

**A STUDY OF POLITENESS STRATEGIES  
IN THE OPENING SPEECHES DELIVERED BY  
LEADERS AT ASEAN SUMMITS**

**PhD DISSERTATION**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with linguistic politeness strategies employed in twelve opening speeches, ten by ASEAN leaders and two by American leaders, made at the openings of ASEAN summits. The study aims to investigate the politeness strategies used in each speech act of the speech of each leader and to identify the similarities and differences in the choice of politeness strategies among ASEAN leaders and between ASEAN leaders and American leaders. The data were collected from the speeches obtained from the internet (<https://asean.org/asean/asean-structure/asean-summit/>). The descriptive qualitative research design was applied in this study. The data were analysed using Speech Act Theory by Searle (1979) and Politeness Theory by Brown and Levinson (1987). The findings showed that assertives and expressives were two common speech acts types and most leaders made assertives more than other speech act types. In general, in all speech acts types, ASEAN leaders preferred negative politeness, while American leaders preferred positive politeness. However, positive politeness was also abundantly used, especially in the assertives. The use of negative politeness was more significant in the directives of every speech. In the use of politeness output strategies, the variety of choice differed from one individual to another. Among them, PPS7 was most frequently used, followed by NPS7 in every speech. The use of NPS2 and NPS5 stood next to these in the speeches of ASEAN leaders. But in the speech of US leader (1), the use of NPS2 and PPS2 followed NPS7 and in that of US leader (2), PPS3 and PPS15 followed NPS7. All these findings showed that not only context and the types of speech acts but also the type of speeches, their purposes and values and principles of the organization the speaker represents influence the choice of politeness strategies. One's linguistic background and culture may also have an impact on it. This thesis will help teachers and students to further enrich their knowledge of pragmatics and also contribute to those who are working in any career that requires them to prepare and deliver speeches, especially to those whose profession has to deal with diplomatic and international relations.