

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Directives

Directives are utterances that are made with the intention of causing the hearer to perform an action. Analysis of the data revealed that although directives were performed by both the teachers and the students, the teachers produced far more directives than the students did. Of 864 directives found in the data, 736 (85.2%) were performed by the teachers while 128 (14.8%) were performed by the students. Similar results were reported by Dalton-Puffer (2005), who observed that requests were performed mainly by teachers in her corpus of English directives in Austrian content-and-language-integrated classrooms. Similarly, Yang (2008) found that teacher-initiated speech acts, including directive acts, are dominant in Hong Kong ESL classroom discourse. Takakubo (2001) too observed that Japanese EFL classroom discourse is dominated by teacher-initiated exchanges.

The vast numerical difference between teacher directives and student directives could be attributed to socialisation and education. Possibly through socialisation and education, the students have come to perceive themselves as powerless participants of the classroom process, whose function is to receive knowledge from the teacher. In fact, when interviewed about the reason for the paucity of their directives in comparison to their teachers', the students responded in the following ways:

- 3480 S7: because we get information from the teacher because the teacher is the
3481 boss
- 3483 S5: she has more authority
- 3485 S4: she has the right
- 3493 S7: cause since centuries ago it's already like that
3494 S3: naturally it's like that
- 3496 S7: cause we don't know anything , we can't say anything

Consequently, the students have adopted a passive attitude towards learning, preferring to be given information rather than to ask for it. This conjecture is corroborated by the teacher interviewed in the present study:

3291 T2: well I suppose students nowadays they er , they have been spoon-fed ,
3292 right , usually they wait for teachers to give the info , and um at times
3293 they are used to that particular method , so it's very difficult for them to
3294 be proactive , to change

Previous research too indicates that students' silence in Asian English language classrooms is related to socialisation and education. Tan (2007) asserts that student silence in the classroom is a result of their education and culture in his study of questions in Chinese university EFL classrooms. Disciplined to esteem obedience and conformity, which are important values in traditional Chinese culture, Chinese students are accustomed to quiet and passive listening in the presence of their teachers. As most of the students involved in the present study are studying in Chinese-medium schools, Tan's (2007) view supports the present data.

Analysis of the data yielded not only the number of directives realised but the types of directives realised by the teachers and the students:

- (1) Questions
- (2) Requirements
- (3) Prohibitives
- (4) Requestives
- (5) Advisories
- (6) Permissives

These types of directives were found in the present study, as illustrated by Table 4.1, which follows.

Table 4.1: Types of teacher directives and student directives

	Teachers	Students	Total
Questions	333 (45.2%)	109 (85.1%)	442 (51.1%)
Requirements	341(46.3%)	-	341 (39.5%)
Prohibitives	24 (3.3%)	-	24 (2.8%)
Requestives	8 (1.1%)	16 (12.5%)	24 (2.8%)
Advisories	19 (2.6%)	2 (1.6%)	21 (2.4%)
Permissives	11 (1.5%)	1 (0.8%)	12 (1.4%)
Total	736 (100.0%)	128 (100.0%)	864 (100.0%)

Marginally more than half of all the directives found were questions whereas the minority of the directives were permissives. The type of directive most favoured by the teachers was requirements, which made up 46.3% of all teacher directives, followed by questions (45.2%), prohibitives (3.3%), advisories (2.6%), permissives (1.5%) and requestives (1.1%). In the case of the students, questions were highly preferred at 85.1% of all student directives, followed by requestives (12.5%), advisories (1.6%) and permissives (0.8%). In sum, all types of directives were produced by both the teachers and the students with the exception of requirements and prohibitives, which were produced only by the teachers.

4.1.1 Questions

Questions, which are directives that perform the function of obtaining specific information, were discovered to be the most frequently produced directive, encompassing 51.1% of all teacher and student directives in the data.

4.1.1.1 Teacher questions

Forming 45.2% of all teacher directives, questions were a regular occurrence in the teachers' discourse. Similar results were reported by Yang (2008), who noted that questions were often employed by teachers to initiate interaction with students in ESL classroom discourse. The abundance of questions in teacher directives could be explained by the various pedagogical functions that questions fulfil, namely assessing

student comprehension, managing classroom activities, guiding students towards discovery of knowledge, prompting students and building teacher-student rapport.

To a large extent, questions were used by the teachers to assess student comprehension, as similarly observed in a previous study by Tan (2007). The use of questions to accomplish this goal can be seen in the following extract.

Extract 1

- 513 T1: ... **now let's go to part two still , OK let's look at part two ,**
514 **who are you writing to actually?**
515 S6: museum , science museum
516 T1: group organiser of the museum , yes , and **why are you writing?**
517 S7: for information
518 T1: for information , **what information will you include?**
519 S7: um bookings number of people in group , maximum , photos
520 T1: OK OK OK OK ((laughs)) **how will you write? formal letter or**
521 **informal letter?**
522 Ss: formal

The questions in lines 514, 516, 518 and 520-521 were employed by the teacher after the reading of a formal letter writing task in the course book. The questions were asked for the purpose of checking whether the students understood the task they were about to attempt. The teacher's positive evaluation of the students' responses to her questions provided the indication that the students did.

In addition to checking student comprehension, questions also helped the teachers to achieve the pedagogical aims of organising students to participate in classroom activities and managing the activities when they were in progress as shown in Extract 2.

Extract 2

- 2999 T3: ... **now turn the page quickly** , you'll notice I'm trying to move very
3000 fast sometimes teach you we spend a lot of time on it it's good but we
3001 must move as fast as possible OK , because I don't want at the end of
3002 the year we've got like thirty forty fifty pages not done , then no class
3003 party uh , no sweets no jelly nothing , just work , finish , finish , OK ,
3004 "Groundhog Day" , **can you see that cute creature there?**
3005 S12: it's a (chichiong park?)
3006 T3: **it's a what park?** , the groundhog it's like a ,
3007 **S15 are you making music?**
3008 S15: no

The teacher was beginning a new classroom activity by giving the students a directive to turn to the next page of the course book in line 2999. A question was first utilised in line 3004 to direct the students' attention to a picture on the page and to move the activity forward. As questions generally call for responses, it could be surmised that the question was intended in part to increase student involvement in the activity. In fact, a student (S12) subsequently responded to the teacher's question by attempting to identify the creature in the picture. The teacher's next question in line 3006 also helped her to control the activity in progress as it functioned to elicit a repetition of S12's response, which the teacher probably had not heard in its entirety. Finally, a question was employed to manage the activity in progress by addressing a disciplinary problem as shown by line 3007. The question signalled the teacher's awareness of the noise a student (S15) was making and caused the student to stop the continuation of the sound to ensure the progress of the ongoing activity. The use of questions to maintain student discipline has been similarly documented in Tan's (2007) study.

Moreover, questions fulfilled the pedagogical function of guiding students towards the discovery of knowledge. This function was cited by the teacher interviewed in the current study as a reason for the abundance of teacher questions:

3314 T2: to lead them on ...

Extract 3

1325 T2: ... **what is**
 1326 **a prefix and what is a suffix? , alright , er can somebody tell me**
 1327 **what's a prefix and what's a suffix? , K? , what is a prefix? , what's a**
 1328 **prefix?** , prefix is a word here that you put at the beginning , alright? , so
 1329 er let's say er let's say mm OK , common , alright , OK , common , if I
 1330 put a prefix here , OK , then it becomes another word **so what's the**
 1331 **meaning of this as compared to common? , what's the meaning? ,**
 1332 **what's the difference? , is there does it mean the same word?** , you
 1333 know , it doesn't mean the same word
 1334 S10: **doesn't mean the same word?**
 1335 T2: what actually does it mean? , it has some sort of relation but it is the what
 1336 the opposite
 1337 S10: yes
 1338 T2: isn't it? , so sometimes by adding a prefix , prefix , alright? , from the
 1339 positive , sorry , from one word you have changed it to the opposite ...

In the preceding extract, the teacher was in the midst of explaining the concept of prefixes and suffixes. At first, she used the question in lines 1325-1328 to check the students' knowledge of prefixes and suffixes. Receiving no response from the students, the teacher proceeded to provide a brief description of prefixes in lines 1328-1330. Subsequently, she utilised another question in lines 1330-1332 for the purpose of leading the students towards the realisation that the adding of a prefix to a word causes a change in the word's meaning.

Furthermore, questions assisted the teachers in attaining the pedagogical goal of prompting students who were facing difficulties in making progress in classroom activities. This particular role of questions was mentioned by the teacher interviewed in the present study when she was providing reasons for the great number of teacher questions:

3314 T2: ... to motivate them er , to give an answer

Extract 4

1483 T2: mm , OK , alright , thank you , OK , **S10 can you continue? , anything**
1484 **else that you can add here? , try , just look at it and try and see**
1485 S10: parents
1486 T2: **what what's the meaning of academically? , here it says "parents do**
1487 **not have to be academically qualified" , what exactly does it mean?**
1488 S10: that means parents do not have , do not have to be , graduated in
1489 university
1490 T2: or to be teachers , to be teachers , OK
1491 S10: but the house must
1492 T2: **must have?**
1493 S10: must have the libraries
1494 T2: yes

In Extract 4, the students were taking turns to the meaning of a passage they had read. After a student had spoken, the teacher elected another student (S10) to continue in lines 1483-1484. In line 1485, S10 appeared to be unable to proceed beyond a single word, "parents". The teacher then used a question (lines 1486-1487) to aid S10, who was able to proceed in the task by answering the question in lines 1488-1489. When S10 had difficulty again in completing her utterance in line 1491, the teacher repeated S10's last

word and offered her another word, “have” in the form a question in line 1492 to encourage her to continue. Consequently, S10 was able to complete the task.

Finally, questions enabled the teachers to build rapport with the students. Teachers are non-intimates to students but are responsible for guiding them “in intimate areas of values and behaviors” (Heath, 1978, p. 3). Hence, establishing close rapport with students aids teachers in achieving other pedagogical goals in the classroom.

Extract 5

- 2720 T3: ... **so let’s move on now to forty-seven** ,
2721 many creatures wanted , that part there , “put the verbs in brackets in the
2722 correct form” , **so what it means is are you gonna copy blindly and**
2723 **put what you see?**
2724 S12: no
2725 T3: no , **you’re gonna change it when necessary , you can even add a**
2726 **little bit , here they didn’t say one word only , you can add**
2727 **something if you need to** , oh I think it’s gonna rain soon
2728 S12: tomorrow is going to be hot
2729 T3: sorry , **how do you know?**
2730 S12: sure one , every Monday hot , Tuesday
2731 T3: no , I notice every morning is hot , just now was really hot and around
2732 three now is already , now is nearing five so suddenly bang boom then
2733 the rain comes from the left from the right , and then lightning thunder
2734 S12: Tuesday and Thursday will be afternoon rain
2735 T3: **are you a meteorologist or something?**
2736 S12: no , *Ko-Ko* time I see it’s raining
2737 T3: ((laughs)) **they make you still go out?**
2738 S12: yeah
2739 T3: aiyo , **then how?**
2740 S12: no , no choice , because we have to go out for lunch , we have to go out
2741 from the school and it’s rains , every week
2742 T3: **so you carry umbrellas with you?**
2743 S12: nope , it’s fun
2744 T3: fun ah? , **but then your uniform how?**
2745 S12: just wet it *lah*
2746 T3: oh , **you have two or three pairs lah?**
2747 S12: five
2748 T3: oh , one per day , then it’s safe , there are some students they only have
2749 like uh two
2750 S12: two three
2751 T3: two or three so they maybe like have to recycle it ...

The above extract illustrates teachers’ use of questions to develop better teacher-student rapport. After the teacher had instructed the students to work on an exercise in the course book in lines 2720-2727, she commented that it was going to rain shortly in line

2727. A student (S12) responded that the following day would be sunny in line 2728. Subsequently, questions were used by the teacher to ask for justification of the student's weather predictions in lines 2729 and 2735, to confirm that students were required to engage in extra curricular activities in school regardless of the rainy weather in line 2737, and to enquire how S12 coped with the circumstances in lines 2739, 2742, 2744 and 2746. The asking of questions about the students' daily lives outside the classroom allowed the teacher to not only express her interest in and concern for the students but also to get to know them better.

4.1.1.2 Student questions

Students' asking for explanation, confirmation and feedback, according to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), is a factor of successful language learning. Therefore, it is not surprising that a great majority or 85.1% of all student directives were questions. Student questions functioned to meet the pedagogical aims of obtaining previously unknown information, verifying presumptions, obtaining repetition of a previous utterance and building teacher-student rapport.

Above all, questions were employed by the students to acquire information which they did not have and to confirm information which they presumed to be true. Both the teacher and the students interviewed in the current study corroborate this inference when asked for the reason behind the abundance of student questions:

3317 T2: mm let me see , well I suppose they want some assurance , they want to
3318 reinforce , reinforce that what they know or what they don't know

3507 S4: cause we don't understand

3508 S7: curious

3509 S5: curious

3511 S5: and then teacher will give answers to us

The use of questions by students to fulfil these pedagogical goals is exemplified by the following extracts.

Extract 6

- 330 S1: teacher just now , uh question eleven ah
331 T1: eleven yes
332 S1: **why is “remarkably?”**
333 T1: it’s a remarkable , **what did you write?**
334 S5: **teacher what’s the meaning of “remarkable”?**
335 T1: **wait** , you think I’m the walking dictionary
336 S7: human dictionary
337 T1: OK one for you you will be in charge , you ask too many questions you
338 will be in charge , **find out what’s remarkable ah , who’s first? ,**
339 **quick quick quick**
340 S3: unusual or special

Extract 6 demonstrates how the students employed questions to obtain previously unknown information. The teacher and the students were discussing the answers to an exercise in the course book that had been completed. Not knowing the rationalisation for one of the answers, a student (S1) issued a question in line 332 to ask for it. Since S1 misheard the answer as “remarkably” instead of “remarkable”, the teacher responded by providing her with the right answer in line 333. After that, another student (S5) asked a question in line 334 to obtain the definition of “remarkable” to which the teacher responded by directing some students to look the word up in the dictionary in lines 337-339.

Extract 7

- 659 S5: **teacher just write , the Inti College Science Club?**
660 T1: ah yes
661 S5: **no need to write of?**
662 T1: ah yes yes yes ...

