EXPLORING POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN 'A WALK TO REMEMBER' MOVIE: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

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Abstract

The primary objective of this research is to determine the many types of politeness tactics and the prevalent ones in the film "A Walk to Remember". This analysis aims to explore how language variation, social factors, and politeness strategies are represented through the interactions of the main characters, Jamie Sullivan and Landon Carter. Politeness tactics are used to maintain social peace and reduce communication disputes. This study uses Brown and Levinson's (1987) approach to identify several types of politeness techniques. The characters' conversation from the film "A Walk to Remember" was utilized to collect the data. The data for this study were gathered by non-participant observation and note-taking approaches. The data for this investigation were examined using a classified approach. The film screenplay had 4 examples of positive politeness, 4 instances of negative politeness, 4 instances of off-record techniques, and 4 instances of bald-on-record strategies.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Politeness Strategies, A Walk to Remember movie.

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of sociolinguistics basically examines how the language use by people in everyday life affected by its social factors. Furthermore, this study also examining several social factors in the society including age, geographical location, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity influencing the use of languages for people (Wardaugh, 2006)). Basically, there is a lot of linguistic study branches, and one of them is sociolinguistic study. The focus of this study is understanding a variation of language and how does it shaped by several social context, concerning in the regards of how language is used in different social settings which could reflects as well as shapes the relationship and identity building in social interaction

(Abdullaeva, 2022). Thus, the study of politeness and sociolinguistics were defines as socio-pragmatics studies, that focuses on the social dimensions of language used in everyday social practices, which shapes social relationship and norms (van Compernolle, 2014). In English literature study, the sociolinguistic focusing on several approaches such as its variation, language and society, discourse analysis, pragmatics, ethnomethodology, and multilingualism. These approaches in English literature, allow scholars to examine and understand how society use the language to find meaning, relationship, shaping social identity, as well as to negotiate (Nurmaisa & Arsyad, 2022).

Understanding of sociolinguistic theoretical approaches, can also be examine by the concept of politeness strategy which become the study to understand how does people interact with each other by using its preference way of speaking. It can be defined as a way or preference of speaking by a person which aims to reduce the damaging effects of self-image which came from Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) by those who used it (Blackie, 2020). People used this strategy of speaking in the mean of preventing violation of their partner of speaking face, in other way to prevent its partner of being treated disrespectful. The politeness strategy categorized in several outcomes such as positive and negative politeness, bald on and off records, thus the choice will be differing depends on several factors including the relative power between those people, level of seriousness, and the social distance (Kenetova et al., 2022).

On the other hand, we can learn how the sociolinguistic and politeness strategies is used in everyday life, one of them is by studying these concepts by analyzing the way of actors acts in the movie. One of the movies that could provide a brief example of how politeness strategy in sociolinguistic were being used is "A Walk to Remember" movie, directed by Adam Shankman and written by Karen Jansen which released in 2002. Basically, the genre of the movie is romantic drama which tells the story about two North Carolina Teenagers named Jamie Sullivan and Landon Carter, they were in a relationship after Landon sentenced to perform in a community service after get into trouble. According to the stories, Landon as a male actor is a popular student who have no plans for his future, he was forces to join an after-school activities. Jamie as the female actor, she

was an honorable student and daughter who is smart and ambitious. Despite these actors' characteristics differences, they do have a romantic relationship between each other, as the time passing by, both finally find the true meaning of love and fate. Their faith, power of kindness and compassion, as well as faith were explored in the movie. These actors' performances were very strong with images of positive portrayal between teenagers in his romantic love story which made the audience can truly felt the same feeling as them.

