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Exploring the Use of Politeness Strategies in the Algerian EFL Classrooms

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Declaration of originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material that has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or another institution.

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Dedication

For the first time, words fail me. I feel so much, yet I do not know how to express it. Not even letters can shape the right words to convey the depth of love and appreciation I feel for my parents.

To my mother, Fatiha, your unconditional love, support, prayers, and sacrifices have opened countless doors for me. You are the light of my life, a true gift from God. No words can ever capture what I truly feel or wish to say. You deserve the world and more. Without you, I would not be where I am today. I am so lucky to have you and Dad as my parents.

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I am endlessly thankful for the happiness and support you both have given me since birth.

To my dear siblings: Aisha, Ibitissem, Farouk, and Krime.

To my nieces and nephews: Maïssa, Farah, Zineb, Hamouda, Sofien, Ilyes, and Mohamed, you brought so much joy to my heart.

And to all my extended family, thank you for your encouragement and du'aas.

To all of you, I dedicate this work.

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Abstract

Politeness is a significant procedure in human interaction; more specifically, in teaching and learning contexts. It is often associated with respect and goes beyond basic courtesy, especially in the EFL context, as it paves the way for a fertile environment. This study investigates the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms. Specifically, this thesis focuses on understanding how politeness contributes to fostering supportive teacher-student relationships, classroom engagement, and academic achievement. This study employs a mixed-method approach to collect data, involving a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) with Master One Didactics EFL students, interviews with teachers of different experience levels, and classroom observations of both EFL teachers and learners at the University of Dr. MoulayTaher, Saida. The study seeks to explore who employs more politeness strategies, teachers or students, the nature of these strategies, how politeness enhances classroom engagement, and the effect of the degree of formality in these interactions based on Leech's maxims framework. The results show that politeness strategies have an important role on creating a supportive educational atmosphere. The findings show that both teachers and students tend to employ politeness strategies such as tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, and agreement, except sympathy. However, there is a noticeable difference in the awareness and complexity in their usage. Although teachers use a varied strategies including euphemisms, students tend to use simpler strategies, sometimes even blunt language. These findings indicates that the use of politeness is shaped by many factors, making it a complex phenomenon. The results also found that the most used maxim was the Tact maxim. While students use a mix of formal and informal strategies depending on the situation, teachers use a blend of formal politeness strategies, with moderately informal language. This helped them create a more approachable and motivating learning environment. Ultimately, this study emphasizes the significance of courteous language in building positive rapport, creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere, and enhancing the overall teaching and learning experience in Algerian EFL settings.

Keywords: academic achievement, classroom engagement. EFL, Leech maxims, politeness strategies, teacher-student relationship.

Résumé

La politesse est une étape primordiale dans l'enseignement et l'apprentissage, ainsi que dans les interactions humaines en général. Elle est souvent associée au respect. La politesse va au-delà de la simple courtoisie, surtout dans le contexte des EFL, car elle contribue à créer un environnement fertile. Cette étude étudie l'utilisation des stratégies de politesse dans les classes d'anglais algérien comme langue étrangère (EFL), en se concentrant sur la façon dont elles contribuent à favoriser les relations de soutien entre enseignants et élèves, l'engagement en classe et le rendement scolaire. Bien que de nombreuses études aient été menées sur l'utilisation des stratégies de politesse dans les classes, il subsiste une divergence quant à leur utilisation et leur impact dans le contexte algérien des EFL. Cette étude utilise une approche de méthode mixte pour collecter des données, impliquant une tâche de complétion du discours (DCT) avec des étudiants de Master One et des observations en classe de professeurs et d'apprenants EFL à l'Université du Dr. Moulay Taher, Saida. L'étude cherche à savoir qui utilise plus de stratégies de politesse chez les enseignants ou les élèves, la nature de ces stratégies, comment la politesse améliore l'engagement en classe et le rôle de la formalité dans ces interactions selon les maximes de Leech. Les résultats montrent que les enseignants et les élèves ont tendance à utiliser des stratégies de politesse telles que le tact, la générosité, l'approbation, la modestie et l'accord, sauf la sympathie. Cependant, il y a un écart notable dans la conscience et la complexité de leur emploi. Bien que les enseignants utilisent des stratégies variées, y compris des euphémismes, les élèves ont tendance à utiliser des stratégies plus simples, parfois même un langage direct. Ces résultats indiquent que l'utilisation de la politesse est façonnée par de nombreux facteurs, ce qui en fait un phénomène complexe. Les résultats ont également révélé que la maxime la plus utilisée était la maxime Tact. Alors que les élèves utilisent un mélange de stratégies formelles et informelles en fonction de la situation, les enseignants utilisent un mélange de stratégies de politesse formelle, avec un langage modérément informel. Cela les a aidés à créer un environnement d'apprentissage plus accessible et motivant. Finalement, cette étude met l'accent sur l'importance du langage courtois pour établir une relation positive, créant une atmosphère de classe confortable, et améliorer l'expérience globale d'enseignement et d'apprentissage dans les milieux EFL algériens.

Mots-clés : Réussite scolaire, Engagement en classe. EFL, maximes de Leech, stratégies de politesse, relation enseignant-élève.

ملخص

يعد التأديب خطوة أساسية في كل من التدريس والتعلم، وكذلك في التفاعلات البشرية بشكل عام. وغالبا ما يرتبط بالاحترام. يتجاوز الأدب المجاملة الأساسية، خاصة في سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، لأنه يساعد على تمهيد الطريق لبيئة خصبة. تبحث هذه الدراسة في استخدام استراتيجيات الأدب في الفصول الدراسية للغة الإنجليزية الجزائرية كلغة أجنبية (EFL)، مع التركيز على فهم كيفية مساهمتها في تعزيز العلاقات الداعمة بين المعلم والطالب، والمشاركة في الفصول الدراسية، والتحصيل الأكاديمي. على الرغم من إجراء العديد من الدراسات البحثية حول استخدام استراتيجيات المجاملة في الفصول الدراسية، إلا أنه لا يزال هناك تناقض فيما يتعلق باستخدامها وتأثيرها في سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجزائر. تستخدم هذه الدراسة نهجاً مختلطاً لجمع البيانات، يتضمن مهمة إتمام الخطاب (DCT) مع طلاب ماستر واحد تخصص تعليمية اللغة الإنجليزية، ومقابلات مع معلمين من مستويات خبرة مختلفة، وتدوين ملاحظات في الأقسام الدراسية لكل من معلمي ومتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة الدكتور مولاي طاهر، سعيدة. تسعى الدراسة إلى استكشاف من يستخدم المزيد من استراتيجيات التأديب للمعلمين أو الطلاب، وطبيعة هذه الاستراتيجيات، وكيف يعزز التأديب تلك المشاركة في الفصل الدراسي، والدور الذي تلعبه الشكليات في هذه التفاعلات بناءً على مبادئ ليتش. وأظهرت النتائج أن كلا من المعلمين والطلاب يميلون إلى استخدام استراتيجيات الأدب مثل اللباقة والكرم والاستحسان والتواضع والاتفاق، باستثناء التعاطف. ومع ذلك، هناك اختلاف ملحوظ في الوعي والتعقيد في توظيفهم. على الرغم من أن المعلمين يستخدمون استراتيجيات متنوعة بما في ذلك العبارات الملطفة، إلا أن الطلاب يميلون إلى استخدام استراتيجيات أبسط، وأحياناً لغة صريحة. وتشير هذه النتائج إلى أن استخدام الأدب يتشكل من خلال العديد من العوامل، مما يجعله ظاهرة معقدة وجدت النتائج أيضاً أن المبدأ الأكثر استخداماً هو مبدأ اللباقة. بينما يستخدم الطلاب مزيجاً من الاستراتيجيات الرسمية وغير الرسمية اعتماداً على الموقف، يستخدم المعلمون مزيجاً من استراتيجيات الأدب الرسمية، مع لغة غير رسمية إلى حد ما. وقد ساعدتهم ذلك على خلق بيئة تعليمية أكثر سهولة وتحفيزاً. وفي النهاية، تؤكد هذه الدراسة على أهمية اللغة المهذبة في بناء علاقة إيجابية، وخلق جو مريح في الفصل الدراسي، وتعزيز تجربة التدريس والتعلم الشاملة في بيئات اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الجزائرية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التحصيل الأكاديمي، المشاركة في الفصل الدراسي. اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مبادئ ليتش، استراتيجيات الأدب، العلاقة بين المعلم والطالب.

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List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

DCT: Discourse Completion Task.

FTA(s): Face Threatening Act(s).

M1: Master One (first year of Master's Degree).

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Politeness is not just about saying ‘thank you’, ‘sorry’, and ‘please’. It is a powerful social tool that people use to maintain harmony, shape relationships, and reflect cultural values. Whether used to show respect, soften requests, or navigate social hierarchies, politeness proves how language greatly influences and mirrors human interaction.

Language, as the most powerful means of communication, is inseparable from politeness. These two aspects go hand in hand. The primary function of language is to communicate, and humans do so for multiple reasons, like expressing feelings, sharing emotions, asking questions, interacting, and building relationships. None of this can be achieved through rudeness. Hence, politeness becomes a crucial aspect of communication due to its significant role in softening the impact of face-threatening acts.

Politeness is a part of our daily social interactions, encountered every day both consciously and subconsciously. When asked to define politeness, a layperson would likely describe it as being kind and showing respect, often associating it with simple words like please and thank you. From this perspective, politeness is perceived as a way to make difficult conversations smoother. However, when it comes to communication and how it works, politeness becomes a much deeper concept that extends beyond pleasantries. It is rooted in the field of linguistics, particularly in pragmatics, and plays a significant role in the teaching and learning process. Politeness signifies more than just a sociolinguistic concern; it also plays a key role in the educational setting, particularly in fostering an effective classroom climate (Mahmud, 2019). As further discussed, “Politeness is believed to enhance learning by providing a lively and friendly atmosphere in the classroom” (Jiang, 2010, as cited in Mahmud, 2019, p. 598).

In the field of pragmatics, which studies language in real-life situations, politeness has attracted the interest of many linguists and psycholinguists, such as Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983). The term politeness cannot be fully discussed without referring back to the theory introduced by Brown and Levinson (1987), which was originally developed based on Grice’s Cooperative Principle (1975) and Austin’s Speech Act Theory (1962), as discussed in Drissi et al. (2023). According to Brown and Levinson (1987, as cited in Drissi et al., 2023), politeness is described as a communicative strategy that helps in minimizing conflicts in conversations. However, their theory was first introduced by Goffman (1967),

who defined face as “the positive social value a person effectively claims for [him/herself]” (Goffman, 1967, as cited in Ghembaza, 2016, p. 91). A further definition was proposed by George Yule (1996): “Face is the public self-image of a person. It refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize” (Yule, 1996, as cited in Ghembaza, 2016, p. 91). Another definition of The Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (Richards & Platt, 1986, p. 214): face is described as social contacts between people that involve what the sociologist of language, Goffman, called face-work, that is, efforts by the participants to communicate a positive face and to prevent loss of face.

However, it is worth noting that the main premise of their theory is that people have a universal desire to be treated with politeness since they are fragile creatures who want both to be liked and to be left alone. Whenever they make requests or discuss an issue, they commit face-threatening acts (FTAs). The Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (Richards & Platt, 1986, p. 214) defined face-threatening acts as a speech act that is potentially threatening to the face of a speaker or hearer or threatening to the speaker or hearer’s freedom of action. For example, apologies are potentially threatening to the good image of the speaker, while complaints are threatening to the good image of the hearer; requests potentially threaten the freedom of action of the hearer, while promises threaten the freedom of action of the speaker. In Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness, potential threat to face is also influenced by social distance and power relationships between speaker and hearer. Thus, Brown and Levinson divide face into two parts: Negative face and Positive face. Positive face: aims to strengthen social bonds and show affection or support, through complements or expressions of gratitude. While, negative face: seeks to avoid imposing or creating pressure, for example, making indirect requests or using softeners such as “could you” or “would it be possible”.

Brown and Levinson (1987) defined positive face as the person’s desire to be, esteemed, admired and respected, while negative face refers to the person’s wish to be free from people imposing on their personal space (Brown & Levinson, 1987, as cited in Kitamura, 2000, p. 61).

This study explores the use of politeness strategies, as proposed by Geoffrey Leech (1983), in Algerian EFL classrooms within the Master's One Didactics field of study, where English is taught as a foreign language. People use polite language in order to avoid face-

threatening acts (FTAs) towards others and to maintain friendly social interactions. According to Leech, politeness principles involve minimizing expressions of impoliteness and maximizing expressions of politeness (Leech, 1983, as cited in Drissi et al., 2023). Leech introduced six maxims as a means to guide the use of language in different situations, which are: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. **Tact maxim:** minimize cost to others, maximize benefit to others. E.g., Do you need any help tidying up the living room? I am happy to lend a hand. **Generosity maxim:** minimize benefit to self, maximize cost to self. E.g., I can reexplain the lesson for you to help you better understand the lecture. **Approbation maxim:** minimize dispraise of others, maximize praise of others. E.g., you could do better. Good job!. **Modesty maxim:** minimize praise of self, maximize dispraise of self. E.g., thank you for the compliment, it was a team effort. **Agreement maxim:** minimizes disagreement; maximizes agreement between self and others. E.g., that's an interesting idea; I think we should give it a try. **Sympathy maxim:** minimize antipathy; maximize sympathy between self and others. E.g., I am sorry to hear that. If you want to talk about it, I am here for you (Athifah&Nurlaila, n.d.).

Given that Leech frames politeness within the pragmatics scope, this makes it strongly affected by the level of formality, as the level of formality affects the use of politeness strategies. The Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (Richards & Platt, 1986, p. 214) refers to the formal speech act as: a careful, impersonal, and often public mode of speaking used to express a polite distance between participants, and which may influence pronunciation, choice of words, and sentence structure. For example, compare: *Ladies and gentlemen*, it gives me great pleasure to be here tonight (said on a formal public occasion) vs. Nice to be here (said on an informal occasion between friends).

Even though many studies have been conducted to investigate the impact of the level of formality on the use of politeness strategies, no study so far has examined this within the Algerian EFL context. Thus, the present study aims to fill this gap by investigating the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms adopting Geoffrey Leech's (1983) maxims. It also aims to investigate the politeness strategies used in Algerian EFL classrooms and how they contribute to fostering supportive teacher-student relationships, leading to better engagement and academic achievements. To address this gap, we aim to address the following questions:

- What types of politeness strategies are used in Algerian EFL classrooms, and who employs them more frequently, teachers or students?
- How can politeness enhance classroom interaction (or engagement) in EFL classrooms?
- To what extent does the degree of formality affect politeness in the EFL context?

