

Language Politeness of Elementary School Students on the South Coast of Java: A Sociopragmatic Study

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Abstract—Politeness is essential in communicating because it can show communication ethics. Politeness can be influenced by social, cultural, economic, and natural conditions. This study will review the form of politeness in the Indonesian language of elementary school students with fisherman family backgrounds when communicating with teachers and friends in class. The method used in this study is the phenomenological method. The study subjects were elementary school students and class teachers on the south coast of Java Island, Cilacap Regency. The results of this study show the form of politeness and incivility in the Indonesian language of students from fisherman family backgrounds with teachers during the teaching and learning process in class. There are influences of the family environment and socio-culture of the local community, which tend to be rude and straightforward, causing the form of communication to be more likely to ignore good and correct language standards, especially regarding language politeness. This study implies that family, social, and school factors play an essential role in language politeness practices for elementary school students.

Index Terms—politeness in language, elementary school students, coastal languages, sociopragmatics

I. INTRODUCTION

Language politeness is essential for the interaction process. With good language politeness, the communication process will run smoothly because there are ethics and caring feelings in interacting (Graham & Hardaker, 2017, p. 787; Izadi, 2016, p. 15). As an important communication tool, language conveys messages in the form of desires and feelings (emotions) to the communicator or messenger (Martela et al., 2021, p. 307; Mehrabian, 2017, p. 197). Messages and expressions in this language are related to how to express it, namely with language politeness. This language expression is related to language politeness. Gestures and behaviour show polite behaviour and must be expressed in good speech using language media (Ryabova, 2015, p. 92; Van der Bom & Mills, 2015, p. 180). Language politeness is an ethic in socializing with society or where someone is with the use of language and choosing good diction selection and paying attention to whom he talks to (Nashruddin & Al-Obaydi, 2021, p. 212).

One application of language politeness can be made in the primary education environment. One of the formal educations in Indonesia is elementary school. The concept of education in elementary schools differs from education in secondary schools. Basic education is for children aged five to twelve years. The concept of education in elementary school differs from education in secondary schools. The characteristics and characteristics of elementary school-aged children are that they like to play with their peers, are more physically active, and express everything directly (Mahfud & Fahrizqi, 2023, p. 18).

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The speaking development of elementary school-age children aged 10 to 12 years has the characteristics of being happy to talk and argue with anyone, using more complex language structures, being a listener who likes to think, understanding that sentences have a purpose, such as "Is your homework finished?", and understanding the concepts of irony and sarcasm (Sullivan et al., 2022, p. 637; Wilson et al., 1991, p. 216). In speaking, children have imitated adults in following general rules of understanding pragmatic features, such as in expressing thanks and apologies (Allan & Jaszczolt, 2012, pp. 79–80; Ćatibušić, 2019, p. 145; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996, p. 152). Children also begin to be able to combine gestures and procedures to express pragmatic meanings, such as requests, requests, core information, uncertainty about things, or politeness, before they are able to convey these meanings in speaking (Hübscher & Prieto, 2019). This is regardless of the cultural or environmental context in which they initiate pragmatic rules (Farnsworth, 2018, p. 96). For this reason, language skills are very important to be mastered by someone to build pragmatic abilities in the social environment.

One of the development and maturity of language in children is influenced by family social conditions (Susanto, 2014, p. 27). For example, children from fishing families experience language barriers due to limited access to literacy. In addition, learning opportunities and nutritional intake obtained in children with fishing family backgrounds are also limited. Fishermen or coastal communities are still left behind socially and economically (especially in health and education) and culturally compared to other community groups.

Fishermen are a group of people whose lives depend directly on marine products. Fishermen generally live on the coast or coastal areas in neighborhoods close to their livelihood activities. Fishermen are a group of people who are classified as poor (Amir Zal et al., 2020). Traditional fishing communities who are classified as laborers are the poorest social layer when compared to other social layers of society, for example, farming communities (Lein & Setiawina, 2018, p. 83). The poverty of fishing communities can be seen in the sanitary conditions of slum settlements, ownership of makeshift furniture, the ability to meet mediocre clothing needs, low health awareness, and insight low education. The socio-cultural conditions of the fishing community are unique. Fishermen communities on the southern coast of Java have a characteristic mindset (*local wisdom*) which is manifested in the form of language and tradition (Amir Zal et al., 2020, p. 545; Chafidhi et al., 2019, p. 304).

