

## **Linguistic politeness strategies in classroom interactions: An exploratory mixed methods study<sup>2</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to explore the politeness strategies used by teachers in classroom interaction and the effectiveness of these strategies in the learning process of students in the Ifugao context. In the qualitative phase, the linguistic aspect of politeness was transcribed and classified further using Brown and Levinson's model. Thereafter, a survey-questionnaire instrument for students was developed to determine the effectiveness of the politeness strategies used by teachers and transition to the quantitative phase of the study. In general, the findings revealed that teachers used all the four politeness strategies in motivating, presenting lessons and discussions, managing the class, and evaluating the students. The teachers' use of positive politeness strategies was appropriate and hence effective in all the aspects of classroom interaction. However, from the perspective of the students, a combination of negative politeness, positive politeness, and bald-on record strategies was highly effective. As an output, a model for the effective use of politeness strategies in classroom interaction was developed to provide a perspective on how effective politeness strategies could be localized in the Ifugao context.

**Keywords:** *linguistic politeness, politeness strategies, classroom interaction*

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Politeness plays a crucial role in linguistic expression and in human interaction in general. However, speakers of different languages and cultures have various means of encoding politeness considerations. Hence, it is of great importance to investigate the particular politeness strategies in specific languages used by speakers as a means of understanding the functions of language. One of the most crucial tools that link humans is language, the primary medium of communication. The

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different modes of communication require conveying ideas in an acceptable manner. It is a challenge requiring creative communication most especially in a learning environment.

For students to thrive in a world of oral communication, teachers need to teach and model to students how to build and present a message in way that does not undermine students' motivation and learning outcome. Educational researchers increasingly recognize the importance of affective factors and their contribution to learner intrinsic motivation (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000) and hence to learning outcomes. Similarly, Hanaas (2009) stated that it is essential to raise learners' awareness of the dynamics of different communicative modes. Language teachers should set up an environment with optimum learning conditions for their learners. They should also prepare learners to deal with various modes of face-to-face and online learning, considering the pros and cons of each mode of interaction.

Politeness plays a crucial role in all cultures and societies for maintaining relationships and for face saving. Although politeness is common to all cultures and languages, how it functions and is realized vary from one culture to another. The close relationship between language structure of a culture and the modes in which the people think and act cannot be disregarded. Language becomes the most distinctive means in which people communicate their ideas. Nida and Taber (1969) argued that effective interlingual communication is always possible despite seemingly enormous differences in linguistic structures and cultural features. Within the same culture, several variations of the same component naturally occur. Although there is a variation, a particular culture can be usually typified through some dominant patterns evident in the linguistic politeness strategies utilized by speakers. Every culture has a different way of encoding politeness. In the Ifugao community, values are considered in expressing politeness. Among the Ifugaos, there are many words in their language that can be used to express politeness. The adjuncts *ag'a*, *ahan*, and *ya* are polite expressions used to soften a request or politely evoke particular feelings in the hearer.

Wolfson (1989) posited that the acquisition of sociolinguistic rules can be greatly facilitated by teachers who have the necessary information at their command and who have the sensitivity to use their knowledge in order to guide students and help them interpret values and patterns which they would otherwise have difficulty in interpreting. As learners and teachers, there is an inevitable need to be aware of the sociolinguistic conventions, not only having a simple awareness about the conventions but rather critical awareness.

In the last fifteen years, politeness had been one of the most important and productive areas of research in pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Its importance in cross-cultural communication is obvious, and comparative studies of the conceptualization and manifestations of politeness in different cultures must therefore be regarded as vital in an era of growing internationalization. Despite this, very few studies were made especially in Philippine classrooms. A teacher has always been regarded with a superior status in the classroom. The language used by the teacher in class interactions plays a big role in successful learning. Consequently, there is need for teachers to establish a context where students respond to questions, explore information and construct new knowledge. A positive learning environment is conducive for both teachers and students since it enhances the teaching-learning process. In classroom interaction, various expressions of politeness are essential. An awareness of different politeness strategies facilitates communication and learning. Although students in the tertiary level are expected to have acquired and demonstrated basic communication skills, how they choose to interact in the classroom greatly affects the learning process. Hence, it is essential to examine how students and teachers use politeness strategies in class interactions in order to maximize success in the teaching-learning process. Findings of this study shall provide useful pedagogical insights on successful classroom interactions to teachers of English.

In the Philippines, students devote much of their time in school where the medium of instruction is English. From the home to years of formal schooling, Filipino students have great exposure to the English language. The Filipino culture of being hospitable, friendly, and cheerful is largely attributed to the Filipinos' innate sense of politeness. The use of *po* and *opo* that is attached to almost any utterance is a concrete evidence of linguistic politeness.

This paper aids language planners particularly on enhancing learners' communicative competence in using politeness linguistic devices in the process of language teaching and learning. This paper also offers insights to language teachers especially in designing syllabus and lesson plans that incorporate politeness strategies in classroom interactions. These carefully crafted syllabus and lesson plans allow teachers and learners to deliberately choose their utterance that belong to politeness strategies. Language researchers who attempt to provide a perspective on how the theory of politeness could be classified, localized, and adopted to the Filipino context find this paper useful. Students also benefit by taking insights on how to successfully apply their notion of politeness into the foreign linguistic context of English and how to extensively utilize politeness strategies in classroom interactions to maximize learning.

### **1.2 Related studies**

In a similar study by Liu, Cai, and Tan (2012), teachers in EFL classrooms are highly aware of politeness strategies. In particular, praising and complimenting helped develop positive self-images of students. The gap between the teacher's intention and student's expectation in terms of politeness strategies was attributed to gender differences and different levels of English proficiency. Thus, it is suggested that it is important to strengthen teachers' and students' politeness awareness and competence to greatly maximize the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

In a study by Jiang (2010), it was concluded that politeness promoted mutual understanding and harmonious relationship between the teacher and students. Moreover, it was also revealed that employing politeness strategies did not only enhance teaching and greatly benefit the students, it also greatly contributed to an effective classroom interaction and friendly ambiance.

A study conducted by Kurdghelashvili (2015) put emphasis on the role of the teacher in improving students' language competence and pragmatic competence involved in the teaching-learning process inside the classrooms in Georgia. Furthermore, there was a need for teachers to increase their awareness in the use of politeness strategies especially those that address the cultural differences to prevent miscommunication with the speakers of the target language.

Regarding the teaching-learning process, the study of Purandina, Seken, and Budasi (2014) presents five aspects: efficient instruction, respectful communication between teacher and students, great rapport between teacher and students, cooperative classroom interaction, and minimal use of imposition and indirect expression. Apart from polite and negative politeness, the teachers mostly used Bald-on Record, while the least utilized strategy is off-record. Those aspects enumerated can stipulate motivation among learners that can also evolve a meaningful teaching-learning process.

Zhao (2009) conducted an investigation and analysis of politeness strategies employed by college English teachers' classroom feedback. This study revealed that there is a gap between the teachers' feedback and practice and the expectation of the students towards teachers' feedback. Furthermore, it was concluded that the teacher's knowledge of psychology and employment of effective politeness strategies satisfy the students' face wants and increase motivation in learning. Hence, the suggestions put forward centered on strengthening teachers' theory knowledge on pragmatics, employing appropriate politeness strategies and providing supportive verbal feedback to increase the students' pragmatic competence in communication.

Mates (2010) revealed that answering in unison is most frequently used by the students; they responded by saying the answer aloud along with the other students. This could somehow be considered a deviation from the expected social politeness norm of Filipino students. However, this was also widely accepted by the teacher hence unknowingly allowed this disrespectful act by the students. Garcia (2014) presented a manifestation of a level of competency on pragmatic competence and politeness along three face threatening acts. Moreover, the ethnic affiliation and gender of students did not affect their level of politeness. Despite spending significant amount of time in studying English, it was observed that students generally do not seem to be successful in communicating in English. Factors that affect communication such as native language, cultural background, and level of proficiency were explored in this research.

This mixed methods study aimed to explore the politeness strategies used by teachers in classroom interactions in the light of Brown and Levinson's theory. Specifically, the qualitative phase (Phase 1) of this study included the following questions:

1. What are the politeness strategies used by teachers in motivating, instructing, managing the class and giving feedback/evaluation?

