

Illocutionary Acts and Politeness Strategies in EFL Classroom Interaction and The Students' Perceptions

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Abstract: This study explores illocutionary acts and politeness strategies employed by the academic staff and also the students' perceptions on the academic staff's language and politeness strategies in EFL classroom interaction. Twelve different classes of six English academic staff in one term lasting 100 minutes each were observed and recorded and then transcribed. The results showed that four out of five types of illocutionary acts were employed; directive, representative, commissive, and expressive. Concerning the use of politeness strategies in the academic staff's illocutionary acts, bald on-record, positive, negative and off-record politeness strategies were all employed. This study also indicates that most of the university students expressed agreement to the use of polite language in the classroom interaction.

Keywords: illocutionary acts, face, face threatening acts, politeness strategies, perception

Abstrak: Penelitian ini membahas tentang tindak ilokusi dan strategi kesopanan yang digunakan oleh para dosen dan persepsi dari mahasiswa mereka terkait penggunaan bahasa dan strategi kesopanan oleh dosen di interaksi kelas Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing. Dua belas kelas yang berbeda dari enam dosen Bahasa Inggris dengan waktu pertemuan masing-masing 100 menit telah diobservasi, direkam, dan ditranskrip. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa para dosen menggunakan empat dari lima macam tipe tindak ilokusi, yaitu: direktif, representatif, komisif, dan ekspresif. Sehubungan dengan strategi kesopanan yang ditemukan di tindak ilokusi para dosen, disimpulkan bahwa para dosen menggunakan tipe kesopanan *bald on-record*, kesopanan positif, kesopanan negatif, dan kesopanan *off-record*. Penelitian ini juga menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar mahasiswa setuju atas penggunaan bahasa yang sopan di dalam interaksi kelas.

Kata kunci: tindakan ilokusi, wajah, tindakan ancaman wajah, strategi kesopanan, persepsi

INTRODUCTION

Politeness is the way how speakers show their intention while communicating by expressing respect to others. One who applies politeness is considered to be a thankful one, modest, and nice to other people in society. Behaving politely depends not only on how nice a member in a society is, but also on how to act politely in an everyday conversation. The more people use polite language, the more they achieve some respects from society. In addition, speaking politeness involves other people's feeling, and being a polite person means that we should make others feel comfortable to communicate with us since everything people say may affect the hearer (Maria Gil, 2012). Different culture and behavior may lead to different way to be polite or impolite.

Politeness theory is commonly associated with speech acts theory. In some contexts, people's utterances convey various types of speech acts, especially illocutionary act, an implicit meaning performed by the speaker, which express politeness strategies in order to minimize the hearer's face or to consider the feelings of the hearers. In the academic field, the use of proper language plays an important role in classroom activity and it may lead to a successful teaching and learning process (Schleppegrell, 2004:19). Nunan (1991, cited in Peng, Xie, & Cai, 2014) also described that classroom language determines the success of teaching and learning activities as well as the medium to enhance students' knowledge acquisition in the classroom. In classroom

interaction, academic staff's language plays an important role to build an effective communication in the classroom. Wrench, Richmond, & Gorham, (2009) stated that the establishment of effective and affective classroom communication is one of the prominent elements in teaching. As Jiang (2010) stated that politeness in relation to teachers-students relationship is able to enhance the mutual understanding and to build a harmonious relationship in the classroom, therefore, study of communication in classroom interaction is important especially dealing with speech act and politeness. How teachers, in this case academic staff in Brawijaya University, deliver their utterances in the classroom, related to the language they use cannot be denied that it may influence the atmosphere of the teaching and learning process, especially on the students' perceptions.

To support the analysis, several theories related to this research are presented. The theories include teachers' role, teachers' language, speech acts, politeness, face threatening acts (FTA), and politeness strategies. Teachers in this case refer also to academic staff or faculty members.