High business risk causes fishing communities to live in a harsh natural atmosphere, always overwhelmed by uncertainty in obtaining marine products (Basavakumar et al., 2011, p. 687). Thus, coastal communities (fishermen) have distinctive characteristics in the language (Paredes, 2020, pp. 57–59). This linguistic characteristic is certainly closely related to how to communicate in the form of linguistic politeness. Social, cultural, and economic factors can influence politeness in language in a society. This is closely related to the principle of politeness that influences social behavior in society (Blum-Kulka, 2019, p. 256). Language politeness in the social environment will impact the family environment (Trisnawati & Aminuddin, 2022, p. 314). The condition of the family environment and social environment impacts the language (Holzinger et al., 2020, p. 1079; Lubis et al., 2023, p. 18). Children can experience this impact. Children will identify and imitate ways of communicating with the elderly and those around them (Vygotsky, 2011, pp. 201–204). In society, consideration of the principle of courtesy in communicating cannot be ignored, especially when communicating in a school environment.

In the study of student language politeness, research or study of student language politeness has not reached much of the social, economic, and cultural background in which students develop. Language politeness is closely related to the social and cultural conditions of the community. Politeness is expressed as a form of relationship between language, culture, and speech communities that have the language and culture concerned (Gao et al., 2021, p. 213; Kita, 2009, p. 147). The fishing communities' geographical, social, and economic conditions directly or indirectly affect ethics (politeness) when communicating. For example, fishing communities on the southern coast of Cilacap, Central Java, tend to have rough habits in communicating and doing activities. This is characterized by a straightforward, spontaneous attitude, and speech that tends to be what it is, while in other community groups, such as farmers (agrarian), the way of communicating is more likely to pay attention to norms and values because closer kinship ties influence it. Therefore, this research has the advantage of focusing on the description of politeness and incivility in the Indonesian language in elementary school students from coastal community backgrounds who have fishermen backgrounds when communicating with teachers and friends during classroom learning.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is qualitative research. This research is intended to obtain information about language politeness in the learning process. The research period began from October to November 2022 at a Ujunggagak Elementary School 02 Kampung Laut located in a southern coastal fishing village, Cilacap, Central Java. This study aims to describe a situation and the politeness of Indonesian elementary school students in classroom learning with teachers and peers. This study's data source is all oral speech made by teachers and students during the learning process.

This research design uses phenomenological descriptive research design. The approach to this study describes the phenomenon of language politeness of elementary school students from fishing family backgrounds with teachers and peers during teaching and learning activities at school. This study focuses on the principle of politeness Leech (2014, p. 27), which is translated into six maxims, namely the maxim of wisdom, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of appreciation, the maxim of simplicity, the maxim of consensus, and the maxim of sympathy. Data collection techniques

are carried out by observation and recording. The instruments used are human and supporting instruments in the form of recording instruments and field record format guidelines. The data analysis technique used is a modified data analysis technique by Miles and Huberman (1984). The modification is in the form of cross-data with existing data in the social environment, such as families and surrounding communities.

III. RESULTS

This fishing village on the south coast of Java, precisely in Cilacap Regency, is geographically located in the southernmost area of Turtle Bay. Kabupaten Cilacap is the largest regency in Central Java, with an area of 225,361,361 Km (including Nusakambangan Island, which has an area of 11,551 ha. The western region of Cilacap Regency is bordered by West Java (Pangandaran Regency, Ciamis Regency, Banjar City, and Kuningan Regency), the southern region is bordered by the Indian Ocean, the eastern region is bordered by Kebumen Regency and the northern region is bordered by Banyumas Regency and Brebes Regency. The geographical location of Cilacap Regency is $108^{\circ}4'30''$ – $109^{\circ}22'30''$ East Longitude and $7^{\circ}45'20''$ – $7^{\circ}30'$ Line South latitude. The southern coastal community area, Cilacap, is located north of Nusakambangan Island, bordering the Indian Ocean. Some of the people's livelihoods for those on Nusakambangan Island and South Cilacap are fishermen, while those in the north are farmers and some fishermen on the Serayu River. The location of the study is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Southern Coastal Area of Java
(Source: <https://pinhome-blog-assets-public.s3.amazonaws.com/2021/12/Peta-letak-cilacap-dalam-peta-buta-jateng-1.jpg>)

