

The Element of Politeness in Novel *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

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Abstract

The objective of this study were to analyze the type of politeness principle used and how the politeness principle use in the novel written by Stephen Chbosky. The data source used in this research is The Perks of Being a wallflower novel. In analyzing the data, the writer used a qualitative descriptive research method through a sociopragmatic approach. The data were obtained by using reading, collecting, and analyzing techniques and to classify the politeness principle in the novel by Geoffrey Leech theory. The result of this research were 28 utterance that contain maxim of politeness principle where 6 utterance of tact maxim, 2 utterance of generosity maxim, 5 utterances of approbation maxim, 5 utterances of modesty maxim, 6 utterance of agreement maxim and 4 utterance of sympathy maxim. Furthermore, the characters use the politeness by follow measurement of the pragmatic scale to express their politeness. Those pragmatic scale are the cost benefit scale, the optionally scale, indirectness scale and social distance scale.

Keywords: Politeness; maxim; utterance.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The language used in communication has a social function as a tool for establishing relationships between humans. Without language, it is impossible for humans to interact with other people in everyday life because language can express feelings, desires, and opinions. This means that language makes it easier to convey the meaning of an information or idea with expressions, emotions, or feelings. Language is shaped by the environment, thus language is a system of symbols or sound symbols that represent meanings related to real-life situations and experiences.

One of the most obvious characteristics of language in expressing human social characteristics expressed in speech is politeness. Basically politeness is something that takes into account other people's feelings about how they should be treated interactionally when they are involved in a conversation including behaving in a way that shows proper attention to the social status of their interactions and social relationships, conversation including behaving in a way that shows proper attention to the social status of their interactions and social relationships

The speech situation involves several aspects, including speaker and listener, the context of the speech itself, and the purpose of the speech. Speaking usually involves an element of politeness. In principle, politeness relates to the relationship between two participants and can be called the same as yourself and others. The principle of politeness and Two participants in the conversation are self and others. Features From the politeness principle, speakers are encouraged to express themselves in politeness, make both parties feel respectable and get a good impression from others. The principle of politeness is generally expressed in two aspects, namely: reduce the expression of immodesty in faith and increase the expression of humility is a kind of faith.

According to Leech in his book (2014:131-139) advances his concept that in conversation, we must not only adhere to the Conversational Principles, but also to the Politeness Principles. It is made up of the following qualities: tact, generosity, approval, modesty, agreement, and sympathetic maxim.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical review about politeness principle would be explained in this chapter.

2.1 Previous Study

“Politeness Strategies of Main Character ‘The Descendants’ Movie Directed by Alexander Payne” (Harmoko, 2016) the writer found some words and expression that indicated impoliteness, such as fuck, damn, goddamn, shit, tampon, spaz, retarded, dope, stupid, hell, chicken-head, half pipe, motherless whore, and suck.

“An Analysis of Politeness Strategies used by Deddy Corbuzier in Hitam Putih Talkshow” (Selvia & Marlina) this results finding that the host of Hitam Putih Talkshow used four types of politeness strategies with different presentation. The most dominant politeness strategy used was positive politeness with 59%. Another dominant politeness strategy used was Bald on Record(18%), negative politeness(15%) and off record (9%).

“Strategie Kesantunan Positif dalam Tindak Tutar pada Novel ‘Bidadari-Bidadari Surga’ Karya Tere Liye” (Tadjuddin, 2017) These findings indicate that Tere Liye's novel Bidadari-Bidadari Heaven contains a positive politeness strategy. The strategy of positive politeness includes 15 positive politeness strategies and in the form of 39 kinds of mannerisms spoken by the characters of the story.

“Maxim of Politeness on Alice in Wonderland Movie” (Widyaningsih & Hastuti, 2018) The results show that Alice in Wonderland film consists of Maxim proposed by Leech such as generosity, wisdom, approval, courtesy, approval, and sympathy.

