

P-ISSN: 2338-8617

E-ISSN: 2443-2067

Jurnal Ilmiah

# PEURADEUN

Vol. 10, No. 2, May 2022



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**JIP**  
The Indonesian Journal of the Social Sciences  
[www.journal.scadindependent.org](http://www.journal.scadindependent.org)  
DOI Prefix Number: 10.26811



ACCREDITED "Sinta 2" by Decree No. 164/E/KPT/2021  
Valid Until the January 2026 Edition

**Learning Process of Online Class by Using Language Politeness Principles**

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**Article in Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun**

Available at : <https://journal.scadindependent.org/index.php/jipeuradeun/article/view/699>

DOI : <https://dx.doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v10i2.699>

**How to Cite this Article**

APA : Daulay, S.H., Ningrum, D.W. & Nasution, P.S. (2022). Learning Process of Online Class by Using Language Politeness Principles. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 10(2), 403-420.  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v10i2.699>

Others Visit : <https://journal.scadindependent.org/index.php/jipeuradeun>

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## LEARNING PROCESS OF ONLINE CLASS BY USING LANGUAGE POLITENESS PRINCIPLES

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<b>Received:</b> August 02, 2021	<b>Accepted:</b> April 28, 2022	<b>Published:</b> May 30, 2022
<b>Article Url:</b> <a href="https://journal.scadindependent.org/index.php/jipeuradeun/article/view/699">https://journal.scadindependent.org/index.php/jipeuradeun/article/view/699</a>		

### Abstract

*This article results from research on language politeness in the learning process in the "Language Curriculum Evaluation and Design" class. Leech's politeness principle theory consists of six maxims: tact maxim, generosity maxim, appreciation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. This study aimed to find out the language politeness used in that class. Then, this study focused on the Lecturer's utterances to the students. The type of this study was descriptive qualitative. The instrument of this study was the researchers themselves and the audio recorder. The technique of collecting the data was tapping techniques to tap the conversation of the Lecturer with the students, field notes and observation. This research showed that Leech's politeness principles were used in that class. The maxim of politeness included tact maxim 22,7%, generosity maxim 13,6%, appreciation maxim 18,2%, modesty maxim 9,1%, agreement maxim 18,2%, and sympathy maxim 18,2%. Most of the maxims used in that class are tact maxims. After analyzing these six maxims, it is essential to have them when we are a lecturer teaching in the class. A teacher with the six maxims can control the class to run well.*

**Keywords:** *Language Politeness Principles, Learning Process, Maxim.*



## A. Introduction

Language is a tool or means of communication that is very important in teaching and learning interactions. Through good communication, activities will create teaching and learning interactions that run according to the goals to be achieved. Therefore, the role of language in learning cannot be separated because teaching and learning interactions cannot run well without the function of language itself.

According to Darwis (2018), language is one of the tools of social interaction used by a group of people in communicating. Communication activities can be carried out between two speakers or on a large scale. Communication aims to establish social relations between one speaker and another through messages so that it sounds better and can keep the feelings of those who hear them.

Each speaker wants to convey specific goals or intentions to the speech partner through communication activities. The communication must occur effectively and efficiently so that the message conveyed can be clearly understood by the speech partners involved in the communication process. An effective and efficient communication process will not occur appropriately if the speech partner cannot understand the language used by the speaker. Thus, to facilitate the communication process, the language used by the speaker must be in a language that the interlocutor quickly understands.

In pragmatics, there is a term known as politeness in language. Politeness or etiquette is procedures, customs, or habits applied in society. Politeness is a rule of behaviour determined and mutually agreed upon by a specific community, so politeness is also a prerequisite for social behaviour. Therefore, this politeness is commonly called "manners". Based on this understanding, politeness can be seen in various aspects of daily interactions. In addition, Leech (1983) says that *politeness is utterances used as little as impolite expressions*.

Furthermore, Yule (1996) states that politeness is a fundamental principle in language use and communication. Politeness can be defined

as showing awareness of another person's face. Politeness also involves how one can make others feel more pleasant.

