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**Examining Politeness Strategies in EFL Students and Teachers'  
Emails**

**Case Study of 3<sup>rd</sup> year Students of Khenchela University**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial  
Fulfillment of The Requirements for the degree of Master in Language and Culture**

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## **DEDICATIONS**

**ABDI AMEL**

*I dedicate this work*

*To my dear self for believing in me and for all the hard times that I faced this year*

*To my Queen (My mother ZAYDA may God save her) thank you for encouragement and love*

*To my King (my father ALWARDI may God save him) I am grateful for the sacrifices you have made for me I love you*

*To my beloved brothers, DJAMEL, RAMI, Hassan and Hossein*

*My dear sisters Meyada, Dalal, Soraya*

*To my supportive Abdeladjalil*

*To the spoiled grandchildren of the family Kossay, Louay, Didou*

*To my dear friends and the partner IMEN who was with me hand by hand throughout this hard journey*

*To the soul of HICHAM, may God has mercy on him.*



## **DEDICATIONS**

### **AZIZI IMEN**

*I dedicate this work to my dear self for all the hard times that I faced this year in particular, for the ups and downs.*

*To my parents SAID and NOURA who were always by my side*

*My beloved brothers SALAH EDDINE, NASR EDDINE and IDRIS*

*To my supportive uncle ISMAIL*

*To my dear partner AMEL who was the friend and the partner of the journey during five years*

*My supportive dear friends FARIDA, LINA, ASSIA and NADJET, who were there for me at any time*



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## **List of Abbreviations**

|      |                                           |
|------|-------------------------------------------|
| CMC  | Computer Mediated-Communication           |
| EFL  | English as Foreign Language               |
| FTAs | Face Threatening Acts                     |
| NNS  | Non-Native Speakers                       |
| TL   | Target Language                           |
| SPSS | Statistical Package and Software Services |

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation investigates the politeness strategies used in email exchanges between students and their teachers. It aims to identify the kinds of politeness techniques that EFL students use while emailing their teachers. Additionally, the study aims to increase students' knowledge of the need to apply politeness strategies when speaking to their teachers in a formal setting. Because of this, the current study uses mixed methods. A questionnaire was sent to third-year English Department students (N=51) at Khenchela University in order to achieve this purpose. Additionally, the text corpus analysis approach was used to examine the written emails that the students (N=6) sent to their teacher. The results demonstrate that the students use straightforward language and constructive politeness strategies .

*Key words: politeness strategies, Email, Teachers and students interaction*

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*CHAPTER ONE:*  
*GENERAL INTRODUCTION*

## **General Introduction**

Politeness significantly influences our interpersonal communication dynamics, serving as a pivotal element in comprehending linguistic usage across diverse social contexts. It serves as a mechanism for fostering and nurturing relationships by employing strategies aimed at circumventing utterances that may potentially offend or distress others. Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework furnishes an intricate elucidation of these strategies, delineating their efficacy in tempering our discourse and fostering harmonious interactions.

Email provides a great way for EFL teachers and students to communicate with each other. It helps us achieve our educational goals and understand important language features for successful interaction. This tool allows us to grasp the significance of language in establishing successful communication. Algerian EFL students need to have advanced language and communication skills to effectively communicate in English via email and avoid any misunderstandings.

Using polite language in academic emails helps learners improve their writing skills. It also lowers the chance of using rude phrases that could upset teachers. Following email etiquette builds good relationships in and out of the EFL classroom, and it has a positive impact on language learning. So, when learners are polite, they can make the most out of email as a helpful tool in institutional zone.

This dissertation aims to increase students' awareness of using polite language in email discussions among EFL students and teachers. The research investigates why teachers receive inappropriate or informal emails and whether students understand the importance of using politeness strategies. To achieve this goal, it is crucial to understand students' attitudes and perceptions of politeness strategies. This examination will provide valuable information about politeness strategies, email communication, data collection methods, and recommendations.

## **1. Statement of the problem:**

Email, as a type of computer-mediated communication, provides EFL learners with a chance to engage with the target language both inside and outside the classroom. While learners mainly use email to convey their messages, EFL teachers aim to incorporate this tool in the foreign language class with innovative ideas and careful consideration. Email allows EFL learners, especially Third year students, to interact frequently with their teachers, making it a predominant activity in their daily lives. In terms of EFL learning, email is considered a helpful and effective medium. However, teachers often receive inappropriate or informal emails from students, which might be due to a lack of awareness about the usefulness and application of politeness strategies.

Even though email communication is widely used in EFL learning and teaching, there is a lack of clear guidelines on how to write emails. This highlights the importance of establishing rules for composing formal emails in the future. Additionally, the challenges that learners may encounter when engaging in asynchronous communication to effectively transmit their email messages are often overlooked.

## **2. Purpose of the study:**

Using politeness strategies is essential for effective communication. When students engage in email conversations and recognize the importance of these strategies, they can establish and maintain positive relationships with their teachers. Additionally, they become skilled at avoiding misunderstandings in non-face-to-face communication. As a result, this research has a dual purpose:

- 1) To check students' awareness of the significance of employing politeness strategies in email conversations with their teachers.

2) To explore the types of politeness strategies used by students and their correct application.

### **3. Research questions:**

When students and teachers communicate through electronic means, it is necessary to utilize formal English and polite expressions in order to effectively convey messages and engage in smooth interactions.

The current research addresses the following questions:

- 1) To what extent do the students use politeness strategies?
- 2) Are the students aware of the importance of politeness strategies email writing?
- 3) Can email enhance the interaction between students and teachers?

### **4. Significance of the study**

The significance of this study is to investigate EFL student's use of politeness strategies when they interact with teachers via email and the importance of applying them.

### **5. Methodology**

The current dissertation uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect detailed information on the topic being studied.

#### **5.1. Data Gathering tools**

The research tool used for the study was a questionnaire and a theme of email discussion given to Third year students to learn about their knowledge of politeness strategies, how they use these strategies in email communication, and the reasons behind informal conversation, a qualitative analysis of the students' emails to their EFL teacher was conducted to explore the politeness forms they use.

## **5.2. Data Analysis:**

We analyze the retrieved data both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis involves turning the data into numerical statistics, explaining and interpreting the information in text, and presenting it in tables using Statistical Package and Software Services (SPSS). Qualitative analysis focuses on examining questionnaire and text corpus analysis, using an analysis approach to highlight differences in politeness strategies and EFL forms based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework. The discussions and conclusions are based on the findings.

## **5.3. Population and sampling:**

Our research sample consisted of randomly selected individuals, specifically focusing on third-year students studying in the English Department at the University of Abbes Laghrour, Khenchela.

## **6. Research instrument**

In order to answer the research questions we need to investigate and collect data

The research instrument used in the study includes:

A questionnaire and text corpus analysis addresses third year students of English. The main Purpose of them is to know and developed politeness strategies.

## **7. Structure of the dissertation:**

This dissertation is structured in a traditional way. Four chapters, the first chapter contains a general introduction, the second chapter reviews the literature on theoretical concepts. The third chapter explains the research design, including how data was collected and analyzed. The final chapter shares the results of questionnaires and text corpus analysis and discusses the findings in relation to the theoretical framework, answering research questions. The conclusion summarizes the work done.

## 8. Limitations

- The limited number of participants in the text corpus analysis.
- Half of the students don't respond to the questionnaire.
- The study was limited to 3<sup>rd</sup> year EFL students at Khenchela University.
- We received 5 emails, which made it difficult for us to generalize the results.

*CHAPTER TOW:*

# *LITERATURE REVIEW*

## **Introduction**

Politeness can be defined as linguistic phenomenon of language use in all languages and cultures. The difference lies in the manner in which speakers express politeness .Politeness is

culturally distinct and ,for non-native speakers (NNS) of the Florida language , can be extremely difficult .Politeness strategies are used in different ways and styles in different languages ; nonetheless , it has the same aim , which is to maintain a harmonious relationship between the participants and to convey a particular image to others in a less aggressive manner .This chapter aims to provide an overview of the different linguistic aspects of politeness , the different theoretical approaches , and the use of politeness terms that are characteristic of language and that reveal the consistency of human speech is essential to every factors that can influence the choice of a communication tactic .In addition, the literature reviewed will provide an understanding of how polite expressions are used to frame a discussion. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory, presented in their important work "Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage" (1978), explains that politeness involves using different strategies to maintain good social relationships while reducing the chances of offending someone. According to them, politeness can be achieved by using polite language, being cautious, or indirectly communicating, based on the situation and the social status and relationship between people involved. Their theory highlights the significance of both positive politeness (trying to build a connection) and negative politeness (trying to avoid being too forward) in conversations.

### **1/ Overview about politeness:**

It is important in this chapter to provide insights into politeness and related concepts such as language use , but it is also important to clarify what the term politeness stands for .Theorists present a variety of arguments to arrive at a realistic definition of linguistic literature , demonstrating the desire to address issues relating to the definition and perception of linguistic literature .However , scientists differ on the subject ; some believe that politeness is a strictly linguistic trait , while others believe it is related to culture , place , and personalities .Brown and Levinson (1987) conducted a research on politeness to face “ as a complex

system for softening face threats .In addition to that Ritchard J watts , Cambridge University press(2003) , during the last fifteen years , new theories of linguistic politeness have spawned a lot of empirical research . This latest introduction to politeness dissipates from the limitations of current theories by examining a wide variety of facts from real -life situations , arguing that commonsense assumptions of what politeness and impoliteness are the proper subject of study in politeness theory .Watts argued that from the experience , a more appropriate model, one based on bourdieu's social theory , is developed. Miwita Rosari(2016) added the characters in the great debaters film use politeness techniques to achieve their goals , according to this report .The data collected in this study were gathered from 166 pages of the great debaters movie transcription .The research is based on Brown and Levinson's politeness principles and spolsky's theories of how someone's politeness is affected by speaking . According to the study findings , the characters in the great debaters film used the following types of politeness techniques :off-record , bald on-record , positive politeness , and negative politeness .In addition , the characters also revealed the factors that influence their politeness in speaking , including language style ,register, and domain , as well as slang and solidarity .The characters in the story did not include the use of words or gender in their conversation, since they were mostly engaged in the same topic, namely a debate competition. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness refers to how people behave in a way that takes into consideration the feelings of the person they are addressing. In other words, it involves being mindful of the impact our words may have on others. To achieve this, there is a strategy known as the « politeness strategy » that can guide us.

## **2/POLITENESS STRATEGIES**

Politeness strategies were appeared by Brown and Levinson in1978. It used to the effect of the face threatening , also referred to as the face threatening act .To minimize any face –offs that any occur in any social activities , the participants should use appropriate strategies

(Mansoor, 2018). To make communication work smoothly, a political scheme is required to make the work –life. Ivana Petrickona (2012) conducted a research about politeness strategies, according to the politeness theory of Brown and Levinson (1987), this thesis investigates politeness strategies and their application. This method of communication is characterized by politeness as a means of achieving a face-threatening act in a way that minimizes the intended recipient's negative impact. Brown and Levinson have developed a variety of techniques for tackling a face –threatening commotion. This dissertation investigates the relationship between positive and negative politeness, as well as the effect of social distance on the choice of one of the strategies. The similarities between the two approaches are shown by the use of American talk show interviews. In interviews with celebrities, positive politeness techniques are used, because their aim is to create a relaxed atmosphere and encourage the guest to disclose information that he would otherwise consider private. In political interviews, negative politeness strategies are being used more often as a way to show respect to the interviewee without giving the appearance of bias. The question's structure and execution are therefore dependent on the answer to be sought as well as on the intended audience. This thesis aims to show that the choice of politeness strategy is dependent on many factors and is not only a reflection of interpersonal relationships between conversation participants, but that the choice of strategy also influences how these relationships are reshaped. In the Journal of English Education and Teaching 2 (4), 1-8, 2018, the study focused on identifying the politeness strategies used by the members of UKM Debat at the University of Bengkulu during debate practice, based on Brown and Levinson's theory. The participants of the study were eight students from UKM Debat. The research followed a descriptive qualitative approach, collecting data through video recordings and observation sheets. The analysis revealed that the debaters utilized various politeness strategies, including bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. Among the 28 utterances containing politeness strategies, positive politeness was the most commonly used,

appearing 19 times (67.8%). Bald on record and off record were used 4 times (14.3%), while negative politeness was used only once (3.6%). Positive politeness was favoured because the debaters already knew each other well and had a close bond, making it the most suitable strategy during debate practice. Sugini et al. (2016 : 29) argue that politeness strategies are integral to interpersonal interactions. These strategies encompass both positive and negative politeness. Positive politeness focuses on building and maintaining a positive image and reputation between interlocutors. It involves using language and actions that show respect, empathy, and friendliness. On the other hand, negative politeness involves strategies aimed at minimizing potential imposition or intrusion on the other person's autonomy. It emphasizes the use of indirect language, hedges, and politeness markers to mitigate any potential threats to the interlocutor's face. Kausar (2015: 86) highlights that the orientation of politeness is closely tied to the social status and power dynamics between individuals. In other words, the way people communicate and employ politeness strategies can shape how they are perceived by others, whether positively or negatively. Therefore, effective communication and the skillful use of politeness strategies play a crucial role in maintaining harmonious and respectful interpersonal relationships.

Brown and Levinson divided the politeness strategies as follows:

## **2.1/POSITIVE POLITENESS STRATEGIES:**

Thomas Holtgraves (1997) confirmed that this paper explored some of the linguistic techniques people used when engaging in disagreements with one another. Unaccustomed students debated a subject on which they had contradictory viewpoints. These disagreements were then transcribed and analyzed for the presence of politeness tactics. There was evidence for many of Brown and Levinson's highly polite behaviours, as well as several previously undocumented tactics that seem to be effective politeness. Participants rated each other on several levels, and these perceptions were related to a speaker's degree of positive politeness.

In the Journal of the College of Basic Education in 2011, Jassim Nasser Al-Azzawi discusses how compliments are used to maintain, improve, or support the addressee's face. Compliments are a way to show positive politeness by acknowledging the interests, wants, needs, and goods of the person being complimented. People give and receive compliments on topics like appearance, ability, performance, and possessions. This study looks at how English speakers use compliments as a strategy for positive politeness. It explores the linguistic structures of compliments, the functions of compliments, types of responses to compliments, and the differences between men and women in giving compliments. Moreover, Akutsu Yuka, in an article published in The Economic Journal of Takasaki City University of Economics in 2009, discussed the differences between Japanese and English in terms of politeness. Japanese is considered a "negative politeness language," where speakers do not often use positive politeness strategies unless they are very close to the person they are speaking to. On the other hand, in English-speaking societies, such as the US, positive politeness is seen as crucial in building good relationships. This contrast between the two languages can pose challenges for Japanese learners trying to connect with native English speakers. It is important for English learners to understand this difference and to be able to use positive politeness strategies when needed. The article focuses on the analysis of address terms in high school English textbooks approved by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology. The goal is to determine how many address terms are included and what types of terms are used, as these are essential positive politeness strategies. The article also examines how these terms are presented in the textbooks and assesses if they are effective for learners based on previous studies on teaching pragmatic skills.