People on the south coast of Cilacap, Central Java are peculiar in communicating. In daily communication, the people of the south coast, Cilacap, Central Java, use the Banyumas dialect of Javanese.

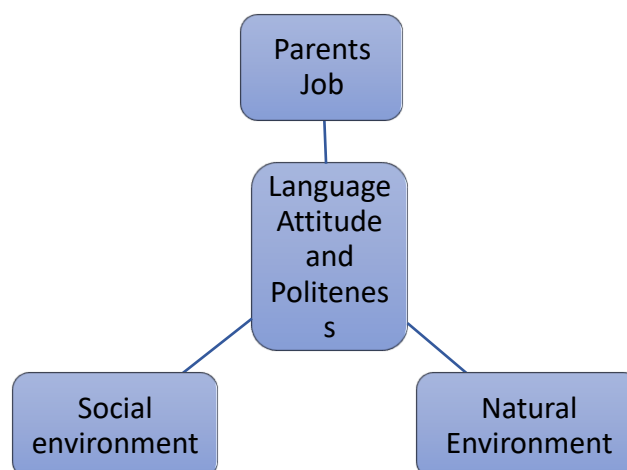


Figure 2. The Relationship Between Fishermen's Social Background and Language Civility

Based on observations made by students from fisherman family backgrounds and teachers during the learning process in elementary schools in Cilacap Regency, researchers found compliance with the principle of politeness and violation of the principle of politeness. More details can be seen in the following discussion.

A. *Tact Maxim*

Leech (2014, p. 37) explains that in order to fulfill the requirements of the maxim of wisdom, the speaker must minimize the losses of others and increase the benefits of others. The following is a form of conversation during sixth-grade learning between the teacher and students of Ujunggak 02 Kampung Laut Elementary School.

Teacher: Are the children ready for the exam next week? Learn. If you do not understand, ask.

Student A: Yes, Teacher, ready. But I often forget. My *Bukuku* is gone, hehe. (My book is lost)

Teacher: You know, how come it's gone? A neat one hence.

Student B: Yes, can you arrange a book? (Yes. Can organize books, right?)

Student A: Yes, you can. *Meng kelalen, Bu*. (Yes, you can. But, forgot, ma'am.)

In the speech above, student A has a fisherman family background. Student A's speech dialect is polite because students answer the teacher's questions and obey the teacher's instructions to prepare for the end-of-semester assessment. The teacher responds well to student A's speech. Student B responds to student A's speech with a Banyumas Cilacap accent with the words. *Yes, can you arrange books, mbok?* 'Yes. Can organize books, right?'. Student A also chimed in with a Banyumas accent in the coastal community of Cilacap *Yes, you can. Meng kelalen, Bu* 'Just forgot, Ma'am' The speech between the teacher and the student shows polite speech. Each speaker gives a good response so that it meets the criteria of the maxim of wisdom.

In class conversations, violations of tact maxims were also found. In violation of the maxim of wisdom, the speaker maximizes the other person's loss or minimizes the other person's advantage (Leech, 2014, p. 39). Violations of the maxim of wisdom during teaching and learning activities in the class of Ujunggak Elementary School 02 Kampung Laut are as follows.

Teacher: Apri, next time you write neatly. Ma'am, Master can't read because your writing is not neat.

Student A: Ya so, ma'am. My writing has always been.

Teacher: Yes, practice from now on. Which is neat.