“The Analysis of Richard a Vias Never on Wednesday based on Brown and Levinson Politeness Strategies” (Geramosiva & Timur, 2020) it was found that there are 4 politeness strategies in this play, namely bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategy. There is no don't-do-the-act strategy in this play because each character keeps talking and not being silent.

“The Investigation of Politeness Principle and Strategies Used in Akeelah and The Bee Movie” (Hikmawati et al., 2021) The results of this study are: first, the main characters apply tact maxim, approbation maxim, tact maxim, modesty maxim, and sympathy maxim in their utterances and the most dominant type used is agreement maxim. Second, in implementing strategy politeness, the main character applies bald-on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off-record in their speech.

2.2 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a discipline of linguistics that focuses on the structure of language from the outside. To put it another way, it learns how the linguistic unit is employed in communication. It is intimately linked to semantics. Both semantics and pragmatics are concerned with a statement's meaning. However, a closer examination reveals a significant difference between them. Crystal (2001: 102) explain that “The focus of the modern subject (semantic) is on the way people relate words to each other within the framework of their language” whereas, “Pragmatics is the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language”.

In simple explanation, semantic focuses on the meaning of a statement or sentence by concerning to the structural words. While pragmatics sees the meaning not only from

structural words, but also by involving the conversation environments, such as topic, setting, social status, situation (formal or informal).

According to Yule (2006:03) "Pragmatics is a concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener." He argues that there are four definition about pragmatics:

- a. Pragmatics is the study of the speakers meaning.
- b. Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning.
- c. Pragmatics is the study of how more gets communicated than is said.
- d. Pragmatics is the study of the expression of relative distance.

From Yule's idea about pragmatics, it can assume that pragmatics is emphasizing in personal awareness about the other implicit purpose in communication process. Both speakers and hearer must aware the conversational environment such as social status, topic of conversation, setting and cultural roles in interaction.

2.3 Politeness Principle

It is best to have modest behavior as firm concepts such as ethical ideas and modest social conduct that are found in cultures. Through an attitude of politeness, one may be called wise, gracious, sympathetic, and humble. It is time people realize if participants of interaction are the norms and principles that exist in large societies. Politeness relates to culture and values of a relative nature in a society. An utterance is polite, in a sense, but elsewhere it may be viewed as disrespectful. People should understand and be able to put them conscious selves where people communicate. Humans are social creatures, so it is reasonable for any human to understand the social aspects of everyday life.

According to Watts (2003:10) Politeness in pragmatics differs from everyday understanding and focuses uniquely on polite language in learning verbal language. One should be aware of both the co-text and context as well as culture as politeness may differ from one to another.

While Brown and Levinson (1987:61) state that Politeness is an attempt to save other people's faces. Leech (2014: 131) introduces the Politeness Principles which has a purpose to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place. There are two ways to formulate a politeness language. First, by minimizing (other things be equal) the expression of impolite beliefs. Second, by maximizing (other things being equals) the expressions of polite belief.

Based on those theories, we can conclude that politeness is a social tool which has an essential role to maintenance a good relationship between speaker and hearer. Furthermore, politeness is expected to keep the balance of social equilibrium in a society.

The Politeness Principle is a series of maxims, which Geoffrey Leech has proposed as a way of explaining how politeness operates in conversational exchanges. Leech defines politeness as a type of behaviour that allows the participants to engage in a social interaction in an atmosphere of relative harmony. Leech explains that politeness of language basically has to pay attention to the six maxims of politeness namely, tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim.

- a. Tact Maxim "Minimize the expression trust that implies loss to others but maximize the expression of trust that implies benefits to others".
- b. Generosity Maxim is "minimize the expression of cost to other; maximize the expression of benefit to other"
- c. Approbation Maxim "minimize the expression of belief which express dispraise of other; maximize the expression of belief which express approval of other".

- d. Modesty Maxim “minimize the expression of praise of self, maximize the expression of dispraise of self.”
- e. Agreement Maxim “Minimize the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximize the expression of agreement between self and other”
- f. Sympathy Maxim “Minimize antipathy with others and maximize sympathy with other”.