## **2.2/NEGATIVE POLITENESS STRATEGY**

In the English instruction diary (2021).A discussion is considered as the center of human interaction .People used politeness strategies to play down and maintain a strategic distance

from struggle that will happen in discussion .The marvels appeared that the graduate understudies suddenly did their discussion with their companions who have different societies did not realize that they utilized negative respectfulness procedures .This consider points to clarify to use of negative politeness techniques in causal discussion among the English Instruction Department's graduate program understudies .The members of this ponder were 14understudies of the graduate program of the English instruction division .Expressive subjective inquire about with interpretative information examination was used within the show consider . The comes about appeared that the understudies used negative respectfulness methodology ,which comprises of ;be ordinarily roundabout , address and fence , be cynical , minimize the burden , apologize, impersonalize the speaker and the listener , state the FTA as a common run the show , and go on record as bringing about obligation or as not indebteding the listener , it can be concluded that the think about found eight sub-strategies of negative respectfulness .It has benefits for the understudies to move forward their information , particularly in using negative politeness techniques. In International Journal on Integrated Education 4 (3), 468-471, 2019The paper discusses the significance of taking a systematic approach to understanding politeness and its strategies. The main aim of the paper is to examine how certain models of English speech etiquette, specifically politeness forms in English, are used. Politeness strategies come in different forms, such as absolute, relative, negative, or positive politeness. Each type of politeness corresponds to a specific way of speaking politely. The analysis of politeness strategies focuses on speech acts like apologies and condolences, looking at their pragmatic structures.

### **2.3/BALD ON RECORD:**

Anna Leli Harhap (2019) in her study based on the bald record strategy, this study sought to investigate Jokoui-Amin's and Prabawo –Sandi's utterances in the first presidential election

debate, this study used a descriptive method, the utterance of both candidate become the source of the findings, the researcher and a sheet of data were the mainstays of the study, according to the report, Jakoui –Amin and Parabawo –Sandi used a bald on record approach.

Bald on record strategy tend not to minimize the danger to the addressee's face, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), a bald on record approach is a direct way of saying things without minimize the effect in a simple , straightforward and concise way. In another context in 2016, Seyyed Mohammad Reza Adel, Mohammad Davoudi, and Akram Ramezanzadeh conducted a study in the Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research. The study aimed to understand how Iranian EFL learners use different politeness strategies in online class blog posts. The participants were 14 Iranian EFL learners chosen based on their language skills. The learners used a total of 1520 politeness utterances in their posts, with 800 directed towards their teacher and 720 towards their peers. The researchers used content analysis and Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA) to analyze the data. The results showed that learners often used positive politeness strategies to show closeness, reciprocity, and friendship in their interactions.

## **2.4/OFF –RECORD:**

Mria Sifianou (1993) confirmed that OFF-RECORD utterances are polite ways of requesting but they express their politeness in a situation ally and culturally specific way, OFF RECORD requests have been largely seen as devices driving their politeness from minimizing demands by having the addresses choices open for them , this paper presents some preliminary findings that link off record requests with offers in Greek families and familiar contexts , it is therefore suggested that a second important reason for their employments is the opportunity they give the addresses to offer rather than being asked . Considering the differences between the Greek and the English in terms of the relative importance given to the concepts of involvement and the independence .She added, in 1997, Walter de Gruyter published a study that discussed the

idea that politeness plays a key role in indirect communication. This popular belief, often associated with British English, sees politeness as a way to show formality and create a sense of distance. The concept of on-record and off-record indirectness helps to explain some of the issues related to this perspective. This paper specifically looks at off-record indirectness and how it can convey both formality (negative politeness) and solidarity (positive politeness) based on evidence from Greek.

### **3/the realization of politeness strategies in EFL teacher-students classroom interaction:**

In the English Education Journal 10 (1), 85-93, 2020, they argued that the study focused on how politeness is used in the interaction between EFL teachers and students in the classroom. The goal was to understand how politeness strategies are implemented and what factors influence their use. The research was conducted at SMP Semester Bilingual School and involved an EFL teacher and 30 students. The study found that different politeness strategies were used, such as positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. The teacher mainly used positive politeness to connect with students, bald on record for clear instructions, negative politeness to avoid coercion, and off record for subtle hints. Factors like distance, power, and imposition level also played a role in determining which politeness strategy was chosen. Overall, politeness is essential for building relationships and fostering a comfortable learning environment in the EFL classroom. Moreover, in 2013, Senowarsito conducted a study for TEFLIN (The Association for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia) to explore how teachers and students use politeness strategies in English lessons at a senior high school. The study involved video recordings of two 90-minute classes where English was used as the main language for teaching and learning. The analysis focused on the politeness strategies outlined by Brown and Levinson. The findings revealed that both teachers and students mainly used positive, negative, and straightforward strategies in their interactions. Their use of these strategies was influenced by factors such as social distance,

age difference, institutional setting, and power dynamics. According to Ayfer Sülü in the International Online Journal of Education in 2015, being polite can help people interact effectively. In the field of language teaching, politeness is believed to improve learning by creating a lively and friendly environment in the classroom. In a study conducted by Sülü, an EFL classroom was examined to see how English learners interacted with a native English speaking teacher. The goal was to determine if politeness had different effects when students and teachers came from different cultures and spoke different native languages. The researcher observed and recorded two hours of classes, then transcribed and analyzed the recordings to identify politeness strategies and speech functions. Additionally, three students were randomly selected for interviews after class. The results indicated that politeness was present in the EFL classroom, helping students feel positively about the lesson and encouraging them to participate more in class.

#### **4/politeness theories:**

In the year 2013, Mohsen Shahrokhi and Farinaz Shirani Bidabadi published a paper in the American Journal of Linguistics. The paper aims to give a complete overview of politeness theories, from classic to modern. The paper discusses various views on politeness, such as the social norm view, conversational maxim view, conversational-contract view, Brown and Levinson's face-saving view, Arndt and Jannaey's Supportive face-work and interpersonal politeness, Spencer-Oatey's view of rapport management, Ide's notion of discernment and volition, Scollon and Scollon's intercultural communication, and Watt's politeness view. Each theory is explained in detail and critically analyzed. The paper also discusses the current state of politeness theories and provides suggestions for future research in this area. Moreover, Fareed H Al-Hindawi and Musaab A Raheem Alkhazaali (2016) explored politeness theories in their study published in Theory and Practice in Language Studies. The paper criticizes various theoretical foundations and pragmatic models of politeness, highlighting their

shortcomings and defects. The aim of this work is to be valuable for specialists and analysts in fields such as pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and conversational analysis, ethnomethodology, and communication studies. The criticism revealed that politeness theories have shortcomings that affect their effectiveness in analyzing interactive communication. For example, Brown and Levinson's theory lacks a clear definition of universalism, while Leech's model is limited to certain speech acts and does not clearly address culture-specific and cross-cultural communication aspects. Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson's Theory of Politeness (1987) is an example of how people interact, as discussed by Solomon Asch in his Social Psychology (1952). Politeness involves considering others' feelings, specifically their desire to be liked (positive face) and their desire to be free from interference (negative face). According to Politeness Theory, there are various ways to be polite, and the choice of strategy depends on the perceived risk of hurting someone's feelings. This risk increases based on the listener's authority, the social distance between the speaker and listener, and the level of imposition in a particular culture. Politeness is seen as a systematic approach, not just a set of habits. While the overall system is thought to be universal, cultural values play a role in certain aspects. Politeness is a key aspect of human behaviour, but it is not biologically determined. The theory is firmly grounded in intellectual thought, aligning well with Solomon Asch's principles of social psychology.

## **Conclusion**

The first chapter dealt with studies on politeness, mainly Brown and Levinson's method, which serves as a pioneering contribution to the literature review. The emphasis was on the politeness strategies framework, which includes four options that are arranged based on the degree of directness or indirectness involved in each strategy. The existence of various sub-strategies reveals the variety of approaches that speakers can employ in everyday life to achieve politeness. Lastly, identifying the factors that may have an effect on the use of

courtesy techniques will give us a solid foundation for conducting research into the subject of investigation.

## *CHAPTER THREE*

# *METHODOLOGY* *AND* *DESIGN*

## **Introduction**

The methodology section of this report serves as a comprehensive guide for the investigation of politeness principles in email communication between EFL students and teachers, focusing on third-year students at Khenchela University. This study employs a mixed-methods approach to gain a holistic picture of politeness dynamics in digital correspondence. Quantitative data are collected to quantify and analyze patterns of politeness behaviours using a carefully designed questionnaire given to students. In addition, quantitative methods such as text analysis and thematic coding are used to dig deeper into the nuanced intricacies of politeness phenomena. This chapter describes the research framework, participant selection criteria, data collection techniques, and the analytical frameworks used to comprehensively

explore the multifaceted landscape of politeness concepts in the context of EFL student-teacher email interactions.

### **3.1. Methodological approach**

What is qualitative research? (Patrik aspers, 42, 139-160, 2019). The literature is sparse if we look for a precise definition of qualitative research, and specifically one that emphasizes its distinctive characteristic of being "qualitative." A collection of 89 sources that use or attempt to use the term "qualitative" is systematically searched, identified, and analyzed. We then formulate and illustrate a definition that captures its basic characteristics, based on terms commonly encountered in literature and based on Becker's famous experiment with marijuana use. Qualitative research is an iterative process in which new significant distinctions are made to the scientific community by being closer to the subject being investigated. This approach has been used to improve research designs while still recognizing that qualitative work has a quantitative component. It can be used to support research education, collaboration among researchers, bridge the gap between qualitative and quantitative research, help to address criticisms of qualitative research, and can be used as a basis for evaluating qualitative research. Quantitative research is a set of research methods that use quantitative data and statistical analysis to investigate and understand phenomena. According to hair & al, 2019, quantitative methods are defined as "study techniques" that involve the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to identify patterns, correlations, and trends. (Agresti& Finlay, 2009) » Quantitative research methods are defined as « research methods that use quantitative methods and techniques to analyze numerical data and draw conclusions about populations or phenomena. ».

### **3.2. Description of the students' questionnaire**

A questionnaire serves as an essential instrument in inquire about, outlined to efficiently assemble information from respondents to address particular inquire about targets. It

ordinarily comprises an arrangement of organized questions, carefully created to evoke data on different viewpoints such as states of mind, suppositions, behaviours, socioeconomics, and other pertinent factors. Surveys can be managed through distinctive mediums counting paper-based groups, online stages, or indeed in face-to-face interviews, depending on the investigate setting and the target populace. They offer analysts a flexible and versatile strategy to gather information effectively from a huge test measure whereas keeping up consistency in information collection procedures. (Fowler, 2013). The plan of a questionnaire includes a few significant steps, counting recognizing the inquire about goals, defining clear and fair-minded questions, organizing the questions consistently, and considering components such as dialect, organize, and format to improve respondent comprehension and engagement. Also, analysts frequently protest the survey to recognize and correct any ambiguities or issues some time recently it's far reaching usage. (Bobbie, 2016)

### **3.2.1. Aims of the students' questionnaire:**

The students' questionnaire is used to check if students know how to use polite strategies when emailing their English teachers. It also helps to understand how they communicate in non-face-to-face situations.

The questionnaire aims are threefold:

- 1) To showcase the students' personal background.
- 2) To uncover how much they understand the significant role of politeness strategies in the interaction between students and teachers.
- 3) To assess the extent of their email communication with teachers.

### **3.2.2. Students' questionnaire administration**

The questionnaire was conducted by third-year students from the Department of English at Abbes Laghrour Khenchela University. The students administered the questionnaire in person,

ensuring anonymity to encourage honest responses. The questionnaire comprises 18 questions organized into three sections, incorporating both open-ended and close-ended questions. The first section, "Personal Information," explores participants' backgrounds, including gender, age, and English proficiency. The second section focuses on EFL Students' Use of Politeness Strategies and it consists of 7 questions, aiming to identify the types of politeness strategies students utilize when interacting with their teachers. The third section, titled Online Communication, investigates participants' perspectives on the role of politeness in email discussions.

### **3.2.3. Population and sampling:**

The participants in the study were chosen randomly and willingly agreed to take part in the research. They were cooperative and eager to gain a broader understanding of the topic being investigated.

We chose this sample because third-year students are expected to use emails often to communicate with their teachers. We also wanted to introduce them to the concept of politeness in email interactions between supervisors and supervisees for future use.

Also, even though students have a good grasp of language, their teachers still receive complaints about rude emails. Additionally, the participants are more active in the second semester compared to master's students. The online questionnaire sent to the (...) student subjects was successfully completed and answered.

### **3.3. Text corpus analysis:**

(Aarts ,Ostman, 2011)explained that, People have used corpus data throughout history, but a major leap forward in their use came in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it was possible to store and search large amounts of text electronically. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some people who were dissatisfied with the linguistic mainstream's preference for intuitive data began to

use corpus data in a new way. It's important to remember that corpus data show what people actually say and write, making them ideal for linguists who want to study language use rather than just linguistic competence or universals. Since the study of language use involves not only describing what people say and write, but also understanding why they choose one linguistic term to over another in a particular context, a corpus of linguistic events must satisfy tow basic requirements.

### **3.4. Description of text corpus analysis:**

Kutter, 169-186, 2017) provide that, this chapter provides an introduction to the field of corpus analysis, making it possible to understand the subject and resolve case-specific problems. Readers will get to know the variety of methods used for corpus analysis, familiarize themselves with the specifics of text-statistical methods, and consider potential applications, all illustrated by case studies on crisis discourse. The chapter argues that corpus analysis is a valuable addition to the discourse researcher's toolbox, particularly when used as an explorative technique for heuristic and reflexive purposes. The corpus analysis provides a specific macro-view of text and facilitates the investigation of questions and hypotheses (heuristic potential). The chapter explores how to exploit these potentials for political discourse research. Methods and problems of corpus research are discussed, the strengths of lexicometrics and corpus linguistics are discussed, and the development of a discourse-analytical approach to corpus analysis is discussed.(Elaine Vaughan, Anne O'Keeffe, 1-17, 2015) in the broad fields that make up the study of language and social interaction, large and small language text corpora have become quite common. This paper introduces the concept of the « corpus » in which language research is concerned, as well as the field of corpus linguistics. It discusses the main corpus analysis techniques and the types of perspectives they can offer for language data. Lastly, it provides a broad overview of the ways in which corpus analysis has informed or is beginning to influence different areas of language study.