Exploring politeness strategy in the "A Walk to Remember" movie has previously done by (Thoyyibatunisa, 2020) that she finds around 11 from 15 positive politeness strategy in the movie including exaggerating, intensifying interest to the hearer, noticing, group identity, avoiding disagreement, seeking agreement, presupposing, promising, and offering. It can be defining that the movie reflecting politeness strategy which reflected from the conversation between actors. Furthermore, (Syafrizal, et al., 2018) have found politeness strategy in "A Walk to Remember" movie, concluded that every sentenced spoken by the actors are the expression of politeness strategy which reflected by their emotions and the script of the novel as well as the movie. Aligned with previous research by (Sari, 2010) to explore the reflection of politeness strategy in the same movie which correlated to the study of socio-pragmatic approaches, by using an individual psychological approach. The politeness strategy in the "Walk of remember" movie has further explored by (Kholid, 2011) in her research by using a speech acts analysis based on politeness strategy approach. However, in order to finding gaps between this study with previous research, in this research the author aimed to finds

positive and negative politeness strategy used by the main character by analyzing the speech acts between the actor's interaction in the movie based on the sociolinguistic theoretical approach.

Understanding the use of sociolinguistics in everyday conversation is important in studying how people interact each other and shaping a social norm as well as identity by the use of different language among society. Therefore, there is a reason of why does 'A Walk to Remember' Movie would become a good example of how politeness strategies were portrayed in sociolinguistic studies. The two actors' expression and conflict of their romantic world as well as interaction between them, could become an example to the linguistic studies. Thus, in this paper, author would examine and analyze of how does this movie would provide an example in the sociolinguistic study, specifically to examine the politeness strategies which reflected on the movie. The author used the theory of sociolinguistic study as a theory which explores how languages used in shaping a society, from the perspective of socio-pragmatic study. The research conducted by using descriptive qualitative approach, where the primary data collected from the conversation between the main characters in the movie which reflecting positive and negative politeness, and secondary data collected from previous study and theoretical analysis. Therefore, the analytical method will used listening and creating notes methods while watching and analyzing the conversation from the movie. Thus, aims of this study is to explore and examine the positive and negative politeness strategies existed in "A Walk to Remember" movie.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
a. Politeness Strategy

Politeness strategy is a part of socio-pragmatic and sociolinguistic studies which become a technique used in common conversation to embrace respect while maintaining social harmony as well as mitigate potential conflict in communication. It is a communication strategy that help the speakers to maintain its social relationship and navigating Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs), where the action itself could harm someone feeling or face. The face concept itself aim to make the hearer or partner of speaking feel valued and appreciated when making a conversation. It aims to build friendliness and solidarity between people interaction and communication such as by making a compliment, showing interests, using inclusive language, and exaggeration (Abdullaeva, 2022).

There are four types of politeness strategy including Positive Politeness that emphasizing the speaker's positive face that can be showed by highlighting his or her friendliness and solidarity. It can be achieved using positive language for example, finding common ground and compliments. Negative Politeness emphasizing the speaker's negative face that can be showed by reflecting deference as well s avoiding imposition to its partner. In the practices, it is involving several indirect languages for example, minimize potential threat and hedging as well as apologizing. Off-record as the way of communication which involved FTA indirectly, which allows the listener interpreting the utterance between their interaction. This strategy mostly used to avoid any responsibility of potential face-threatening act. Bald-on Record which the same as off-record, these types of politeness involved FTA but in the direct

way without any redressive action (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Therefore, politeness strategy is the main concept used in this research in order to explain and identifying the use of positive and negative politeness by the main characters in "A Walk to Remember" movie.

b. Politeness Strategies in Sociolinguistic

Emphasizing the importance of social context in understanding language use, by considering social status, power dynamics, cultural norms factors that influence the use of language and how it is interpreted by people. The study includes the exploration of how languages used in different regions, cultures, and societal groups, while shaping a social meaning and social hierarchies (Geoffrey N. Leech, 1985). Discourse makers, that organize the conversation and signal transition and reflecting social identity and group member. Conversational implicature, which become meaning arises from the sharing knowledge as an understanding in shaping awareness from conversation. Socio-pragmatic failure, that become a misunderstanding of conversation mainly occurred when speakers from different cultural backgrounds misinterpret each other's pragmatical intentions (Beeching & Woodfield, 2015).