Building on the discussion above, it is hypothesized that politeness strategies play a significant role in enhancing teacher-student relationships and promoting better classroom engagement and learning outcomes in Algerian EFL classrooms. Algerian teachers are more likely to use formal politeness strategies, while students may use a combination of formal and informal strategies depending on their relationship with the teacher and the classroom context. Also, there is a strong belief that the level of formality affects the use of politeness strategies. The reliability of the above data will be either accepted or rejected based on the data analysis and interpretation.

Chapter One:

Literature Review

1 ChapterOne:LiteratureReview

1.1 OVERVIEW

This chapter discusses relevant literature on politeness strategies used in EFL classrooms. Its main aim is to establish a theoretical foundation for the study by delving into the main concepts, significant theories, and previous studies on politeness and its role in EFL classrooms, concentrating mainly on the Algerian context.

This chapter begins with a general discussion on politeness. Covering its definitions and theoretical frameworks, and explicitly focusing on Leech's politeness maxims. Additionally, it emphasizes its impact and role in classroom settings. And teacher-student relationships, as well as learners' academic achievement.

Furthermore, this chapter reviews previous studies on different types of politeness strategies that both teachers and students apply.

Finally, this chapter sheds light on the gap in the literature that this study aims to investigate.

1.1 Introduction to politeness

Before diving into Politeness, its theories, and strategies, it is crucial to understand communication, which is a primary tool for delivering information. Communication is not just about interacting and transmitting meaning and ideas; it is also about choosing the right and appropriate words to avoid embarrassment and hurting people's feelings. However, some situations require individuals to be firm and direct, making conversation uncomfortable and unpleasant. To avoid these issues, people create a so-called euphemism.

- **Euphemism**

It is a part of Politeness and is a significant rhetorical means of interaction. As mentioned by Pan (n.d.), the word euphemism is originally sourced from the Greek word meaning "to speak favourably" or "good speech." As stated in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, it indicates the use of pleasant terms to avoid unpleasant expressions. According to the Oxford Fourth Edition Dictionary, euphemism is the use of an indirect word or phrase to express something unpleasant. For instance, instead of saying, "She died," people might say, "She passed away, or instead of murder, they say killing, and so forth.

- **Rhetoric**

Rhetoric within this framework is defined as the art and etiquette of persuasive speaking, encompassing strategies adopted to make communication more impactful. As referenced in the fourth edition of the Oxford Dictionary, rhetoric is a speech or writing intended to influence people, but it is insincere. It has likewise been explained as the art of using words impressively in speech and writing. Rhetoricians often use this to sound educated and sophisticated, and one of the key components of rhetoric is Politeness. For instance, each teacher uses a type of rhetoric related to their specific context, which is known as pedagogical communication. This approach helps teachers deliver information while ensuring that Politeness is maintained. It is known that polite conversations open doors to fruitful communication, creating and fostering a healthy learning atmosphere, leading to better learning achievements. Politeness is influenced by several factors, such as formality, closeness, rapport, and social distance between the speaker and the perceiver. Since human beings have an innate desire to be addressed with courtesy, which makes Politeness a crucial item in all contexts of life. According to the Oxford Dictionary, being polite means having or showing good manners. People are polite when they show respect to others and when they use good manners while dealing with others. That is why polite people pay attention to what they say before they say anything to anyone. They are meticulous in selecting the expressions they use when they request something from others. Simply put, polite people are not rude. Thus, Politeness is paramount when it comes to the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. It fosters successful teaching and learning, motivates learners, and builds trust and respect in the EFL Classrooms. Politeness also helps maintain good EFL classroom conduct, turning disruptive behaviour into a homogeneous, effective, and safe learning atmosphere where both teachers and students show Politeness to each other. Educators cannot imagine a classroom discourse without Politeness or establish a positive rapport without a certain degree of Politeness. When respect and etiquette are not present, the classroom atmosphere will be emptied of any form of engagement and enthusiasm. This absence leaves room for tension, ultimately leading to scepticism and conflicts. Furthermore, Politeness can be defined as an act and a set of verbal and non-verbal behaviours aimed at respecting others, minimising threats to their image, and maintaining social harmony. In the context of classroom interactions, this includes using polite expressions, attentiveness, and phrases such as please and thank you, which demonstrate respect and consideration. Politeness also represents a broad concept, with many similar items like discipline, mutual respect, euphemism, etiquette rules, and obedience to the classroom code. Politeness is a primordial

condition in the teaching and learning atmosphere. Several studies have examined how students use politeness strategies in their interactions with teachers, and the appropriate adaptation of politeness strategies plays a significant role in creating a positive learning environment. Students who master these strategies are often perceived as more respectful and engaged, which helps promote a collaborative educational atmosphere. In this respect, fostering positive affective predispositions among students depends tremendously on the appropriate use of politeness techniques. Additionally, polite expressions vary according to the context, particularly within classroom instructions.

It is impossible to address the concept of politeness without mentioning the politeness theory presented by Brown and Levinson (1987), which revolves around the idea of face, initially developed by Goffman (1967).

- **Face**

Face refers to a person's public image, which shapes their social and linguistic behaviours and represents the social value individuals are expected to maintain and be recognised for in social interactions. Goffman (1967), as cited in Ghambeza (2016), defines face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for [him/herself]" (p.60). At the same time, Yule (1996, as cited in Ghambaza, 2016) describes it as the person's public self-image. In simpler terms, face is how people want to be seen and appear to others. It is also worth mentioning that Brown and Levinson (1978) elucidate two types of faces: positive face and negative face. Senowaristo (n.d.) classified Politeness into two main types: positive politeness strategies, which focus on building close connection, familiarity, and intimacy. Together with negative politeness strategies, they reflect independence, distance, and formality between the utter and the interlocutor. In other words, positive Politeness is when the person wants to be esteemed, admired, and respected. Negative Politeness is when people want the freedom to make their own choices. There are many examples of polite teacher discourse in the classroom. For instance, expressions like praising the student's achievement (thank you! Well said! Or kindly inviting students to share their ideas with the class (Don't you think this piece of knowledge is significant?) are all examples of positive Politeness. The latter enhances student engagement, leading to a more effective classroom interaction. On the other hand, teachers may request students to do something indirectly to ensure that their discourse sounds less authoritarian (e.g., it would be great if you could rearrange your outline). This strategy is called negative Politeness. It is noteworthy that the effective use of rhetorical tools, thoughtful dialogues, and conversations may optimise students' learning outcomes! That is why Politeness is a priority in classroom discourse.

1.1 Leech's politeness theory

Leech's theory focuses on maintaining good social relationships between individuals during and through conversational practices. It is more about socio-pragmatics. For Leech, what is most important to be respectful of others is the use of negative politeness (indirect requesting). He introduced his politeness principle, which covers six different strategies called *maxims*.

1.2 Politeness Principles

- **Tact Maxim:** Minimize cost to others; maximize benefit to others. exp: Would it be possible for you to hand me the homework tomorrow? It would help enrich the class debate.
- **Generosity Maxim:** Minimize self-benefit, maximize self-cost, and show willingness to sacrifice personal benefit for the sake of another. Experiment: I can set up a revision session for you to help you better grasp the content of the last lecture.
- **Approbation Maxim:** Minimize the disposal of others and maximise the praise of others. Use positive talk instead of providing negative feedback about a student's performance. For example, "You have shown great presentation skills!" Good job!
- **Modesty Maxim:** Minimize praise of self; maximize dispraise of self. Showing modesty, especially when receiving compliments from others (students, for example). Example: I just did my job! You have helped me a lot in my career!
- **Agreement Maxim:** Minimize disagreement; maximize agreement between self and others. Do not show disagreement in a rude way. So never say to someone, "No, you are wrong! I totally disagree with you!" Instead, one may say, "I understand your viewpoint, but I see things differently!"
- **Sympathy Maxim:** This strategy minimises antipathy and maximises sympathy between self and others. It mainly focuses on SHOWING and expressing sympathy to others. Experiment: I know and understand what you have been through! You can count on me; I am here to help!

When applying Leech's theory in EFL classes, the main objective is to ensure smoother interaction between the teacher and students. It helps establish a positive rapport between students and their teachers.

Since the first section introduced the key concepts and terminologies, many studies have worked similarly to ours. The next section will provide a summary of the key findings from these works.

1.3 Politeness Strategies in Teacher-Student Interaction

Senowaristo (n.d.) researched the politeness strategies teachers and students use in an EFL classroom context at the senior high school level. Their work was based on Brown and Levenson's politeness strategies framework; they collected data through a video-recorded classroom interaction. This helped them explore how teachers and students employ different politeness strategies, specifically positive, negative, and bold-on-record. The findings indicated that various societal aspects, such as age difference, institutional setting, power, and the limitation of the student's linguistic ability, affect the selection of politeness strategies. Moreover, students frequently use some interpersonal function markers and linguistic expressions, like encouraging, thanking, apologizing, and leave-taking, to manage classroom communication efficiently.

The research coordinates with our research in its focus on EFL classroom communication. However, while it mainly investigates politeness strategies, our study includes an analysis of their impact on student and teacher relationships and learning outcomes. By doing so, our research promotes a deeper understanding of the role of politeness strategies in fostering supportive teacher-student relationships, leading to better engagement and academic achievements.

1.4 The Implications of Politeness Strategies among Teachers and Students in the Classroom

Widiadnya et al. (2018) highlighted that politeness was created to rectify classroom problems between teachers and students. Teaching students how to behave respectfully and reduce conversational confrontation is also significant. This study sheds light on exploring the impact of politeness on the teaching and learning process. The research case study included tenth-grade teachers and SMK Nusa Dua Bali students. The data were collected via observations and interviews through a real-life classroom interaction. The findings revealed that teachers and students implement various politeness strategies that promote effective teaching and learning processes, such as fostering respectful communication between teachers and students and enhancing cooperative interactions. Furthermore, politeness strategies

minimized imposition and fostered indirectness in educational settings. The latter implications positively affect student outcomes.

Widiadnya et al. (2018) emphasize the role of employing politeness strategies among teachers and students in classrooms and its impact on developing effective teaching and learning processes. The research sheds light on how politeness strategies diminish imposition and foster implicit interaction in the school. However, this study explores the politeness strategies used in Algerian EFL classrooms, a linguistically and academically diverse setting from Widiadnya et al.'s study. While their work studies secondary school students, this research focuses on Master One EFL Algerian students, where classroom dynamics and interaction styles may differ significantly. A further significant distinction is in the methodological approach. Widiadnya et al. rely on Observation and Questionnaires that provide rich insights. Nevertheless, it may lack a well-structured framework. This study. However, it employs Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs), interviews, and classroom observations to ensure validity and reliability. Also, to enhance a comprehensive analysis of how these strategies affect teachers' students' discourse.

1.5 The Use of Politeness Strategy in EFL Classroom

Politeness is a crucial aspect of communication, especially in the educational context, where it contributes to establishing respect, maintaining social unity, and fostering a healthy learning environment. Several studies have examined the importance of politeness strategies in affecting teachers students' interactions and boosting classroom engagement. A case in point by

Harmonia (2024) investigates politeness strategies in EFL classrooms, particularly in Yogyakarta's junior high school English courses. The study adopts a descriptive-qualitative approach, analyzing classroom interactions through direct classroom observation, listening, note-taking, and speech transcription. The findings showed that politeness strategies create a more interactive and respectful learning environment, supporting students' involvement and facilitating teachers' classroom management. However, the study also highlighted the challenges of implementing politeness strategies.

While Harmia's (2024) study provides significant insights into politeness strategies in Indonesian EFL classrooms, it differs from the present research in various key aspects. Primary, Harmia focused only on using a general qualitative approach; on the other hand, this study focuses on Leech's (1983) politeness framework to analyze politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms. Leech's framework classifies politeness based on six maxims: tact,

generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy, ensuring a more systematic theoretical basis for analyzing politeness in real-life interactions. Furthermore, Harmia's (2024) work focused primarily on classroom observation, while the present study integrates several methods, including interviews with teachers, Discourse Completion Task (DCT), and observation. To gain a holistic view and deeper insight into how these strategies affect teachers' relationships, leading to better engagement and learning outcomes.

This study highlights the significance of politeness in EFL classrooms by examining how pedagogical discourse interacts with the national and cultural aspects of the English and Uzbek languages. It explores the communication techniques and everyday speech acts associated with politeness. Emphasizing both similarities and differences between the two languages. Discourse theory continues to grow as an active area in communicative linguistics, cognitive discourse studies, discursive psychology, discursive psychology, linguistics text, and other scientific disciplines, including the EFL environment. The new era of development and globalization imposes modern demands on specialists across different scientific disciplines. This research underscores the importance of implementing the cognitive-pragmatic and linguacultural approach in EFL education.

1.6 The Importance of Expressing Politeness in EFL Classrooms

Rakhimova (2024) stresses the importance of politeness in EFL classrooms, highlighting the interrelation between pedagogical discourse and cultural differences in English and Uzbek. The research examines communication strategies and speech acts that reflect politeness in these different linguistic contexts while emphasizing the similarities and differences between the two languages. Although this study contributes to our understanding of politeness in EFL education, particularly within the framework of discourse theory, our research presents a different emphasis. It focuses on how politeness strategies function within Algerian EFL classrooms, explicitly focusing on the interaction between teachers and students.

Furthermore, while Rakhimova's research illuminates the cognitive-pragmatic and linguacultural approaches to politeness, our study aligns with Leech's politeness maxims. It aims to explore the relationship between politeness strategies and student engagement in Algerian classrooms.

1.7 Teachers' Politeness Strategies in Delivering Feedback during Classroom Presentations

Febriansyah and Anam (2021) investigated politeness strategies in teachers' feedback in an Indonesian EFL setting. Their study explored how two English teachers used politeness strategies when providing corrective feedback throughout students' presentations and analyzed students' viewpoints of these strategies. The research focused on Brown and Levinson's (1978, as cited in Febriansyah&Anam, 2021) politeness theory. The results showed that teachers used positive politeness strategies while preventing negative politeness. Moreover, student interviews revealed a fondness for positive politeness strategies. Students preferred praise rather than negative criticism.

This study's findings align with the present research, which also examines the use of politeness strategies in EFL settings. However, a main difference is found in the theoretical framework. Unlike Febriansyah and Anam's (ibid) research, which focused on Brown and Levinson's (1978) theory, which mainly tackles FTAs' face-threatening acts, this study is based on Leech's politeness maxims, which perceive politeness as a means to foster social harmony.