In the teaching and learning process, especially in the classroom, a teacher plays a very crucial role in developing students' interest toward the subjects of the learning or the language. It is agreed that teachers' performance in the class definitely give an influence to their students. Xu & Huang (2010) asserted that teachers who have deficient in their own self-esteem will, indeed, encounter a boundary to raise their students' confidence. With the similar fashion, the ones who fail in creating a good classroom atmosphere will probably find their students turn to be demotivated in learning.

An effective communication between teachers and students in the classroom interaction plays an important role in language learning since its goals are encouraging students and communicating with them. Another objective is the development of the students' foreign language proficiency. In learning language, especially in many foreign language classrooms, Gebhard (2000, quoted by Fachrurrazy, 2014) stated that teacher talk is important in providing learners with the only substantial live target language input they are likely to receive. It can be said that in a language classroom, the language used by teachers may become such a medium to achieve the teaching objective since it is believed that it will, to some degree, influence the language learning process. Whenever teachers deliver positive emotion and energy in the classroom, it may

become such a good teaching and learning process. By having effective communication through their language which then influence the relation between teachers and students can affect the quality of students' motivation to learn and classroom learning experiences as well. Additionally, Consolo (2006, cited in Khusnia, 2017:32) also stated that students' language development could be achieved by having a good teachers-students' relationship. Furthermore, in classroom context, teachers own the authority over students to determine the degree of their dominance with reference to the way they use the language (Elmianvari & Kheirabadi, 2013).

Speech act deals with how language is used in society. It is an action which is performed via utterances, concerning participants and the context of the conversation. Austin (1962) defined speech acts as acts performed in saying something. He divided speech acts into three categories: *locutionary*, *illocutionary*, and *perlocutionary acts*. Specifically, Brown & Yule (1983, cited in FENG Yi-xuan, 2016:516) described an illocutionary act as an act performed by the speaker. Searle (1976) then developed Austin's *illocutionary act* types into five categories: *directive*, *representative*, *commissive*, *expressive* and *declarative* speech acts.

Politeness defines as a way of how to be linguistically polite. Grundy (1995) asserted that politeness is one manifestation of a wide concept: etiquette. Politeness is important for people to have appropriate language in having interaction. Mills (2003:6) stated that politeness is the expression of the speakers' intention to minimize *face* threats accomplished by certain face threatening acts to the hearer. *Face* is defined by Brown & Levinson (1987:61) as an individual's desire to be unimpeded or to be free (negative face) and to be appreciated, respected, approved of, and to be well thought of (positive face). In other words, *face* refers to respect that one has for him or herself and the maintaining self-esteem in public or private situations. However, in communication in some occasions, people sometimes do not pay attention to the addressee's *desire* or called *face* when they are asking for something, declining statement, or refusing a request. This act is called *Face-Threatening Acts (FTA)* as stated by Brown & Levinson (1987). Therefore, they provided some politeness strategies in order to soften the impact of FTA to the hearer's face employed by the speaker. In classroom context, the attractive classroom interactions could be created if teachers thoughtfully make use of politeness strategies to their students. This pivotal tool benefits

in terms of their social distance and instructional process in ELT classroom (Peng et al., 2014). Besides, according to Manik & Hutagaol (2015:153), the politeness of teacher is perceived to affect the classroom output enhancement in which they elicit from students' intended obedience.

Politeness strategies are used in order to save the hearer's face, therefore, Brown & Levinson (1987) propose several politeness strategies in minimizing FTAs done by the speaker to the hearer. Politeness strategies theory proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987:94-227) consists of five strategies: (a) bald on record (to follow what it says), (b) positive politeness (by performing speech acts and referring to the positive face; 15 strategies), (c) negative politeness (by performing speech acts and referring to the negative face; 10 strategies), (d) off the record (indirect speech act; 15 strategies), and (e) do not do the FTA (do not do speech act or say anything). In other words, "on record" means that the doer of the action does not try to hide what he/she is doing; everything is clear. On the contrary, "off-record" means that the actor pretends to hide his/her action by applying indirect speech act.