3. METHODS

The data was collected from reading the novel repeatedly and carefully more than once and under lined the important words, sentence which are related to the research. In analyzing the problem this research used descriptive qualitative method, by applying six maxim politeness principle by Leech theory through sociopragmatic approach.

4. RESULTS

In this part the research shows the data result. The data result was gotten from the novel.

4.1 Types of Politeness Principle Used by The Characters.

4.1.1 Tact Maxim

There are 6 data found in the use of tact maxim. One of the examples below:

Data 1:

That was enough for my dad and everybody else, and I didn't even have to lie. Luckily, the attention was turned off me when my mother said what she likes to say when we're all together celebrating something.

“who's in the mood for ice cream?”

Everyone was except for my sister. I think she was worried about the “freshman fifteen.”

Based on the sentence above, Mom utterance “who's in the mood for ice cream” according to Mom's question, she asked if anyone wanted to eat ice cream? In this question, she wants treats everyone, which means she minimizes the costs to others and maximizes the benefits to others. In line with the definition of the tact maxim, so Mom's question can be called doing the tact maxim.

4.1.2 Generosity Maxim

There are 2 data found in the use of generosity maxim. One of the examples below:

Data 2:

I looked around, and I saw that Sam and Patrick had left with Brad. That's when Bob started passing around food.

“Would you like a brownie”

“Yes, thank you.”

Based on the conversation, Bob utterance “Would you like a brownie” he giving his brownies to Charlie. It certainly reduces the benefit of Bob because he has to share the brownies to Charlie. The utterance has complied with the generosity maxim.

4.1.3 Approbation Maxim

There are 5 data found in the use of approbation maxim. One of the examples below:

Data 3:

I started crying a little bit. I actually think his girlfr was, too. But Bill wasn't. He looked very solid. I just remember wanting to hug him. But I've never done that before, and I guess Patrick and girls and family don't count. I didn't say anything for a while because I didn't know what to say.

*So, finally I just said, "You're the best teacher I ever had."
And he said, "Thank you."*

Based on the conversation, the speaker has obey to approbation maxim, which can be seen "*You're the best teacher I ever had*", the speaker gave his teacher a good compliment.

4.1.4 Modesty Maxim

There are 5 data found in the use of modesty maxim. One of the examples below:

Data 4:

*Bill looked at me looking at people, and after class, he asked me what I was thinking about, and I told him. He listened and he nodded and made "affirmation" sounds. When I had finished, his face changed into a "serious talk" face.
"well, are you dancing at these dances"?
"I'm not a very good dancer"*

The utterance "*I'm not a very good dancer*" above can be categorized as the use of from the modesty maxim because he minimize praises himself and maximizes dispraised to himself. He maximized dispraise of himself it against by saying he is not a very good dancer.

4.1.5 Agreement Maxim

There are 6 data found in the use of agreement maxim. One of the examples below:

Data 5:

*She asked me if I wanted to invite Sam and Patrick over for dinner sometime after the holidays are over because my mom gets nervous enough as it is during the holidays. **I called Sam and Patrick and they said they would.***

Utterances that show the agreement maxim can be seen in the utterance "*I called Sam and Patrick and they said they would.*" explains that there has been an agreement between Sam and Patrick to fulfill the dinner call with Charlie's mother.

4.1.6 Sympathy Maxim

There are 4 data found in the use of sympathy maxim. One of the examples below:

Data 6:

*I try to think of my family as a reason for me being this way, especially after my friend Michael stopped going to school one day last spring and we heard Mr.Vaughn's voice on the loudspeakers.
"Boys and girls. **I regret** to inform you that one of our students has passed on. We will hold a memorial service for Michael Dobson assembly this Friday."*

In Mr.Vaughn's utterance above, it is seen that he expressed his sympathy for what had happened to Michael Dobson by using the words "*Regret*". Furthermore, "*Regret*" Mr.Vaughn's expressed that he is also saddened and condolences for the death of Michael Dobson. Mr.Vaughn's antipathy between self and others and maximize sympathy between oneself and others so that the speech can be categorized as the use of sympathy maxim.

