

**VOL 15 NO 2. JULI- DESEMBER 2019**

**P-ISSN 1829-7951  
E-ISSN 2655-9889  
DOI 10.34005**

**Lingua**



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PUBLISHED: 2020-02-05

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1829-7951

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1829-7951

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Nurul Hasanah Fajaria  
Universitas Islam As-Syafi'iyah Jakarta

**Phone**

085645483331

[nurulhasanah.fkip@uia.ac.id](mailto:nurulhasanah.fkip@uia.ac.id)

### Support Contact

Hanafi Wibowo

**Phone**

081291834455

[hanafiwibowo.fkip@uia.ac.id](mailto:hanafiwibowo.fkip@uia.ac.id)

ISSN

**P-ISSN**

1829-7951

**E-ISSN**

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# Language Phenomenon in Classroom Learning Process: A Study at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School Gorontalo

**Sayama Malabar**

Universitas Negeri Gorontalo

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.34005/lingua.v16i1.595>

**Keywords:** Phenomenon, Language, Spoken Discourse, Learning, Islamic Senior High School

## **ABSTRACT**

This present study is devoted to investigating the language phenomenon focusing on spoken communication during the classroom learning at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School, Gorontalo. Employing a descriptive qualitative method, the data of this study encompassed the utterances of the teacher and students during the classroom learning, specifically in UN (national examination) subjects. The data were generated by a conversation method with its basic techniques, i.e., recording, and note-taking. Furthermore, the data were qualitatively analyzed by (1) transcribing the recording into a written discourse, (2) grouping the data according to the problem statement, (3) examining the data, and (4) summing up. This study successfully identifies four strategies used during the communication process in a classroom learning; the strategies are (1) bald on record, (2) positive politeness, (3) negative politeness, and (4) off record.

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PUBLISHED

2020-02-06

ISSUE

Vol 16 No 1 (2020): Lingua Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa (on going)

SECTION

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Articles

ISSN

**P-ISSN**

1829-7951

**E-ISSN**

2655-9889

**LANGUAGE PHENOMENON IN CLASSROOM LEARNING PROCESS:  
A STUDY AT MAN MODEL STATE ISLAMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
GORONTALO**

**Sayama Malabar**

*Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, Jl. Jenderal Sudirman Kota Gorontalo  
Email: sayamamalabar@gmail.com*

**Abstract**

This present study is devoted to investigating the language phenomenon focusing on spoken communication during the classroom learning at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School, Gorontalo. Employing a descriptive qualitative method, the data of this study encompassed the utterances of the teacher and students during the classroom learning, specifically in UN (national examination) subjects. The data were generated by a conversation method with its basic techniques, i.e., recording, and note-taking. Furthermore, the data were qualitatively analyzed by (1) transcribing the recording into a written discourse, (2) grouping the data according to the problem statement, (3) examining the data, and (4) summing up. This study successfully identifies four strategies used during the communication process in a classroom learning; the strategies are (1) bald on record, (2) positive politeness, (3) negative politeness, and (4) off record.

**Keywords: Phenomenon, Language, Spoken Discourse, Learning, Islamic Senior High School**

**1. Introduction**

The issue that underpins the conduct of this research is the phenomenon of impoliteness in spoken communication at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School in Gorontalo during classroom learning. A concrete example of this is the conversation between the teacher and students during the scheduled exercise of the national examination (hereinafter referred to as UN) subjects. Both the teacher and the students no longer refer to the politeness in speaking. Such a problem is evident from the use of varied languages, e.g., Malay language with Manadonese and Gorontaloese dialect.

Another instance is illustrated in the interaction between student 1 (S1) and the teacher (G), also, please note that the English translation is translated from the polite sentence (italicized, underlined sentence): *Pak guru, kiapa ti pak*

