POLITENESS IN TEACHER- STUDENT INTERACTIONS: APOLOGY ACTION BASED-CASES

CHIAYE KHORSHEED FAQE[*] and ABBAS FADHIL LUTFI[**]

[*]Dept. of English Language, Faculty of Arts, Soran University, Kurdistan Region–Iraq

[**]Dept. of English Language, College of Languages, Salahaddin University, Kurdistan Region-Iraq

ABSTRACT

The current research paper aims to explore apology actions of politeness in teacher-student interactions in academic settings. In the current study, the researchers attempted to make use of the discursive approach to politeness as a post-modern view of politeness. Eelen (2001), Mills (2003), and Watts (2005) were launched noticeable criticism against Brown and Levinson and proposed the discursive approach. The present study has utilized a qualitative research method. It enabled researchers to collect detailed data on participants' experiences, which could be analyzed using interpretive methods to identify key themes and patterns. The results show that there is politeness in teacher-student interactions, in particular apology actions which serve as a particularly meaningful manifestation of politeness within teacher-student interactions. Moreover, various aspects related to politeness in teacher-student interactions, such as the cultural influences on politeness norms, and the role of power dynamics in shaping politeness behaviors should be taken into consideration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Every day, people use polite strategies language to communicate. The choice of language may reveal a lot about a person's interpersonal interactions. Politeness is crucial because it helps speakers understand each other and establish connection when they begin to communicate. Communication issues might indicate that a relationship is headed for problems. It is not uncommon for someone to be offended and the other person fails to try to put things right in a respectful manner. Self-reflection may be considered a quality of effective interaction.

The phenomenon of politeness or impoliteness is of great interest to scholars and theorists from a wide range of academic disciplines such as pragmatics, sociolinguistics, cultural studies, comparative studies, etc. Collective concern reflects the multidimensional nature of politeness and its significance in various contexts of human interaction. Rash (2004) argues that linguistic politeness is an essential component of human communication because it allows people to live peacefully and in harmony as long as they follow certain social norms while interacting with each other. Since

each approach has been taken to the concept, it is impossible to come up with a single definition of linguistic politeness that applies to all situations. However, despite the fact that there are numerous definitions, they frequently overlap in some way. The majority of recent theories on linguistic politeness consider politeness as a mechanism for avoiding conflict or as a strategy for maintaining good relationships cooperating in social engagement (Eelen, 2001& Watts, 2003).

Linguistic politeness is therefore defined as the ability of participants to communicate with each other in accordance with societal standards while also demonstrating respect for their sentiments. To be linguistically courteous, you must adapt your communication style to the context of the other person's relationship. Most people perceive rudeness to be the use of insensitive idioms. Politeness in language means using signs and language to try to take into account and make sense of the social context of the interaction.

The conceptualization of politeness viewed politeness as face-threat device (Brown and Levinson, 1978) and being "a good thing" (Holmes, 1995) to a rather "manipulative tool" (Mills, 2003, p. 59 &Watts, 2005, p. 69). As

stated by (Mills 2003, p. 60), this kind of shifting indicated that politeness can be used for a variety of purposes, such as, "avoiding responsibility" or "hiding one's real intentions". To Mills (2003), context should be taken into account while evaluating politeness and that "politeness cannot be seen as simply 'nice' or 'deferent' behaviour towards others, but should be seen as a wide-ranging set of behaviors which individuals view differently depending on the context and interactions" (Mills, 2003, p. 245).

PREVIOUS STUDIES

Over the years, many researchers have conducted a multitude of studies on the topic of politeness. This demonstrates the significant interest and attention that the concept of politeness has garnered within the academic community. Scholars from various fields, including pragmatics, sociolinguistics, anthropology, psychology, and communication studies, among others, have contributed to the extensive body of research on politeness.

They have explored politeness not only in interpersonal interactions but also in various other aspects of research. On their part, researchers have delved into the intricacies of politeness in different cultural contexts, examining how politeness norms and practices vary across societies and languages. They have investigated politeness strategies used in professional settings, educational environments, healthcare interactions, online communication, and many other domains.

