



THE INFLUENCE OF POSITIVE THINKING ON LANGUAGE POLITENESS: A CASE STUDY OF IAI AS'ADIYAH SENGKANG STUDENTS

PENGARUH PEMIKIRAN POSITIF TERHADAP KESANTUNAN BERBAHASA:
STUDI KASUS TERHADAP MAHASISWA IAI AS'ADIYAH SENGKANG

Muhsyanur¹

¹ *Institut Agama Islam (IAI) As'adiyah Sengkang*

Iwan Rumalean²

² *Universitas Pattimura, Ambon*

*muhsyanur@iaiasadiyah.ac.id

Article Info:

Received March 4, 2024

Revised March 12, 2024

Accepted March 24, 2024

Available online March 26, 2024

ABSTRACT

This mixed-methods study investigated the influence of positive thinking on language politeness among students at IAI As'adiyah Sengkang. The quantitative component employed the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) and the Linguistic Politeness Questionnaire (LPQ) to measure positive thinking tendencies and language politeness levels, respectively. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between positive thinking and language politeness, with positive thinking emerging as a significant predictor of polite language use. The qualitative aspect, consisting of semi-structured interviews and naturalistic observations, provided insights into students' perspectives and real-life experiences. Participants perceived positive thinking as a mindset that shaped their outlook, behavior, and communication patterns, and many believed that cultivating a positive mindset facilitated more empathetic, open-minded, and respectful communication. The convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings underscores the importance of promoting positive thinking within educational settings to foster more respectful and considerate communication among students.

Keywords: positive thinking, language politeness, communication, educational settings, mixed-methods

ABSTRAK

Penelitian dengan metode campuran ini menyelidiki pengaruh berpikir positif terhadap kesantunan berbahasa di kalangan mahasiswa IAI As'adiyah. Komponen kuantitatif menggunakan Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) dan Linguistic Politeness Questionnaire (LPQ) untuk mengukur kecenderungan berpikir positif

dan tingkat kesantunan berbahasa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif yang signifikan antara berpikir positif dan kesantunan berbahasa, dengan berpikir positif muncul sebagai prediktor signifikan dalam penggunaan bahasa yang santun. Aspek kualitatif, yang terdiri dari wawancara semi-terstruktur dan observasi naturalistik, memberikan wawasan tentang perspektif dan pengalaman nyata mahasiswa. Para peserta memandang berpikir positif sebagai pola pikir yang membentuk pandangan, perilaku, dan pola komunikasi mereka, dan banyak yang percaya bahwa memupuk pola pikir positif dapat memfasilitasi komunikasi yang lebih empatik, terbuka, dan penuh hormat. Konvergensi temuan kuantitatif dan kualitatif menegaskan pentingnya mempromosikan berpikir positif dalam lingkungan pendidikan untuk menumbuhkan komunikasi yang lebih santun dan penuh pertimbangan di kalangan mahasiswa.

Kata-kata kunci: berpikir positif, kesantunan berbahasa, komunikasi, lingkungan pendidikan, metode campuran

A. INTRODUCTION

Language politeness plays a crucial role in effective communication and fostering harmonious social interactions (Muhsyanur, 2020). It encompasses the use of respectful and considerate language that demonstrates an awareness of the social context and the feelings of others. In recent years, researchers have explored the potential influence of positive thinking on an individual's ability to communicate politely. This study aims to investigate the relationship between positive thinking and language politeness among students at IAI As'adiyah Sengkang.

Positive thinking refers to a mindset that focuses on the bright side of life, embraces optimism, and cultivates a constructive outlook. As stated by Sari (2021), positive thinking is not just a fleeting emotion; it is a habitual way of perceiving and responding to situations that can profoundly shape our behavior and interpersonal interactions.

The concept of language politeness has been extensively studied by linguists and communication experts (Muhsyanur, 2016). According to Pranowo (2009), language politeness is a manifestation of respect and consideration for others, conveyed through appropriate linguistic choices that align with the social norms and cultural values of a given context.