*bilang torang pe jawaban salah?” (Pak guru, mengapa kata Pak guru jawaban kami salah?) [Would you please tell us why our answer is wrong, Sir?] The sentence was expressed by the student with a wondering expression on his/her face. Replying to the student’s question, the teacher showed a bit of anger: “Tadi ti pak guru so jelaskan, kamu tidak mangarti? (Tadi Pak guru sudah jelaskan, apakah kamu tidak mengerti?) [I’ve already explained it to you, and you still don’t understand it?] Another student (S2) objected to the teacher's response, saying: “Iya pak! Penjelasan yang ti pak kase tadi cuma untuk soal yang menentukan isi tabel bukan simpulan punya. (Ya pak, penjelasan yang pak berikan tadi hanya cocok untuk soal menentukan isi tabel bukan untuk simpulan tabel) [Yes, Sir. The explanation was only for determining the content of the table, not the conclusion]. The teacher refuted the statement from S2, saying: “Ini jawaban dari guru laen” (Jawaban ini dari guru lain) [I got this answer from other teachers]. S1 rebut the teacher; angrily, the student said, “Torang tidak butuh dari mana ini jawaban. Yang torang butuh alasan kiyapa sampe itu depe jawaban. Kalu torang cocokkan dengan penjelasan Ibu Ani, jawaban A yang benar karna yang ditanya simpulan. Simpulan harus mengkafer semua data. Tidak boleh Cuma satu. (Kami tidak membutuhkan dari mana jawaban itu. Yang kami butuhkan mengapa jawabannya itu. Kalau kami cocokkan dengan penjelasan Ibu Ani, jawaban yang benar A karena untuk menentukan simpulan tabel harus mencakup semua data) [We need the explanation on why the answer should be like that, it’s not about from whom did you get the answer. Ma’am Ani told us that option A is correct since the conclusion of the table encompasses all data]. Upon hearing this, the teacher got angry and spoke loudly. “Ooh ... jadi kamu ba bantah pa ti pak guru. So pintar-pintar berarti kamu ee. Kalu bagitu kamu cari guru lain yang lebe kamu dengar (sambil melempar penghapus dan keluar dari kelas dalam keadaan marah). (Ooh ... jadi kamu membantah Pak guru. Sudah pintar kamu ya, kalau begitu cari saja guru yang lebih kamu dengar) [I see, you think you are a smart student, aren’t you? Alright, just find other teacher that you guys want].*

The condition above represents the use of Malay language mixed with Manadonese and Gorontaloese dialect during classroom learning. It reflects

impoliteness in communication, by which the people involved in the conversation consider the behavior of their speaking partner as face-attacking. This situation consequently leads to dissonant in the class, which is negatively impactful on the student learning motivation. Abdurrahman (2012: 87) has claimed that a learning atmosphere contributes to the learning motivation--and the student motivation is central to their achievement. Considering this, impoliteness in communication is a surefire way to fail classroom learning. The notion resonates with the opinion by Muslich (2007), asserting that the use of language should adhere to the cultural elements of society. Otherwise, a person will be perceived negatively by other people; the people may judge the person as being arrogant, haughty, indifferent, selfish, and worse, uncivilized.

The issue mentioned in the above discussion is worth examining. Thereby, as based on the research's problem statement, this study is devoted to investigating the language phenomenon focusing on spoken communication during the classroom learning at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School, Gorontalo.

## **2. Literature Review**

The study employed theories of politeness principles by Leech and by Brown, Levinson and Yule. Leech (1983:19) views the politeness principles as a conflict prevention strategy that can be measured by the extent to which the speaker attempts to avert dispute in conversation. Further, Leech (2011:206-207) mentions six types of maxim related to politeness principles, those are (a) (tact maxim), (b) generosity maxim, (c) approbation maxim, (d) modesty maxim, (e) agreement maxim, and (f) sympathy maxim. In addition to the theory by Leech, Brown and Levinson (2012:7) encapsulate the concept of politeness principles and divide it into five, namely (1) bald on record, (2) positive politeness, (3) negative politeness, (4) off record, and (5) remaining silent (as cited in Manaf, 2011:213). Yule (2006:107) proposes three types of speech act, i.e., (a) negative politeness, (b) positive politeness, and (c) remain silent.

### 3. Methodology

This study was conducted at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School, Gorontalo, in the academic year of 2018/2019. It relied on the data from the utterances of the teacher and students during classroom learning. UN (national examination) subjects. The data were generated by a conversation method with its basic techniques, i.e., recording, and notetaking. Furthermore, the data were qualitatively analyzed by (1) transcribing the recording into a written discourse, (2) grouping the data according to the problem statement, (3) examining the data, and (4) summing up.

### 4. Results and Discussion

#### a. Language Phenomenon in Spoken Communication During the classroom learning at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School in Gorontalo.

Speaking is a form of communication that is inseparable from the activities of the teacher and students in a classroom learning process. This form of communication refers to the activities of expressing meaningful sentences to perform wide range of activities in a given social context, such as asking, answering, responding, commenting, asking for something, etc. In addition to exchanging messages, teachers and students build a social relationship in oral communication. According to the result, there are four strategies used during the communication process in a classroom learning; the strategies are (1) bald on record, (2) positive politeness, (3) negative politeness, and (4) off record. Each strategy is discussed separately in the following sections.