Numerous studies regarding politeness have been conducted by several researchers. Many studies have been carried out not only in interaction, but also in various aspects of research. Conceptualizing Politeness in Japanese and Greek was the focus of Saeko Fukushima and Maria Sifianou's first investigation (2017). Greek visitors who self-identified as polite were seen positively, while Japanese attendees self-identified as courteous firmly. This research suggests that being polite indicates concern for the requirements and feelings of others. Maharani (2017) conducted a study using Leech theory maxims inside a movie. Her research consisted of analyzing how many different forms of politeness were shown by the film's key characters and comparing those results to one another. She stated that the primary characters made use of all the maxims, but just two of them occurred regularly. The maxims of approval and agreement were those two phrases. These two adages were put into practice seven times during the course of the film's major protagonists.

Hosseinpur and Mousavi (2020) organized a research entitled "Politeness on instagram: The Employment of Gratitude Speech Act by Male and Female English and Persian Users." According to this research, Russian and Persian instagram users mostly employed politeness approaches of thankfulness expressing. In spite of this, Russian and Persian Instagram users employed three positive politeness behaviors and one negative politeness differently. Interactions between people of various cultures resulted in the occurrence of this event. According to the conclusions of this research project, users of Instagram made use of gender-free language, direction language, and secret language while communicating with one another.

Sugianto (2021) conducted a study entitled "Pragmatic Comparison on Javanese and Western Politeness in Cross-Cultural Communication." The study attended to the different levels of politeness shown by westerners and Javanese, particularly in terms of how they responded to and declined offers of help. The addressing strategies and the rejecting tactics were the two aspects that made up the politeness characteristic. The politeness feature was formed of these two aspects. According to the results of this investigation, the degree of association may be classified into one of three distinct buckets: lower, equal, or larger levels. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the cultural differences in politeness levels between Westerners and Javanese individuals, particularly in the context of responding to and declining offers of help. By examining the addressing strategies and rejecting tactics employed by participants, researchers were able to categorize the levels of politeness exhibited by these groups into lower, equal, or larger. This research contributes to our understanding of how cultural norms and expectations influence politeness behavior in interpersonal interactions.

Another study was carried out by Fitriah and Hidayat (2018) and was published under the title "Politeness: Cultural Dimensions of Linguistic Choice." It intended to accomplish the goal of educating pupils about the manners of politeness practiced in the culture that was the focus of the study. The study's findings were anticipated to help students communicate more effectively with individuals from other cultures.

Nurhasanah (2018) conducted a research on "Gender Language Differences in Traditional Markets." The researcher focused on examining conversations between sellers and purchasers at traditional markets, using Lakoff's theory as a framework for analysis. Lakoff's theory, developed by linguist Robin Lakoff, explores how language and gender intersect and how gender influences linguistic patterns and communication styles. Her study recorded and studied conversations between sellers and purchasers using Lakoff's theory. Conversations between sellers and clients at traditional markets took on various linguistic forms, some of which are distinct. The customers that were evaluated include male and female purchasers; thus, Nurhasanah investigated the various ways in which male and female buyers interact with one another differently. The study investigates the conversations between sellers and purchasers in traditional markets, drawing on Lakoff's theory as a theoretical framework. It explored the various linguistic forms that arise in these interactions and aims to analyze any differences in the ways male and female buyers engage with sellers. Through this analysis, the researcher seeks to enhance our understanding of the gendered aspects of buyer-seller communication in traditional market contexts.

Yuting Mu (2015) implemented several politeness methods to both English and Chinese movies. The researcher chose to focus on five well-known films and 10 reviews to accompany them, splitting the reviews evenly between English and Chinese. The study revealed that English and Chinese movie reviewers utilized significantly different approaches to both positive and negative evaluation of films.

Another related study entitled "Effects of positive politeness strategies in business letters." by Jansen's and Janssen's (2010) was conducted on the impacts of positive politeness strategies in business letters. The goal of this study was to analyze the many ways in which extra and combined positive strategies could be used as a defense mechanism against claims made by policy-holders. This study generated two different sets of outcomes from two different experiments: one of the studies had a positive influence on the quality of the letter, whilst the other two strategies had virtually no impact at all.

