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MAXIM OF POLITENESS IN SENDING MESSAGES FROM STUDENTS TO LECTURERS VIA WHATSAPP

Dinia Irsa Lina¹, Havid Ardi²

English Department
Faculty of Languages and Arts
Universitas Negeri Padang
email: diniairsalina17@gmail.com

Abstract

This study is a study related to the politeness maxims by students to lecturers in conversations via WhatsApp. The purpose of this study is to determine the types of politeness maxims used by students to lecturers based on the gender of the sender and recipient of the message. This study is a descriptive research with a qualitative approach, and the instrument used is Leech's maxim of politeness. The source of data in this study is text messages sent by students to lecturers. The data in this study are in the form of student utterances in the form of words, phrases, and sentences containing politeness maxims based on Leech's theory (2014). The data in this study were analyzed using the document analysis method. In this study, four types of conversations (female to female, female to male, male to female, male to male) are applying the tact maxim and obligation of speaker to other maxim. However, it found that only 3 types of conversations use the generosity maxim, 1 type of conversation uses the modesty maxim, 1 type of conversation uses the sympathy maxim, and 1 type of conversation uses the obligation of other to speaker maxim.

Key words: Maxim of Politeness, Students, Lecturers, Whats App

A. INTRODUCTION

Communication is an activity that is mostcarried out by humans to express thought and feeling toward others by using a language (Effendy, p. 8). Communication also can be happen in social media. There are lots of social media that can be used for communication such as Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Line, Telegram, WhatsApp, etc (Bungin et al., 2021). However, in the field of education, communication via text messages commonly happens in WhatsApp. Therefore, the students and lecturer need to use language to communicate wether its verbal or non-verbal communication so that both of students and lecturers need to use the effective communication strategies to convey their ideas appropriately (Mahmud, 2018, p. 598).

Communicating with anyone, including lecturers, requires ethics ensure the communication process is appropriate. In communicating, both speakers and



¹ English ELLSP of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang graduated on March 2025

² Lecturer of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang

hearers need politeness to avoid misunderstandings or conflicts. In order to maintain the politeness in communicating process, Leech (2014, p. 120) put forward ten politeness maxims aimed at minimizing negative impacts in social interaction: tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, sympathy maxim, obligation (of speaker to other) maxim, obligation (of other to speaker) maxim, opinion reticence maxim, and feeling reticence maxim.

In its application, the use of politeness maxims in each person will be different due to differences in language style. Each individual's language style is formed due to differences in the social structure in which the individual was raised, such as where they live, or how the individual lives in society, such as the school or work environment (Eckert and McConnel-Ginnet, 2013). One example of a difference in each individual's language style is gender which happened due to differences in social status (Lakoff, 1973). On the other hand, Graddol and Swan (2003: 147) argue that what differentiates one individual's speech from another is gender. Therefore, a person's gender and language ability are two things that cannot be separated (Sunderland, 2006: 2). Gender is a social construct that varies in society (Salzmann et. al 2012, p. 261). The choice of words or language styles of women and men can vary according to differences in the interlocutor, experience, and various other circumstances (Salzmann et. al, p. 262). Therefore, the role of gender in the application of politeness to each individual is important.

Several studies had been conducted regarding to the maxim of politenes and the language style based on gender has been conducted by some researchers. Lustyantie and Dewi (2019) conducted a research about 6 politeness maxims by Leech's in lenong Betawi. Other research which analyzed maxims of politeness used by movie characters were done by Firdaus and Simatupang (2022); Muhaling, et. al (2023). Beside that, Jafar (2023) analyzed the language politeness based on the principle of student cooperation in unversity. On the other hand, Prayitno et al., (2021) politeness in social media; Daulay et. al (2022); Dewi et. al (2023) conducted research regarding to the politeness principle used by teacher in class room interaction. Pratama & Ardi (2024) studied about politeness in talkshow. In contrast with the previous research, Juita et. al (2024) did a research related to the linguistic politeness of Indonesian female politicians in political communication on social media. However, several studies regarding language style based on gender has been done by some researchers such as the research conducted by Atika (2019) related to the interactions among learning styles, language learning strategies and gender of EFL learners. Beside that, Karjo and Wijaya (2020) had done a research about the language features of male and female beauty influcencers in youtube videos. Meanwhile, Marantika (2022) conducted a research related to the relationship between learning styles, gender, and learning outcomes. On the other hand, Dewi et. al (2024) analyzed the gender-based linguistic patterns in Quora apps.