Language activities cannot be separated from the rules that have been set or agreed upon by community groups. These rules relate to the polite attitude individuals and groups of people use to communicate orally or in writing. As Adriana (2014) stated that the use of language is not only limited to conveying messages so that the interlocutor can understand them, but what is no less critical is building social harmony. This is not much different from Alviah's (2014) opinion that one of the functions of speech acts is that speakers can create them to create strategies for realizing politeness in language. Therefore, using words, phrases, sentence structures, and expressions when expressed orally becomes essential in creating unified communication.

As we know, Indonesian people respect politeness in language. The meaning to be conveyed is not only related to the choice of words but also the way of delivery. For example, choosing the right word if it is conveyed rudely will still be considered impolite. Many opinions say that the culture of a society will be reflected in the politeness applied, including politeness in language. There will be some differences in language procedures. The language used when talking to older people will undoubtedly be different from that used when talking to young children.

Nowadays, learning activities are not only carried out face to face but also online. Seeing these conditions, with the development of technology, online learning activities can take advantage of various media and applications to support the learning process so that it is continuously implemented. Applications widely used to date in learning are zoom, Google classroom, Whatsapp, and various other applications that are considered easy to use. The presence of the applications certainly dramatically facilitates the learning process to continue to be implemented. However, behind the ease of communicating through cyber space through short messages carried out by students to teachers and students to lecturers, they must still follow the attitude of politeness in language.



Researchers' observations during online learning activities through the zoom application, Google classroom, and Whatsapp are still found in the use of language that ignores politeness, both communicating with others, lecturers, and during discussion activities. This is quite often found during online learning. One example is when students conduct discussion activities through Google classroom, "your explanation cannot be understood..." this example can illustrate that the choice of words and the use of language styles are critical even though learning activities are carried out online.

Previous researchers have widely studied and published research related to language politeness. In a research conducted by fatmawati, boeriswati, and zuriyati (2020) entitled the realization of students' polite rejection speeches, this study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a phenomenological approach. The result of the study reveals that politeness refusal is more dominantly used accompanied by reasons, such as refusing offers, invitations, orders and appeals that are considered more appropriate to be expressed and do not harm the interlocutor.

This is not much different from the research finding of Ningsih, boriswati, and muliastuti (2020) entitled Language politeness of student and teachers A Ethnographic approach. The research findings reveal that the speech between teachers and students can be categorized as polite. According to Leech's opinion, it appears that the 101 utterances are categorized as disrespectful or violate the six rules of politeness.

The results of further research were carried out by wahidah and Wijaya (2017) with the title Analysis of language politeness according to Leech in Arabic speech teachers at Ibnul Qoyyim Putra Islamic Boarding School Yogyakarta (Pragmatic Studies). The findings of his study are based on Leech's theory reveals that there are 17 maxims of wisdom, four maxims of generosity, 14 maxims of appreciation, 25 maxims of consensus, and four maxims of generosity, 14 maxims of appreciation, 25 maxims of consensus, and four maxims of sympathy. In addition, several violation maxims were also found in the learning process. Febriasari and wijayanti (2018) also

stated the same finding in a study entitled Language Politeness in the Learning Process in elementary schools. The findings revealed that some of the students' utterances had complied with the maxims of wisdom, generosity, appreciation, simplicity, consensus, and sympathy. However, some students also violate the maxim.

Based on the problems that have been described, it appears that this research is quite essential to do. This is based on the fact that politeness in the language is done in face-on-face learning. However, politeness is also essential even though learning is done online so that speech participants can accept and understand each other's meaning of an utterance. In addition, from the results of relevant research studies, previous researchers have not conducted research related to language politeness in online learning, so this research is interesting to be reviewed in depth through a study.