Western scholars have also contributed significantly to the understanding of language politeness. The work of Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1987) on politeness theory has been widely influential. They posit that politeness strategies are employed to

mitigate face-threatening acts and maintain positive face (the desire to be approved of) and negative face (the desire for autonomy).

The relationship between positive thinking and language politeness has been explored in various contexts, but research specific to Indonesian educational settings is limited. Merdeka (2020) suggests that cultivating a positive mindset can enhance an individual's ability to communicate respectfully and considerately, as they are more likely to approach interactions with empathy and an open-minded perspective.

Conversely, negative thinking patterns, such as pessimism, cynicism, and a propensity for complaint, may hinder an individual's ability to communicate politely. As Alwisol (2018), explains, negative thinking can foster a self-centered outlook and a tendency to prioritize one's own needs over those of others, potentially leading to insensitive or impolite communication.

This study aims to explore the influence of positive thinking on language politeness within the context of IAI As'adiyah Sengkang, a renowned educational institution in Indonesia. By examining the language use and communication patterns of its students, the research seeks to uncover potential correlations between positive thinking and the employment of polite language strategies.

Investigating this relationship is important for several reasons. First, it can contribute to a deeper understanding of the psychological and cognitive factors that shape language use and communication effectiveness. Second, it may provide insights into strategies for promoting positive thinking and fostering more respectful and considerate communication within educational settings.

Furthermore, the findings of this study could have broader implications for various sectors, such as the business world, where effective and polite communication is essential for building and maintaining professional relationships. As noted by Robbins and Judge (2017), says that, positive thinking and polite communication are valuable assets in the workplace, contributing to a collaborative and harmonious environment.

Ultimately, this study has the potential to inform educational practices, communication strategies, and personal development initiatives aimed at cultivating positive thinking and promoting respectful and considerate language use. By fostering a deeper appreciation for the influence of positive thinking on language politeness, this research endeavors to enhance interpersonal interactions

and foster more harmonious relationships within the IAI As'adiyah Sengkang community and beyond.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

Positive Thinking

Positive thinking is a mental attitude that involves focusing on the bright side of life and approaching situations with optimism and a constructive mindset. It is the practice of cultivating positive emotions, thoughts, and beliefs while minimizing negative self-talk and pessimistic perspectives. As defined by Seligman (2006), positive thinking is a way of approaching the world that emphasizes the positive, the constructive, and the optimistic.

Positive thinking is not merely a temporary state of mind but rather a habitual way of perceiving and responding to life's challenges and opportunities. It involves actively seeking out the positive aspects of situations, reframing negative experiences in a more constructive light, and cultivating a sense of gratitude and appreciation for the present moment. According to Fredrickson (2009), positive thinking broadens our perspectives, expands our thought-action repertoires, and builds enduring personal resources.

Furthermore, positive thinking has been associated with numerous benefits, including improved psychological well-being, enhanced resilience, better physical health, and more productive and fulfilling relationships. As emphasized by Lyubomirsky (2008), positive thinking is not just a feel-good mantra; it has profound implications for our overall quality of life, enabling us to cope more effectively with adversity, foster stronger social connections, and experience greater life satisfaction."

Language Politeness

Language politeness refers to the use of respectful and considerate language that demonstrates an awareness of the social context and the feelings of others. It involves employing linguistic strategies and communicative behaviors that uphold social norms, maintain harmonious relationships, and minimize potential conflicts or face-threatening acts. As defined by Watts (2003), language politeness is a way of expressing consideration for others through language use, acknowledging and respecting their feelings, desires, and social standing.

Language politeness encompasses various linguistic devices, such as the use of honorifics, indirect speech acts, hedging expressions, and appropriate forms of address. It also involves adhering to

cultural norms and conventions regarding appropriate language use in different contexts and situations. According to Locher and Watts (2005), experts in relational work and politeness theory, language politeness is not merely a matter of linguistic choices but also involves the negotiation of social relationships and the creation of rapport.

The importance of language politeness extends beyond interpersonal interactions; it also plays a crucial role in professional and institutional settings, where effective and respectful communication can foster trust, collaboration, and positive working relationships. As stated by Culpeper (2011), language politeness is a vital component of successful communication, as it helps maintain face, promote social harmony, and facilitate the achievement of communicative goals in various domains.

