

**POLITENESS STRATEGIES OF REQUEST FOUND IN
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE MOVIE**



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APPROVAL

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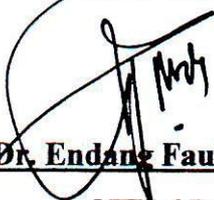
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POLITENESS STRATEGIES OF REQUEST FOUND IN *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on politeness strategy of request found in Pride and Prejudice movie using Brown and Levinson's theory. Someone should know how to utter a polite request in English, because a request can threat both of the speaker and hearer's face. The purpose in using politeness strategy is to make people can communicate in the right language based on the context when the communication is occurred. This research aims to investigate the types of politeness strategies of request are used in Pride and Prejudice movie, the dominant types of politeness strategies of request are used in Pride and Prejudice movie, and the factors contribute to the choice of politeness strategies in realizing request in Pride and Prejudice movie. This research is a descriptive qualitative research. The data of this research are the excerpts which contain politeness strategy of request utterances taken from the conversation of the characters in Pride and Prejudice movie. The result shows that there are four types of politeness strategies of request which are used by the characters of Pride and Prejudice movie, those four strategies are Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness and Off Record. The dominant type of politeness strategy of request in Pride and Prejudice movie is Bald on Record. In realizing politeness strategy of request, the characters in Pride and Prejudice movie were influenced by two factors namely payoff and relevant circumstances which cover 'social distance' (D) of speaker and hearer, relative 'power' (P) of speaker and hearer, and the absolute ranking (R) of imposition in the particular culture.

Key words: *Pragmatics, Politeness, Politeness Strategy, Request*

1. Introduction

Politeness theory is one of the main areas of linguistic theory that is relevant to relational communication. Politeness is a form of social interaction that is conditioned by the socio-cultural norms of a particular society which can be expressed through communicative and communicative acts. Brown and Levinson (1987) propose the Universal Politeness theory as an improvement of the ideas from the Grice's and Leech's Maxim and Fraser's rules of Conversational Contract. Brown and Levinson then refer to a Model Person (MP) who is seen as a fluent speaker of a natural language as the properties of rationality. Brown and Levinson state "model person (MP) consists in is a willful fluent speaker of a natural language, further endowed with two special properties- rationality and face" (1987:58).

Brown and Levinson (1987) discuss politeness primarily in relation to speech acts. Clearly, they point out that speech acts have to be handled carefully. They also explain that face consists of two related wants: positive and negative face. Positive face is a person's want to be appreciated and approved of by selected others, in terms of personality, desires, behavior, values, and so on. In another side, negative face is a person's want to be unimpeded by others, the desire to be free to act as she or he chooses and not to be imposed upon. To reduce acts which threaten face, Brown and Levinson propose strategies, known as face threatening acts (FTAs).

- a Baldly on record
- b Positive politeness
- c Negative politeness
- d Off record

Each speaker should use appropriate strategies which are able to lessen the FTAs.

In every day human interaction, requests are one of the speech acts used quite frequently. It is an expression of what the speaker wants the addressee to or to refrain from doing something. Requests which belong to directives speech act can easily threaten people's face, because they have an intention of a speaker to get the hearer since they put imposition on the shoulders of the hearer. Beside that, requests can affect people's autonomy, and freedom of choice. When speakers utter requests, speakers use to get someone else to do something. Thus, it can threaten people's sense of equity of rights. According to Brown and Levinson's (1987) terms, requests are face-threatening acts (FTAS). So those who perform a request need to reduce the level of imposition created by an act being requested in order to save the hearer's face and, at the same time get his/her compliance with a request. They argue that requests are face-threatening because they impose on people's desire for autonomy, and thus threaten people's negative face. In English language, there are some linguistic options that can be used for managing face and sociality rights. One of those options is using politeness strategy in saying request.