In Extract 7, questions were utilised by the students for the purpose of verifying presumptions. While the students were in the midst of a formal letter writing exercise, one of them (S5) desired to know whether she could use a particular grammatical structure in her writing. S5 expressed her uncertainty through a question seeking confirmation in line 659. Although the teacher responded in the affirmative to S5’s question, S5 rephrased the question in line 661 to obtain assurance that it had been clearly understood by the teacher. The teacher’s subsequent reply in line 662 indicated that the teacher did.

Moreover, the students applied questions in obtaining repetition of a preceding utterance. The use of questions for this purpose can be seen in the following extract.

Extract 8

3035 T3: ... **so fill in** ,
3036 **can you see the words down there?** , they've helped you , A B C D ,
3037 you've just got to choose , how you answer this kind of question? ,
3038 **don't just put the first thing that pops into your head , read the**
3039 **sentence with your word in it , does it sound correct? ,**
3040 **finished? , not yet , S12 finished already? , S13 finished? ,**
3041 **S12 make sure everyday you spray your house ah , because I heard**
3042 **on TV uh that second round you get dengue it's worse**
3043 S12: **second round?**
3044 T3: if you get it second round it's much worse

In Extract 8, the students were engaged in a multiple choice cloze test exercise in the course book which they had been instructed to do in lines 3035-3039. In lines 3041-3042, the teacher advised a student (S12) to take precautions against dengue fever, which S12 seemed to have recently contracted. In response, the student repeated part of the teacher's utterance in the form of a question in line 3043. His question indicated that he had not heard the teacher's utterance in its entirety and would like a repetition of the utterance. As a result, the teacher repeated the part of her utterance that contained the phrase repeated by the student in line 3044.

Lastly, the students made use of questions to build teacher-student rapport, as did the teachers.

Extract 9

2063 T2: ... **next , S9 try the next one , "he stayed**
2064 **on"**
2065 S9: "he stayed on at university another year"
2066 T2: **what do you think it means?**
2067 S9: stay level
2068 T2: er no , no , "stay on" , "stay on" , OK , now I give you OK , after class I
2069 stayed on until twelve midnight , after class OK I stayed on , so?
2070 S11: remain
2071 T2: remain
2072 S10: **are you sure you want to stay until twelve?**
2073 T2: **because S10 is keeping me company , right S10?**
2074 S10: I want to sleep already

Extract 9, in which the teacher was leading the students in discussing an exercise on phrasal verbs in the course book, provides an example of how students employ questions to establish a close connection between teachers and themselves. S9, the student whom the teacher elected to provide the meaning of the phrasal verb “stayed on” in line 2066, supplied an incorrect answer in line 2067. Hence, the teacher attempted to guide S9 towards the correct answer by giving S9 an example of the use of the verb in a sentence in lines 2068-2069. Because the teacher’s example indicated the teacher’s staying on past the class’ regular 8pm to 10pm period, S10, another student, jokingly asked the teacher if she was certain of her decision in line 2072. Without missing a beat, the teacher responded in jest that she would stay on since S10 would accompany with her in line 2073.

4.1.2 Requirements

Requirements are directives that function to cause the hearer to do something because of the speaker’s power over the hearer (Bach & Harnish, 1979). Requirements also occurred fairly frequently in the data, accounting for 39.5% of all directives found in the data. However, all requirements found in the data were produced by the teachers with none originating from the students.

4.1.2.1 Teacher requirements

Requirements constituted 46.3% of all teacher directives and were the type of directives most favoured by the teachers in the data. Not unlike questions, requirements were also favoured by the teachers in meeting an array of pedagogical aims in the classroom including managing classroom activities, offering feedback and making corrections, acting as a resource and prompting students.

Requirements mostly helped the teachers to coordinate students to engage in classroom activities and then to manage the activities as they progressed. The extract below illustrates the use of requirements for this pedagogical purpose.

Extract 10

- 110 T1: **let's go to the next page , next part , next test** , oh S3 , you weren't
111 around , OK going to page sixty-six , **we start from page sixty-six ,**
112 **from the back OK?** , um S1 did for us "Chasing Tornados" , it and it
113 was a memorable experience ((laughs)) no just kidding OK? , um **"My**
114 **Struggle with Cigarettes"** **we'll start with that** and you weren't here
115 so I'm going to ask somebody who
116 S7: are here
117 T1: **S3 tell me all the answers**
118 S3: hah?
119 T1: **just read and cut out words , this is very easy I'm not asking you to**
120 **do the difficult ones OK?**
121 S3: "usually I'm quite a strong person but I have to admit that I started
122 smoking at the incredibly young age young age of twelve , and then I
123 found myself unable to stop uh , I knew I had a problem"
124 T1: so you're cutting "did"? , I knew I had a problem , very nice , **continue**
125 S3: "but I didn't want to admit it , one day , our head teacher insisted"

A discussion of the answers to a word deletion exercise in the course book was in progress. To manage the activity, the teacher performed not only one but several successive requirements. The activity was initiated with a requirement in line 110, which directed the students to turn the page of their course book. A subsequent requirement was issued in lines 111-112 to direct the students to a particular page and another in lines 113-114 to instruct them to look at a specific exercise on the page. Next, a student (S3) was directed to read out the answers to the exercise through the requirement in line 117. The S3's response in line 118 prompted the teacher to produce another requirement in lines 119-120, which told S3 how to proceed in the activity. The use of requirements did not cease at the initiation of the activity, but proved to be useful in moving the activity forward. In line 124, the teacher directed S3 to continue reading after she had given positive feedback to his answer.

In addition to controlling classroom activities, requirements were useful in offering feedback particularly in the form of mistake or error correction. The use of

requirements in error correction manifested in two ways, namely providing the correct language form and giving instructions that led to the correct form. The first of these can be seen in the following extract.

Extract 11

- 1350 T2: **S9 , you read first and we'll try and do this together , “in the UK”**
1351 S9: “in the UK there is no lejál”
1352 T2: **legal**
1353 S9: “legal”

The teacher was leading a classroom discussion of an exercise on prefixes and suffixes in the students' course book. A student (S9) was instructed to answer the first question in the exercise in line 1350. As S9 attempted to do so in line 1351, she mispronounced the word “legal”. To correct S9's pronunciation of the word, the teacher issued a requirement by simply uttering the word in its correct form in line 1352. Although there was no performative verb in the teacher's utterance, S9 understood it to be a requirement. Therefore, S9 proceeded to repeat the word albeit with the accurate articulation in line 1353. Another method of error correction utilising requirements was directing the student to do something which led to the correction of the error. The extract below reveals an occurrence of this method.

Extract 12

- 2812 T3: ... **next one , S12**
2813 S12: “I regretted for not bringing a video camera”
2814 T3: OK I regretted for not bringing , I was scolded for not bringing , but I
2815 regretted , **cut off the “for”**
2816 S12: not bringing

The class was in the midst of discussing the answers to a verb form exercise in the course book. The students were taking turns to read out their answers to the questions as elected by the teacher when a particular student's (S12) turn arrived in line 2812. S12's answer in line 2813 revealed that S12 had made a grammatical error in his collocation of the verb “regretted” and the preposition “for”. After stating an example of a verb commonly paired with the preposition “for”, the teacher instructed S12 to omit the word from his answer using a requirement in line 2815, thus correcting his error.

Requirements were also realised for the pedagogical aim of acting as a resource albeit to a smaller extent. In acting as a resource, teachers provide students with information or direct students to sources of information when asked for it.

Extract 13

688 S7: **teacher this advertisement I see on the road ah?**
689 T1: no , **you check** , ah no no , need to read , no need to tell where you saw
690 I saw your advertisement on , something like that

In Extract 13, the students were engaged in completing a formal letter writing exercise which involved writing a letter of enquiry based on an advertisement. In response to a student's (S7) request for information in line 688, the teacher initially directed S7 to locate the information in the course book by making a requirement in line 689. The teacher's reason for doing so could be partly attributed to uncertainty of the answer to S7's question since the teacher subsequently provided S7 with the requested information in lines 689-690.

Finally, the teachers issued requirements when they intended to prompt students or help them to proceed in an activity or task.

Extract 14

174 S3: “indeed in spite the plenty , the plenty the great”
175 T1: ((chuckles)) yeah **cut something out from there , from the middle**
176 S3: **the plenty great opportunities?**
177 T1: plenty great , **can you say plenty of? , if you want to put that**
178 **“plenty” there , so what should you cut? , if you want to put**
179 **“plenty” there must be “of” there , so we must cut the?**
180 S3: **great many?**
181 T1: great many , yes! , great many heroes , yes you can say inventors , they
182 are great and they are many , OK , can? , OK , “plenty” cut out because
183 there is no “of” , OK? , **continue**

In the above extract, a student (S3) was attempting to read aloud and complete a word deletion exercise in the course book as he had been directed to by the teacher. As S3 arrived at a particular line in the exercise, he appeared to be unable to proceed as evidenced by his repetition of the phrase “the plenty” in line 174. Hence, to enable S3 to progress in the task, the teacher directed him to delete a word from the middle of the line through the requirement in line 175. S3 was then able to proceed albeit

unsatisfactorily, thus prompting the teacher to guide him towards the realisation of the answer through another type of directive, namely a question in lines 177-179. Because S3 was yet unable to arrive at the answer required as can be seen in line 180, the teacher finally provided the answer along with its rationale in lines 181-183.

4.1.2.2 Student requirements

No requirements were found in the students' discourse, indicating that they were not inclined to this type of directive. The absence of student requirements could be explained by the nature of requirements, which convey the speaker's power over the hearer. In conventional Malaysian classroom hierarchy, the teacher holds great power over the students. The classroom and lessons are controlled by the teacher who determines what students do, when they do it and how they do it. Very rarely do students have or perceive that they have authority to direct the teacher to do things in the classroom. Therefore, student requirements could be deemed a rarity in Malaysian ESL classroom discourse.

4.1.3 Prohibitives

Prohibitives are directives with the aim of forbidding the hearer from doing something because of the speaker's power over the hearer (Bach & Harnish, 1979). Representing 2.8% of all the directives discovered in the data, prohibitives were infrequently realised and were realised solely by the teachers.

4.1.3.1 Teacher prohibitives

Despite being seldom used, prohibitives were the teachers' third most favoured type of directive, accounting for 3.3% of all teacher directives. Prohibitives aided the teachers in meeting the pedagogical objectives of controlling classroom activities, providing feedback and correcting errors, and functioning as a resource.

The teachers expressed prohibitives mostly in managing the progress of classroom activities. The following extract illustrates a way in which the teachers applied them for this purpose.

Extract 15

- 608 T1: OK , dear sir or madam , I'm the secretary of the s- , **you still don't**
609 **want the lucky paper?** , this is the lucky paper you know?
610 S1: lucky paper
611 T1: this is the luckiest paper
612 S1: lucky paper , don't have answer
613 T1: what you need the , shh , **don't ask S1 to do that** , she's a very good
614 magician

The students were just beginning to carry out a formal letter writing task that they had been instructed to complete. After the teacher had distributed some paper to each student, she attempted to help the students by providing them with an example of how to begin the letter in line 608. However, she was sidetracked by a student's apparent refusal to use a piece of paper that she dubbed "the lucky paper" in lines 608-609. After another student (S1) observed that the piece of paper being referred to did not contain the solution to the writing task in line 612, the teacher started to respond but stopped in mid-utterance to issue a prohibitive in line 613. The prohibitive served the communicative purpose of forbidding a student from doing something and the pedagogic purpose of maintaining classroom order. Although the prohibited action in line 613 was not explicitly stated, it could be inferred to be one that the teacher perceived to be a threat to the progress of the activity underway since the prohibitive was preceded by her shushing the students.

To a small extent, prohibitives were also of practical use to the teachers for giving feedback and correcting errors. The following extract exemplifies the use of prohibitives in achieving this pedagogical aim.

Extract 16

- 880 T1: **S4 red pen , red , red**
881 S4: red
882 T1: thanks , why I have saw? , I saw , if you put have , it's always seen , **no**
883 **contractions**
884 S4: contractions?
885 T1: I'm cut , ten marks for that
886 S1: **teacher , what is another name of essay?**
887 T1: composition , so? , why so? , I am **don't write so it's like hey you**
888 **what's up what's up what's up like that you know , very informal** ,
889 that's why , I am writing to ask for some information about your , how
890 to change this one , as we can make necessary
891 S4: preparations
892 T1: necessary preparations , you are hanging all your sentences
893 S4: **if I use "or"?**
894 T1: no , it's either this or this isn't it? , this would enable
895 S4: us
896 T1: the students , to prepare , for the rules , in addition I would also like to
897 ask for some information , what is this? , about , **don't write "that's**
898 **all" OK? , don't write "that's all" ,**
899 **just write "we are looking forward to hearing from you and ,**
900 **visiting" , not "that's all for today" ...**

Near the end of a formal letter writing activity, the teacher sat down with a student (S4) to assess and correct the latter's letter. As the teacher marked S4's letter, she gave S4 feedback which also served the purpose of correcting his language errors through the repeated use of prohibitives. The prohibitive in lines 882-883 was employed to prevent the student from using contractions in such writing tasks in the future while the prohibitives in lines 887-888 and 897-898 were utilised to stop the student from using "so" as a logical connector and "that's all" to end the letter respectively.

Lastly, prohibitives enabled the teachers to accomplish the pedagogical purpose of acting as a resource.

Extract 17

- 631 S5: **teacher , after dear sir and madam need title?**
632 T1: title? , no no no no **don't write titles** ,
633 **don't follow school style**

In the preceding extract from the data, the students were engaged in a writing activity in which they were individually writing a formal letter of enquiry each. In line 631, a student (S5) asked the teacher about the need to include the subject of the letter after the

salutation. The information requested by the student was provided by the teacher through the prohibitive in line 632, in which the teacher forbade S5 from including a subject line in the letter. Subsequently, the teacher produced another prohibitive in line 633 to prevent S5 from using the format of letter writing taught in schools perhaps because the student's question reminded her of the difference between the format taught in the language centre and that taught in schools.