Additionally, Febriansyah and Anam (ibid) identified that students were more receptive to positive politeness strategies in feedback, favouring positive reinforcement over direct criticism. This observation matches this research paper, which also considers how politeness affects student motivation and involvement. However, this study focuses mainly on examining politeness in corrective feedback. The present study expands to encompass broader teacher-student interactions. Analyzing how these maxims improve communication within the classroom fosters better outcomes. Another important distinction is the educational context. The authors conducted their research in Indonesia, whereas the current study focuses on Algerian EFL classrooms. Furthermore, exploring those nuances gives a deeper understanding of how politeness strategies are applied in different EFL contexts.

1.8 The Application of Moderate Politeness to School Practices

Politeness is one of the most essential characteristics of Indonesian society. In the modern age of global communication and advancement, maintaining moderate politeness, particularly in expressing and exchanging ideas and respecting diverse perspectives, is essential. However, progressive politeness in Urban Muhammadiyah Primary School has become an increasing issue that requires deliberate focus. Riyanto et.al (2023) aimed to explore violations of politeness in interactions among students, teachers, and school principals in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with classroom teachers, principals, and learners, while observations were recorded through field notes and reflections. Furthermore, audio-visual documentation, such as photographs, videos, and recordings, captures interactions during the learning process. Data collection followed Creswell's framework. Validity was assessed through data triangulation, member checking, extended data collection periods, repeated observations at the study site, and peer examination.

The findings revealed:

a) Violations of politeness, such as bullying, body shaming, and verbal abuse, contradicted the principles of respect and sympathy.

b) Urban Muhammadiyah Primary School implemented several strategies to foster language politeness, including Duha prayers, morning recitations guided by teachers and the principal, and teacher role modelling by arriving early (6:15 AM) and collectively reciting Asma Allah AlHusna. These initiatives positively influenced students' politeness.

This study highlighted the support provided to students to address impolite behaviour through religious practices, including Duha prayers, morning recitations, and memorization of Al-Qur'an and AsmaulHusna under the guidance of teachers. Additionally, the school manages a well-equipped School Health Unit (SHU) to promote a clean, healthy, disciplined, and polite lifestyle. Alongside teacher guidance, effective and dedicated efforts reinforce these values.

The study indicated that learning the Quran and Asma Allah AlHusna encourages learners to express their opinions politely. Similarly, their engagement in forming joint discipline agreements reflects politeness in deliberation, fostering a respectful exchange of perspectives.

In reviewing the study on politeness violations in the interactions among students, teachers, and school principals at Urban Muhammadiyah Primary School, the focus centres on how educational environments can shape students' behaviour and attitudes, particularly concerning politeness. Compared to our study, which focuses on implementing politeness strategies in EFL classrooms, there are notable similarities and differences. Both studies emphasize the significance of politeness in facilitating effective communication and interaction, though the context differs. The Indonesian research focuses on how spiritual practices and school activities, such as Duha prayers and recitations, are pivotal in promoting politeness, demonstrating a culturally and spiritually rooted approach. In contrast, our study lies within the context of EFL classrooms, where politeness strategies are shaped by cultural

norms, teacher-student dynamics, and the learning environment, but without integrating religious practices.

A key distinction between the studies stems from the methods and types of politeness violations observed. The Indonesian study pinpoints behavioural violations, such as bullying and body shaming, that directly contradict politeness norms. While our research examines how politeness influences classroom interactions, it primarily focuses on teachers' and students' strategies and their effects on communication rather than violations of politeness norms. Despite these differences, both studies stress the importance of teacher modelling and a proactive approach to cultivating polite behaviour. In the Indonesian study, teachers' actions, like arriving early and guiding prayers, indicate the impact of teachers' behaviour on students. Our research shows that politeness strategies during lessons directly affect students' engagement and motivation.

Overall, both studies highlight the importance of a well-structured and supportive environment in promoting respectful interactions, although they do so from different cultural and educational perspectives. The findings from the Indonesian study deepen the understanding of how cultural and religious contexts influence the teaching and learning of politeness, offering a critical perspective that could be used to incorporate cultural sensitivity into EFL classrooms.

1.8.1 Politeness Strategies in EFL Classrooms

Politeness, at its core, refers to the study of how individuals use language in communication. Language education goes beyond relying only on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to construct the foundation for teaching "politeness phenomena" (Khusnia, 2017). However, it emphasizes the importance of raising cultural awareness. Learning politeness in a foreign language also promotes "reframing," where existing frameworks of linguistic behaviour in specific contexts are reexamined.

This study explores the politeness strategies employed by students and teachers in EFL classrooms and their impact on fostering positive values. The research adopted a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Thirty students participated, and data were gathered through recordings and observations (ibid).

The findings reveal that 40% of the utterances applied positive politeness strategies, 30% used negative politeness strategies, and 30% employed bald-on-record strategies. The activities that indicated positive utterances included academic instruction, motivation,

classroom management, and evaluation. These activities encourage positive values such as promoting polite expressions, avoiding direct conflicts, and raising awareness through instructional changes (ibid).

Although this study provides valuable insights into the role of politeness strategies in EFL classrooms, it neglects critical factors such as levels of formality and power dynamics between teachers and students. Additionally, the study does not fully address the impact of these strategies on student engagement and educational achievement. Our research builds on these findings by incorporating Leech's (1983) politeness maxims, which offer a more detailed analysis of how politeness functions beyond frequency patterns. Moreover, our study broadens the scope by integrating Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) alongside classroom observations and teacher interviews. This approach further explores the motivations behind politeness choices in Algerian EFL classrooms. By addressing these gaps, our study enhances the understanding of politeness in academic settings. It identifies politeness strategies and examines their contextual application, effectiveness, and influence on teacher-student rapport and classroom dynamics.

1.8.2 Politeness Strategies in EFL Teaching-Learning

Gunas et al. (2023) investigated politeness strategies in EFL teaching and learning in high schools in the Manggarai region of eastern Indonesia. The data were collected using qualitative research, observations, audio recordings, and field notes, and analyzed through an interactive model and pragmatic equivalent method. The study focused on exploring teacher and student communication in eleventh-grade EFL classrooms. The results revealed that teachers and students used three types of politeness strategies: bald-on-record, positive, and hostile. These strategies were mainly employed to ease instructional goals.

The investigation indicated that several maxims, such as tact, approbation, sympathy, and agreement maxims, impacted politeness strategies. The study's findings also highlighted that the teaching approaches and the methods used in classrooms are closely related to politeness strategies, and a deeper examination of these strategies within this context is needed.

The findings of this study coordinate with our study in various ways, specifically in their emphasis on politeness strategies in EFL classrooms. Both studies acknowledge the role of politeness in influencing teacher-student interactions and encouraging an efficient learning environment. However, there are notable distinctions between the two studies. While the researchers analyzed politeness strategies through a broadly pragmatic approach, this research

mainly focuses on Leech's politeness principles. Their study recognized three politeness strategies: bald-on-record, positive politeness, and negative politeness, while this research highlights more politeness maxims to analyze the nuances of teacher-student interaction. Another key difference lies in the educational context. Gunas et al. (ibid) shed light on high school EFL classrooms in Indonesia, whereas our research explores politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms.

1.8.3 Politeness and Face-Threatening Acts in Iraqi EFL Learners' Conversations

Salman and Betti's (2020) study explores using face-threatening acts and politeness strategies among Iraqi EFL learners in conversation. Using an eclectic model that combines Brown and Levinson (1978), Roberts (1992), and Hoebe (2001), the study examines and discusses one hundred conversations of Iraqi university students. The study hypothesizes that negative politeness is the most frequently used politeness strategy, and Iraqi EFL learners tend to misuse face-threatening acts. The second hypothesis was that Brown and Levinson's model applies to Iraqi EFL students, and the level of politeness expected in conversation is higher than what was observed when applying Brown and Levinson's equation. As highlighted by Salman and Betti (ibid), the study aims to provide quantitative and qualitative analyses of face-threatening acts (FTAs) and politeness strategies used by Iraqi EFL students, as well as to explore the impact of participants and situational context on their choice of face-threatening acts.

Salman and Betti (ibid) explored the use of face-threatening acts (FTAs) and politeness strategies among Iraqi EFL learners, implementing an eclectic model that integrates Brown and Levinson's (1978), Roberts' (1992), and Hoebe's (2001) frameworks. This approach aligns with the current research, which also investigates politeness strategies used in classroom settings, even though the focus is on Algerian EFL classrooms. Similar to the study by Salman and Betti (2020), the current research examines how politeness strategies enhance classroom engagement. While their work focuses on an eclectic model of politeness strategies applied to conversations among Iraqi university students, the present research adopts Leech's (1987) maxims within the learning environment. Both studies seek to identify the most commonly used politeness strategies, with Salman and Betti's study assuming that politeness is the most frequently used among Iraqi EFL students.

However, a significant difference between the two studies is found in the contextual scope. While Salman and Betti (2020) explored informal communication among university

students, the current study emphasizes teacher-student communications within EFL settings, where formal and informal strategies are distinctly separate. Moreover, Salman and Betti (2020) discovered a gap between the expected politeness level and what is observed, reflecting some of the struggles identified in the present study. However, the focus here is more on the role of formality in shaping politeness strategies, while the Iraqi study centres on the misuse of FTAs.

The mixed-method approach in Salman and Betti's study is similar to the current research, which combines qualitative and quantitative data types. Though they stress situational context in their study, particularly how different participants and contexts impact FTA choices, the focus on the role of the context contrasts with the present research, which highlights how politeness strategies foster classroom interaction. Furthermore, while Salman and Betti examine a broad spectrum of politeness strategies in Iraqi culture, the current work mainly concerns how teachers' strategies affect student motivation and interaction in Algerian EFL settings. The contextual nuances highlighted the cultural aspects that may impact politeness strategies, an area explored in the present research, emphasizing the Algerian context.

1.9 Euphemism in English Contexts

Pan(2013) examined euphemism from a pragmatic point of view. He explored euphemism as both a language-related and a social phenomenon, highlighting its features and usage in multiple areas of Western cultures and its importance in minimizing the impact of rude and direct language. The main goal of Pan's study was to strengthen people's understanding of euphemisms and encourage their proper use in communication.

Although Pan's study provides an insightful understanding of euphemism, which serves as a medium of communication, he does not explore the broader concept of politeness, which is the umbrella term under which euphemisms fall. This contrasts with the current study, which considers euphemism as the most significant part of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms, guided by Leech's politeness framework. Unlike Pan's research, which focuses on euphemism as a sole phenomenon, the current work studies how euphemism functions within the broader politeness model, avoiding face-threatening acts (FTS) and maintaining harmonious classroom interactions.

1.9.1 The Role of Euphemism in Teaching

Mamatova (2020) focused on teaching students how to use euphemisms in speech as a means to develop their communicative competencies. As modern education emphasizes the personal communicative qualities of students, such as preventing communicative conflicts and creating a comfortable atmosphere for interlocutors, using euphemism instructions is considered a methodological issue. Addressing this issue aims to enhance students' communicative competence through communicative activities and systemic and personal approaches. Mamatova (2020) explored various definitions of “euphemism” and concluded that there is no unified interpretation of the concept. Different approaches define euphemism in various ways, such as tropes, periphrases, or substitutes, which complement each other, establishing the ground for developing new techniques and methods for teaching euphemisms. Building on these innovative approaches, we can create new lesson materials that target various aspects and skills

Mamatova (2020) highlighted teaching euphemisms as an approach to enhance students' communicative competence, focusing on their role in avoiding conflicts and developing a healthy learning atmosphere. While this fits with the wide concept of politeness, her study shed light primarily on the instructional aspects, seeking how euphemisms can be taught rather than how they are used spontaneously in communication.

In contrast, our research provides a more comprehensive view by investigating politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms, with euphemisms being one of the strategies under consideration. Unlike Mamatova's largely theoretical approach, our study adopts an empirical approach through classroom observation, teacher interviews, and Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) to investigate how politeness strategies, including euphemisms, function in real classroom interactions rather than just focusing on their pedagogical instruction.

Furthermore, while Mamatova looks at euphemisms solely, our research situates them within a broader framework of politeness strategies, examining their role alongside other techniques in managing face-threatening acts, building positive teacher-student relationships, and improving classroom engagement. By taking this approach, our research addresses the gap in Mamatova's study by providing real-world data on how euphemisms and other politeness strategies contribute to effective communication in Algerian EFL classrooms.

1.9.2 Euphemisms and Teacher-Student Interactions

Bloch-Rozmej (2023) investigated the effect of euphemism on teacher-student interactions. Highlighting the impact of teacher talk in boosting adequate instruction, she advocates that the quality of teacher discourse should be in line with the subject matter and the students' mental processing abilities, which are affected by their attitudes toward the material and the teacher. The work explores euphemism in classroom interaction, and the data were collected in June 2023, targeting university educators, through an online survey. The findings are examined to analyze how euphemisms foster linguistic innovation, a fundamental characteristic of successful language teachers.

Bloch-Rozmej's (2023) study aligns with our study in its emphasis on the significance of teacher discourse in shaping student attitudes and communication processes. However, while Bloch-Rozmej mainly studies euphemisms as a means of linguistic creativity and their role in fostering teacher-student relationships, the current study situates euphemisms as part of a broader framework of politeness strategies used in Algerian EFL classrooms.

Furthermore, the present research takes a more holistic approach by investigating both teacher and student talk. It also goes beyond euphemisms to examine different politeness strategies, making it a more comprehensive investigation of the use of politeness in EFL classrooms, unlike Bloch-Rozmej's research, which primarily focuses on an online questionnaire conducted for university teachers.

1.9.3 The Use of Euphemistic Strategies among Algerians

Drissi (2020) highlighted that semantic changes and innovations have become an important area of focus for many scholars today. The appropriate choice of words in specific contexts to soften speech and reduce or avoid embarrassment is commonly referred to as euphemism. In light of the complex linguistic, cultural, and social context in Algeria, this study makes a unique contribution to the field of sociolinguistics and gender studies by exploring the use of euphemism among Algerian males and females. The study sample consisted of 30 Algerian PhD students at the University of Jordan (15 males and 15 females). The participants were given a discourse completion task to illustrate different types of euphemistic strategies in both formal and informal settings and to measure similarities and differences between the genders.

The results revealed that both genders used different strategies, with females notably employing euphemistic strategies more frequently than males. Females utilized eight distinct strategies, including understatement, metaphor, implication, loanwords, and onomatopoeia.

On the other hand, males used fewer euphemistic strategies, with implication, understatement, and metaphor being the most used, especially in formal contexts. Moreover, the findings show that the choice of euphemistic strategies is significantly linked to formality level, as both males and females tended to use more euphemisms in formal situations than in informal ones.

Ultimately, this gender-based study emphasizes the semantic changes linked to euphemism and provides a critical reflection on gender preferences in using euphemistic strategies that align with the formality level of the context.