Pride and Prejudice is a 2005 British romance film directed by Joe Wright. This story is based on Jane Austen's 1813 novel about five sisters (Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty and Lydia Bennet) from an English family of marriage, morality and misconception in Georgian era. Their lives are turned upside down when the family's future happiness and security is dependent on their making good marriages. Life is uneventful until the

arrival in the neighborhood of a wealthy young man (Mr. Bingley) and his best friend (Mr. Darcy). There are many trial and tribulations stand between the Bennet sisters and their happiness, including class, gossip and scandal. *Pride and Prejudice* movie is the rich source for polite utterances, especially linguistics politeness used by the characters. The characters lived in the Georgian era which was still adhering to social classes which were divided into three main groups of classes: The Upper Class (people with inherited wealth and high position), The Middle Class (industrialist, professionals, shop owners and business people), Lower or Working Class (people who are agricultural, mine and factory workers). By using this movie, the researcher intends to identify politeness strategy of request used by the characters.

This research aims to investigate the following questions: (1) the types of politeness strategies of request are used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie, (2) the dominant types of politeness strategies of request are used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie, and (3) the factors contribute to the choice of politeness strategies in realizing request in *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

2. Research Method

This study uses descriptive qualitative approach and employs the Brown and Levinson (1987) theory on politeness as its theoretical framework and for the analysis of the data obtained. The object of this study is excerpts which contain politeness strategy of request utterances taken from the conversation of the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The data of this research are 78 excerpts taken from the conversation of the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie by Joe Wright. The data are taken from <http://specialfeatures.mrsdarcy.com/page1.html>. Documentation is used in collecting the data about the utterances of the characters. In analyzing the data, the researcher takes some steps as follows: (1) classifying excerpts which contain politeness strategy of request, (2) classifying the politeness strategy of request utterances by using Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategy, (3) describing the intention of addressing request utterances from the data by using Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategy, (4) describing the factors that contribute to the choice of politeness strategies in realizing request, and (5) making the conclusion and suggestion based on the data.

3. Findings and Discussion

The findings of this study are to analyze the types of politeness strategies of request are used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie, the dominant types of politeness strategies of request are used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie, and the factors contribute to the choice of politeness strategies in realizing request in *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

3.1 Types of Politeness Strategies of Request Which Are Used in *Pride and Prejudice* Movie

Analysis of the data revealed that four strategies politeness strategies of request used by the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The strategies are Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness and Off Record.

a. Bald on Record

Analysis of the data revealed that bald on record politeness strategies are used in the conversation between the participants who are known each other very well, such as between family and friends. The characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie had employed forty five bald on record strategies. These strategies are presented below with examples from the data to illustrate their usage in context.

06/PNP/BOR

Caroline : Good Lord, Miss Bennet. Have you walked here?

Lizzie : I have. I'm so sorry. How is my sister?

Darcy : (more kindly) She's upstairs.

Darcy : (to footman) *Show Miss Bennet the way, Alfred!*

“*Show Miss Bennet the way, Alfred!*” was utterance which had proposition that Darcy attempted to make the footman to do something. The request was to show Elizabeth Bennet the way to meet her sister upstairs. The illocution of request has perlocution consequence that the benefit of it is taken by Darcy. Darcy's utterance in imperative form shows the strategy without doing any effort to minimize the impact of the FTA. That is why his utterance is classified in bald on record strategy.

08/PNP/BOR

Caroline : How many letters you must have occasion to write, Mr Darcy. Letters of business too. How odious I should think them!

Darcy : It is fortunate, then, that they fall to my lot instead of yours.

Caroline : *Please tell your sister that I long to see her!*

Darcy : I have already told her once, by your desire.

In her utterance, Caroline uttered her request without minimizing the impact of the FTA because both speaker and hearer was close friend and they did not have any intention to offend others. So Caroline said her request directly which can be classified in bald on record strategy. In her utterance, Caroline used mitigating device '*please*' to soften the request.

16/PNP/BOR

Mr. Collins : I must conclude that you simply seek to increase my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females.

Lizzie : Sir! I am not the sort of female to torment a respectable man.
Please understand me - I cannot accept you!

Lizzie said an utterance as a request to Mr. Collins so that he stopped saying his proposal to Lizzie. In her request, Lizzie did no effort to satisfy Mr. Collins' face and to reduce the impact of the FTA's. Lizzie was angry with Mr. Collins' action so that she used bald on record strategy to maximize the efficiency of her request.

b. Positive Politeness

Analysis of the data revealed that positive politeness strategies are used in the conversation between the participants who want to satisfy the hearer's positive face and minimize the threat of the FTA in their requests. The characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie had employed four of fifteen positive politeness strategies: strategies 3, 10, 12 and 14. These four strategies are presented below with examples from the data to illustrate their usage in context.