Quantitative phase (Phase 2) included the question:

2. How effective is the use of politeness strategies by the teachers in classroom interaction as assessed by students along (a) motivation, (b) instruction, (c) classroom management, and (d) evaluation?
3. Based on the qualitative findings and quantitative results, what model can be developed for the effective use of politeness strategies in classroom interaction?

### 1.3 Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Different theories have been proposed to examine the strategies with which politeness is expressed. Each theory has weak and strong points that may make it appropriate to a culture but not to another. This paper utilizes one of the most widely used theories, Brown and Levinson's (1978) and its modified version (1987) on theories of politeness. Nowadays, there are two different perspectives to politeness theory: first-order politeness and second-order politeness. The first order considers politeness as behavior that is appropriate in a specific socio-cultural group, while the second order views from a theory-driven construct wherein politeness concepts and differences from socio-cultural groups are considered. Most studies on politeness have largely favored second-order politeness (Odeunmi 2009). Aside from Brown and Levinson, other studies also explore the concept of politeness in the second-order perspective: Fraser (1990), Watts (1989, 1992, 2003), Eelen (2001), and Locher (2004).

Lakoff featured politeness on pragmatic competence that includes two general sets of rules: *Be clear* and *Be polite*. The latter is further sub-categorized into *Don't impose*, *Give options*, and *Make the hearer feel good*. Lakoff's (1975) model of politeness centers on a set of rules where its importance is context-bound. Leech, another sociolinguist, approaches politeness as a set of conversational maxims. He underscores on maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships that are dealt with in the three constituent principles: Cooperative Principle, Irony Principle, and Politeness Principle. The various maxims underlying the Politeness Principle according to Leech (1983) are Tact maxim, Generosity maxim, Approbation maxim, Modesty maxim, Agreement maxim, and Sympathy maxim.

The analytical model of Brown and Levinson (1987) views politeness as a face-saving strategy. The study focuses on Brown and Levinson's model since it describes conventionalized rules in different language and cultures. Hence, the model lays down the important foundation for the discussion of politeness strategies. This model is also widely used by researchers as a framework in dealing with politeness.

Face is originally presented by Goffman (1971) as he made a distinction between supportive and remedial interchanges. The notion of face in the theory of politeness begins with a definition of the applicable notion of face as introduced into linguistic theorizing by Brown and Levinson. Brown and Levinson (1978) define face as the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself consisting in two related aspects: (a) negative face and (b) positive face. Negative face pertains to the desire of every competent adult member of a culture that his/her actions be unimpeded by others, whereas positive face refers to the desire of every member of a culture that his/her wants be desirable to at least some others. In other words, positive face can be thought of as “the positive and consistent image people have of themselves, and their desire for approval” (p. 66), while negative face, on the other hand, is “the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, and rights to non-distraction” (p. 66). The positive face entails longing for connection with others while the negative face needs concerns autonomy and independence.

Prior to providing the basis for a theory of linguistic politeness, the term *face* had been in common use in English and in other languages in such expressions as *saving face* and *losing face* (Tripp, Nakamura & Guo, 1995). Brown and Levinson (1987) explicitly acknowledged drawing on the English folk-term when formulating their definition of face. This intimate relationship between the scientific and folk terms in English prompted other researchers to apply the theory to different cultural settings. In particular, other cultures seemed to have emphasized the possibilities of enhancing face as well as threatening it (Matsumoto 1988; Mao 1994), of positive face being more important than negative face, and of group considerations taking priority over individual wants (Mao 1994). These are not tackled in Brown and Levinson’s discussion of face.

Face threatening act (FTA) is another concept that sheds light in the understanding of how face and politeness are connected. A face threatening act is an act that inherently damages the speaker’s face by acting in opposition to the wants and desires of the other. Face threatening acts can be linguistic, paralinguistic, or non-linguistic in nature. Politeness then is viewed as a way of mitigating face threat. It follows then that politeness strategies to save face are selected according to the gravity of the FTA.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies are developed primarily to deal with FTAs. Human “politeness” behavior is outlined into four types of politeness strategies: Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off-record. Bald on record strategies do nothing to minimize threats to the hearer’s face. In the classroom, this could be observed when students just blurt out aloud what they want to say; in response, teachers simply reprimand students outright. This happens mostly in early childhood classes where students need guidance and learn to adhere to classroom rules. In social interactions, *I want some beer* is an example of this strategy. Other situations where this strategy is used are in commanding *Open the door*, requesting *Put your phones away*, or alerting *Turn off the lights*. In the tertiary classroom where rules are already established and students have achieved a sense of maturity and accountability, it is expected that bald on record strategy is almost not used in the classroom. Positive politeness is redress aimed at the addressee’s positive face, his desire that his wants should be thought of as desirable. An example where this strategy is observed is when a student voluntarily recites but is having a hard time expressing his idea verbally using the target language. The teacher decides to be considerate by guiding and encouraging the student in expressing his idea. Other positive strategies include attending to the hearer, avoiding disagreement, assuming disagreement, and hedging opinion. Negative politeness strategies are intended to prevent giving offense by showing respect. Other negative politeness strategies include questioning, hedging, and presenting disagreements as opinions. In class, a speaker may get offended if these are not handled or communicated carefully. The teacher is then faced with the challenge of preventing embarrassment at all cost during classroom interactions. Off record strategies remove some of the pressure off the speaker avoiding

the FTA by allowing the other person to offer or do the explaining rather than the speaker imposing his/her idea or what he/she wants. For example, in assigning a leader for an important classroom task, a teacher offers it to the whole class rather than simply assigning one student outright. This strategy prevents the notion that the teacher may have favorites in class. Brown and Levinson (1987) opined that the output of these linguistic strategies of the speaker puts into face-maintaining linguistic behavior; the speaker communicates his/her desire that the hearer's face wants be satisfied. Other strategies that are off record include giving clues *It's what we emphasized in our class yesterday ...*, being indirect *It's a bit crowded in here ...*, or by giving jokes *That's what we gain by being overly beautiful*.

The role of the teacher has slowly shifted from a mere director of the class to a facilitator allowing the students to be more responsible of their own learning. Domingo (2016) supported this view when she outlined that effective teaching is not merely the expertise of the teacher in dispensing information and knowledge to the students, but it is molding them into socially efficient individuals. Moreover, she added that educators worldwide often put emphasis on students' achievement and too little on the learning process in the learning environment. Hence, the society's role in developing speaking abilities of students should always be considered by the teachers.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), there are three sociological variables that are important in determining the seriousness of an FTA. First is Social Distance (D), which pertains to the level of familiarity and solidarity between two people (speaker and hearer). In the classroom, teacher and student relationship impacts successful communication. Hence, this distance compels students to give respect to teachers and in turn, teachers are expected to build rapport with the students and create an environment conducive for learning. Second is the Relative Power (P) of the speaker and the hearer, the power that the hearer has over the speaker. The teacher plays a vital role for learning to take place; hence, the best recommended strategy for the teacher is to arouse the interest of the students and keep the students motivated. This poses a great challenge among teachers especially in college where there are students who attend their classes simply for the sake of attendance rather than for learning. Finally, the third variable is Absolute Ranking (R) of imposition in the culture. This refers to the degree to which the speaker wishes to impose on the hearer, and the degree to which the hearer accepts the imposition. Simply, this pertains to the stage wherein the hearer's attention is set on the speaker allowing a smooth and comprehensible flow of ideas. These three factors add to the seriousness of FTA and on how a speaker calculates what politeness strategy will be used to alleviate the threat to face.

Ting-Toomey (2005) defined interaction skills as the ability to communicate appropriately, effectively, and adaptively in a given situation. The five interaction skills that can transform the knowledge and mindfulness dimensions to a concrete level are mindful listening, mindful observation, facework management, trust-building, and collaborative dialogue. For a language teacher, figuring out the type of classroom interaction can be quite tricky. Hence, the teacher should always consider the type of classroom interaction that is most beneficial. Teachers and students who participate in interactions cannot disregard the need to maintain each other's face. Interaction in the classroom, which is a professional context (as with this study), can promote or damage class interests; it becomes a crucial factor on how students' and teachers' face is treated.

