

AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS PRINCIPLES IN “FREEDOM WRITERS” MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the use of politeness principles in “Freedom Writers” movie by Richard LaGravenese (2007). It aims to identify, classify, and analyze the politeness principles and their function in characters utterance in the Freedom Writers movie. This research used a descriptive method. The data collected from utterances among characters, then classify and analyze them to the concept of Leech’s maxim (1983). Based on Leech theory there are six result of maxims that found by researcher. They are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim, and their function applied by the characters in their utterances. The first is tact maxim consist of 3 utterances that function is minimizes cost to other and maximizes benefit to the other. Second is generosity maxim consist of 2 utterances and the function is to minimizes benefit to self and maximizes cost to self. Third is approbation maxim consist of 6 utterances that function is to minimizes dispraise of other and maximizes praise of other. Fourth is modesty maxim consist of 3 utterances that function is to minimizes praise of self and maximizes dispraise of self. Fifth is agreement maxim which consist of 2 utterances that function is to maximizes agreement between self and other and minimizes disagreement between self and other. Sixth, sympathy maxim which consist of 3 utterances that function is to minimizes antipathy between self and other and maximizes sympathy between self and other. The researcher is expected that this research can help the readers to study about pragmatic especially politeness principles because, it was interesting and important to study.

Keywords: linguistics, pragmatic, politeness principle, movie, maxim

INTRODUCTION

There are many languages in the world, and many countries have their own language. Language is one of the humans necessary in the world. We can send and receive feelings, experience, knowledge, and many others with language. In other definition, language is communication

media. Bloch and Trager (1945:5) said a language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates. Language makes humans able to communicate and interact with each other.

The study of language is called linguistics. Akmajian (1990:5) said that,

linguistics deals with the nature of language and communication. The communication will be a success depends on the ability of the speaker and listener to convey and receive a message. the message received or delivered must have meaning.

According to Hurford and Heasley (1983:3) there are two concepts of meaning. The meaning of the sentence or the meaning of the word and the meaning of the speaker. The meaning of a sentence or the meaning of a word is the meaning of the sentence or word itself. This is what is studied in semantic. The speaker meaning is what the speaker means when he says a sentence. This is what is studied in pragmatics.

Pragmatics is the study about aspects of the use of meaning and language that depend on the speaker, receiver, and other features of the speech context. Leech (1983:36) says that pragmatics involves solving problems from the speaker's point of view and from the listener's point of view. The problem from the speaker's point of view is how to produce an utterance that will produce the results.

According to Levinson (1983: 3), pragmatics is the study of the meaning of context, especially the meaning spoken by the speaker. Yule (1996: 3) furthermore stated that pragmatics are the study of contextual meaning that is communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by the listener or reader.

Politeness is one aspect from pragmatics. Humans also need politeness in their social life to avoid conflict with others. Therefore, they should consider the

way of speaking and the choice of words. In the words, they can apply politeness as their strategy of communication. Alan D. Cruse defines politeness as “first and foremost, a matter of what is said, and not a matter of what is thought or believed” (Cruse 2000: 362).

Leech defines the Politeness Principle as “Minimize the expression of impolite beliefs” (Leech 1983: 81), for Cruse this is not the best formulation, he prefers the statement: “Choose expressions which minimally belittle the hearer’s status” (Cruse 2000: 362). Politeness principles is a series of maxims that Leech (1983) has put forward as a way to explain how politeness operates in exchange of conversation. Leech (1983: 132) was classify politeness principles into six maxims, namely tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim.

In everyday life, politeness is often used in real conversation. but to analyze it is not a necessity to observe the community directly, because politeness is often portrayed through media such as movies, magazines, novels, and others. Movies are the most popular media in public and can use to analyze the politeness.

From descriptions above, the writer wants to analyze politeness principles in *Freedom Writers* movie written by Richard LaGravenese (2007). *Freedom Writers* movie is telling about the struggle of a teacher in educating students at a high school in Long Beach, United States.