Drissi (ibid) presented themes aligning with our study, investigating how linguistic strategies, such as euphemisms, promote social balance and reduce face-threatening acts, aligning with our focus on politeness. The two studies highlight the impact of context, especially the level of formality, on using these strategies, with results showing that both genders tend to use more euphemisms in formal settings. However, there are significant distinctions between the two studies. Drissi's research specifically investigates the gendered use of euphemisms among Algerian PhD students, demonstrating that females employed a wider range of strategies, such as metaphor, understatement, and onomatopoeia, while males used fewer politeness strategies, primarily implication and understatement.

Conversely, our study takes a different approach, focusing on politeness strategies in classroom interaction and examining teachers' and students' use of these strategies rather than focusing solely on euphemism. Furthermore, while Drissi's study stressed how males and females use euphemism, our research seeks to provide an extensive analysis of politeness strategies across different contexts, considering not only gender but also teacher-student communication and other cultural influences on politeness. Therefore, while both studies focus on politeness, our research extends beyond euphemism and gender to explore a broader spectrum of politeness strategies within educational settings.

1.9.4 Euphemism from a Politeness Perspective

Alsabbah and Al-Shemmery (2021) highlighted the crucial role of euphemism in social interaction by transforming sensitive topics into more acceptable ones, helping prevent resentment and embarrassment. This research examined the ability of Iraqi learners to use euphemistic expressions while raising awareness among students and faculty in English teaching departments about the importance of addressing topics that require euphemism. The study consisted of three stages: a primary assessment, clear instructions with activities, and a

concluding evaluation to assess students' progress in these fields. The authors administered a test to 50 participants in their fourth year of undergraduate studies at the University of Babylon, College of Basic Education. Findings from the first stage revealed a limited output rate and acknowledgement of euphemisms, highlighting that the course design in the foreign context is insufficient.

However, after consistent training during the second stage, students exhibit significant improvement in their ability to master these expressions. Alsabbah and Al-Shemmery (ibid) also examined Iraqi EFL learners' use and comprehension of euphemistic expressions, stressing the importance of instruction in improving their proficiency.

Alsabbah and Al-Shemmery (ibid) examined the importance of euphemism in social communication and its influence on Iraqi EFL learners, particularly in developing their ability to navigate sensitive topics appropriately. Their study highlights the obstacles the learners encounter due to inadequate course design and the benefits of explicit instruction in fostering euphemistic competence. This aligns with our research on politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms, as both studies explore how language use affects communication and social harmony. Although their research focuses specifically on euphemism, our study takes a broader approach by exploring various politeness strategies beyond lexical choices.

Moreover, the study incorporated a structured training program. In contrast, our study incorporates interviews, classroom observations, and Discourse Completion Tasks to investigate politeness strategies within the EFL context. Regardless of these differences, both studies emphasize the significance of pragmatic instruction in EFL settings for enhancing students' communicative competence.

1.9.5 The Role of Euphemism in Enhancing the Speaking Skills of Algerian EFL Learners

Chouati (2019), from a linguistic perspective, explored euphemism's role in enhancing EFL learners' speaking skills. The research highlights how crucial euphemism is to mitigate rudeness and minimize face-threatening acts in communication. The main objective was to examine the effect of euphemism on students' speaking abilities. The study focused on Goffman's (1967) concept of face and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. She adopted a descriptive qualitative methodology, and data were gathered through two questionnaires: one designed for 100 third-year English students at the University of 8 Mai

1945, Guelma, and another for 10 English teachers. The findings indicated that euphemisms serve as a powerful communicative tool, improving students' speaking skills, protecting their public self-image, and facilitating social interactions.

Chouati's (2019) work aligns with our research on euphemism as a politeness strategy in EFL classrooms; however, they differ in various aspects. While Chouati (2019) explored euphemisms, particularly as a tool for improving students' speaking skills, the present study takes a broader strategy by examining several politeness strategies, encompassing euphemisms, used by both teachers and students in Algerian EFL classrooms. The theoretical approach also differs; Chouati's research is based on Goffman's (1967) concept of face and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, while the current study focuses on Leech's (1983) politeness framework, which gives a more detailed classification of politeness strategies. Methodologically, both studies apply a descriptive qualitative method; however, Chouati's work centres initially on students' use of euphemisms.

At the same time, the ongoing research considers both teacher and student communication to analyze the role of politeness strategies in classroom discourse. This study offers a broader viewpoint on politeness, particularly in Algerian EFL classrooms.

1.9.6 The Impact of Educational Euphemistic Expressions on EFL Learners and Teachers

Sabir, Ali, and Azeez (2023) investigated the role of educational euphemisms on Kurdish EFL learners and teachers, highlighting how these euphemistic expressions promote effective classroom communication by encouraging a courteous learning atmosphere. Moreover, they shed light on its impact on improving formal discourse. They collected data using a quantitative research design; the authors designed questionnaires for 78 students and 10 teachers at Koya University. The findings reveal that both groups consistently use educational euphemisms, which foster teacher-student relationships and strengthen communication. The work concludes that euphemistic expressions play a significant role in boosting more polite interaction in an educational environment.

While this study provided significant insights into the role of euphemisms in EFL classrooms, it remains insufficient as it focuses mainly on euphemism rather than the broader concept of politeness. The present research investigates politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms, focusing on Leech's politeness framework and considering euphemism as a part of politeness in teacher-student interaction.

Additionally, Sabir et al. (2023) depended entirely on quantitative data, which does not provide a more detailed analysis of the pragmatic functions of euphemisms in fundamental classroom interactions. The current study, however, adopts a more holistic approach by examining various politeness strategies, particularly in Algerian EFL classrooms.

1.9.7 The Use of Euphemistic Expressions by Arab EFL Learners

Altakhaine and Rahrouh (2015) investigated the comprehension and use of euphemistic expressions among Arab EFL students, emphasizing two particular domains: courtesy and physical appearance. The main objective of their study was to explore whether learners can identify euphemisms and how various factors, including gender and English proficiency, impact their understanding. They used a multiple-choice test adapted from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to collect data; the researchers measured participants' capacity to recognize proper euphemistic expressions. The findings showed that Arab EFL learners lack awareness regarding euphemisms. However, gender played a crucial role; in contrast to males, female participants exhibited a notably higher awareness of euphemistic expressions.

While Altakhaine and Rahrouh's (2015) research provided valuable insights into Arab EFL learners' recognition of euphemisms, its scope is limited to specific domains where they focused exclusively on multiple-choice tests, which assess recognition and ignore the actual usage of euphemisms in natural discourse. However, the present research examines how Algerian EFL students navigate politeness strategies and euphemisms in educational interactions.

Moreover, the current study also aims to explore the impact of politeness strategies on fostering teacher-student relationships, leading to better learning outcomes.

1.9.8 The Application of Euphemism in Teaching English

Salih (2017) examined the use of Euphemisms in Teaching English in Some Secondary Schools in Misurata, highlighting its importance in boosting a respectful and interactive learning environment. The study explores the awareness of third-year students and teachers in Misurata, Libya. The data were collected through questionnaires distributed to both groups; the study investigated whether euphemisms are actively used in classroom interaction. The results indicated that students have a reduced understanding of euphemistic

expressions despite studying English for nine years. Additionally, teachers showed minimal interest in incorporating euphemisms into their pedagogy, with some failing to incorporate courteous language to support students. Gender differences were also observed, as female students are more aware of euphemisms than their male classmates. Ultimately, the study revealed that euphemism in Libyan secondary school English classrooms is barely employed, if at all.

While Salih's (2017) study provided insightful comprehension of the awareness and application of euphemism in EFL classrooms, Salih's (2017) study focused on questionnaire-based data, which captures perceptions but does not provide a detailed investigation.

However, the present study employs three instruments to analyze data, with a particular focus on politeness as well as euphemism. Furthermore, Salih's research is constructed in secondary school contexts in Libya. In contrast, the present study investigates university-level Algerian EFL classrooms, where different contexts besides social and linguistic aspects may shape the use of politeness strategies differently. By broadening the scope, the study will provide a deeper insight into politeness and euphemisms in EFL classroom interactions in Algeria.

1.10 Conclusion

Politeness plays a crucial role in shaping communication in EFL classrooms, impacting both teaching effectiveness and student interaction. As a politeness strategy, Euphemism creates a more positive and respectful learning atmosphere by preventing directness. Protect students' self-esteem. And encourage mutual respect between teachers and learners. However, politeness in the classroom surpasses euphemism with a range of strategies used by the teacher and students to maintain harmony and a good rapport. Despite its significance, many studies focused narrowly on learners' awareness of Euphemism rather than exploring how politeness strategies function in actual classroom interactions. Moreover, previous studies have mainly used quantitative methods, such as surveys and multiple-choice tests, which measure recognition rather than the pragmatic use of politeness strategies in discourse. As a result, there remains a gap in understanding how politeness is used in real-time classroom communication, particularly in EFL contexts where cultural and linguistic factors potentially influence its use.

Additionally, most research has explored politeness in general EFL settings without specifically addressing how it manifests in the Algerian context, where sociocultural aspects may shape politeness strategies differently. Hence, the current study seeks to address these gaps by providing a comprehensible analysis of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms using Leech's politeness framework.

This research will also provide clear insights into politeness in EFL education by exploring how teachers and students implement politeness strategies in actual discourse. It will try to show how it can enhance teaching practices, promote effective communication, and contribute to a more culturally responsive approach to language learning. Hence, its ultimate objective is to clarify how politeness fosters a supportive relationship between teachers and students, leading to better engagement and learning outcomes.

Chapter Two:

Research Methodology and

Design

2 Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Design

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the data collection and analysis methods used in this study to investigate the use of politeness strategies implemented in Algerian EFL classrooms, regarding what strategies they utilize, and how they contribute to fostering supportive teacher-student relationships that lead to better engagement and academic achievements. This research is based on Leech's politeness maxims to investigate how teachers and students approach politeness in communication. The first chapter will explore the different strategies employed in EFL classrooms, who uses more politeness strategies, and how the level of formality affects their usage. Moreover, the study highlights how euphemism softens face-threatening acts (FTAs), helps ensure smoother interaction, and minimizes potential confrontation, which will eventually lead to better classroom dynamics. The chapter focuses on describing the research methods used, participants, and data collection tools.

2.2 Research Methods

In order to investigate the use of politeness strategies implemented in Algerian Master One (M1) EFL classrooms, a mixed-method approach has been implemented. This approach involves combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, including an online Discourse Completion Task (DCT) designed for the target population of M1 students, along with classroom observation with the same target population, as well as semi-structured interviews conducted with a sample of teachers selected based on specific criteria. By implementing the triangulation method, I was able to gather in-depth insights and diverse data on the use of politeness strategies, as well as their impact on teachers, students' relationships, and the students' learning outcomes.

2.3 Participants

The core of any research study is the participants, who transform theoretical concepts into practice. This study was conducted at Saida University, where master's students are divided into two different specialities: Didactics and Civilization. This study specifically focuses on M1 didactics students as the target population to assess their hypotheses. The target population was not selected haphazardly. The Master's one didactics students were

chosen due to their awareness and understanding of politeness strategies, as well as their advanced level and their expertise in this area, enabling them to provide high-quality data on politeness in communication. Unlike first, second, and third-year LMD students, who were initially observed but deemed unsuitable since their knowledge and experience were insufficient, they did not align with the study's scope. Moreover, a sample of EFL teachers was selected to participate in the interview based on specific criteria, such as their experience and familiarity with politeness strategies. It is worth noting that I tried to put both master one specializations (didactics and literature & civilization) under scrutiny. However, the pilot study revealed a very high rate of Lit & Civ student absenteeism. Subsequently, I decided to investigate only one specialization (didactics).

2.4 Research Instruments

Despite the participants' key role in any research, they can do nothing without the support of well-designed research instruments, which are the heart of any study. By applying these instruments, researchers can achieve reliable and accurate findings, leading them to draw well-formed conclusions. To guarantee an in-depth investigation, this study adopts three methods of data collection: a Discourse Completion Task (DCT), an interview, and a classroom observation. To ensure a comprehensive view and in-depth understanding of the use of politeness strategies in EFL classrooms, the data were collected from both teachers and students using triangulation to successfully fulfill the research objectives.

2.4.1 Discourse Completion Task (DCTs)

The research relies on a Discourse Completion Task as a primary means of collecting data due to its ability to elicit participants' politeness strategies in controlled communicative situations.

2.4.1.1 Description Of The Discourse Completion Task:

I opted for an Online DCT consisting of 12 scenarios, each representing a real classroom interaction situation. The researcher started with a brief introduction to the topic and the aim of their study to make it clearer to the respondents. Since the DCTs were online, I also made sure to provide them with the necessary instructions to ensure they understood what a DCT is and how they were going to respond; to encourage natural and honest responses, I emphasised that there are no right or wrong answers, and informed them that their responses would

remain anonymous and be used for academic purposes only. Additionally, the questions were open-ended, enabling students to answer naturally and authentically.

The DCT was designed to gather students' responses in various classroom situations, allowing the researcher to analyze the types of politeness strategies used in Algerian EFL classrooms. This written, scenario-based method provided insight into how students apply politeness strategies in different communicative contexts. Moreover, to capture realistic and natural linguistic choices that might not be found in questionnaires.

2.4.2 Interview

This work opted for an interview as the last research instrument to gain deeper insights into the teachers' perspectives on the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms.

2.4.2.1 Description of the Interview

I conducted A semi-structured interview consisting of open-ended questions to encourage teachers to give explanatory responses rather than simple yes or no answers. The interview aimed to investigate the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms by exploring how teachers employ these strategies, comparing their usage between teachers and students, examining the impact of formality, and understanding the role of politeness in fostering supportive teacher-student relationships as well as improving the learning outcomes. The interview consists of three sections, each containing questions related to a specific aspect of politeness strategies. The first section focuses on teachers' use of politeness strategies; the second section examines a comparison between teachers' and students' use of politeness and its impact on classroom interactions; and the third section explores the impact of formality in shaping politeness strategies.

2.4.3 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation plays a crucial role in research; its significance and value are unquestionable. This method allows researchers to obtain data in a real-world setting. Their presence enables them to directly witness and analyze classroom interactions with an advantage that other instruments can not provide.

2.4.3.1 Description Of Classroom Observation

I conducted a non-participant observation with master one EFL students of didactics. five sessions were attended, including three lectures and two practice sessions, to observe the politeness strategies used by both teachers and students in real-life interactions. The observation was conducted based on Leech's politeness maxims, I made sure to take detailed notes on the verbal politeness strategies.

2.5 Purpose of Use

Since politeness strategies cannot be fully examined through DCTs or interviews alone, observation is the most effective tool for analyzing how these strategies are employed in real classroom interactions. It allows the researcher to validate the data collected from the Discourse Completion Task and provides deeper insights into the use of politeness strategies. Moreover, observation ensures an authentic and naturalistic approach, making the findings more reflective of actual communication patterns.