4.1.3.2 Student prohibitives

The use of prohibitives in the classroom could be concluded to be disfavoured by the students as no student prohibitives could be found in the data. This phenomenon could be attributed to the distribution of power in conventional Malaysian classrooms as well as the characteristics of prohibitives. In most classroom settings including the ones observed in the present study, power is unequally distributed between the participants with the teacher accorded greater institutional power than the students. The authority accorded to the teacher in addition to the students' awareness of this imbalance in power allows the teacher to have control over the students and the happenings in the classroom. Since prohibitives intrinsically communicate the speaker's authority to prohibit the hearer from performing certain actions, the absence of student prohibitives suggest that the students believed that they lack the authority to forbid the teacher from doing anything in the classroom.

4.1.4 Requestives

Requestives are directives that are expressed with the intention of causing the hearer to do something (Bach & Harnish, 1979). Like prohibitives, requestives formed only 2.8% of all teacher and student directives in the data.

4.1.4.1 Teacher requestives

Rarely realised and least preferred by the teachers, requestives comprised a mere 1.1% of all the teacher directives found. Requestives express the teacher's wish that the student does something that the teacher has no institutional authority to tell him or her to do. Thus, the scarcity of requestives in the data indicates the teachers' disinclination towards directing students to do things that are not institutionally expected of them in the classroom. Nonetheless, requestives assisted the teachers in fulfilling the pedagogical functions of managing classroom activities and building rapport with students.

Firstly, requestives were performed to manage classroom activities in progress.

Extract 18

880 T1: **S4 red pen , red , red**
881 S4: red
882 T1: thanks , why I have saw? , I saw , if you put have , it's always seen , **no**
883 **contractions**
884 S4: contractions?
885 T1: I'm cut , ten marks for that

Extract 18 exemplifies the use of requestives for this purpose. In the extract, a requestive was employed by the teacher in line 880 to borrow a red pen from a student so that she could assess and grade the student's written work. The directive utilised is considered a requestive as the teacher had no institutional right and authority to make such a demand of students, who are not obligated to lend stationery to any of their teachers.

Moreover, requestives helped the teachers to establish camaraderie with the students, as illustrated by the extract that follows.

Extract 19

- 1884 T2: ... **which is correct? , which is correct? , which**
1885 **is correct? , holidays , holidays are coming , the holidays are coming**
1886 **, I'm very boring at home or I'm very bored at home? , which is the**
1887 **correct word?**
1888 S10: **bored?**
1889 T2: **you think so? , hah hah , you think so?**
1890 S10: yes
1891 T2: **S9? , what say you?**
1892 S9: bored
1893 T2: **sure? , sure? , very sure? , do you want to**
1894 S11: I think it's boring
1895 T2: **OK , do you agree with him? , boring**
1896 S10: no , I say bored
1897 T2: **do you agree with him? , he says boring ,**
1898 **they are right , you must call them jie jie , they are right ...**

While the teacher was explaining the formation of adjectives, she decided to check whether the students were aware of the difference between the words “bored” and “boring” by asking them a question in lines 1884-1887. Two students (S10 and S9) answered the question correctly in lines 1888 and 1892 respectively but one (S11) answered incorrectly in line 1894. As a result, the teacher requested in jest that S11 address S10 and S9, who were female, as “jie jie” through the use of a requestive in line 1898. Although “jie jie” means “elder sister” in Chinese, it is commonly used in Malaysia as a fairly respectful address term for elder but young ladies who are not of kin.

4.1.4.2 Student requestives

Even though requestives constituted only 12.5% of all student directives in the data, they were discovered to be the students' second most favoured type of directive. Through the use of requestives, the students were able to offer suggestions, obtain previously unknown information and obtain repetition of a preceding utterance.

To a great extent, requestives were performed for the pedagogical purpose of making suggestions.

Extract 20

1168 T1: **part three , thirty-nine part three , uh the part which , with misfire ,**
1169 **that one , misfire , and page forty everything , page forty everything**
1170 **, page forty-one everything , page forty-two everything , page forty-**
1171 **three everything**
1172 S5: **OK enough**
1173 S7: **that's enough , teacher**
1174 T1: **aren't you happy?**
1175 S4: no
1175 S1: happy
1176 S5: not happy at all
1177 T1: **do you want anymore?**
1178 S7: no
1179 T1: OK um

In the extract above, the teacher was assigning the students homework in the students' course book. After the teacher had directed the students to do the exercises in a number of pages in lines 1168-1171, two students (S5 and S7) employed requestives in lines 1172 and 1173 to suggest to the teacher that the amount of homework that had been given was sufficient or as much as they could handle.

Besides making suggestions, requestives were also produced to obtain information which the students did not previously have.

Extract 21

636 S7: **teacher , give the name of college**
637 T1: **ah you just make a name please**
638 S7: Apple College Apple

The preceding extract shows how a requestive was utilised for such a pedagogical purpose. The students were in the midst of completing a writing task in the classroom when one of them (S7) requested for the name of a college for the task through a requestive in line 636. In response to S7's request, the teacher directed S7 to make up a name for the college in line 637.

Finally, requestives were applied by the students in getting the teacher to repeat a previous utterance even though the use of requestives for this pedagogical goal occurred very infrequently.

Extract 22

- 35 T1: it's a holiday , yup , OK , **all the answers S2 gave , are they correct?**
36 S4: **please repeat**
37 T1: **very sleepy?**
38 S4: no , repeat
39 T1: **repeat , S2 , please**

The utterances in Extract 22 occurred after a student had read aloud his answers to an exercise in the course book as he had been instructed to. In line 35, the teacher asked the other students whether the answers given were correct for the possible reason of checking if the students had been paying attention and if they had any doubts about the answers. A student (S4) responded by issuing a requestive in line 36 to ask for repetition of the answers.

4.1.5 Advisories

Advisories, which are directives that function to cause the hearer to do something that benefits him or her, represented only 2.4% of the overall number of directives in the data. Thus, they were produced somewhat less frequently than prohibitives and requestives.

4.1.5.1 Teacher advisories

2.6% of all teacher directives were advisories, causing them to be the teachers' fourth most preferred type of directive although they were relatively rarely employed by the teachers. Advisories were used for the pedagogical aims of controlling classroom activities, building rapport with students, prompting students and guiding students towards discovery of knowledge.

Advisories were predominantly utilised to fulfil the pedagogical function of managing classroom activities in progress, such as in the following extract.

Extract 23

- 426 T1: OK , **then the next one is associated isn't it?** , L M N O P Q R S ,
427 **don't help me I know I'm slow with this dictionary** , asso- , asso- ,
428 connected she was preparing to take a job associate something with
429 something , uh "associated" doesn't go with "on"
430 S7: **goes with?**
431 T1: it doesn't go with "on"
432 S3: with it
433 T1: mm hmm "associated" goes with "with" only so that's why no
434 associated K?
435 S5: teacher just now say take account of , this account is noun , accounted is
436 verb
437 T1: **hang on hang on hang on** , see see see see
438 S7: *S5 wo zhen* blur
439 T1: **you must come to class my friend**

During a discussion of a multiple choice cloze exercise in the course book, a student had asked the teacher for the meaning of the words "accounted" and "associated". After the teacher had checked the dictionary, she explained that "associated" does not collocate with "on" in lines 426-429. A student (S7) appears to be unable to follow the discussion, as evidenced by her confession that she was really "blur" or unsure of what was going on in line 438. Subsequently, the teacher performed an advisory in line 439 to advise S7 to not miss any classes. The teacher's advisory served the pedagogical purpose of controlling the activity in progress in a few ways, namely by endeavouring to draw the student's attention back to the activity in progress, by causing the student to realise that her difficulty in following the discussion was a result of her absenteeism and by making the student realise the importance of being disciplined in regularly attending all the classes.

Advisories were also chiefly realised to pursue the pedagogical aim of enhancing teacher-student relationship.

Extract 24

- 3040 T3: **finished? , not yet , S12 finished already? , S13 finished? ,**
3041 **S12 make sure everyday you spray your house ah , because I heard**
3042 **on TV uh that second round you get dengue it's worse**
3043 S12: **second round?**
3044 T3: if you get it second round it's much worse
3045 S12: the first round is when I was five I think
3046 T3: oh
3047 S12: yeah I got dengue when I was five
3048 T3: but that was a long long time ago
3049 S12: yeah
3050 T3: **no but they say if you get it again you know I guess within the**
3051 **nearby time of the first round it's uh you will get sicker , OK? , so**
3052 **spray your house every day**

In the extract above, two advisories, namely in lines 3041-3042 and 3050-3052, were realised to advise a student (S12) to have his house sprayed daily with perhaps some sort of insecticide so that he would not be infected with dengue fever for a second time. Issued while the students were completing an exercise in their course books, the advisories enabled the teacher to not only show her awareness of S12's recovery from a recent bout of dengue fever but also to convey her concern for S12's health and personal life although these are matters external to her professional responsibilities. Expressing concern and interest in the students' lives beyond the topics and objectives in the immediate syllabus is a way for the teacher to improve her relationship with the students.

Furthermore, advisories were useful to some extent for the purpose of prompting students who were unable to proceed in an activity or task.

Extract 25

- 1248 T2: alright , OK , **next , ah , S10**
1249 S10: "sorry about that , there never seems to be..."
1250 T2: **OK , slowly**
1251 S10: "any time today"

In Extract 25, the teacher was in the midst of teaching the use of "some" and "any" as articles. In doing so, she called upon each student to read aloud and answer a question in turn. One of the students (S10) had some difficulty answering her question, as her voice trailed off mid-sentence in line 1249. Apparently sensing the S10's inability to

continue, the teacher encouraged the student to take time to answer the question via an advisory in line 1250. The teacher's decision to prompt S10 in such a way instead of providing S10 with vocabulary or ideas to proceed suggests that the teacher believed S10 would be able to proceed in answering the question if S10 was given more time. In fact, S10 was subsequently able to proceed and answer the question correctly in line 1251.

The teachers also made use of advisories in guiding students towards self discovery of knowledge. The utilisation of advisories for this pedagogical purpose is illustrated by the subsequent extract.

Extract 26

- 2791 S13: "spectators saw the sky gradually going dark"
2792 T3: **you're saying going dark?**
2793 S13: getting dark yeah
2794 T3: going dark , now I would say there's nothing wrong with that but uh
2795 what we have done is there's no need to change it , so "spectators saw
2796 the sky gradually go dark" , **going dark is not , is is OK , but you**
2797 **can just say go dark also , OK , so you put a slash there** , go dark ,
2798 going dark , going dark shows what? , going dark shows that you're
2799 watching it right? , turning slowly darker darker correct? , but go dark is
2800 uh you know is a kind of a neater way of saying it , have you seen the
2801 sky go dark? , one minute you can see the sun there glowing happily
2802 nice yellow colour , around five minutes later you look the same spot got
2803 a little bit of purple in it and then few minutes later it's like dimmer
2804 dimmer dimmer and the next thing you know it's black
2805 S12: eclipse
2806 T3: **you should try this on a nice sunny day , observe the sunset , it's**
2807 **interesting** , the colours that come out you know , a bit purplish then it
2808 turns dark , except where , during summer time like in England nine
2809 o'clock at night you don't need any light you can still read a book , it's
2810 like seven o'clock or seven thirty here , no lighter than seven thirty , like
2811 seven o'clock here , that's nine o'clock at night , imagine that , but it's
2812 only during summer , **next one , S12**

The students had completed a verb form exercise in their course book and they were taking turns to read out their answer to a question each. After a student had read out his answer in line 2791, the teacher responded that both "going" and "go" were acceptable answers in lines 2796-2797. Then the teacher tried to explain the difference between the two verb forms within the context of the sentence in the exercise in lines 2797-2800.

Because the sentence was related to sunset, the teacher formed an advisory in lines 2806-2807 to advise the students to experience the event for themselves.

4.1.5.2 Student advisories

Advisories were one of the types of directive that were least favoured by the students. Only a mere 1.6% of all student directives consisted of advisories, which were found to be utilised for the pedagogical reason of making suggestions.

In the following extract, the teacher was in the process of distributing paper to the students for a writing task she had instructed them to complete.

Extract 27

- 602 T1: I have paper for some lucky people I can give you paper right now , see
603 S3: mm
604 T1: oh you don't want to be lucky , you , all the boys , ((laughs)) I thought I
605 had paper
606 S7: **uh teacher you can go out and take it**
607 T1: again?

Via the use of an advisory in line 606, one of the students (S7) suggested that the teacher goes out of the classroom to obtain paper since there was none in the classroom and the students could not proceed with the activity without any paper.

4.1.6 Permissives

Permissives are directives that function to authoritatively present the hearer with permission to do something (Bach & Harnish, 1979). Permissives were scarcely utilised for they comprised just 1.4% of all the directives found in the data.

4.1.6.1 Teacher permissives

Constituting merely 1.5% of all directives issued by the teachers, permissives were the teachers' second least favoured type of directive. Even so, permissives did

prove to be advantageous in helping the teachers to achieve the pedagogical aims of controlling classroom activities, acting as a resource and prompting students.

To a large extent, the teachers used permissives to manage ongoing classroom activities. The utilisation of permissives for this purpose is exemplified by the following example, in which a listening exercise was in progress.

Extract 28

- 2576 T3: ... **so let's start from let's**
2577 **start from S13 again , and we go this way**
2578 S13: Nick says that he saw a f- he first saw a jaguar at um four past five in the
2579 morning
2580 T3: OK that's really cute , because it's not four past five , **he started at four**
2581 **but he saw it at?**
2582 S12: five forty-five
2583 T3: ((laughs)) I think I need to play this tape three times , **who can give me**
2584 **the answer? , anybody? , hah? ,** I see S14's lips moving , come on
2585 S14: half past five
2586 T3: yes
2587 S12: it's five thirty there
2588 T3: OK **guys you can give me either half past five , five thirty , you can ,**
2589 **what I'm saying here is you can write the words out or you can put**
2590 **them in numbers** , you know zero five point three O also can , yeah ,
2591 five thirty , half past five ...

After the class had listened to an audio recording, the students were taking turns to answer questions in their course book. The student elected to read out his answer to the first question (S13) had answered the question incorrectly in line 2578-2579. Although the teacher then asked a question in lines 2580-2581 for the purpose of prompting S13, another student (S12) answered the teacher's question in line 2582. However, S12's answer was incorrect. Hence, the teacher called upon another student (S14), who produced the correct answer in line 2585. Another answer was subsequently offered by S12 in line 2587. In response, the teacher employed a permissive in lines 2588-2590 that allows the students to write the answer in words or numbers. The teacher's doing so enabled the activity to move forward as it provided the students with her positive evaluation of S14's and S12's answers as well as the forms of the answer that she considered acceptable.

