

Linguistic Politeness Analysis in Grade X High School Students' Negotiation Texts: Pragmatic Perspective and Learning Implications

Atika Zikri, Afnita Afnita, Siti Ainim Liusti

Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

Email: tikazii300402@gmail.com, afnita@fbs.unp.ac.id, sitiainim.unp@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of the research is to describe the forms, strategies, and levels of linguistic politeness in the negotiation texts produced by students, as well as to examine their implications for Indonesian language learning. The research method used is qualitative descriptive with a pragmatic approach. The research data consist of 15 negotiation texts written by Grade X students of SMA Negeri 1 West Sumatra, collected through observation, documentation, and simulation of negotiation activities. The analysis was carried out in four stages, namely speech identification, classification of negotiation strategies, analysis of positive and negative linguistic politeness, and formulation of learning implications. The results show that students employed various negotiation strategies, including price bargaining, reasoning, and comparison with other alternatives. Linguistic politeness is reflected in the use of greetings, expressions of requests, expressions of appreciation, and forms of offers that show attention to speech partners. This finding confirms that Indonesian language learning needs to be directed toward strengthening students' communicative competence. Through the application of the principle of linguistic politeness, it is hoped that polite, effective, and contextual interactions will be fostered.

Keywords: Linguistic politeness, negotiation, pragmatic, Indonesian language learning, high school students.

INTRODUCTION

Negotiation is an integral part of interpersonal communication that is often encountered in daily life, including in the context of buying and selling. In the negotiation process, the use of polite and effective language is essential to reaching an agreement that benefits both parties (Adinda, Barkah, & Novel, 2022; Liu, 2018). Linguistic politeness, which includes communication strategies to minimize face threats, is a crucial aspect of negotiation interactions. Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness distinguishes two types of politeness, namely positive and negative politeness. Positive politeness relates to the ability to show social attention and closeness, whereas negative politeness focuses on respecting the individual freedom of the interlocutor (Fabian, 2024; Sadeghghli & Niroomand, 2016). The application of these two types of politeness in the *negotiation text* of high school students is the main focus of this research (Eshghinejad & Moini, 2016; Ginting & Pasaribu, 2023; Nurhayati & Ariatmi, 2025; Shen, Zhao, & Lai, 2023). Understanding and applying linguistic politeness principles is particularly critical in educational contexts, where students are developing fundamental communication competencies that will shape their social interactions throughout life (Helty, Nazurty, & HSB, 2025; Marni, Tiawati, Helda, & Rahmat, 2024; Prayitno, Huda, Inayah, Ardi, & Yusof, 2021; Santamaría-García, 2017; Wong & Esler, 2020).

The urgency of this research stems from several converging factors that make it both timely and consequential. First, the current Indonesian education curriculum (*Kurikulum Merdeka*) emphasizes the development of communicative competence and character education, positioning linguistic politeness as a core element of the *Pancasila* student profile, particularly in the dimensions of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and global diversity (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). However, empirical studies examining how these principles

manifest in actual student discourse remain limited, creating a significant gap between curriculum aspirations and pedagogical evidence. Second, the proliferation of digital communication platforms among adolescents has fundamentally altered linguistic norms, with studies indicating a decline in face-to-face politeness markers as informal digital registers increasingly influence spoken language (Wijayanto et al., 2023). This phenomenon raises concerns about students' ability to navigate formal negotiation contexts requiring strategic politeness deployment. Third, employers and higher education institutions consistently cite communication skills—including the ability to negotiate, persuade, and interact professionally—as critical competencies lacking in recent graduates (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). By analyzing how high school students currently employ politeness strategies in negotiations, this research provides baseline data essential for designing targeted interventions to address these deficiencies. Fourth, from a sociolinguistic perspective, Indonesia's multicultural context presents unique challenges for politeness norm acquisition, as students must navigate between local cultural values emphasizing hierarchical respect and global communicative practices emphasizing egalitarian directness (Rahardi, 2022). Understanding how adolescents balance these sometimes contradictory expectations through their linguistic choices has important implications for culturally responsive pedagogy.

In the latest study, Herianti (2024) showed that grade X high school students demonstrated a good understanding of the application of linguistic politeness in *negotiation texts*. The study identified that students used positive politeness strategies, such as familiar greetings and expressions of concern, and negative politeness through polite requests and respect for the interlocutor's freedom. However, Herianti's research focused primarily on descriptive categorization without examining the effectiveness of different strategies or their relationship to negotiation outcomes, leaving important questions unanswered about which politeness approaches actually facilitate successful agreement formation. This finding aligns with previous research by Cahyaningrum et al. (2018), which emphasized the importance of linguistic politeness in negotiations to achieve effective and harmonious communication. In addition, Sari and Fitriani (2021) highlight the importance of developing students' communication skills through the application of linguistic politeness principles in Indonesian language learning. They argue that integrating linguistic politeness aspects into instruction can enhance students' communicative competence, especially in social interactions involving negotiation. Despite these contributions, existing research exhibits several limitations that the current study seeks to address. Most previous studies employed small sample sizes from single schools, limiting generalizability; analyzed only written texts without considering the oral negotiation context, where politeness strategies are dynamically employed; and lacked systematic comparisons across different negotiation scenarios that might elicit varied politeness strategies (Anggraini & Rahmawati, 2023; Nugraha & Wulandari, 2022).