### **3.5. Aims of Text corpus analysis:**

In the present study, the text corpus analysis technique is used to determine in what extent politeness tactics are used by students in email discussions with their teachers. The following are the objectives of the text corpus analysis:

- To identify and illustrate the different politeness strategies used.
- To investigate such linguistic structure.
- To determine the consistency of student-teacher interaction.

### **3.6. Administration of text corpus analysis:**

The main focus of this study was to analyze a specific set of written email messages that were randomly collected from students who had responded to instructions sent by their teacher. The study took place in the English Department at Abbas Laghrour University in Khenchela, during the second semester. Each participant was requested to promptly share their thoughts on the possibility of organizing make-up sessions on Saturdays. To ensure confidentiality, any personal information, including email addresses, was carefully removed from the messages. It's worth mentioning that the emails received varied in length, ranging from just one sentence to as long as twelve sentences.

### **3.7. Population and sampling:**

A group of individuals, including students, was randomly selected to participate in the text corpus research. These participants were chosen because they are expected to have strong language skills, making it easier for them to engage in communication compared to others at different levels. The age range of the students is between 22 and 27 years, with both males and females included. For the text corpus study, only a specific number of written emails were received and analyzed to achieve the study's objectives.

## **Conclusion**

In the conclusion, the methodology section provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating politeness principles in EFL students and teachers' emails. This study provides a holistic picture of politeness dynamics in the digital communication environment by using a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative data from email content with quantitative data collected by way of a questionnaire and text corpus analysis. Both questionnaire and text corpus analysis, which are designed to capture nuanced perceptions and behaviours, they are a useful tool for securing a diverse group of EFL students and teachers, facilitating the exploration of diverse perspectives and experiences. This study strives for both breadth and depth in its investigation by taking into account sampling techniques and population characteristics. This study seeks to shed light on the intricacies of politeness techniques by integrating these theoretical elements, resulting in a deeper understanding of interpersonal communication in EFL contexts.

*CHAPTER FOUR:*

*ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS*

#### **4.1. Analysis of the Learners' Questionnaire**

In today's interconnected world, effective communication through email has become an essential skill, particularly in academic settings where students engage in virtual discussions with their teachers. Politeness strategies play a crucial role in shaping these interactions, influencing the tone, clarity, and overall effectiveness of communication. Understanding how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students perceive and employ politeness strategies in email correspondence with their teachers is fundamental for enhancing communication efficacy and fostering positive teacher-student relationships. This study delves into the perspectives of third-year EFL students regarding politeness strategies employed in email discussions with their teachers. By examining students' perceptions and practices, this research aims to uncover the prevailing politeness strategies utilized, the underlying motivations guiding their usage, and potential areas for improvement in email communication within academic contexts. Moreover, examining EFL students' perspectives on politeness strategies in email discussions with teachers holds practical significance for language pedagogy and curriculum development. By

elucidating students' awareness, preferences, and challenges concerning politeness in digital communication, educators can tailor instructional approaches to cultivate students' communicative competence in diverse contexts.

By addressing these 18 questions to 51 EFL 3<sup>rd</sup> year learners, this research endeavours to contribute valuable insights to the understanding of politeness phenomena in academic email discourse and inform pedagogical practices aimed at enhancing students' communicative proficiency in digital communication contexts.

### **Item1.**

1. What is your gender?

#### **Gender**

**Distribution**    Male

Learners:

Number of males: 7    Percentage

of    total:    13.7%    Female

Learners:

Number of females: 44

Percentage of total: 86.3%

**Table1: Learners' Gender**

| Options    | Male  | Female |
|------------|-------|--------|
| Number     | 7     | 44     |
| Percentage | 13.7% | 86.3%  |

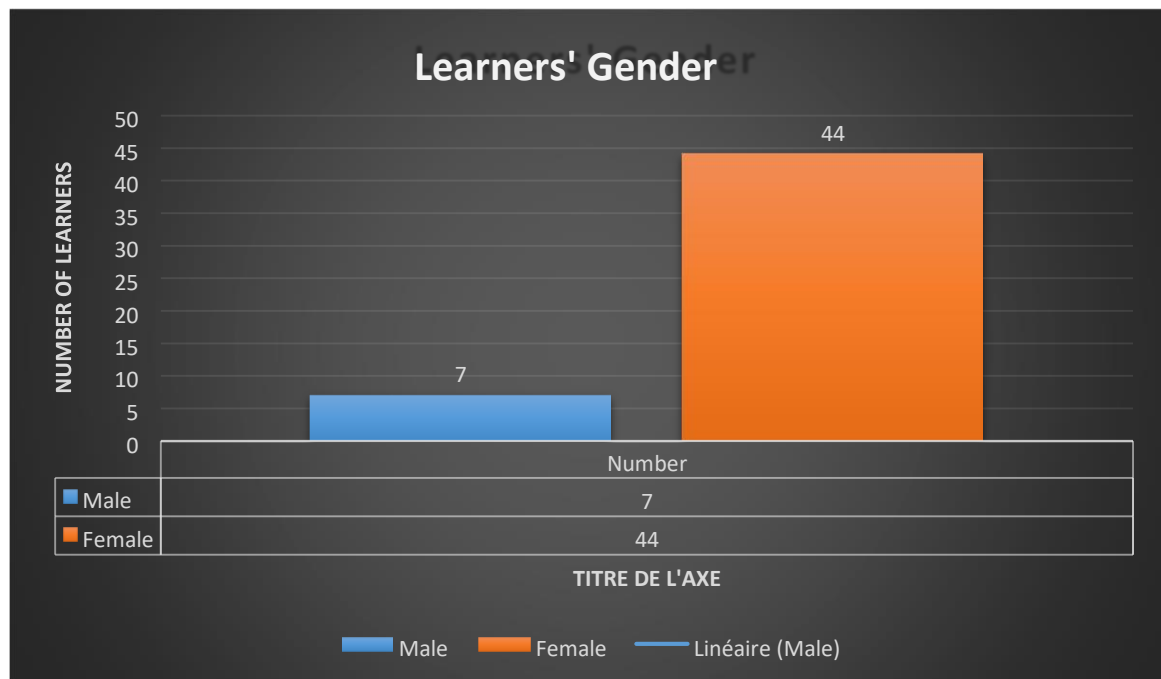


**Figure 1. Learners' Gender**

The table indicates a significant gender imbalance with a predominance of female learners (86.3%) compared to male learners (13.7%). This disparity has implications for the interpretation of data and suggests areas for further investigation to understand and address the underlying causes.

## Item2.

2. How old are you?

Under 20 years old (6) 11.76%

To 21 years old (38) 74.50%

Beyond 21 years old (7) 13.72%

**Table 2. The Demographic Composition of the Sample**

| Options | Under 20 Years | To 21 years | Beyond 21Years |
|---------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
|---------|----------------|-------------|----------------|

|            |        |        |        |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Number     | 06     | 38     | 07     |
| Percentage | 11.76% | 74.50% | 13.72% |

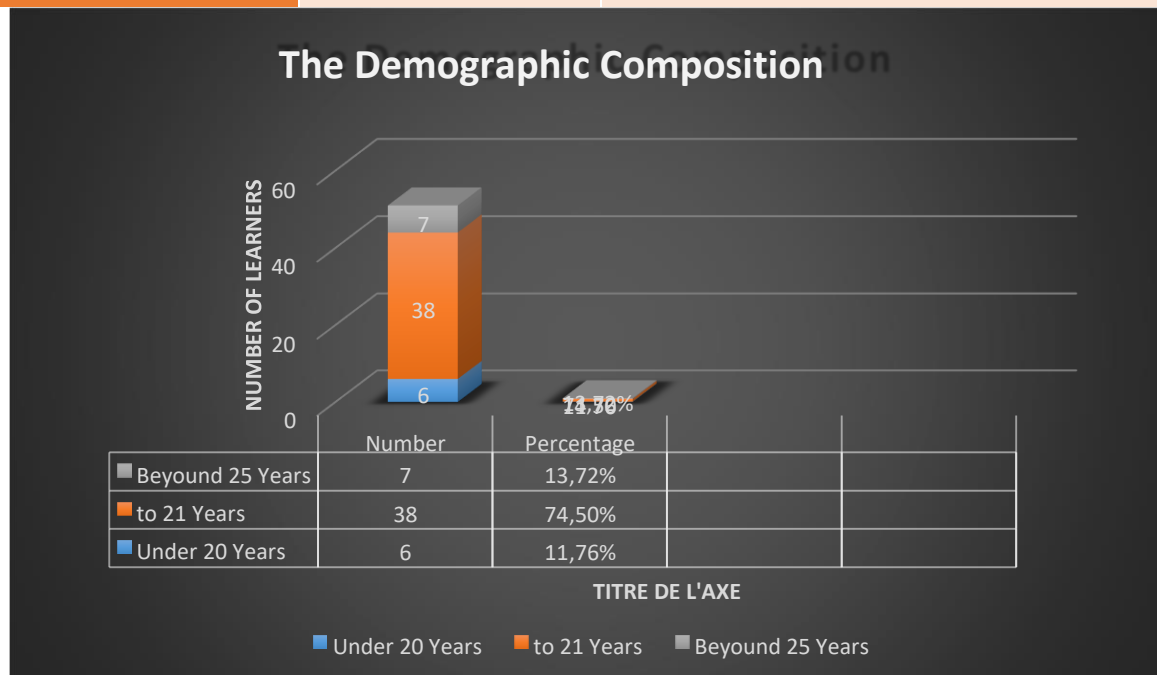


***Figure 2. The Demographic Composition of the Sample***

First, the age distribution of the learners, as captured by the questionnaire, reveals significant insights into the demographic composition of the group. The majority of the learners fall within the age range of "to 21," with 38 individuals, which represents the most substantial segment of the population. This suggests that a large portion of the learners are likely in their early adulthood. The second largest group comprises those "beyond 21," with 7 individuals, indicating that a smaller, yet notable, segment of the learners consists of adults who may be pursuing further education or professional development, perhaps to enhance their career prospects or shift to a new field. The smallest group, consisting of 6 learners, is "under 20," suggesting a minority of the cohort includes younger students. The predominance of learners aged up to 21 suggests that the educational program or context is particularly appealing or accessible to this age group, the relatively lower numbers of younger Understanding these dynamics can help in

tailoring the educational content, support services, and outreach efforts to better serve and attract a more diverse age range of learners.

### Item 3.

3. What is your English level?

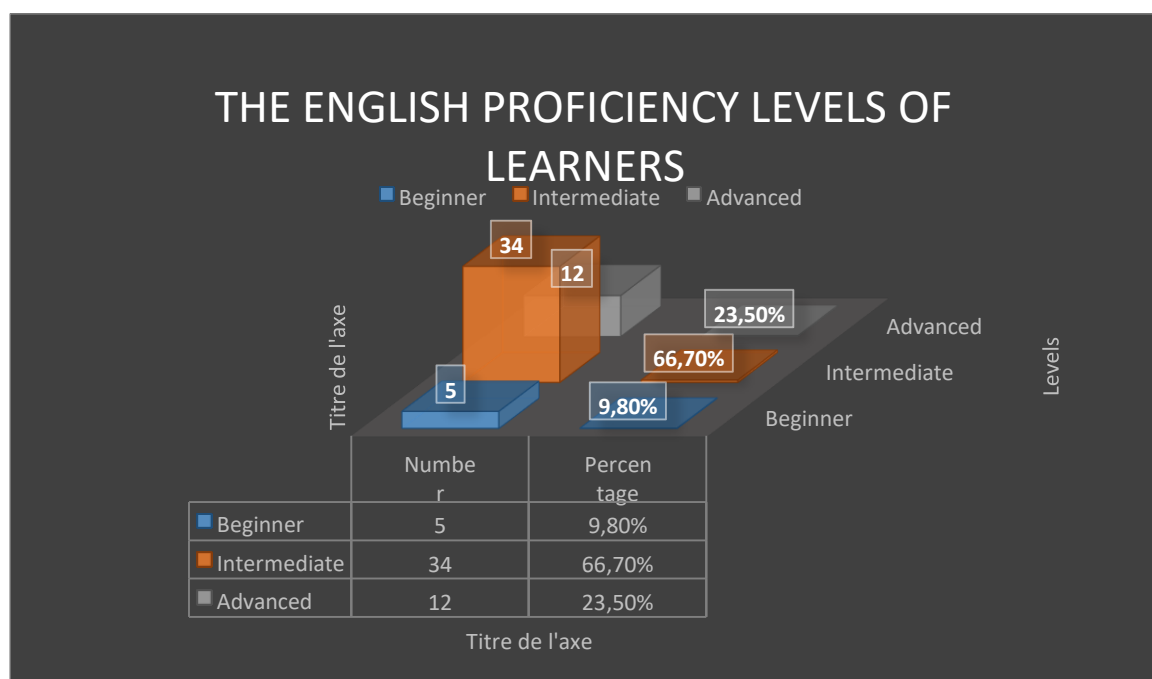
Beginner 5 (9.8%)

Intermediate 34 (66.7%)

Advanced 12 (23.5%)

**Table3. The English Proficiency Levels of Learners**

| Options    | Beginner | Intermediate | Advanced |
|------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| Number     | 5        | 34           | 12       |
| Percentage | 9.8%     | 66.7%        | 23.5%    |



### ***Figure3. The English Proficiency Levels of Learners***

Doubtlessly, the English proficiency levels of the learners, as indicated by this questionnaire, provide valuable insights into the group's language skills and potential needs. The majority of learners, 34 individuals or 66.7%, self-identified as having an intermediate level of English. This suggests that while these learners have a functional command of the language, they may still benefit from further language support to achieve fluency and greater confidence in their English usage. The second largest group, consisting of 12 learners or 23.5%, reported an advanced level of English proficiency. These learners likely possess strong language skills, enabling them to engage more deeply with complex materials and participate more fully in discussions and written tasks. However, only a small portion of the group, 5 learners or 9.8%, identified as beginners. This indicates that there are few learners who might struggle significantly with understanding and using English in the educational context. The predominance of intermediate learners suggests that instructional materials and communication should be tailored to suit this level, ensuring clarity and accessibility while still challenging the more advanced learners. Meanwhile, the presence of both beginners and advanced learners highlights the need for differentiated instruction or additional resources to support the varying proficiency levels. This distribution underscores the importance of offering targeted language support, such as additional tutoring for beginners and advanced content or opportunities for the advanced learners to further enhance their skills. Understanding these proficiency levels can help educators design and deliver more effective and inclusive language instruction, fostering an environment where all learners can thrive.

