn and develop their potential for the better in terms of intelligence, knowledge, personality, etc. The availability of educated human resources influences the success of the nation's development. Generally, countries make education the main program to build the nation. The quality of human resources with advanced education is the starting point for the successful development of a country.

Character development is currently one of the serious concerns of the government. In the process of change, character education is a challenging change for this generation because children's character has already been formed in their family life. In comparison, the nation that has a strong character is the one that can reach the pinnacle of world civilization. Character education is a continuous process starting from children to adults and will never end. Thus, students who do not have good character can see it, especially in speaking ethics. This is due to students' lack of awareness of being polite in speech and not seeing an example at home or in the environment.

The character has three interrelated parts: moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral behavior. Good character consists of knowing good things, wanting good things, and doing good things - habits of thought, heart, and action. These three things are needed to direct a moral life; all three forms of moral maturity, even though they are faced with internal temptations and external pressures (Lickona, 2012). Character building can be done through two educational channels: formal and non-formal. Formal education is an educational path with levels ranging from elementary school to middle school to college. This is an education held by schools in general. As Indonesia's most common academic pathway, it is formal, and its graduates have been recognized both nationally and internationally. So, what is the difference between formal and non-formal education goals? Formal education aims to form potential human resources, physically and mentally healthy and provide benefits for themselves, their families, communities, and the country.

Formal education is implemented at school and it has a number of courses to be taught to the student e.g., Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Social Studies, Indonesian language, and foreign languages. One of the foreign languages taught to and learned by the learners is the English language.

English people widely spread, e.g. Asia, Africa, and Australia. As a consequence of an increasingly globalized world and supported by the development of science and technology, English language has been widely used by many people all over the world. This means that the English language has spread widely to the new geographical territories. This statement has an implication that English language users have been widely distributed in very large numbers to very wide regions. So, the number of English users who are fluent in using that language are also great in numbers. According to David Crystal, a quarter of the population of world already has fluency or competence in using English; this profile or figure is continually growing in the beginning of 2000s. This means that there are about 1.5 billion English language users. There is no other language that can match the growth, and the figure is steadly growing" (Crystal, 2003:6).

English becomes the most essential language in the world. Almost all the people from many different countries around the world use English to communicate. English is one of the foreign languages for Indonesian students, which should be learned in school from Elementary until University. English is considered as a difficult subject for Indonesian students because English is completely different from the Indonesian language based on its grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. English learning presented at Junior High School (SMP) is more stressed on knowledge of the four standards of competence or the four language skills, such as, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, without considering the ethical values contained in that four language skills. It means that the teaching and learning English, especially in speaking skills, should be taught not only in the cognitive skills but also in the affective skills as well.

Character is "a compatible mixture of all the virtues identified by religious traditions, literary stories, sages, and common sense people in history." Based on this classical understanding, to provide a way of thinking about the exemplary character for value education, the character is built from operative values, values in action. We proceed in our character, as a value becomes a good, an inner disposition that can be relied upon to respond to situations in a morally sound manner. Such a character has three components: moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral behavior. Good character consists of knowing good things, wanting good things, and doing good—habits of thought, heart, and action. These three things are needed to direct a moral life; these three forms of moral maturity (Lickona, 2012).

Politeness is the way we speak in showing respect for others. Politeness, especially positive politeness, is usually used to maintain social relations. Muslich (2006:1) stated that politeness, courtesy, or etiquette is a procedure, custom, or custom prevailing in society. Politeness is the rules of conduct determined and decided together by a particular community to be concluded by the prerequisite of social behavior. Politeness is the practical

application of good manners or etiquette so as not to offend others. It is a culturally defined phenomenon. What is considered polite in one culture can be quite rude or simply eccentric in another cultural context.

All languages in the world consist of 4 basic principles. It doesn't matter what kind of language it is, where it comes from, and how it is structured - they are all made of 4 main elements, namely reading (reading), writing (writing), speaking (speaking), and listening (listening). These four elements are undoubtedly interrelated but have significant differences in the process. To master English, we must also carry out these four basic principles. Those who want to be proficient in English must adopt the four basic principles as a complete learning process, but keep in mind that the four basics have different characteristics and methods. But keep in mind that there will be only a tiny chance to be able to master English if someone only learns English with one principle and leaves the other three principles.