Permissives were also useful to some extent in enabling the teachers to function as a resource to their students.

Extract 29

729 S5: **teacher can we put question mark inside?**
730 T1: yes you can , but you cannot ask direct questions so , it has to be
731 nicely done like that ...

In the extract above, the students were engaged in writing a formal letter of enquiry that the teacher had directed them to do. The task required the students to make polite requests in the form of indirect questions. Perhaps unsure about punctuation for indirect questions, a student (S5) asked a question in line 729 to enquire if questions marks could be used in indirect questions. Consequently, the teacher supplied the information requested by S5 in the form of a permissive in line 730, which allowed the student to use question marks in indirect questions.

4.1.6.2 Student permissives

Very few of the directives performed by the students were permissives, which accounted for 0.8% of all student directives. In fact, permissives were the type of directive that the students were least partial to.

Permissives were applied by the students to offer suggestions. The use of permissives for this pedagogical goal can be seen in the excerpt that follows.

Extract 30

872 T1: **proofread your answer , please recheck your grammar then pass it**
873 **to me , I don't want to mark so much**
874 S7: teacher , it's OK
875 T1: everything is correct , and then don't pass it to me
876 S7: you can , you can , conteng

Near the end of a writing task, the teacher directed the students to proofread their work so that she needed not make so many corrections in lines 872-873. Subsequently, a student (S7) employed a permissive in line 876 to give the teacher permission to “conteng” (which means “scribble” in Bahasa Malaysia) on the sheet of paper on which

the former had done her work. In other words, S7 was suggesting that the teacher makes as many corrections as she likes in the student's work.

4.2 Politeness strategies

Directives are inherently face-threatening because they present risks to the speaker's positive face or desire to be accepted and the hearer's negative face or desire for independence. The five strategies that can be applied to perform face threatening acts such as directives, according to Brown and Levinson (1987) are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off record and not doing the face threatening act. Of the five strategies, not doing the face threatening act is unobservable as it is impossible to determine whether an individual had an intention to issue a directive but decided not to. Therefore, it is disregarded in the analysis of data in the present study. Nevertheless, of the four observable politeness strategies, only bald on record, positive politeness and negative politeness strategies were found upon examination of the data. The politeness strategies most favoured by the teachers were positive politeness (45.8%), followed by bald on record (39.2%) and negative politeness (15.1%). On the other hand, the students generally preferred positive politeness (50.7%), followed by negative politeness (30.4%) and bald on record (18.9%).

Table 4.2: Types of politeness strategies

	Teachers	Students	Total
Positive politeness	389 (45.8%)	75 (50.7%)	464 (46.5%)
Bald on record	333 (39.2%)	28 (18.9%)	361 (36.2%)
Negative politeness	128 (15.1%)	45 (30.4%)	173 (17.3%)
Total	850 (100.1%)	148 (100.0%)	998 (100.0%)

Applying off record strategies in making directives means to issue directives implicitly (Brown & Levinson, 1987). These strategies were discovered in neither the teachers' nor the students' directives. Similar findings have been documented in other studies. Non-conventional indirect strategies, which is comparable to off record

strategies, were likewise found to be least preferred in Chen's (2006) study of English and Chinese requests made by Chinese EFL learners.

The lack of off record strategies in the data could be attributed to the factors of social distance and imposition in the speech event of the lessons. Due to the low imposition of the directives and the low social distance between the teachers and the students, there appears to be less need for indirectness in making the directives. Interviews with one of the teachers in the present study revealed that time limitations was also a factor that discouraged the teachers from utilising off record strategies:

3331 T2: ... I think this is due to time constraint , because at times ,
3332 uh there's so much , the syllabus is so er vast , and there's so much to
3333 teach and ... so maybe of time constraints because of time
3334 constraints , so there's no time to beat around the bush so the teachers
3335 have to be more direct

She believed that students, on the contrary, were not inclined to off record strategies because of language limitations:

3386 T2: ... it's because of um they
3387 don't have a good command of the language , so that actually is a
3388 setback for them , so uh not having a good command of the language so
3389 they would not be able to er go in a roundabout way , so they say ...
3390 ... whatever comes to their head
3391 straightaway they , you know , uh tell us , or open and speak it out...

4.2.1 Positive politeness

Positive politeness involves softening a directive by suggesting closeness and commonality (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This strategy was the most favoured politeness strategy of both the teachers and the students, accounting for 46.5% of all politeness strategies discovered in the data. Preference for positive politeness within the similar context of online classroom discussions (Schallert et al., 2009) has also been documented.

The frequency with which the strategy was discovered to be utilised varied between the teachers and the students. Positive politeness occurred in all types of

teacher directives but most frequently in requirements, requestives and advisories. Positive politeness was the teachers' second most preferred strategy in questions and permissives and the least favoured strategy in prohibitives. On the contrary, positive politeness was the strategy that was present and most frequently employed in all types of student directives with the exception of advisories in which no positive politeness strategies were found.

In the context of the classroom, the power relationship between the teachers and the students were asymmetrical with the former possessing more power than the latter. The teachers possessed institutionally-sanctioned metaphysical power over the students; that is, the power to direct the actions of the students as authorised by the learning institution and defined by the hierarchical roles of the teachers and the students within the learning institution. Nevertheless, there was low social distance between the teachers and the students as they not only had known each other for several years but also had been meeting regularly for their lessons on a weekly basis. In addition, the directives were generally low in imposition. A vast majority of the directives were low in imposition because they facilitated student learning, which was one of the primary goals of the learning institution. Directives that were not aligned with institutional goals were higher in imposition. However, these were seldom found in the data.

In sum, the factors of power, social distance and rank of imposition point to teachers' preference of directness in the form of the bald on record strategy and students' preference of positive politeness in performing directives. Hence, it can be concluded that positive politeness was favoured by the teachers because of its intrinsic advantage, which is satisfaction of the students' positive face. The teachers' desire to convey familiarity and commonality in goals and values superseded their desire for efficiency in interaction. On the other hand, the students' partiality toward positive

politeness supports Brown and Levinson's (1987) argument that the selection of politeness strategies is subject to the parameters of power, distance and imposition.

Five of Brown and Levinson's (1987) positive politeness strategies were discovered in the data:

- (1) Using in-group identity indicators
- (2) Using first-person plural pronouns
- (3) Using proximal demonstratives and unclear references
- (4) Giving reasons
- (5) Avoiding disagreement

Of these strategies, using in-group identity indicators was the most frequently applied positive politeness strategy for both the teachers (52.7%) and the students (84.0%). The least frequently applied positive politeness strategy was avoiding disagreement (7.2%) for the teachers and using first-person plural pronouns (1.3%) for the students.

Table 4.3: Types of positive politeness strategies

	Teachers	Students	Total
Using in-group identity indicators	205 (52.7%)	63 (84.0%)	268 (57.8%)
Using first-person plural pronouns	69 (17.7%)	1 (1.3%)	70 (15.1%)
Using proximal demonstratives and unclear references	53 (13.6%)	7 (9.3%)	60 (12.9%)
Giving reasons	34 (8.7%)	2 (2.7%)	36 (7.8%)
Avoiding disagreement	28 (7.2%)	2 (2.7%)	30 (6.5%)
Total	389 (99.9%)	75 (100.0%)	464 (100.1%)

4.2.1.1 Using in-group identity indicators

Positive politeness was primarily conveyed through the use of in-group identity indicators by both the teachers and the students. This substrategy encompassed 52.7% of all positive politeness strategies used by the teachers and 84.0% of all those used by the students. The use of linguistic devices including ellipsis, address terms and in-group languages or dialects enabled the teachers and the students to show solidarity and in-group membership.

Ellipsis

Ellipsis refers to “the leaving out of words or sentences from where they are unnecessary because they have already been referred to or mentioned” (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 90). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the use of ellipsis is deemed a positive politeness strategy as shared knowledge is necessary for an ellipsis to be understandable. Ellipsis was discovered to be frequently utilised by both the teachers and the students.

On the part of the teachers, there was preference for ellipsis in requirements, questions, requestives and advisories although most frequently in the first of these. The syntactical parts commonly omitted from teacher directives were subjects, verbs and objects.

Extract 31

- 1955 T2: he is harmless , OK , **next , S10**
1956 S10: “it is natural for a child to be like that sometimes”
1957 T2: OK , N-A-T-U-R-A-L , right , so you put in “natural” , **S9**
1958 S9: “despite his illness all the courage”
1959 T2: **courageous**
1960 S9: “courageous”
1961 T2: OK , C-O-U-R-A-G-E
1962 S10: O-U-S
1963 T2: O-U-S , correct , courageous , add O-U-S , “courageous decision to sit
1964 for his exam” , OK , **next , S9 again**
1965 S9: “(Beck?) often behave in a very silly and childish”
1966 T2: childish , correct , childish , OK , I-S-H , childish , alright , **S11**
1967 S11: “(Alvin?) gave us some helpful suggestions about”
1968 T2: yes , helpful , **the next one also S11 , “Mr (Turpen?)”**
1969 S11: “Mr (Turpen?) has always been passionate”

In the above extract, the teacher was electing students to answer a question each from an exercise on adjective formation in the students’ course book. Ellipsis was applied in six directives, namely in lines 1955, 1957, 1959, 1964, 1966 and 1968. In all of these directives, the verb was omitted. Furthermore, the object was completely omitted in the directives in lines 1957 and 1966 and partially in lines 1955 and 1964. In line 1959, both the subject and the verb were omitted although the object remained intact. Regardless of the ellipsis of major syntactical parts of the directives, the students were

able to comprehend the teacher and perform the action required of them, namely to repeat the word “courageous” in the case of the directive in line 1959 and to answer a particular question for the rest of the directives. The teachers’ inclination for ellipsis could be attributed to its allowing them to convey instructions quickly, concisely and efficiently, especially in situations such as classroom activities that are routine and conventional to the students.

As for the students, the use of ellipsis was discovered in questions and requestives but especially frequently in the first of these. Omission of subjects and verbs was a common occurrence in student directives.

Extract 32

- 3013 S12: **what’s hedgehog?**
3014 T3: hedgehog look like little durians you know? , I’ve seen a white one
3015 which is like albino , I’ve seen the normal brown colour one , they’re
3016 little spiky things but the difference is the spikes don’t come out ,
3017 they’re awfully cute , they crawl on the ground , they’re western
3018 creatures , I don’t think we have hedgehogs in Malaysia , those are
3019 hedgehogs and then we have porcupines , porcupines have the long
3020 needles , you know? , and those can come out
3021 S12: **can shoot?**
3022 T3: they can shoot , the hedgehogs cannot but the porcupines with the long
3023 needles can , but this is a groundhog , it’s not a porcupine ...

Extract 32, in which the class was reading a passage about groundhogs, exemplifies ellipsis of subjects in student directives. The teacher had mentioned hedgehogs, which caused a student (S12) to ask her about what hedgehogs are in line 3013. The teacher then attempted to describe hedgehogs and compared them to porcupines, which have quills that can be released in lines 3014-3020. Consequently, S12 asked another question about whether the quills can be projected in line 3021. Even though the subject of the question was omitted by S12, the teacher assumed that S12 was referring to porcupines because the teacher’s utterance in lines 3014-3020 ended on the subject of porcupines. Nonetheless, the teacher was also aware that S12 might have been referring to hedgehogs. Hence, the teacher’s answer to S12’s question in lines 3022-3023 was in relation to both porcupines and hedgehogs.

Extract 33

40 S2: number one A , number two C , number three B , number four D ,
41 number five B , number six C , number seven B , number eight D ,
42 number nine C , ten A , eleven B , twelve A , and thirteen is D
43 S5: **eleven B or D?**
44 T1: **ask him**
45 S2: B , B , B , boy

Extract 33 shows an instance of ellipsis of verbs of student directives. In lines 40-42, a student (S2) was reading out his answers to a previously completed exercise with multiple choice questions. After that, another student (S5) asked a question in line 43 to enquire if the answer to question 11 was B or D. Even though S5 omitted the verb in the question as well as the hearer to whom the question was directed, the teacher responded to the student in line 44 by directing him to ask S2, who provided the information requested immediately after in line 45.

Extract 34

754 S3: **teacher why are we asking about (booking?)**
755 T1: **which one?** , asking about booking , is it necessary to , um you can start
756 like this , um , the group , uh the group is quite large so I was
757 wondering not wondering , I was , I was wondering whether it is
758 necessary for , necessary to make , to make uh what?
759 S2: advanced booking
760 T1: to make , is it necessary to to book for , a large group , and if it is
761 necessary , how far in advance do I need to book , something like that
762 S5: is it necessary to book in advance
763 T1: in advance , how far in advance , **you must tell how far in advance , so**
764 **describe your group as well** , my group consists of maybe eighty
765 students , again I am changing my story eighty students , or or you don't
766 need to say eighty students my group is fairly large , and something like
767 that , **please add in extra information otherwise if you just write**
768 **exactly what is written no you won't get very far**
769 S1: **teacher , can we use "beside" and "for"?**
770 T1: besides
771 S1: **"besides" and "for" "thus" these kind of words?**
772 T1: yes linking words , **I have given you a list of linking words use those ,**
773 **at the right place though**
774 S3: **"is it necessary to"?**
775 T1: is it necessary to , make a (?) for a large group to make a , to book a , uh
776 uh this is a tour isn't it? , to book a tour also isn't it? , so you can
777 include that part as well isn't it? is it necessary to book , for a tour , for
778 such a large group , when you go to an exhibition you have to book the
779 tour guide , you know for a tour , include extra words , ideas coming in
780 OK? ...

The preceding extract illustrates the ellipsis of both the subject and the verb in student directives. As a letter writing activity was underway, one of the students (S3) asked the teacher about the reason for enquiring about booking in line 754. The teacher interpreted the S3's question as a request for help in vocabulary and content in writing about that particular point in the letter. Thus, the teacher provided S3 with some structures as well as ideas to enable the student to proceed in lines 755-758 and 760-761. Subsequently, another student (S1) asked the teacher whether the use of logical connectors were allowed in lines 769 and 771. Perhaps because S3 could not catch the model structures provided by the teacher in their entirety, S3 asked the teacher another question in line 774 to request for repetition of the structures. The question, in which the subject and the verb were omitted, did not make explicit the action requested of the teacher. Nevertheless, S3's intention was successfully conveyed to the teacher, who responded by providing S3 with the requested information in lines 775-780.