2.6 Data Collection Procedures

- Pre-observation:

A pilot study was conducted first through informal observations with licence students and master one didactics students to assess their classroom interactions and politeness strategies. These observations helped me to establish and identify that licence students do not serve the study's purpose and scope, unlike master's students, who are the most suitable sample population that aligns with the study's purpose and scope.

- Classroom observation:

These were conducted in several sessions to capture natural classroom interactions.

- Discourse completion task :

The DCT was distributed to the students as a good online form, and responses were collected for later analysis.

- Teacher'sinterview :

Interviews were collected with selected teachers and recorded for later transcription and analysis. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their anonymity was ensured.

2.7 Challenges and Limitations

I encountered several challenges trying to conduct my research. First, during the observations, I noticed a reduced number of students, and I was informed that this number would be even lower during Ramadan, with possibly no students present until the end of the month. This led to conducting the DCT online, but unfortunately, the responses received were very few, resulting in limited data. Moreover, it is important to note that the behaviour of certain teachers biased this study. One teacher, for instance, asked about the topic of this research when they were not supposed to, which remarkably led to a change in their behaviour in class.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the practical aspects of the study, providing detailed information about the research design and methodology. It described the research methods, instruments, and target population. The third chapter presents and interprets the key findings in relation to our study's objectives.

Chapter Three:

Data Analysis and

Interpretation

3 Chapter three: Data analysis and interpretation

3.1 Introduction:

There is no doubt that the theoretical part of the research is crucial, yet it is not enough, and insufficient without the practical part that bridges the gap between theory and practice, which will eventually ensure valid and reliable results if conducted, analyzed, and discussed appropriately. In this regard, the analysis section plays a crucial role, as it helps the researcher answer their research questions and confirm or reject the hypotheses.

3.2 Discourse Completion Task Analysis (DCT)

The study used a Discourse Completion Task(DCT)consisting of twelve natural classroom interactions that assisted the researcher in getting deeper insights into the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms. The results were analyzed based on Leech's politeness maxims, which include Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, Sympathy. The participants' responses will be tested in terms of directness and formality or indirectness and informality to examine how these strategies are employed in different classroom interactions.This analysis reveals that students predominantly use negative politeness strategies such as indirectness, especially when addressing teachers. However, there is more variation between formal and informal language use in both peer and teachers interactions. Formality is most evident in hierarchical interactions with instructors, while also informality appears in both peer and teachersdiscussions.

3.3 DCT Results

3.3.1 Scenario 1: Asking for Help from a Teacher.

Context 1: You don't understand a task given by your Teacher, and you need help. How would you ask the teacher for help?

Almost all students used polite language when seeking help from their teacher, which minimized imposition on the teacher while maximizing benefits for themselves. This aligns with the tact maxim that emphasized (minimizing cost to others, and maximizing benefit to others).

Examples:

- Could you please explain again the task?
- Miss, can you explain again? I didn't get the task
- Could you please explain again? I'm having trouble understanding it
- Sir/Mrs, I didn't understand the task given, could you please help me?

As previously mentioned, most students used polite language and avoided directness with their responses, generally being formal. However, few responses were more direct, yet they still remained polite and respectful and they still fall under the Tact maxim.

Examples:

- Ask the teacher for more clarification.
- Ask him directly to make it clear.
- I would ask him/her directly.
- By explaining each idea and writing at the board.
- I need him to explain the idea of the task to understand what I am going to do in this.

3.3.2 Scenario 2: Expressing disagreement with the Teacher's opinion

Context 2: The Teacher says something you disagree with during the course. How would you express your disagreement?

Most students used models such as could, would, and sorry to reduce the force of disagreement, which aligns with the Tact maxim.

Examples:

- I respectfully disagree with that point. Could we discuss it further
- "I see your point, but I think [your perspective] because (reason)"
- I'm sorry, Mrs/Sir, but I have to disagree with what you said
- I have to disagree with your opinion for the following reasons

Other students showed respect to the teacher's point of view; they softened their responses before expressing their own perspective, which demonstrated a balance between Tact and Agreement maxims, aiming to ease the disagreement, while partially aligning with the other person's perspective.

Examples:

- "I'm sorry, Mrs/Sir, but I have to disagree with what you said."
- "I respectfully disagree and explain my point of view while considering theirs."
- "Sorry, but no, all I think is that..."
- "Yes, teacher, I respect your opinion, but don't you think that...?"

Yet, we should note that there were other students' responses that did not follow any Maxim directly and appeared to be less polite.

Examples:

- "Keep it to myself." (Avoids engagement)
- "Pardon, sir." (Unclear)
- "About my interest in the course."

3.3.3 Scenario 3: Addressing a misunderstanding with the Teacher.

Context 3: The Teacher misinterpreted something you said in the class, and you want to defend yourself and clarify it. How would you clarify the situation?

The most frequently used principle was the Tact maxim, with students choosing to clarify their intentions by using polite, respectful, and indirect language to avoid offending the teacher.

Examples:

- "I think there was a misunderstanding—what I meant was [clarification]."
- "Excuse me, sir, I want to clarify something."
- "Sir, I think you misunderstood, I meant..."
- "Excuse my phrasing, sir/miss, there must be some sort of a misunderstanding. What I meant is... Sorry if I wasn't articulate enough."

Some responses combined both the Tact and Modesty maxims; students preserved the teacher's face using a respectful tone while accepting responsibility for any misunderstanding.

Examples

- "Excuse my phrasing, sir/miss..."(Avoids criticizing the teacher.)

- "Sorry if I wasn't articulate enough."
- "I don't mean no disrespect to you, Mrs/Sir..."
- "Excuse me, sir..."
- "Teacher, I didn't mean this by any sense. I want to clarify my point."
- "Sir, I guess there is a misunderstanding, but, in fact, I didn't do that."

Other responses that break the Leech's framework were some students used less polite language and sarcasm, showing a low level of formality.

Examples:

- "By repeating it louder for the deaf teacher."
- "Using the same style he used or more."
- "You've misinterpreted what I've said."

3.3.4 Scenario 4: Asking for a grade review

Context 4: You disagree with the grade you got in the TD mark. How would you ask the Teacher to reconsider it?

Most students used Tact maxim. They preferred to soften their expressions and show polite and respectful language while interacting with the teacher. This shows their awareness of authority dynamics in teacher-student interactions.

Examples:

- "Teacher, please could you reconsider my TD mark given and tell me how you evaluated me. I don't think that I deserve such a mark."
- "Could you please review my grade? I believe I met the criteria for [higher grade]."
- "Would you please reconsider my mark? I think there is a mistake in my grade."
- "Could we review my TD mark? I believe there may be an error."

While very few students preferred to use direct expressions, which may show a lack of awareness of politeness used in academic settings, as well as the power dynamics in teacher-student interactions.

Examples

- "Sir, can you tell me why I got this mark, and where exactly I made the mistake to receive this mark?"
- "Hello Sir, I didn't expect to have that mark, and I'm sure with my answers. Can you explain to me why you considered them wrong?"
- "I understand that the exam mark is a result of a correction and I can't contest your evaluation, but the TD mark is a combination of many factors, including presence and classroom work. In my belief, the contributions I made in class weren't evaluated enough."
- "I need him/her to help me because I always attend and participate, and I help myself with doing homework..."
- "Dear Miss, I'm writing this email as a contention for my TD mark."

3.3.5 Scenario 5: Correcting the teacher

Context 5: While your Teacher was explaining a concept, you noticed an error (grammatical or pronunciation). How would you address him to correct his statement?

Most students in this scenario used the Tact maxim by being polite and indirectly suggesting corrections to protect the teacher's face and avoid embarrassment.

Examples:

- "I think there might be a small error—should it be [correction]?"
- "Excuse me, I believe there might be a slight correction needed in that explanation."
- "Excuse me, sir/miss, is this word written/pronounced this way? I guess it's [correct form]."
- "Excuse me, Sir/Mrs, I think there's a mistake in this part."
- "Excuse me, sir, I think you meant to say/write..."

Some students used the modesty maxim, showing respect to the teacher, proposing that they might be mistaken themselves. On the other hand, very few students showed a weak awareness of politeness strategies and preferred to be direct or not to correct the teacher at all.

Examples:

- "Sir, I guess you made a mistake, or maybe I just didn't hear you well!"
- "I wouldn't."
- "I am not going to do so."

- "I stop him and tell him that there's a mistake."

3.3.6 Scenario 6: Changing seats

Context 6: Your teacher asks you to change your seat to rearrange the class, but you do not want to move.

How would you refuse the teacher's request?

Most students showed a strong awareness of the Tact maxim; they preferred to give justifications why they want to stay in their places rather than direct and impolite refusal.

Examples:

- "I would explain politely why I would stay in my place."
- "I'm afraid I cannot move, Sir/Mrs. I do like this seat because I can hear you and see clearly from here."
- "Sorry, I cannot focus from that place."
- "Sir/Miss, would you mind if I stay in my place? This position suits me best, especially regarding my sight and hearing."

A small group used the Generosity maxim to minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self and it was very clear in their responses. While very few students used direct and impolite responses.

Examples:

- "I would not refuse, and I'll respect him."
- "I just move, my placement in class is not important for me unless it is hindering me (I wear glasses)."
- "Sir, this place is good for me."
- "I won't."
- "I wouldn't change my seat."

3.3.7 Scenario 7: Refusing the teacher's request

Context: Your teacher asks you to present in front of the class, but you're not ready to do so. How would you refuse?

The most used maxim by students is Tact, and this was shown in their polite refusal strategies, where they preferred to refuse politely, either apologizing, asking for a delay, or more time to minimize imposition on the teacher, and this shows a high awareness of politeness strategies.

Examples:

- "Teacher, I think I'm not ready enough to present. Could you please give me a few minutes to be ready?"
- "I'm not ready to present today—could I do it later?"
- "I'm not prepared to present today, could I do it another time?"
- "My apologies, sir/miss. It seems that I am not really prepared to present at the moment. Would you excuse me for this time? I promise that I will be ready for the next session."

As previously noted, nearly all students employed the Tact maxim by softening their refusal instead of direct rejection. Very few responses were direct almost all responses showed respect.

Examples:

- "Sir, I think I still need some time. Maybe it would be better to choose someone else."
- "I am not ready yet. I'll present as soon as I finish my work."
- "I'm sick today."
- "Can you pick someone else, sir? I'm still preparing my content."

3.3.8 Scenario 8: Giving feedback to your classmate

Context 8: Your classmate asks for your opinion on their presentation. However, you feel that it was not a good presentation. How would you share your feedback with them?

The majority of students used the Tact and Approbation maxims. They chose their words carefully to avoid hurting their classmates' feelings. They started by praising their efforts and encouraging them, then politely and kindly introduced suggestions to help them improve their future presentations without being rude or sounding harsh.

Examples:

- "Your presentation was good, but [specific area] could be improved by [suggestion]."
- "I thought your topic was interesting, but..."

- "I appreciate the efforts made in the presentation.Thank you for your work. However, you could maybe work more on your body language and your interactions with the audience."
- "First of all, I would like to thank you for this piece of work. You made some good points; however, you missed a lot of points that weren't mentioned in this presentation."
- "I appreciate your efforts, while we need to discuss some points in order to develop our level in presentation."

Although most of the students' responses followed the tact and approbation, showing positivity and encouragement, a few other answers fell into the trap of bluntness.

Examples:

- "Criticize them normally".
- "I prefer to keep my feedback for myself, I can just say it's okay."
- "I keep it to myself"

3.3.9 Scenario 9: Correcting a classmate.

Context 9: Your classmate mispronounced a word in English. How would you correct his pronunciation?

Most students employed the Tact maxim, making it the most frequently used. Moreover, in a limited number of responses, the Approbation and Generosity maxims were also used, and their accuracy was typically shown in a blend of act and generosity or tact and approbation.

Students preferred to use polite language when correcting their peers by rephrasing or repeating the word; some of them even chose to speak with their peers privately to protect their classmates' faces.

Examples:

- "I think the word is pronounced [correct pronunciation]—it's a tricky one!"
- "You might want to try pronouncing that word like this: [correction]."
- "By asking the teacher about the word and how to pronounce it."
- "I would not correct it in front of our classmates; I'd rather talk to him secretly."
(Indirectly corrects the classmate.)

- "I correct them by giving the correct pronunciation or writing it on the board."

While very few responses risked being too direct.

Examples:

- "No. It's pronounced... Not like you said it."
- "I'll tell him directly the right pronunciation."

3.3.10Scenario 10: Arriving late

Context 10: You arrive late to class, and your teacher is upset with you. What would you say to him in this situation?

Almost all students used the Tact maxim, where they started by sincerely apologizing and trying to show they did not mean to be disrespectful.

Examples:

- "I'm really sorry for my lateness. There was traffic. It won't be repeated."
- "I am very sorry for being late. It won't happen again."
- "I'm terribly sorry for being late. I do not in any way wish to disrupt your class or disrespect you by my delayed arrival. I had a few issues on my way here."
- "I'm sorry for being late—it won't happen again."

While three responses demonstrated the use of tact. However, incorporated elements of modesty, approbation, and generosity maxims, where they took full responsibility for their lateness. And only one or two students gave very short responses, such as(Traffic issue), which lacks a full, polite response.

Examples:

- "Excuse me for being late. It's my fault."
- "I really apologize, sir, but I faced some issues while coming."
- "I would apologize for the tardiness and accept whatever they ask of me, stay or leave."
- "I'm sorry for being late. And I would explain why I arrived late."

3.3.11Scenario 11: Requesting an Extension for an Assignment

Context 11: Your teacher gave you an assignment with a deadline, but you could not complete it on time. How would you ask them for a time extension?

The most prominent maxim in this scenario is the Tact maxim, reflecting the student's high awareness of the teacher's authority. They used modals such as could I, would you mind, and please, showing respect, particularly when requesting their teacher. In addition to these tactful expressions, one or two students used apologies to maintain a positive relationship with their teachers, which aligns with the approbation maxim. As well as the modesty maxim, were also evident, as few students took responsibility for not completing on time and did not ask for extensions.

Examples:

- "Could I please have an extension on the assignment? I'm having trouble completing it on time."
- "Sorry, Miss, I had a doctor appointment, so can I extend my work till next week?"
- "Sir/Mrs, may I have some more time for the assignment? I faced some challenges while doing it and still didn't finish."
- "I won't. It is my fault for not doing the assignment on time."
- "Sir/miss! I would like to speak with you regarding the assignment."
- "I'm sorry, sir, I wasn't able to finish the assignment you gave us, but I promise I'll have it finished by next week if you'll allow it."
- "If I have a legitimate justification for not completing it, I would ask for an extension by presenting the reason. Otherwise, I won't ask."

