

**AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED ON  
WARNINGS IN PUBLIC PLACES AT BENGKULU CITY**



**THESIS**

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MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF BENGKULU**

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**AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES USED ON WARNINGS  
IN PUBLIC PLACES AT BENGKULU CITY**

**UNDERGRADUATE THESIS**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of  
English Education**



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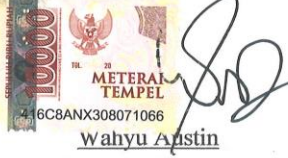
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## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

### MOTTO

Chill Until your calm down

(Wahyu Austin)

"I, Giorno Giovanna, have a dream!"

(Giorno Giovanna)

### DEDICATION

With all the struggle, sacrifice, love, hope, and gratitude, I dedicate this thesis to:

❖ Dengan penuh rasa syukur dan cinta, karya ini saya persembahkan untuk kedua orang tua tercinta, Bapak Ahmat Sya'fei dan Ibu Rabima. terima kasih atas segala doa, kasih sayang, pengorbanan, dukungan, serta kesabaran yang tiada henti diberikan kepada saya dari kecil hingga dewasa pada saat ini. tanpa bimbingan dan perjuangan kalian, saya tidak akan mampu sampai pada titik ini. semoga karya sederhana ini menjadi salah satu bentuk bakti, kebanggaan, dan ungkapan terima kasih saya kepada Ayah dan Ibu yang selalu menjadi sumber kekuatan dalam setiap langkah hidup saya.

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The author realizes that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly welcomed for future improvement.

Bengkulu, 21 February 2026

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Wahyu Austin

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#### ABSTRACT

**Wahyu Austin, 2026.** "An Analysis of Politeness Strategies Used in Warnings in Public Places in Bengkulu City". Thesis, English Education Study Program Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. Supervisor: Drs. Epi Wadison, M.Pd.

This study aims to identify the politeness strategies used in warning signs in various public places in Bengkulu City. Warnings in public spaces are a crucial element of the linguistic landscape that function to regulate social behavior and ensure public safety. Based on the politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), this research employed a descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected through field observations and photographic documentation at several strategic locations, including roads, shopping centers, universities, and other public service facilities in Bengkulu City. A total of 43 warning signs were identified and analyzed based on their context and linguistic strategies. The findings reveal that four politeness strategies are used, namely Bald on-record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off-record. The Bald on-record strategy is the most dominant with 29 instances, followed by Negative Politeness (7 instances), Positive Politeness (5 instances), and Off-record (2 instances). The dominance of the Bald on-record strategy indicates that the creators of warning signs in Bengkulu City prioritize efficiency and clarity of instructions, particularly in urgent situations related to public safety. In contrast, other politeness strategies are used selectively to maintain social relations and minimize the imposition in certain service contexts.

**Keywords:** Politeness Strategies, Warnings, Public Places, Bengkulu City.

## ABSTRAK

**Wahyu Austin, 2026.** An analysis of politeness strategies used on warnings in public places at Bengkulu city. " Skripsi, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. Pembimbing: Drs. Epi Wadison, M.pd.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi strategi kesantunan yang digunakan dalam tanda peringatan di berbagai tempat umum di Kota Bengkulu. Peringatan di ruang publik merupakan elemen krusial dari lanskap linguistik yang berfungsi untuk mengatur perilaku sosial dan menjamin keselamatan. Berdasarkan teori kesantunan dari Brown dan Levinson (1987), penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi lapangan dan dokumentasi fotografi di beberapa lokasi strategis, termasuk jalan raya, pusat perbelanjaan, universitas, dan fasilitas pelayanan publik lainnya di Kota Bengkulu. Sebanyak 43 data peringatan diidentifikasi dan dianalisis berdasarkan konteks dan strategi linguistiknya. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat empat strategi kesantunan yang digunakan, yaitu: *Bald on-record*, *Positive Politeness*, *Negative Politeness*, dan *Off-record*. Strategi *Bald on-record* menjadi yang paling dominan dengan 29 data, diikuti oleh *Negative Politeness* (7 data), *Positive Politeness* (5 data), dan *Off-record* (2 data). Dominansi strategi *Bald on-record* menunjukkan bahwa pembuat tanda peringatan di Kota Bengkulu memprioritaskan efisiensi dan kejelasan instruksi, terutama dalam situasi mendesak yang berkaitan dengan keselamatan publik. Sebaliknya, strategi kesantunan lainnya digunakan secara selektif untuk menjaga hubungan sosial dan meminimalkan beban paksaan dalam konteks layanan tertentu.

**Kata Kunci:** Strategi Kesantunan, Peringatan, Tempat Umum, Kota Bengkulu.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

Warnings displayed in public places such as highways, airports, or narrow alleys are messages intended to be conveyed by the writer to the reader or public places user. Warnings are notices or signs intended to inform people about potential dangers, risks, or actions to avoid for safety, health, or property. Warnings can take the form of sentences, symbols, signs, or labels on products and the environment, intended to increase public awareness and prevent accidents or losses. Effective communication is crucial for delivering safety information to the public, helping to mitigate risks and encourage injury-preventing behaviors (Wogalter et al., 2020).