Ellipsis could be highly preferred for they allowed the students to ask questions and obtain information quickly from the teachers. In fact, when asked why they employed ellipsis in asking questions, the students involved in the current study responded that they did so for the following reasons:

3526 S5: to save time

3529 S8: direct to the question

The need to ask quick questions might be attributed to the risk of the student's speaking turn being abruptly ended and seized by one of the many other students in the classroom. The preference for ellipsis could have also resulted from the teachers' familiarity with the communicative styles of the students and the teachers' ability to comprehend the ways in which ellipsis was utilised by the students, who confirmed these notions when they were interviewed:

3528 S4: she can understand

3534 S5: we already familiar with each other

Finally, the use of ellipsis may have also been unintentional when used to elicit the repetition of a previous utterance. One of the students interviewed in the present study maintained that she used ellipsis out of necessity:

3519 S7: because you can't get what the teachers are saying , are talking about
3520 and you can't repeat what the teacher said

Inability to catch the teacher's utterance in its entirety led to partial repetition of the teacher's utterance, in which some syntactical parts were omitted not by choice but by necessity.

In-group languages or dialects

The use of in-group languages or dialects, which is also known as code-switching, refers to "any switch from one language or dialect to another in communities where the linguistic repertoire includes two or more such codes" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 110). Code-switching was discovered to occur in both teacher and student directives albeit infrequently and at particle and word levels only.

The use of in-group languages or dialects by the teachers was found in advisories but mostly in questions. The switch from English to an in-group language transpired at particle level through the use of the particles "ah" and "lah". These particles are found in Chinese dialects and Bahasa Malaysia, which are some of the dialects and languages commonly spoken by Malaysians.

Extract 35

2274 T2: ... **why your brother**
2275 **didn't come last week? , what happened to him?**
2276 S11: no transport
2277 T2: **no transport?**
2278 S11: my father and mother go to Penang
2279 T2: your father and mother went to Penang? , **why , is it for Cheng Beng**
2280 **ah? ,**
2281 **you all didn't follow your parents to Penang?**
2282 S11: because there is school

An instance of the particle “ah” in use is revealed in the extract above. In lines 2274-2275, the teacher asked a student (S11) a question to discover the reason of S11’s brother’s absence from the previous class. S11 replied that there was no transport available in line 2276. Subsequently, the teacher asked another question in line 2277 to obtain elaboration of S11’s response. After S11 had explained that his parents had gone to Penang in line 2278, the teacher asked two consecutive questions in lines 2279-2280 and 2281 to find out if the student’s parents had gone to Penang for the Cheng Beng or Qing Ming Festival and why the student and his brother had not gone with them. In line 2280, the particle “ah” included by the teacher is syntactically optional as the question is not grammatically affected by its omission. Therefore, it could be inferred that the usage of the particle “ah” in the question was motivated by the teacher’s desire to convey solidarity and familiarity since the question was rather personal and could be deemed intrusive. By switching to a code shared by S11 and herself, the teacher could emphasise that they were both Chinese and thus mitigate the threat posed to S11’s face.

Extract 36

2734 S12: Tuesday and Thursday will be afternoon rain
 2735 T3: **are you a meteorologist or something?**
 2736 S12: no , *Ko-Ko* time I see it’s raining
 2737 T3: ((laughs)) **they make you still go out?**
 2738 S12: yeah
 2739 T3: aiyo , **then how?**
 2740 S12: no , no choice , because we have to go out for lunch , we have to go out
 2741 from the school and it’s rains , every week
 2742 T3: **so you carry umbrellas with you?**
 2743 S12: nope , it’s fun
 2744 T3: fun ah? , **but then your uniform how?**
 2745 S12: just wet it *lah*
 2746 T3: oh , **you have two or three pairs lah?**
 2747 S12: five

Extract 36 above exemplifies the inclusion of the particle “lah” in teacher directives. In the extract, the students were individually engaged in completing an exercise in their course book. After the teacher had commented on the possibility of rain, a student (S12) remarked that Tuesday and Thursday afternoons were rainy in line 2734. S12’s remark

led to an exchange between S12 and the teacher about the S12's reason for the claim, which was S12's experiencing rain during co-curricular activities in school every Tuesday and Thursday, as shown in lines 2735 and 2736. After S12 stated that he let his school uniform get wet every time it rained in line 2745, the teacher asked him if he had two or three sets of his school uniform in line 2746. In the question, the teacher inserted the particle "lah", which appears to function not only as a marker of in-group membership but also as an indicator of the teacher's presupposition of the number of sets of uniforms possessed by the student.

Like the teachers, the students' use of in-group languages or dialects was dominant in questions although it was also found in a permissive. The particles "ah" and "meh" were characteristic of the students' switching from English to an in-group language at particle level. The particle "ah" is from Chinese dialects and Bahasa Malaysia while the particle "meh" is from the former.

Extract 37

857 T1: **S4 here , don't write name in front on top , not at school OK**
858 S4: **ah like that *ah*?**
859 T1: mm I'm the secretary , you can introduce like that , but the name has to
860 be at the bottom , don't write your name at the top
861 S4: OK

In Extract 37, a teacher was correcting a student's (S4) written work. The teacher directed S4 to not include the sender's name above the return address in line 857. In response, S4 possibly rectified his mistake and asked the teacher a question in line 858 to confirm that he had correctly understood the teacher's directive. S4's question, which included the particle "ah", resulted in the teacher elaborating the meaning of her directive in lines 859-860.

Extract 38

647 S7: **teacher science club of?**
648 T1: at
649 S1: **not in *meh*?**

In the preceding extract, during a letter writing activity, a student (S7) asked the teacher whether the preposition “of” could be used after the phrase “science club” via a question in line 647. Upon hearing the teacher’s response in line 648 that “at” should be used, another student (S1) sought to clarify whether “in” should be the preposition used through a question in line 649. S1’s question ended with the particle “meh”. The particle “meh” functioned to signal in-group membership as well as to contribute meaning to S1’s question. According to Ler (2006), the particle “meh” tells the hearer “that an assumption recently manifest in the external environment challenges an existing one in the cognitive environment of the speaker” (p. 164). Therefore, S1’s use of the particle “meh” indicated that S1’s assumption of the preposition that collocates with the noun phrase “science club” in line 649 differed from the teacher’s one in line 648.

The use of in-group languages or dialects by the teachers and the students in classroom directives could be ascribed to the desire for positive face redress. When interviewed about the reasons for their code-switching, the students in the present study expressed the belief that the use of in-group languages and dialects allowed them to be friendlier, less direct and less likely to offend in asking questions:

- 3546 R: ... why must you add the “lah” , the “mah” , the
3547 “ah”?
3548 S8: because too direct already
- 3572 S7: it’s not so formal
- 3573 S1: more friendly , friendly and relaxed
- 3575 S1: no need to be so serious
- 3579 S8: not so strict , will hurt
3580 S8: will hurt people like that

In fact, the particle “lah” has been reported to convey multiple meanings including solidarity and friendliness (Ler, 2006). In the same way, the teachers might have applied code-switching to establish unity and camaraderie with the students.

Nonetheless, the use of in-group languages or dialects in teacher directives and student directives may have been unintentional as code-switching could have been the product of the influence of the local discourse style as well as the participants’ first language. One of the students interviewed in the current study attributed code-switching to the communicative style of Malaysians:

3537 S5: Malaysian style

Other students in the interview ascribed code-switching to the influence of their mother tongue or first language:

3552 S1: yeah most of the Chinese will “lah” , because we always talk , speak in
3553 Chinese we will add some “lah”

3554 S8: because the Chinese version is got “lah” “ah” “mah” ...

3556 S6: like in Bahasa Melayu

3557 S7: Bahasa Melayu also got “lah” , “ah” , “apa tu”

Hence, code-switching in the realisation of directives could have probably been natural and spontaneous, as confirmed by another student in the interview who asserted that code-switching was a result of habit:

3561 S5: it’s like a habit

In fact, the influence of culture on teacher requests has been similarly documented by Dalton-Puffer (2005), who observed that the linguistic choices made by teachers in realising requests reveal how the teachers’ culture views teacher-student relationships.

In addition to particle level code-switching, the students also demonstrated the use of code-switching at word level.

Extract 39

- 872 T1: **proofread your answer , please recheck your grammar then pass it**
873 **to me , I don't want to mark so much**
874 S7: teacher , it's OK
875 T1: everything is correct , and then don't pass it to me
876 S7: **you can , you can , conteng**

The preceding extract illustrates the only occurrence of a word-level switch from English to Bahasa Malaysia. Near the end of a writing activity, the teacher directed the students to proofread their work because she did not want to make too many corrections through the utilisation of a directive in lines 872-873. In responding to the teacher in the form of a directive in line 876, a student (S7) switched the English word “scribble” to its Malay counterpart “conteng”. When interviewed and asked for her reason for doing so, S7 revealed that this strategy was applied only because the English word “scribble”, which she meant to use, could not be recalled:

- 3661 S7: ... I can't think about the English word for *conteng* , you see

Address forms

Certain address terms such as generic names and terms of endearment can be used for positive face redress because they convey familiarity and solidarity (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Nonetheless, the use of address terms was not only rare but also specific to one teacher.

The teacher's usage of address terms occurred in questions, requirements, prohibitives and advisories. The address term favoured by the teacher was “my friend”.

Extract 40

- 46 T1: **any questions?** , these are the correct answers he got everything correct
47 , any questions? **let's go through anything you got ((laughs)) wrong ,**
48 **which one? , which one?**
49 S5: thirteen
50 T1: **thirteen?** , thirteen it says , “it's easy to find somewhere to leave a
51 bike”
52 **what did you write my friend?**
53 S5: I put donkey

In Extract 40, the students had been given the answers to a multiple choice question exercise. The teacher directed the students to tell her which questions they had answered incorrectly in lines 46-48. In line 49, a student (S5) responded that she had gotten question thirteen wrong. To identify S5's mistake, the teacher asked a question in line 52 in which she addressed S5 with a term of endearment, "my friend". The teacher's inclination for address terms as a form of positive face redress in directives could be ascribed to individual communicative styles since only one teacher was found to utilise address terms in the data. In fact, Dalton-Puffer (2005) has observed that personal interactional styles may have an effect on the ways in which teachers' requests are realised.

4.2.1.2 Using first-person plural pronouns

The use of first-person plural pronouns including "we", "us" and "our" to refer to the speaker or the hearer when first-person singular pronouns such as "I", "me" and "my" or second-person pronouns such as "you" and "your" should be used functions to include both the speaker and the hearer in the activity mentioned in the directive. The inclusion of both the speaker and the hearer in the activity when only the speaker or the hearer is involved not only conveys cooperation between both parties but also shifts the focus away from the speaker (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This strategy accounted for 17.7% of all positive politeness strategies employed in teacher directives but only 1.3% of those employed in student directives. The use of the inclusive "we" form in teacher requests has also been documented by Dalton-Puffer (2005).

Teacher questions and especially teacher requirements were found to contain first-person plural pronouns including "let's", "our" and "we".

Extract 41

545 T1: ... **let's go to part three** top top
546 , OK **let's plan our paragraphs** , first paragraph of course you are
547 introducing yourself , so I am the secretary of the science club at which
548 college? , Chong Hwa college , OK? , **write for me like that** ...

The extract above shows some ways in which “let’s” and “our” were utilised in teacher directives. In providing students with instructions on a writing task in the course book, the teacher used “let’s” instead of “you” in lines 545 and 546. In addition, the teacher used “our” instead “your” in referring to the students’ paragraphs in line 546. Verbally including themselves in the activity stated in the directives helped the teachers to motivate the students to actively participate in the on-going classroom proceedings. An interview with one of the teachers confirmed this conjecture:

3404 T2: this is to engage them , erm and also er , yes I mean to show the students
3405 that this is not just a one-sided , er because we want to do something ,
3406 we want to do something together so that to show the students that it is
3407 actually a two-way thing or a teamwork that means it’s between the
3408 teacher and the student

The use of first-person plural pronouns to include both the speaker and the hearer in the activity was rare in the case of student directives. In fact, there was only one instance of this substrategy found in a student directive.

Extract 42

2544 T3: ... ((T3
2545 plays audio CD)) **do you need to hear this again? , yes , no , maybe? ,**
2546 **come on , you want to hear it again?**
2547 S12: no
2548 T3: **is that no or yes?**
2549 S15: no
2550 S12: **let's do**
2551 T3: **girls?** , I saw them nodding their heads ((T3 plays audio CD)) OK ,

In Extract 42, after playing a recording for the first time during a listening activity, the teacher asked the students if they wanted the recording to be played for the second time in lines 2545-2546. Two students (S12, S15) responded in the negative. In fact, S12 requested that the teacher to proceed to the next part of the activity in line 2550. The usage of the word “let’s” emphasised the inclusion of both the teacher, the student

himself and the other students in the activity stated in the request so that the teacher would be persuaded to comply. Nevertheless, S12's request was unsuccessful because the teacher decided to play the recording again for the benefit of the female students as can be seen in line 2551.

4.2.1.3 Using proximal demonstratives and unclear references

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), proximal demonstratives and unclear references can be used to create or emphasise commonality between the speaker and the hearer. Proximal demonstratives such as "this" and "here" signal nearness between the speaker and the hearer whereas distal demonstratives signal distance. The deliberate use of proximal demonstratives instead distal demonstratives narrows the gap between the speaker's and the hearer's points of view (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Similarly, when the speaker uses any term or pronoun whose referent is not made clear, he presupposes that the hearer knows what is being referred to and he asserts that they share commonality in knowledge (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This positive politeness strategy constituted 13.6% of all positive politeness strategies employed by the teachers and 9.3% of those employed by the students.

Analysis of the teacher directives revealed preference for this strategy in questions and mostly in requirements. Proximal demonstratives such as "this" and "here" and pronouns such as "this", "that", "it" and "one" were favoured in teacher directives.