#### **Item4.**

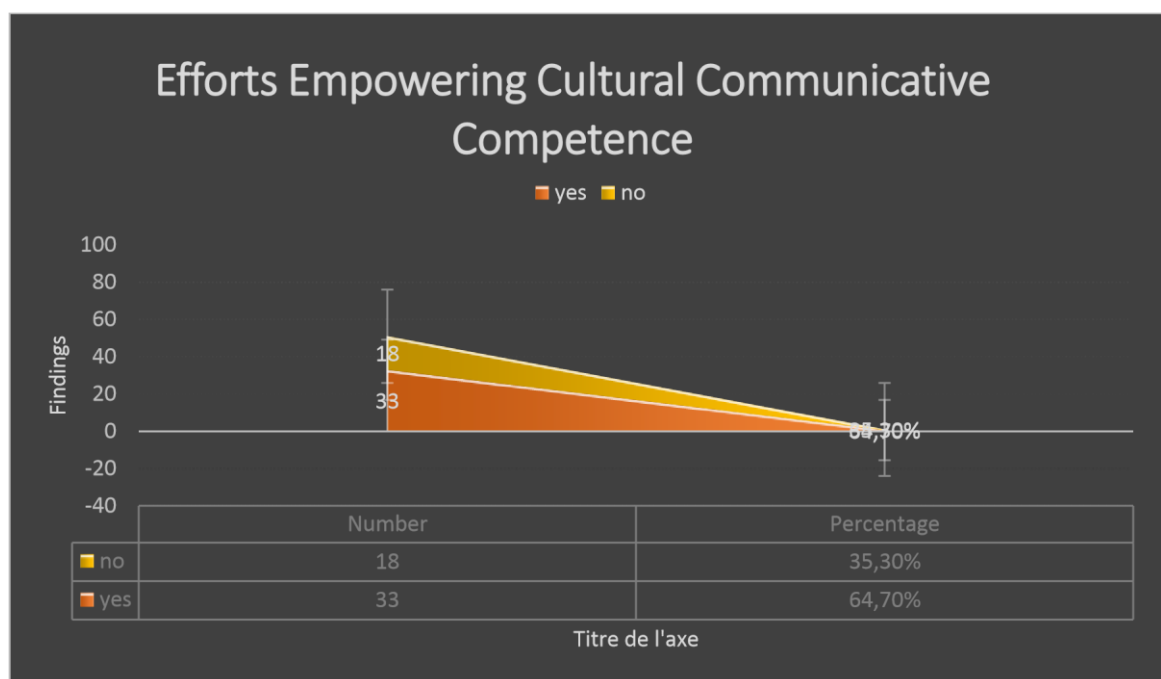
4. Do you make an effort to learn language behaviours and culture of the target language as an EFL learner?

Yes 33 (64.7%)

No 18 (35.3%)

**Table4. Learners' Efforts to Empower Cultural Communicative Competence**

| Options    | Y es  | N o   |
|------------|-------|-------|
| Number     | 33    | 18    |
| Percentage | 64.7% | 35.3% |



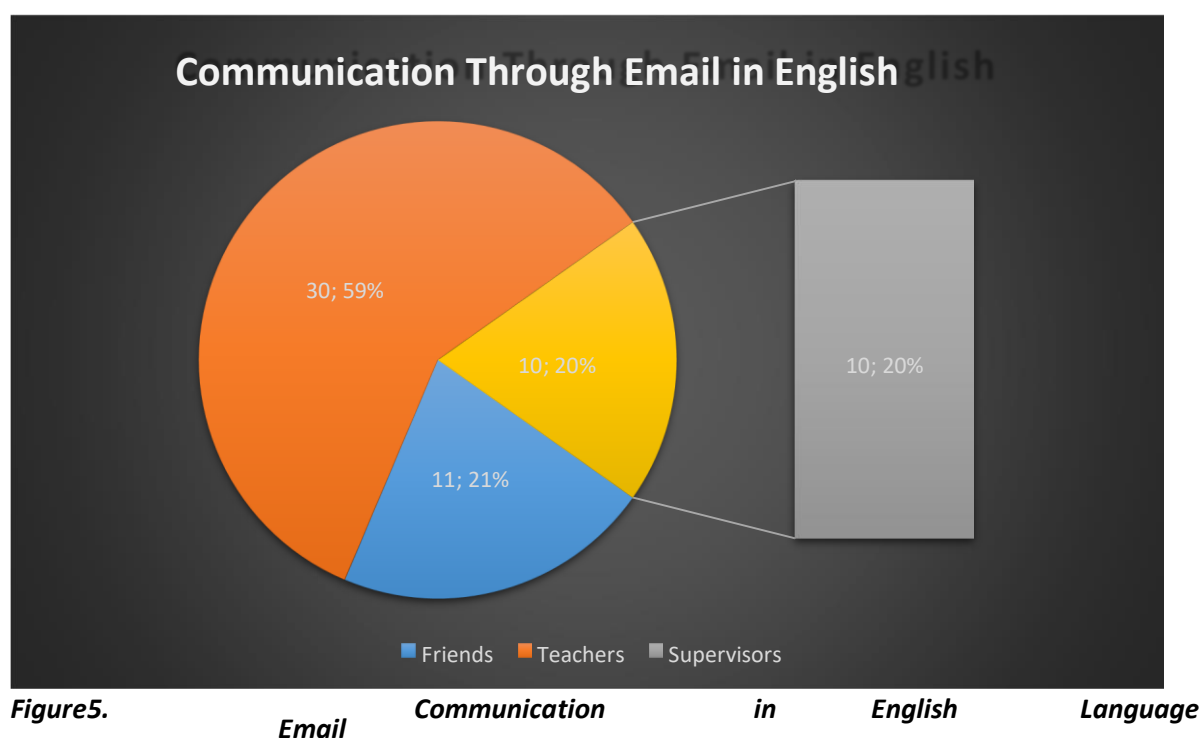
#### **Figure4. Learners' Efforts to Empower Cultural Communicative Competence**

In fact, the questionnaire results regarding learners' efforts to understand language behaviors and culture as part of their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) studies reveal a notable trend. A significant majority, 33 learners or 64.7%, reported actively making an effort to learn the cultural and behavioral aspects of the target language. This indicates a strong recognition among these learners of the importance of cultural competence in achieving language proficiency, suggesting that they understand how cultural context can enhance communication skills and overall language comprehension. On the other hand, 18 learners or 35.3% indicated that they do not make such efforts. This substantial minority highlights a potential gap in the language learning process, as these learners may miss out on crucial contextual knowledge that can enrich their understanding and use of the language. This disparity suggests a need for educators to emphasize the value of cultural learning within EFL programs, potentially integrating more cultural content and activities into the curriculum to engage those who may not naturally seek out this aspect of language learning. Addressing this gap can help foster a more holistic language learning experience, ensuring that all learners appreciate and engage with both the linguistic and cultural dimensions of the target language.

#### **Item5.**

5. With whom do you typically communicate through email in English?

- Friends
- Teachers
- Supervisors



Remarkably, the questionnaire responses regarding email communication in English reveal varied interaction patterns among learners, shedding light on their practical use of the language. Communicating with friends suggests that learners engage in informal, perhaps more relaxed and spontaneous exchanges, which can enhance their conversational skills and familiarity with everyday language. Interaction with teachers indicates a more formal and structured use of English, often involving academic language, clear articulation of ideas, and adherence to grammatical standards. This form of communication likely helps in developing proficiency in formal writing and academic discourse. Communication with supervisors implies a professional context, requiring learners to use English in a more formal, precise, and often persuasive manner, which is crucial for career-related language skills and professional etiquette.

These different communication contexts collectively contribute to a well-rounded development of language proficiency, as learners adapt their language use to suit various social and professional settings. Understanding these patterns can help educators tailor

their teaching strategies to include diverse communicative practices, ensuring that learners are well-equipped to use English effectively in multiple contexts.

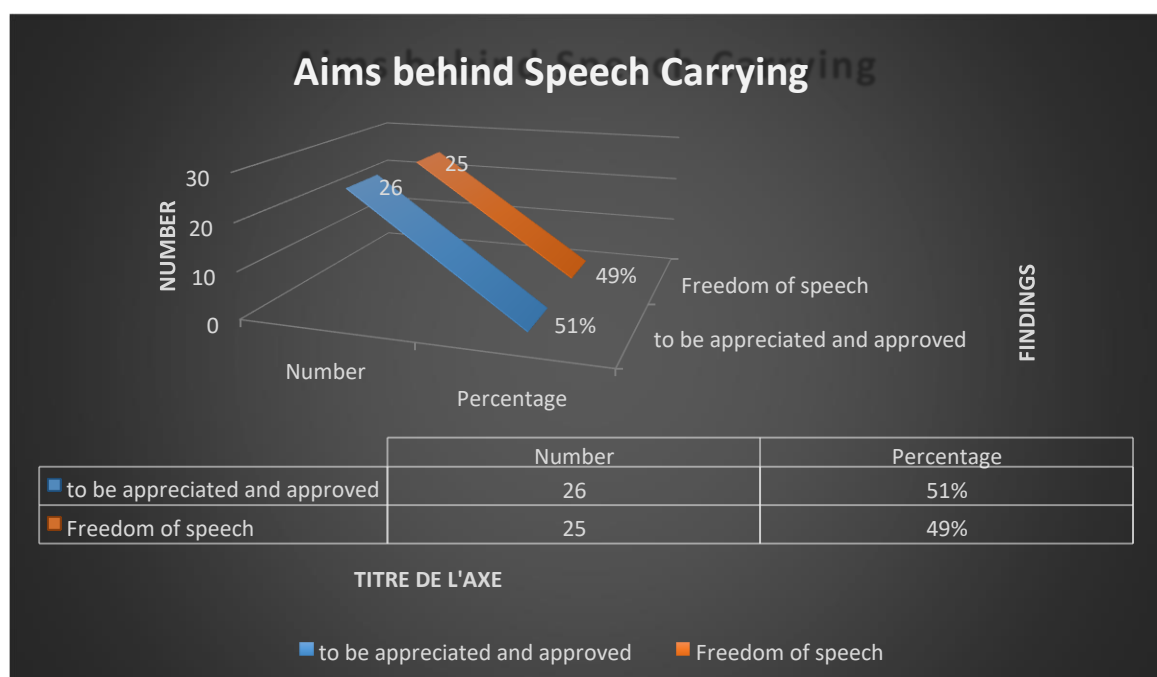
### Item 6.

6. When you are carrying out a speech act, you aim to:

- The desire to be appreciated and approved 26 (51%)
- Freedom of Speech 25 (49%)

**Table6. Aims behind Speech Carrying**

| Options    | To be appreciated and approved | Freedom of Speech |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Number     | 26                             | 25                |
| Percentage | 51%                            | 49%               |



### **Figure6. Aims behind Speech Carrying**

Well the responses to the question about the aims of carrying out a speech act highlight two primary motivations among learners: the desire to be appreciated and approved (51%) and the pursuit of freedom of speech (49%). Many learners express a strong need for validation and recognition, believing that positive feedback indicates their message was effectively communicated and understood, which in turn boosts their confidence and encourages them to improve their language skills. They aim for their speech to be valued and appreciated by their audience, feeling that this appreciation reflects their competence and efforts. On the other hand, a nearly equal number of learners emphasize the importance of freedom of speech, valuing the autonomy to express their thoughts and ideas without restraint. This freedom allows them to act spontaneously, speak more fluently, and feel comfortable and respected. These learners prioritize their right to communicate openly and make choices in their speech acts, reflecting a desire for self-expression and independence. Together, these motivations underscore a fundamental human instinct to seek connection, validation, and autonomy in communication, balancing the need for approval with the desire for expressive freedom.

#### **Item 7.**

7. What politeness strategies do you prefer to use when you interact with your teacher?

- a. Providing clear and unambiguous message 37 (72.5%)
- b. Using Indirect Language in which one sentence has different interpretations such as the employment of metaphors. 5 (9.8%)
- c. Avoiding impositions. 9 (17.6%)
- d. Being friendly with your teachers. 16 (31.4%)

e. Do not participate in the communication at all. 5 (9.8%)

**Table7. Preferred Politeness Strategies by Learners**

| Options     | A     | B    | C     | D     | E    |
|-------------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|
| Number      | 37    | 5    | 9     | 16    | 5    |
| Percent age | 72.5% | 9.8% | 17.6% | 31.4% | 9.8% |