3.3.12Scenario 12: Borrowing a Classmate's Notes

Context 12: You were absent for a week and missed several lessons. You need to ask your classmate to share their notes with you.

Almost all students used polite and soft language, carefully choosing their words to avoid sounding demanding or even pushy. The majority of their responses reflected the Tact maxim, while others tried to seek help from their peers. Others used some unique expressions of appreciation which are common in the Algerian context, such as (May Allah reward you), which matches with the Approbation maxim.

Examples:

- "Hey dear, I hope you are doing well. I was absent last week and missed a lot of lessons. Would you mind sharing your notes with me, please? I would really appreciate your help."
- "Could you please share your notes from last week? I missed some lessons."
- " Would you mind sharing your notes with me? I would really appreciate it."
- "I would appreciate your help in getting back on track."
- "I wasn't able to be present last week. Could you please share your notes with me?"
- "I missed a lot of lessons, could you please share your notes with me?"

Table 1: Politeness Strategies in Algerian EFL Classrooms: DCT Scenarios Analysis based on Leech's Maxims.

Scenarios	Dominant Maxim(s)	Overall response style	Examples
1	• Tact	• Formal and indirect	• Sir/Mrs, I didn't understand the task given, could you please help me?
2	• Tact + Agreement	• Formal	• I respectfully disagree with that point. Could we discuss it further
3	• Tact + Modesty	• Mostly indirect	• "Excuse me, sir, I want to clarify something."
4	• Tact	• Mostly indirect, but there are some direct responses	• "Could you please review my grade? I believe I met the criteria for [higher grade]."
5	• Tact + Modesty	• Mostly indirect, very few direct responses	• "Excuse me, Sir/Mrs, I think there's a mistake in this part."
6	• Tact	• Mostly indirect and polite	• "I'm afraid I cannot move, Sir/Mrs. I do like this seat because I can hear you and see clearly from here."

7	• Tact	• Mostly indirect	• "I'm not ready to present today—could I do it later?"
8	• Tact+ Approbation	• Mostly indirect	• "I appreciate the efforts made in the presentation. Thank you for your work. However, you could maybe work more on your body language and your interactions with the audience."
9	• Tact (+Approbation/Generosity)	• Mostly indirect	• "By asking the teacher about the word and how to pronounce it."
10	• Tact + Modesty	• Formal	• "I'm terribly sorry for being late. I do not in any way wish to disrupt your class or disrespect you by my delayed arrival. I had a few issues on my way here."
11	• Tact (+Modesty/Approbation)	• Direct	• "Sir/Mrs, may I have some more time for the assignment? I faced some challenges while doing it and still didn't finish."
12	• Tact + Approbation	• Polite and informal (friendly)	• "Hey mate! Can I please have your notes? I wasn't there last session for some reason."

3.4 Interpretation of the (DCT)

The analysis of the Discourse Completion Task (DCTs), conducted among master one Algerian EFL students, reveals a high awareness of the strategic use of politeness. This was particularly true in teacher-student interactions, where participants' responses aligned with Leech's politeness maxims. The most dominant maxim across the twelve scenarios was the Tact maxim. They also employed approbation, modesty, agreement, and generosity maxims, depending on the situation.

Participants preferred to use indirect, formal, and polite language, reflecting the dominance of negative politeness strategies, which presents a significant finding in this study. This pattern was evident in scenarios such as: (Scenario 1.) Asking for help from a teacher (Scenario 2). Expressing disagreement with the teacher's opinion (Scenario 3), addressing a misunderstanding with the teacher (Scenario 4). Asking for a grade review (Scenario 5) Asking for a grade review, and (Scenario 11). Requesting an extension for an exam. In these situations, students prioritized minimizing imposition to protect the teacher's face. It is also worth mentioning that students employed modal verbs such as could and would, as well as apologies, polite requests, all of which are strongly associated with the Tact maxim.

Additionally, the Modesty and Approbation maxims co-occur along with the Tact maxim, especially in peer interactions. For instance, some responses mainly reflect the Tact maxim. However, they contain elements of Modesty or Approbation. For example, Scenario 8: giving feedback to your classmate, and Scenario 9: correcting a classmate.

Moreover, the researcher noted an important finding regarding teacher-student and peer-peer interactions. Participants predominantly used formal and polite strategies across all scenarios, whether interacting with teachers or peers. However, there were instances where informal or less polite language appeared, depending on the context and the nature of the situation. For example, in Scenario 12, when borrowing notes from a classmate, one participant used the informal yet warm expression, 'May Allah reward you.'

Even though most responses aligned with Leech's politeness maxims, some students fell into the trap of bluntness, as their responses sounded more direct, less polite, and even sarcastic in the case of Scenarios 3 or 5. This indicated that not all students are aware of the strategic use of politeness strategies and power dynamics.

Table 2: The use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms.

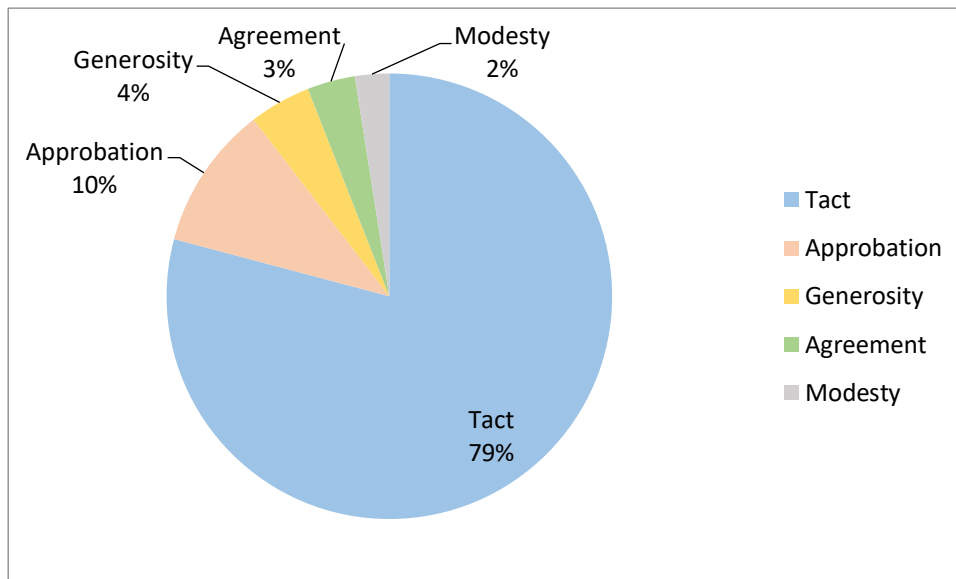
Maxims	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Tact	159	64,89%
Approbation	21	8,57%
Generosity	9	3,67%
Agreement	7	2,85%

Modesty	5	2,04%
Sympathy	0	0%
Less polite	44	44%

The results, as depicted in Table 2, demonstrate that all of the participants (100%) are well aware of politeness strategies as evidenced by their usage. However, the majority employed the tact maxim with about 64,89%PST and utilize it regularly, providing strong evidence of its widespread use among EFL learners, particularly in the Algerian context. Notably, the data in the table indicate that none of the participants used the sympathy maxim, which may be due to a preference for the other maxims or they find it less effective, particularly in the EFL context. These results suggest that EFL learners are selective in the use of politeness strategies.

Table 3: Normalized percentage of politeness maxims.

Maxims	Normalized percentage
Tact	79,13%
Approbation	10,44%
Generosity	4,47%
Agreement	3,48%
Modesty	2,48%

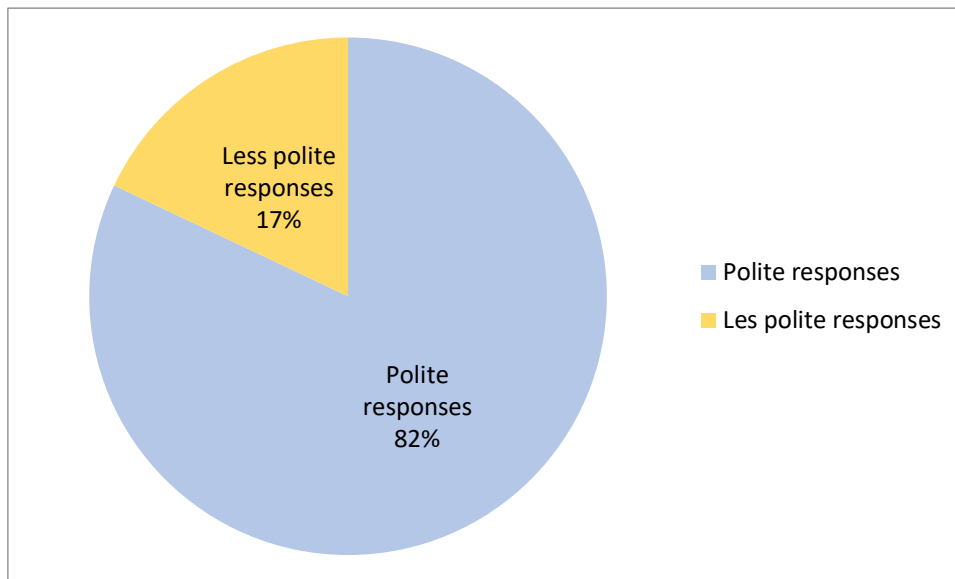


Pie-chart1: Normalized distribution of politeness maxims in polite responses.

It was observed that the most popular strategy employed by the participants was the tact maxim with 79,13% of polite responses. The Approbation was also a frequently used strategy, with (10,44%) of respondents using it in different situations as a means to avoid criticizing others. The generosity maxim was another strategy that approximately 4,47% of students employed. Similarly, (3,48%) of participants employed the agreement maxim, while only (2,48%) of students used the modesty maxim. It is significant to note that the researcher normalized the percentage based on the polite responses, excluding the sympathy maxim, which was not used at all.

Table 4: Frequency of polite and less polite responses.

Response type	Counted
Polite responses	201
Less polite responses	44



Pie chart 2: the use of polite Vs. Less polite responses.

According to the third pie chart, the researcher compared the number of polite responses to less polite ones. A total of 201 polite responses were identified, which, when combined with the 44 less polite responses, resulted in 245 overall responses. The percentage of polite responses was then calculated as 201 out of 245, resulting in 82.04%. In contrast, less polite responses made up 17.96% (44 out of 245). As demonstrated in the pie chart above, polite strategies were significantly more frequently used. This suggests that most participants were aware of Leech's politeness maxims. However, the presence of some less polite, direct, or informal responses may indicate limited awareness among certain students.

3.5 Interview Analysis

For the interview analysis, the researcher selected the most relevant questions for this study. As previously mentioned, the study employed an interview with teachers. The questionnaire was divided into three sections to gain a deeper understanding of the subject under investigation.

3.5.1 Section 1: The use of politeness strategies

Q1: Do you mindfully use politeness strategies in your classroom? If so, why? How often?

Although the first question of this interview focused mainly on understanding if teachers mindfully use politeness strategies, and if so, why, and how often. All five

participants confirmed that they use politeness strategies in their classrooms both consciously and subconsciously when interacting with their students. And it is worth noting that some teachers indirectly answered the question. And shifted to talk about the role and the significance of politeness. Their responses are valuable and indirectly related to the main question. Yet, they don't directly relate to the intended question; they align more closely with other questions of the interview concerning the role of politeness in fostering a supportive teacher-student relationship and promoting academic achievements.

For instance, (Teacher1) emphasized that politeness is a primordial step in both teaching and learning. He explained how students' responses can influence teachers to be kind to them and motivate teachers to give more. On the other hand, (Teacher 2) mentioned that they cannot come over politeness especially when dealing with human relationships. Similarly, (Teacher 3) highlighted that we need to be polite.

In addition the this, (Teacher 4 and 5) shed light on the necessity of politeness in teacher-student interactions. (Teacher 5) mentioned that politeness is an obligation in human interactions, and the teacher-student relationship is not an exception.

Q2: Which politeness strategies do you tend to use the most? (e.g., The Tact maxim, the Generosity maxim, the Approbation maxim)

The second question of the interview focused on investigating which politeness strategies teachers frequently use in the classroom setting. All five participants indicated that instead of relying on one maxim, they tend to use varied maxims depending on the situation and context, even across different individuals. However, (Teacher 1) and (Teacher 2) confirmed in their responses the prominent use of the Tact and Modesty maxims in their interactions with students, often combined with a mix of other maxims.

For instance, (Teacher 1) stated that they frequently use the Tact and Modesty maxims, but it also depends on the situation. They also highlighted that being tactful and modest helps break barriers and brings the teacher closer to the student; likewise, Teacher Two emphasized that when the teacher is modest and humble, students feel closer, and it helps break barriers. Yet, they also stated that sometimes they lean more towards the use of the Tact maxim, especially when it is necessary to establish respect in the class or when dealing with misbehaved students.

(Teacher 3) mentioned that they use all the maxims depending on the situation, shedding light on the importance of protecting the students' faces. Similarly, (Teacher 4) emphasized employing a combination of maxims based on the context and circumstances, stating that they use the Tact maxim when it is needed, sometimes Modesty, and so forth. (Teacher 5) Also mentioned that they use a bit of everything, stressing the importance of being tactful, understanding, and showing sympathy with students, since they are human beings with different needs and struggles.

Q3: Do you feel that students respond or behave differently when you use polite

Language? How?

Question three focused on exploring whether students respond or behave differently when their teachers use politeness strategies. All five participants confirmed that the use of polite language does indeed affect students' behavior. However, their responses indicated different perspectives since they have different experiences.

(Teacher 1) highlighted how politeness can change perceptions, stating that students, before getting to know them well, may find you arrogant, but the use of polite language will foster approachability and break the barriers.

(Teacher 2) stated that students' background plays a huge role in how they perceive politeness in the classroom, saying that some students have a family background that sacred politeness, while others don't have this notion of politeness.

(Teacher 3) highlighted that politeness helps in creating what is called rapport, so by being polite, you are going to cultivate politeness.

(Teacher 4) shared the same perspective as (Teacher2), shedding light on how politeness can be perceived as a weakness, especially when dealing with disrespectful or misbehaved students. The teacher warned that it's a serious issue, suggesting that sometimes teachers need to take off that polite face and be more serious in order to prevent misbehavior from spreading around.

Similarly, (Teacher 5) acknowledged that respect is something mutual, and if you show it, you will get it. They mentioned that exceptions exist, yet if you show your students respect, they will show it too.

3.5.2 Section 2: teachers' vs. students' use of politeness and its impact on classroom interactions

Q1.Based on your own experience, do teachers use more politeness strategies than students, or vice versa? Why? Can you provide any examples?