Extract 43

- 2190 S9: "I seen Jane since last week"
2191 T2: your sentence is correct but there's a little bit wrong , "I have not" , you
2192 see "I last saw Jane a week ago" , a week ago , so let's say today is
2193 Wednesday , let's say last week was twenty-seven , so I saw Jane on the
2194 twenty-seven until today which is the second , so I last saw Jane , **so did**
2195 **you see her the whole week?**
2196 S9: no
2197 T2: **so I , what , haven't**
2198 S9: seen
2199 T2: yes , "I haven't seen Jane" , **when you have a haven't and you want a**
2200 **time what word do you put there?**
2201 S2: since
2202 T2: since , OK , **always remember present perfect , present perfect when**
2203 **you want to have a point in time or a period of time when you want**
2204 **to use either for or since ,**
2205 **let's try this on your own , come , let's try this on your own ,**
2206 **now this one slowly , you read , you try to break it up into section if**
2207 **you're not sure of the meaning** , this is , your meaning is correct but
2208 this is not , this is something to do with the present tense , it's something
2209 that is like often , isn't it? , isn't it? , **so what do you think? , will?**
2210 S9: seen
2211 T2: no , no , no , present , present tense , **what's the present tense for this?**
2212 S9: saw

In line 2190, a student (S9) incorrectly answered a question from an exercise in the course book. Therefore, the teacher tried to guide her toward realisation of the correct answer through a variety of directives. In lines 2205 and 2206-2207, the teacher's use of "this" created and emphasised common ground in two ways. Firstly, using "this" to refer to the question that S9 was having difficulty with positioned the question deictically close to the teacher and thus reduced the distance in point of view between the teacher and the student. Secondly, the use of "this" to refer to the question that S9 was having difficulty with emphasised commonality between the teacher and the student as it presupposed shared knowledge of the pronoun's referent. In fact, although the referent of the pronoun "this" was not made explicit, S9 was able understand what she had been directed to do. Therefore, S9 responded accordingly although incorrectly in line 2210. In line 2211, "this" was used by the teacher to refer to the verb "seen" that was uttered by S9 in line 2210 although "that" could have been used. The teacher's

usage of proximal demonstratives instead of distal ones allowed her to convey empathy to motivate S9 in answering the question.

Even though the students demonstrated an inclination for the proximal demonstrative “this” in questions, they did not use any unclear references in their directives.

Extract 44

- 2226 T2: **next I want you to go back , all of you , and try and do paper one ,**
2227 **paper one , the whole thing , page thirty-four , thirty-five and thirty-**
2228 **six** , this is a format of your exam , this is a format of what you exam will
2229 be like , when you come back , I prefer you not to refer to the dictionary ,
2230 **don't refer to the dictionary** ,
2231 **try and see whether you can do this or not** , and from there I will be
2232 able to see how you fare , **don't worry if you don't know or whatever** ,
2233 **just leave out the answer or wrong** , so from there we would have an
2234 idea of how you fare , because uh FCE is pretty difficult so I want to see
2235 how you fare , but so far I see you all are quite OK , so keep your eyes
2236 on that , **so what else do you need to do for homework?** , there's
2237 something else I asked you to do for homework ,
2238 **look up the words OK?** , **any words you don't understand , look it up**
2239 **in the dictionary , write it in your vocab book because it will help**
2240 **you** , you never know sometimes you do your SPM you come across that
2241 word ...
2252 S10: **are you going to mark this?**
2253 T2: you want to mark , no , I want to mark it , I want to mark it ...

In Extract 44, the teacher assigned the students some homework in the form of exercises in the students' course book in lines 2226-2228. The teacher also directed the students to do homework in the form of vocabulary work in lines 2238-2240. Consequently, a student (S10) asked the teacher whether the latter would mark or correct the completed exercises in the course book in line 2252. To refer to the exercises, S10 could have used either “that” because the exercises were mentioned in the teacher's previous utterance in lines 2226-2228 and were somewhat distant in time. Nonetheless, S10 could also have used “this” to refer to the exercises because they had to be completed by the students and were thus proximal in space. Hence, S10's usage of “this” to refer to the exercises indicates a desire to emphasise similarity between the teacher's and the S10's points of view.

4.2.1.4 Giving reasons

As argued by Brown and Levinson (1987), giving the hearer reasons for what the speaker asks of the hearer is a way of including the hearer in the activity and conveying positive politeness. This positive politeness strategy was a rare occurrence in the data, forming 8.7% of positive politeness strategies found in teacher directives and 2.7% of those found in students directives.

The giving of reasons was observable in all teacher directives albeit most often in teacher advisories.

Extract 45

2650 T3: in fact I hardly see any
2651 S12: **what? , scorpion?**
2652 T3: yeah it seems when I was very young my parents stayed near the jungle
2653 somewhere and I almost stepped on one , I was very small then , almost
2654 *kena* , if I had stepped on it I might not be here teaching you today
2655 ((laughs)) **it's very poisonous , stay away from it ...**

In Extract 45, during a discussion of the answers to the questions in a listening exercise, the subject of scorpions came up. After telling the students that she had hardly seen any scorpions in line 2650, the teacher related her close encounter with a scorpion when she was young in lines 2652-2654 and advised the students to avoid scorpions in lines 2655. In her directive, the teacher stated that scorpions are very poisonous, giving the students a reason to take her advice. Providing reasons was favoured by the teachers because they believe that the students are capable of reasoning, as explained by the teacher who was interviewed in the present study:

3457 T2: ... when we advise
3458 them and give them some reason and so on then they would understand
3459 it better and from there , you see they are able to follow your advice ,
3460 hopefully they with the reasons given , it's easier for them to follow
3461 your advice

The giving of reasons was also observable in student directives even if only in requestives.

Extract 46

307 T1: OK ((laughs)) **S6 continue**
308 S1: **wait wait wait , S6 need to check the answer**
309 T1: **why?**
310 S1: to sure , her answer is hundred percent

In the preceding extract, a student (S6) was directed by the teacher to continue reading out S6's answers to a previously completed exercise in line 307. Subsequently, another student (S1) requested that the teacher wait for S6 in line 308. S1 softened her request by giving the teacher the reason for the request, which was S6's need to check the accuracy of the answers. The fact that this strategy was employed only in requests that were not related to elicitation of information suggests that the students believed that these types of requests were unusual and thus had to be justified with reasons.

4.2.1.5 Avoiding disagreement

Avoiding disagreement can be achieved through token agreements, which involves feigning agreement; pseudo-agreement, which involves the use of words such as "then" and "so" that refer to a prior agreement when none has been made; white lies, which involves outright lying to avoid damaging the hearer's positive face; and hedging opinions, which involves using hedges to render the speaker's opinion vague (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Despite the many ways of avoiding disagreement, the teachers and students were partial to pseudo-agreement, which amounted to 7.2% of all positive politeness strategies employed by the teachers and 2.7% of those by the students.

Pseudo-agreement through the use of "so" and "then" was found in requirements and questions realised by the teachers.

Extract 47

- 810 T1: or if we bring our own food , is there a picnic space available for
811 students to , you can say that since it's going to be one whole , a whole
812 day so that we there's a need for students to eat , **add in extra**
813 **information** , is a
814 **what are you writing?**
815 S7: teacher
816 T1: **so what are you writing?**
817 S7: **teacher , instead of "I would like to" , " I would be grateful"**
818 T1: **where is it? where is it?**

The extract above illustrates the teachers' use of "so" in directives. The students were engaged in a letter writing task. Asking individual students which part of the letter they were writing was one of the teacher's ways of monitoring the students' progress, as can be seen in lines 814 and 816. The teacher's use of "so" to begin her question in line 816 did not function to indicate the teacher's arriving at a conclusion after jointly discussing something with the student (S7). Instead, the teacher's use of "so" functioned to seek S7's cooperation in responding to the question, which was consequently answered by S7.

The use of pseudo-agreement for positive face redress was also displayed by the students through the use of "so" in their questions.

Extract 48

- 671 S7: **teacher , I see the advertisement first or , I want to , I write the?**
672 T1: I saw the advertisement
673 S7: like a KDU College then I am writing
674 T1: full stop full stop
675 S7: **yeah I'm writing , or I saw your advertisement?**
676 T1: writing you're always writing wrongly the writing , the spelling , I've
677 corrected so many times
678 S7: **so , I am writing this letter to ask re-?**
679 T1: regarding the exhibition , the exhibition named um , the next hundred
680 years , at your museum ...

An instance of a student using "so" for pseudo-agreement is found in the extract above, in which the students were writing a formal letter of enquiry. The student's (S7) question in line 671 sought to ascertain whether S7 should begin the letter by referring to the advertisement to which the letter was a response or by stating the purpose of the letter. As the teacher's response of correcting S7's misuse of verb tense in line 672 was

not the response *S7* desired, *S7* rephrased the question slightly and asked it again in line 675. *S7*'s second attempt was met with the desired reply for the teacher indicated that *S7* should begin the letter by stating the reason for writing the letter in line 676. However, the teacher also complained about the *S7*'s frequent misspelling of the word "writing" in lines 676-677. Desiring the teacher's help in structuring the sentence, *S7* responded by beginning her question (in line 678) with "so". The use of "so" allowed *S7* to convey apparent agreement with the teacher's complaint and also to indicate that *S7*'s question (in line 678) was related to the previous question (in line 675).

4.2.2 Bald on record

Realising a directive bald on record involves performing it in the most straightforward manner (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Usage of the bald on record strategy accounted for 36.1% of all politeness strategies found in teacher and student directives.

The teachers and the students varied in their usage of this strategy in their directives. Bald on record was discovered to be the teachers' second most frequently used politeness strategy, occurring in all teacher directives. The bald on record strategy was the most preferred strategy in questions, prohibitives and permissives but the least favoured strategy in requestives, requirements and advisories. On the other hand, bald on record was found to be the students' least frequently used politeness strategy. The bald on record strategy was found in and least frequently used in all student directives with the exception of permissives.

The parameters of power, social distance and rank of imposition in the speech event of the lessons advocate the use of this strategy for the teachers but not for the students. Although it was not the dominant politeness strategy for directives, it was

nevertheless employed by the teachers and the students when there was a need for maximum clarity of meaning and efficiency of communication.

4.2.2.1 Prohibitives

The bald on record strategy was found only in teacher prohibitives as no student prohibitives were discovered in the data. The teachers expressed the majority of the prohibitives through the bald on record strategy, which constituted 60.0% of all politeness strategies employed in teacher prohibitives.

The subsequent extract shows a way in which directness was utilised in teacher prohibitives.

Extract 49

- 731 T1: ... why would you want to wonder? , **don't wonder ,**
732 **I was wondering , no , you ask questions**
733 S7: I saw your advertisement and I was wondering if I could
734 T1: **you never wonder**
735 S7: **no "wonder"?**
736 T1: to ask , some questions regarding the exhibition

As the students were engaged in a formal letter writing activity, the teacher was moving from student to student to monitor their progress. Noticing a student (S7) using the structure "I was wondering" to ask indirect questions, the teacher issued prohibitives in lines 731-732 and 734 employing the bald on record strategy to forbid the student from using the structure. The bald on record strategy was greatly preferred for performing prohibitives because it emphasised the institutionally-sanctioned power of the teachers as revealed by a teacher-participant of the current study when she was interviewed:

- 3425 T2: ... the teacher has to show that she is
3426 in charge so er , she has to be authoritative and also to make it very
3427 clear , that this is , what the chil- the students are required to do

4.2.2.2 Questions

The bald on record strategy accounted for 54.6% of all politeness strategies applied in teacher and student questions. It was the politeness strategy utilised most frequently by the teachers but least frequently by the students in asking questions.

An instance of the use of the bald on record strategy in teacher questions can be seen in the following extract.

Extract 50

- 1668 T2: ... **let's look at this**
1669 OK? , “discuss these questions , what do children learn at school apart
1670 from what they are taught?” , **let's have a discussion , what do children**
1671 **learn at school apart from what they are taught? , what do they**
1672 **learn?**
1673 S10: discipline
1674 T2: discipline , very good , OK , alright , **what else do they learn at school?**
1675 **, what else?**
1676 S10: manners
1677 T2: manners , discipline , alright , **what else? , what else do you think**
1678 **children learn at school?** , apart from what they are taught , what do
1679 you mean by apart from what they are taught? , apart from the ABC or
1680 History or you know English and so on , she tells me that it's discipline ,
1681 manners , **why manners? , don't you think that parents teach them**
1682 **manners?**
1683 S10: yes the parents teach but the children will not follow , even teachers
1684 teach also the children will not follow
1685 T2: **so why teach?**
1686 S10: still have to teach them in class

In Extract 50, the teacher was leading the students in a discussion of a passage from the students' course book. In asking the students questions to move the discussion forward, the teacher employed the bald on record strategy, as evidenced by the questions in lines 1670-1672, 1674-1675, 1677-1678, 1681-1682 and 1685. The teachers' partiality to the bald on record strategy in asking questions could be attributed to the source of the questions and the need for clarity as explained by one of the teachers interviewed in the present study:

3416 T2: ... possibly because the questions they are all direct from the
 3417 book so it's reading it out you see directly from the book and also , to be
 3418 straight to the point K , so erm , well probably when you ask a question
 3419 directly with no frills they concentrate on the question and what is ,
 3420 what is asked of them , and then they can concentrate directly on er the
 3421 answer as well

Some of the questions asked by the teachers, such as in lines 1670-1672, were questions from the course book that is part of the course syllabus. Therefore, the questions were direct as they were direct in the course books. However, other questions were direct because of the teachers' desire to be clear in what they were asking. Direct questions allowed the students to focus on the answers to the questions instead of the meaning of the questions. Likewise, Dalton-Puffer (2005) has also found that teacher questions about curricular content-related information are direct without any mitigation in her corpus of English directives in classroom interaction.

The extract below exemplifies the students' use of the bald record strategy in questions.