METHOD

This study employed descriptive a qualitative research design. In this regards, the analysis of this research focuses on the utterances in the interaction of academic staff-students in EFL classroom and eventually arrive at the findings pertaining to illocutionary acts and politeness strategies employed by the academic staff and also the students' perception on the academic staff's politeness strategies in the classroom. The participants of this research were six English Language Education Program academic staff in Brawijaya University and their students, who came from different levels of English proficiency which were represented from different years, start from the first until the third year and all majoring in English Language Education. The selected academic staff consisted of three female and three male who have at least five years teaching experience and also have at least a Master's degree title, and were both younger and older ones.

In collecting the data, observation checklist and questionnaire were used as the main instruments. The first instrument was used in order to know the classroom interaction between the academic staff and

the students. It recorded some points which provided data for analysis. Field note was also used to collect more supporting data and to record some aspects of teaching and learning process that might be not covered in observation sheet. The questionnaire contained forty items derived from four main issues, namely; the influence of academic staff's language in the classroom in different aspects (9 items), students' perceptions on academic staff's language in the classroom (6 items), practice of the politeness strategies in classroom (21 items), and factors influencing academic staff's language choice, utterances, and politeness strategies (4 items). The questionnaire employed a likert scale, one to four (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree), that minimized the bias and supplied the respondents with various options to choose according to their opinion.

In collecting the data, observations were first carried out in the classroom by video-recording the subjects' conversation and interaction in order to find out the real or factual situation of teaching process. The oral data produced by the academic staff as in the class were obtained from the video-recording as well. The data collection phase was conducted in two meetings of each selected academic staff with 100 minutes time allotment in each meeting. The last procedure was distributing questionnaires to the students in order to find out their perceptions related to the research. All the students attended in the chosen academic staff's classes received both a hard and soft copy questionnaire in case they were not available to do it within the planned time. After collecting the questionnaires, the data were then analyzed further.

The data were first analyzed by transcribing the recorded dialogues to identify the academic staff's utterances. Then, the data utterances containing illocutionary acts were coded into several categories based on their types. Then the classified illocutionary acts utterances containing politeness strategies were coded again into their politeness strategies types. After that, summarizing the data was conducted through examining and connecting the coded data among the categories. The questionnaires for the students were used in order to find out their perceptions related to the academic staff's language and politeness strategies in the classroom. The politeness strategies conveyed in the illocutionary acts of the subjects' utterances were identified and analyzed as the result of the research. The data were then demonstrated in tables in order to ease the researcher to completely understand what happens in the fields and come to the conclusion.

FINDINGS

The academic staff's utterances were analyzed in order to find out the illocutionary act types and their politeness strategies. While the students' perceptions on the academic staff's language and politeness strategies were examined to answer the next research question.

Illocutionary Acts Employed by the Academic Staff

Based on twelve meeting class observations in English Language Education Program in twelve different courses, four types of illocutionary acts employed by the six academic staff were found. A total of 445 utterances classified as illocutionary acts during most of the teaching and learning process are presented in Table 1.

The data presented in Table 1 were from the utterances containing illocutionary acts performed by the six academic staff in their classroom activity. Of all types of illocutionary acts presented in Table 1, it is clear that directive speech acts is the type of speech act that are often employed in EFL classroom activity with 216 instances which represents 48.43% out of the total number of utterances. Representative occupied the second place among the other types. They appeared in 155 utterances which represent 34.75% out of the total utterances. The occurrence of commissive was revealed in 43 utterances with the percentage of 9.64% out of the whole utterances. Meanwhile, the least illocutionary acts employed in the classroom activity was expressive with 32 utterances equal with 7.17% out of the total utterances containing illocutionary acts. Out of five types of illocutionary acts, declarative is the only one illocutionary acts that was not found the academic staff's utterances.