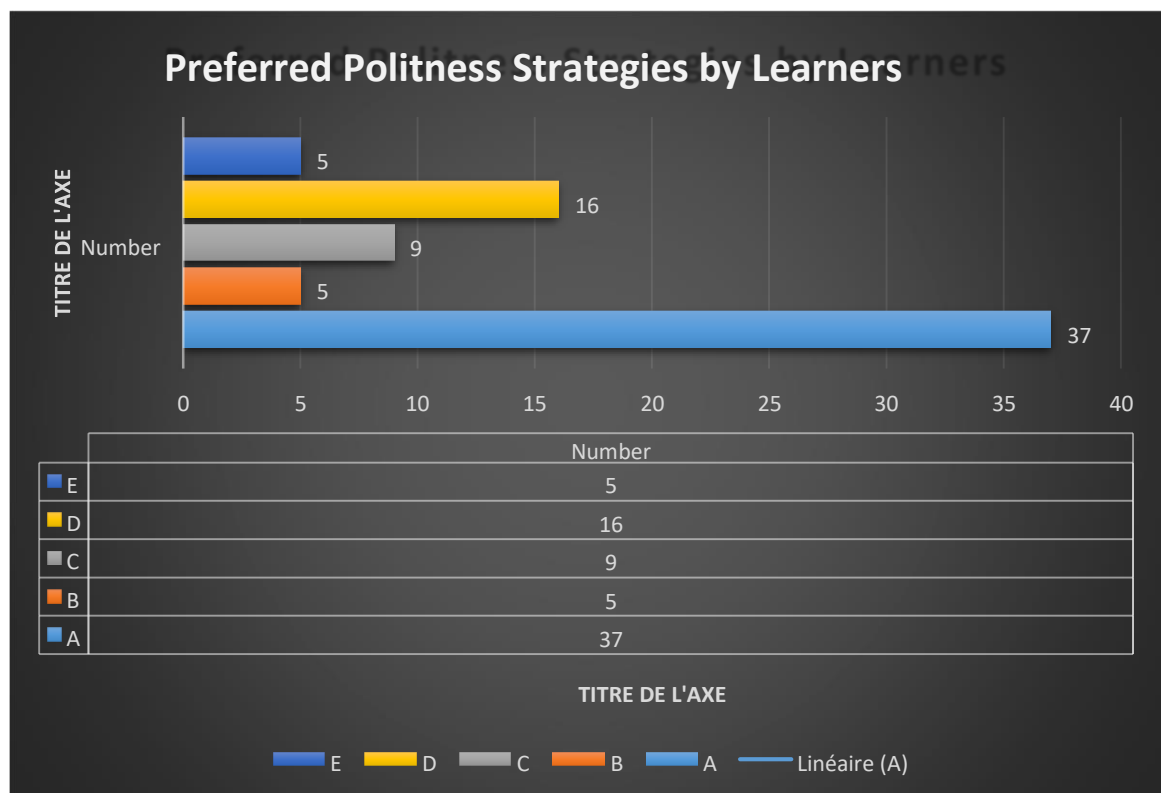


**Figure7. Preferred Politeness Strategies by Learners**

Noticeably, the questionnaire results regarding preferred politeness strategies when interacting with teachers reveal diverse approaches among learners. The most preferred strategy, chosen by 37 respondents (72.5%), is providing clear and unambiguous messages. This indicates a strong preference for straightforward and direct communication, likely to ensure clarity, avoid misunderstandings, and maintain a

professional tone. Being friendly with teachers is the second most favored strategy, with 16 respondents (31.4%) selecting it. This choice suggests that a significant portion of learners' value building a rapport and fostering a positive, approachable relationship with their instructors. Avoiding impositions is preferred by 9 respondents (17.6%), reflecting a sensitivity to the teacher's authority and a desire to be respectful and considerate. Using indirect language, such as metaphors, is chosen by 5 respondents (9.8%), indicating a minority preference for a more nuanced and less direct form of communication, which might be employed to soften requests or comments. Interestingly, the same number of respondents (9.8%) opts not to participate in communication at all, perhaps due to anxiety, lack of confidence, or a belief that their input is not necessary. These findings suggest that while most learners prioritize clarity and directness in their interactions with teachers, there is also a notable emphasis on friendliness and respect, highlighting the multifaceted nature of politeness strategies in educational contexts.

#### Item 8.

8. Which strategy should you use if you want your teacher to repeat a previously explained point?

1. You make the teacher feel great by showing interest in the lesson and using friendly statements, showing support, and giving compliments. 22 (43.1%)

2. Request based on minimizing the imposition on the teacher by employing distancing styles as some apologies. 32 (62.7%)

**Table8. Strategies Used by Learners to Repeat a Previously Explained Point**

| Options | 1  | 2  |
|---------|----|----|
| Number  | 22 | 32 |

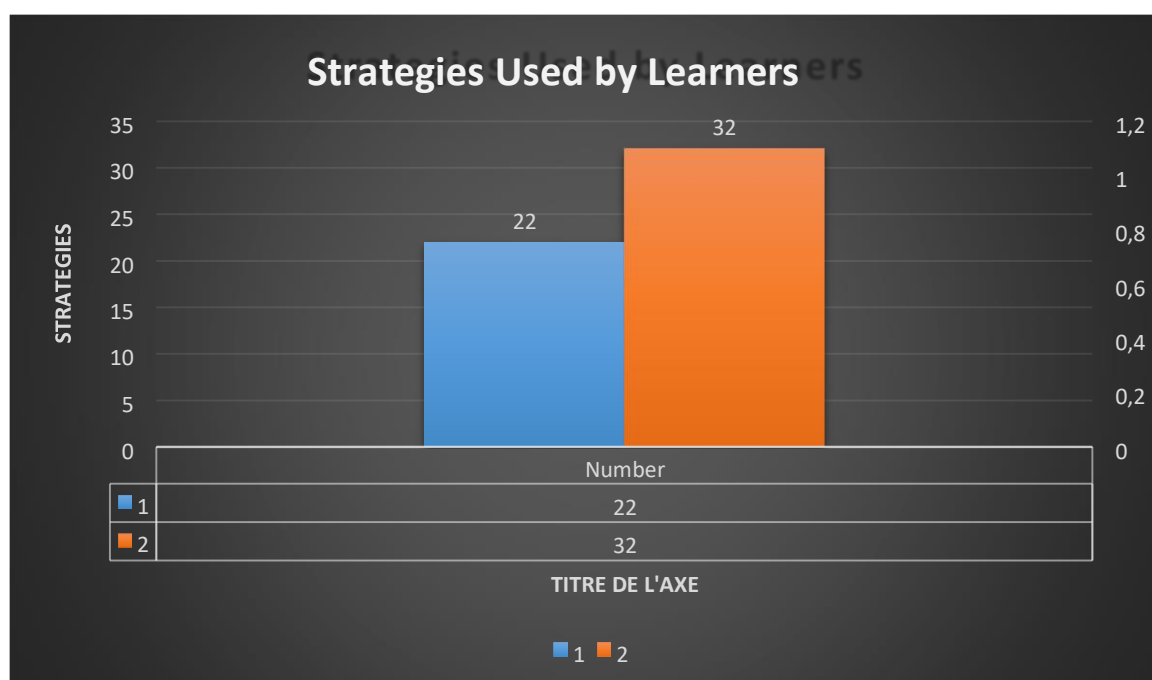
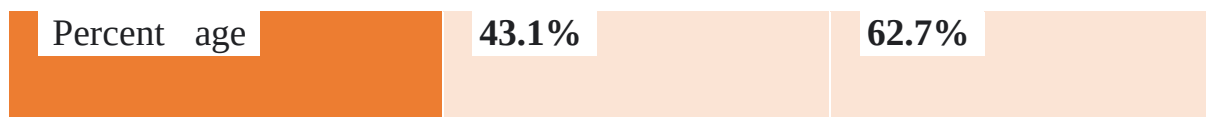


**Figure8. Strategies Used by Learners to Repeat a Previously Explained Point**

Remarkably, the results of the questionnaire regarding the preferred strategy to use when wanting a teacher to repeat a previously explained point reveal two distinct approaches among respondents. The majority, 32 respondents (62.7%), favour a request based on minimizing the imposition on the teacher, utilizing distancing styles such as apologies. This strategy reflects a desire to be considerate of the teacher's time and workload while still addressing the need for clarification or repetition. By framing the request in a polite and apologetic manner, learners aim to mitigate any potential inconvenience to the teacher and demonstrate respect for their authority. On the other hand, 22 respondents (43.1%) opt for a strategy focused on making the teacher feel appreciated and valued, using friendly statements, showing support, and giving compliments. This approach emphasizes fostering a positive teacher-student relationship by expressing interest and

enthusiasm for the lesson content. While both strategies aim to achieve the same outcome of having a point repeated, they differ in their emphasis on either minimizing imposition or enhancing rapport. These findings underscore the importance of understanding and adapting to the social dynamics of the teacher-student relationship when seeking clarification in educational settings.

**Item 9.**

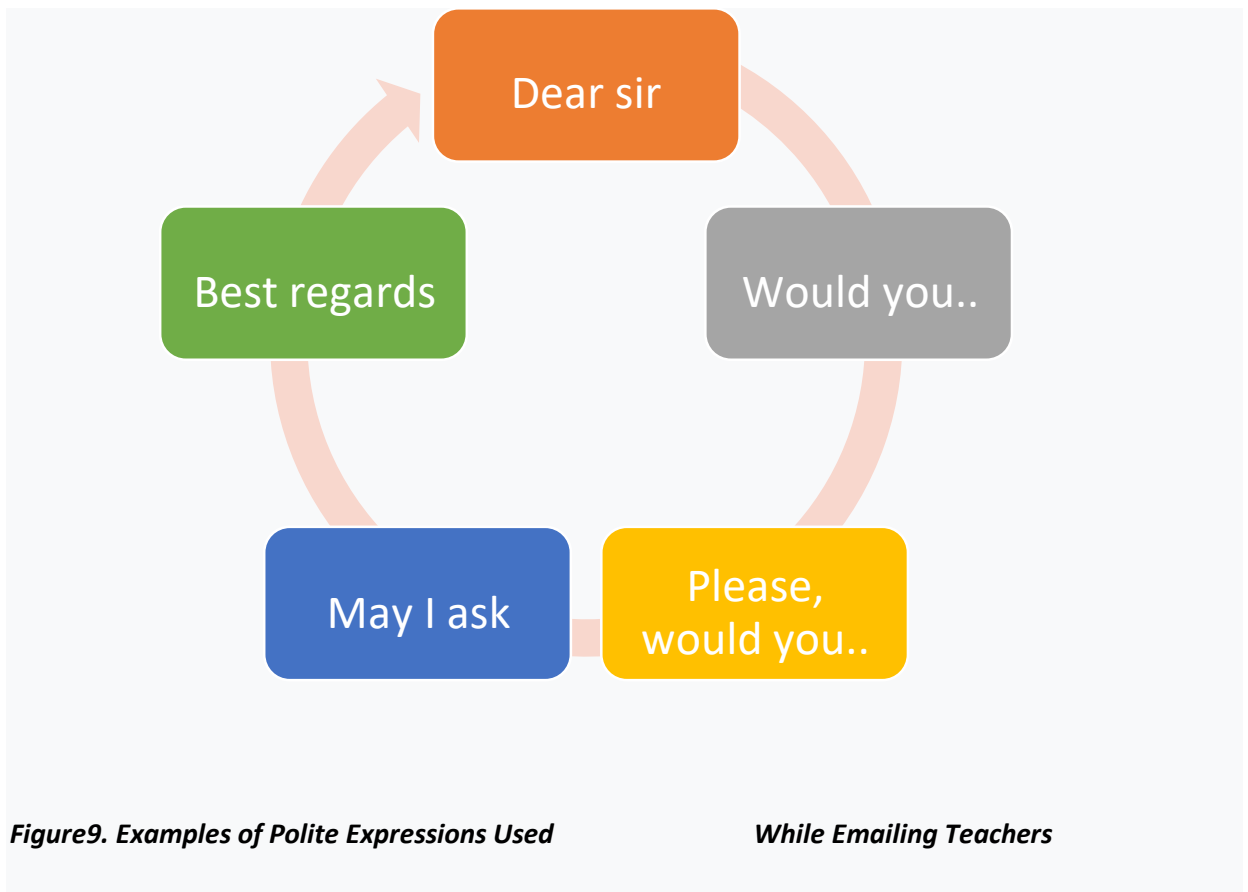
9. Can you provide an example of polite expressions you use when emailing your teacher to negotiate tasks? Examples:

Hello, Miss. I hope you are doing well. May I ask you about the assignment that you gave us the session?

I hope this email finds you well. I am reaching out to discuss the possibility of negotiating the deadline for [specific task/assignment]. Due to [brief explanation of circumstances, if applicable], I am finding it challenging to meet the original deadline.

Would you please repeat this idea for me

Dear Sir, I hope that email found you great; please can you give me the summary of the lesson. Best regards



The examples provided demonstrate various polite expressions commonly used when emailing a teacher to negotiate tasks. Each example begins with a courteous greeting, expressing well wishes or concern for the teacher's wellbeing, setting a respectful tone for the interaction. The requests are formulated politely, using phrases such as "May I ask," "I am reaching out to discuss," and "Please can you," which convey a sense of politeness and deference to the teacher's authority. Additionally, some examples include explanations or reasons for the request, demonstrating accountability and transparency in communication. Despite variations in formality and language proficiency, all examples convey a respectful attitude and intention to negotiate tasks politely and effectively with the teacher. This analysis highlights the importance of employing polite expressions in email communication with teachers, as it helps maintain a positive and professional relationship while addressing tasks and requests.

**Item 10.**

10. When giving a speech, what do you think is the most important factor that affects the use of polite expressions? Choose the ones that have the most influence.

- a. age 19 (37.3%)
- b. Gender 10 (19.6)
- c. Power 6 (11.8%)
- d. Social Distance 12 (23.5%)
- e. Education 9 (17.6%)
- f. Social Class 10 (19.6%)
- g. Cultural Background 23 (45.1%)
- h. Rank of the imposition 4 (7.8%)
- i. The context in which language takes place 20 (39.2%)

**Table10. The Most Influential Factor Affecting the Use of Polite Expressions**

| Options    | a     | b     | c     | d     | e     | f     | g     | h    |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Number     | 19    | 10    | 6     | 12    | 9     | 23    | 4     | 20   |
| Percentage | 37.3% | 19.6% | 11.8% | 23.5% | 17.6% | 19.6% | 45.1% | 7.8% |

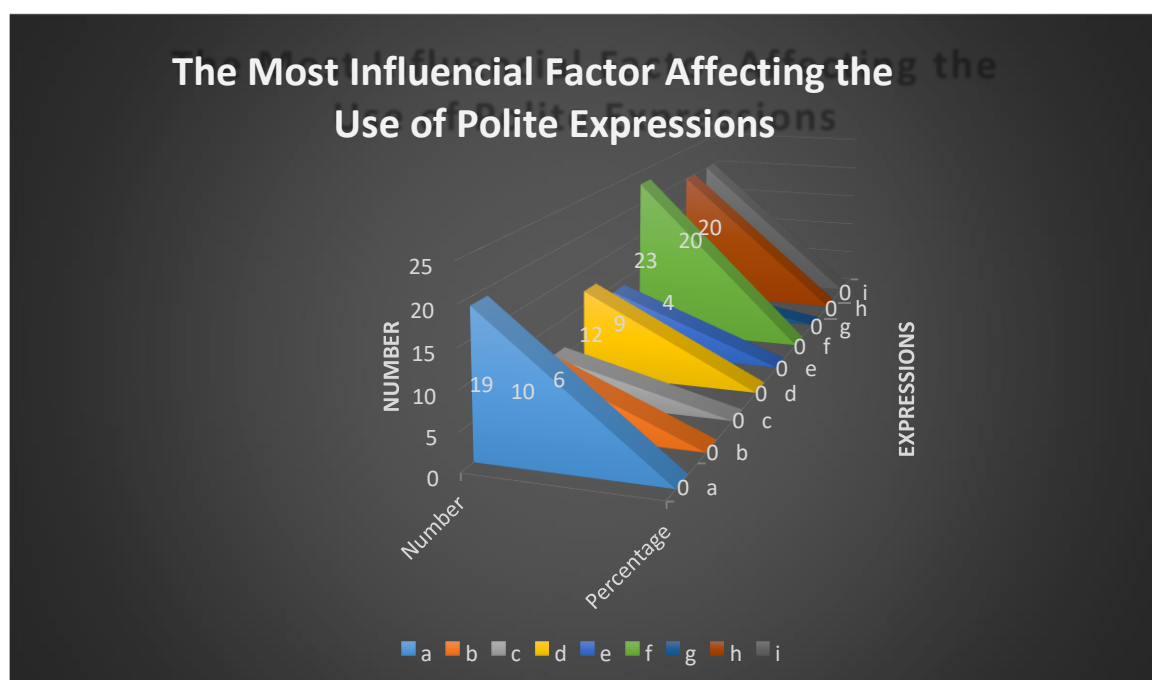


**Figure10. The Most Influential Factor Affecting the Use of Polite Expressions**

The table mirrors that the responses to the question about the most influential factor affecting the use of polite expressions when giving a speech reveal a variety of considerations among respondents. The highest percentage of respondents, 45.1%, selected cultural background as the most important factor. This suggests a recognition of how cultural norms and values significantly shape speech patterns and expressions of politeness, reflecting the diverse ways in which different cultures perceive and prioritize courteous communication. Following closely behind, 39.2% of respondents identified the context in which language takes place as the most influential factor. This indicates an awareness of how situational factors, such as the setting, topic, and audience, can impact the appropriateness and effectiveness of polite expressions in speech. Other factors, such as age, social distance, and social class, also received notable consideration, highlighting the complex interplay of individual, interpersonal, and societal dynamics in determining polite speech behavior. Overall, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of

politeness in speech and the importance of considering various contextual and cultural factors when assessing its use.