Here, the researchers will try to analyze some politeness principles applied in the online class. However, the researchers got six recorded classes: the "*Language Curriculum Evaluation and Design*" subject. It means that there are six meetings via Zoom recorded. The findings are in the form of fragments of several sentences, which are the realization of politeness principles spoken by the Lecturer to the students or students with other students. The number of students consists of 18 students. The researchers included the participants as a student.

## **B. Method**

Theoretically, the researchers used a pragmatic approach. However, methodologically, a qualitative descriptive approach was used. The method used for this research was qualitative. As Moeleong (2007) qualitative method is a form of research experienced by research subjects, such as behaviour, perception, motivation, and action descriptively in language by utilizing scientific methods. The researchers used a qualitative approach because it could produce descriptive data in written or spoken words from people and observable behaviour. In this study, the researchers observed



the words used in the conversations between the Lecturer with the students and students with other students that contain language politeness.

This type of research used descriptive research. This type of descriptive research was used to describe the result of data collection carried out by researchers. The researchers chose this type of descriptive research because it could accurately describe individuals, language conditions, symptoms, or specific groups. The data in this research were in the form of a written text based on an audio recorder, such as words, phrases, clauses, and sentences that the Lecturer and the students uttered. The contexts of the data were dialogues. Then, it becomes the primary source of this research.

The instrument of this study was the researchers themselves as the primary because the presence of the researchers was needed to obtain the required data. The presence of the researchers here was in some aspects, namely as planners, collecting data, interpreting data and reporting research results. So that the involvement of the researchers was needed, the involvement of researchers could be done in collaboration with informants. The other instrument of this study was an audio recorder. So, the researchers would analyze the conversations between the Lecturer and the students.

The data collection used in this study was a listening technique by listening when the Lecturer with the students and students with other students used words and sentences categorized as politeness. The basic technique of the listening method was the tapping technique. With this technique, the researchers tapped the conversation between primary and secondary informants, namely lecturers with students and students with other students. In addition, an observation was also a way to collect the data. The observation results were immediately recorded in the field notes as an advanced technique. Field notes were in the form of many abbreviated scribbles containing core words, phrases, and main points of conversation. The researchers recorded everything that was heard as accurately as possible without knowing the subject under study.





Data analysis was based on the theory of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of three concepts; data reduction, data display, and verification. Data reduction, which was to create a script based on recorded and written data, selected the data needed to answer research questions, removed unnecessary data, and then identified politeness principles. Data display was, i.e., the relationship between politeness used in the teaching and learning process and data displayed in written text. The final step was the conclusion or verification. The critical thing about well-collected qualitative data was that they focused on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings so that we had a firm handle on what "real life" was like.

### **C. Result and Discussion**

#### **1. Result**

Leech's politeness principles were divided into six maxims. Maxim itself is a linguistics principle in verbal interaction. Maxim is a tool for controlling to use of politeness utterances. The six maxims, according to Leech, are the tact maxim or the maxim of wisdom, generosity maxim, modesty maxim, appreciation maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim.

This research explains the politeness of language used in the interaction of a lecturer and the students as long as the teaching and process are based on the six maxims above.

After analyzing the data taken from the observation result for the six meetings, there were Lecturer's utterances that contained the politeness principles. All of the utterances were divided into the maxims of politeness principles. The following table will show the results of the observation.

*Table 1: The Frequency of Utterances of Politeness Principles used by the Lecturer*

NO	Maxim	Meetings			Total
		I	II	III	
1.	Tact Maxim	1	2	1	5



NO	Maxim	Meetings			Total
		I	II	III	
2.	Appreciation Maxim	2	1	1	4
3.	Generosity Maxim	1	-	2	3
4.	Modesty Maxim	-	1	1	2
5.	Agreement Maxim	1	1	2	4
6.	Sympathy Maxim	2	1	1	4
<b>Total</b>					<b>22</b>

Table 1 shows the maxims frequency of the Lecturer's utterances to the students from the first until the third meeting. It indicates 22 different maxims used by the Lecturer to the students. The result shows that the tact maxim or the maxim of wisdom becomes the most utterances used by the Lecturer to the students in the interaction of the teaching-learning process as many as five times as long as three meetings. Then, appreciation, agreement and sympathy maxims are used as many as four times to become the second, third and fourth position.