Strategy 3: Intensify interest to H in the speaker's contribution

In this strategy, the speaker shares some of his wants to intensify the interest of the speaker's own contribution to the conversation, by making a good story. The utterance may redress an FTA simply by stressing the sincerity of speaker's good intentions, but there also seems to be an element of attempting to

increase the interest of the conversational contributions by expressing them dramatically.

01/PNP/PP3

Mr. Collins : *Dear Miss Elizabeth, I am sure my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house I singled you out as the companion of my future life.*

Mr. Collins : *(cont'd) But before I am run away with my feelings perhaps I may state my reasons for marrying. Firstly, that it is the duty of a clergyman to set the example of matrimony in his parish. Secondly, that I am convinced it will add greatly to my happiness, and, thirdly, that it is at the urging of my esteemed patroness Lady Catherine that I select a wife.*

Mr. Collins : *My object in coming to Longbourn was to choose such a one from Mr Bennet's daughters, for I am to inherit the estate and such an alliance will surely suit everyone. (drops to his knee) And now nothing remains for me but to assure you in the most animated language of the violence of my affections.*

Mr. Collin's utterance showed that he intensified interest to Lizzie. Mr. Collins wanted to get Lizzie's attention. Moreover, he gave some reason why he should marry, and why his choice came to Lizzie. Mr. Collins did it to make Lizzie interested in Mr. Collins and could accept him to be her husband. In another way, Mr. Collins also appreciated Lizzie, so he saved her positive face. Here, Mr. Collins shared some of his wants to intensify the interest of his own contribution to the conversation, by making a good story. Mr. Collins as the speaker used the vivid explanation or description. Therefore it could pull Lizzie's right into the middle of the events being discussed, even by using metaphorically at any rate.

Strategy 10: Offer or promise

In this strategy, the speaker may choose to stress his cooperation with the hearer in order to redress the potential threat of some FTAs. Offers and promises demonstrate the speaker's good intentions in satisfying hearer's positive face wants.

01/PNP/PP10

Lizzie : *Shall I call for some tea?*

Darcy : No. Thank you.

Request for offer delivered by Lizzie was a request of offering something to be accepted or refused. Her action was for the benefit of Darcy and as an appreciation for him. Lizzie claimed that whatever Darcy wants, Lizzie wanted for him and would help to obtain. Here, Lizzie had satisfied Darcy's positive face wants by offering him some tea.

Strategy 12: include both S and H in the activity

This strategy uses an inclusive 'we' form, when speaker really means 'you' or 'me'.

01/PNP/PP12

Caroline : *Miss Bennet, let us take a turn about the room.*

Caroline : (cont'd) It's refreshing, is it not, after sitting so long in one attitude?

Lizzie : And it's a small kind of accomplishment, I suppose.

This strategy uses an inclusive 'we' form, when speaker really means 'you' or 'me', he can call upon the cooperative assumptions and thereby redress FTAs. Let's in English is an inclusive 'we' form. The request utterance "*Miss Bennet, let us take a turn about the room.*" showed an act that Caroline wanted to entice Elizabeth to do the same thing with her want. *Let's* here can be described as "*we*". The request also represented that it was not only for Caroline but for Elizabeth as well.

Strategy 14: assume or assert reciprocity exchange or tit for tat

The existence of cooperation between the speaker and hearer may also be claimed by giving evidence of reciprocal rights or obligations obtaining between speaker and hearer.

01/PNP/PP14

Kitty : (to Jane) *I have to have your spotted muslin, Jane!*

Lydia : No, I need it! It makes Kitty look like a pudding.

Kitty : - *Oh please Jane, I'll lend you my green slippers.*

By uttering the utterance “*I have to have your spotted muslin, Jane! Oh please Jane, I'll lend you my green slippers.*” Kitty might say in effect. ‘*I'll do X for you if you do Y for me*’. It shows that Kitty, as the speaker, tried to make an agreement with Jane. Kitty wanted to go to the ball wore Jane’s spotted muslin so she would lend Jane her green slippers. Kitty here just tried to give her an agreement.

c. Negative Politeness

Analysis of the data revealed that negative politeness strategies are used in the conversation between the participants who want to satisfy the hearer’s negative face and avoid the threat or potential face loss from their requests. The characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie had employed two of ten negative politeness strategies: strategies 2 and 6. These two strategies are presented below with examples from the data to illustrate their usage in context.