Murti (2020) conducted a research on ""An analysis of Politeness Strategies on Comments Indonesian Politicians Twitter Account". In her study, Murti identified some politeness strategies comments on politicians' followers. The researcher showed all types of politeness strategies utilized by the politicians" followers as they tried to comment on their twitter account. The only way these opinions were shared was via the presentation of the number of persons who used each strategy.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research methods typically involve gathering data through techniques such as observation, interviews, and focus groups. Creswell (2002) suggests that "an inquiry approach useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon of politeness". In line with this recommendation, the present study utilized a qualitative research method to examine the research question at hand. This approach enabled the researchers to collect rich data on participants' experiences, which could be analyzed using interpretive methods to identify key themes and patterns.

STUDY INSTRUMENT

In the present study, the researchers made a deliberate choice to conduct observations on naturally transpiring audio data, focusing specifically on teacher-student interactions during their routine meetings. This methodological decision was intended to faithfully capture the genuine instances of politeness as manifested in authentic real-world settings, thereby facilitating the generation of valuable insights that hold practical relevance and applicability.

STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The current research focuses on investigating politeness in teacher-student interactions, using Jefferson's conventions for transcription of the data. The study population primarily comprises teachers and students from Soran University and the University of Duhok. These two institutions were chosen as they provide a suitable setting for exploring the research topic due to the frequency and nature of teacher-student interactions that occur within their academic environment. By examining the interactions between teachers and students in these institutions, the research seeks to shed light on how politeness is expressed and perceived in such settings, and how it affects the dynamics of communication and social relations between teachers and students in two daily class interactions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In this particular section of the study, our focus lies on conducting a meticulous and systematic analysis of apology actions that take place within the context of teacher-student interactions during their routine classroom exchanges. The primary objective is to identify and elucidate the most salient apology actions employed by both teachers and students when encountering instances of conflict, misunderstanding, or interpersonal difficulties.

EXTRACT 1: Formatting A Female Student's Flash Drive by Her Teacher Accidentally

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01 TE: ↑ You can use my laptop.
02 ST: ((cheerfully)) oh::h   ↑ this is rea::lly helpful
         ( the student is busy with transferring slides to her flash drive)
03 TE: ((Cheerfully)) No:: worries
04 ST: ↑ God bless you my lovely teacher
05 TE: Is your flash drive ↑clean?
06 ST: ↑ Yeah
07 TE: I want to check it
         ( the teacher plugs the flash drive into his laptop)
08 ST: ↑ Is everything OK teacher?
09 TE: Oh::h  (0.5) I have formatted instead of ↓ scanning
010 ST: Really ?
011 TE: I am so:: sorry
012 ST: Yo::u destroyed all my ↑ files
013 TE: I am very very so::rry
014 ST: Ho::w can I retrieve all my DATA. It is a disaster
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When faced with a situation where a teacher has unintentionally or intentionally made a mistake, it is crucial to approach the situation with thoughtfulness and empathy, taking into account the teacher's membership category and the institutional regulations. It is important to remember that everyone is liable to make mistakes, and therefore, showing compassion and support can go a long way in resolving the situation (Ahmed, 2017). When dealing with a teacher who has intentionally or unintentionally done something, it is essential to approach the situation with a thoughtful and empathetic attitude due to the membership category and institutional regulations. Taking a compassionate approach can also help in building positive relationship between the teacher and student, which is essential for effective learning and growth. It is also important to keep in mind the institutional regulations that guide the behavior of teachers, as these regulations can impact the way that the situation is handled.

Overall, by showing understanding and support, it is possible to turn a negative situation into a positive one and promote mutual respect and understanding between teachers and students. Accidents happen to everyone and we should always approach to finding solutions rather than assigning blame. It is very important that both participants should avoid blame and help to maintain relationships towards finding a solution that meets everyone's needs. The above extract exemplifies the rejection of unintentional accident on the student's part regardless offering solutions from the teacher's side. This type of approach can lead to a breakdown in communication and trust between the teacher and the student. A more effective approach would be for the teacher to work collaboratively with the student to address the issue and find a solution together. Blaming students for unintentional accidents can lead to feelings of frustration and resentment. The acknowledgment of the crucial nature of understanding what happened in educational interactions emphasizes the value of effective communication, empathy, and cooperation between teachers and students. This mutual comprehension lays the foundation for constructive learning experiences and supports the overall development and well-being

of all individuals involved in the educational process.