Politeness Strategies Employed in Academic Staff's Illocutionary Acts

In twelve meeting observations of different classes, it is concluded that 268 utterances are categorized as politeness strategies as presented in Table 2.

The data presented in Table 2 indicated that the academic staff frequently used positive politeness strategies with 107 utterances or about 39.93% during their interaction with the students. The second frequently used politeness strategy is negative politeness

with eighty six utterances or about 32.08%. The third mostly used strategy is bald on-record strategy with fifty nine utterances or about 22.02% and the last used strategy employed in the academic staff's illocutionary acts is off-record politeness strategy with only sixteen occurrences or about 5.97% from total utterances.

Students' Perceptions on Academic Staff's Language and Politeness Strategies

The questionnaire is composed with 40 items to 178 respondents from the twelve different classes being observed. The findings were drawn after the researcher analyzed the results of the questionnaires. The findings are divided into several indicators: (1) the influence of academic staff's language in the classroom, (2) the students' perceptions on the academic staff's language, (3) the practice of politeness strategies, and (4) the factors influencing academic staff's language choice, utterances, and politeness strategies.

DISCUSSION

This section presents the discussion of the findings. Regardless to the findings of the research, the discussion of the illocutionary acts employed by the academic staff, the politeness strategies conveyed in academic staff's illocutionary acts, and the students' perceptions on the academic staff's language and politeness strategies are presented in the following explanation.

Illocutionary Acts Employed by the Academic Staff

In general, the concept of illocutionary speech acts as proposed by Searle (1976) did not all occur in this research completely. This indicated that the findings of the research showed a difference result as found in the research conducted by Kurdghelashvili (2015) in which he claimed that all types of illocutionary acts used throughout the lessons had been imposed by the teachers in her research. The present research revealed that four out five illocutionary acts; *directive*, *commissive*, *representative*, and *expressive* were employed by the academic staff which was in agreement with the research conducted by Susanti, Sumarlam, Djatmika, & Rohmadi (2018). Furthermore, the classification of each illocutionary acts according to

Table 1. The Illocutionary Acts Employed by the Academic Staff

Illocutionary Acts Types		f	%
1	Directive	216	48.43
2	Representative	155	34.75
3	Commissive	43	9.64
4	Expressive	31	7.17
5	Declarative	0	0
Total		445	100

Table 2. Politeness Strategies Employed by the Academic Staff

Politeness Strategies		f	%
1	Bald on-record	59	22.02
2	Positive Politeness	107	39.93
3	Negative Politeness	86	32.08
4	Off-record	16	5.97
Total		268	100

Table 3. The Students' Perceptions on the Influence of Academic Staff's Language

Items	Statement	Scale			
		1	2	3	4
1	The academic staff's language influences the positive energy of classroom'	0%	2.24%	38.20%	59.55%
2	The academic staff's language influences the classroom' atmosphere	0%	2.24%	41.01%	56.75%
3	The academic staff's language influences your self-confidence	0.59%	6.74%	46.07%	46.62%
4	The academic staff's language influences your identity as a learner	0%	7.30%	53.93%	38.76%
5	The academic staff's language influences your self-esteem	0.59%	21.76%	50.56%	28.72%
6	The academic staff's language can lift your highest potential or tear you down	0.59%	13.48%	42.70%	43.25%
7	The academic staff's utterances influence the input or information you receive	0%	9.55%	56.17%	34.26%
8	The academic staff's utterances determine the power he/she has with the students	0%	6.74%	62.92%	30.33%
9	The academic staff's polite utterances build such a good relationship with students in the class.	0%	7.86%	39.89%	52.24%

Table 4. The Students' Perceptions on the Academic Staff's Language in the Classroom