For the fifth and sixth, it belongs to generosity as many as three times and modesty maxims as many as two times.

*Table 2: The Percentage of Politeness Principles used by the Lecturer*

No	Maxim	Marker	Example	Freq.	%
1.	Tact Maxim	Commanding indirectly (using the word "please")	Please, ask your other friends to join.	5	22,7
2.	Appreciation Maxim	Appreciating the students' opinion	I think the presentation for today is excellent	4	18,2
3.	Generosity Maxim	Giving options to the students	If you cannot find the answer from this book, you can search in the other sources.	3	13,6
4.	Modesty Maxim	Pointing self-limitation	I do not know which	2	9,1



No	Maxim	Marker	Example	Freq.	%
			pronunciation is proper for the word "placement".		
5.	Agreement Maxim	Agree with the students	For next week, do you agree if we evaluate one syllabus?	4	18,2
6.	Sympathy Maxim	Showing sympatric sense for the students	I understand if your friend can not join our class today because the signal is very bad.	4	18,2
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>

Meanwhile, table 2 shows the percentage of the maxims used by the Lecturer to the students via zoom meeting class. This indicates that, in three meetings, there is 22,7% for tact maxim, 18,2% for sympathy, agreement, and appreciation maxims, 13,6% for generosity maxim and 9,1% for modesty maxim. The researchers will explain in more detail about this.

## 2. Discussion

### a. Maxim of Wisdom (tact maxim)

The wisdom in the principle of politeness is that the speech participants should adhere to consistently reducing their profits and maximizing the benefits of other parties in speaking activities (Rahardi, 2005). This maxim requires the speech participant to reduce the losses of others and maximize the benefits of others. Chaer (2010) adds that a person can avoid envy if he implements the maxim of wisdom. The treatment that benefits the other party is carried out so that it is considered polite and maintains the feel of the interlocutor.

Tact maxim or maxim of wisdom can be found in the first, second and third meeting. In the second meeting, there are two utterances. The Lecturer used tact maxim to the students in his communication because he wanted to minimize his benefit and maximize the benefits for the



students. This is an example of the tact maxim used by the Lecturer before starting the class.

Based on the syllabus, starting from the second meeting, each group would have a presentation. The number of the class is 18 students. Eighteen students are divided into nine groups. The ESP class's time is about 2.00 pm - 3.30 pm. Because the class is online, is used one application to study. It is a zoom meeting. In every meeting, the Lecturer always asks the class whether the class is ready or not.

#### Extract 1

The Lecturer : Has everybody joined the class? **Please inform them to join.**  
The students : It is all right, Sir

In this situation, the Lecturer asked before instructing the students. Then, the Lecturer gave instruction indirectly by using the word 'PLEASE'. This indicates that the Lecturer used the politeness principle, in this case, tact maxim. It is because the Lecturer maximizes the benefit to the students.

Furthermore, in the third meeting, the researchers also found the tact maxis as follows;

#### Extract 2

The students : Sir, when will be the deadline for the task?  
The Lecturer : I know that you have many tasks from the other lecturers. So, **please submit it in the next two weeks.**  
The students : It's alright, Sir. Thank You so much, Sir.

In the conversation, the situation happened when the students asked about the task given by the Lecturer. Then, the students asked the Lecturer when the task should be submitted in the Google Classroom. Fortunately, the Lecturer understood that the students had many tasks from the other lecturers too. So, he gave easiness to the students by giving them longer time to finish their tasks. That is why most of the students said thankful to the Lecturer.

The situation above absolutely indicates that the Lecturer maximizes the benefits from the students. It means that the utterance used by the Lecturer belongs to tact maxim or the maxim of wisdom.