The first question of the second section aims to explore whether teachers use more politeness strategies than students or vice versa. Teachers' responses indicated that teachers tend to use more politeness strategies than students. However, there are some other factors, such as background and level, that may influence those interactions.

Teacher (1) strongly agreed that teachers use more politeness strategies than students, stressing that this might be a consequence of the generational gap. They even shared a personal experience where one of their students showed disrespect for the curriculum. While the teacher first decided to tolerate it, the misbehavior was repeated, and the teacher had to assert authority. This indicates that teachers use politeness strategies with students, but they don't let them cross the boundaries and might switch to other strategies if the students misbehave.

Teacher (2) had deep insights and a more philosophical perspective, stressing that politeness isn't linked to social roles but rather has to do with individual personality. They also mentioned that students' impoliteness can be controlled, unlike teachers' impoliteness, which is a bigger issue because teachers are role models to their students and will influence them in one way or another. The teacher recalled an example of impoliteness from a teacher laughing at students' mistakes, and also students laughing at their classmates' mistakes or even appearance. They emphasized that it's the role of the teacher to stop this. This suggests teachers should use and be more aware of politeness strategies, not just follow some instructions.

Teacher (3) acknowledged that teachers are generally polite, based on their own experience as both a student and a teacher. Although there are some disrespectful students, teachers maintain polite language, and they also highlight the importance of being flexible.

Teacher (4) stated that the use of politeness depends on the academic level of students. They observed that Master One students tend to be more polite due to their stronger language proficiency. However, with first-year students, it is different; they are less polite, likely due to their poor language skills.

Teacher (5) somehow shared the same perspective as Teacher 4 in terms of low proficiency level. Teacher five linked politeness with language competency, stating that teachers are obliged to use politeness strategies, and students may appear impolite due to their limited language skills and the lack of awareness of politeness strategies, particularly in the target language. They suggested that teachers should be more polite to serve as role models for their students.

Q2: Which one do you think uses politeness strategies more, males or females?

This question focused on investigating who uses more politeness strategies, males or females. All five participants shared the same perspective that politeness is not linked to gender, but rather to family background, personality, and character. For instance, Teacher Two and Teacher Three agreed that politeness is related to education (التربية). Teacher (1) also emphasized that some males are polite, but in their own way, not like females, who tend to be more feminine.

On the other hand, Teachers (4) and (5) confirmed that females are more polite than males, linking it to their femininity and emotional sensitivity, saying that they are more considerate and calmer compared to males

Q3: Have you observed any specific politeness strategies that students use the most when addressing you or their classmates?

The fourth question of this section aimed to analyze whether teachers have observed any specific politeness strategies that students use the most when addressing their teachers or their classmates. Teachers' responses revealed that students do use more positive politeness strategies but lack sophisticated strategies.

Teacher (1) stated that the most used maxim is the Tact maxim, but very few students use politeness strategies in general. They believe that politeness has almost disappeared.

Teacher (2) believes that the use of politeness depends strongly on the family background.

Teacher three observed that students use simple strategies like saying "please" or "thank you," however, they lack more sophisticated strategies.

Teacher (4) noted that some students use the tact or modesty maxims, which indicates their awareness of those strategies.

Finally, teacher (5) highlighted that students use a bit of everything depending on the situation, the context, as well as family influence.

Q4: How do you think politeness fosters supportive teacher-student relationships and Enhances communication and learning outcomes?

This question aims to investigate whether politeness fosters supportive teacher–student relationships and enhances communication and learning outcomes.

All five participants agreed that politeness plays a crucial role in educational settings, particularly when it comes to building a positive atmosphere and improving the learning outcome.

Teacher (1) highlighted that politeness can eventually create a nice atmosphere in the classroom and helps in shaping relationships between teachers and students, noting that when students feel respected, they will be more motivated and active.

On the other hand, Teacher (2) shed light on the importance of creating a balanced environment where teachers' politeness won't be interpreted as a weakness. According to their view, respect is primordial, yet it should be followed with some strictness to create a positive atmosphere.

Teacher (3) emphasized how politeness can pave the way for a fertile environment where the teacher can establish positive rapport and a comfortable environment, which will lead to successful knowledge transmission and fruitful learning outcomes.

Last but not least, Teacher (4) stated that being too authoritarian with students will not break the ice and will create barriers between the teacher and the student. However, by using politeness strategies and being decent, this will break the boundaries and create an approachable atmosphere where students will feel free to ask and seek help. As a result, this will enhance the learning outcomes.

Lastly, Teacher (5) referred to politeness as an exchange of respect, and for this exchange to happen, teachers need to build channels, and those channels can't be facilitated without politeness.

Q5: Do you think that students fake politeness for their own interests? Can you tell the

Difference between authentic and fake politeness? Can you provide any examples?

This question aims to explore if students fake politeness for their own interest and if teachers can distinguish it; all five responses revealed mixed and different views.

Teacher (1) stated that, based on their experience, they believe that students don't fake politeness, mentioning that fake politeness is encountered outside the classroom, not with students.

Teacher (2) mentioned that there are a few students who fake politeness, linking this behavior to the family background. The teacher acknowledged that smart teachers can distinguish fake from genuine politeness.

While teacher (3) shared a nuanced perspective by stressing that not all students fake politeness, there are some students who are just afraid of the teacher, and that they can't call it fake politeness. According to the teacher's view, this strategy is socially acceptable, and it's totally fine to be polite in order to gain a benefit.

Teacher (4) mentioned that some students fake politeness; however, they believe that true politeness is shown based on how the student reacts when it comes to evaluation, especially when they get poor grades.

Teacher (5) shared somehow the same perspective as teacher three, stating that fake politeness is a strategy that students use because their fate is somehow in the hands of the teacher.

3.5.3 Section 3: The role of formality in the use of politeness

Q1: To what extent does the degree of formality affect the use of politeness strategies in the classroom?

The last question of the third section focused on analyzing the role of formality in the use of politeness. All participants' responses confirmed that formality influences how politeness strategies are used.

Teacher (1) highlighted that the level of formality influences the use of politeness strategies, stating that the language used with the teacher should be more formal than the

language used with peers. However, this participant believes that politeness and formality work together and are linked, and sometimes a moderate formality can be beneficial.

Teacher (2) stated that the level of formality affects the use of politeness, yet teachers shouldn't be formal all the time, suggesting that this is the best way to be polite with students.

Teacher (3) shared the same viewpoint as teachers one and two concerning the impact of formality, but this participant stressed an important point, mentioning that politeness alone is not enough because a teacher can be polite without being too strict or formal.

Teacher (4) mentioned that teachers should avoid appearing as the only owners of information. This participant believes that being too formal will create barriers between the teacher and the student, which will eventually create a negative atmosphere.

Finally, teacher (5) also stated that the level of formality affects the use of politeness strategies, noting that teachers observe a difference in the language used between student-student and student-teacher interactions. This participant suggested that it's better to establish boundaries at the beginning by being formal. Once rules are set, teachers can be less formal to foster a friendly classroom environment.

3.6 Results Interpretation of the interview

- The Use of Politeness Strategies

All five participants highlighted the importance of the use of politeness strategies in creating a supportive, positive, and respectful educational environment. They also noted that they use politeness strategies either consciously or subconsciously.

- The Most Used Strategies by Teachers

Participants stated that they use a variety of politeness maxims depending on the situation and the context. Some participants noted that they use the modesty and tact maxims the most, particularly for building approachability. This indicates that teachers are aware of the role of these strategies and their importance in the classroom.

- The Impact of Politeness Strategies on Students' Behavior

All five participants confirmed that students behave positively when teachers use polite language with them. It makes them feel respected and loved. However, they believe that there

are some factors that hinder the students' ability to use politeness strategies, such as language proficiency, family background, and even the educational level.

- Politeness and Gender

Some participants strongly believe that females tend to be more polite than males, linking it to their emotional sensitivity. However, most teachers believe that politeness is shaped by many factors, such as the individual's character as well as the family background.

- The Most Used Strategies by Students

Participants observed that students tend to use simple and positive politeness strategies like saying "please" or "thank you." They don't use complex strategies such as approbations, agreement, sympathy, etc., due to their limited language skills and lack of pragmatic awareness.

- The Role of Politeness Strategies in Enhancing Communication and Learning Outcomes

All five participants confirmed that the use of politeness helps in creating a supportive learning environment. Politeness will make the students feel respected and valued, which will affect their behavior, make them more productive, activate their intrinsic motivation, and improve the learning outcomes.

- Faking Politeness

The five participants shared different perspectives, where some of them believe that students don't fake politeness at all, while others believe that faking politeness is a strategy used by students to gain benefits. But all of the participants agreed on one point: that teachers can distinguish between fake and genuine politeness.

- The Role of Formality in the Use of Politeness Strategies

Participants acknowledged the role of formality in affecting the use of politeness, stressing that extensive formality can create boundaries and distance. In contrast, the balanced approach, not too formal and not too friendly, helps break the ice and leads to approachability.

- Overall Analysis

This study's findings revealed the significance of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms for enhancing learning, fostering a positive environment, and creating rapport.

Teachers are aware of the use of these strategies, unlike students, who lack awareness and language proficiency. It's worth mentioning that there are a lot of factors that influence the use of politeness and how it is perceived, such as family background, educational level, and individual personality.

3.7 Classroom Observation Analysis

Classroom observation holds great significance as a research method. It provides authentic and detailed insights about classroom dynamics that other tools may not provide. The researcher observed five different sessions with different teachers and across different modules, including psycholinguistics, ESP, research techniques, research methodology, and psychology. The students observed were Master One Didactics students, and the number of students varied between 22 to 27. Each session lasted about an hour and a half and took place in the morning. The researcher analyzed the findings based on Leech's politeness maxims.

The first observation sessions, which took place in a traditional classroom setting, demonstrated that both teachers and students use politeness strategies. Additionally, the researcher observed that the Tact maxim was the most used in teacher–student interactions. For example, when the teacher said, “Yes, you come, but you are absent,” the teacher protected the student's face and showed concern for his feelings by softening his tone. This also reflects a tactful response. Another example includes a teacher repeating a question instead of saying, “You are wrong”; this aligns with both tact and euphemistic strategies.

When students called the teacher “sir,” and when the teacher said, “You are welcome, but you are absent,” these indicate the Approbation maxim. Moreover, the Agreement maxim appeared several times, particularly when the teacher asked the students if everything was clear, and they responded with “yes,” avoiding disagreement in front of their classmates.

Other statements, such as “Excuse me for my language,” and the teacher's response, “it's okay,” as well as the teacher's admission, “This is my own perspective, I may be wrong,” align with the Modesty maxim. Furthermore, euphemism also played a role in teacher–student interactions in order to soften criticism rather than being direct.

In the second observation session, the researcher noticed that the teacher often used the Tact maxim, where the participant blended authority with an informal tone to create a positive atmosphere. The teacher frequently used questioning techniques, like “Fellah, have you understood?” and “What about the newcomer, have you understood?”, which directly aligns with the Tact maxim.

Some comments from the teacher violate the Modesty and Tact maxims, such as “You are coming like a tourist” or “You don’t forget makeup.” This might create rapport and a more informal atmosphere, but may also be perceived either in a positive or a negative way students might perceive it as an authoritative teacher, or they might laugh and perceive it as sarcasm.

Expressions such as “Where’s your school bag?” indicate directness and authority. However, the use of the agreement maxim was also observed. For instance, when the teacher asked “Did you all sign your names?” or “Everything is clear?”, which aligns with the agreement maxim.

The third observation session was interactive, where the teacher started his session with a warm “Good morning, how is everyone doing?” which aligns with the Tact maxim. The teacher aimed at creating rapport; this built a friendly atmosphere where both the teacher and the students used humor. The teacher also used the Approbation maxim when he allowed the latecomers to join using light and positive expressions.

Students’ responses, uttering expressions like calling the teacher “sir” before answering, and asking the teacher kindly to repeat, as well as responding with “yes”, and even the teacher’s responses such as “Yeah, you are correct, but you need to elaborate,” and “Exactly,” are a clear reflection of the Agreement along with the Modesty maxims. This led to an engaging environment where students felt free to ask questions and be more comfortable.

A remarkable moment was observed when a debate between students took place about knowledge, and the teacher remained neutral by saying, “Maybe you’re right, maybe you’re wrong,” avoiding a threatening environment, which aligns with the Modesty maxim.

The teacher made sure to maintain a two-way communicative method by applying politeness strategies. This indicated how polite language can support motivation, comprehension, and even help in building a connection between the teacher and students.

In the fourth observation session, the researcher observed that both politeness and tension existed. For instance, when a student tried to correct the teacher's mistake, the teacher confused American with Chinese. He apologized, saying "Sorry," which aligns with the tact maxim. Also, in another observation, one of the students gave the wrong answer to the teacher's question, and the teacher moved on quickly by saying "No" in Arabic. Students started laughing; they perceived it in the wrong way. However, when another student gave the correct response, the teacher responded with "Thank you," which indicated the use of politeness.

Approbation and Agreement maxims co-occurred in students' expressions such as "Can you please raise your voice?" and "Thank you, that was really expressive." Yet, a notable moment appeared when one of the students began to cry after being caught by the teacher using AI. The teacher responded using polite forms like "Stop crying and think about something to participate, "Do you need a napkin?" "Are you okay?" The student responded positively and gave three missed words correctly. The teacher showed appreciation for his efforts and acknowledged his intelligence. The teacher responded by saying, "You see how smart you are," which aligns with the Approbation maxim, giving value to the student's effort. Moreover, as mentioned before, students used polite expressions such as "please" and "thank you", trying to maintain a positive and respectful interaction.

In the last observation session, the researcher observed the teacher using politeness strategies that helped in fostering students' motivation and created a safe place for encouraging expressions.

The Tact maxim appeared in the teacher's questions, such as Is that clear?, Is there any question?, and many other respectful and encouraging questions. For example, calling the student by his name, Mr. Miloud, do you have any idea?, reflects the Tact maxim as well. Moreover, when the students shared the correct answer, the teacher tended to use positive reinforcement by praising the students, like replying with Thank you, Very good, which reflects the Approbation maxim. Furthermore, the teacher used some rhetorical expressions. For instance, when he was reading the TEL subject, the teacher referred to its questions as silly questions and advised his students to focus more on ESP. This may seem negative and informal; however, the teacher was trying to provoke the students' critical thinking, and it was perceived by them as a part of humor, which created a positive, friendly environment. At the end of the session, the teacher ended with an emotional expression: Thank you so

much, I love you, which may be informal, yet it reflects the strong connection between the teacher and his students, confirming how the use of politeness fosters a healthy atmosphere.

