POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN JOSH BOON'S *THE FAULT IN OUR STARS*: A PRAGMATICS

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Abstract

This research is a pragmatics study of the use of politeness strategies in Josh Boon's *The Fault in Our Star*. The research seeks to identify the types and to describe the realizations of politeness strategies.

This research employed qualitative approach as it explained the utterances in the movie which contained politeness strategies. The data were in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences in the context of the character's dialogues. The data were collected y following procedures such as watching the movie, checking the accuracy of the transcript, identifying the utterances containing politeness strategies, and compiling them into the data sheet. To conclude, the researcher involved peer review triangulation to verify the trustworthiness.

The results of the study show that four types of politeness strategies are applied. They are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record strategy. In term of realizations of politeness strategies, there are 20 realizations of politeness strategies. First, bald on record includes speaker and hearer no face redress, metaphorical urgency and task oriented realization. Second, there are 12 realizations of positive politeness. They are notice, attend to hearer, exaggerate, intensity interest to hearer, use in group identity marker speaker knowledge, seek agreement, avoid disagreement, joke, assert of presuppose, be optimistic, include both speaker and hearer in activity, give reason, assume/assert reciprocity. Third, negative politeness strategy is manifested in three realizations. They are conventionally be indirect, minimize imposition and apologize realizations. Last, off record is realized by 2 sub strategies. They are be ironic and rhetorical questions. Hence, there are some realizations that are not found in the conversation since there are some new characters included in this movie. Thus, it creates social distance and formal conversations between the characters.

Keywords: *pragmatic analysis, politeness strategies, The Fault in Our Stars*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini merupakan jenis penelitian pragmatic dari penggunaan politeness strategi di film The Fault in Our Star oleh Josh Boon's. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa jenis dan realisasi dari politeness strategi.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif seperti menjelaskan pengucapan dan maksut dari percakapan difilm yang mana berhubungan dengan politeness strategi. Data dalam bentuk kata-kata, frasa dan kalimat yang diambil dari percakapan karakter di film The Fault in Our Star. Data dikumpulkan berdasarkan ketentuan dan langkah-langkah seperti menonton film, memeriksa akurasi transcript, mengidentifikasi pengucapan yang berisi politeness setrategi, dan mengusun memasukannya kedalam table data. Sebagai kesimpulannya, penelitian ini melibatkan seorang peneliti ulang untuk dan pembimbing skripsi untuk mendapatkan keabsahan data.

Hasil dari penelitin ini menunjukan bahwa ada empat jenis strategi politeness yang digunakan difilm tersebut. Mereka adalah setrategi Bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness dan setrategi off record. Didalam realizasi dari setrategi politeness, ada 20 realisasi dari setrategi politeness. Pertama, bald on record berisi speaker and hearer no face redress, metaphorical urgency realization, task oriented. Kedua, ada realisasi dari positive politeness. Mereka adalah notice, attend to hearer, exaggerate, intensity interest to hearer, use in group identity marker speaker knowledge, seek agreement, avoid disagreement, joke, assert of presuppose, be optimistic, include both speaker and hearer in activity, give reason, assume/assert reciprocity. Ketiga, setrategi negative politenessis ada 3 realisasi yang ditemukan. Mereka adalah conventionally be indirect, minimize imposition dan realisasi apologize. Terakhir, setrategi off record menemukan dua realisaso. Mereka adalah be ironic dan rhetorical questions. Akantetapi, ada beberapa realisasi yang dari strategi politeness yang tidak dapat ditemukan di percakapan oleh karakter dari film The Fault in Our Star karna ada beberapa karakter yang membuat jarak social antara karakter.

Kata Kunci: *analisis pragmatis, setrategi kesopanan, The Fault in Our Stars*

INTRODUCTION

In daily life, communication is important to all human relationship, because the relationship to each other is formed when human has more interaction and communication with others. Communication helps people express their ideas, knowledge, and experiences with others. For example, when a teacher shares his or her ideas to students about a certain subject in class, her ideas will help the students get new ideas or experiences they have not got before. They might not know the new ideas or experiences if there is no communication between the teacher and them. Communication also helps people develop their relationships with families, friends, colleagues, and others. Therefore, people should learn how to communicate effectively in a society to make their lives better that people need language to communicate.

Through the language, people use it as a medium to interact and communicate with other. People also use language to share their ideas, suggestions, and feelings with others. In addition, it is very important for people to convey their meanings and ideas. Therefore, people can be easier to make a communication through language. As a result, to get the meaning of what is being communicated, people should look at various factors such as culture, social status, and environment. Corresponding to those factors, speakers need to show their politeness to the hearers when doing a communication.