### Item 11.

11. Does the use of appropriate linguistic structures enhance the interactional relationship between students and teachers?

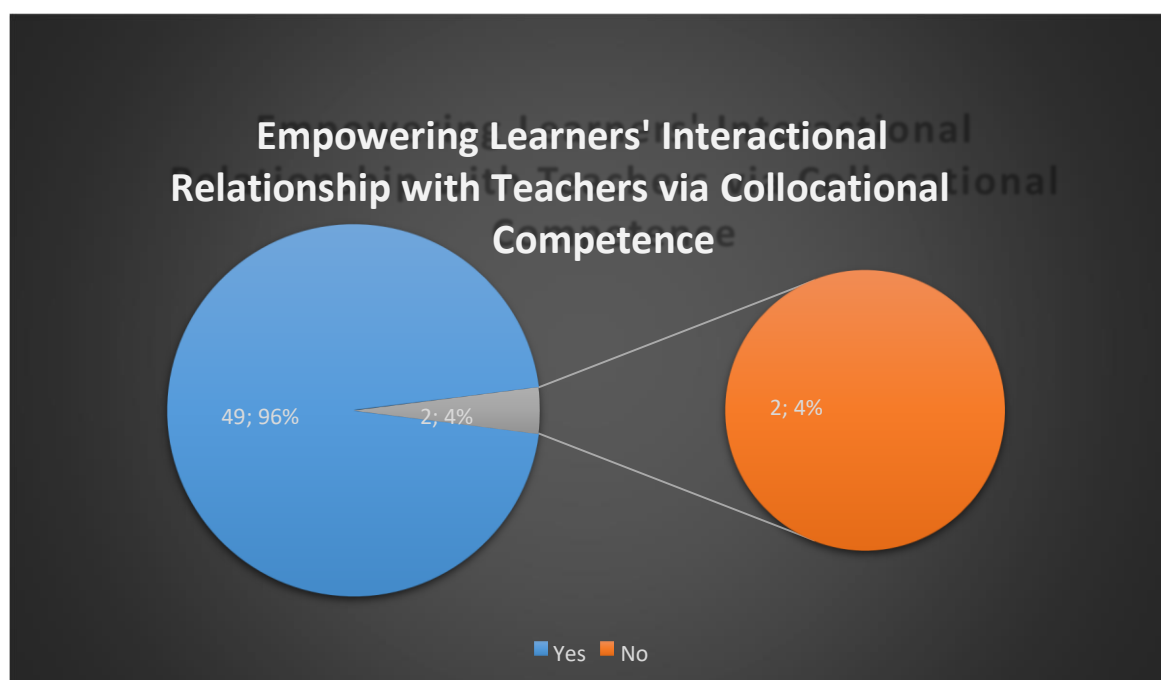
Yes 49 (96.1%)

No 2 (3.9%)

**Table 11. Empowering Learners 'Interactional Relationship with Teachers**

**Via Appropriate Linguistic Structures (Collocational Competence)**

| Options    | Yes   | No   |
|------------|-------|------|
| Number     | 49    | 2    |
| Percentage | 96.1% | 3.9% |



### **Figure 11. Empowering Learners 'Interactional Relationship with Teachers Via Appropriate Linguistic Structures (Collocational Competence)**

Remarkably, the overwhelming agreement among respondents, with 96.1% indicating that the use of appropriate linguistic structures enhances the interactional relationship between students and teachers, underscores the significance of language proficiency in fostering positive and effective communication within the educational context. By employing correct grammar, vocabulary, and communication norms, students can convey their ideas clearly, demonstrate respect for the teacher, and facilitate mutual understanding. This adherence to linguistic conventions not only promotes smoother interactions but also reflects a level of professionalism and attentiveness that is crucial for building trust and rapport between students and teachers. The negligible dissent, with only 3.9% disagreeing, suggests that the majority recognize the pivotal role of linguistic proficiency in shaping the dynamics of student-teacher relationships, highlighting the importance of language competence as a foundational aspect of successful educational interactions.

#### **Item 12.**

12. Does your use of inappropriate language in email lead to misunderstandings with your EFL teachers?

- Yes 38 (74.5%)
- No 13 (25.5%)

**Table12. Inappropriate Language in Email and Misunderstanding with EFL**

**Teachers**

| Options     | Yes    | No     |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| Number      | 38     | 13     |
| Percent age | 74.5 % | 25.5 % |

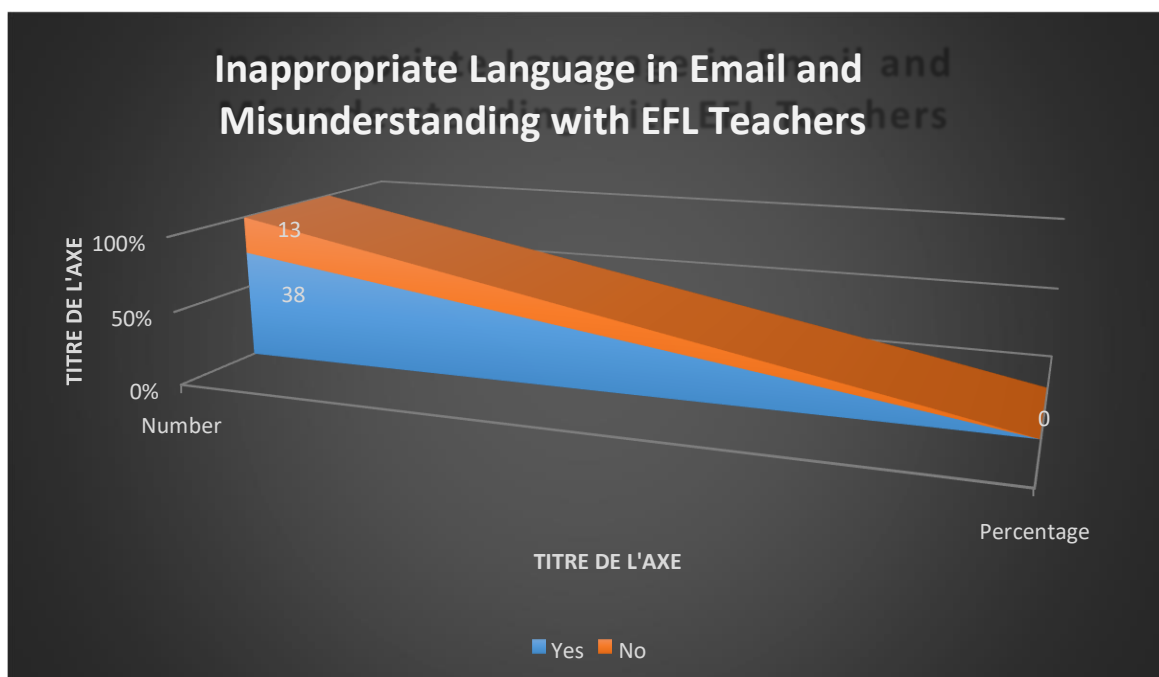


**Figure12. Inappropriate Language in Email and Misunderstanding with EFL Teachers**

The findings from the questionnaire and the figure suggest that a significant majority of respondents, comprising 74.5%, believe that their use of inappropriate language in emails can indeed lead to misunderstandings with their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. This high percentage underscores the potential impact of language choice and tone on the clarity and effectiveness of communication, especially in written exchanges where nonverbal cues are absent. Inappropriate language usage may include grammatical errors, inappropriate vocabulary, or culturally insensitive expressions,

all of which can hinder comprehension and convey unintended meanings. The minority, representing 25.5%, who disagree with this notion, likely believe that their communication skills are proficient enough to minimize misunderstandings, or they may perceive their teachers as understanding and forgiving of linguistic mistakes. Nevertheless, the dominance of the majority opinion suggests a widespread recognition among learners of the importance of using appropriate language in emails to avoid potential misinterpretations and maintain effective communication with their EFL teachers.

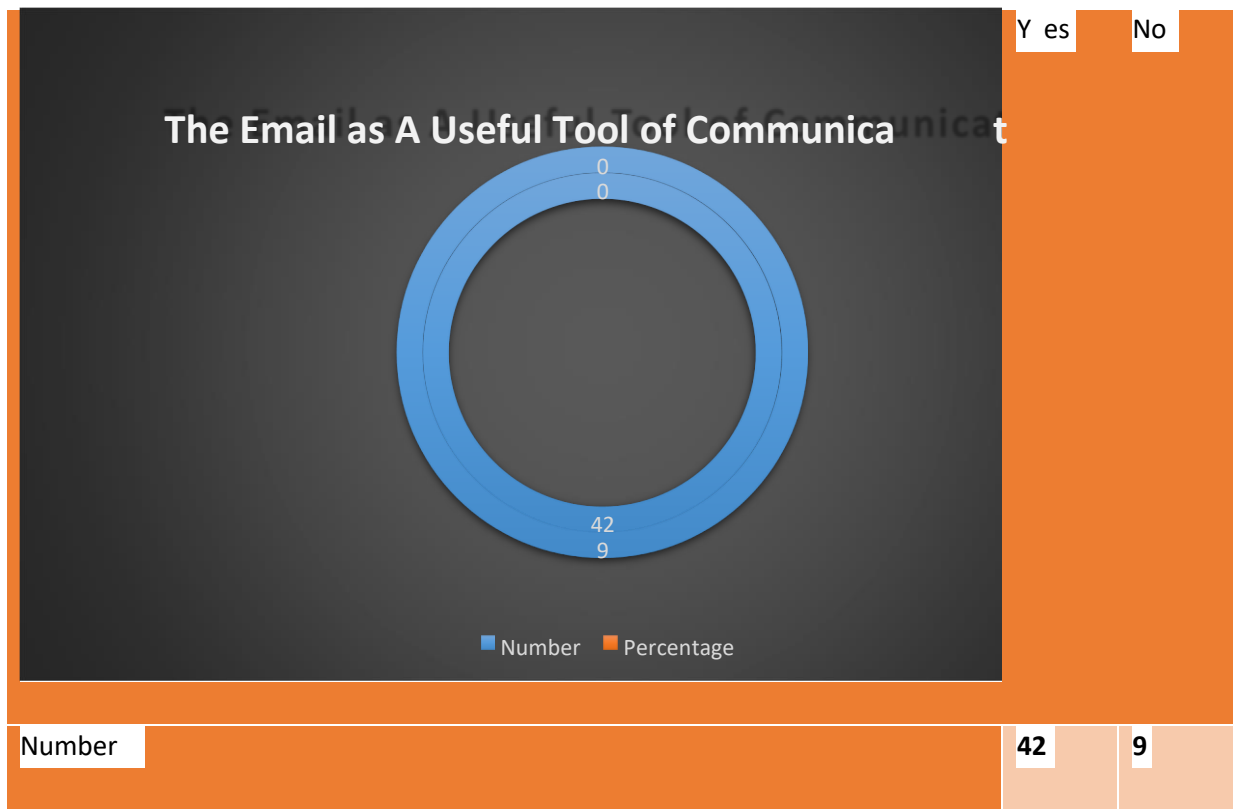
Item 13.

13. Is email a useful method of communication for EFL students and teachers?

Yes 42 (82.4%)°

No 9 (17.6%)

Table13. The Email as Useful Tool of Communication



|            |      |      |
|------------|------|------|
| Percentage | 82.4 | 17.6 |
|            | %    | %    |

**Figure13. The Email as Useful Tool of Communication**

The table shows the resounding agreement among respondents, with 82.4% indicating that email is a useful method of communication for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students and teachers, underscores the widespread recognition of its utility in facilitating remote communication and collaboration. Email offers several benefits for language learners, including opportunities to practice written English skills, seek clarification or assistance from teachers outside of class, submit assignments, and receive feedback. Additionally, email provides a convenient and asynchronous means of communication, allowing learners to communicate at their own pace and schedule, which can be particularly advantageous for those with busy schedules or differing time zones. The minority, comprising 17.6%, who disagree may perceive limitations or challenges associated with email communication, such as potential misunderstandings due to language barriers or the lack of immediacy compared to face-to-face interactions. However, the overwhelming support for email as a useful communication tool highlights its effectiveness in facilitating language learning and fostering teacher-student engagement beyond the confines of the classroom.