Strategy 2: Do not assume willingness to comply (question, hedge)

A hedge makes a membership of a noun phrase in a set that it is partial, or true only in certain respects and more complete than might be expected. Hedge may be functioned to soften command and turn it into a polite request.

04/PNP/NP2

- Lizzie : *Will you come to the Netherfield ball then, Mr. Wickham?*
Wickham : Ah. Perhaps. How long has Mr. Darcy been a guest there?
Lizzie : About a month. Forgive me but are you acquainted with him?
With Mr. Darcy?
Wickham : Indeed, I have been connected with his family since infancy.

Lizzie asked Wickham whether he would come to Bingley’s ball or not by saying ‘*Will you come to the Netherfield ball then, Mr. Wickham?*’. Her utterance can be indicated as a request toward Wickham to come to the ball. Lizzie did not make any assumption whether Wickham would like to go to the ball or not.

05/PNP/NP2

- Mr. Collins : There you are.
Lizzie : Mr Collins. What a pleasant surprise.

Mr. Collins : *Perhaps you will do me the honour, Miss Lizzie?*

Lizzie : Oh. I didn't think you danced, Mr Collins.

Mr. Collins : I do not consider it incompatible with the office of a clergyman to indulge in such an innocent diversion.

By saying '*Perhaps, you will do me the honour, Miss Lizzie?*' Mr. Collins made minimal assumptions about Lizzie's wants. The usage of the word '*perhaps*' indicated the presence of an implicature that turn the statement into a request. Hedge might function to soften request and turn it into more polite.

Strategy 6: Apologize

By apologizing for doing an FTA, the speaker can indicate his reluctance to impinge on hearer's negative face and thereby partially redress that impingement.

01/PNP/NP6

Darcy : *Forgive me, madam, for taking up so much of your time.*

By apologizing for doing an FTA, Darcy could indicate his reluctance to impinge on Lizzie's negative face and thereby partially redress that impingement. Darcy beg forgiveness toward Lizzie for taking her time with a conversation that could possibly make both of them hurt or at least ask for Lizzie's acquittal that Lizzie should cancel the debt implicit in the FTA.

02/PNP/NP6

Bingley : *I know this is all very untoward, but I would like to request the privilege of speaking to Miss Jane*

Bingley : (cont' d)- *alone.*

Mrs. Bennet : Everybody to the kitchen. Immediately. Except you, Jane, of course. Oh, Mr. Bingley. It is so good to see you again so soon.

On his utterance Bingley admit the impingement. Bingley simply admitted that he was impinging on Mrs. Bennet face, with expression '*I know this is all very untoward, but I would like to request the privilege of speaking to Miss Jane - alone.*'. There was no word '*I'm sorry*' delivered by Bingley, for Bingley had delivered a self-humbling remark which constituted the apology by saying that his coming might be untoward. Bingley stated his regret or reluctance to do an FTA in his request.

d. Off Record

Analysis of the data revealed that off record politeness strategies are used in the conversation between the participants who want to avoid the responsibility for the potentially face-damaging interpretation from their requests. The characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie had employed three of fifteen off record politeness strategies: strategies 1, 2 and 3. These three strategies are presented below with examples from the data to illustrate their usage in context.

Strategy 1: give hints

01/PNP/OR1

Mrs. Bennet : As you well know, Mr Bennet, when you die, which may in fact be very soon.

Mr. Bennet : As soon as I can manage it.

Mrs. Bennet : - our girls will be left without a roof over their head nor a penny to their name.

Lizzie : *Oh Mother, please! It's ten in the morning.*

If a speaker wants to do an FTA, and chooses to do it indirectly, the speaker must give the hearer some hints and hope that the hearer picks up on them and thereby interprets what speaker really intends to say. In the conversation, Lizzie asserted a statement to her mother '*It's ten in the morning.*' which actually was a request to her mother to stop talking about her want to saw her five daughters married soon.