Therefore, pragmatics as a scientific study of language in context is required to observe language phenomena related to circumstances.

Under pragmatics, politeness is one of linguistic strategies that an important role in understanding the speaker's meaning. Based on Yule (1996: 60), politeness can be defined as the linguistic action to show awareness of another person's face. Here, face refers to the individual's self-image in public. For instance, people have to choose the appropriate words and also attitudes when communicating with others in order to maintain or threaten other's face. Therefore, politeness here is not the matters of way of people behave politely, but rather act politely in various level according to the language or particularly the utterances performed.

There are four types of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson namely bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record strategy. Each type of politeness strategies consists of some sub-strategies as the realizations of the strategy. First, there are eight realization of bald on record strategy. Next, fifteen sub-strategies are involved in positive politeness strategies. Then, there are ten sub–strategies of negative politeness strategies. Meanwhile, off record strategy contains fifteen sub-strategies.

In this study, the researcher is interested to observes *The Fault in Our Star* movie which involves around Hazel, Frannie, and Michael's relationships as family and

Hazel, Augustus, Isaac's relationships as best friend. Those two conditions, family and best friend relationship may involve many utterances dealing with politeness strategies. In other word, this movie is not fictitious story. It is based on true story. Then, to interpret the main characters utterances, the aspects of meaning are necessary to be considered together with their circumstances. Therefore, it can be analyzed in term of politeness that it can be used pragmatics approach. While, politeness has aimed to reveal or to understand intended meaning of the speaker. Therefore, the researcher is interested to analyze the movie in terms of politeness strategy as the subjects of the study.

The objectives of this study are to explain the types of politeness strategies used by the characters in *The Fault in Our Stars* movie, and to describe the realizations of the politeness strategies used by the characters in *The Fault in Our Stars* movie.

This research is expected to give some benefits both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the knowledge related to politeness issues for students of English Department and it also can give a supplementary contribution to students who study language, especially on politeness. Meanwhile, the concept of politeness asserted in this analysis gives some knowledge about politeness in daily communication for people in general, especially about how to use a certain strategy to achieve goals in real life communication.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research applied a qualitative method. According to Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009: 7), the result of qualitative research is narrative or textual description of the phenomena under the study which the researcher focuses on. Besides, the researcher analyzed the types of politeness strategies and their realizations found which belong to pragmatic study. Consequently, the research used pragmatics approach dealing with the meaning of language use in context.

In conducting the research, the researcher analyzed the utterances performed by the characters in *the Fault in Our Stars* movie that employs politeness strategies. The sources of the data were the video of the movie and the transcript in *The Fault in Our Stars* movie.

Dealing with the qualitative research, the instrument of this research was in the form of data sheet. The researcher utilized the data sheet as an instrument for categorizing the data into types and realizations of politeness strategy based on theories postulated by experts. The categorization of the data was used to help the data analyses process.

The researcher employed note-taking as the technique of data collection. Note-taking is a method which is used to collect the data of analysis in manually (Thomas, 2003: 185). Thus, the researcher watched the movie

carefully to find appropriated information of the data and then identifying the dialogues which contain of politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategies.

Moreover, the researcher adopted qualitative method with an inductive approach. Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009: 168) state that an inductive approach is a reasoning process in which theory is deployed as a guideline to observe the data.

The researcher utilizes triangulation to ensure the quality of the data. Triangulation is a method of using more than one methodology to address the same question to provide the trustworthiness of the research data (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009:179). Thus, the researcher discussed and consulted the research data with her supervisor lecturing and her fellow linguistics students to triangulate the data and to gain credibility data.

DISCUSSION

There are four types of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. They are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record strategy. All four types of politeness strategies found in the conversation of the characters in The Fault in Our Stars script.

In terms of the realizations of politeness strategies, there are three realizations of bald on record, twelve realizations of positive politeness, three realizations of negative politeness, and two realizations of off record that are employed in the conversation. Meanwhile, there are some conversations that show social distance between the speaker and the hearer. It makes the characters do not apply some realizations of politeness strategy in the conversation in *The Fault in Our Star* movie.

In relation to the objectives of the study, the following section discusses about the types of politeness strategies and their realizations performed by the characters of *The Fault in Our Stars* movie.

1. Bald on Record Strategy and the Realizations

According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 69), bald on record is performed in direct and unambiguous way. It is commonly uttered by people who know one another very well in their environment like close friends and families. In the conversation, bald on record as the type of politeness strategy is found in the character's utterance since the characters of the movie wants to communicate their conveyed meaning explicitly. In addition, there are three variations of bald on record strategy found in the conversation.

The first realization of bald on record used by Michelle is using speaker and hearer no face redress for great urgency.