The target that every English learner wants to achieve is to be able to use it in communicating. Harmer (1983) stated, "language learning occurs most successfully when the students are put in communicative situations in the target language." To make it happen, Haris (1969) mentions that five components must be mastered, namely: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Achieving this target is not easy. Teachers must be skilled in using appropriate techniques to teach speaking skills. The education regarding how language-speaking politely, considering the value of tolerance, sympathy, and empathy. So the cognitive and affective skills must be balanced. For example, implementing politeness in the process of teaching English speaking skills.

The writer wants to describe that the process of teaching and learning English at school, from elementary to university has been still based on the knowledge of English as it is stated in standard competence and linguistic components. It seems that its ethical values have not been considered. This phenomenon may be due to the lack of teachers' knowledge of politeness theories underlying the language and the ways to apply them in their teaching and learning process. Then, the researcher wanted to assess how the character values underlying the English language taught or internalized in the learners' behavior in the classroom.

Literature Review

Ethics of Language

These linguistic norms can be linked to old ideas, as suggested by Fishman, "Who speaks what language to Whom and When (1972:244), and by Pride and Holmes," factors that influence language use: participants, topics, settings, channels, mood, and intention (1972: 35). Speech acts in front of seniors must be polite. Speakers must respect the listener by choosing speech that has respect value. Therefore, participants in speech events must use speech that has the value of respect. Attitude and respect are shown by: tolerance, acceptance, privacy, non-violence, decency, politeness, caring, and responsibility.

Politeness

Language plays an essential role in human communication and interaction. According to Chaer (2003:32), language is an arbitrary system used by human beings to communicate, cooperate, maintain social relations, and identify them. Communication and interaction can happen among and between the teacher and learner in the classroom. Barker (1987:72) states that classroom interaction happen at the time of teacher and learners talk together for the instructional purposes carried out in the paradigm of process and product. The interaction can be performed orally and in writing.

Polite behavior is equivalent to socially 'correct' or appropriate behavior. Politeness can be positive and negative. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:70), positive politeness is the strategy which is oriented to satisfy the positive self-image of the hearer. The positive politeness might be expressed in fifteenth politeness strategies. These are: (1) Notice or attend to hearer, (2) Exaggerate, (3) Intensify interest to hearer, (4) Use in-group identity markers, (5) Seek agreement, (6) Avoid disagreement, (7) Presuppose/raise/assert common ground, (8) Joke, (9) Assert S's knowledge of H's wants and willingness, (10) Offer and promise, (11) Be optimistic, (12) Include both S and H in the activity, (13) Give or ask reason, (14) Assume or assert reciprocity, and (15) Give gifts to Hearer. The urgency of researching about politeness is to know how to approach and teach students well by using politeness strategies. The importance of politeness strategies is to build smooth and harmonious social interaction between teacher and students; it is also necessary to avoid the speech acts that used by the speaker that may be potentially face-threatening or damaging the hearer. In addition, it is important to use an appropriate word or phrase in the suitable context of teaching and learning process.

Positive Politeness

It is usually seen in groups of friends, or where people in the given social situation know each other fairly well. It usually tries to minimize the distance between them by expressing friendliness and solid interest in the hearer's need to be respected (minimize the FTA). For example:

- a. Attend to the hearer: "You must be hungry, it's a long time since breakfast. How about some lunch?"
- b. Avoid disagreement: A: "What is she, small?" B: "Yes, yes, she's small, smallish, um, not really small but certainly not very big."
- c. Assume agreement: "So when are you coming to see us?"
- d. Hedge opinion: "You really should sort of try harder."