Strategy 2: give association clues

01/PNP/OR2

Mr. Collins : Mrs Bennet. You do know I have been bestowed by the good grace of Lady Catherine de Bourg a parsonage of no mean size.

Mrs. Bennet : I have become aware of the facto.

Mr. Collins : *Well, it is my avowed hope that soon I may find a mistress for it, and I have to inform you that the eldest Miss Bennet has captured my special attention.*

A related kind of implicature triggered by relevance violations is provided by mentioning something associated with the required of the hearer. The statement of Mr. Collins used to convey a request to propose the eldest Miss

Bennet. Such association clues leave it up to the hearer, here is Mrs. Bennet, to offer by taking the responsibility for the FTA away from Mr. Collins.

Strategy 3: presuppose

01/PNP/OR3

Lizzie : *Liddy! Kitty - what have I told you about listening at?*

Lydia : Never mind that, there's a Mr. Bingley arrived from the North.

Kitty : - with more than one chaise

Lydia : - and five thousand a year!

Lizzie : Really?

Lizzie presupposed that she had done it before, to ask them not to listening at, and therefore might implicate a criticism and also a command. The use of '*what have I told you*' forces Lydia and Kitty to search for the relevance of the presupposed prior event. The utterance '*Liddy! Kitty - what have I told you about listening at?*' can be almost wholly relevant in context, and yet violate the Relevance Maxim just at the level of its presuppositions.

3.2 The Dominant Types of Politeness Strategies of Request Used In *Pride And Prejudice* Movie

By analyzing the data, the writer has found out that there are 73 excerpts which contain politeness strategy of request. Based on the 73 excerpts, there are 45 data or 61.64% belong to bald on record politeness strategy, 8 data or 10.96% belong to positive politeness strategy, 16 data or 21.92% belong to negative politeness strategy and 4 data or 5.48% belong to off record politeness strategy. Thus, it can be concluded that the most dominant type of politeness strategy of request in *Pride and Prejudice* movie is bald on record. It is because most of the request utterances in *Pride and Prejudice* were uttered by the characters who know each other very well and have close relationship as they were family and friends. Therefore, the characters provided no effort to reduce the impact of the FTA's in their request. Its usage is occurred whenever a speaker (S) of the conversation on that movie wanted to do the FTA with maximum efficiency more than he wanted to satisfy the hearer's (H's) face.

3.3 Factors Contribute to The Choice of Politeness Strategies in Request

The employment of those strategies in delivering request is influenced by two major factors, namely payoff and relevant circumstances. Payoff can influence the choice of the politeness strategy of request because a speaker considers the advantages that he will get when using each strategy. While relevant circumstances, affects the seriousness level of an FTA. There are three dimensions to determine the level of politeness. Among them are social distance (D) of speaker and hearer, relative power (P) of speaker and hearer, and size of imposition (R).

In delivering request, most of the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie used bald on record strategy to elicit participants' quick response for their mutual benefits. Some of them used positive politeness strategy to satisfy hearer's positive face, reflected from their claiming common ground, conveying that speaker and hearer are cooperators, and fulfilling hearer's wants. The presence of the second high percentage of positive politeness in *Pride and Prejudice* movie indicated that the characters in that movie wanted to build reciprocity, mutual cooperation and sense of community even when they were not acquaintances with each other. The characters on that movie also used a number of negative politeness strategies because they were distant in social relations. Some request utterances impinge on others' negative face so that the negative politeness strategies could soften the weight of imposition. The off record politeness strategy was only used by the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie when they tried to avoid the responsibility of face damaging interpretation of their request. The characters wanted to satisfy the participant's negative face greater than when they used negative politeness strategy.

4. Conclusion

The researcher finds that some formulas of politeness strategy used by the characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie are suitable with the application of Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness. The finding and the theory has close relationship formula in how to produce polite utterance in delivering request. It is like Brown and Levinson said that requests are likely to threaten the face of speaker and hearer so that it should be delivered appropriately. There are four strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson that can be used to realizing request which considered as polite utterances. Also, it is found from the finding that the degree of politeness strategies can be measured by using some factors

proposed by Brown and Levinson in their theory namely payoff and relevant circumstances.

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