Accordingly, this provides opportunities for the researcher to try and combine several elements that have been carried out by previous studies related to the analysis of the maxims of politeness used by students toward lecturers based

on the gender in the interactions through the Whatsapp application using the theory from Leech (2014).

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The source of data on this research is taken from the screenshots of bubble texts of Whatsapp messages from conversations between UNP English Language and Literature students of class NK-2020 and lecturers at via WhatsApp. Thus, the data to be used in this study are in the form of utterances in written form with units of words, phrases, and sentences uttered by UNP English Language and Literature students of class NK-2020 which contains politeness maxims based on Leech's theory (2014).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Finding

The data in this study were obtained from 19 female and 6 male students, each communicating with one female or male lecturer via WhatsApp. 207 data were found from screenshots of conversations between 25 students, 19 female and 6 male, with lecturers in conversations via WhatsApp.

a. The use of politeness maxims by female senders toward female receivers

The first type of conversations based on gender of the sender and the receiver is female sender toward female receiver

Tabel 5. The use of politeness maxims by female senders toward female receivers

Type of the maxim used by the sender toward the receiver	Frequency	%
Tact maxim	28	37.84%
Generosity maxim	2	2.70%
Simpathy maxim	3	4.05%
Obligation of speaker to	41	55.41%
other maxim		
Total	74	100%

Table 5 shows the percentage of maxims used by female senders to female receivers. Based on the Table 5, from the 74 data, there are four politeness maxims used by female sender toward female receiver, namely tact maxim (37.84%), generosity maxim (2.70%), sympathy maxim (4.05%), and obligation of speaker to hearer maxim (55.41%). The number of female students in this conversation is nine people. These are the examples of data

from the use of politeness maxims by female senders toward female receivers as follow:

Datum 15

Assalamualaikum ms maaf mengganggu waktunya ms, izin bertanya ms, terkait bimbingan nanti, saya dapat menemui ms pada jam berapa ms? Terima kasih ms

Assalamualaikum ms sorry to interrupt your time ms, may I ask ms, regarding the consultation later, what time can I meet you ms? Thank you ms

Datum 15 is the example of maxim politeness used by the female sender to female receiver. The datum 15 is included in the tact maxim in the form of asking and requesting about consultation time or the availability of lecturer to fulfill the student's wants. The form of asking a consultation time is shown by the sender by saying "... may I ask ms, regarding to the consultation later, what time can I meet you ms? ..." The word can and may are used to ask permission from receiver to do what the sender wants. The use of modal verbs such as can and may is intended to reduce the benefits of the students and increase the benefits to lecturers. This is considered to be polite because it allows the receiver to refuse so that there is no element of coercion between the two parties.

Datum 1

Assalamualaikum ms, saya (nama mahasiswi) dari kelas Nkx 2020. Saya sudah mengajukan judul skripsi dan kebetulan dapat ms sebagai dosen pembimbing, untuk itu saya izin membagikan Surat Tugas Pembimbing Skripsi, ms. Jika diperlukan hardcopy dari surat tsb, nanti akan saya serahkan ms. Berikut saya kirimkan filenya dulu, ms. Terima kasih, ms.

Assalamualaikum ms, I am (student name) from class Nkx 2020. I have submitted a thesis title and happened to get ms as a supervisor, for that let me share the Thesis Supervisor Assignment Letter, ms. If a hardcopy of the letter is needed, I will submit it later, ms. Here I will send the file first, ms. Thank you, ms.

Datum 1 is the example of generosity maxim used by the female sender toward female receiver. Based on the example above, it can be said that the sender is giving a full benefits to the lecturer. This is shown by the sentence "If a hardcopy of the letter is needed, I will submit it later, ms". This sentence shows a form of politeness in which the sender gives generosity to the receiver.

Datum 1
Kehujanan ya miss
Seems like you got caught in the rain, miss
Datum 2
Berarti saya tunggu saja dulu y miss?
So should I just wait miss?

Datum 3 Atau saya jemput miss? Or should I pick you up miss?