Items	Statement	Scale			
		1	2	3	4
10	The academic staff should communicate to students in a polite language and manner	0%	10.67%	39.89%	49.43%
11	The academic staff should encourage students to ask questions in a polite language	0%	4.49%	51.68%	43.82%
12	The academic staff should mind the language he/she uses when speaking to the students in the class	0%	1.68%	49.43%	48.87%
13	The academic staff should build an effective communication with the students in the class when speaking	0%	5.05%	45.50%	49.43%
14	The academic staff should speak to students with an encouraging and positive way of language	0%	0.56%	50%	49.43%
15	The academic staff should use a calm, warm, and professional tone of voice when speaking.	0%	5.05%	43.82%	51.12%

Table 5. The Students' Perceptions on the Practice of Academic Staff's Politeness Strategies

Items	Statement	Scale			
		1	2	3	4
16	You feel comfortable when your academic staff call you by your name	1.12%	6.74%	40.44%	51.68%
17	You feel comfortable when your academic staff always talks in a polite language	0%	1.12%	43.25%	55.05%
18	You feel comfortable when your academic staff uses polite markers such as <i>please</i> , or <i>excuse me</i> when speaking with you	0%	1.12%	46.62%	52.24%
19	You feel comfortable when your academic staff uses the word <i>sorry</i> when he/she interrupts you	0%	3.37%	39.32%	57.30%
20	You feel comfortable when your academic staff uses the word <i>sorry</i> when he/she wants you to repeat what you say	0%	5.05%	41.57%	53.37%
21	You feel comfortable when your academic staff uses the word <i>sorry</i> when he/she makes a mistake	0%	5.05%	37.64%	57.30%
22	You feel comfortable when your academic staff asks for a volunteer and does not directly point the random student	0%	11.23%	51.68%	37.07%
23	You feel comfortable when your academic staff indirectly requests you to do what he/she wants you to do	2.80%	25.28%	50%	21.91%
24	You feel comfortable when your academic staff indirectly disagrees with your opinion or the example you give	6.17%	27.52%	50%	16.29%
25	You feel uncomfortable when your academic staff says bluntly that you are completely wrong in the class	0%	23.03%	38.20%	38.76%
26	You feel uncomfortable when your academic staff talks in less polite/impolite language in the class	1.12%	15.16%	43.25%	40.45%
27	You feel uncomfortable when your academic staff interrupts your sentences during discussion	2.24%	8.42%	33.70%	55.61%
28	You feel uncomfortable when your academic staff says that you are stupid in the classroom when you cannot answer the question he/she gives	2.80%	7.86%	24.15%	65.16%
29	You feel uncomfortable you're your academic staff says your name and make an example about you when you do something wrong in the class	1.12%	21.91%	34.83%	42.13%
30	You feel uncomfortable when your academic staff does not remember your name	3.93%	12.92%	48.88%	34.26%

Continued...

31	You feel motivated when your academic staff praises you when you have a good achievement in the classroom	0%	3.37%	42.69%	53.93%
32	You feel appreciated when your academic staff says <i>thank you</i> when you give an example about the topic	0%	0%	35.39%	64.60%
33	You feel appreciated when your academic staff says <i>thank you</i> after he/she requests you to do something	0%	0%	40.45%	59.55%
34	You feel appreciated when your academic staff uses polite markers such as <i>please</i> or <i>excuses me</i> when speaking in the class	0%	2.24%	56.17%	41.57%
35	You feel intimidated when your academic staff directly tells you in harsh feedback or comment that your work is not good or incorrect	2.80%	15.73%	51.12%	30.33%
36	The academic staff may give instructions to students baldly; in a direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way, for example “Do X!”	5.05%	30.90%	50.56%	13.48%

Table 6. The Students’ Perceptions on the Factors Influencing Academic Staff’s Language Choice, Utterances, and Politeness Strategies