Negative Politeness

The main focus for using this strategy is to assume that you may be imposing on the hearer, and intruding on their space. Therefore, these automatically assume that there might be some social distance or awkwardness in the situation. For example:

- e. Be indirect: "I'm looking for a comb." In this situation you are hoping that you will not have to ask directly, so as not to impose and take up the hearer's time. Therefore, by using this indirect strategy, you hope they will offer to go find one for you.
- f. Forgiveness: "You must forgive me but"
- g. Minimize imposition: "I just want to ask you if I could use your computer?"
- h. Pluralize the person responsible: "We forgot to tell you that you needed to by your plane ticket by yesterday." This takes all responsibility off of only you and onto "we", even if you were the person responsible for telling the hearer when the deadline was to buy the ticket.

Teaching and Learning English Speaking Skills

Techniques of teaching English speaking skills are fundamental to encourage students to improve their speaking skills. Inaccuracy in the selection and use of teaching techniques can decrease student motivation. Many techniques can encourage students to speak English orally, including guided speaking, short conversation, role play, and rubric techniques. The use of all techniques is adjusted to the target and level of ability of the students being taught. For example, the guided speaking technique emphasizes pronunciation because students must be prepared to pronounce words correctly. The use of short conversation and role-play scenarios that ask students to compose their script or short text before presenting/acting it out in front of the class is also very well applied. These techniques encourage students to be more confident.

Each teaching technique has advantages and disadvantages. The use of appropriate techniques encourages students to master English speaking skills quickly. Inaccurate use of techniques can have an impact on decreasing student motivation. Teachers must master many techniques of teaching speaking skills and be able to practice them in the classroom. In addition to guided speaking techniques, there are short conversations, role play, and rubrics. Teachers should also be able to use other techniques, such as discussion techniques, even though the material is simple. Teachers should use supporting media to make the learning process more exciting in learning skills in class and not bore students.

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Discussion

This social difference is not shown explicitly but is delivered through honorifics. Honorific values are expressed by ceremonial greeting terms such as Your Majesty and Your Grace and indirect requests. Would you like to help me? Do you want to get the coffee?. In Indonesian, we often hear similar speeches like Your Majesty and Can help me. A number of these utterances show politeness; simultaneously, social status and power are still maintained (Leech, 2014).

Polite character is an integrative part of – and simultaneously influenced by – sociocultural background as a starting point for politeness. When politeness is manifested in verbal language, there will be similarities and differences between cultures, such as the politeness level of greetings. This greeting can be expressed with utterances such as "Good morning," "Good day," "Hi," and "Hello."

Respect for the interlocutor can be expressed by using honorific speech. Every language has systems that control how people use their language. In English, a similar attitude is governed by Honorific Devices. Honorific Devices are a means to construct utterances that implies respect following oral or written communication strategies, as suggested by Fishman in 'Who speaks What language to Whom and When.'

and when the speech was delivered) (Fishman, 1972). In Javanese, respect in language acts is regulated through what Clifford Geertz calls Linguistic etiquette. In Indonesia, respect with the slogan "Use Indonesian properly and correctly" and English through Honorific Devices.

In general, the norms in the use of language are shown in the following communication strategies. The first strategy suggests that "a speaker must know what he wants to say, and with whom he is communicating and interacting." The second strategy relates to language choice, "what language or language variety is suitable in the sociocultural setting in which or when the communication or interaction takes place." The third strategy aligns with "when and how we use our turn in speaking, interrupting when others are speaking. The fourth strategy is silence time, i.e., "When should we speak or be silent." The fifth strategy is about voice quality and attitude, e.g., "How good are our voices, and how good are our attitudes in speech acts77." All strategies are intended to produce speech followed by respect and courtesy. The resulting utterance is expected to be culturally acceptable to the participants involved in interpersonal communication.

From the three observations that have been conducted, it showed that three of the lecturer used 87 kinds of positive politeness strategies where there are variations of using these politeness strategies. By using those politeness strategies, it showed that the lecturers included linguistics as language teaching as well to make the students comprehend the teaching and learning process more comfortable. Mariani and Mu'in (2007: 29) stated that linguistics is essential for language teaching because linguistics and language teaching can be linked to the relationship of knowledge about the engine and the skill in driving a car. Therefore, the lecturers supported their teaching skills with the linguistics capabilities by using positive politeness strategies to establish the teaching and learning process successfully.