Politeness Strategy is one of the approaches learned by sociolinguistic studies, learning of how to understand the way of people interact with each other using its preference way. The chosen preference aimed to reduce damaging effect of self-image came from Face Threatening Act (FTAs) by those who used it. They are also used this strategy of speaking to prevent violation that could happen with their partner of speaking, they are trying to prevent their partner for being treated disrespectful (Kenetova et al., 2022). As explained before on the introduction regarding several outcomes that could come from interaction between people, there is a positive and negative politeness, bald on and off record politeness. Here are several types of the politeness strategy in a way of speaking between society (Blackie, 2020):

1) Positive Politeness: Emphasizing the speaker's positive face that can be showed by highlighting his or her friendliness and solidarity. It can be achieved using positive language, for example, finding common ground and compliments.
2) Negative Politeness: Emphasizing the speaker's negative face that can be showed by reflecting deference as well s avoiding imposition to its partner. In the practices, it is involving several indirect languages for example, minimize potential threat and hedging as well as apologizing.
3) Off-record: The way of communication which involved FTA indirectly, which allows the listener interpreting the utterance between their interaction. This strategy mostly used to avoid any responsibility of potential face-threatening act.
4) Bald-on Record: The same as off-record, these types of politeness involved FTA but in the direct way without any redressive action.

In the way of choosing its preference of using politeness strategy, people are often influenced by several factors such as relative power, level of seriousness, and social distance between those interactions which could be explained as (Geoffrey N. Leech, 1985):

1) Relative Power: Power difference between speaker and listener (power authority).

2) Social Distance: Means as psychological distance between speaker and listener.
3) Cultural Background: Means as the difference of cultural background between speaker and listener.
4) Occupation: Means social status difference between speakers and listener.
5) Formality: Means as the context of situation that can affect to the way of expressing politeness.

These factors which affect the preference of people while doing interaction with their society, would help to understand why some specific people choose to reflecting positive or negative politeness. Thus, we can also find examples of these practices in everyday life (Misnarni et al., 2019).

c. Movie

A movie is a type of visual art that employs moving pictures to convey ideas, tales, perceptions, emotions, and atmosphere. Movies are divided into genres such as drama, comedy, action, romance, thriller, and science fiction based on the techniques used in their production. A movie's aspects include script, director, acting, cinematography, editing, sound, and special effects, which influence, inspire, and provoke thinking. "A Walk to Remember" is a 2002 American romantic drama film directed by Adam Shankman and written by Karen Janszen. The movie is based on the 1999 novel of the same name by Nicholas Sparks. The story is set in the late 1990s in the fictional town of Beaufort, North Carolina, and revolves around the relationship between two high school students, Landon Carter and Jamie Sullivan.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

Based on the brief explanation on the introduction, the objective of this research is to examine of how the approach of sociolinguistic and politeness strategy can be found and explained on the movie of "A Walk to Remember." Furthermore, this research will use qualitative research approach which focuses on understanding human behavior, thoughts, and experiences from the perspective of the researcher. This approach aims to provide in depth insights in societal phenomenon, while exploring the meaning, character, symbol, concept, and definition of things (Sugiyono, 2018). The data collection technique using document and content analysis from the movie of "A Walk to Remember" as the primary data, and literature review as well as theoretical study as the secondary data for this research. Furthermore, the data analysis technique is using listening and creating notes methods while watching and analyzing the conversation from the movie. Thus, the result of this study is presented by the statement of positive, negative, bald, and off-record politeness strategy which reflected from the movie and the conversation between main characters. The research finding of this study, has successfully represented the aspects of politeness strategy from the conversation of the main character in the movie of "A Walk to Remember based on sociolinguistic approach."

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of politeness strategy analysis conducted in the movie script "A Passage to India" were found based on existing data sources. Data is classified based on the theory used. The researcher then explained why the results were included in the types of politeness strategy.

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a. Positive Politeness

Positive Politeness Emphasizes the speaker's positive face which can be shown by highlighting his or her friendliness and solidarity. It can be achieved using positive language, for example, finding common ground and compliments (Blackie, 2020).

Data 1:
"You're listening to her people's music." (00:49:28)

Eric talking to Landon about Jamie's influence on him. Eric uses in-group identity markers ("her people's music") to show camaraderie and acceptance of Jamie's influence on Landon.