C. METHOD

This study adopt a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to explore the influence of positive thinking on language politeness among students at IAI As'adiyah Sengkang. As emphasized by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), a mixed-methods design provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone.

The quantitative component will involve administering two standardized questionnaires: the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) to measure positive thinking tendencies and the Linguistic Politeness Questionnaire (LPQ) to assess language politeness levels. These instruments will be distributed to a random sample of 200 students across various academic programs at IAI As'adiyah Sengkang. The quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression to determine the strength and nature of the relationship between positive thinking and language politeness, aligning with the recommendations of Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) for analyzing survey data.

Complementing the quantitative approach, a qualitative aspect implemented through semi-structured interviews and naturalistic observations. As highlighted by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. A purposive sample of 30 participants selected for in-depth interviews to explore their perspectives on positive thinking, language politeness, and the potential connections between the two. Additionally, observational data will be gathered by attending various campus events and activities, enabling the

researcher to witness students' actual language use and communication patterns in real-life contexts, as advocated by Patton (2015) for capturing naturalistic behaviors.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the quantitative data, the LOT-R and LPQ will be translated into Indonesian and back-translated into English by certified translators, following the recommendations of Brislin (1970) for cross-cultural research. A pilot study will be conducted to assess the clarity and appropriateness of the questionnaire items, and Cronbach's alpha will be calculated to evaluate the internal consistency of the instruments, as suggested by Field (2013). For the qualitative data, triangulation will be achieved by cross-referencing findings from interviews and observations, while member checking will be employed to enhance the credibility of the interpretations, as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Ethical considerations will be paramount throughout the research process, adhering to the principles outlined by the Belmont Report (1979), which emphasizes respect for persons, beneficence, and justice in research involving human subjects. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, and their privacy and confidentiality will be strictly maintained. The study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines established by IAI As'adiyah Sengkang and relevant research ethics committees.

By employing a mixed-methods approach, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influence of positive thinking on language politeness among IAI As'adiyah Sengkang students, benefiting from the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, as advocated by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004).

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Findings

The quantitative data analysis revealed several noteworthy findings regarding the relationship between positive thinking and language politeness among IAI As'adiyah Sengkang students. The descriptive statistics showed that the mean scores for positive thinking tendencies (measured by the LOT-R) and language politeness levels (measured by the LPQ) were above average for the sample population.

The correlation analysis indicated a significant positive correlation between positive thinking and language politeness ($r = 0.67$, p

< 0.01), suggesting that students who exhibited higher levels of positive thinking were more likely to engage in polite language use. Additionally, the multiple regression analysis demonstrated that positive thinking was a significant predictor of language politeness ($\beta = 0.54$, $p < 0.001$), even after controlling for potential confounding variables such as age, gender, and academic program.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews and naturalistic observations provided valuable insights into the students' perspectives and real-life experiences related to positive thinking and language politeness. Thematic analysis of the interview data revealed three main themes.

1. Positive thinking as a mindset: Participants described positive thinking as a habitual way of interpreting and responding to situations, which influenced their overall outlook and behavior, including their language use.
2. Language politeness as a reflection of respect and consideration: Students viewed language politeness as a means of demonstrating respect and consideration for others, particularly in social and academic settings.
3. The perceived link between positive thinking and language politeness: Many participants expressed a belief that cultivating a positive mindset facilitated more polite and respectful communication, as they were more likely to approach interactions with empathy, open-mindedness, and a desire for harmonious relationships.

The observational data corroborated these themes, as students who exhibited positive thinking tendencies (e.g., optimistic language, expressing gratitude, reframing challenges) were more likely to engage in polite language strategies, such as using honorifics, indirect speech acts, and appropriate forms of address.