In this speech, it can be seen that the teacher asked student C to tidy up his writing. The teacher has shown his attitude of wisdom by asking students to practice tidying up their writing. However, Student A responded with an unwise speech, namely ignoring the teacher's orders with the words *Ya so, ma'am. My writing has always been*. The teacher's speech shows politeness. However, student A's speech shows a violation of the maxim of wisdom. Student A's speech shows indifference to the teacher's response.

B. *Generosity Maxim*

To be said to fulfill the requirements of the generosity maxim, the speaker must respect the interlocutor. A person can be said to respect others if he can reduce his own gain and maximize the benefits of others (Borris & Zecho, 2018, p. 35). Leech (2014, p. 43) also suggests making self-gain as small as possible and making self-loss as large as possible. The maxim of generosity in learning in elementary school in the fishing environment spoken by teachers and students is as follows.

Teacher: There will be a poetry reading practice tomorrow. Who wants to read a poem with the title *Boat*?

Student N: *Nyong*, yes, Ma'am. My voice is good. I also like to ride ships.

Teacher: Great, Noval. Definitely can, yes.

Student N: Okay, Ma'am. Ready.

Student N responds to that teacher with a speech that shows generosity. Student N is a student from a family with a fisherman background. Student N was very enthusiastic about reading poetry because as a family fishermen felt experienced in boating. With a Banyumas Cilacap accent, students answer with *the word Nyong 'I/Me'*. After hearing the speech from student C, the teacher appreciated student N's courage to appear to read poetry. It can be concluded that teachers and students have made a speech that obeys the maxim of generosity when learning.

In violating the generosity maxim, the speaker maximizes the benefits for himself and minimizes the benefits for the other person. The description of the attitude of violating the generosity maxim committed by students towards teachers in learning in grade six of the Ujunggak 02 Kampung Laut Cilacap Elementary School is as follows.

Teacher: Earlier, Noval wanted to read a poem about ships. Who else wants to read a poem with the title *Fisherman*?

Student N: *Bebeh*, that's ma'am. It's the other thing. (Lazy)

Student D: I want to, ma'am. If the title is *Plesir*. Hehe.

Teacher: Dedi, where *are you* going?

When learning to read poetry, the teacher offers students to read poetry. However, student N who comes from a fisherman family background, refused with disrespectful remarks using the Banyumas accent *bebeh 'lazy'*. Student D refused the teacher's request. This illustrates student D's speech as impolite. Student D also responded to the teacher's request, but by using unethical conditions by saying *I want, ma'am. If the title is Plesir* (traveling) *Hehe*. These remarks tend to mock teachers because students want to 'travel'. The utterances of students N and student D towards the teacher show a violation of the generosity maxim. The utterances of students N and student D towards the teacher show a violation of the generosity maxim.

C. *Maxim of Appreciation (Approbation Maxim)*

In the appreciation maxim, a person is said to be polite if his utterances always give credit to others by praising and not criticizing (Leech, 2014, p. 37). In this maxim, participants are expected not to insult each other, belittle each other, or ridicule each other. The maximum compliance of appreciation in learning in Ujunggagak Elementary School 02 Kampung Laut spoken by teachers and students as follows.

Student F: Ma'am, I've finished doing the story problem. Can you rest, Ma'am?

Teacher: Yes. But hurry in when you have a bell.

Student F: Yes, Ma'am. Thank you, Ma'am.

Teacher: Yes, smart children must be disciplined.

In the above speech event, student F informs the teacher that the work of answering the story question has been completed. The teacher gave a response in the form of a speech of appreciation to student F. Student F also gave an award to the teacher by saying thank you. Thus, the speech between the teacher and the student complies with the maxim of appreciation.

In violation of the respect maxim, the participant does not respect others, for example by insulting, ridiculing and demeaning. Speech participants who do not respect other people will be said to be impolite (Eliasoph, 1999, p. 485; Rahardi, 2017, p. 309). The following violates the maxim of appreciation in learning in Ujunggagak Elementary School 02 Kampung Laut at the time of learning.

Teacher: The children have already submitted assignments?