> AUGUST: something is wrong.
> You gotta…
> Help!! Help!!
> Cam you came and help me
> Hazel: Gus! What going on.
>   (Datum 32)

This utterance occurs when August calls Hazel to asking help. In this case, the word "Help" shows that August is in a great urgency situation. Therefore, August conveys his meaning with maximum efficiency. In this case, August does not need to redress the hearer's face.

Another realization of bald on record is metaphorical urgency provided in Michael's utterance.

> MICHAEL: **Hey, listen, Gus**.
> You have to understand, Hazel's still pretty sick. And she will be the rest of her life. And she's gonna want to keep up with you. She's that kind of girl. But the truth is, her lungs...
>
> (Datum 43)

Michael attracts August's attention by saying of the important thing **"hey, listen Gus"** in the statement to show that Michael utters metaphorical urgency in her conversation. Michael does not use this strategy to give the hearer a task to look at something. However, Michael uses this strategy to asks August's attention, and to makes August more focuses to him. Here, the speaker wants to convey an important thing to be heard and looked.

The last realization of bald on record is task oriented applied Patrick's utterance.

> PATRICK: (comes to the class)
> Have a seat guys.
> All right, Are you guys?
>
> (Datum 1)

Patrick applies the utterance with employing the task-oriented strategy. The utterance shows that Patrick asks his students in direct and clear way. This strategy is used because Patrick wants a direct response from the hearer. Patrick used this strategy to his students to gives instruction to students to do something which related to the academic task.

2. Positive Politeness Strategy and the Realizations

As stated by Brown and Levinson (1987: 103), This strategy is used to show solidarity between the speaker and the hearer which is usually seen in a group of friend or people in a social situation to know each other well. There are twelve realizations of positive politeness strategy used by the characters of *The Fault in Our Stars* movie.

The first example is noticing or attending the hearer as the output of positive politeness strategy. The example is taken from Michael's utterance.

> FRANNIE: This is the dry
> MICHAEL: uhum. **very good.**
> **Well I like it.**
>
> (Datum 22)

In the expression "**very good. Well I like it".** Michael appreciated Frannie who has made goji berry. It indicates that Michael employed the strategy in the form of compliment. since the use of positive politeness strategy is not always to mitigate the FTA, but also to come closer with the hearer. Thus, Michael saved Frannie's positive face.

The second realization of positive politeness is exaggerated applied Hazel's utterance.

AUGUST: This is it. August World.
This is my room.
HAZEL : Woww. **It's an impressive collection**

(Datum 18)

Hazel applies the statement with exaggerated intonation and stress. To express his emotion of shock, she says **"it's an impressive collection".** This strategy is used by hazel to show August that she is very surprised and sympathy of August's room where it has many trophies that is August collection.

The third, intensity interest to the hearer as the realization of positive politeness strategy is found August's utterance.

HAZEL   : oh my God.
Ooh!
AUGUST : **Yeah,you know.** I failed my test a couple times. Actually, the fourth time I took the test, (..) me, and she says. "your driving while unpleasant, is not technically unsafe."

(Datum 16)

August employed the strategy of intensifying interest to the hearers in the speaker's contribution. He used this strategy to show to the hearer that he has interest experience that can be shared to the hearer. He applied this strategy by saying **"yeah, you now"**. This statement show that the speaker wants to the hearer more focused what is the speaker say.

The next example of using in-group membership as the realization of positive politeness strategy is presented in datum 15 in which Michelle calls his daughter in front of her friends.

FRANNIE: **Hey, sweetheart.**
Is it Top Model time?
HAZEL   : Ho. Uh
I've made plans with Augustus Waters.

(Datum 15)

Frannie applies the strategy by saying **"sweetheart"** instead of her real name, Hazel. Frannie uses the strategy because she wants to show her daughter and the other people that she has close relationship and solidarity with her daughter.

The use of positive politeness is provided in Michael's utterance talking about Michelle's suggestion for the men.

FRANNIE: They're good, right?
MICHAEL: **Mmm.hmm very good.**

(Datum 23)

Michael repeats what Frannie says in the expression "Mmm.mm very good." It signifies that Michael agrees with Frannie since they share common opinion about what men can do. Hence, Michael can attend to Frannie's positive face as the need to be approved.

3. Negative Politeness Strategy and the Realizations

Negative Politeness is a type of politeness in which the purpose is to redress the threat of addressee's negative face (Brown and Levinson in Goody, 1978: 129). This strategy focuses on minimizing the imposition to the hearer. Negative politeness strategy is the opposite form of positive politeness strategy. In the conversation of the characters in *The Fault in Our Stars* movie, three

realizations of negative politeness are performed.