If face is universal (Brown & Levinson, 1987), it follows then that each culture values the importance of face. Despite this universality in the concept of face, still it can vary from one culture to another. These are presented in the differences in *Western* and *Eastern* culture. In the Filipino context, how the face is treated varies greatly from the Chinese, Japanese, or Korean. This paper considers four aspects of classroom interaction based on the major roles of a language teacher: motivational, instructional, evaluative, and managerial. The first aspect is Motivation, which refers to the illocutionary speech acts that aim to activate students to participate, ask questions, and

initiate feedback. Some examples are *Just go ahead and tell us what you remember* or *Share your experience*. The second aspect is Academic Instructions. This refers to the teacher's presentation of the lesson and answering questions arising from the class discussions. These include *Today, we are going to try something new ...* or *Could you please point out the difference between the two words?* Third is Evaluation, which is very vital in English classes since it covers the positive and negative feedback given to students. The politeness strategies employed in evaluating may either encourage or discourage the students. The fourth and final aspect considered is Classroom Management. This refers to instructions connected to maintaining discipline in the class such as orders, requests, questions, calls, and other procedural directives. Some examples include *Stop talking please*, *Why don't you come closer?* and *We only have 3 minutes left*.

Politeness is an important social norm and is very much expected in social interaction in any society. According to Lakoff and Ide (2005), politeness needs are crucial in keeping a society cohesive. However, the extent to which politeness is universal or culturally conditioned is much debated until now. There are many linguistic variations in encoding politeness that vary greatly according to culture. For the Filipinos, the Ifugaos in particular, there are values that affect how politeness is expressed. As part of work culture, teachers put pride in their role as models and molders of the youth. This directs them to strive to create a positive learning environment. The idea of pride as *saving face* by some means corresponds to Brown and Levinson's concept of *face-saving* politeness strategies. In the Filipino context, public discourse focuses on the degree of politeness exhibited by the interlocutors. Politeness among the Filipinos springs highly from the use of honorifics as politeness markers, the *po* and *opo*, the nature of being hospitable and cheerful, and the value of *hiya*.

Vulgarity, profanity, and excessive sarcasm are considered inappropriate depending on the context. Moreover, refined or good mannered people are careful in choosing language to deal with possible conflict and avoid confrontational situations. Teachers in Filipino classrooms are expected to deliver the lessons and manage classes with the highest degree of politeness since they are considered models. The code of conduct of teachers explicitly spells out how teachers should display politeness and exemplary conduct.

Despite the criticisms in the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987), it is still very influential in social science, and it applies to a range of cultures. This politeness theory is the most widely applied structure of the relations between politeness and cultures. Likewise, many researchers support the theory because it puts emphasis on face saving, a very essential value for cooperation and a positive indicator of successful learning in the classroom.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design and Methodology

This study approached data collection and analysis using a mixed method design, particularly an exploratory sequential mixed method design. Since the study entailed interaction using a second language, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches as complementary means of investigating the study was deemed appropriate.

A mixed method design was suitable for this study since the use of either pure quantitative or pure qualitative was not sufficient to fully understand and address the research problem. In choosing a mixed method, the principles of choosing a mixed method approach were carefully considered. The design chosen reflected the interaction, priority, timing, and mixing of data.

The Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2008) was applied to explore the politeness strategies used by teachers and the current thoughts of students regarding the effectiveness of these politeness strategies used in classroom interaction. The first phase of this study was a qualitative exploration of the use of politeness strategies in classroom interaction for which observation, and interview data were collected. Eight basic English classes were observed for a period of one week. To aid in the recording of data, the researcher sought the permission for video recording of the classes observed. Moreover, two teachers were initially interviewed using interview guides prior to classroom observation. Findings generated from the qualitative study informed the development of a survey instrument that was used to collect data from a larger population of Ifugao State University (IFSU) students. The second phase of this study was a quantitative description of the perceived level of effectiveness of politeness strategies used by teachers based on the findings generated from the initial qualitative portion of the study. Data from both phases were then mixed in this final analysis to provide a more complete description of the third research question.

### 2.2 Participants

The study was conducted at Ifugao State University (IFSU). The target respondents were eight (8) basic English classes composed of 150 students enrolled in the first semester of School Year 2017-2018 and two college instructors teaching basic English courses. The classes were composed of students with varying majors and currently enrolled in basic English courses. The teachers were observed in their classes in the main campus involving students taking up Bachelor of Agricultural Technology (BAT) and Diploma of Agricultural Technology (VAT) in the College of Agriculture and Home Sciences and Bachelor of Science in Criminology from the College of Criminology.

This study was conducted in three campus locations since these were the largest and most populated campuses where basic English courses were offered. Particularly, these were students from the IFSU main campus: the College of Education, College of Agriculture and Home Sciences and College of Criminology; from Lagawe campus: College of Education, College of Business and Management, and College of Engineering and Architecture; and from Hapao campus: College of Agriculture and Forestry. The teacher participants were tapped from the main campus, Nayon, Lamut given that they had at least 15 years teaching experience. The student respondents were taken from the main campus in Lamut, Lagawe campus, which is thirty minutes away from Lamut and from Hapao campus located 2 hours away from the main campus. These three campuses were chosen since these are the nearest and the most accessible campuses. Geographically, Ifugao is a landlocked province; however, the language varies in each town. Since the study aimed to provide a perspective on how effective politeness strategies were classified and localized in the Filipino context, the Ifugao language *tuwali* offered various linguistic features to encode politeness. This language variety provided a systematic data for linguistic analysis. The use of the English language and Ifugao language to express politeness were considered. This study did not include an analysis



of linguistic accuracy but rather aimed to determine the politeness strategies used in classroom interactions.

### **2.3 Research Instruments**

In identifying the politeness strategies used in the classroom, classroom observations were conducted. After transcribing the linguistic aspects of politeness, the model of Brown and Levinson was used to classify the politeness strategies. Using an interview guide, an interview with the teacher participants was conducted to further assess the appropriateness of the politeness strategies demonstrated by teachers in motivating, in delivering lessons and instructions, in managing the class, and in evaluation.

In assessing the level of effectiveness of politeness strategies, a survey-questionnaire was devised using Brown and Levinson's model of politeness strategies. This survey-questionnaire developed from the qualitative phase of the study served as a tool in gathering the quantitative data. The questionnaire contained actual politeness strategies used by teachers in four classroom interaction aspects: motivation, instruction, classroom management, and evaluation. The politeness strategies statements were rated by the students in order to determine the level of effectiveness. MS Excel was used to compute the level of effectiveness.

Two reliability tests were performed for each section of the survey instrument. Results from Cronbach's alpha yielded 0.86 while Guttman Split-half correlation yielded 0.087. Using the scale of DeVellis (2012), the reliability tests results were interpreted as good. Overall, the research instrument was reliable from motivation to evaluation. Thus, the researcher came up with valid outcomes. Other sources of information were taken from informal interviews with the participants, field notes, and observations and experiences in the researcher's capacity as an English language teacher.

### **2.4 Data Collection**

This study utilized the Exploratory Sequential Mixed Method design. The topic was explored qualitatively, and themes from the qualitative data were established. Thereafter, an instrument (questionnaire for politeness strategies) was developed based on these results and then this instrument was used in the second, quantitative phase of the study. As an initial step, permission was obtained from the research director and vice-president for academic affairs. Once the permission to conduct study was endorsed to the dean and department head, a classroom observation of two teacher participants was scheduled. To establish reliability in data collection, these teacher participants were chosen according to similarity of years of teaching experience, subjects taught, and seminars/trainings attended. Then, the teacher participants were interviewed using an interview guide. After developing the survey instrument, the questionnaires were administered to the student respondents. The content of the questionnaires were further validated by the English language teachers. Once the questionnaires were gathered, the data were tabulated, interpreted, and analyzed.

### **2.5 Analysis**

The first phase of the study is the qualitative phase. To determine the politeness strategies demonstrated by teachers in the class, class observations were conducted where class interactions were recorded to allow comprehensive procurement of data on politeness strategies. To display the language use during interactions, the recorded videos were transcribed. Brown and Levinson's model of politeness strategies was used to classify and analyze the politeness strategies. To address the second problem, an interview with the teacher participants was also conducted to establish and verify the appropriateness of the politeness strategies demonstrated in the classroom.