Datum 1-3 are the example of the sympathy maxim used by the female sender to the female receiver. The data above can be categorized as sympathy maxim because the data shows the form of student concern for the lecturer. Datum 1 shows the student's sympathy for the lecturer who is gotten caught by the rain. Datum 2 and 3 also show a sense of sympathy and concern for the misfortune faced by the lecturer so that student took the initiative to wait and also help the lecturer by saying "should I just wait miss?" and "should I pick you up miss?".

Datum 21

Assalamualaikum selamat siang ms, maaf mengganggu waktunya ms. Ms saya ingin melakukan bimbingan ke ms, sekiranya ms ada waktu luang kapan ya ms agar saya bisa menemui ms untuk bimbingan ms? Dan untuk softcopy nya sudah saya kirimkan ke email ms. Maaf apabila ada salah kata dan terima kasih ms

Assalamualaikum good afternoon ms, sorry for interrupting your time ms. Ms I want to do consultation to you, if you have free time when can I meet you for consultation ms? And for the softcopy I have sent it to your email. Sorry if there are any wrong words and thank you ms

Datum 21 is the example of the obligation of speaker to other maxim used by the female sender toward the female receiver. Datum 21 above shows the use of apologizing and thanking. The sentences "Assalamualaikum good afternoon ms, sorry for interrupting your time ms" and "Sorry if there are any wrong words ... " is showing apology to the receiver because the sender positioning herself as someone who is bothering and someone who is guilty, so the sender asking for an apology. Beside that, in the sentence last message, the sender said "Thank you ms" as a form of thanking. The sender said thanks because it positions the receiver as someone who has given the opportunity toward the sender's wants even though the receiver has not yet agreed to the sender's want.

b. The use of politeness maxims by female senders toward male receivers

The second type of conversations based on gender of the sender and the receiver is female sender toward male receiver.

Tabel 6. The use of politeness maxims by female senders toward male receivers

mare receivers			
Type of the maxim used by the sender toward the receiver	Frequency	%	
Tact maxim	31	40.79%	
Generosity maxim	1	2.70%	
Obligation of speaker to other maxim	43	56.58%	
Obligation of other to speaker maxim		1.32%	
Total	76	100%	

Table 6 shows the percentage of maxims used by female senders to male receivers. Based on the Table 6, from the 76 data, there are four politeness maxims used by female sender toward male receiver, namely tact maxim (40.79%) generosity maxim (1.32%), obligation of speaker to hearer maxim (56.58%), and obligation of other to speaker maxim (1.32%). The number of female students in this conversation is nine people. These are the examples of data from the use of politeness maxims by female senders toward male receivers as follow:

Datum 43

Baik pak, izin bertanya pak, kalau hari senin sekiranya jam berapa bapak bisa ditemui pak?

Alright sir, may I ask sir, if its monday what time can i meet you sir?

Datum 43 is the example of tact masim used by the female sender toward male receiver. The datum 43 is included in the tact maxim in the form of asking about the consultation time also the avaulability of the lecturer to fulfill the student's wants by saying "Alright sir, may I ask sir, if its monday what time can I met you sir?"

Datum 4

Berikut softcopy dari surat tersebut bapak, apabila diperlukan hardcopynya, segera saya antar kan bapak, terimakasih

Here is a soft copy of the letter, sir. If you need a hard copy, I will send it to you immediately. Thank you

Datum 4 is the example of generosity maxim used by the female sender to the male receiver. Based on the example above,

the use of generosity maxim by students provides full benefits to the lecturer. In the datum 4, the sender shows the initiative to immediately provide the document to receiver if it is needed by saying "If you need a hard copy, I will send it to you immediately". This sentence shows a form of politeness in which the sender gives generosity to the recipient.

Datum 54

Mohon maaf izin bertanya pak, sekiranya sampai kapan bapak di luar kota pak? Maaf mengganggu waktunya

Excuse me may I ask sir, how long will you be out of town sir? **Sorry to interrupt your time**

Datum 54 is the example of the obligation of speaker to other maxim used by the female sender toward male receiver. Datum 54 shows the use of apoligizing to the receiver by saying "Excuse me ... Sorry for interrupting your time". This sentence contained the obligation of speaker to other maxim in the form of apologi from the sender toward the receiver.