Extract 51

1077 T1: mm hmm and then you just wash and scratch people's car , because you
 1078 don't know how to do those things OK but then that's a good idea , OK
 1079 **now is a raffle**
 1080 S3: **what's a raffle?**
 1081 S4: **what's raffle?**
 1082 T1: raffle means like one dollar one dollar one dollar people will buy you
 1083 know , it's like , no he doesn't know , **you tell in English**
 1084 S5: something
 1085 S7: like jackpot
 1086 T1: it's not like , yeah , raffle like , one ringgit one ringgit you buy your
 1087 tickets you know

The teacher was leading the students in a discussion of the best fund-raising methods during a speaking activity. When the teacher mentioned the method of having a raffle in line 1079, two students (S3 and S4) asked her for the meaning of the word "raffle" in lines 1080 and 1081. The students' questions were directly related to the task at hand as they needed information on what a raffle was before they could actively participate in

the task. The urgency and low imposition of the questions could have led the students to be direct in asking them.

4.2.2.3 Permissives

The usage of bald on record was also prominent in permissives, in which 50.0% of all positive politeness strategies found were comprised of this strategy. The majority of the teacher permissives were expressed baldly on record. Contrarily, this strategy was not discovered in student permissives perhaps because of the rare occurrence of student permissives in the data.

The extract below shows an instance of the bald on record strategy in use in teacher permissives.

Extract 52

1946 T2: ... **let's go back to where we were**
1947 **just now** ,
1948 **let's try and do this** , OK ,
1949 **complete each sentence with the words in the brackets and see**
1950 **whether you can do that** , OK ,
1951 **you can use your red pen or something to mark** , OK
1952 **let's go through** , and I'll help you if er as we go along , OK ,
1953 **let's start with S11 first** , "that boy"
1954 S11: "that boy is not naughty but he is harmless"

In Extract 52, the teacher realised a permissive baldly on record in line 1951 while she was giving the students instructions on an activity they were about to do. The bald on record strategy found favour with the teachers as they had to stress their power over the students in aspects such as the granting and denying of permission. In emphasising their power in these aspects, the teachers could maintain their control over the classroom, as stated by the teacher interviewed in the current study:

3468 T: ... we also at the same time
3469 have to show the students that , the teacher is in charge , so er , the
3470 teacher has the authority , for certain er , to give the authority for certain
3471 things , so I think at the same time at times , the teacher has to show that
3472 she in charge ...

4.2.2.4 Requestives

The bald on record strategy was the least favoured politeness strategy in the case of the realisation of both teacher and student requestives. In fact, only 22.1% of all politeness strategies utilised in teacher and student requestives was composed of this strategy.

An example of the teachers' use of the bald on record strategy in requestives is shown below.

Extract 53

855 S1: I need to count again ((laughs))
856 T1: **you blame him , don't blame me** , ah hah hah , no no no no , S4 , S4 ,
857 **S4 here , don't write name in front on top , not at school OK**

In Extract 53, the teacher was giving a student (S4) feedback on his work during a writing activity when another student (S1) apparently light-heartedly complained about losing count of the number of words used in her work in line 855. Consequently, the teacher requested that S1 should blame S4 and not the teacher in line 856. The teacher's directness could be explained by her desire for efficiency of communication because she was occupied with giving feedback to S4.

The following extract demonstrates the usage of the bald on record strategy in student requestives.

Extract 54

1168 T1: **part three , thirty-nine part three , uh the part which , with misfire ,**
1169 **that one , misfire , and page forty everything , page forty everything**
1170 **, page forty-one everything , page forty-two everything , page forty-**
1171 **three everything**
1172 S5: **OK enough**

The teacher was assigning the students homework at the end of the class in Extract 54. After the teacher had called out the pages in the students' course book that were to be completed as homework, a student (S5) requested that the teacher does not assign any more homework in line 1172. S5's requestive might have been realised baldly on record owing to the urgency of communication. S5 could have felt that if she did not perform

the requestive immediately and quickly, the teacher might have assigned the students more homework.

4.2.2.5 Requirements

The bald on record strategy was discovered only in teacher requirements because no student requirements were found in the data. This strategy was the one the teachers exhibited the least tendency for as it encompassed 16.6% of all the politeness strategies used by the teachers to perform requirements.

The next extract illustrates the use of the bald on record strategy in teacher requirements.

Extract 55

- 2419 T3: of , have and too , T-O-O , got it? , **number seven S18**
2420 S18: “as a result city leaders have (?) an (?)”
2421 T3: OK you must understand , you must understand , if you’re going to use
2422 “an entire city” , **listen** , if you’re going to use “an entire city” , that is
2423 general , here is it general? , we already know the name of the city ,
2424 **what’s the name of the city S18? , Hi?**
2425 S18: Hiching
2426 T3: yes , Hiching , so remember what I told you? , **if you have mentioned it**
2427 **already you must?**
2428 S18: the
2429 T3: yes , use “the” , “the entire city” , **number ten S19?**

In Extract 55, the students were taking turns to answer questions from an open cloze exercise in the students’ course book. A student (S18) answered her question incorrectly in line 2420. Subsequently, while trying to guide S18 towards realisation of the correct answer, the teacher produced a requirement in line 2422 directing S18 and perhaps all of the students to pay attention to what was being said by the teacher. The requirement was expressed directly without any redress for the probable purpose of stressing the teacher’s authority over the students to maintain control of the classroom and its happenings. Another possible reason for the lack of redressive action was the teacher’s desire for efficiency of communication. As the teacher was in the midst of giving her

feedback on S18's answer, she had to realise the requirement clearly and quickly so that the on-going activity could progress without delay.

4.2.2.6 Advisories

Advisories were rarely realised baldly on record by both the teachers and the students. In fact, the bald on record strategy was the politeness strategy that the teachers and the students were least inclined to in the realisation of advisories, making up 15.4% of all politeness strategies employed in advisories.

The use of the bald on record strategy in teacher advisories is shown in the subsequent extract.

Extract 56

- 294 T1: ... **page thirty-six everybody** World Heritage
295 sites , The Galapagos Island all those species there , nobody can do
296 anything over there because it's protected , and you have the Red
297 Square Moscow , and you have page thirty-eight no not thirty-eight ,
298 page forty you have the Statue of Liberty and Taj Mahal and then
299 there's one street I don't know that one , K? , those are World Heritage
300 Sites nobody can touch those , cannot develop cannot do anything , they
301 are protected places yes?
302 S7: no
303 T1: OK (it's a bit too?)
304 S7: teacher I really don't
305 T1: you've been away for so long , **don't miss a class**
306 S7: teacher I have no choice

During a discussion of an exercise in the students' course book, the teacher reminded the students that they had done a similar exercise on World Heritage sites. In lines 294-301, the teacher directed the students to turn to the page on World Heritage sites in the course book and briefly described the sites. However, one of the students (S7) seemed to be having difficulty following the discussion as can be inferred from her response to the teacher in line 302. Subsequently, the teacher remarked that S7 had missed many classes and advised S7 to not miss classes in line 305. The teacher's advisory was produced baldly on record, which corresponds to Brown and Levinson's (1987) view that FTAs which are performed for the benefit of the hearer need not be redressed

because doing the FTA demonstrates the speaker's concern for the hearer's self and positive face.

The students' use of the bald on record strategy in advisories is shown below.

Extract 57

- 88 T1: C , that's fine , **let's go to B** , this way of travelling is reliable ,
89 **which word tells us that this way of travelling is reliable , can**
90 **everybody find for me because I also haven't read it OK? , so please**
91 **find for me , why this way of travelling is reliable** , "you can't always
92 depend on public transport for that , in the next , the next six years I've
93 been cycling around I have noticed that during commuting" na na na na
94 na don't write those OK? , please ((laughs)) now I'm so conscious now
95 S1: relax
96 T1: **which word? , which word?**
97 S5: you can't always depend on

While leading a discussion of the answers to a multiple choice cloze exercise the students had previously completed in their course book, the teacher joked that she was self-conscious about being audio-recorded in line 94. In response, a student (S1) advised the teacher to relax in line 95. The bald on record strategy was employed by S1 in realising the advisory. Such directness in student advisories is usually unexpected due to students' position in the classroom hierarchy. However, the students' use of directness was influenced not by the factor of power but the factor of social distance. An interview with some of the student-participants in the present study confirmed that the students' use of directness in advisories was caused by the students' close rapport and familiarity with their teacher:

- 3611 S7: cause teacher we know each other
3632 S5: and we are like friends
3633 S8: we close to the teacher so we can
3634 S1: if I don't know you very well I don't do that
3637 S1: because we have been together for a while
3638 S7: not a while but quite long
3639 S5: we know teacher won't scold us

In addition, Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that face threatening acts that are performed for the benefit of the hearer do not need to be redressed. Since the advisory was performed in the interest of the teacher, it required no redressive action.

4.2.3 Negative politeness

Negative politeness entails the softening of a directive through the conveyance of deference (Brown & Levinson, 1987). 17.0% of all the politeness strategies employed in the realisation of teacher and student directives consisted of negative politeness strategies. Negative face redress has been also found to be utilised to a smaller extent in online class discussions in English by Schallert et al. (2009).

Negative politeness was the teachers' least favoured strategy in realising directives whereas it was the students' second most favoured one. Negative politeness was found in all teacher directives with the exception of requestives. It was the politeness strategy utilised second most frequently by the teachers in their requirements, prohibitives and advisories but least frequently in their questions and permissives. On the other hand, negative politeness was found in all student directives except permissives. It was the most frequently used strategy for advisories and second most frequently used strategy for questions and requestives.

The teachers did not need to soften their directives with negative politeness on account of their power over the students. Therefore, the teachers' occasional use of negative politeness suggests that the teachers at times felt the need to communicate their respect for the students' individuality and independence. Conversely, the students were more partial to this strategy than the teachers were because of the factor of power. In the context of the classroom, there is a clear inequality of power between the teacher and the students. The students' use of negative politeness indicates that they were often

aware of their lower hierarchical standing in the classroom and also of the need to communicate their respect to their teachers through their linguistic choices.

Six of Brown and Levinson's (1987) negative politeness strategies were discovered in the data:

- (1) Hedging
- (2) Giving deference
- (3) Using indirect speech acts
- (4) Minimising the imposition
- (5) Impersonalising the speaker and the hearer
- (6) Apologising
- (7) Nominalising

Of these, the teachers favoured hedging (58.6%) the most and nominalising (1.6%) the least. As for the students, they favoured giving deference (93.3%) the most and hedging (6.7%) the least. An interesting phenomenon is that the only negative politeness strategy employed by both the teachers and the students was hedging. In fact, the teachers and the students differed in their use of all other negative politeness strategies.

Table 4.4: Types of negative politeness strategies

	Teachers	Students	Total
Hedging	75 (58.6%)	3 (6.7%)	78 (45.1%)
Giving deference	-	42 (93.3%)	42 (24.3%)
Using indirect speech acts	31 (24.2%)	-	31 (17.9%)
Minimising the imposition	11 (8.6%)	-	11 (6.4%)
Impersonalising the speaker and the hearer	6 (4.7%)	-	6 (3.5%)
Apologising	3 (2.3%)	-	3 (1.7%)
Nominalising	2 (1.6%)	-	2 (1.2%)
Total	128 (100.0%)	45 (100.0%)	173 (100.1%)

4.2.3.1 Hedging

Hedges are utilised to reduce the force of FTAs and they can take the form of particles, words, phrases, clauses, stress and intonation as well as bodily movements (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Teacher hedges formed 58.6% of the teachers' negative face redressive action. However, hedging was the negative politeness strategy that the students were least inclined to as it only amounted to 6.7% of the students' negative

face redressive action. There are four types of hedges as discussed by Brown and Levinson (1987), namely hedges on illocutionary force, hedges addressed to Grice's Maxims, hedges addressed to politeness strategies as well as prosodic and kinesic hedges. Of these, only the first two types were found in the data. It must be noted that prosodic and kinesic hedges were not analysed because non-verbal communication is not a focus of the present study.

Adverbial hedges

Hedges on illocutionary force are adverbs or particles that modify the performative verb of the directive and soften the directive (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Such hedges were regularly employed by the teachers but not by the students.

The teachers were fond of using hedges on illocutionary force including adverbs such as "please", "now" and "slowly" in all types of directives except requestives and most frequently in requirements.

Extract 58

- 1424 T2: very good , excellent , inattentive , alright , I-N , so it's a prefix ,
1425 inattentive , that means not attentive , inattentive , OK , **S10 please**
1426 **continue , ah slowly**
1427 S10: "by far the biggest problem"
1428 T2: yes , usually when you see "by far" , "by far" means it's a superlative ,
1429 OK? , "by far" , alright? , by far the biggest problem , by far the largest
1430 car , by far the most expensive car , OK so when you see the word "by
1431 far" usually it relates , OK , to something that is in the superlative , OK ,
1432 "by far the biggest problem for teachers for parent teachers is the? ,"
1433 **what sort of attitude? ,**
1434 **continue , please , S10**
1435 S10: "for parents teacher is the attitude for other"

In Extract 58, the teacher was eliciting from a student (S10) the answers to some questions in an adjective formation exercise and evaluating S10's answers. In directing S10 to continue after the teacher had provided her feedback, the teacher hedged the directive in lines 1425-1426 with the adverbs "please" as well as "slowly" and the directive in line 1434 with the adverb "please". The teachers' preference for such

hedges indicates that the teachers were concerned about weakening the force of their directives to make the directives sound less coercive and intimidating so that the students were more likely to comply.

On the other hand, the students were partial to the use of hedges on illocutionary force, namely the adverb “please”, in performing requestives and advisories.

Extract 59

- 35 T1: it’s a holiday , yup , OK , **all the answers S2 gave , are they correct?**
36 S4: **please repeat**
37 T1: **very sleepy?**
38 S4: no , repeat
39 T1: **repeat , S2 , please**

In Extract 59, a student (S4) made use of the adverb “please” to hedge his request in line 36. The purpose of S4’s request was to obtain a repetition of the answers that the teacher had directed another student (S2) to read out. Given the great difference in power between the teacher and the students, S4’s use of a hedge to convey negative face redress is not surprising. Moreover, using the adverb “please” is a common way of expressing non-linguistic politeness (Quirk et al., 1985).

Manner hedges

The force of a directive can also be weakened by utilising hedges that indicate compliance or non-compliance with Grice’s maxims of cooperation (Brown & Levinson, 1987). This type of hedges was occasionally employed only by the teachers.

Manner hedges function to indicate the speaker’s awareness that his or her utterance was not stated in a clear and unambiguous manner. Manner hedges were found in teacher requirements, prohibitives and permissives but most often in the first of these. These hedges include “OK”, “alright”, “you know” and “actually”.