The results of the qualitative data in the first phase developed the second phase of the study, which was the quantitative phase. A secondary data was gathered through a questionnaire, the instrument derived from phase 1. It was administered to the student respondents to gather information on the effectiveness of the politeness strategies used by the teacher in classroom interaction. The respondents were students enrolled in basic English courses from three different campuses of IFSU. As a product, a model for the use of politeness strategies based on the results of research questions 1 and 2 was created. The data needed to address research question 1 were taken from the class observation where the linguistic aspects of politeness strategies were transcribed and classified according to Brown and Levinson's model. To assess the effectiveness of politeness strategies used in the classroom interaction in research question 2, data was taken from the student respondents. To facilitate the rating of the indicators in the questionnaire, the following descriptions were used: (4) highly effective, (3) moderately effective, (2) slightly effective, and (1) not effective.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

#### 3.1 Politeness strategies used by teachers in classroom interaction

The transcribed data from classroom observation generated a total of 217 statements that qualify as politeness strategies. These classified politeness strategies were further coded in four aspects of classroom interaction: motivation, instruction, classroom management, and evaluation. These aspects of classroom interaction were based on the major communicative roles of the teacher in motivating, teaching/instructing/processing the lesson, managing the class, and responding and giving feedback to students.

Generally, it was evident that positive politeness was widely used across all situations of classroom interaction in the form of compliments and teachers seeking agreement and establishing rapport with students. Meanwhile, off-record strategy was used by teachers particularly for managing the class only. The findings also show that politeness strategies were used mostly in processing the lesson. Conversely, politeness strategies were used the least in motivation. An implication of this finding is that teachers have more opportunities to efficiently use politeness strategies since they spend most of their time interacting with students during instruction. Despite the fact that teachers dominate discussions, the use of politeness strategies facilitates learning while the students are motivated to interact easily with the teachers.

**Positive politeness strategies.** Positive politeness strategies lay emphasis on friendliness and solidarity between the speaker and hearer. The speaker aims to address the positive face needs of the hearer, thus enhancing the hearer's positive face. Brown and Levinson (1978) also refer to this as positive face redress. Teachers used several statements to convey positive politeness. Consider the sample statements drawn from the coded transcriptions:

(S1) *Very good! I heard the answer...*

(S2) *Very good*

(S3) *I congratulate everyone for being so energetic today*

(S4) *Very good for being alive*

In (S1) to (S4), the teacher complimented the students, which might encourage the students to participate more in class. These findings parallel the study of Hobjila (2012) where the exaggeration/hyperbolisation of the positive feedback for the interlocutor is manifested in the statements: *You did a good job!*, *Today you worked beautifully!*, *Great, you answered perfectly!*, and *Great job!*. In the last statement, a hyperbolic adjective is placed before the noun. Although

Hobjila's focus of study centered among younger students, these positive statements addresses the hearer's face to be recognized and to be inspired to learn more.

These findings have important implications on how compliments may help advance the performance of students. When students receive compliments from teachers, the feeling is likened to receiving a cash reward. In fact, a recent research discovered that the same area of the brain, the striatum, is activated when a person is rewarded a compliment or cash. The compliment serves as intrinsic motivation for the students to achieve more. Complimenting someone could become an easy and effective strategy to be used in the classroom. The teacher, being the person in authority, should maximize the use of compliments as a means to encourage new learning.

In some statements, the teacher asked for confirmation or sought for agreement with the students as illustrated in (S5) to (S7).

(S5) *You appreciate too?*

(S6) *Right! Do you agree?*

(S7) *Are you sure?*

These statements also corresponded to the confirmation and strengthening common ground findings of Hobjila (2012): *I believe that we all agree that this cartoon worth seeing* and *Why don't we have a short break?* Moreover, these findings resembled another study by Muhsinin (2012) wherein the teachers' perception on a learner-centered concept in the learning process prompted the need to employ politeness strategies. In language teaching, Stephen Krashen, a well-known linguist, devised the *input model*, also known as the *monitor model*. Two of the hypotheses in this model are particularly associated to this study. According to Krashen (1979), in the input hypothesis, the learners progress in their knowledge of the language when they comprehend language input that is slightly more advanced than their current level. This implies that the language competence of teachers may affect the learning of the students. Moreover, in the affective filter hypothesis, the learners' ability to acquire language is constrained if they are experiencing negative emotions such as fear or embarrassment (Krashen, 1979). In this study, these positive politeness strategies employed by the teachers ensured that the face (dignity) of the students was not threatened as it may have a negative impact on the students. Since the students are at the core of the learning process, this finding suggests that teachers constantly seek ways on how to tailor fit the students' learning strategies with their teaching style.

Using in-group terms such as *my dear* indicated that there was some degree of familiarity and closeness between the teacher and students as demonstrated in (S8) and (S9).

(S8) *Thank you, my dear.*

(S9) *Anyway, my dear students...*

One issue emerging from this finding is that the use of *my* may indicate intimacy and *dear* is usually reserved for someone really close. Repeated use of *My dear* in the class may be interpreted casually and possibly be relegated to a mere general polite but impersonal term of endearment in class. The study of Monsefi and Hadidi (2015) offers evidence on the influence of the use of positive politeness strategies in the learning process and the teacher-student interaction. Their findings revealed that female teachers used thanking responses more than their male counterparts. Furthermore, the use of in-group identity markers was exemplified in the teacher's statement: *Okay, good morning, class*. The use of in-group identity markers (Brown & Levinson, 1987) such as *my dear students* and *class* were some positive strategies employed by teachers to ease the threat of *face* to students.

Lastly, the teacher also spoke in Filipino and Ilocano or code-switched to the local Ifugao dialect in attending to the needs of the students. These were exemplified in (S10) and (S11).

(S10) *So ti problem kit han mu ... you cannot hear*

(S11) *Ano problem? Isa isa lang ...*

These statements highlighted the teacher acknowledging the interests and needs of the learners. Ilocano is widely understood and spoken by the students especially in the main campus, Nayon Lamut, because it is situated near the boundary of Ifugao and the low lands of Nueva Vizcaya. Hence, the use of the native tongue and other languages understood by the students may facilitate understanding in classroom interaction. However, the findings of another study contrast with the claims made that students were expected to communicate in the target language since they are already in the higher level of education (Kurdghelashvili, 2015). As tertiary students, they are expected to have the proper language competence in communicating and learning during class interactions. These findings provide important clarifications on the educational use of code-switching. By definition, code-switching involves the use of multiple languages, where speakers of additional languages incorporate alternate linguistic elements into their source language. As such, two or more languages may be spoken alternately during a conversation. Chen and Ting (2010) practically define code-switching as “the intra-sentential switching of two different languages in a spoken utterance” (p.281). When used as politeness strategy, code-switching can have a positive impact in classroom interaction. A crucial teaching skill involves the capacity of the teacher to transfer knowledge to students in a clear and efficient manner; hence, code-switching can be a useful tool in the classroom for teachers.

Positive politeness is also the most used strategy for classroom instruction. The teachers utilized solidarity in-group identity markers by using the dialect as in *Basaon yu ta ahen yu ishare nan maawatan yu* “Please read first then later on we can have a sharing about what you have understood”. Another mode used in expressing positive politeness is to heed the students’ needs and wants by using polite words such as those in (S12) and (S13).

(S12) *May I ask each one to count one to four*

(S13) *So please count, 1, 2, 3... 1, 2, 3...*

In motivating the students during recitation, positive politeness was used by the teachers to attend to the needs and interests of the students as shown in (S14) and (S15).

(S14) *May I ask some of you to share something about what happened last week?*

(S15) *How do you feel after the four-day vacation?*

In engaging the students in small talk, the teacher conveys care to students and prepares the learning environment. Likewise, positive politeness was also used by the teachers in overemphasizing the interests of students as well as the teachers’ interest as illustrated in the statement *Can you sing it for us?* or in expressing optimism in the statement: *There is no need to worry because all you need to do is share what you have felt ...* . These findings confirm that despite the asymmetrical power distance between the interlocutors, the teachers made an effort to create a non-threatening ambiance in engaging the students to interact. Richards (2009) consider three different types of speech: talk as interaction, talk as transaction, and talk as performance. Although interactional talk is a complex and a delicate task, teachers often engage in conversations and small talk with students. Small talk is then used to initiate interactions on a topic familiar to

both teacher and students. Comments elicited from students are agreements that are face-preserving and non-threatening. Considering the positive impact of talk, teachers should be made aware of politeness strategies embedded in naturalistic dialogues that model features such as opening and closing conversations, making small talk, recounting personal incidents and experiences, and reacting to what others say. In this study, the teachers used mainly positive politeness in the form of compliments, seeking for agreement/confirmation, in-group terms, and code-switching to establish rapport with the students. This sense of closeness and belongingness decreased the reticence among students thereby increasing productive classroom interaction.