Datum 1

Iyaa pak, sama sama

Yess sir, you are welcome

Datum 1 is an example of the application of the maxim obligation of other to speaker used by the female sender toward male receiver. The student responds to the lecturer's thanks by saying "Yes sir, you are welcome" which is considered as one of the responses that shows politeness to the interlocutor by the use of the maxim obligation of other to speaker.

c. The use of politeness maxims by male senders to female receivers

The third type of conversations based on gender of the sender and the receiver is male sender toward female receiver.

Tabel 7. The use of politeness maxims by male senders toward female receivers

Type of the maxim used by the sender toward the receiver	Frequency	%
Tact maxim	7	36.84%
Generosity maxim	1	5.26%
Obligation of speaker to other maxim	11	57.89%
Total	19	100%

Table 7 shows the percentage of maxims used by male senders to female receivers. Based on the Table 7, from the 19 data, there are three politeness maxims used by male sender toward female receiver, namely tact maxim (36.84%) generosity maxim (5.26%), and obligation of speaker to hearer maxim (57.89%). The number of male students in this conversation is three people. These are the examples of data from the use of politeness maxims by male senders toward female receivers as follow:

Datum 60

Assalamualaikum ibuk, maaf mengganggu waktunya buk, (nama mahasiswa) ingin menanyakan perihal jadwal bimbingan untuk senin besok bu, apa (name mahasiswa) juga bisa ikut bimbingan besok tu buk?

Assalamualaikum ma'am, sorry to interrupt your time ma'am, (student name) want to ask about the consultation schedule for Monday tomorrow ma'am, can (student name) also join the consultation tomorrow ma'am?

Datum 60 is the example of taxt macxim used by male sender toward female receiver. The datum 60 is included in the tact maxim in the form of asking for the permision to join the consultation by saying "... can (student name) also join the consultation tomorrow ma'am?". The word can in this sentence is used to ask the permission from the receiver to fulfill the sender's wants.

Datum 4

Assalamualaikum Maam, (nama mahasiswa) mau mengucapkan terimakasih atas waktu, bantuan, dan bimbingannya selama ini ya Maam, akhirnya selesai juga skrpsi dan perkuliahan ini Maam heheh (nama mahasiwa) ada ngasih titipan dari ibu (nama mahasiswa) untuk maam, sebagai bentuk terimakasih juga maam, mohon diterima ya maam, tapi tadi (nama mahasiswa) titipkan lewat anak Maam aja diruangan Maam, Maam.

Assalamualaikum Maam, (student name) would like to thank you for your time, help, and guidance so far, Maam, finally finished my thesis and lectures Maam heheh (student name) has given something from (student name)'s mother, as a form of gratitude, Maam, please accept it, Maam, but (student name) just left it through Maam's child in Maam's room, Maam.

Datum 4 is the example of generosity maxim used by male sender toward female receiver. Based on the example above, The use of the generosity maxim in the datum 4 is a form of kindness and appreciation from the sender for the actions that have been carried out by the receiver in the form of giving a gift. This is proven by the sentence " ... Maam, finally finished my thesis and

lectures Maam heheh (student name) has given something from (student name)'s mother, as a form of gratitude, Maam, please accept it, Maam, ...". This sentence shows a form of politeness in which the sender gives generosity to the recipient.

Datum 42

Assalamualaikum ms. **Maaf mengganggu malam nya ms** Assalamualaikum ms. **Sorry for intterupting your night ms**

Datum 42 is the example of the obligation of speaker to other maxim used by the male sender toward the female receiver. Datum 42 above shows the use of apologizing by saying "... Sorry for interrupting your time ms". This sentence is showing an apology to the receiver because the sender positioning himself as someone who is bothering and someone who is guilty, so the sender asking for an apology. And the use of this terms is considered to be polite.

d. The use of politeness maxims by male senders toward male receivers

The fourth type of conversations based on gender of the sender and the receiver is male sender toward male receiver.