The teacher recognized that the student was experiencing technical difficulties and offered a solution by providing his laptop for the student's use. This is evident in the teacher's initial statement, "**You can use my laptop**". This is an unsolicited offer that engenders positive feelings often manifested in acceptance responses or expressing gratitude. Moreover, the teacher did not have to do so, but he did it out of courtesy. Discerning someone in a needy situation and initiating an offer in regard shows someone's inexplicit appeal to the moral order. He may feel that he had to do so morally. The teacher's action makes the next action conditionally and morally relevant.

The teacher's unsolicited offer to provide his laptop to the student in need elicits positive emotions such as gratitude or acceptance. Although the teacher was not obligated to offer his laptop, his courteous gesture shows an implicit appeal to moral values. The teacher's ability to discern the student's situation and offer a solution demonstrates recognition of moral responsibilities. By providing assistance, the teacher has created a moral obligation for the student to reciprocate in a way that is morally relevant. The student recognizes the teacher's favor when she cheerfully says "**really helpful**" in turn (**02**). By saying so in a cheerful manner, the student shows appreciation and recognizes the teacher's favor, namely a self-initiated offer. The student expressed appreciation and acknowledged the teacher's kind gesture by responding cheerfully. The student recognized that the offer to use the teacher's laptop was self-initiated and represented a favor from the teacher.

In the fourth exchange (**04**) the student does not amplify the teacher's closing the sequence at line 3. Instead, the students is determined to close down the sequence by himself which can be evaluated positively (morally) since he is the beneficiary of the teacher's offer (Clayman & Heritage 2014). Moreover, the student does not close the sequence with a minimal response. His turn is composed of two TCUs (God bless you + my lovely teacher). These all show the sense of appreciation of the teacher's self-initiated offer

which is polite. In exchange (**05**), the teacher asks a content question to the student regarding the flash drive, indicating a lack of knowledge about its contents. This may suggest that the teacher was not aware of the student's technical difficulties prior to offering the use of his laptop. The teacher's question demonstrates a willingness to understand the situation and potentially offer additional assistance. This exchange may also confirm the nature of the technical problem and allow the student to provide further explanation. A new sequence as content question whereby the teacher shows lack of knowledge about the flash drive being empty. Beside teacher's favor towards the student, she answers her teacher with "**Yes**" in exchange (**06**) when he asks for safety of her flash drive. This does not seem polite since the student has to speak formally and has to say 'yes'. But he may not have enough realization about that.

In exchange (**08**) the student realized that something not good happened because of the delayed response by her teacher when she says "**is everything OK teacher?**". Likewise, why does the student ask such a question? Did something happen? The student appears to become aware that something may be amiss due to the teacher's delayed response, and asks if everything is okay. This exchange suggests that the student is attuned to the teacher's behavior and communication patterns, and may be picking up on subtle cues that indicate a potential problem. The student's question could be interpreted as a way of seeking reassurance or clarification, as they may be unsure if the teacher's behavior is related to their technical difficulties or something else entirely. In exchange (**09**) the teacher states that he did something wrong. The tone indicates the relevance and indicates newsworthy of the action. The teacher admits to making and the tone of his statement emphasizes the importance and significance of the admission. This admission may have implications for the ongoing interaction between the teacher and student, as well as for the overall dynamics of the classroom. The student's response "**really**" in exchange (**010**) indicates that she is surprised by the teacher's admission of fault and views it as new information. In the final exchange of

interactions, the teacher feels embarrassment. Exchange (012) is a simple statement but it also implies blaming. Compare it with a statement like "**all my files have been destroyed**" which would have been different. If the student had made a statement like "**all my files have been destroyed**," it would have been a neutral statement without any implication of blame towards the teacher. The teacher attempts to amend his mistake by apologizing multiple times "**I am very very sorry**", but the student continues to place blame. Then finally the student evaluated her teachers' action negatively. The student points out the negative consequences of the teacher's action by stating "**How can I retrieve all my data. It is a**

disaster". The student expresses the negative impact of the teacher's action.

The above example is interesting in the sense that a self-initiated offer which is a nice gesture from the teacher's side turns into a potential blameworthy action. The example shows that politeness is dynamic as it may fluctuate through the sequences of talk. This is manifested in the students' turns (actions) if we compare them between the beginnings and later turns.

