

An Analysis of Politeness Strategy and Cooperation Principle in 'Gravity' movie

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Abstract

This research studies about the politeness strategies and cooperation principle that are used in 'Gravity' movie. This was a descriptive qualitative research, which used the movie transcript as the data source. Then, the researcher used politeness strategies theory by Brown and Levinson (1987) and cooperation principle by Grice (1975) to analyze the data. The result from the analysis showed that 1) all politeness strategies theories proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) are employed in the script and 2) out of four strategies, the most used strategy was positive politeness strategy. Then, from the result, it can be concluded that.

Keywords: politeness strategy, cooperative principle, movie

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I. Introduction

In life, language plays an important role because through language, people can interact with each other. Moreover, in the field of communication language is needed to make interaction and to produce utterances in communication. Thus, people should be able to decide the polite language that is appropriate in order to maintain the communication. Politeness is universal that can be observed as a phenomenon in all cultures. Politeness can be defined as showing concern when dealing with others. People should pay attention to other's feeling, for example, by being friendly or respecting others or trying not to insult someone's feeling in order to avoid embarrassing other person or making them feel uncomfortable.

Understanding politeness is very important. People often think that politeness is simply a matter of saying *please*, *sorry*, *excuse*, and *thank you*. Politeness does have its own role. Being linguistically polite means speaking to people appropriately in the right place and the right time. People must be aware of the context of speaking and then be able to determine which politeness form is the best to be applied in a context. The politeness strategies used not only in daily life but also in literary work like novels, drama or films. In dramas or films. The important points about politeness are more than easy to understand because we can watch directly without having to imagine it. Hutauruk (2017) investigated politeness strategies in a movie called *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and found out that there are thirteen of fifteen strategies of positive politeness found in the movie. Safitri (2015) analyzed politeness strategies in a movie called *The Big Wedding* and found out that the most frequently used politeness is positive politeness. Then, Nailah (2016) found that in movie *Transformers: Age of Extinction*, all of politeness strategies are employed in the movie with bald-on record as the most used one.

Besides politeness, a conversation can be said as a success if both the listener and the speaker should also consider to cooperate each other. In linguistics, cooperative principles are introduced by Grice (1975). The principles are divided into four maxims. Those principles should be submissive by the participant of communication. However, people sometimes speak without fulfilling the maxims. Some studies have been done concerning with maxim and its relation with movie. Utami (2013) who conducted a research in Analyzing Beatrice Utterances in *Divergent* Movie found that Based on 38 data of Beatrice's utterances, submissive of cooperative principle consists of 61 % data, while violation of cooperative principle consists of 39% data which means that submissive of cooperative principle are mostly obeyed by Beatrice. Then, Pakaya (2015) whose study is about Maxim Clash in *Titanic* Movie had found that clash between maxim of Quantity with maxim of Quality dominates the flouting on the utterance of the movie. Last, Nugraha (2013) had found that in *Real Steel* movie, characters often violate the maxim of cooperative principle by generating a

conversational implicature. The maxim which often violated by the characters is maxim of Quality, because the characters give lack evident, Maxim Quantity also violated in this movie, Maxim of Relation also violated and Maxim of Manner violated in the same amount.

Since so many studies have been conducted in politeness strategies and cooperative principles, but in separate field, this time the researcher wants to analyze both politeness strategies and the violation of maxim in a movie entitled 'Gravity'. Gravity was a horror scientific-fiction movie that told about the space life and its

problems. Considering all explanation above, the objective of this research are to find out the politeness strategies and maxims that mostly used by the characters in the 'Gravity' movie.

II. Literature Review

In the design of politeness speech, Brown and Levinson (1987) suggested that some formula that is associated with the concept of politeness; they are bald-onrecord, positive politeness, negative politeness, and offrecord.

a. Bald-on Record

Bald-on record is performed in the most direct, clear, unambiguous, and concise way as possible. The *bald on-record* does nothing to minimize threats to the hearer's 'face'. This type of strategy is commonly found in people who know each other very well, and who are very comfortable in their environments, such as a close friend and family. In applying this strategy, someone can utilize five sub-strategies; showing disagreement (criticism), giving suggestion/advice, requesting, warning/threatening, and using imperative form.

b. Positive Politeness

Positive face refers to every individual's basic desire for their public self-image that wants to be shown; the speaker recognizes the hearer has desire to be respected. In this type of strategy, the relationship is friendly and expresses group reciprocity. It is usually seen in the groups of friends or where the people in the social situation know each other fairly well. the threat to face is relatively low. It usually tries to minimize the distance between them by expressing friendly statement and solid interest in the hearer's needs. There are three strategies which are included in Positive politeness: claiming common ground, conveying that S and H are co-operators, and fulfilling H's want for some X.

c. Negative Politeness

The *negative politeness* also recognizes the hearer's face. However, it also admits that the speaker is in some way imposing on the hearer. Negatively polite constructions contain negative face by demonstrating distance and wariness. *Negative face* represents the want of every action to get freedom from impingement. the threat to face is relatively high. The *negative politeness* focuses on minimizing the imposition by attempting to soften it. The sub-strategies of *negative politeness* include being indirect, not presuming/assuming, not coercing H, communicating S's want to not impinge on H, and redressing other wants of H's.

d. Off Record

Off-record takes some of the pressure off of the speaker. Its utterances are indirect uses of language which precise meaning has to be interpreted. The hearer cannot know with certainty that a hint has been broached; the speaker can credibly claim an alternative interpretation. Here, the threat to face is very high. Inviting conversational implicature and being vague or ambiguous are the sub-strategies of off-record.