Student G: Yes, ma'am. I have. That's Iqbal yet.

Student H: *Inyong uwis yes. Tempiling sisan. Uwis was accused of even slander.* (I've had yes. I hit you. It has been helped even slander)

Teacher: Yes, don't be noisy and rude with friends

The teacher asks the results of student work in student worksheets. Student G answered the teacher's question and said student H had not collected task. Student H is a student from a fisherman family background who speaks words with a Banyumas accent that is not polite and tends to be rude, namely with the sentence: *Inyong uwis ya. Tempiling sisan. Uwis was even slandered* 'I have. I hit you. It has been helped even slander'. This is done because student G does not value student H. Thus, the utterances of students G and students H are stated as impolite speeches or violating the appreciation maxim.

D. Modesty Maxim

Leech (2014, p. 99) states that in the maxim of humility, one will be less likely to praise oneself and curse oneself. The following is the form of the maxim of humility between teacher and student at Ujunggagak 02 Kampung Laut Cilacap Elementary School.

Student D: Ma'am, I want to ask you not yet the task. (Ma'am, I want to ask you not yet understand the task.)

Teacher: Which one, Din? About making up, huh?

Student D: I still often confuse composing. Even though I often read, you know. Ma'am said to read it often, right?

In the above speech, student I humbly admit that he does not understand the task of composing. Student D also tried to follow the teacher's advice to read to improve his composing skills. However, student D still found it difficult to compose. The speech between the teacher and student can be said to be polite or obey the maxim of modesty.

Violation of the maxim of humility is the opposite of obedience to the maxim of humility. In the modesty maxim, humility is shared by speech participants. The speaker should do this humility by reducing praise to oneself. Speakers are categorized as arrogant or arrogant if in speaking often praise themselves. In Indonesian culture, simplicity and humility are widely used to assess one's politeness (Borris & Zecho, 2018, p. 39; Mandala, 2018, p. 47; Rahardi, 2017, p. 313). The following violates the maxim of student humility during teaching and learning activities in class.

Student K: *Ngeneh, bukune, Di!* Already want to be collected. (Return the book, Di! Already want to be collected.)

Student L: I must score one hundred. Last night it was worked on until the evening, you know.

Student K: *Ah, ngarang rika.* (Ah, just carelessly you.)

Teacher: Yes, I'll grade later. If you study seriously, you must be successful.

This speech violates the maxim of humility because Student K and Student L give the impression of being arrogant towards themselves by ensuring that they are the ones who will get good grades. Student K considers himself the one who will score one hundred. Student L also did not want to budge by saying that student K was just wishful thinking with the words *Ah, ngarang rika* 'Ah, carelessly you'. In other words, a violation of the maxim of modesty or humility occurs when the speaker continues to want to add profit to himself.

E. Agreement Maxim

Leech (2014, p. 111) states that speakers must always reduce disagreement with the addressee and increase agreement with the addressee to fulfill the maxim of agreement. This maxim emphasizes the speaker to realize conformity or mutual agreement in speech activities. The fulfillment of the maxim of agreement between teachers and students in learning activities at the Ujunggagak 02 Kampung Laut Cilacap Elementary School is as follows.

Teacher: There will be a theme three test tomorrow morning. Learn it!

Student M: *Nggih*, Ma'am. (Yes, Ma'am.)

Student N: But, don't make it difficult, Ma'am? (But, it's hard, Ma'am.)

Student M: I will accompany you to pick up the net in Sleko tonight.

Teacher: Yes, but study.

In the speech above, the teacher gave information to the students that tomorrow a theme three test will be held. Student N agrees to the teacher's proposal but asks the teacher to make an easy test question. Student M, who comes from a fishing family, also reasoned to help his parents pick up nets at the fish auction. It can be stated that the speeches of the teacher and students are polite speeches and comply with the maxims of agreement.