The example is intriguing because a kind gesture from the teacher, in the form of a self-initiated offer, can turn into something that may be considered wrong. The example demonstrates that politeness is not static, as it can change throughout a conversation.

EXTRACT 2: Student's Being Late to the First Class at the University

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01 ST:          ((door knocks))   May I come in teacher?
02 TE:    (0.2)   where have yo::u been?
03 ST:           It is ↑ a long story teacher
04 TE:         (0.5)          We::ll (0.3) Wha (h) t is it?
05 ST:          ↑ i swear to Go:d, my alarm did not go off, and
hardly       caught a taxi.
06 TE:         ((cheerfully)) really?
07 ST:          ↑ Yeah
08 TE:       Err ↑ come
09 ST:           ↑ Thank you; will not be repeated trust me
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The student tries to give the teacher a good reason for his being late from the class while he says "**it is a long story teacher**" which implies that the student had a good reason for being late. Look, it does not answer the teacher's question which is also manifested in the teacher's even longer silence (**line 4**). As a result, the teacher remains silent for an extended period, which suggests that the student's justification was not satisfactory and may require further explanation or clarification.

In exchange (**05**) the students tries to shift responsibility to his alarm clock not himself exactly when he says "**My alarm did not go off**". It is not me but my alarm. The student is shifting responsibility from himself to something else which again to sound sincere or honest. Deflecting responsibility for a particular situation (presumably, being late or oversleeping) by attributing it to an external factor, namely their alarm. By doing so, they seek to come across as sincere or honest about

their situation, while avoiding taking full blame or admitting fault.

This action of shifting responsibility is a common practice used in interpersonal communication to manage social relationships and avoid negative judgments or consequences. Also the student seems indeed credible when he mentions another reason for being late: having trouble with getting a taxi (**line 5**). See there is a series of reasons which all explain why he said *'long story'*). The student appears to be trustworthy when he provides an additional reason for his tardiness, namely having difficulty getting a taxi. This supports his earlier comment about it being a "**long story**" and suggests that there were multiple factors contributing to his lateness. Taken together, these reasons provide a more complete explanation for why the student was late, which helps to reinforce his credibility and sincerity in the eyes of the teacher or others who may be evaluating his excuse.

In exchange (**06**) since it is said cheerfully, the teacher is projecting the fact that he is about to believe the student. The teacher's cheerful response in exchange (**06**) suggests that he or she is inclined to believe the student's excuse for being late. This positive tone conveys a sense of acceptance and understanding. In the last line, an element of appreciation shows that the student did not make up the story again and promises of forbearance when he says "**will not be repeated**". (Al Adaileh, 2007). Furthermore, the student's promise that the situation will not happen again implies a sense of regret and a willingness to take responsibility for his actions, which can be seen as a gesture of respect towards the teacher and the class. The point is that politeness has to be negotiated sometimes. In order to reach a conclusion or an assessment about the students' credibility and whether or not the student to enter allows, the teacher has gone through an interrogative sequence.

When it comes to the teacher's identity, he has to do so why? He wanted to show that there are rules and consequences when someone violates them. He also saves his own face and sends a message to the other students as well. The student's response can be seen as polite. The conversation highlights the importance of negotiating politeness in social interactions. In order to assess the credibility of the student's excuse for being late and whether or not to allow the student to enter the class, the teacher engages in a series of questions.

This process is necessary to establish rules and consequences for those who violate them, and to maintain a sense of order and authority in the classroom. By asserting his identity as the teacher, he also communicates a message to the other students about the importance of following the rules and being accountable for their actions. Despite the teacher's questioning, the student responds in a polite manner, thus demonstrating a willingness to engage in the negotiation of politeness and social norms.

DISCUSSIONS

The above illustrations and analysis provide a comprehensive understanding of the academic interactions that take place between teachers and students during their classroom activities. By analyzing real-life examples, we can gain insights into the dynamics of these interactions and their impact on the learning environment. To achieve this, we adopt a discursive approach to politeness, which focuses on how language is used to establish and maintain social relationships. By examining the data from two specific instances, we can observe how both teachers and students employ politeness strategies.