4.2 How The Character Use Their Politeness Principle.

4.2.1 The Indirectness Scale

I don't know how long my mom was on the phone because I couldn't stay at the table and listen. I went into my room and read. I wasn't hungry anymore anyway. I just wanted to be in a quiet place. After a little while, my mom came into the room.

Home in thirty minutes. She asked me if anything was wrong, and I knew that she didn't mean my sister, and I knew that she didn't mean she and Dad fighting on the phone because that stuff just happens sometimes. She just notice that I looked very sad today, and she didn't think it was my frineds leaving because I looked okay yesterday when I came back from sledding.

"Is it your aunt Helen?"

It was the way she said it that started me feeling.

"Please don't do this to yourself, Charlie."

Based on speech above is more polite, according to the indirectness scale. The indirectness scale refers to the directness or indirectness of speech, according to its definition. The more direct the speech, the more insulting the speech would be perceived. The more indirect the discourse, the more polite it is, and likewise. According to the utterance above, the speaker's show what is better for the communication partner with a more polite speech. Using polite utterance gives the impression that the address is pleasant. Thus, if the utterance above is associated with the cost-benefit scale, it becomes more polite.

4.2.2 The Cost-benefit Scale

I looked around, and I saw that Sam and Patrick had left with Brad. That's when Bob started passing around food.

"Would you like a brownie"

"Yes, thank you."

According to definition of cost-benefit. The more the speech harms the speaker, the more polite the speech will be. On the other hand, the more the speech benefits the speaker, the more disrespectful the speech will be. The speech above uses a cost benefit scale, because the benefits to the listener are higher than the costs, the speech is said to be polite. The speech above has an impact on listeners that would you like a brownie, makes listeners feel respected. Minimizing benefits for self, as well as maximizing benefits for others is an attitude of politeness.

4.4.3 The Optionally Scale

One boy has it particularly hard. I won't tell you his name. But I will tell you all about him. He has very nice brown hair, and he wears it long with ponytail. I think he will regret this when he looks back on his life. He is always making mix tapes for my sister with very specific theme. One was called "autumn Leaves." He included many songs by the Smiths. He even hand-colored the cover. After the movie he rented was over, and he left, my sister gave me the tape.

"Do you want this Charlie?"

Based on the utterance above. The discourse will be more polite if it permits the speaker or speech partner to choose a variety of free options. The utterance above comprises a choice scale in which the speaking partner is offered the option of accepting or declining the speaker's gift. Because the speaker increases praise and reduces dispraise to the listener, using the approbation maxim helps the speaker be nice to the listener.

4.4.4 The Authority Scale

I would have explained that I didn't want to start going on dates again and I was just doing these things as a friend, but I knew it would have only made things worse, so I didn't

J just said "I'm sorry"

The authority scale refers to the social status relationship between the speaker and the hearer involved in the utterance. The farther the distance of authority between the speaker and the speech partner, the speech used will tend to be more polite and vice versa, the closer the distance of authority between the speaker and the speech partner, the speech used will tend to be more disrespectful. In this speech there is a scale of authority. The meaning of deepest apologies seems to be respectful to the other person. Thus, the utterance is conveyed politely the use of politeness principle brings impact to the addressee to speak politely. Maximizing dispraise to self makes the hearer being pleasant and pleasure.

4.4.5 The Social-Distance Scale

*Sam told me during the game that they were going over to their friend's house later for a party. Then, she asked me if I wanted to go, and **I said yes because I had never been to a party before.** I had seen one at my house, though.*

The politeness of the utterance above can be seen from the pragmatic scale used. The statement above is indirect because Charlie did not say directly that he did not agree with the argument. Using indirectness will make the speech more polite. The conversation above happened to Sam and Charlie. Charlie has authority and can speak impolitely, but he doesn't show his strength but shows equality. When he feels equal to others, he can show solidarity. Thus, the social distance scale is also used. From the utterance above, it implies that to show polite speech, we can use the maxim of agreement. Minimize disagreement between self and other, maximize agreement between self and other is an attitude of politeness.