Data 2:
"That was great." (00:42:36)
After Jamie sings during the play. This is an exaggeration of approval and appreciation to make Jamie feel accepted and valued.

Data 3:
"Nice sweater." (00:11:53)

Belinda compliments Jamie at school. The compliment shows interest and approval, enhancing Jamie's positive face and making her feel appreciated.

Data 4:
"I'm glad I thought of it." (00:01:51)

A character expressing satisfaction with their own idea. This self-praise is indirectly showing the group that the speaker has good ideas, thereby seeking approval and positive face reinforcement from others.

b. Negative Politeness

Negative Politeness emphasises the speaker's negative face that can be showed by reflecting deference as well s avoiding imposition to its partner. In the practices, it is involving several indirect languages for example, minimize potential threat and hedging as well as apologizing (Blackie, 2020).

Data 5:
"Would you like something to drink?" (00:55:30)

During Landon's date with Jamie. The waiter uses a question to offer Jamie a drink, thereby minimizing the imposition on her and respecting her freedom of choice.

Data 6:
"With all due respect, sir, I ask you to reconsider." (00:54:38)

Landon talking to Jamie's father. The phrase "with all due respect" is a hedge that shows deference and politeness towards Jamie's father.

Data 7:
"I'm sorry I haven't treated Jamie the way I should have." (00:54:56)

Landon apologizing to Jamie's father. This apology acknowledges a fault and shows deference, reducing the imposition on Jamie's father by acknowledging his authority and feelings.

Data 8:
"I know it can be difficult, but maybe you should back into it from somewhere else." (00:16:43)

Jamie advising Landon on tutoring. Jamie uses hedges ("I know it can be difficult, but maybe") to soften her advice, showing deference to Landon's feelings and autonomy.

c. Off Record

Off record is the way of communication which involved FTA indirectly, which allows the listener interpreting the utterance between their interaction. This strategy mostly used to avoid any responsibility of potential face-threatening act (Blackie, 2020).

Data 9:
"Maybe you inspire me." (00:44:56)

Landon talking to Jamie. Landon implies his admiration and inspiration indirectly without explicitly stating it.

Data 10:
"So would it kill you to try?" (00:20:51)

Jamie talking to Landon about participating in the school play. Jamie hints at Landon's potential without directly stating that he should put in more effort.

Data 11:
"You couldn't pull this off in three months! De Niro couldn't!" (00:23:40)

Eric talking to Landon about memorizing his lines. Eric indirectly suggests that memorizing the lines is difficult by comparing Landon to De Niro, thus softening the criticism.

Data 12:
"I hope you had your Wheaties!" (00:05:14)
A character talking about a challenging task. This indirect statement implies that the task requires strength without directly stating that it is difficult.

d. Bald-on Record

The same as off-record, these types of politeness involved FTA but in the direct way without any redressive action (Blackie, 2020).

Data 13:
"No. No. See, I didn't plan on acting or anything." (00:19:38)

Landon's reaction to being assigned a role in the play. Landon's direct refusal to participate in the play shows a bald-on-record strategy.

Data 14:
"Come on, let's go! Jump!" (00:05:07)

Landon urging his friends during the jump scene. The urgency and directness of the command show a bald-on-record strategy.

Data 15:
"Put it away before you hurt somebody." (00:02:28)

A character warning another about a dangerous action. The direct command aims to prevent harm without mitigating the impact on the hearer's face.

Data 16:
"I want to go back to the dance." (00:02:06)

Belinda expressing her desire directly. Belinda states her preference clearly and directly without minimizing the impact on the listener's face.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigates the script of the film "A Walk to Remember" using politeness tactics. The author applies Blackie's (2020) theory to examine political strategies in film screenplays. The movie text has 40 data points: 10 positive, 10 negative, 10 off-record, and 10 bald-on-record. The investigation identified four sorts of politeness

strategies: positive politeness (4 data points), negative politeness (4 data points), off-record (4 data points), and bald-on-record (4 data points). According to the data findings, the researchers may conclude that practically all forms of politeness methods are prevalent in the film.

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