Table 8. The use of politeness maxims by male senders to male receivers

Type of the maxim used by the sender toward the receiver	Frequency	%
Tact maxim	7	41.18%
Modesty maxim	1	5.88%
Obligation of speaker to other maxim	9	52.94%
Total	17	100%

Table 8 shows the percentage of maxims used by male senders to male receivers and male senders to male receivers. Based on the Table 6, from the 17 data, there are three types of politeness maxims applied by male senders to male receivers, namely tact maxim (41.18%), modesty maxim (5.88%), and obligation of speaker to other maxim (52.94%). The number of male students in this conversation is three people. On the other hand, there are three uses of politeness maxims in male senders to male receivers conversations, namely tact maxim (41.18%), modesty maxim (5.88%), and obligation of speaker to other maxim (52.94%). In this type of conversations, sympathy maxim and obligation of other to speaker maxim are not applied. The number of male students in this conversation is three people. These are the

examples of data from the use of politeness maxims by male senders toward male receivers as follow:

Datum 52

Assalamu'alaikum pak, izin untuk bimbingan hari ini pak, apakah bapak bisa pak?

Assalamu'alaikum sir, please let me do a consultation today sir, are you available sir?

Datum 52 is the example of tact maxim used by male sender toward male receiver. The datum 52 is considered as the tact maxim in the form of asking the availability of the receiver to fulfill the sender's wants by saying "... please let me do a consultation today sir, are you available sir?". This is considered to be polite because it allows the receiver to refuse so that there is no element of coercion between the two parties.

Datum 1

Saya kayaknya gak bisa september pak, artikel sama toefl saya belum ada

I do not think I can do it in September sir, my article and TOEFL are not avail yet.

Datum 1 is the example of generosity maxim used by the male sender to the male receiver. The example above shows the use of the modesty maxim by students towards lecturers. In the sentence "I do not think I can do it in September sir, my article and TOEFL are not avail yet", the sender humbles himself. This can be categorized as polite because the student does not show an attitude that elevates himself. This is in line with the application of the modesty maxim, namely giving a low value sender's or speaker's quality.

Datum 72

Maaf pak, nanti di jam berapa pak

I am sorry sir, what time will it be later sir

Datum 72 is the example of the obligation of speaker to other maxim used by the male sender toward male receiver. Datum 72 above shows the use of apologizing by saying "I am sorry sir, ...". This is considered as polite because the sender positioning himself as someone who is bothering and someone who is guilty, so the sender asking for an apology form the sender.

2. Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher found that there is a use of politeness maxims by students toward lecturers based on Leech's (2014) theory. In addition, there are the differences in the use of politeness maxims in the conversations of female senders to female

receivers, female senders to male receivers, male senders to female receivers, and male senders to male receivers.

a. The use of politeness maxims by female senders toward female receivers

Further analysis of this study is to find differences in the types of politeness maxims used by students and lecturers based on gender differences of the sender and receiver of the message in WhatsApp communication. The first type of conversation in this research is female senders toward female receivers. The use of politeness maxims by female sender toward female receiver is tact maxim, generosity maxim, sympathy maxim, and obligation of other to speaker maxim. The most common politeness maxim used by the female senders toward female receivers is obligation of speaker to other maxim.

In the other type of communication based on gender of the sender and receiver in this research, there is a use of tact maxim, agreement maxim, and obligation of speaker to other maxim. However, there is a use of sympathy maxim which is only applied in the conversations between female sender and male receiver. Based on Leech (2014), sympathy maxim plays a role to give a sympathy to the interlocutor, which mean the speaker is validating the other's feeling. The reason for the use of the sympathy maxim in a conversation between a female sender toward a female receiver is because both are women. Women are generally considered to be more feminine and sensitive, as stated by Hippel et. al (2011) who said that women is considering themselves as feminine which made woman tend to communicate indirectly and emotionaly. This is also in line with the findings of Mahmud & Nur (2019, p. 264) which states that women lecturer tend to be a good listener also tend to pay attention to fullfil the student's necessitate. Beside that, Akbar et. al (2019, p 13) also claim that female teachers utterances is intimate because their utterances contain suavity and proximity

b. The use of politeness maxims by female senders toward male receivers

The second type of conversation in this research is female senders toward male receivers. The use of politeness maxims by female sender toward female receiver is tact maxim, generosity maxim, obligation of other to speaker maxim, and obligation of other to speaker maxim. The most common politeness maxim used by the female senders toward male receivers is obligation of speaker to other maxim. In female senders and female receivers, there are also the use of tact maxim, generosity maxim, dan obligation of speaker to other maxim. However, what distinguishes the conversation between female sender toward male receiver and female sender toward female receiver is the use of obligation of other to speaker maxim. Obligation of other to speaker maxim plays a role in responding to gratitude or apology from the other person.