**Bald-on record politeness strategies.** Brown and Levinson (1987) posit that in the bald-on record strategy, the speaker does nothing to minimize threats to the hearer's *face*, and it may be used whenever a speaker wants to do a Face Threatening Act (FTA) with maximum efficiency more than he/she wants to satisfy the hearer's face. There are different kinds of bald-on-record usage in different circumstances because the speaker can have different motives for his want to do the FTA with maximum efficiency. They also claim that the sociological variables: distance, power, and rate of imposition are not considered in bald-on record. In general, it is used by teachers mostly during lesson discussion and used least during motivation. The use of bald-on record was prevalent for instruction but it was rarely used by teachers for motivation. Certain circumstances required the teachers to employ bald-on record. Brown and Levinson (1978) outline various circumstances that necessitate the use of the bald-on record strategy such as when there is no desire for someone to maintain his/her image or no plan to minimize threat on a hearer's face. In this study, these are manifested in the statements of the teachers that were stated directly and seemingly without regard to the student's wants/needs. Moreover, although positive politeness was used more often during instruction, the use of bald-on record was also necessary since there are some instructions or information that the teachers need to share quickly to minimize disrupting the flow of the lesson, such as the statements from (S16) to (S18).

(S16) *There should be order*

(S17) *There should be silence*

(S18) *No shouting.*

In comparison to Kurdghelashvili's study (2015), the teacher imposed on the students by using direct strategies to give instructions. These were illustrated in the statements *Bring your notebook!* and *Come here.* These expressions, including (S16-S18), clearly indicate that the teacher did not attempt to minimize the threat to the student's face since the situations needed immediate action. An implication of these findings stipulates that college students are expected to be mature enough hence the use of bald-on record strategy is deemed to be common and acceptable in class. As classes go on, other circumstances in classroom interactions would arise that may require the use of bald-on strategy.

In discussing lessons, the teacher used direct questions to elicit response from the students, such as those from (S19) to (S22).

(S19) *What else?*

(S20) *What is the significance? What is the importance of this one to our event last week?*

(S21) *What is permanence? permanente?*

(S22) *How does it stimulate emotions when you are left alone?*

These statements increased the response rate of the students since rephrased questions (S20) and clue words (S21) were provided by the teacher. These questions were used for recalling previous lessons, presenting a new lesson, and processing discussions. Through questioning, the teacher was able to support the urgency of task-oriented circumstances during class interaction. Consequently, students remained alert as their attention was sustained. Apart from questioning, another strategy used was by stating a demonstration: *Your classmate and I will show the people in front the message, and you will try to tell it to the next person ...*. Involving the teacher and the students as a way of demonstration was displayed in the given statement.

Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that the primary reason for bald-on record usage may be generally stated as whenever the speaker wants to employ an FTA with maximum efficiency more than s/he wants to satisfy the hearer's face, even to any degree. In this study, it was evident that the teachers used differing statements for bald-on strategy in several circumstances of classroom interaction. Most of the time, the teacher intended to carry out authority in the class. In order to maintain a positive learning environment, a careful assessment of circumstances is needed before employing bald-on record strategies. One thing that emerged clearly in this study was that during evaluation, the use of bald-on record was used by the teacher when an immediate feedback on pronunciation was needed. This was exemplified in the statement *ee gow not e goh* when the teacher was giving the correct pronunciation of the word *ego*. Mispronouncing the target language in class would have drastic effect on the student especially if it leads to embarrassment. The target language, English, is a second language for Filipinos. The many regions of the Philippines have differing English accents; some are even heavily accented, and the Ifugaos are not exempted. Sometimes, this heavy accent is referred to as "regional defect." Even in the Ifugao language, the vernacular varies from one town or barangay to another. In IFSU, some students coming from remote areas hence would have less exposure and opportunities in using the target language. With this linguistic diversity in the classroom, there is a high chance for cross-over of the native tongue to the English language especially in pronunciation. However, on most occasions, students need constructive support in developing their communication skills. Hence, the teacher used an indirect strategy since it reduced the chance for other students to notice and focus on the mistake and embarrass the student reciting.

Several research studies have differing views on why, how, and when oral corrective feedback especially on pronunciation should be given. Ellis (2006) defines oral corrective feedback as "responses to learner utterances containing an error" (p. 28). The study of Lyster, Saito, and Sato (2013) discovered the frequency of oral corrective feedback across the instructional context. It was also found out that there was an inclination for the learners to prefer receiving corrective feedback more than teachers feel they should provide it. In this situation, the teachers need not impose on the students since there may be no face threat. In Kurdghelashvili's study (2015), the teachers often used indirect ways for error correction by pronouncing the correct version themselves instead of directly pointing at the mistake itself. In the same way, the teacher in this study managed to correct the errors without threatening the students' social image.

Other classroom-based research studies reveal a high tendency for learners to gain more learning when oral corrective feedback is given as compared to when no oral corrective feedback is given. These findings suggest that teachers need to implement various ways of giving feedback in accordance with the language abilities and awareness of the students. When teachers threaten the face of students in providing outright feedback, opportunities for meaningful learning is diminished even if the teacher means well in giving such feedback. As a result, students become reticent or aloof because they want to avoid any chance of losing face once they commit mistakes. In summary, the use of bald-on record ranked as the second most employed politeness strategy. This was not expected since Brown and Levinson classified this strategy as the least polite strategy

because the speaker does nothing to redress *face*. However, in the classroom context, certain circumstances required the teachers to employ bald-on record strategies. In particular, indirect strategy was used for oral corrective feedback. Language ability and culture determined the corrective oral feedback preference of students.

**Negative politeness strategies.** Brown and Levinson claim that negative politeness strategies are used to avoid giving offense by giving deference. These strategies include questioning, hedging, being apologetic, and using plural nouns. In the Western culture, this strategy is considered as the most common and elaborate means of compensating any FTA. Findings reveal that negative politeness was employed primarily in giving directions (classroom management), in providing feedback (evaluation), and in processing the lesson. Although the teacher is an authority figure in class, he/she chooses to interact with the students in a non-imposing manner as manifested in (S23) and (S24).

(S23) *I hope that... assignments are to be done at home*

(S24) *You can move your chairs quietly.*

The positivity of the teacher towards the students' responsibility in doing their homework was indirectly manifested in (S23), and in (S24), the teacher used the second person point of view and the auxiliary verb *can*. Negative politeness is also known as negative face redress; it addresses the hearer's need for freedom of action and freedom from imposition in making his or her own decisions. (S23) and (S24) resemble the first approach to negative politeness, which is to be conventionally indirect.

In giving feedback and lesson discussion, the teacher used the adverb *not* in most statements, as illustrated from (S25) to (S29).

(S25) *Is it not, there should not be ...*

(S26) *Not necessarily but ...*

(S27) *You all know that cellphones are not allowed in class.*

(S28) *Don't you do videoke?*

(S29) *Are you not going to change your style?*

For (S25), the adverb *not* was used in a question form, while in (S26), it was used to indirectly disagree with the response of the student. In (S27), the adverb *not* was applied to state some general rule in the classroom. The teacher did not single out one student but rather stated the rule for the whole class. Once again, in this strategy, imposition was minimized. Comparably, other statements, (S28) and (S29), used during class discussion involved the use of the adverb *not* to process the lesson in some responses given by students. Furthermore, this was also exemplified with the use of plural nouns *we* and *us*. For instance, *So let us try to listen and respect the speaker*, this was also utilized for instruction and for motivation: *We can always get back to this if you need more time*. All these techniques listed were classified under negative politeness strategies. Such finding is supported by the results presented by Li (2012), Chiad (2013), Herianto (2014), and Najeeb, Maros, and Nor (2012). These findings suggest that in IFSU, teachers value their relationship with the students and long for successful learning to take place.