Freedom Writers is a movie that is referred to from the book *"The Freedom Writers Diary"*, where the book comes from a true story that tells the struggle of a teacher who tries to arouse the enthusiasm of learning from his students. This film presents some politeness principles found in the communication and interaction of the characters in the film. that is what makes the writer interested in analyzing politeness in this film.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative research design. Strauss & Corbin (1997:11) state that "qualitative research is kind of research that produces an invention that is not obtained by using procedures statistic". In other word, qualitative research has no calculation in it. Therefore, the data from this research focuses more in words rather than in numbers.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), descriptive is the characteristic of data in qualitative research because it was taken from documents, audio- video recordings, transcripts, words, pictures, etc. Moreover, this research is categorized as qualitative research design because this research is to explain and analyze the politeness principles in "Freedom Writer" movie written by Richard LaGravenese.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Discussion

In this part, the researcher analyzed and classify the data based on politeness principles theory of Leech (1983).

Politeness principles categorized in 6 maxims, that is tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. Based on the data, the researcher can find out the description of the object being researched. This research presents description of politeness principles utterances analysis used in Freedom Writer movie characters by LaGravenese (2007) which would be presented and analyze below.

There are 19 character's utterances that researcher collected.

1. Margaret: "Here's your coffee." (00:03:59)
2. Margaret: "So I wouldn't give them too much of a homework load. You'll just be wasting a lot of time following up on overdue work."
Erin: All right. Thank you. (00:04:49)
3. Margaret: "Those are lovely pearls." (00:06:17)
4. Brian: "Well, don't be discouraged." (00:12:20)
5. Brian: "Nice pearls." (00:12:44)
6. Scott: "Are you OK?" (00:16:59)
7. Erin: "You're an architect." (00:47:40)
8. Scott: "All right, I just don't want it." (00:47:43)
9. Erin: "Well, I'm sorry I left my dirty eraser at work." (00:48:04)
10. Brian: "Thank you so much for coming. Susan's a terrific student." (00:48:52)
11. Brian: "..... Drive safe." (00:49:04)

12. Steve: "Put on your sit belt!" (01:01:56)
13. Miguel: "Miss G? Can I read something from my diary?"
Erin: "That'd be great." (01:12:45)
14. Marcus: "Miss G? When Miep Gies come, can I, like be the one to escort her in?" (01:22:31)
15. Marcus: "I've never had a hero before. But you are my hero." (01:27:40)
16. Steve: "Honey, take a break. Sit down." (01:45:07)
17. Steve: "Yeah it is But the thing's for sure, you are an amazing teacher. Special." (01:46:09)
18. Steve: ". . . . and I envy you that, and I admire you." (01:46:23)
19. Erin: "Andre? Wait a minute before you go in. I heard about your brother's conviction. I'm sorry." (01:49:26)

The Discussion of Research Result

The research data that source from the Freedom writer movie's script that can be present and classify below.

1. Tact maxim

In the tact maxim a speaker minimizes the expression of beliefs which imply cost to other; maximizes the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to other.

- a. Steve: "*Put on your sit belt!*" (01:01:56)
- b. Steve: "*Honey, take a break. Sit down.*" (01:45:07)
- c. Brian: ". . . . Drive safe." (00:49:04)

In utterance (a) Steve maximize benefit to Andre by ordered to wear a sit belt for safety. In utterance (b) Steve order to Erin for take a break and calm down with her problem. And in utterance (c) Brian order to parents who coming on parents meeting.

2. Generosity maxim

In the generosity maxim a speaker minimizes the expression of beliefs that express or imply benefit to self; maximizes the expression of beliefs that express or imply cost to self. Unlike the tact maxim, the maxim of generosity focuses on the speaker, and says that others should be put first instead of the self.

- a. Margaret: "*Here's your coffee.*" (00:03:59)
- b. Marcus: "*Miss G? When Miep Gies come, can I, like be the one to escort her in?*" (01:22:31)

In utterance (a) Margaret offer a cup of coffee for Erin to drink. And in utterance (b) Marcus ask to miss G to escort Miep Gies when she come in because he is her fans.