The first extract involves an accidental incident where a female student's flash drive is formatted by her teacher. This scenario presents an opportunity to explore how politeness is negotiated when addressing unintended actions or mistakes. Through this analysis, we can uncover the strategies employed by the teacher and student to maintain a respectful and harmonious relationship, despite the unfortunate situation.

The second extract revolves around a student who arrives late for the first class at the university. This example allows us to investigate how politeness is enacted in situations where students violate social norms or expectations. By examining the teacher-student interaction in this context, we can identify the communicative strategies employed to address the student's tardiness while still preserving a positive learning atmosphere.

By presenting these two diverse examples, we can illustrate the varied nature of teacher-student interactions and how politeness plays a crucial role in shaping these interactions. This analysis contributes to our understanding of the complex dynamics within the classroom, highlighting the significance of effective communication and maintaining respectful relationships for an optimal learning environment.

CONCLUSIONS

The presentation of these two diverse examples of teacher-student interactions demonstrates such interactions' nuanced and multifaceted nature. The analysis emphasizes the pivotal role of politeness in shaping the dynamics within the classroom.

Through these examples, we have gained a deeper understanding of how communication strategies and politeness are employed by both teachers and students to navigate unexpected situations and maintain respectful relationships. The inadvertent formatting of a student's flash drive and a student's lateness to the first class at the university showcase the importance of effective communication in mitigating potential conflicts and fostering a positive learning environment.

The analysis highlights the significance of promoting effective communication skills and cultivating respectful relationships between teachers and students. By recognizing the impact of politeness on classroom interactions, educators can foster an atmosphere that encourages open dialogue, trust, and mutual respect. Such an environment is essential for creating optimal conditions for learning and personal growth. Ultimately, this exploration of teacher-student interactions and the role of politeness contribute to our broader understanding of the complex dynamics within the classroom. It underscores the importance of equipping teachers and students with the skills to communicate effectively, adapt to diverse situations, and maintain respectful relationships, thus enhancing the overall educational experience.

Furthermore, the analysis of these examples sheds light on the intricate interplay between language, social norms, and power dynamics within the classroom. Politeness strategies serve as crucial tools for managing potential conflicts, maintaining social harmony, and preserving the dignity of both teachers and students. By examining these interactions, we recognize that effective communication goes beyond the mere exchange of information. It involves the negotiation of social identities, the acknowledgment of individual needs and perspectives, and the cultivation of empathy and understanding. Politeness acts as a bridge that allows teachers and students to navigate through potential misunderstandings, power differentials, and challenging situations.

The findings from this analysis have practical implications for educators and educational institutions. It highlights the importance of incorporating communication and interpersonal skills training into teacher professional development programs. Equipping teachers with a deeper understanding of politeness strategies can foster a supportive and inclusive classroom environment that facilitates effective learning. Moreover, students can benefit from explicit instruction on communication strategies, including politeness, as part of their educational curriculum. Developing these skills can empower students to express themselves confidently, engage in meaningful dialogue, and build positive relationships within the classroom and in future academic and professional settings.

Finally, the examination of teacher-student interactions through the lens of politeness provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics that shape the classroom environment. Understanding and utilizing politeness strategies contribute to effective communication, respectful relationships, and an optimal learning atmosphere. By embracing and promoting these principles, educators can create an inclusive and supportive educational environment that nurtures the growth and development of all students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

By presenting these two diverse examples, such as the accidental formatting of a female student's flash drive by her teacher and a student's lateness for the first class at the university, we can vividly illustrate the intricate and multifaceted nature of teacher-student interactions. These examples showcase how politeness strategies are employed in real-life classroom scenarios. By analyzing these interactions, we gain valuable insights into the dynamics at play and their implications for the learning environment. Understanding these complex dynamics, recognizing the crucial role of effective communication, and maintaining respectful relationships can have profound implications for education. By fostering a climate of respect and understanding, educators can create an optimal learning environment that enhances student engagement, academic performance, and overall well-being.

Moreover, the findings from this analysis extend beyond the classroom. They have the potential to inform teaching practices, curriculum development, and educational

policies, promoting inclusive and supportive learning environments. Incorporating the understanding of politeness in teacher-student interactions into teacher training programs and professional development initiatives is essential. Equipping educators with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate complex interactions and build positive relationships with their students can contribute to the overall improvement of the educational system.

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