Items	Statement	Scale			
		1	2	3	4
37	The difference of language choice, utterances, and politeness strategies every academic staff conveys are influenced by their gender difference	5.61%	34.26%	43.25%	5.62%
38	The difference of language choice, utterances, and politeness strategies every academic staff conveys are influenced by their age difference	2.24%	19.66%	51.68%	2.24%
39	The difference of language choice, utterances, and politeness strategies every academic staff conveys are influenced by their cultural background	6.74%	24.15%	46.19%	21.91%
40	The difference of language choice, utterances, and politeness strategies every academic staff conveys are influenced by the length of their teaching experience	0%	15.17%	55.05%	29.77%

Searle (1976) was also not all included in this research findings. In directive illocutionary act, *questioning* was the most frequently employed, while *challenging* and *begging* were not found. Representative speech act is the second most employed illocutionary act, while commissive is the third most employed illocutionary act which appeared forty three times. In expressive illocutionary act, the last illocutionary act, the most frequently employed act was *praising*, employed by the academic staff when they expressed their approval of something or just said good things of the students' performance by saying *good*, *nice*, or *well done*. It was also employed when they expressed their appreciation to the students' opinion. Such a positive attitude obviously encouraged the students and increased their motivation, which reflected positively on classroom management that supports Kurdghelashvili's (2015) findings.

Politeness Strategies Employed in Academic Staff's Illocutionary Acts

There are 268 total occurrences politeness strategies employed in the academic staff's illocutionary acts to minimize the students' face. Different findings were obtained between the present research and Senowarsito (2013) and Monsefi & Hadidi (2015). Both of the research analyzed politeness strategies in classroom context by the teachers. The two research found out that not all politeness strategies were produced by the teacher or the academic staff; off-record strategy was not found. Meanwhile, the present research presented four types of politeness strategies proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987). Bald on-record was found in fifty nine utterances employed by the academic staff. The present findings support Senowarsito (2013) and Monsefi & Hadidi's (2015) research that bald on-record strategy was used in the form of instructions or orders and also in requesting and complaining in the classroom. It also supports Agustina & Cahyono's (2016) that most of the academic staff threatened the students' face when delivering instruction in direct speech acts. However, bald on-record was not the most frequently used strategy in this research as presented in Senowarsito (2013) and Kurdghelashvili's (2015) findings. The results of this present research were in agreement with the research conducted by Adel, Davoudi, & Ramezanzadeh (2016), Rahmawati (2018), and Heriyawati, Siba, & Sultistyo (2019) on the use of positive politeness as the most frequently used strategy by the participants. Positive politeness utterances can

be understood as a kind of social acceleration, where the academic staff indicated that they want to come close to their students. In this strategy, the academic staff employed fourteen out of fifteen positive politeness strategies. The fourteen strategies include *notice*, *attend to H*, *exaggerate*, *use in group identity markers*, *seek agreement*, *avoided agreement*, *presuppose/raise/assert common ground*, *joke*, *assert or presuppose S's knowledge of and concern from H's wants*, *offer and promise*, *be optimistic*, *include both S and H in the activity*, *give or ask for reason*, *assume or assert reciprocity*, and *giving gifts to H*. The only positive strategy that was not found in this research is strategy 3, *intensify interest to H*. This strategy is used by the speaker in attracting the hearer's attention for example by making a good story.

The results of positive politeness strategy in this research supports Jiang's (2010) research that most of the academic staff used it when they actively pursued the student by making a number of initiatives, such as giving permission and agreement to make students more willing to engage in the teaching and learning process. This present research is also in agreement with Elisdawati, Husein, & Setia's (2018) research that the use of positive politeness in classroom interaction could encourage students' motivation to learn and to be actively involved in teaching and learning process.