#### **Item 14.**

14. Do your EFL teachers raise your awareness towards interacting via email?

Yes 38 (74.5%)

No 13 ( 25.5%)

**Table14. Raising Awareness towards Interacting via Email by Teachers**

| Options     | Yes    | No     |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| Number      | 38     | 13     |
| Percent age | 74.5 % | 25.5 % |

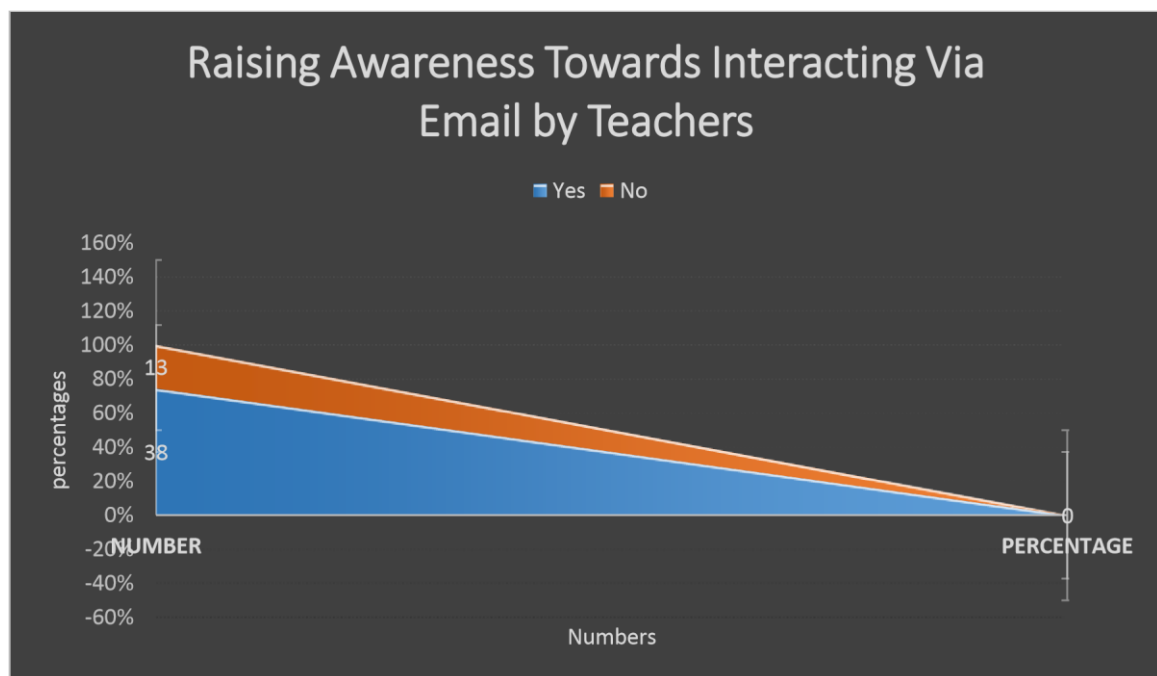


**Figure14. Raising Awareness towards Interacting via Email by Teachers**

First, the results indicate that a significant majority of respondents, comprising 74.5%, acknowledge that their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers raise their awareness towards interacting via email. This suggests that educators recognize the importance of preparing students for effective written communication in English beyond the classroom setting. By raising awareness towards email interaction, teachers likely provide guidance on email etiquette; formatting, tone, and language use, helping students

navigate the nuances of professional communication in English. This proactive approach not only equips students with practical skills for academic and professional contexts but also fosters their confidence and independence in engaging with English-language communication platforms. The minority, representing 25.5%, who do not perceive such efforts from their teachers may either have limited exposure to email communication in their language learning curriculum or may not fully recognize the significance of email interaction skills in their language development. Overall, the majority agreement underscores the importance of educators' role in preparing students for effective communication across various mediums, including email, in the EFL classroom.

#### Item 15.

15. How much do you use emails to communicate with your teachers?

1. Very frequently 5 (9.8%)
2. Frequently 16 (31.8%)
3. Occasionally 12 (23.5%)
4. Rarely 13 (25.5%)
5. Very Rarely 5 (9.8%)

**Table15. The Frequency of Email Communication with Teachers**

| Options   | 1    | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5    |
|-----------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Number    | 5    | 16    | 12    | 13    | 5    |
| Frequency | 9.8% | 31.8% | 23.5% | 25.5% | 9.8% |

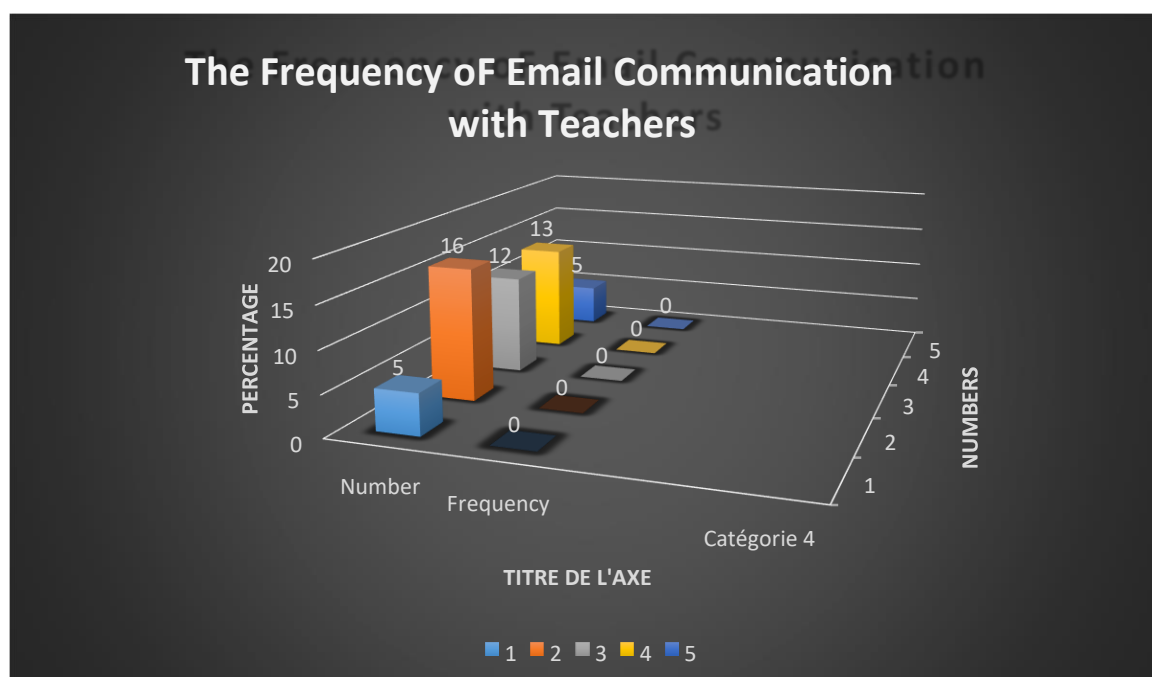


**Figure15. The Frequency of Email Communication with Teachers** Doubtlessly, the responses to the question regarding the frequency of email communication with teachers show varied patterns among respondents. The majority of students, comprising 31.8%, report using emails frequently, indicating that email serves as a common and regular mode of communication between students and teachers. Another significant portion, comprising 23.5%, communicates occasionally via email, suggesting that while email is not their primary means of interaction, they still utilize it as needed for specific inquiries or tasks. A notable number, accounting for 25.5%, report using emails rarely, indicating infrequent reliance on this mode of communication, perhaps preferring other channels such as in-person discussions or messaging platforms. Meanwhile, a smaller percentage, comprising 9.8% each, indicate using emails very frequently or very rarely, suggesting extremes in their email usage habits. Overall, these findings highlight the varied usage patterns of emails among students, reflecting differing preferences, communication needs, and comfort levels with this medium in their interactions with teachers.

**Item 16.**

16. How much do you believe students should explore politeness strategies in order to communicate effectively through email?

- Very important 27 (52.9%)
- Important 18 (35.3%)
- Somewhat important 3 (5.9%)
- Slightly important 00 (0%)
- Not important 3 (5.9%)

**Table 16. The Importance of Exploring Politeness Strategies for Effective**

**Email Communication**

| Options    | Very Important | Important | Somewhat Important | Slightly Important | Not Important |
|------------|----------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Number     | 27             | 18        | 3                  | 0                  | 3             |
| Percentage | 52.9%          | 35.3%     | 5.9%               | 0%                 | 5.9%          |

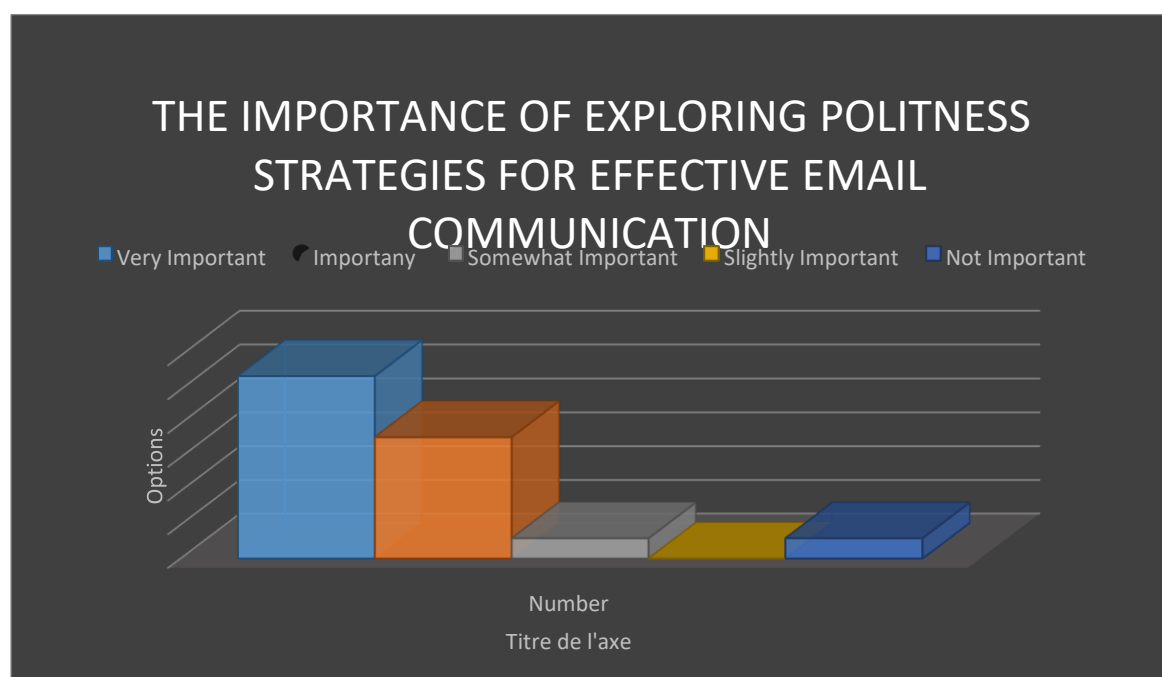


**Figure16. The Importance of Exploring Politeness Strategies for Effective Email Communication**

Well, the responses to the question regarding the importance of exploring politeness strategies for effective email communication highlight a strong consensus among respondents. A significant majority, comprising 52.9%, consider it very important for students to explore politeness strategies when communicating through email. This indicates a widespread recognition of the pivotal role that politeness plays in fostering clear, respectful, and productive interactions in written communication. Additionally, 35.3% of respondents deem it important, further underscoring the significance attributed to understanding and applying politeness strategies in email correspondence. While a smaller percentage consider it somewhat important, no respondents deem it slightly or not important. These findings collectively emphasize the critical importance of politeness strategies in email communication, reflecting a shared belief among respondents in the value of cultivating effective interpersonal communication skills in digital contexts.

**Item 17.**

17.Does email discussion improve the ability of EFL learners to use polite structures?

- Yes 50
- No 1

**Table17. Email Effectiveness**

| Options     | Yes    | No    |
|-------------|--------|-------|
| Number      | 50     | 01    |
| Percent age | 98.03% | 1.96% |

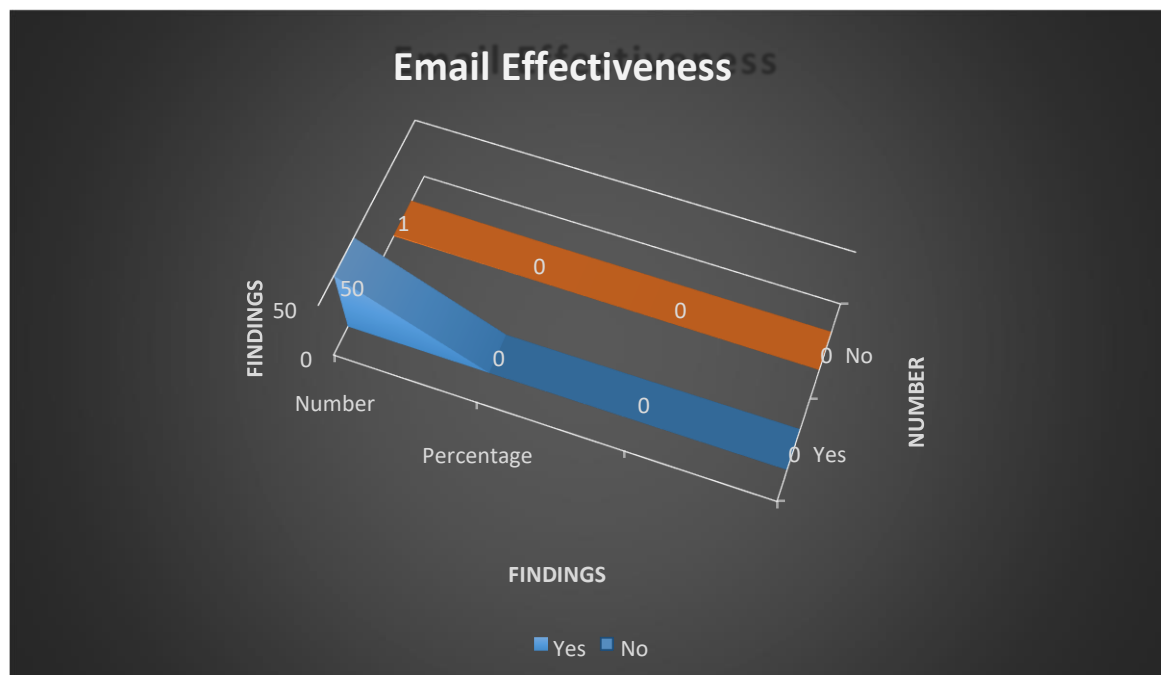
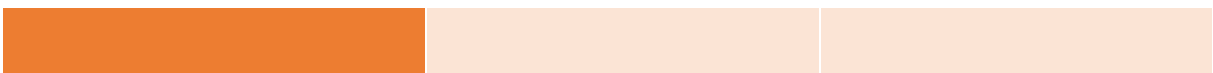


**Figure17. Email Effectiveness**

As the figure shows the overwhelming agreement among respondents, with 98% indicating that email discussion improves the ability of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners to use polite structures, underscores the perceived effectiveness of email communication as a tool for language development. This strong consensus suggests that learners believe engaging in email discussions provides valuable opportunities to practice and refine their understanding and application of polite language structures in written communication. The minority dissenting opinion, represented by 1 respondent, may stem from unique experiences or perceptions regarding the impact of email discussion on language learning. Nonetheless, the dominant agreement underscores the widely held belief among EFL learners that email communication serves as a beneficial platform for

honing polite language usage, contributing to their overall proficiency and communicative competence in English.