Extract 60

- 1469 T2: you think so , **S9? , any problem? , do you understand? , you do? ,**
1470 OK
1471 **then you tell me , alright , in your own words , your own words , just**
1472 **like , just like a story , alright , you know just in a couple of words**
1473 **what actually this text says , yes , just in a couple of words , OK?**
1474 S9: this about the edu- education in UK
1475 T2: alright
1476 S9: it's different from us , from our country

In the teacher's directive in lines 1471-1473 in the above extract, the teacher employed Manner hedges including "alright", "you know" and "OK" to direct the students to summarise the text they had read. The hedges emphasised the fact that the directive may not have been clearly expressed and served to check whether the students could follow the utterance. One of the student's (S9) corresponding response in lines 1474 and 1476 indicated that the teacher's directive was comprehended by the students.

4.2.3.2 Giving deference

The negative politeness strategy of giving deference involves lowering the speaker's status and elevating the hearer's through the use of honorifics or terms of respect (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The students had a penchant for this strategy, which forms 93.3% of the negative politeness strategies utilised by the students. However, this strategy was not found in any of the teachers' directives.

Requestives, advisories and many questions realised by students were redressed through this strategy, which was accomplished via the use of the professional title "teacher" as an address form.

Extract 61

- 2340 T3: myself is with F , themselves is V-E-S , **correct , everybody?**
2341 S15: yeah , **teacher number one should be "have" or "had"?**
2342 T3: people have

In Extract 61, a discussion of the answers to an exercise in the students' course book was in progress. In line 2341, a student (S15) asked the teacher for clarification of the

answer to question number one in the exercise. The address term “teacher” was utilised at the beginning of the student’s question to convey negative politeness.

The students’ inclination for this negative politeness strategy could be explained by Gu’s (1990) Address Maxim of modern Chinese politeness given the fact that the overwhelming majority of the students were Chinese. Gu’s (1990) Address Maxim detailed that the hearer should be addressed with a suitable term to show the speaker’s acknowledgement of the hearer’s social status and the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer. This term could take the form of professional titles, proper names or kinship terms. In the context of the classroom, the status of teachers is higher than that of students by virtue of age and classroom hierarchy. Hence, showing deference through the use of honorifics was favoured by the students but not the teachers. In fact, an interview with some of the students who participated in the present study confirmed that they used the address term “teacher” to signal respect for their teachers:

3599 S5: as a respect
3600 S7: maybe a kind of respect *lah*

Besides conveying deference, the address term “teacher” was used for the practical reason of obtaining the teacher’s attention and indicating that the teacher was the intended hearer of the directive, as attested to by the students interviewed in the current study:

3590 S7: teacher you know I’m talking to you , teacher
3591 S3: just to call you
3592 R: to address?
3593 S5: the teacher don’t know we are speaking to you
3594 S8: yeah yeah , like we are calling the friend we also call the friend name ,
3595 like “wei” that one

4.2.3.3 Using indirect speech acts

Being conventionally indirect refers to the use of “phrases and sentences that have contextually unambiguous meanings (by virtue of conventionalization)” (Brown &

Levinson, 1987, p. 132). Conventional indirectness is often achieved through indirect speech acts. The teachers favoured this strategy, which accounted for 24.2% of all negative politeness strategies employed by the teachers. In contrast, the students were disinclined to it and did not use it in any of their directives although conventional indirectness has been found to be highly favoured in English and Chinese requests made by Chinese EFL learners (Chen, 2006).

The teachers had a tendency to use indirect speech acts in questions and requirements but mostly in the latter. Forms of indirectness employed by the teachers include the use of syntactical interrogatives beginning with “can”, “who knows” and “how about” as well as syntactical declaratives instead of syntactical imperatives.

Extract 62

- 2285 T3: **can we start with the course book today?** ,
2286 **how about we go on to “Predicting Earthquakes”?**
2287 S12: **page?**
2288 T3: we’ll start with **we’ll start with “Natural Heritage” , page forty-four** ,
2289 hi , alright , we’ve done the one with Nick Gordon isn’t it , or we were
2290 going to do it that day right? , so while I fix in my uh tape recording
2291 **we’ll go to the next page first and do “Predicting Earthquakes”** ,
2292 OK? , “think of the word which best fits each space , use only one word
2293 in each space” , one word , now you’ve got to learn especially in exams
2294 you have to follow instructions , when it says two to three words it
2295 means two to three words , when they say one word you have to follow
2296 one word , **so start “Predicting Earthquakes” while I fix in the**
2297 **cassette** , hi ,
2298 **we’re doing forty-six , page forty-six ...**

In Extract 62, at the beginning of the lesson, the teacher was giving the students instructions for an activity they were about to do, which was an open cloze exercise in the course book. In line 2285, the teacher utilised a grammatical interrogative to direct the students to open their course books. The modal verb “can” was not used to ask about the students’ ability to open their course books but it was used to direct the students to do so. In line 2286, another grammatical interrogative was employed to direct the students to turn to a particular section in the course book. Although the structure “how about” is generally used for making suggestions, the teacher’s intention of using the

structure was not to suggest but to command. In line 2298, the teacher used a grammatical declarative to produce a directive that was addressed to a student who had just entered the classroom. Even though the declarative structure is generally used to make statements, it was used in line 2298 to direct the student to do the exercise on the page mentioned by the teacher. The teachers' partiality to the use of indirect speech acts indicates a compromise between the teachers' desire to be explicit in realising their directives and their wish to be less coercive and intimidating.

4.2.3.4 Minimising the imposition

Negative politeness is also communicated by reducing the imposition or difficulty of the action the hearer is asked to perform (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Minimising of imposition can be realised via words, phrases or clauses. This strategy constituted 8.6% of all negative face redressive action employed by the teachers but it was not used at all by the students.

This strategy was found in teacher requirements, prohibitives and advisories albeit most frequently in requirements. This strategy was predominantly accomplished through the use of the adverb "just".

Extract 63

- 117 T1: **S3 tell me all the answers**
118 S3: hah?
119 T1: **just read and cut out words , this is very easy I'm not asking you to**
120 **do the difficult ones OK?**
121 S3: "usually I'm quite a strong person but I have to admit that I started
122 smoking at the incredibly young age young age of twelve , and then I
123 found myself unable to stop uh , I knew I had a problem"
124 T1: so you're cutting "did"? , I knew I had a problem , very nice , **continue**

In Extract 63, the teacher issued a directive in line 117 to direct a student (S3) to attempt an editing exercise in the course book. However, S3's response in line 118 indicated that he was reluctant or hesitant to comply with the directive. As a result, the teacher produced another directive in lines 119-120 directing S3 to read and omit certain words

from the passage. The teacher's use of the adverb "just" including the expression that the task was "very easy" served to reduce the perceived difficulty of the action requested of S3. The teacher's application of this strategy could be deemed effective because S3 then began to tackle the task he had been directed to. When students seem daunted by the perceived difficulty of a task they are directed to carry out, this strategy can be employed to reduce the size of the directive and make the task appear easier and achievable to them.

4.2.3.5 Impersonalising the speaker and the hearer

Negative politeness is also conveyed by means of impersonalising the speaker and the hearer in terms of avoiding the mention of the speaker as the agent and the hearer as the addressee of the directive (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In other words, the speaker endeavours to avoid the first person singular pronoun "I" and the second person singular pronoun "you" in realising the directive. This strategy represented 4.7% of all negative politeness strategies used in teacher directives although it did not occur in those used in student directives. Avoidance of direct reference to the speaker and the hearer can be accomplished through the usage of performative verbs, grammatical imperatives, impersonal verbs, passive voices, indefinites, address and reference terms, and point-of-view distancing (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Despite the various ways in which the speaker and the hearer can be impersonalised in directives, only the use of the passive voice was displayed by the teachers.

Usage of passive verbs to avoid referring to the speaker was discovered in teacher prohibitives.

Extract 64

- 307 T1: OK ((laughs)) **S6 continue**
308 S1: **wait wait wait , S6 need to check the answer**
309 T1: **why?**
310 S1: to sure , her answer is hundred percent
311 T1: whoa , never mind , **remember the other day S1 was so courageous**
312 **and read all the answers ((laughs)) so S6 cannot , you're not allowed**
313 **to do that , K**
314 S6: “the original botanical in Padova Italy is the world’s oldest and home to
315 a remarkably”
316 T1: remarkably fine collection yes

In Extract 64, a student (S6) had been directed to read out her answers to a previously completed exercise in the course book but another student (S1) requested that the teacher wait for S6 to check the accuracy of the answers. As a result, the teacher produced a directive in lines 311-313 forbidding S6 from stopping to check the answers and directing S6 to continue reading. Instead of using the active form of the verb “allow”, the teacher used the passive form and omission of the agent to avoid referring to herself as the speaker of the directive. The use of the passive voice allowed the teacher to focus S6’s attention on the action in the directive rather than on the speaker of the directive.

4.2.3.6 Apologising

Apologising for performing a directive conveys negative face redress by expressing the speaker’s unwillingness to impose on the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Even as apologising occurred in 2.3% of the teachers’ negative politeness strategies, it was absent from the students’. Apologising for making a directive can take the forms of admitting the impingement on the hearer, indicating reluctance, giving overwhelming reasons and begging forgiveness. Only the last form was present in teacher directives.

Begging forgiveness was found in requirements and questions produced by the teachers, specifically through the expression “sorry”.

Extract 65
 1272 T2: couple of days , couple of days , OK? , **uh you , can you please help us ,**
 1273 **“but”?**
 1274 S11: “but I need some money for the train , I have got”
 1275 T2: er **sorry wait sorry , I I I I lost you** er OK alright er , let’s... but , but
 1276 I’ll need , OK , alright , **continue , “but I’ll need”**
 1277 S11: “but I’ll need some money for the train fare”
 1278 T2: alright
 1279 S11: “I have got hardly any left in the bank until my next cheque comes
 1280 through”
 1281 T2: OK , alright , **S10**

In Extract 65, the students were taking turns to answer questions from an exercise in the students’ course book. While one of the students (S11) was answering a question from the exercise in line 1274, the teacher lost track of what S11 was saying. Hence, the teacher performed a directive in line 1275 to cause the student to pause and wait for the teacher. S11’s negative face was redressed via the expression “sorry” in the directive. The teacher’s reason for apologising could be attributed to the imposition of her directive, which was rather abrupt and interruptive.

4.2.3.7 Nominalising

Nominalising involves converting another part of speech into a noun or a clause into a noun phrase. Nominalisation, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), disassociates the speaker and the hearer from the action in the directive. This strategy occurred in only 1.6% of all teachers’ negative politeness strategies but not at all in the students’.

Nominalising occurred only in teacher requirements in the form of conversion of verbs to gerunds.

Extract 66

- 523 T1: in a formal letter you don't write direct questions OK? , no direct
524 questions we are going to learn how to not to write direct questions OK?
525 , can I have a cup of tea that is very direct **so how would you change**
526 **this to indirect question?**
- 527 S1: can I have a
- 528 T1: no that is direct can I have again , OK going to going to , again I
529 dropped it , **the yellow box at the bottom here , this side** , OK , now
530 where's the café , instead of asking "where's the café?" you can write "
531 , do you think if you could tell me where the café is?" OK? , that kind of
532 question , don't write where's the cafe
- 533 S1: yeah yeah yeah , I know do you think I can have a cup of coffee?
- 534 T1: ((laughs)) OK **so no direct questions in your in your formal letter**
535 **OK?** , is the café open? , could you please tell me whether the café is
536 open , **now everybody looking at the first direct question , "where's**
537 **the café?" , and how it is changed** , "do you think if you could tell me
538 where the café is" the "is" is at the very end , can you see that? , "where
539 is the café?" , but the "is" is going at the very end so you need to change
540 the structure of your question as well , can follow? ...

In Extract 66, the teacher was explaining the use of indirect questions for a formal letter writing activity in the students' course book. To direct the students' attention to a section of a page in the course book, the teacher produced a directive in lines 528-529. The teacher mitigated the directive by converting the verb "go" into the gerund "going". When the teacher desired to direct the students' attention to another part of the page, she issued another directive in lines 536-537 and she softened the directive by changing the verb "look" to the gerund "looking". The teacher's nominalising changed the actions in the directives to objects and detached both the speaker and the hearer from the actions, thus decreasing the threat posed by the directives.

4.3. Summary

In conclusion, more directives were produced by the teachers compared to the students possibly due to socialisation and education. The type of directive produced most frequently by the teachers was requirements, followed by questions, prohibitives, advisories, permissives and requestives. These directives were utilised for the pedagogical purposes of organising and controlling classroom activities, prompting

students, guiding students towards self-discovery of knowledge, assessing and offering feedback to students, acting as a resource to students and enhancing teacher-student relationships.

The students produced four types of directives, namely questions, requestives, advisories and permissives. These directives were employed by the students to achieve the pedagogical goals of acquiring previously unknown information, acquiring repetition of a preceding utterance, verifying presumptions, offering suggestions and enhancing teacher-student relationships.

In producing directives, three types of politeness strategies were utilised by the teachers and the students, namely positive politeness, bald on record and negative politeness. The factors of power, social distance, imposition and type of directive being realised determined the teachers' and the students' choice of politeness strategies in performing directives.

Positive politeness was both the teachers' and the students' most frequently used politeness strategy in the realisation of directives. The positive politeness strategies employed by the teachers and the students were using in-group identity indicators, using first-person plural pronouns, using proximal demonstratives and unclear references, giving reasons and avoiding disagreement. Using in-group identity indicators was both the teachers' and the students' most frequently used positive politeness strategy. However, avoiding disagreement was the teachers' least favoured positive politeness strategy and using proximal demonstratives and unclear references was the students'.

The bald on record strategy was the teacher's second most frequently used politeness strategy although it was the students' least frequently used one. This strategy was found in all types of teacher directives and student directives with the exception of student permissives.

Negative politeness was the politeness strategy that the teachers used least frequently while it was the politeness strategy that the students used second most frequently. The negative politeness strategy utilised most frequently by the teachers was hedging, followed by using indirect speech acts, minimising the imposition of the directive, impersonalising the speaker and the hearer, apologising and nominalising. On the contrary, the negative politeness strategy utilised most frequently by the students was giving deference, followed by hedging.