In the third strategy, the negative politeness, eighty six utterances produced by the academic staff were found. The academic staff used this strategy to minimize the face loss as the result of imposing the students' freedom or personal space. Requesting was the most commonly employed illocutionary act classified in this negative politeness strategies. Ten types of strategies are included in this negative politeness. However, three out of ten were not found. The seven strategies used by the lectures are *be conventionally indirect*, *questions or hedge*, *be pessimistic*, *minimize the imposition*, *give difference*, *apologize*, and *impersonalize S and H*. Three negative politeness strategies that were not found in this research are *state the FTA as a general rule*, *nominalize*, and *go on record as incurring a debt or not*. The final politeness strategy employed by the academic staff is off-record strategy in which it makes the speakers, in this case the academic staff; perform an act in a vague manner that could be interpreted differently by the students. They used this strategy to prevent responsibility for doing something when he/she decides to do an FTA. Indirect speech acts were mostly employed in this strategy since Huang (2007, cited in Maskuri, Tarjana, Djatmika, & Purnanto, 2019)

also stated that the use of indirect speech acts in communicating is considered to be more polite than the direct one. Sixteen utterances containing off-record strategy were found in this research. Out of fifteen sub-strategies, ten were identified. All those identified strategies are *give hints*, *give associate clues*, *presuppose*, *understate*, *use tautologies*, *be ironic*, *use rhetorical questions*, *be vague*, and *be incomplete or use ellipsis*. According to Kartomiharjo (1990, cited in Chojimah, 2015), one of the strategies in off-record, *giving hints*, indicates more polite statement than directly say *no* to the hearers, for example in refusal speech act.

Students' Perception on Academic Staff's Politeness Strategies

The findings of the whole questionnaires distributed to the 178 students indicated that most of the students agreed that the academic staff's language influences several aspects in the teaching and learning process. 59.55% students strongly agreed that it influences the classroom's positive energy as discussed in Sülü's (2015) findings that teachers/academic staff's politeness used in classroom interaction helped students to have positive feeling in learning and it motivated them to participate more in the classroom activity. Meanwhile, 46.62% strongly agreed that it influences the classroom's atmosphere. It supports theory of Harmer (2007) that one of the teacher's roles is a classroom environment creator. How academic staff's language influences the student's self-confidence and the student's identity was concluded from the consecutive percentage out of 178 respondents: 56.75% (strongly agree), 53.93% (agree), 50.56% students agreed that it also influences the students' self-esteem. This relies on Xu & Huang's idea (2010) that teachers or academic staff who have less self-esteem will have difficulties in building the students' self-esteem. In addition, how the academic staff utterances can lift the students' highest potential, can influence the input received by the students, can determine the power the academic staff have, and can build such a good academic staff-students relationship were indicated by the number of the percentage as follow: 43.25% (strongly agree), 56.17% (agree), 62.92% (agree), 39.89% (agree).

More than half of the students also agreed that academic staff should mind their language while teaching in the classroom. The students agreed that (1) academic staff should communicate in polite language and manner, (2) academic staff should

encourage students to ask questions politely, (3) academic staff should mind the language used when speaking to the students, (4) academic staff should build effective communication, (5) academic staff should speak to students with encouraging and positive language, and (6) academic staff should use a calm, warm, and professional tone of voice when speaking. This indicator was represented in the consecutive number of percentage: 49.43% (strongly agree), 51.68% (agree), 49.43% (agree), 49.43% (strongly agree), 50% (agree), and 51.12% (strongly agree). This supports the notion proposed by Schleppegrell (2004:19) that the use of proper language plays an important role in classroom activity and it may lead to a successful teaching and learning process. In Addition, according to Wrench et al.'s (2009) notion that the establishment of effective and affective classroom communication is one of the prominent elements in teaching leads to the students' expectation that academic staff should build effective communication in teaching and learning process.