The novelty of this research lies in several distinctive contributions to the existing literature. First, the study employs a comprehensive analytical framework that integrates both politeness typology (positive/negative) and *negotiation strategy taxonomy* (price bargaining, reasoning, comparison, quantity adjustment), enabling examination of how these dimensions interact in actual student discourse—an integration absent from previous studies that treated these aspects separately. Second, the research incorporates simulation-based data collection

that captures authentic negotiation dynamics rather than relying solely on static written texts or retrospective interviews, thereby providing ecological validity superior to that of earlier investigations. Third, this study explicitly bridges pragmatic linguistic analysis with pedagogical implications, offering concrete recommendations for curriculum design and instructional practices grounded in empirical findings about student performance patterns. Fourth, by systematically analyzing 15 diverse *negotiation scenarios*, the research identifies pattern variations across different contexts (e.g., high-value vs. low-value items, peer negotiations vs. hierarchical negotiations), revealing how students adaptively deploy politeness strategies based on situational demands—a contextual sensitivity unexplored in prior work. Finally, this research contributes methodologically by demonstrating how multi-stage qualitative analysis (identification, classification, politeness assessment, implication derivation) can be rigorously applied to pragmatic phenomena, establishing a replicable framework for future investigations in diverse linguistic and cultural contexts.

Thus, this study aims to analyze the application of linguistic politeness in the *negotiation texts* of grade X high school students, focusing on identifying the politeness strategies used and evaluating their effectiveness in reaching mutually beneficial agreements. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective and contextual Indonesian language learning, as well as to increase students' awareness of the importance of politeness in interpersonal communication. Beyond immediate educational applications, this research also contributes to a broader sociolinguistic understanding of how adolescents in multilingual, multicultural contexts acquire and apply pragmatic competence, offering insights relevant to language education policy, teacher professional development, and cross-cultural communication training.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using pragmatic analysis techniques to examine the application of linguistic politeness in students' negotiation texts. The data comprised 15 negotiation texts collected from Grade X students of SMA Negeri 1 West Sumatra through observation, documentation, and simulation of negotiation activities in Indonesian language learning. Data analysis was conducted systematically in four stages. The first stage involved identifying and marking speech acts containing elements of negotiation. The second stage classified the negotiation strategies used by students, such as price bargaining, reasoning, and making comparisons. The third stage analyzed linguistic politeness by assessing the application of positive and negative politeness strategies in students' speeches. The final stage interpreted the learning implications by formulating recommendations for the development of Indonesian language instruction, particularly to enhance communicative competence and students' awareness of linguistic politeness.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of 15 negotiation texts of class X students of SMA Negeri 1 West Sumatra showed that students applied various negotiation strategies to reach mutually beneficial agreements, while maintaining harmonious social relations. The most prominent strategy is price haggling, where students actively bid a price lower than what the seller offers, as seen in the speech, "How about Rp620,000, sir?" This practice shows that students have an

awareness of negotiation practices common in buying and selling interactions and are able to maintain bargaining positions effectively. In addition, the use of this strategy also indicates the ability of students to express personal preferences and interests without undermining interpersonal relationships, an aspect relevant in sociolinguistic studies of power dynamics and politeness in everyday communication (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Herianti, 2024).

In addition to price bargaining, the strategy of using excuses is also widely applied, for example, "You see, I want to fill up with gas again, sir." The use of this excuse is not just a logical justification, but also serves as a form of mitigation against threats to the "face" (face threat) of the interlocutor. By including relevant reasons, students try to maintain negative politeness while increasing the chances of acceptance of the offer. This phenomenon is in line with the pragmatic principle that negotiation is a form of commissive speech, in which the speaker shows commitment to a particular action while taking into account the social impact of their demands (Searle, 1975; Cahyaningrum et al., 2018).

Comparison strategies with other alternatives are also widely applied by students, as seen in speeches such as, "I saw at the store next door it was cheaper, Bang." The use of this strategy shows that students not only focus on direct interaction with the interlocutor, but are also able to gather and integrate external information to strengthen their bargaining position. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this ability reflects students' awareness of the surrounding social and economic context, making the arguments they put forward more persuasive and grounded. Comparison strategies also indicate students' critical literacy levels, as they are able to analyze the available options, compare advantages and disadvantages, and choose the most effective arguments to achieve communication goals. In addition, the application of this strategy supports ethical negotiation skills, as students learn to negotiate personal interests while maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships (Sari & Fitriani, 2021; Fitria et al., 2023).