3. Approbation maxim

In the approbation maxim a speaker minimizes the expression of beliefs which express dispraise of other; maximizes the expression of beliefs which express approval of other. It is preferred to praise others and if this is impossible, to sidestep

the issue, to give some sort of minimal response (possibly through to use of euphemisms), or to remain silent.

- a. Margaret: *“Those are lovely pearls.”* (00:06:17)
- b. Brian: *“Nice pearls.”* (00:12:44)
- c. Erin: *“You’re an architect.”* (00:47:40)
- d. Brian: *“Thank you so much for coming. Susan’s a terrific student.”* (00:48:52)
- e. Marcus: *“I’ve never had a hero before. But you are my hero.”* (01:27:40)
- f. Steve: *“Yeah it is But the thing’s for sure, you are an amazing teacher. Special.”* (01:46:09)

In utterances (a) and (b) Margaret and Brian had same give approbation to Erin Gruwell’s pearls on her necklace. In utterance (c) Erin give approbation to Scott if her job is good. In utterance (d) Brian give approbation to his student with her parent. And utterance (e) Marcus give approbation to Miep Gies because she was a hero for him. In utterance (f) Steve give approbation to Erin that she is an amazing teacher that can be teach the gangster student.

4. Modesty maxim

Modesty maxim is a maxim in which a speaker minimizes the expression of praise of self; maximizes the expression of dispraise of self.

- a. Scott: *“All right, I just don’t want it.”* (00:47:43)

- b. Erin: *“Well, I’m sorry I left my dirty eraser at work.”* (00:48:04)
- c. Steve: *“.... . and I envy you that, and I admire you.”* (01:46:23)

In utterance (a) Scott maximizes self-dispraise to himself by saying his ability. In utterance (b) Erin maximizes self-dispraise to himself by saying her work. And in utterance (c) Steve minimizes the expression of praise of himself by saying envy with Erin.

5. Agreement maxim

In the agreement maxim, a speaker minimizes the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximizes the expression of agreement between self and other.

- a. Margaret: *“So I wouldn’t give them too much of a homework load. You’ll just be wasting a lot of time following up on overdue work.”*
Erin: *“All right. Thank you.”* (00:04:49)
- b. Miguel: *“Miss G? Can I read something from my diary?”*
Erin: *“That’d be great.”* (01:12:45)

In utterance (a) means that Erin is agree with Margaret’s opinion about she will not give the students too much of a homework load. And in utterance (b) Erin is agree with Miguel asked to read his diary.

6. Sympathy maxim

Sympathy maxim is a maxim in which a speaker minimizes antipathy between self and other; maximizes sympathy between self and other. This includes a small group of speech acts such as congratulation, commiseration, and expressing condolences.

- a. Brian: “*Well, don’t be discouraged.*” (00:12:20)
- b. Scott: “*Are you OK?*” (00:16:59)
- c. Erin: “*Andre? Wait a minute before you go in. I heard about your brother’s conviction. I’m sorry.*” (01:49:26)

In utterance (a) Brian minimize antipathy to (Erin) because she has a bad day in her class. And in utterance (b) Scott minimize antipathy to (Erin) same as in (a)’s utterance. And in utterance (c) Erin minimize antipathy to Andre about his brother’s conviction in court.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data taken from utterances in Freedom Writer movie, the researcher can conclude that there are six maxims of politeness principles applied based on Leech’s theory. They are as follows: tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. In this research paper, the researcher focused on the function of politeness principles which expressing by characters in Freedom Writer movie.

The researcher found 19 politeness principle which are used in the Freedom Writer movie. 3 tact maxims, 2 generosity maxims, 6 approbation maxims, 3 modesty maxims, 2 agreement maxims, and 3 sympathy maxims. Approbation maxim is at the most if compares with the others maxim. Especially utterances from closest person with the main character of the movie. From the analysis above, we can conclude that the use of utterances manners is very important in communication. This can make the comfortable zone to interact with each other persons. It is important to studied in language because, speakers and hearer can be feels offended or there was misunderstanding in improved communication.

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