In pre-activity, it contains the beginning section of the teaching and learning process,

where the lecturers should be able to apply what they have planned to do as the starter. According to Kumar (2012: 12), the pre-activity phase is the planning phase of the teaching activities and good planning makes the task of a teacher smooth, functional and successful.

Therefore, by using positive politeness strategies help the lecturers to save the students' face while teaching and learning process is conducted.

It was found Positive Politeness Strategy 1: Notice has become one of the strategies which were used the most by the lecturers. At the beginning of the lesson, the lecturers always showed their attention to the students before entering to the main focus of the learning. In this part of the teaching and learning process, the lecturers used Positive **Politeness**

Strategy 1: Noticing attend to the hearer(s) (his/their interest, wants, needs, goods)

Notice Attend to Hearer is meant to make the students feel appreciated and noticed at the very beginning of the lesson. This strategy suggests that speaker (S) need to take notice the hearer (H) condition. Therefore, it would bond the good atmosphere as the start of the teaching and learning process for the students. Brown and Levinson (1987:103) stated that the speaker should take notice of the aspects of hearers' condition where listener has an expectation to the speaker to notice and recognize her/him). For example, Example: "Bayu, you're really good at solving computer problems. I wonder if you could just help me with a little problem I have got."

Strategy 2 : Exaggerating (interest, approval, sympathy with hearer)

This strategy is performed by utilizing high intonation or stress so that it can be intensifying modifiers, for instance, "Oh, Anne, so beautiful you are. Just the girl I wanted to see. I knew I'd meet you here. Could you spare me a couple of minutes?"

Strategy 3: Intensify interest in the hearer

Another way for Speaker (S) to communicate to Hearer (H) that he shares he wants to intensify the interest of S's own contributions to the conversation, by making a good story. This strategy is used by the speaker (S) that interest to the conversation to the hearer (H) by making a good story, for instance, "I came down the stairs, and what do you think I see? - a huge mess all over the place, the phone is off the hook, and clothing is scattered all over..."

Strategy 4 : Use In-group Identity Markers

This strategy is done by using innumerable address forms to indicate that S and H belong to some set of persons who share specific wants. In conveying of a group member, the speaker can use terms such as mac, mate, buddy, pal, honey, dear, duckie, Luv, babe, Mom, blondie, brother, sister, cutie, sweetheart, guys, fella, etc.

Strategy 5: Seek Agreement

This strategy is such another way to save the positive face of H. Seeking agreement may be stressed by raising and repeating what the preceding S has said in a conversation. In this strategy, there are two ways: safe topics and repetition (Brown and Levinson, 1987:112).

a. The raising of 'safe topics,' it allows the speaker to stress his/her agreement with the hearer which is the hearer's opinion is right. For instance, if your neighbor comes home with a new car and you think that it is hideously huge and pollution producing, you might still be able to say sincerely.

Example: "Isn't your new car a beautiful color!"

b. By repeating apart of what the speaker said in a conversation, the agreement may also be stressed.

Example: A: "I had a flat tire on the way home."

B: "Oh, God, a flat tire!"

Strategy 6: Avoid Disagreement

In this strategy, the speakers may go in not clear utterances to make it agree or to hide disagreement. Here are four ways to avoid disagreement in soft ways, such as token agreement, pseudo agreement, white lies, and hedging opinion.

c. For instance, the 'token' agreement is the desire to agree or try to coincide with the hearer that is pretending to agree (Brown and Levinson, 1987:113). The utterance will be like "Yes, but..." in effect, rather than "No."

Example:

Adam: "What is she small?"

Bryan: "Yes, yes, she"s small, smallish, um, not really small but certainly not very big."

d. Pseudoagreement is used as a conclusion marker, an indication that the speaker is concluding a line of reasoning carried out cooperatively with the addressee.