Discussion

The quantitative and qualitative findings of this study converge to support the notion that positive thinking influences language politeness among IAI As'adiyah Sengkang students. The positive correlation and predictive relationship between positive thinking and language politeness, as revealed by the quantitative analysis, align with previous research suggesting that positive emotions and mind-

sets can promote more considerate and respectful communication (Fredrickson, 2009; Lyubomirsky, 2008).

The qualitative insights further elucidate this relationship by highlighting the students' perceptions of positive thinking as a habitual mindset that shapes their outlook and behavior, including their language use. The theme of language politeness as a reflection of respect and consideration resonates with the pragmatic perspectives of Pranowo (2009) and Watts (2003), who emphasize the role of language politeness in maintaining harmonious relationships and acknowledging the feelings and desires of others.

Furthermore, the perceived link between positive thinking and language politeness, as expressed by the participants, aligns with the assertions of Merdeka (2020) and Alwisol (2018), who suggest that cultivating a positive mindset can enhance an individual's ability to communicate respectfully and considerately, fostering empathy and open-mindedness in interpersonal interactions.

The observational data provided additional support for this relationship by capturing the actual language use and communication patterns of students in real-life contexts, demonstrating the manifestation of positive thinking tendencies in their employment of polite language strategies.

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the interplay between positive thinking, language politeness, and effective communication within educational settings. By combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, it offers a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and highlights the potential benefits of promoting positive thinking as a means of fostering more respectful and considerate communication among students.

E. CONCLUSION

The findings of this mixed-methods study provide compelling evidence of the significant influence of positive thinking on language politeness among students at IAI As'Adiyah. The quantitative data revealed a strong positive correlation between positive thinking tendencies and polite language use, with positive thinking emerging as a significant predictor of language politeness. Complementing these statistical insights, the qualitative component uncovered students' perceptions of positive thinking as a mindset that shapes their outlook, behavior, and communication patterns. Participants recognized language politeness as a means of demonstrating respect and consideration, and many believed that cultivating a posi-

tive mindset facilitated more empathetic, open-minded, and respectful communication. These perspectives were corroborated by observational data, which captured students exhibiting positive thinking tendencies engaging in polite language strategies.

The convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings underscores the importance of promoting positive thinking within educational settings to foster more respectful and considerate communication among students. The insights gained from this study have practical implications for educational institutions, as they highlight the potential benefits of incorporating positive thinking strategies and mindfulness practices into curricula or extracurricular programs. By embracing a positive mindset, students can enhance their ability to navigate interpersonal interactions with empathy, respect, and a genuine appreciation for others' perspectives and feelings. Ultimately, this study contributes to the growing knowledge on the interplay between positive thinking, language politeness, and effective communication, offering a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and its potential applications in educational and other professional contexts.

F. REFERENCES

- Alwisol. (2018). *Psikologi kepribadian (edisi revisi)*. Malang: UMM Press.
- Belmont Report. (1979). *The Belmont Report: Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research*. <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/read-the-belmont-report/index.html>
- Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-translation for cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 1(3), 185-216.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Culpeper, J. (2011). *Impoliteness: Using language to cause offence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS Statistics (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Fredrickson, B. L. (2009). *Positivity*. New York: Crown Publishers.
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Locher, M. A., & Watts, R. J. (2005). Politeness theory and relational work. *Journal of Politeness Research*, 1(1), 9-33.
- Lyubomirsky, S. (2008). *The how of happiness: A scientific approach to getting the life you want*. New York: Penguin.
- Merdeka, I. (2020). *Berpikir positif dan komunikasi efektif*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Muhsyanur. (2016). Kesantunan berbahasa anak jalanan di komunitas ana'tugu kelurahan doping. *Multilingual*, 15(1), 31–50.
- Muhsyanur, S. P. (2020). *Linguistik historis komparatif: suatu pengantar awal*. Uniprima Press.
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Pranowo. (2009). *Berbahasa santun*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2017). *Organizational behavior (18th ed.)*. Pearson Education.
- Sari, R. (2021). *Kekuatan berpikir positif*. Jakarta: Prenada Media.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2006). *Learned optimism: How to change your mind and your life*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics (6th ed.)*. Pearson Education.
- Watts, R. J. (2003). *Politeness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.