#### **Bald on Record**

Bald on record is the strategy that is mostly found in the utterances of both the teachers and the students. The dominant use of the strategy applies in the context of classroom learning. For this reason, all information from the teacher is explained directly and concisely. The example is as follows

KP-1 (G): *Wei (Hai)? Jangan ribut! Selesaikan tugas kalian! Kamu terlalu pandang enteng ya? Jadi get aut (get out) yang tidak bikin!* [Be

silent! Just finish the task! You do underestimate the lesson, don't you? Those who don't submit the task, get out!] (A teacher scolded the students as none of them submit their tasks in English subject).

KP-2 (G): *Saya kasih contoh dulu misalnya masalah narkoba ya?* [Let me give you some examples, maybe the issue of narcotics will do] (A teacher gave a lecture during the lesson of *qiyas* in Islamic *fiqh* (jurisprudence)).

KP-3 (G): *Nah, itu yang saya tanya, kenapa tegak lurus* [That is my question; why it should be vertical]. (A teacher responded to the students' question in the lesson of vertical during the mathematics class).

Sentence KP-1 is a sentence uttered by the teacher to the student directly in an unambiguous manner; it is intended to give a clear direction to the students that the lesson and the task are important and should be accomplished. In the sentence, the speech act used belongs to the command illocutionary act, i.e., an illocutionary act that has the directive force to do something; the teacher used a loud tone to emphasize something, such as the stress in the phrase *get out*. The tone is different in another instance, i.e., KP-2 (G): *Saya kasih contoh dulu misalnya masalah narkoba ya?* [Let me give you some examples, maybe the issue of narcotics will do]. In this example, the teacher spoke in a soft tone. This is also the same as seen in example KP-3 (G): *Nah, itu yang saya tanya, kenapa tegak lurus* [That is my question; why it should be vertical]. The two sentences highlight the incorporation of the word *saya* and *ya* to emphasize the softer tone used by the teacher, which is aimed at having a polite conversation.

### **Positive Politeness**

Positive politeness is a strategy that is found in the teacher's utterance in communication with the students during classroom learning. There are two sub-strategies in this example, i.e., (1) using group identity markers and (2) humor. Provided in the following section is the discussion of each sub-strategy.

### a. Using the Group Identity Marker

KP-4 (G): *Yaa ngomong aja! Silahkan Mbak!* [Just tell me the reason!] (A teacher scolded a female student who had forced to stand in front of the class as she had yet to give the report paper during the natural sciences class).

KP-4 (S): *Assalamu'alaikum. Hihhi. Jangan tatawa wa uti?* [Assalamu'alaikum. Hihhi. Don't make fun of me, please] (A student told the others not to make a noise during a class presentation in the Indonesian Language subject).

Sentence KP-4 and KP-5 represent the use of group identity marker, namely *salam* (Islamic greeting), *mbak* (a form of address for Javanese girl who is older than the speaker), *uti* (a form of address used by Gorontaloese).

### b. Humor

KP-5 (G): *Oke bagaimana dengan perayaan tahun pake petasan?* [What is your opinion about firecrackers in the New Year celebration?]

KP-6 (S1): *Ya ibu, sebenarnya tidak boleh* [Actually, firecrackers are not allowed anymore].

KP-6 (S2): *Pake bunggo, pake bunggo boleh* [But, we think *bunggo* is not a problem (Gorontaloese traditional bamboo cannon)].

KP-7 (S3): Hahaha

(The conversation above illustrates a situation when a teacher gave a lecture in the lesson of *aqidah*, lit. creed).

KP-8 (G): *Golongan darah orang tua harus sama dengan anaknya. Artinya begini, ketika ada yang bergolongan darah B berarti anak Anda termasuk anak orang lain* [Parent's blood type should be the same as their children. In other words, if one of the children has a different blood type, let's say B, then the child is someone else's child].

KP-9 (S): Hahaha

(The example above is the conversation between the teacher and students during the biology class).

In script KP\_5 - 9, the teacher and some students used humor to reduce anxiety and release tension during the classroom learning.

### **Negative Politeness**

Negative politeness strategies are opted to create a positive impression of a speaker to the listener. These strategies are common in teacher-student interaction during the class; it consists of seven sub-strategies, i.e., (1) indirect speech, (2) hedging, (3) using pessimistic expression, (4) minimizing threat, (5) using honorific terms, (6) using apologetic language, and (7) using inclusive terms. Each strategy is discussed in the following section separately.