Several formulations of statements were used by the teachers to convey negative politeness, which correspond to Brown and Levinson's theory. These included being conventionally indirect, not impinging on the hearers, and avoiding imposition. This finding implies that the teacher recognizes the rights of the students to choose a decision and not to be coerced.

**Off-record politeness strategies.** A communicative act is considered off-record if it is done in such a way that there is no clear communicative intention. Off-record strategies are used to completely remove the speaker from any potential to impose on the hearer and only allude to the speaker's idea or specific request (Brown and Levinson, 1987). It is only in this classroom management aspect of classroom interaction where the use of off-record strategy was present. Only five statements were classified as off-record, as shown from (S30) to (S34).

(S30) *Somebody has stolen my seat.*

(S31) *Anyway, as if the gentlemen are not interested.*

(S32) *The ceiling is too thick for us to be covered with ... di ba?*

(S33) *Ladies and gentlemen, it's just early in the morning, you just finished your breakfast.*

(S34) *This is English 11 class but Math papers are everywhere.*

When the teacher entered in class, she greeted the students, checked attendance, and reviewed the previous topic. Before starting the lesson proper, the teacher said *Somebody has stolen my seat*. In this instance, (S30) is considered off-record since the teacher (speaker) eliminated any potential that may oblige the students as hearers. The teacher may have intended to make the students grasp that the teacher's chair is missing and that the teacher needed one. However, with the given statement, the word *stolen* is a terse term, which is more often pondered as something negative because of its accusatory nature. There are other techniques for the teacher to convey this intent. Some examples include *Will someone please find me a chair?*, *Please get me a chair*, or *May I have my chair please*. Instead of plainly making a request, the teacher opted to use an off-record strategy. As a result, the students had differing understanding of the statement and the teacher's intention. One possible interpretation of the statement is that the teacher is reproaching the students in toppling the teacher off his power and authority in class. Similarly, in (S31), the students may perceive that the teacher is being sarcastic in uttering such a statement even if it was not true. This finding suggests that in managing the class, the teacher gives opportunities for the students to negotiate meaning and understand suggestions. In this way, neither the teacher nor the student is urging each other as exemplified in (S32), (S33), and (S34). Moreover, other politeness strategies may be used in combination with off-record so that misunderstanding is avoided during class interactions.

Brown and Levinson (1987) rationalized that the use of off-record strategies is more common among interlocutors of distant relationship. Herianto (2014), who did an investigation of politeness in an anonymous online discussion, identified the use of off-record strategies. This is further supported with the reason that distance and anonymity allows interlocutors not to show deference, as they are unknown to each other.

In this study, the interlocutors (teacher and students) communicate face to face hence they know each other unlike in computer-mediated communication or written communication. As classes progress, the teacher and the students may become very familiar and comfortable with each other; nevertheless, the use of off-record is still employed.

In using off-record strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987), the speaker removes any possible threat to the hearer. Hence, the teacher was relying merely on how the students would interpret his intended meaning. From the given statements used as off-record strategies, these flouted some of the Gricean (1975) maxims on the assumption that the addressee is able to infer the intended meaning. In the Gricean model of cooperative principle, the four maxims involve quality (say what is true), quantity (be as informative as required), relation (be relevant), and manner (be clear). (S30) to (S34) specifically flouted the quantity and relation maxims. This



finding suggests that for the interlocutors (teachers) in the classroom to avoid misunderstanding and be successful communicators, these maxims should be followed. In addition, there is a need for the teachers to do inferential processing considering the nature and comprehension abilities of the tertiary students.

### **3.2 Students' perception on the effectiveness of politeness strategies used by teachers in classroom interaction**

An overview of the results of the level of effectiveness of the politeness strategies used by teachers in classroom interaction indicated that all the politeness strategies employed by teachers were moderately effective in all the four aspects of classroom interaction. Moreover, combining various politeness strategies was considered effective in each aspect of classroom interaction. A closer analysis of the results revealed that although the politeness strategies were found to be moderately effective, there was a need to delve further into the specific kind of politeness strategies used per aspect of classroom interaction to adapt the best suitable strategy according to context and language situation.

Table 1

*Students' perception on the effectiveness of politeness strategies used for classroom management*

Statements	Politeness strategy	Mean	Qualitative descriptor
Okay, you sit down.	Bald on record	3.44	Highly effective
You can move your chairs quietly.	Negative politeness	3.38	Highly effective
You all know that cellphones are not allowed in class.	Negative politeness	3.32	Highly effective
No shouting.	Bald on record	3.30	Highly effective
Please let every member give his/her comment.	Positive politeness	3.25	Moderately Effective
May I ask each one to count one to four...	Positive politeness	3.18	Moderately Effective
There should be order; there should be silence.	Bald on record	3.17	Moderately Effective
This time, let us try to make a different grouping.	Positive politeness	3.15	Moderately Effective
Ladies and gentlemen, it's very early in the morning, I'm sure you just had your breakfast...	Off record	2.89	Moderately Effective
The gentlemen do not seem to be interested.	Off record	2.84	Moderately Effective

Table 1 displays that there are four statements rated as highly effective. In particular, bald-on record strategy was ranked as the number one highly effective strategy. Meanwhile, the other six statements were rated moderately effective and off-record ranked the least. Overall, the level of effectiveness of politeness strategies was particularly moderately effective in classroom management (3.19) since it is the aspect of classroom interaction where the teacher was compelled to impose on his/her authority. The teacher used bald-on record strategies such as *No shouting* as a quick reminder for the class. Similarly, negative politeness was also highly effective like in the statement *You can move your chairs quietly*. Although negative politeness was used to interact with the students in a non-imposing way, it was also highly effective in maintaining classroom discipline. It is surprising that among all the aspects of classroom interaction, it was only in classroom management aspect where off-record strategies were used, as in (S35) and (S36).

(S35) *Ladies and gentlemen, it's very early in the morning, I'm sure you just had your breakfast...*

(S36) *The gentlemen do not seem to be interested.*

These examples indicate that the teacher does not wish to impose on the students but only relies on the students' implication of what was said. According to Brown and Levinson (1998), off-record strategies are considered the most polite. However, when a student interprets these statements as mere sarcasm from the teacher, it would lead to misunderstanding.

The suggestions of the student respondents for classroom management centered on keeping the learning environment clean, as shown from (S37) to (S40).

(S37) *Can you please maintain cleanliness in the classroom*

(S38) *No throwing of garbage or any dirt anywhere*

(S39) *No chewing of betel nut*

(S40) *Chewing betel nut is not allowed*

The respondents also rated these as highly effective. Chewing betel nut or the so-called *moma* is a practice among the Ifugaos to engage in conversations or as a form of socialization with fellow Ifugaos. In the classroom, however, the students are also aware that chewing betel nut could be likened to chewing gum where it is somehow showing disrespect to the teacher especially in classroom interactions. These findings might help solve the issue on the negotiation of meaning

embedded in cultural practices of the interlocutors. Moreover, the findings may also shed light on the degree of imposition of the teacher over the students.

For classroom management, there were four statements indicating bald-on record politeness strategies and negative politeness strategies that were considered highly effective. Bald-on record and negative politeness were used primarily to maintain discipline and order in class and to ensure proper facilitation of learning. Moreover, the use of off-record strategies was rated moderately effective since it posed risk of creating misunderstanding between the teacher and the students.