An example of using conventionally be indirect as the realization of negative politeness is expressed by Hazel.

> HAZEL: He invited us to Amsterdam Amsterdam
> FRANNIE : wow!
> HAZEL : **Can we go Amsterdam?**
> (Datum 39)

Hazel receives an email from Van Houten and the email is written that Van Houten that asks her to visit him in Amsterdam. Then, Hazel does indirect way request to Frannie to go to Amsterdam by saying **"can we go Amsterdam?".** It shows that the hearer can obtain the speaker meaning because the speaker deliversthe statement in indirect way, but it is in a clear meaning. Thus, Hazel tries to satisfy the hearer negative face that the speaker wants to get freedom of action.

Next example of the realization of negative politeness is minimize imposition. Isaac performs this strategy to express her feeling to August.

> AUGUST: here we go, man. Here we go.
> (GRUNTS)
> ISAAC : No, **I just want to kick something.**
> (Datum 30)

Minimizing the imposition strategy is applied when Isaac asks August that he wants to kick something to express his emotion. Isaac delivers a minimum imposition by making her statement or her asking seems smaller by saying **"I just want to kick something".** In this case, Isaac tries to safe the hearer's negative face to make the imposition becomes smaller.

Apologize as the realization of negative politeness strategy is also found in the conversation. The utterance is portrayed in datum 71.

> VAN HOUTEN: I'm sorry for yours, and **I'm so sorry for ruining your trip.**
> HAZEL : You didn't ruin our trip. We had an amazing trip.
> (Datum 71)

In the utterance, Van Houten begins to regret his mistakes to Hazel and August. Then he comes to August's burial ceremony to meet and ask forgiveness to Hazel by saying **"I'm so sorry for ruining your trip."** In this case, he saves the hearer negative face.

4. Off Record Strategy and the Realizations

This strategy is used to show someone face-wants indirectly. Brown and Levinson (in Goody, 1978: 211) states that off record strategy is more than one clear communicative intention that is being attribute by speaker, which means that the interpretation of speaker's utterance is left to the hearer. Two realizations of off record strategy are employed by the characters in The Fault in Our Stars movie.

The example is the use of be ironic as the output of off record strategy performed byAugust.

> AUGUST: well, I will read **this horrible book with this very boring title**, that does not include zombies or stormtroopers.
> (Datum 68)

Being ironic realization is applied when August says to Hazel that the book which is given to August by Hazel is the most horrible book and the most boring title. In the conversation, August applies the opposite utterance of what August means. In fact, August told that the book is interested so much with the book since he read the title of the book.

Another realization of off record strategy is use rhetorical questions provided in Hazel's utterance.

> AUGUST: Don't get mad.
> HAZEL   : I am mad.
> **You know why?**
> I'm mad because I think you're special. And is that not enough You think that the only way to lead (…)This is your life, okay? This is all you get.
>
> (Datum 70)

The conversation between Hazel and August happens when Hazel gives a question to August. Hazel utters a question "**you know why?**" to show that Hazel does not need an answer from August because the question is ambiguous, and Hazel knows the reason why she is mad to August. At the time, Hazel is angry to August because August always feels that his fear is oblivion. Then, in the dialogue, Hazel tries explaining to August that nobody will forget him, everyone loves him, and everyone remembers him. from the conversation, it can be said that Hazel uses rhetorical questions.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

This research explains types of politeness strategies and the realizations of each type of politeness strategy used by the characters of *The Fault in Our Stars* Movie. Based on the findings and discussion, some conclusions are drawn related to the two objectives of the research.

Dealing with the first objective of the research which is to explain the types of politeness strategy used by the characters of *The Fault in Our Stars* Movie, the data of the research are classified based on the theory of politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. there are four types of politeness strategies employed by the characters in The Fault in Our Star movie. They are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. The data of the research are classified based on Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategy as the references.

Concerning with the second objective which is to describe the realizations of politeness strategies, the researcher could find 20 realizations of politeness strategies in the object of the research. Moreover, there are some realizations of politeness strategies cannot find in the movie. For the reason, there are some conversation that show social distance between the speaker and the hearer although it is not the most significant one and there is no any setting that requires the characters in the movie to do something such

as reading an instruction of following on recipe.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions of the research and lack of the research, some suggestions are presented for the following parties. The researcher suggests to linguistics students who interest in studying pragmatics, to deeper understanding politeness strategy because, politeness strategy will be useful in social interaction to make conversations successfully. Besides, there are some other approach related to the linguistics study that can be applied by future researchers to analyze the object of this research such as sociolinguistics, stylistics, or semantics. Hence, it can be applied by future researchers to analyze the object of this research.

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