According to Santosa (2019), texts in public places serve communicative functions, often aiming to regulate behavior, provide warnings, or promote social values in specific contexts. Warnings in public spaces represent a critical element of the linguistic landscape, acting as a bridge of communication between the authorities (writers) and the general public (readers) to regulate social behavior (Gorter & Cenoz, 2023). warnings serve to alert individuals to potential dangers or concerns about undesirable behaviors that frequently occur in those areas. Warnings in public places are not only informative but also serve as persuasive tools that can influence the mindset of public places users. example of a Warning is: *“Marilah kita menjaga*

*kesehatan demi masa depan yang cerah /Let's take care of our health for a beautiful future.”*

This Warning commonly found in the hospital as a health Campaign usually found in the front of the hospital. The warning carries a deep meaning, which is that if you want to have a beautiful future, you must take care of your health. The warning uses an inclusive imperative sentence, which functions to advising readers. In this context, it addresses people in public places specifically hospital visitors encouraging them to take care of their health. The sentence “Mari Kita /Let’s” invited the readers to join with the Writer in a shared of goal which is to have a “beautiful future”, The warning also includes the word “*Our*” to grow a sense of the similarity about healthy, This warning not only serves as an informative message but also as a persuasive tool, creating a positive impression that reduces social distance, builds solidarity, and conveys politeness.

Politeness in communication both oral and written is a way for people to be accepted in social interactions. It involves how people write warnings in public places to show respect to the readers. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness is a way of communicating that protects the readers’s feelings so that they feel respected, not embarrassed, and not offended. They are 4 strategies Bald on-record, Positive politeness, Negative politeness, and the last Off-record. One of the politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson is called positive politeness strategies in warning signs. Positive politeness strategies in warning signs is used to express friendliness, concern, and respect toward the reader. In the context of warning messages, the "readers" refers to the users of public places. An example of this can be seen in the warning message mentioned above. The use of more positive language makes the message easier to accept and can increase compliance and receptiveness. This becomes even more effective when the message is delivered with a clear and assertive tone. (Kronrod, Grinstein, and Shuval 2022). Thus, warnings written with politeness strategies in warning signs are in

accordance with Brown and Levinson's theory because they function to attract positive face readers while conveying the message persuasively.

In Bengkulu City, the warnings displayed come in various forms; some are positive, as mentioned above, while others are off-record, where the message sounds quite sarcastic. Sarcasm can be ironic, and it is clear that users of sarcasm can hurt someone's feelings through language, whether in oral or written form (Hasanah, Rahim, and Syamsuri 2021). such as equating humans with animals or using small insinuations. This diversity usually emerges because the warnings previously written were perceived as less effective. Delivering messages creatively can enhance the appeal of a message, making it more persuasive (Gibbs and Izzett (2005) as cited in (Knoblock n.d.). Irony can help people in public spaces navigate social boundaries and convey sensitive messages without triggering physical confrontation. (Burgos, Politico, and Vergara 2025).

Previous research on the uses politeness Strategy in public places has been explored in various contexts. Although the previous research didn't gave the special spotlight about Warning Politeness in public places. (Mubarok, Hayati, and Haristiani 2024). Research about politeness sigh on public train transportation in japan, the researcher boundary places is limited to public train transportation in japan. (Lestari 2023)Analysis of politeness strategy using on learning English language in SMP 2 Tanon, The focus of this study is students' politeness strategies as independent variables and the English learning process as dependent variables. This study also found various types of politeness strategies used by students during the English learning process.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Based on the background that has been explained above, the question is.

1. What are politeness strategies in warnings displayed in public places in Bengkulu city

### **1.3 Objection of the research**

Based on the research questions stated above, the objectives of this study is. to identify politeness strategies use in Warnings displayed at public places in Bengkulu City.

### **1.4 Limitation of the research**

the researcher limits on this study is the reseacher focused on analyzing various type of the politeness strategies warnings display In the public places of Bengkulu city based on brown and levinson (1987)

### **1.5 Significance of the research**

This research is conducted as a means to apply the knowledge of discourse analysis that has been previously studied in the earlier semester. Furthermore, this research aims to inform students about politeness strategies in warnings, based on the theory used for students studying discourse.

### **1.6 Definition of key Terms**

#### **1. Warning**

A written or visual message displayed in public areas (e.g., highways, hospitals) aimed at informing, reminding, or directing people's behavior regarding potential dangers or rules.

#### **2. Politeness Strategy**

A systematic method proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) to maintain the "face" (self-image) of the reader and mitigate Face Threatening Acts (FTA) in communication.

#### **3. Bald on-Record**

A strategy involving direct and explicit communication without attempts to soften the message. It uses imperative and assertive language to prioritize maximum efficiency and clarity in urgent situations.

#### 4. **Positive Politeness**

A strategy that emphasizes solidarity and minimizes social distance. It utilizes inclusive and friendly language, such as collective pronouns ("*Kita*"), inclusive imperatives ("*Mari*," "*Ayo*"), or kinship terms ("*Anakku*"), to build shared responsibility

#### 5. **Negative Politeness**

A strategy that respects the reader's autonomy and desire for freedom from imposition. It uses formal and respectful language characterized by polite markers or hedges (e.g., "*Mohon*," "*Harap*," "*Please*") to soften the command.

#### 6. **Off-Record**

An indirect strategy where the message is delivered through hints or metaphors rather than explicit statements. It uses ironic or sarcastic language (e.g., "*Hanya anjing yang buang sampah di sini*") to trigger the reader's conscience and social shame.

#### 7. **Discourse Analysis**

A branch of linguistics focused on how language is used in texts and social contexts, specifically how messages are structured and interpreted by readers in a real-world environment.