Example:

Banu: "I love you." Della: " love you, too."

e. White lies ways happened when a speaker faced with the necessity to states an opinion, and the speaker wants to lie rather than to damage to the hearer's positive face. It is also used to avoid confrontation when refusing a request by lying, pretending there are reasons why one cannot comply.

Example: In response to a request to borrow a radio, "Oh, I can't. The batteries

are dead."

f. Hedging opinion occurred when the speaker may choose to be vague about his own opinions, so as not to be seen to disagree.

Example:

Una: "Are - are you saying I'm fired?" Banu: "No, no, not yet. I mean not yet,

Strategy 7: Presuppose/Raise/Assert Common Ground

This strategy includes three ways among them are gossip or small talk, point of view operations, and presupposition manipulation.

- g. Gossip or small talk the value of the speaker"s spending time and effort on being with the hearer, as a mark of friendship or interest him. It gives rise to the strategy of redressing FTAs by talking for a while about an unrelated topic before leads to the real topic (Brown and Levinson, 1987:117).
 - For example, the speaker wants to request something to the hearer, and thereby he can stress his general interest with the hearer and indicates that he has not come to see the hearer to do it even though his intent might be evident by his having brought a gift to the hearer.
- h. Point of view operations using deixis. It is used for reducing the distance between the speaker and the hearer"s point of view. For example, when the speaker gives directions to a stranger, unfamiliar with the town, "It's at the far end of the street, the last house on the left, isn't it?"
- i. Presupposition manipulation means that the speaker presupposes something that is mutually taken for granted. (Brown and Levinson, 1987:122). For example, "Well, I was watching High Life last night." The speaker assumes that the hearer does know the program even though the hearer indeed does not know about the TV program. However, it may operate as an expression of good intentions, indicating that the speaker assumes that the speaker and the hearer share common grounds.

Strategy 7 : Joke

Jokes are based on mutual shared background knowledge and values that they redefine the size of FTA.

Example: "How about landing me this old heap of junk?"

Strategy 8: Assert Speaker's Knowledge of Hearer's Wants and Willingness to Fit One's Own Wants in With Them

> Assert S"s knowledge of H"s wants and willingness to fit one's own wants in with them.

Example: "I know you do not like parties. But this is different. You must like it. Coming huh?"

Strategy 9: Offer, Promise

This strategy is done to redress the potential threat of some FTAs. Speaker may claim that whatever H wants, S wants for him and will help to obtain.

Example: "I"ll send the money tomorrow. Do not worry."

Strategy 10: Be Optimistic

This strategy assumes that H will cooperate with S because it will be in their mutual shared interest.

Example: "Wait a minute, you haven"t brushed your hair!"

Strategy 11: Include Both Speaker and Hearer in the Activity

This is done by using an inclusive "we" form when Speaker really means "you" or "me."

The use of let"s is an inclusive form of "we." Example: "Let us stop a bite."

Strategy 12: Give or Ask for Reasons

Another aspect of including Hearer in the activities demanding reasons "why not," and assuming that Hearer has no good reasons why can't help.

Example: "I know there is no one in your home. Why not stay here tonight?"

Strategy 13: Assume or Assert to Reciprocity

The strategy is done by giving evidence of a reciprocal right or obligations obtaining between S and H. Therefore. The speaker can say "I'll do X for you if you do Y for me, or 'I did X for you last week, so you do Y for me this week" (or vice versa). Example: "I washed the dishes yesterday, so you do that for me today."

Strategy 14: Give Gifts to Hearer

To satisfy H"s positive face, S may do this classic strategy. That is to give a gift not only tangible gifts but also human-relation wants such to be liked, to be admired.

Example: "I'm sorry for what happened to you yesterday.

Conclusion

During the teaching and learning process at the Junior High School in Banjarmasin, it was found that the implementation of positive politeness strategies bylecturers is relevant to the teaching phases (pre-activity, while-activity, and post-activity). The application of positive politeness strategies from every subject showed that three of the lecturers almost used the same procedure where positive politeness strategies were implemented by showing attention, repeating student's answers, praising students, and showing gratitude to the students.

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