Regarding the practice of politeness strategies, the findings showed that the students still mainly right in line that the use polite markers such as *please*, *excuse me*, *sorry*, *pardon*, *thank you* or praising in the academic staff's politeness made the students feel comfortable, motivated, and appreciated. The use of polite markers by the academic staff expressed the difference to the students and to bid the cooperative behavior. Such compliment or praising by using polite markers indicated respect showed by the academic staff as proposed by Chen (2014). It is in agreement with Watts, Ide, & Ehlich's (2008) notion that in order to be polite, people can utilize utterances such as *please*, *sorry*, or *thank you*. Generally, the use of more polite language or politeness strategies in EFL context gave positive impacts to the students. Moreover, the students generally agreed that the gender difference, age difference, cultural background, and the length of the teaching experience all influence the language choice, utterances and politeness strategy performed by the academic staff. It supports Monsefi & Hadidi's (2015) findings related to gender that female teachers were more self-involved, enthusiastic, and lenient on students' mistakes than the male ones even though they share some similar aspects in implementing politeness strategies.

The different culture backgrounds the academic staff have (i.e. Indonesian, Javanese, Sundanese, and Banjarese) also influenced their politeness strategies in which the power relation between the academic staff

and the students was often unequal. In regard to this, they were considered to be more respectable than students which lead to the conclusion that students should never threaten the academic staff's face by speaking and acting politely as explained in the previous research by Senowarsito (2013).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The conclusions drawn are based on the research problems, while the suggestions are given for the academic staff, students, and the further researchers who are interested in doing further research in the same field of study.

Conclusions

The types of the illocutionary acts as proposed by Searle (1976) appearing in this research are *directive*, *representative*, *commissive*, and *expressive*. There are 445 utterances in total which are identified as illocutionary acts in this research. The academic staff did not employ declarative speech act in their interaction with the students. Directive was the most dominant illocutionary act employed by the academic staff with 216 utterances. This type of speech act was used when the academic staff wanted to get the students to undertake some actions in the classroom. Questioning or asking became the most dominant directive speech acts followed by ordering in the second place. Representative appeared to be the second most dominant illocutionary speech act employed by the academic staff with 155 times occurrence followed by commissive speech act in 43 utterances. Moreover, expressive appeared to be the least illocutionary act employed by the academic staff with 31 utterances out of 445 utterances.

With regard to the politeness strategies proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987), it can be concluded that all types of politeness strategies were found in this research during the twelve-meeting class observations. The most frequently used politeness strategy is positive politeness which contributes 107 utterances out of 268 from the academic staff's illocutionary acts. In this strategy, the academic staff delivered their utterances in a way to minimize the threat to the students' positive face. It is an act of the academic staff that they want to come close to the

students. The second most frequently used is negative politeness with eighty six times occurrence. This strategy used by the academic staff when they want to minimize the potential loss the students' face as the result of imposing the students' freedom or personal space. The third one is bald-on record strategy with fifty nine times occurrence. This strategy is usually used when the academic staff do not attempt to minimize the threat to the students' face such as when ordering or forbidding. While the least frequently used strategy by the academic staff is off-record strategy with only sixteen utterances out of 268 utterances in total. They used this strategy when requesting or complaining in indirect or ambiguous way in order to prevent responsibility for doing something.

Concerning the students' perceptions on the use of politeness strategies by the academic staff in the teaching learning process, most of the students expressed their agreement to the use of polite language in the classroom interaction. They asserted that the use of polite language in the classroom could influence the improvement of the learning process either it is the classroom's atmosphere, the positive energy, their self-confidence, their self-esteem, their motivation, or maintaining a good relationship between the academic staff and the students.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the research, the suggestions are given to the academic staff, the students, and the further researchers. It is suggested that the academic staff should maintain their politeness and should avoid the use of FTAs. For students, the results should become a reference for the students on how they should act and communicate with their academic staff, and that they should mind the language choice they use in communicating. In regard to the present research, further research need to be conducted with some suggestions given by the researcher: (1) increase the number of the subjects, (2) include students as the subjects of politeness strategies, (3) appending the backgrounds of the subjects, (4) investigating politeness in various field such in daily conversation or printed media, and (5) expanding the research in other languages with distinct culture.

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