### **b. Generosity Maxim**

This maxim expects the participants to reduce their own profit and maximize their own sacrifice. The maxim of generosity is self-centered. Someone who is trying adds to the burden on himself for the sake of others, and then he fulfills the maxim of generosity. (Leech, 2014:133)

There are three times of generosity maxim used. It was used in the first and the third meetings. This maxim relates to the Lecturer who minimizes his advantage. In the first meeting, the Lecturer said the following sentences;

#### **Extract 3**

- The Lecturer : If you cannot find the answer from this book, you can search in the other sources. Next time, **I will share you this important material.**
- The students : Thank you so much, Sir

If we see the sentence above, it indicates that the Lecturer offers his help to the students. It is included to politeness marker.

In the other meeting, the Lecturer also spoke the following utterances;

#### **Extract 4**

- The student : Sir, give us more than 10 minutes.
- The Lecturer : I will try to give you more than ten minutes.
- The students : Thank you so much, Sir

The Lecturer was giving assignment to the students. The time of doing the assignment 10 minutes left. Unfortunately, most of the students did not finish yet. So, they negotiated with the Lecturer in order that the Lecturer would give them more than ten minutes. Fortunately, the Lecturer was not angry and the Lecturer agreed to give them additional time.

This situation indicates that the Lecturer minimized the profit for himself and maximized cost to himself by sacrificing his time to give the students additional time. That is why the Lecturer has used generosity maxim.

### **c. Maxim of Appreciation**

This maxim assumes that people who are polite in language are those who always try to give appreciation to others. This maxim of



appreciation requires each participant to say of maximizing respectful for others and minimizing insults to others (Leech, 2014:133).

One of the characteristics of a good teacher is by giving an appreciation to the students. This maxim can make the students keep spirit in learning process. In this class, the utterances of appreciation maxim are found 4 times. Two times are in the first meeting, and one time is in the second and third meeting. The following is an example that can explain the meaning of appreciation maxim.

#### Extract 5

The students have just finished giving the presentation. And, the Lecturer always gave the appreciation to the students after finishing the presentation.

The Lecturer : **Give applause to your friends and give your love or your big thumb!** (The Lecturer said to the other students)

The students : (Each student gives his/her feeling by showing his emoticon)

The utterance of the lecturer "**Give applause to your friends and give your love or your big thumb**" is included to maxim of appreciation. This indicated that it is a reward to the students. This can motivate the students to be diligent in studying.

The other utterances spoken by the Lecturer also indicated maxim of appreciation as follow;

#### Extract 6

The Lecturer : What is the answer for no. 6?

The students : need analysis!

The Lecturer : **Okay, good!!!**

The situation occurred when the Lecturer and the students were discussing about one task provided in a paper of group presentation. The task consisted of some choices. Then, most of the students answered together. Because the students' answer is correct, the Lecturer gave them appreciation by saying "**Okay, good!!!**".

The Lecturer's compliment that was given to the students could be categorized as the fulfillment of appreciation maxim by maximizing praise to the others.



**d. Maxim of Modesty or simplicity**

In this maxim of simplicity, the speaker should minimize self-praise and maximize self-abuse. This maxim means that the speaker can be humble so that the speaker does not show the impression of being arrogant to his partner. (Leech, 2014:133)

In maxim of modesty here, the Lecturer felt that there is a weakness or lack of him. He did not force himself to be the best one. For maxim of modesty, it can be found two times in the second and the third meeting.

**Extract 7**

The Lecturer was explaining the material about the testing. He said that there are 6 kinds of assessment. Then, he said one kind of tests, namely "placement test". One student said "placement" by using the different pronunciation with the Lecturer's pronunciation. Then, the Lecturer said,

The Lecturer : **I do not know which pronunciation is true!** (The Lecturer said to the other students)

The students : Smiling.....

From the situation above, the utterance **"I do not know"** indicated that the Lecturer admitted that he also has a weakness as a human even though that he is a lecturer. This utterance included one of politeness principles. Actually, by saying those words, it does not mean that the students will consider him someone who does not know, but, the students will consider him the best.