5. DISCUSSION

Politeness principles are used by characters in the novel. These principles are Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim. Twenty-eight utterances from the characters in the novel which could represent politeness principles are identified and classified. Tact maxim 6 utterance, generosity maxim 2 utterance, approbation maxim 5 utterance, modesty maxim 5 utterance, agreement maxim 6 utterance, and sympathy maxim 4 utterance. Based on these data, it can be concluded that tact maxim and agreement maxim is the most and the dominant type of politeness principle used by the characters.

Tact maxim used to maximize benefit to others while reducing cost to self. The purpose of behavior that benefits the others is carried out so that it is considered polite and maintains the feelings of the hearers. The characters use tact maxim when they help each other because they want to keep their relationship pleasant. (In data 1), where the utterance is in accordance with the use of tact maxim. Speakers minimize costs to others and maximize benefit to others.

The generosity maxim give a high value to other's wants, the generosity maxim is commissive it is like: offers, invitation, and promises is other-oriented expressing positives politeness. (In Data 2), the utterance is in accordance with the principle of using generosity maxim that speakers maximize costs to self and minimize benefit to self by offering something. The speakers who tries to add burden to self for the sake of other people, then he fulfills the generosity maxim. The purpose of this maxim is to show kindness to the hearers.

The approbation maxim it is assumed that people those who are polite in language are those who always try to give appreciation. (In Data 3), the speaker give a good

compliment to the hearer. The purpose of this maxim aims to show the respect to the hearers. In modesty maxim the speaker should minimize self-praise and maximize dispraise on self. (In Data 4), the utterance can be categorized as the use of modesty maxim because the speaker minimize praise of self and maximize dispraise of self. This maxim aims to keep the speaker humble and not show the impression of being arrogant towards hearers.

The agreement maxim make a disagreement between of speaker with other is not often to occur, and make an agreement between of speaker with other as much as possible. It means this maxim is agreeing some ideas from others and applicable in assertive and avoiding disagreement. (In Data 5) explain that there has been an agreement between speaker and the hearers. The purpose of this maxim in order to respect to the hearer. The hearer will not show direct rejection to the speakers. Sympathy maxim used to maximizing sympathy between self and other while limiting hostility between self and other is. This maxim is applicable in assertive, it is like: congratulating, others and expressing a condolence. (In Data 6), the utterance can be categorized as the use of sympathy maxim because speaker expressed his condolence to the hearer. The purpose of this maxim to show feelings of compassion and affection to the hearer and understand the hearers feelings.

The data shows that the characters show their politeness by following pragmatics scales. The characters use cost-benefit scale when the benefit for the hearer is higher than the cost or the cost for the speaker is higher than the benefit. The optionality scale used when the speaker gives the addressee option to answer or responds his question. The indirectness scale operates when the speaker uses the indirectness utterance. The higher indirect utterance is the more polite. The authority scale operates between person who have power and the lower authority. Sometimes the lower authority is more polite to who has power. The social distance scale is used for equal participants to show their intimacy and solidarity. The use of a pragmatic scale aims to show the level of politeness in an utterance.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the result and discussion, the characters in the novel *“The Perks of Being a Wallflower”* use politeness maxim in communicating with other characters. It can be seen based on the results politeness maxim used by the characters in the novel are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim. There are 28 utterances that contain maxim of politeness principle where 6 utterances of tact maxim, 2 utterances of generosity maxim, 5 utterances of approbation maxim, 5 utterances of modesty maxim, 6 utterances of agreement maxim and 4 utterances of sympathy maxim. The character show their politeness by following some pragmatic scale such as the cost-benefit scale, the indirectness scale, the optionally scale, the authority scale and the social distance scale. The use of maxims of politeness principle such as tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim, is important to make a good behaviour in communication. Using maxims of politeness principle makes the utterances to be polite. When the speaker speaks politely, the addressee will be pleasant. Thus, the maxims of politeness principle are important to be applied in daily lives to produce and comprehend the polite utterances in communication.

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