Table 2

*Students' perception on the effectiveness of politeness strategies used by teachers for instruction*

Statements	Politeness strategy	Mean	Qualitative descriptor
Alright, we are now ready. Let's start with Group 1.	Positive politeness	3.55	Highly effective
Try to listen and respect each speaker.	Negative politeness	3.52	Highly effective
So, if you don't have any questions...	Negative politeness	3.41	Highly effective
" <i>Basaon yu ta ahen yu ishare nan maawatan yu</i> " (Please read then share what you have understood)	Positive politeness	3.32	Highly effective
You share whatever you have finished.	Bald-on record	3.16	Moderately Effective
Three more minutes...	Bald-on record	3.09	Moderately Effective
Just complete the statement "I enjoyed or I did not enjoy the intramurals because..."	Bald-on record	3.02	Moderately Effective
Can we say then my dear students that...	Negative politeness	3.00	Moderately Effective
Are you familiar with the song... " <i>Itetem ta humgopak</i> ..." (Teacher sings "Put on the ladder so I will enter...")	Positive politeness	2.99	Moderately Effective
What prompted you to say such answer?	Negative politeness	2.75	Moderately Effective

Overall, the level of effectiveness of politeness strategies used in classroom instruction was moderately effective (3.18). For classroom instruction, the use of positive politeness strategies was highly effective. Using the vernacular (local dialect) such as in *Basaon yu ta ahen yu ishare nan maawatan yu* "Please read then share what you have understood" seemed to be very effective in giving instructions. Given that some of the respondents were graduates of Alternative Learning Schools (ALS), they found this to be very effective. This consideration by the teacher made the students feel a sense of belongingness. Another manifestation of this is in using the pronoun *we* and *us* as shown in the statement: *Alright, we are now ready. Let's start with Group 1*. The teacher prompts the students for the class activity. From the student responses, this was also manifested in (S41).

(S41) *Tell me when you're ready for your report ...*

This implies that students favor being given ample time to process and prepare for any class activity. This "wait time" generally impacts the quality of interaction since it allows students to generate discussion and support an in-depth exploration of the topic or subject matter. On the other hand, the use of probing as negative politeness tends to be less appropriate for classroom instruction. The statement, *What prompted you to give such an answer?* puts the student on the spot, which may lead him/her to be embarrassed especially when he/she cannot elaborate on the

answer. Careful use of “wait time” is also given emphasis here. Studies have shown that the ideal “wait time” for students to get involved is between three and seven seconds.

This implies that there is a need for teachers to increase their awareness of what the students expect when they implement wait time. Some students from the tertiary level courses are used to quick questions while it may not be the same case for other courses. When teachers vary their wait time, the quality of answers may improve during classroom interaction.

From the student responses, the suggested strategy rated highly effective involves reading the instructions before answering: *Read first the instruction and answer it carefully.*

These findings imply that teachers can adapt a variety of strategies to successfully deliver classroom instruction. Students tend to be particular with following instructions and need to be reminded often. For classroom instruction, the use of positive politeness and negative politeness strategies were rated highly effective by the students. These were manifested in showing respect to other students and implementing proper “wait time” and in showing solidarity and understanding in classroom interaction.

Table 3

*Students' perception on the effectiveness of politeness strategies used by teachers for evaluation*

Statements	Politeness strategy	Mean	Qualitative descriptor
I congratulate everyone for being so energetic today.	Positive politeness	3.44	Highly effective
Right! Do you agree?	Positive politeness	3.42	Highly effective
Very good! I heard the answer...	Positive politeness	3.31	Highly effective
"/ee gow/ " not "/e goh/" (teacher corrects pronunciation of the word "ego")	Bald on record	3.25	Moderately Effective
Let us give the group three claps.	Positive politeness	3.08	Moderately Effective
You are tired but you are happy because...	Negative politeness	3.08	Moderately Effective
Focus! What else?	Bald on record	3.08	Moderately Effective
You like it too?	Positive politeness	2.94	Moderately Effective
Is it not?	Negative politeness	2.89	Moderately Effective
"Mas magagaling!"	Positive politeness	2.57	Moderately Effective

Table 3 shows that generally, the level of effectiveness of politeness strategies used for evaluation was rated moderately effective (3.11). It is in this aspect of classroom interaction where face threatening acts are highly encountered since the teacher needs to provide both positive and negative feedback to the students.

In the evaluation aspect of classroom interaction, the use of positive politeness was highly effective. Respondents believed that giving compliments and praise to students is highly effective when giving feedback. These statements included *I congratulate everyone for being so energetic today*, *Right*, and *Very good*. These were also consistent with the suggestions of the student respondents: *You did it very well*, *Good job*, and *Nice answer*.

Both teachers and students agreed on the use of compliments and positive feedback. This would appear to indicate that teachers should continue the practice of employing compliments as manifested in positive politeness strategy.

Although these statements fit compliment formulas that parallel recent studies, not all statements indicating positive politeness are deemed appropriate or effective. The teacher expressed compliment to the students in the statement *Mas magagaling*, where the teacher used code-switching and seemed to make a comparison between previous responses from students. From the students' responses, this parallels *Mahusay* rated as moderately effective as well.

Compliments have highly structured formulas with rather simple linguistic structures (Manes & Wolfson, 1981). In this study, students preferred the use of the English language as a compliment formula. According to Manes and Wolfson (1981), eighty-five percent (85%) of compliments contained one of three simple sentential patterns. The majority of compliments contain the most common five adjectives: *nice, good, beautiful, pretty,* and *great* and two verbs: *like* and *love*. Although these linguistic structures seem simple, the act of complimenting itself is not that simple as depicted in the finding of this study. An implication of this finding suggests that the use of compliments is crucial in classroom interaction particularly in giving feedback since it may cause embarrassment or even offense when not used appropriately.

For classroom evaluation, not all statements used by teachers indicating positive politeness are highly effective. Compliment formulas using the English language worked well with the students rather the ones given in Filipino.

Table 4

*Students' perception on the effectiveness of politeness strategies used by teachers for motivation*

Statements	Politeness strategy	Mean	Qualitative descriptor
a. Would you mind giving us an example?	Negative politeness	3.43	Highly effective
b. Like for example...	Bald on record	3.43	Highly effective
c. Let's have volunteers. Yes, my dear...	Positive politeness	3.19	Moderately Effective
d. May I ask some of you to share something about what happened last week?	Positive politeness	3.18	Moderately Effective
e. There is no need to worry because all you need to do is share what you have felt...	Positive politeness	3.17	Moderately Effective
f. Come on... What else?	Positive politeness	3.13	Moderately Effective
g. Just share your answers; all of them are correct.	Bald on record	3.08	Moderately Effective
h. We can always get back to if you need more time.	Negative politeness	2.95	Moderately Effective
i. How do you feel after the four day vacation?	Positive politeness	2.90	Moderately Effective
j. Can you sing it for us?	Positive politeness	2.51	Moderately Effective

Table 4 displays the level of effectiveness of politeness strategies utilized by teachers in the motivation aspect of classroom interaction. There were two statements rated as highly effective. Both statements were ranked number one but these statements employed different politeness strategies, namely, negative politeness and bald-on record. Negative politeness and bald-on record lean towards a more direct strategy and least polite strategy. Overall, the level of effectiveness of politeness strategies in motivation was moderately effective (3.10). Although teachers utilized mostly positive politeness strategies for motivation, students rated those as moderately effective.

For motivation, students perceived that the use of both negative politeness and bald-on record strategy was highly effective. Given that the subject of this study were university students, asking for an example, as in (a) and (b) in Table 4, was the most appropriate politeness strategy for motivation used by teachers in classroom interactions. On the other hand, asking them to perform such as singing, as in (j) in Table 4, was the least moderately effective. There is a possibility for the students to lose face especially when they are not confident in doing a certain task. Example (j) in Table 4 indicates positive politeness that corresponds to students' suggestions such as (S42) and (S43).

(S42) *Can you say it in other words?*

(S43) *Can you expand your answer or cite more examples?*

These questions can be used by teachers to follow up on a previously stated question. In this case, the students may not be prepared to answer such follow up questions and hence may lose face in attempting to provide a response. According to Svinicki (2004), many students believe that good teachers do “motivate” them, and these teachers tend to receive high student ratings on items such as: *the instructor motivated me to do my best work, stimulated my intellectual curiosity, encouraged me to express my opinion or experience, and emphasized learning rather than tests or grades*. In this study, the students’ perceptions on what motivate them most are indicated from (S44) to (S46).

(S44) *You can do it, relax.*

(S45) *You can do it, your answer is appreciated.*

(S46) *There's no wrong opinion, come on ...*

These findings suggest that teachers may need to communicate to students an assurance that it is acceptable to give any response in recitation and that viewpoints of students need to be acknowledged as well. In addition, these findings also clarify the role of teachers in providing a learning environment that fosters a motivation to learn. The function of motivation is very crucial to successful learning.

According to Davis (1993), “Research has shown that a teacher's expectations have a powerful effect on a student's performance” (p. 795). This implies that there is a need for teachers to be enthusiastic in setting realistic and appropriate goals and communicate these to students for successful learning.