In this study, one female sender utterance was found that responded to gratitude from the male receiver. This is in line with the findings of Monsefi & Hadidi (2015, p. 11); Sudirman (2016) who stated that female teachers are more interactive to give responses to students while male teachers are less interactive to give responses to students in the classroom interaction. The findings of this study is also supported by Simon (2020, p. 17) who stated that the female students tend to represent their emotions and feelings in responding to the teacher.

c. The use of politeness maxims by male senders toward female receivers.

The third type of conversation in this research is male senders toward female receivers. The use of politeness maxims by male sender toward female receiver is tact maxim, generosity maxim, and obligation of other to speaker maxim. The most common politeness maxim used by the male senders toward female receivers is obligation of speaker to other maxim.

In conversations between male senders toward female receivers, there is no use of sympathy maxim and obligation of other to speaker maxim. Meanwhile, in the females' conversations toward receivers, sympathy maxim and obligation of other to speaker maxim. This is because men are considered to have no sympathy and are more self-centered. However, the findings of Zansabil (2022, p.1) revealed that gender does not always affect the characteristics and language style of a speaker. However, the findings in this study found the application of generosity maxim by male senders toward female receivers. Generosity maxim plays a role in providing high value to the other's wants (Leech, 2014, p. 92). This means that when faced with women, men still have the initiative in terms of generosity and not self-centered.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be said that gender influences the characteristics and language style of a speaker. This is in line with the findings of Kristy (2022, p. 252) who stated that gender contributes to the difference of language used by male or female. The difference in language use between men and women is caused by differences in social treatment that occur in the environment (Smith et. al, 2016).

d. The use of politeness maxims by male senders toward male receivers

The fourth type of conversation in this research is male senders toward male receivers. The use of politeness maxims by male sender toward female receiver is tact maxim, modesty maxim, and obligation of other to speaker maxim. The most common politeness maxim used by the male senders toward male receivers is obligation of speaker to other maxim.

Of all the types of maxims used by senders to receivers, only in conversations between male senders and male receivers is the use of modesty maxims found. Modesty maxims serve to humble oneself in front of the other person to be considered polite (Leech, 2014, p. 94-96). Based on this, it can be said that men tend to express their feelings of insecurity or humble themselves in front of other men only. This happens because of culture, social hierarchy, and limitations in emotional communication created by society towards the role of men which makes men limit themselves to expressing themselves to the opposite sex (Tannen, 1990; Coates, 2013, Holmes, 2013). Mahalik, et. al (2007) also said that men are afraid to express emotions and feelings towards women because they do not want to be judged and considered weak. This is in line with the findings of Agustina & Simatupang (2024) which revealed that the linguistic strategies used by men function to build relationships with friendships and hide emotional weaknesses.

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that all the conversations have applied politeness maxims regularly even though there are differences in the use of the types of politeness maxims used by students due to gender differences. The difference in the use of politeness in language between men and women is caused by differences in sociological and linguistic factors (Holmes, 2013, p. 315). However, in this study, it was found that both men and women apply politeness maxims, although there are differences in the types of politeness maxims used, which are influenced by the gender of the students and the gender of the lecturers. This is in line with the findings of Juita (2016) who revealed that each female and male character in "Kaba Minangkabau" has certain characteristics in applying politeness in language.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study is a study related to the politeness maxims of students towards lecturers when communicating via WhatsApp. Based on the findings of this study, it found that there are six politeness maxims used by UNP English Language and Literature students of class NK-2020, namely tact maxim, generosity maxim, modesty maxim, sympathy maxim, obligation of speaker to other maxim, and obligation of other to speaker maxim. The approbation maxim, agreement maxim, opinion reticence maxim, and feeling reticence maxim are not found in this study.

Research related to politeness maxims between lecturers and students is still limited. Research related to politeness maxims between lecturers and students can also be seen from other perspectives besides gender such as culture, religion, power relations, and so on. In addition, research related to politeness maxims can also be examined from the perspective of violations of politeness maxims committed by students to lecturers both from the perspective of gender, culture, social status, and others. For this reason, it is hoped that further research can discuss problems related to politeness between lecturers and students with problems such as those mentioned above.

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