#### **a. Using Indirect Requests**

The example below is the conversation with the incorporation of indirect requests during the class at Islamic Senior High School Gorontalo.

KP-10 (G) : *Eee boleh ti ibu minta Tisu lagi?* [Err, would you mind if I take more tissues?] (This script represents the teacher's request to the students, showing that she has no tissue to clean the whiteboard as the class has no erasure).

KP-11 (G) : *Boleh tenang dulu sadiki?* [Would you mind keeping silent?] (Representing teacher's favor to the students to keep silent in the class).

The above conversation illustrates the application of negative politeness strategies using indirect requests. In this situation, the teacher requested the student to clean the whiteboard by tissue; another example, i.e., KP-11 depicts the use of interrogative sentences to control noise in the class.

#### **b. Hedging**

Hedging is among the strategies in the politeness theory; this strategy was also found in the classroom interaction as shown in the following conversation script.

KP-12 (S): *Pak guru bilang tidak boleh kerja sama, tapi kalo misalnya ada yang minta tolong pak, mungkin boleh?* [You told us to work independently for this task. But how if one of us asks for help. If

you don't mind, can I help my friend?] (The student asked the teacher to clarify the topic of concordance in civic education subject).

KP-13 (G): *Kerjakan saja apa yang kau tau. Sapa tau yang kau bikin itu benar* [Just work on the tasks that you understand. Who knows that you get the correct answer]. (The teacher told the student who was yet to understand the explanation during the Islamic *fiqh* subject).

All scripts (KP-12 and 13) provides an illustration of the use of hedging, represented by the use of words *kalo*, *boleh*, *mungkin*, *sapa tau*.

### c. Using Pessimistic Expressions

The use of pessimistic expressions, one of the sub-strategies of negative politeness, is shown in the following conversation.

KP-14 (S) : *Ibu, so torang pe kelompok sekarang, tapi, ibu guru saya malu mo tampil soalnya masih salah-salah* [Excuse me, Ma'am. It's now our group's turn, but I'm shy—I'm afraid if there will be some mistakes]. (The student explained his/her concern to the teacher before presenting group projects in front of the class during *Aqidah* subject).

KP-15(S): *Pak guru, saya tidak tau mo bekeng bagaimana ini gambar* [Sir, I don't know what to do with the picture]. (The student expressed his/her concern to the teacher during the discussion of designing a mind-map of the structure of short story).

The examples above contain the expression of pessimism as the students are unsure of accomplishing or performing the task given by their teachers.

### d. Minimizing Imposition

Minimizing imposition in a request is one of the strategies in the politeness theory. The present study discovered the use of this typical strategy in the classroom interaction, as shown in the following conversation script.

KP-16 (G): *Eee uti boleh ti ibu minta bantuan sadiki?* [Err, would you mind if I ask you for something?] (The teacher asked the student (the

one who gave the teacher the paper) to help her move the table that blocked the whiteboard).

KP-17 (S): *Teman-teman, sebelum pulang ke rumah apa tidak lebe bae torang somo karja ini tugas* [Guys, if you don't mind, would it better for us to finish the task before going home]. (A student told his/her friend to complete their mathematics tasks before going home so they can accomplish it earlier as the teacher will check the task tomorrow).

The above conversation script (KP-16 and 17) illustrates the use of expressions that minimize imposition. In KP-16, the teacher did not urge the student to move the table, although she needed help. This situation also applies to KP-17, where the student did not ask their friends to follow the command. In fact, the student only gave suggestions to the others using the word *apa tidak lebe bae* (would it better). Using such expressions implies that the decision is all for the hearer (in this case, the other students) to choose.

#### **e. Honorifics**

Honorifics are an obligation in teacher-student interaction in all schools, including MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School in Gorontalo. This is seen in the following conversation script.

KP-17 (G): *Ketua-ketua kelompok saya undang ke depan kelas membacakan hasil kerja kelompok masing-masing!* [I invite all group leaders to present your work in front of the class!] (The teacher asked for every group leaders to present their tasks in an Indonesian language class).

KP-18 (S): *Pak guru, boleh mo ganti kafer tugas?* [Sir, is it alright if we change the cover of the paper?] (The student asked the teacher during the Indonesian language class).

The above example (KP-17 and 18) shows the use of honorifics; it is represented by the use of words/phrases, such as *saya undang*, *saya*, and *Pak guru* (Sir is the common honorifics used by the student to address male teachers).