For the motivation aspect of classroom interaction, direct politeness strategies such as negative politeness and bald-on record politeness strategies are highly effective. Not all statements indicating positive politeness are moderately effective. Students are motivated when they are encouraged to interact and when their viewpoints are considered. Conversely, asking follow up questions to clarify or elaborate answers triggers reticence among the students particularly if they are not prepared or may need more time to process their thoughts and responses.

### **3.3 Model for effective use of politeness strategies**

Based on the findings of the study, a model was created as a guide to appropriate and effective use of politeness strategies in classroom interaction. In developing the model for effective use of politeness strategies (as shown in Figure 1), the insights and expectations of teachers in using politeness strategies were ruminated along with the perception of the students on the effectiveness of these politeness strategies in classroom interaction.

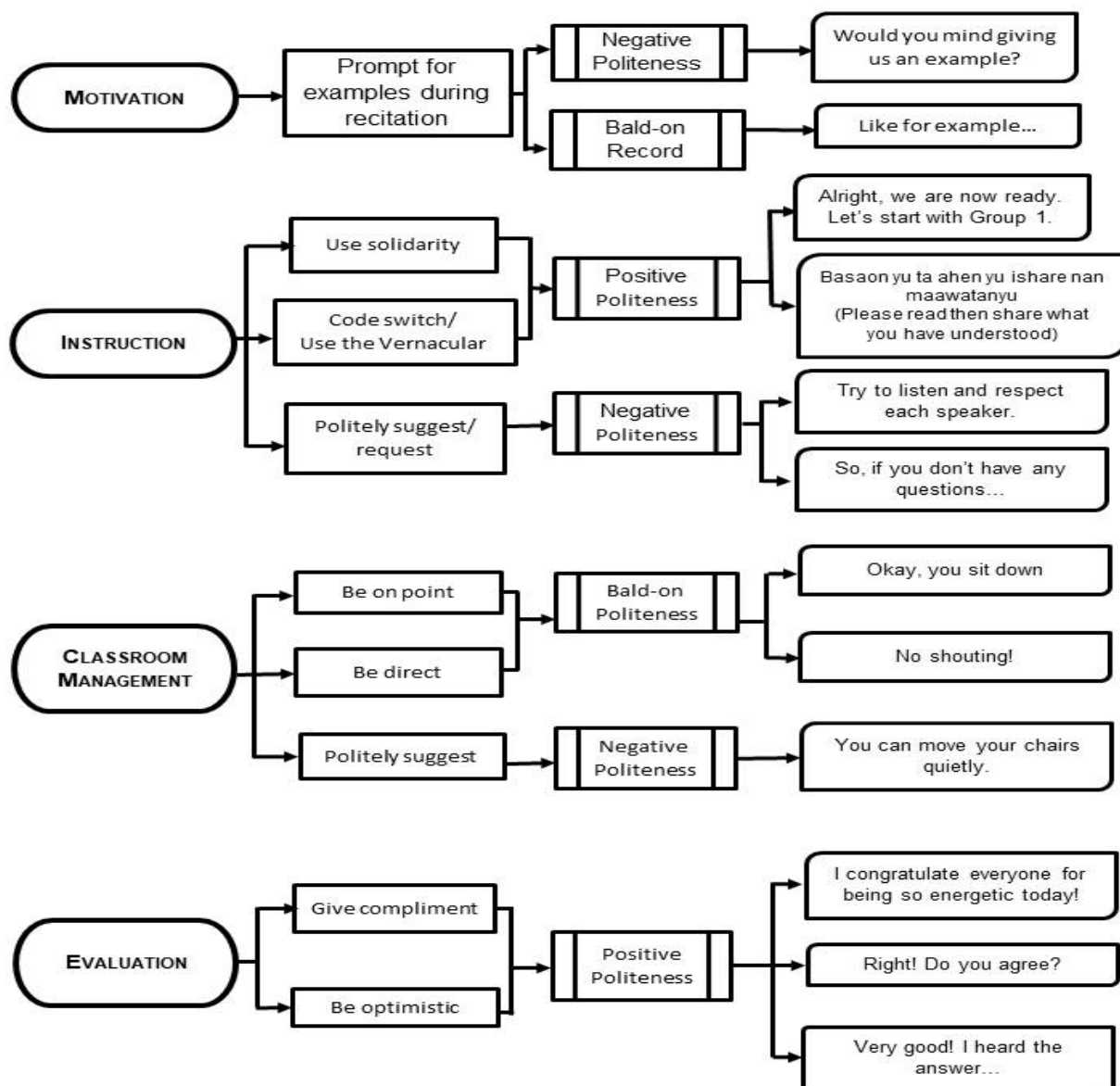


Figure 1. Model for Effective Use of Politeness

Figure 1 presents a model for the effective use of politeness strategies in classroom interaction. It also attempts to resemble a model of politeness strategies appropriate for tertiary classes in Ifugao. The effective politeness strategies are grouped according to the major communicative roles of the teacher in motivation, instruction, classroom management, and evaluation. The possible language situations are also indicated along with example statements.

This study has developed this model in its aim to address the applicability of Brown and Levinson's framework of analysis of politeness strategies contextualized for tertiary level classroom interaction. Since the context is inside the classroom, the speaker is then referred to the teacher and the hearer is the student/s. This model is particularly contextualized for classroom interactions in Ifugao. It can serve as a guide for the teacher of the choices in employing a particular politeness strategy in four situations of classroom interaction. Moreover, specific strategies for each situation of classroom interaction are presented to aid the teacher of the possible options.

#### 4. Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

This paper has given an account of the different politeness strategies used by teachers in four situations of classroom interaction along motivation, instruction, classroom management, and evaluation; the level of effectiveness of these politeness strategies as perceived by the students; and finally presented a model for effective use of politeness strategies.

With regards to the identified politeness strategies used by teachers in classroom interaction, positive politeness, negative politeness, bald-on record and off-record were used mainly during instruction, where teachers presented and discussed the lessons. Teachers spent a great amount of time in this aspect of classroom interaction. In contrast, teachers used politeness strategies the least in motivation. This is quite surprising as numerous research studies on motivation put great emphasis on this aspect because once students are motivated, they are more likely to sustain their interest in the subject and in turn will most likely learn.

Evidence from this study suggests that teachers make use of politeness strategies even though they may not be aware of it. Every utterance entails some sort of politeness in it.

Teachers perceived that using positive politeness strategies was appropriate and hence effective in all aspects of classroom interaction. However, from the perspective of the students, a combination of negative politeness, positive politeness, and bald-on record strategies was highly effective. Overall, both teachers and students did not endorse the use of off-record strategies in class interaction. Brown and Levinson's classification consider off-record strategies as the most polite among the rest since the speaker does not wish to impose on the hearer. In classroom interaction, there is a need for the teacher to explicitly state instructions or explain concepts carefully without imposing on the students. Consequently, this will facilitate learning.

Brown and Levinson argued the universality of these (1987) politeness strategies, however, in this study it was found out that there was also a need to consider cultural pragmatics. In the Ifugao culture, much deference is given to elders. Moreover, the Ifugao language has linguistic components particularly for respect and politeness. In the classroom context where the teacher has institutional power over the students, respect is also highly manifested. Despite the unequal power, distance, and high degree of imposition of the teacher on the students, the teacher strives to maintain a respectful and friendly teacher-student relationship.

Brown and Levinson (1987) also exclude the possibility of invoking two or more strategies at the same time. Nevertheless, as demonstrated in the model developed for effective classroom interaction, there is a need to mix a variety of politeness strategies to attain greater effectiveness in classroom interaction. Careful use of highly effective politeness strategies linked with cultural pragmatics supported the students in achieving success in the learning process.

Taken together, these findings suggest that for students to obtain desirable learning experience, the teachers are expected to show mutual respect to the students as reflected in their demonstration of equal treatment of students, cultural sensitivity, and willingness to listen to students. Ultimately, these can be translated through the various politeness strategies used in classroom interaction.

This study is limited only to the politeness strategies in classroom interactions in the Ifugao context. For future sociolinguistic research, it might be interesting to determine how other languages of Cordilleran culture utilize politeness strategies in a classroom set-up.



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