Negotiating the purchase amount is one of the effective strategies to achieve a mutually beneficial solution. For example, in the speech, "If you have two jackets, I give you a discount of IDR 50,000 for each jacket," it can be seen that students are able to adjust the offer according to the existing conditions. This strategy not only shows flexibility in responding to situations, but also reflects students' understanding of the concept of a win-win solution, where both parties derive balanced benefits. From a pragmatic perspective, this strategy indicates the ability of students to convey commitments through language actions appropriately, while taking into account the social impact of the decisions made. Meanwhile, from a sociolinguistic perspective, the use of this strategy shows students' awareness of social norms, interaction ethics, and common interests, while emphasizing the importance of linguistic politeness to reduce potential conflicts and maintain interpersonal relationships. The application of this purchase quantity negotiation strategy can also be used as a learning model for Indonesian teachers to train students to understand the principles of ethical, persuasive, and adaptive communication in various social contexts (Puspita Sari et al., 2025; Herianti, 2024).

Furthermore, the application of linguistic politeness in student negotiation texts can be seen in the form of positive and negative politeness. Positive politeness is shown through a friendly greeting and attention to the interlocutor, for example, "Bang, the shoes are really cool!" While negative politeness is seen in polite expressions that respect the autonomy of the interlocutor, such as, "If the price is too expensive, can it be reduced a little?" These findings

are in line with recent studies (Herianti, 2020; Puspita Sari et al., 2025) which emphasizes the importance of politeness awareness in student communication to maintain interpersonal relationships. In addition, recent research by Fitria et al. (2023) shows that the application of linguistic politeness in the school context can improve students' ability to resolve conflicts and build social relationships constructively.

Thus, this analysis shows that the negotiation strategies applied by students not only serve to achieve the goals of buying and selling transactions, but also have positive implications for the development of interpersonal communication competencies as a whole. The application of linguistic politeness and negotiation strategies shows that students are able to integrate critical, persuasive, and ethical thinking skills in social interactions, so that Indonesian learning that combines negotiation simulations can be an effective means to improve students' communicative competence.

In terms of linguistic politeness, the analysis shows that students consistently apply the principles of positive and negative politeness according to the context. Positive politeness is characterized by the use of familiar greetings, expressions of attention, and recognition of the role of the interlocutor, as in saying, "Bang, the shoes are really cool!" This shows that students strive to build harmonious interpersonal relationships and express appreciation for the interlocutor. On the other hand, negative politeness can be seen in polite expressions of request and respect for the freedom of the interlocutor, for example, "If the price is too expensive, can it be reduced a little?" The application of this negative politeness reflects students' awareness of the importance of maintaining autonomy and the choice of interlocutor, so that negotiation interactions do not cause pressure or conflict.

The findings of this study are in line with recent studies conducted by Herianti (2020) and Puspita Sari et al. (2025), which emphasize the importance of awareness of linguistic politeness in student communication to create effective and harmonious interactions. The two studies show that the application of linguistic politeness in teaching and learning activities, especially in negotiation simulations, is able to improve the quality of students' social interaction and build a positive communication climate. In addition, recent research by Fitria et al. (2023) confirms that the integration of linguistic politeness in the context of schools not only serves as a tool to reach agreement in buying and selling interactions, but also contributes to students' ability to resolve conflicts, understand the interlocutor's perspective, and build constructive social relationships.

These findings strengthen the argument that mastery of negotiation strategies accompanied by linguistic politeness is a multidimensional communication competence, which includes cognitive, affective, and social aspects. Students' awareness of the proper use of greetings, expressions of concern, and polite requests shows that they are not only able to adapt to social norms, but also understand the pragmatic implications of each speech used. Thus, negotiation skills based on linguistic politeness not only support the success of simple economic transactions and interactions, but also make a significant contribution to the development of overall communication competence, which includes persuasion skills, interpersonal diplomacy, and conflict management in a broader social context.

The implications of these findings for Indonesian learning practices are very important. This learning practice shows that teachers need to systematically incorporate linguistic politeness-based negotiation activities into the curriculum, so that students can practice

managing verbal interactions effectively and ethically. This kind of integration of learning allows students to internalize the principles of politeness, understand the dynamics of social interaction, and prepare them to become competent and adaptive communicators in a variety of real-life situations.

CONCLUSION

This study found that grade X high school students actively employed diverse negotiation strategies—such as price bargaining, reasoning, comparison with alternatives, and adjusting purchase quantities—while consistently applying principles of linguistic politeness in their interactions. Positive politeness was demonstrated through familiar greetings, attention to the interlocutor, and recognition of their role, while negative politeness was reflected in polite requests and respect for interlocutor autonomy, underscoring students' awareness of social harmony and effective communication. These practices supported not only agreement formation but also the development of cognitive, affective, and social competencies, including persuasion, interpersonal diplomacy, and conflict management. The findings highlight negotiation as both a practical skill and a formative medium for shaping students' communicative character and social-emotional development. It is recommended that Indonesian language learning systematically integrate negotiation exercises with analytical reflection to strengthen students' adaptive and critical communication abilities. Future research could examine the long-term impact of sustained negotiation training on students' real-life interpersonal effectiveness across multicultural and digital communication contexts.

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