Leech (2014) states that speakers must reduce the discrepancy between themselves and others and increase the compatibility between themselves and others to fulfill the maxim of agreement. This violation is contrary to the essence of the maxim of consensus, that is, speakers and interlocutors minimize agreement between them and maximize disagreement between them. Violations of the agreement maxims of students at Ujunggak 02 Kampung Laut Elementary School are as follows.

Teacher: Siti, it's your turn to come forward to tell us about your experience of crab harvesting!

Student S: Dedi came forward first, ma'am. Will be the most pintar story.

Teacher: Yes, Dedi came forward yesterday. Now your order.

Student D: *Malas lah*, ma'am. Others used to be, (I'm lazy, Ma'am)

In the above speech, the teacher asked student S to come to the front of the class to tell her experience of harvesting crabs. However, student D refused the teacher's request. Student N does not agree with the rules. The speech between the teacher, student S and student D shows a violation of the maxim of agreement.

F. Sympathy Maxim

Leech (2014, p. 121) states that the maxim of sympathy can be expressed by speakers by reducing antipathy between oneself and others to a minimum. Speakers can also increase sympathy as much as possible. If the interlocutor has good luck or happiness, the speaker must congratulate him. If the interlocutor encounters a problem or disaster, the speaker must express condolences or sadness as a sign of sympathy. The following is a form of fulfilling the maxim of sympathy in learning at the Ujunggak 02 Kampung Laut Cilacap elementary school.

Teacher: Wahyu, read paragraph number one. Find the main sentence where!

Student W: Yes, sir. But if it's wrong, how about it?

Student P: *Rika ora sah wedi salah, Yu*. You won't be punished, Teacher. He. (You don't be afraid of being wrong, Yu. No, will be punished.)

Teacher: Yes, try first.

In the event of his speech, the teacher asks student W to read the first paragraph and show the main sentence. However, student W was afraid of answering incorrectly. Student P with a Banyumas accent sympathizes to motivate Student P: *Rika ora sah wedi salah, Yu*. 'You don't be afraid of being wrong. You won't be punished, Master. Thus it can be stated that the speech between the teacher and students is speech and speech that obeys the maxim of sympathy.

Sympathy maxim requires all speech participants to be able to maximize sympathy and minimize antipathy towards the other person. If the interlocutor gets luck or happiness, the speaker must congratulate him. In violation of the sympathy maxim, the speaker does not maximize sympathy and does not minimize antisympathy towards the interlocutor.

In the sympathy maxim, speech participants are expected to maximize sympathy between speakers and speech opponents. The maxim of sympathy increases sympathy as much as possible and reduces antipathy between speakers and speakers. Antipathy towards one of the speech participants will be considered an act of discourtesy in the event of speech. Indonesian society highly values sympathy for others in communication activities (Leech, 2014, p. 127). The violation can be seen in the following statement.

Teacher: Who can continue the main sentence of Cilacap being hit by a tornado?

Student Q: Dian, Ma'am.

Teacher: Come on, Dian can you? Later, let Tata help.

Student R: *Lah joraken bae*, Ma'am. Let him think about it himself. (Lah, let it go, Ma'am. Let him think for himself.)

Student R's speech violates the principle of politeness maxim sympathy because he has no sympathy and does not care about his friend. Student R speaks Banyumas accent, *joraken bae*. 'Let it go'. Such remarks do not show sympathy and violate the maxim of sympathy.

IV. CONCLUSION

People with a background of fishermen (coastal) life have their own language patterns and language communication styles. This affects the form of language politeness. The surrounding environment will certainly influence the language of children who grow up in the environment. The phenomenon of language politeness can occur in the formal education environment of elementary schools. The language politeness of elementary school students with a fishing family background can be influenced by the habit of communicating in the family and social environment. The findings of this

study indicate that in the learning process in the classroom at Kampung Laut 02 Cilacap elementary school there are politeness in language and violations of the principle of politeness in language. When learning in class, students still show language politeness with the teacher. However, there are still students who show impoliteness in communicating with the teacher. This is caused by the influence of family background and the fishermen's environment which is closely related to the daily life of students. The language of the fishing community tends to be straightforward, hard-intoned, and straightforward because natural and social conditions influence it.

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