3.7.1 Interpretation of the observation

The observation sessions revealed the significant role of the use of politeness strategies in teaching and learning. The data show that the most used maxim was the Tact Maxim, particularly in situations like correcting the students' responses, such as "Is everything clear?", "Do you have any inquiries?" This created a positive environment, confirming how the use of such strategies boosts respect and trust in the classroom. Teachers also applied the Approbation Maxim to encourage the students through positive feedback. We can see this in expressions like "Thank you," "A very good point," "Very good," and so on. The Modesty and Agreement Maxims also occurred in some interactions between teachers and students, which promoted an approachable atmosphere.

It's worth mentioning that the researcher also observed the use of some euphemistic expressions by teachers to mitigate damage and avoid direct criticism. For example, instead of saying "You're wrong," the teacher often says "Not quite right, can you elaborate more?" to soften the impact of words.

Overall, the observation confirms the strong impact of politeness and euphemism in changing the classroom dynamics from a less motivating environment to a trustful, motivating, and respectful atmosphere, leading to effective and successful teaching and learning.

Also, it should be highlighted that despite the use of formal language by teachers during their sessions, the presence of an informal tone also played a crucial role in building rapport, fostering trust, and encouraging participation. In the observed sessions, teachers adopted a balanced approach by blending authority with informality when necessary, which enhanced approachability and reduced students' anxiety. This was evident in instances where teachers addressed students by their first names or used casual expressions such as "I love you," along with humor, jokes, or light rhetorical teasing like "You are coming like a tourist." The repeated use of the Tact maxim further helped soften their language, indicating a deliberate mix of formal and informal strategies to maintain both respect and connection in the classroom. Additionally, It's worth mentioning that some classroom interactions confirmed

that teachers tend to use more complex and initiative-driven politeness strategies, while students often relied on simpler expressions like ‘yes,’ ‘please,’ or ‘thankyou.’

3.8 Conclusion

The data collected from the three research instruments, Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs), interviews, and classroom observation, indicated a clear use of politeness strategies by both teachers and students. This use of politeness played a central role in fostering positive teacher-student relationships and creating a supportive learning atmosphere, which led to greater classroom engagement. The three research tools, DCT, teacher interviews, and observation data, strongly supported this, confirming that politeness strategies contributed significantly to respectful communication and overall classroom harmony. These findings confirm the first hypothesis, which proposed that politeness strategies enhance teacher-student rapport and promote better learning outcomes in Algerian EFL classrooms. This also supports what Fitriyani and Andriyanti (2020) explored concerning the use of politeness strategies in EFL classroom interactions, they emphasized the important role of the use of politeness strategies by both teachers and students in creating a respectful, more pleasant, and positive learning environment, which enhances students engagement that in return leads to better academic achievement. Fitriyani and Andriyanti (2020), Sa'idah and Thooyibah (2022) shared the same view regarding the use of politeness strategies, highlighting how it contributes to fostering a cooperative atmosphere, enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. Overall, all three tools confirmed that politeness strategies significantly contributed to respectful communication and overall classroom harmony.

More specifically, the DCTs and interviews were closely aligned with the findings from classroom observation. The most dominant politeness strategy was the Tact Maxim. Teachers acknowledged in interviews that they frequently used the Tact Maxim to build approachability and trust with students and others, maxims such as modesty or agreement, depending on the situation. This was mirrored in the observation data, where the Tact Maxim was frequently employed, especially in classroom corrections and feedback. Moreover, the DCT results also revealed that the most employed strategy in the twelfth scenario was the Tact maxim. However, despite a general awareness of politeness strategies, particularly among teachers, some students gave direct or even blunt responses, showing a limited or inconsistent application of these strategies due to various factors. Teachers in the interviews confirmed this, explaining that students tend to rely on basic expressions like

“please” and “thank you” but lack awareness of more complex strategies such as (Approbation or Sympathy... etc). The observation sessions also supported this, indicating that politeness strategies were more often initiated by teachers, with students playing a more passive communicative role. This also answers the first research question, highlighting that teachers show greater awareness and more strategic use of politeness than students. Another crucial finding indicates that all research tools confirm that the level of formality affects the use of politeness. For instance, the DCT results revealed that students used a mix of formal language and less formal language in their interactions, depending largely on the relationship between interlocutors and the specific context. Additionally, in the interview, teachers highlight that excessive use of formality builds boundaries and creates distance between teachers and their students, and the only way to avoid this issue is a balanced approach that fosters comfort and approachability. They suggested that a balanced approach, maintaining respect while fostering comfort and approachability, is most effective. Similarly, classroom observations revealed that teachers often adopted moderate formality and used politeness strategies, including euphemism, to maintain a respectful yet relaxed learning environment. These results partially confirm the second research hypothesis, which states that Teachers are more likely to use formal politeness strategies, while students may use a combination of formal and informal strategies depending on their relationship with the teacher and peers and the classroom context. While students clearly employed a combination of both formal and informal strategies depending on the situation and even relationship with their teachers and peers. Teachers did not rely only on formal politeness strategies. Instead, they preferred to use a balanced approach, combining both formal with moderate or less formal expressions to avoid creating boundaries and build a more approachable and supportive classroom setting. These finding aligns with the work of Wahyu (2022), who also found that teachers alternate between formal and informal politeness strategies depending on contextual factors, emphasizing that levels of formality are not fixed but rather adaptable according to the situation. Also, Mahmud (2019), investigation confirmed that students tend to use both formal and informal strategies based on the context of interaction.

General Conclusion

4 General Conclusion

The research at hand focused on investigating the role and use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms. This study aimed to examine how these strategies contribute to fostering supportive teacher-student relationships, leading to better engagement and academic achievements. Moreover, this work sheds light on the impact of the level of formality on how politeness is used and perceived in classroom interactions. A Discourse Completion Task, an interview, and classroom observation were conducted and analyzed based on Leech's politeness maxims.

The findings of this study directly address the research questions and confirm the hypothesis regarding the significant role of politeness strategies in enhancing teacher-student relationships and promoting better classroom engagement and learning outcomes in Algerian EFL classrooms. Specifically, the results revealed how politeness enhances classroom interactions by fostering a positive and respectful learning environment.

Additionally, the results revealed that both teachers and students employ politeness strategies. However, there was a clear distinction in the way politeness strategies are applied: teachers tended to use more complex strategies, while students often relied on simpler or more direct expressions. and this variation appears to be shaped by different aspects such as social dynamics, the level of formality, language proficiency, and the situation itself. This reinforces the assumption that politeness is shaped by many variables, which makes it a complex phenomenon.

One of the key findings is the common use of the Tact maxim(64,89%)by both teachers and students, which involves minimizing cost to others and maximizing benefit to others, particularly in situations that involve asking for help or requesting something. Moreover, the Approbation maxim(8,57%), which involves minimizing dispraise and maximizing praise to others, co-occurs especially in teachers' feedback, where they combine both criticisms with support to protect the students' face, such as "You could do better. Good job." Similarly, the Modesty maxim(2,04%), which aims at minimizing praise and maximizing dispraise of self, was evident in teacher-student interactions. The Agreement maxim(2,85%) was also employed by teachers and students, as well as the Generosity maxim(3,67%), which aims at minimizing benefit to self and maximizing cost to self.

However, the Sympathy maxim(0%) was the least employed by both teachers and students. However, the results indicated that some students showed less to zero awareness of politeness strategies; they tended to use less formal and impolite expressions when interacting with their peers and teachers, and they accounted for 44% of the provided responses. This was evident in the DCT results and confirmed in both the observation sessions and the interviews. These findings indicate that although both teachers and students made use of politeness strategies, it was the teachers who demonstrated a higher level of awareness of more complex politeness strategies than the students, who used simple strategies.

Another key dimension confirmed in this piece of work is the impact of the level of formality on the use of politeness strategies. Formality plays a significant role in shaping how students and teachers use language in classroom interactions. This aligns with the research question concerning the extent to which formality influences politeness in the EFL context.

The present research also sheds light on the influence of the use of politeness strategies on teacher-student relationships. It helped pave the way for a fertile environment, an environment where individuals can establish positive rapport. This positive rapport fosters an environment that facilitates cognitive learning and successful knowledge transfer. The use of polite language creates a very comfortable atmosphere in the classroom, which ultimately enhances academic achievement and leads to effective teaching. So, if teachers want to create a fertile environment and aim to be successful, they need to pave the way for this to happen. This is necessary for having a cognitive product transferred, transmitted, and conveyed appropriately to learners. Because the latter is not established randomly, rather it is built through the establishment of a positive rapport, which is based on respect. And we cannot separate respect from politeness. In other words, when teachers are polite, encouraging, and use positive talk helps in creating and building a strong bond with students. Over time, this positive environment will boost the students' academic achievement. As a result, the teaching-learning mission will be successful. Because, at the end of the day, it's a space of exchange of knowledge between the students and teachers, and for that exchange to happen, it requires an effective channel of communication. And those channels cannot be facilitated without politeness, because it is a precursor of mutual respect between the two parties.

All in all, the role of politeness in Algerian EFL classrooms cannot be denied, and both students and teachers employ these strategies either consciously or subconsciously to

build healthy relationships and avoid misunderstanding. This makes it the key factor in shaping successful classroom interactions.

Although this study highlighted invaluable insights on the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms, it is important to discuss and acknowledge its limitations. The first limitation is an accessibility issue; the researcher was unable to collect data from a large number of students. As a result, the findings may not be generalized.

Furthermore, the availability of relevant literature addressing the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms was limited, which created a theoretical challenge for the researcher.

Finally, the study focused on language (verbal politeness strategies), excluding non-verbal aspects such as gestures, tone of voice, and facial expressions, which also play a significant role in classroom interaction. Lastly, the sample consisted only of Master One EFL learners, excluding License students (Years 1, 2, 3) and Master Two students, whose level of language proficiency and classroom experience is different and may have influenced the variation in their language use.

Recommendations

For future studies, it is highly recommended to take a larger sample of students from different academic levels, including License(1,2,3),and Master Two students, to enhance the generalizability of the results.

Furthermore, researchers should consider conducting comparative studies that test the use of politeness strategies among students with varying levels of language proficiency,such as beginners vs advanced learners,to understand how language proficiency influences the use of language. Additionally, future research should also explore gender differences in the use of politeness strategies, comparing males' and females' usage.

Future investigations should also study the non-verbal politeness strategies, such as tone, facial expressions, and gestures, as these are very important in classroom interactions, but these were beyond the scope of this study.

Future studies should include a larger sample of EFL teachers to explore how educators implement politeness strategies and to obtain more specific and generalizable percentages. Researchers are also encouraged to examine the influence of cultural background on the use of these strategies, as cultural norms may significantly shape the way politeness is expressed in classroom interactions.

In addition, further research is needed on online teaching environments to investigate how politeness is maintained and expressed in virtual settings, particularly in EFL contexts. Comparative studies between face-to-face and online interactions would provide valuable insights.

It is also recommended to explore the use of politeness strategies in rural versus urban classrooms, in order to understand how different teaching contexts and social environments influence language use and communicative behavior.

Moreover, future research should explore the Sympathy Maxim, as it was notably absent in this study among both teachers and students. Investigating the reasons behind its limited or non-use could help complete the picture of politeness in Algerian EFL classrooms and uncover potential cultural or contextual explanations.

To conclude, more attention should be given to the use of politeness in Algerian EFL contexts, and researchers are encouraged to consider this and do further studies.

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Appendix A: students' discourse completion task (DCT)

Dear participants, thank you for participating in this study; this discourse completion task aims to investigate the use of politeness strategies in Algerian EFL classrooms. Your responses will help us understand how teachers and students interact and how courteous language influences communication in the learning atmosphere.

Instructions: You will be given different classroom scenarios, to which you need to write how you would naturally respond in each situation. Please try to answer as naturally and authentically as possible, as there are no right or wrong answers.

Your responses will remain anonymous and will be used for academic purposes only.

Scenario 1: asking for help from a teacher.

Context: You don't understand a task given by your teacher, and you need help. How would you ask the teacher for help?

Scenario 2: expressing disagreement with the teacher's opinion.

Context: The teacher says something you disagree with during the course. How would you express your disagreement?

Scenario 3: Addressing a misunderstanding with the teacher.

Context: The teacher misinterpreted something you said in the class, and you want to defend yourself and clarify it. How would you clarify the situation?

Scenario 4: asking for a grade review.

Context: You disagree with the grade you got in the TD mark. How would you ask the teacher to reconsider it?

Scenario 5: correcting the teacher.

Context: while your teacher was explaining a concept, you noticed an error (grammatical or pronunciation). How would you address his to correct his statement?

Scenario6: Changing seats.

Context: Your teacher asks you to change your seat to rearrange the class, but you do not want to move. How would you refuse the teacher's request?

Scenario 7: Refusing the teacher's request.

Context: Your teacher asks you to present in front of the class, but you're not ready to do so. How would you refuse?

Scenario 8: giving feedback to your classmate.

Context: Your classmate asks for your opinion on their presentation. However, you feel that it was not a good presentation. How would you share your feedback with them?

Scenario9: Correcting a classmate.

Context: Your classmate mispronounced a word in English. How would you correct his pronunciation?

Scenario10: Arriving late.

Context: You arrive late to class, and your teacher is upset with you. What would you say to him in this situation?

Scenario11: requesting an extension for an assignment.

Context: Your teacher gave you an assignment with a deadline, but you could not complete it on time. How would you ask them for a time extension?

Scenario 12: borrowing a classmate's notes.

Context: You were absent for a week and missed several lessons. You need to ask your classmate to share their notes with you. How would you make this request?

Appendix B: teachers' interview

This interview aims to investigate the politeness strategies used in Algerian EFL classrooms and how they contribute to fostering supportive teacher-student relationships, leading to better engagement and academic achievements.

Section 1: The use of politeness strategies.

1. Do you mindfully use politeness strategies in your classroom? If so, why? How often?
2. Which politeness strategies do you tend to use the most? (e.g., the Tact maxim, the generosity maxim, the approbation maxim)
3. Do you feel that students respond or behave differently when you use polite language? How?

Section 2: Teachers vs. Students' use of politeness and its impact on classroom interactions.

1. Based on your own experience, do teachers use more politeness strategies than students, or vice versa? Why? Can you provide any examples?
2. Which one do you think uses politeness strategies more, males or females?
3. Have you observed any specific politeness strategies that students use the most when addressing you or their classmates?
4. How do you think politeness fosters supportive teacher-student relationships and enhances communication and learning outcomes?
5. Do you think that students fake politeness for their own interests? Can you tell the difference between authentic and fake politeness? Can you provide any examples?

Section 3: The role of formality in the use of politeness.

1. To what extent does the degree of formality affect the use of politeness strategies in the classroom?