**Item 18.**

18. If there are any additional recommendations or suggestions you have about the subject being investigated, please feel free to share.



***Figure 18. Recommendations***

Well, the recommendations provided offer valuable insights into enhancing the effectiveness of email communication between English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners and their teachers, particularly in terms of using polite language. Constructive feedback on learners' emails, focusing on polite language usage, can help them refine their communication skills and maintain clarity. Encouraging reflection on communication habits and suggesting ways to enhance politeness while ensuring clarity fosters a culture of respectful and effective email interaction. Additionally, incorporating interactive exercises and authentic email examples into the curriculum can further bolster EFL learners' polite language skills. It's crucial to emphasize the importance of using respectful and formal tones, proper greetings, expressions of gratitude, clarity, and proofreading in emails to teachers. These strategies not only enhance the quality of communication but

also contribute to a professional and respectful academic environment. While email remains an effective communication tool for both teachers and students, exploring additional options to further improve communication success is advisable.

## **4.2. General Findings**

### **4.2.1 The Impact of Politeness Strategies in Email Communication:**

In fact Learners show preferences for various politeness strategies when emailing their teachers, such as providing clear messages (72.5%) and being friendly (31.4%). These preferences underscore the importance of maintaining professionalism and rapport in email interactions.

### **4.2.2. Effectiveness of Email Communication for EFL Students and Teachers:**

The vast majority of respondents (82.4%) consider email a useful method of communication for EFL students and teachers, emphasizing its role in facilitating remote communication and collaboration.

### **4.2.3. Awareness Raised by EFL Teachers Regarding Email Interaction:**

Most learners (74.5%) report that their EFL teachers raise their awareness towards interacting via email, indicating a proactive approach to preparing students for effective written communication in English.

### **4.2.4. Impact of Email Discussion on Polite Language Usage:**

While the majority (98%) believe that email discussion improves the ability of EFL learners to use polite structures, a minority (1%) hold a dissenting opinion. This suggests varying perspectives on the effectiveness of email communication for language learning.

#### **4.3. Recommendations for Enhancing Email Communication and Politeness**

##### **Strategies:**

- Recommendations include providing constructive feedback on polite language usage, incorporating interactive exercises and authentic email examples, and emphasizing the importance of professionalism and politeness in email communication.

Overall, the synthesized findings highlight the importance of cultural competence, professionalism, and effective communication skills, including politeness strategies, in the context of EFL learning and email communication between students and teachers. These insights can inform strategies to enhance language learning experiences and promote successful communication in educational settings.

#### **4.4. Recommendations**

Actually, based on the synthesized findings, several recommendations emerge to enhance English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning and email communication between students and teachers. Firstly, integrating cultural competence training into language curricula can help learners navigate diverse cultural contexts effectively. Secondly, offering workshops on professionalism and email etiquette provides practical guidance for learners in written correspondence. Interactive language activities, such as role-plays and authentic email simulations, offer hands-on practice in applying polite language structures and communication strategies. Establishing feedback mechanisms enables learners to receive constructive feedback on their email communication and refine their skills

accordingly. Facilitating discussions on cultural sensitivity encourages learners to explore how cultural norms influence communication styles. Providing professional development opportunities for teachers equips them with effective strategies for teaching email communication and politeness. Peer learning opportunities promote collaboration and feedback among learners. Continuous assessment measures evaluate learners' proficiency in using polite language and email communication skills, fostering ongoing improvement. Implementing these recommendations can create a supportive learning environment conducive to effective email communication and cultural competence development in EFL learners.

#### 4.5. Text corpus analysis:

Examples of negative and positive politeness strategies from students' corpus:

| <i>The strategy</i>        | <i>The sub- strategy</i>   | <i>Illustration</i>              |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
|                            | • Expressing with greeting | Dear                             |
|                            | • Be optimistic            | I hope you are doing well        |
|                            |                            | I hope you are in good condition |
|                            |                            | I hope you have a great day      |
| •                          | • Giving reasons           | In my personal opinion           |
| <i>Positive politeness</i> |                            |                                  |

Saturday was not.....

- Expressing good wishes

I wish that you ....

- Give gifts to the Receptient

Sincerely, thank a lot

- *Negative politeness*
  - Apologizing I am sorry for bothering you
  - Hedges I think....
  - Minimizing I hope you can change....

- **4.5.1Text corpus analysis summary of results :**

As shown in the chart, the reported results show that students use positive discipline strategies more often than negative ones. Using identity markers within the organization can show respect for the sender while minimizing the free trade agreement, for example due to the nature of instruction given by the tutor, sub-

strategies are used to seek agreement and provide reasons, where agreement or disagreement is accompanied by reasons and justifications. Students are encouraged to emphasize the positive side of the teacher, as shown by this article. Negative coping strategies are more appropriate in the academic context.

## **Conclusion**

All in all, the synthesized recommendations offer a comprehensive approach to enhancing English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning and email communication within educational settings. By integrating cultural competence training, workshops on professionalism, and interactive language activities, educators can empower learners to navigate diverse cultural contexts and communicate effectively through email. Establishing feedback mechanisms, facilitating discussions on cultural sensitivity and providing professional development opportunities for teachers further enrich the learning experience. Peer learning opportunities and continuous assessment measures ensure ongoing improvement in polite language usage and email communication skills. Overall, these recommendations contribute to creating a supportive and conducive learning environment that fosters cultural competence, professionalism, and effective communication in EFL learners.

### *Pedagogical Implications*

The objective of the study is to raise awareness among the general and English-language learners of e-mail strategies, as well as to increase their effective e-mail communication skills. It is important that students adhere to the indirect language to express their ideas in an unambiguous manner. It should therefore adopt more appropriate negative literary strategies for the delivery of messages and the negotiation of assignments with teachers. Negative strategies reduce and significantly reduce polite language, while positive strategies are required in intimate relationships that require less discipline. In the end, direct language in e-mail messages leads to acts that threaten the face of teachers, as e-mail is a simultaneous form of communication, increasing the risk of misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Students should therefore choose a strategy for appropriate discipline in appropriate language posts, taking into account the various factors that may affect their level of discipline. In addition, teachers should inform learners about the procedures required in the context of academic e-

mail.

Although a good relationship can be established between students and teachers, the social distance between teachers should be strictly respected. The fact that teachers are friendly with students does not give them the right to go beyond the procedures or through the existing distance. In particular, the use of e-mail should have more educational purposes, such as expanding the exposure of learners to the target language and making e-mail a vital environment for enhancing their English-language writing skills by authorizing the inclusion of e-mail devices in higher e-learning classes in a more useful manner.

### ***General conclusion***

This work includes the polite strategies used when students interact with their teachers by e-mail. In order to accurately measure the manner of the conversation and the quality of the messages sent electronically. Overall, the report summarizes results in terms of positive and negative strategies.

The questionnaire was sent to 140 students, but it answered by 51 students, and text analysis was designed for the same number of students but a very limited number of N=6 research questions were answered. According to the results achieved, students tend to apply very few polite structures and do not know the strategies to write an appropriate e-mail to their teachers. It is recognized that almost all teachers receive informal and inappropriate e-mail messages, although e-mail is an essential tool that can be used to enhance interaction between teachers and students.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis has been found to reveal similar results. Students tend to use more positive and polite strategies that involve a high level of direct guidance without taking into account the face of their teachers by violating the expected level of discipline they

are supposed to provide, and thus imposing it on their teachers. On the contrary, passive, indirect and acceptable strategies are rarely used to achieve purely polite communication, highlighting the disregard of learners for the high status and social dimension of the teacher. As mentioned above, the language used in EFL is the key factor that may have an impact on the strategies used that emphasize the need for more input into the polite discourse in academic discourse

When students are aware of the appropriate use of language to discuss e-mail, this would prevent misunderstanding and successful communication. This result is also supported by the linkage between understanding what is required of the network and valid e-mail practices. In general, the study raises the overriding argument that teachers should motivate students to recognize the importance of limiting polite structures to e-mail exchanges, as well as identifying the importance of e-mail literacy to compensate for the absence of non-interconnected oral signals.

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# *APPENDICES*

## *APPENDIX (A)*

*Students' questionnaire (adopted from Benhamouda Hanane 2018)*

Exploring EFL 3rd year students' perspectives about politeness strategies and the types employed in emails discussion with teachers.

Dear students,

You are cordially invited to participate in the following questionnaire, which forms part of a Master dissertation research project. The questionnaire is designed to assess your awareness of the use of politeness strategies in email discussions with your EFL teachers. Additionally, it will help us understand the linguistic structures employed during non-face-to-face communication. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and care.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

The students : Abdi Amel , Azizi

Imen , Department of English

Faculty of letters and languages

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

2. How old are you?

.....

3. What is your English level?

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

4. Do you make an effort to learn language behaviors and culture of the target language as an EFL learner?

Yes

No

5. With whom do you typically communicate through email in English?

.....

6. When you are carrying out a speech act, you aim to:

The desire to be appreciated and approved.

Freedom of action.

Please, justify your answer

.....  
.....

7. What politeness strategies do you prefer to use when you interact with your teacher?

A. Providing a clear and unambiguous message.

B. Using indirect language in which one sentence has different interpretations such as the employment of metaphors.

C. Avoiding imposition

D. Being friendly with your teacher

E. Don't participate in the communication process at all.

8. Which strategy should you use if you want your teacher to repeat a previously explained point?

A. You make the teacher feel great by showing interest in the lesson and using friendly statements, showing support, and giving compliments.

B.Request based on minimizing the imposition on the teacher by employing distancing style as apologies (for example, I am sorry), or expressions as: if you have chance to, would you please, etc.

9. Can you provide an example of polite expressions you use when emailing your teacher to negotiate tasks?

.....  
.....

10. When giving a speech, what do you think is the most important factor that affects the use of polite expressions? Choose the one that has the most influence.

a.Age

b.Gender

c.Power

d.Social distance

e.Education

f.Social class

g.Cultural background

h.Rank of the imposition

i.The context in wich language takes place

11. Does the use of appropriate linguistic structures enhance the interactional relationship between students and teachers?

Yes

No

12. Does your use of inappropriate language in email lead to misunderstandings with your EFL teachers?

Yes

No

13. Is email a useful method of communication for EFL students and teachers?

Yes

No

Please, justify your answer

14. Do your EFL teachers raise your awareness towards interacting via email?

Yes

No

15. How much do you use emails to communicate with your teachers?

Very frequently

Frequently

Occasionally

Rarely

Very rarely

16. How much do you believe students should explore politeness strategies in order to communicate effectively through email?

Very important

Important

Somewhat important

Slightly Important

Not important

17. Does email discussion improve the ability of EFL learners to use polite structures?

.....

.....

18. If there are any additional recommendations or suggestions you have about the subject being investigated, please feel free to share.

.....

.....

Thank you for your

Cooperation

*APPENDIX (B)*

*Theme of email discussion*

Subject: Asking for scheduling a test on Sunday

Dear students,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to inquire about the possibility of rescheduling our upcoming linguistics test to Saturday. I understand that scheduling conflicts may arise during the week, and I want to ensure that all of you have the opportunity to perform your best on the test.

Before finalizing any plans, I would like to gather your feedback on this matter. Please take a moment to respond to this email with your thoughts and any potential conflicts you may have with a Saturday test date.

Your feedback is invaluable in making decisions that benefit the entire class, so I encourage you to share your preferences openly.

Thank you for your cooperation, and I look forward to hearing from each of you soon.

Best Regards,

*APPENDIX(C)*

*Students' emails screenshots*

Dear. Ms Assma

I'm khellef Ibtissem 3rd year EFL student in group 02 ,I informed from my friends in class that Saturday was scheduled for the linguistics test . Unfortunately I can't attend on that day. My father has cancer, and he is having chemotherapy sessions on that day, which is something that I cannot postpone and attend on Saturday. I wish that if you can change the day. Or I will bring to you my father's medical certificate so that you can repeat the exam for me later. I apologize for failing, Please accept my highest respect and appreciation.

Sincerely,

Khellef Ibtissem



à moi ▾



Traduire en français



Am writing this letter to inform you that I will be there on Saturday. I hope you a great day.

Sincerely

Dear Miss,

i hope you are doing well , I'm writing this email to inform you that unfortunately I don't think I'll be able to take the linguistic test on Saturday , Because I usually have a weekly appointment with the dentist every Saturday. i hope you can change the test schedule to another day . sorry for bothering you i hope you have a great day.

Sincerely,

Kaouthar khellaf

Dear teacher, I hope you are well.  
Regarding scheduling the exam  
on Saturday, unfortunately, it is  
not possible. This is due to the  
distance of my place of residence,  
meaning I cannot attend the test  
at all. In addition, there will not be  
enough time for a good review for  
the test . I hope you understand.  
Thanks allot



Boîte de réception

Dear Miss,

i hope you are doing well, I'm writing this email to inform you that  
unfortunately I don't think I'll be able to take the linguistic test on Saturday,  
Because I usually have a weekly appointment with the dentist every  
Saturday. i hope you can change the test schedule to another day. sorry for  
bothering you i hope you have a great day.

Sincerely,

Barouki Aya

---

I am writing this email and I hope you are in good condition. I was very upset when they announced the exam program and it was the first linguistics exam. I think that if it had been the last exam, we would have shown a better performance. In my personal opinion, Saturday was not a good decision to pass the exam.

تبحث هذه الأطروحة في استراتيجيات المجاملة المستخدمة في تبادل البريد الإلكتروني بين الطلاب ومعلميهم. ويهدف إلى التعرف على أنواع أساليب الأدب التي يستخدمها طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية أثناء إرسال رسائل البريد الإلكتروني إلى معلميهم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تهدف الدراسة إلى زيادة معرفة الطلاب بالحاجة إلى تطبيق استراتيجيات الإدارة عند التحدث إلى معلمهم في بيئة رسمية. ولهذا السبب، تستخدم الدراسة الحالية أساليب مختلطة. تم إرسال استبيان إلى طلاب السنة الثالثة قسم اللغة الإنجليزية (العدد = 51) بجامعة خنشلة لتحقيق هذا الهدف. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم استخدام منهج تحليل مجموعة النص لفحص رسائل البريد الإلكتروني المكتوبة التي أرسلها الطلاب (العدد = 6) إلى معلمهم. وأظهرت النتائج أن الطلاب يستخدمون لغة واضحة واستراتيجيات الأدب البناء.