The other utterance of the Lecturer to the students, which indicated the simplicity as follow;

**Extract 8**

The Lecturer and the students were discussing about kinds of test. Then, the following conversation happened;

The Lecturer : there are some kinds of test, they are: placement test, summative, formative, and then what else? I forget. (Smiling)

The students : Diagnostic, Sir...

In this situation, the Lecturer acted as if he forgot about the answer. However, he did it by smiling. Actually, he had known the answer of the question. What the Lecturer said to the students indicated that he fulfilled the maxim of modesty. It was because the Lecturer maximized dispraise to himself by saying "he forgot".



### e. Maxim of Agreement

This maxim of agreement also requires that each participant of the speech must not directly object to the speech which he considers unsuitable or disagreeable. This takes into account the factor of age to social status not to show direct refusal when in a speech situation. (Leech, 2014: 133)

Maxim of agreement is found in the first, second and third meeting. The maxim of agreement is needed in teaching-learning process. This agreement makes the students learn without tension. The students will be brave to deliver his/her suggestions.

#### Extract 9

After finishing the presentation, the Lecturer always gave his additional explanation. Then, the Lecturer said as follow;

The Lecturer : **What do you think if next week each of you makes a reflective essay?** (The Lecturer said to the other students)  
The students : Okay, Sir....

If we see the situation above, the utterance **"What do you think if next week each of you makes a reflective essay?"** indicates that the sentence asking an agreement from the students. The Lecturer used the utterance politely. So, the students do not feel mind in answering "Yes....., Okay....., etc."

The other utterance spoken by the Lecturer and the students indicated the maxim of agreement as follow;

#### Extract 10

The Lecturer : Because we will get holiday next week, next two weeks 2 groups will deliver the presentations.  
The students : Yes, Sir....

In the case above, the Lecturer made an agreement with the students to have two groups of presentation. As usual, the group which will do the presentation was only one group. However, instead of a missing class because of the holiday, the Lecturer made an agreement. The students agreed with what the Lecturer said. This agreement can be indicated the maxim of agreement.





#### f. Maxim of Sympathy

The maxim of sympathy is a maxim that marks a person as polite if he can maximize sympathy between himself and others and can minimize antipathy to himself and others. From various speech events, if someone is able to express his condolences towards other people who are being hit by a disaster, then that person is classified as polite in the use of language. (Leech, 2014:133)

The Lecturer used the maxim of sympathy in the first, second and third meeting. The maxim of sympathy can be shown when the Lecturer feels happy or joyful to see the students do the best. He thought that what he delivered to the students succeed. The following is an example of using the maxim of sympathy.

##### Extract 11

The teaching-learning process has just finished. The Lecturer expressed this utterance;

The Lecturer : **I am so happy to see you able to do the assignment.**

The students : smiling....feeling happy too.

The conversation above indicates that the Lecturer participated to feel what the students felt. The Lecturer could maximize his sympathy more than his empathy. So, the utterance above includes the application of politeness. Then, it includes in maxim of sympathy.

#### D. Conclusion

Based on the findings that have been described before, the conclusion of the study is the Lecturer used the six types of maxims of politeness principles. The six types of the maxims are *tact maxim*, *generosity maxim*, *appreciation maxim*, *modesty maxim*, *agreement maxim*, and *sympathy maxim*. It means that the learning process includes every maxim based on Leech.

The tact maxim or maxim of wisdom becomes the highest conversation used in the class interaction as many as 5 times with the percentage 22,7%, and the second, the third and the fourth places are the maxims of appreciation, agreement and sympathy as many as 4 times with the same percentage of 18,2%. And, the fifth place is the maxim of generosity



as many as 3 times with the percentage of 13,6%. For the last place, it is the maxim of modesty as many as 2 times with the percentage of 9,1%.

After analyzing these six maxims, it is very important to have them when we are a lecturer/teacher teaching in the class. It is because a teacher/lecturer who has the six maxims possibly can control the class to run well.

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