### **f. Using Apologetic Languages**

In classroom learning, it is common for both teachers and students to use apologetic languages if there are some mistakes. The following script is some examples of the use of this strategy.

KP-19 (S): *Kalo ini saya eror, salah ini, ini salah. Maaf uti saya salah.* (A student talked to others during a discussion session).

KP-20 (G): *Mohon maaf, sorry, ya ti ibu salah menjelaskan nomor yang benar. Yang benar jawaban A bukan B* [I am so sorry, I've mistakenly explained the answer. The correct answer is A, not B]. (A teacher explained to her students in discussing Indonesian language subject model tests of the National Examination).

The above script KP-19 and 20 contains apologetic languages that represent the use of politeness in communication.

### **g. Using Inclusive Terms**

It is common for teachers and students to use inclusive terms during classroom learning. The following script is some examples of the use of this strategy.

KP-20 (G): *Siapa yang bisa tunjukkan contoh yang benar di papan tulis* [Who can give the correct examples? Please write it on the board].

(A mathematics teacher gave a task to the students).

KP-21(S): *Sudah selesai tugas kami pak guru* [We have finished our task, Sir].

(A student explained to the mathematics teacher during the class).

### **Off Record**

Teachers often use the off record strategy in the class. This study found two examples of using such a strategy in teacher-student interaction at MAN Model State Islamic Senior High School; the examples are (1) hints and (2) rhetoric questions. Provided in the following section is the discussion of the use of each strategy.

#### **a. Hints**

Provided in the following script is the example of indirect speech act using hints.

KPI-22 (G): By using a thumb signal (thumbs-up) and without saying any words, a teacher appraised the student for the correct answer, the

student wrote on the board. (This situation was during the mathematics class).

KPI-23 (G): Without saying any word, a student raised his hand to ask for permission to leave the class for a moment. (This hand sign is common for the students to ask for the teacher's permission before leaving the class for a moment).

Hinting, as seen in KPI\_22 and 23, is also a part of hand sign or sign language. In the examples, both the teacher and the student did not use any verbal language; instead, they opted for the non-verbal communication to, for example, give a compliment (thumbs-up) and to ask for permission to leave the class (raise hand).

### **b. Using Rhetoric Questions**

In classroom learning, the students and teachers frequently use rhetoric questions. Some of the examples are in the following conversation script.

KPI-24 (S): *Oke, semua pertanyaan teman-teman sudah kami jawab semua, jadi tidak ada lagi pertanyaan yang terlewati?* [Alright, we have answered all of the questions. Is there any that we missed?] (A group leader asked other student groups during a presentation class; the question, however, did not to be answered by the forum).

KPI-25 (G): *Mana yang harus saya pilih, yang lain menjawab sudah dan yang lain belum. Apa masih bingung dengan tugas ibu?* [Since some of you haven't finished the task, who should I pick to present your result? Are you still confused with the task?] (A teacher asked her students to confirm whether or not the assignment have been finished. Based on the students' replies, some had yet to complete the task. The teacher's question did not need answer from the students).

### **Silent Strategy**

Often during classroom learning the conversation does not contain indirect or direct speeches. However, the teacher sometimes does not reply to the students' questions

and vice versa. This study founds this situation at the research site, represented in the following script:

KPI-25 (S): *Pak guru, somo kumpul tugas?* [Are you going to collect the task, Sir?] (A student asked the teacher whether or not the task would be collected).

KPI-26 (G): (The teacher remained silent) (The teacher did not reply to the student's question about whether or not the task would be collected).

## 5. Conclusion

As based on the result of this research, there are four strategies used during the communication process in a classroom learning; the strategies are (1) bald on record, (2) positive politeness, (3) negative politeness, and (4) off record.

Bald on record is the strategy that is mostly found in the utterances of both the teachers and the students compared to other strategies. The dominant use of the strategy is because of the context of classroom learning. For this reason, all information from the teacher is explained directly and concisely. Sub-strategies involved in the positive politeness encompass: (1) using group identity markers and (2) humor. Negative politeness strategies consisted of seven sub-strategies, such as (1) indirect speech, (2) hedging, (3) using the pessimistic expression, (4) minimizing threat, (5) using honorific terms, (6) using apologetic language, and (7) using inclusive terms. Indirect strategies encompass several approaches, namely (1) hints and (2) rhetoric questions. These approaches are also used in direct strategies.

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