To make the conversation become successful, both the listener and the speaker should also consider to cooperate each other. People having a conversation are generally assumed to be honest and conveying relevant information. In order to make good condition of conversation, Grice (1975) learn about four maxims of cooperative principles, that is maxim of quality (truthfulness), quantity (amount of information), relation (relevant), and manner (avoid obscurity). In this case, the speaker and hearer must share the context and observe the using of four maxims of cooperative principle in their utterances.

a. Maxim of Quality

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange.
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

b. Maxim of Quantity

Supermaxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

c. Maxim of Relation

Be relevant.

d. Maxim of Manner

Supermaxim: Be perspicuous.

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

On the other hand, not all maxims are obeyed at all times. There are times when speaker may disobey them. Grice proposes that there are five types of disobedience of the maxims i.e. flouting maxim, violating maxim, infringing a maxim, opting out a maxim, and suspending a maxim.

a. Flouting

Someone who is flouting a maxim expects the listener to notice.

b. Violating

Violating a maxim is quite the opposite of flouting a maxim. Violating a maxim rather prevents or at least discourages the hearer from seeking for implicatures and rather encourages the taking utterances at face value.

c. Infringing

Maxim infringement occurs when a Speaker fails to observe the maxim, although s/he has no intention of generating an implicature and no intention of deceiving. Generally infringing stems from imperfect linguistic performance (in the case of a young child or a foreigner) or from impaired linguistic performance brought about by nervousness, drunkenness, excitement, disability.

d. Opting out

A speaker opts out of observing a maxim whenever s/he indicates unwillingness to cooperate in the way the maxim requires.

e. Suspending

Under certain circumstances/as part of certain events there is no expectation on the part of any participant that one or several maxims should be observed (and non-fulfillment does not generate any implicatures).

III. Method

According to Gumilar (2005) "Research method is a systematic way that is used by researcher in collecting data in order to identify and explain the process of research itself". And this research belongs to a qualitative design because it is intended to describe, explore and clarify about the most used politeness strategies and cooperative principle in Gravity movie. In conducting the research, the data are taken from the dialogues while kind of the data that will be analyzed are the script of the dialogue used in Gravity movie. The instrument used was the researcher herself.

The data of the research are collected by doing the following steps: 1) choose the movie, 2) watch the movie, 3) identify the utterances which are produced by the characters by taking note while watching, 4) read the movie script, and 5) deeply analyze the script in looking for the politeness strategies and cooperative principle. To analyze the data, the researcher uses content analysis, the utterances that produced by the actors/actress on the movie that contain politeness and cooperation principle. Therefore, here are the following steps as part of the process of analyzing the data: 1) identifying all utterances which were taken from the movie, 2) classifying the data according to the politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson theory and cooperative principles by Grice theory, 3) interpreting the data, and 4) drawing a conclusion.

IV. Result & Discussion

1. Politeness Strategies

From the data of utterances in Gravity movie, the researcher has found 88 cases of politeness that are uttered by the characters. Those 88 cases are included in 4 politeness strategies from Brown and Levinson (1987). There are 25 utterances belong to bald on record politeness strategy, 56 utterances for positive politeness strategy, 2 utterances for negative politeness strategy, and 5 utterances for off record politeness strategy. Those data are listed in a table as follows:

Table 1 Politeness Strategies used in Gravity Movie

| No. | Politeness Strategy | Total |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Bald-on Record | 25 |
| 2. | Positive Politeness | 56 |
| 3. | Negative Politeness | 2 |
| 4. | Off Record | 5 |
| Total | | 88 |

a. Bald-on Record

Bald-on record is performed in the most direct, clear, unambiguous, and concise way as possible. In applying this strategy, someone can utilize five sub-strategies; showing disagreement (criticism), giving suggestion/advice, requesting, warning/threatening, and using imperative form.

In the script, there are 25 utterances which indicate the bald-on record.

The following data is the example of bald-on record from the script:

Data 1

CONTROL : Shariff, what's your status?
 SHARIFF : Nearly there. Replacing battery module A1 and C.
 CONTROL : Could you be a little more specific? Indeterminate estimates make Houston anxious.

SHARRIFF : No, no, no, Houston. **Don't be anxious. Anxiety's not good for the heart. System is ready to reactivate.**

The bold utterance above shows the Shariff just responds on what Control have said earlier with a suggestion.

Data 2

Kowalski : Copy all. **Put a bow on it, Dr. Stone.**

Dr. Stone : I can't. The board is still initializing.

Kowalski : I'm not gonna ask you again.

Dr. Stone : One second.

Kowalski : Not one second. Now. **Shut it down. That's an order.**

Dr. Stone : Okay, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, I'm done. I'm done.

The bold utterances are also the examples of bald-on record. As Kowalski said the utterances is about giving warning to not to do something.

b. Positive Politeness

As explained before, Positive face refers to every individual's basic desire for their public self-image that wants to be shown; the speaker recognizes the hearer has desire to be respected. There are three strategies which are included in positive politeness:

- Claiming common ground, which still has some sub-strategies.
 - ⇒ Noticing, attending to H (his interests, wants, needs, goods),
 - ⇒ Exaggerating (interest, approval, sympathy with H),
 - ⇒ Intensifying interest to H,
 - ⇒ Using in-group identity markers: in-group language or dialect, jargon, slang, contraction or ellipses,
 - ⇒ Seeking agreement: safe topics, repetition,
 - ⇒ Avoiding disagreement: token agreement, pseudoagreement, white lies, hedging opinions,
 - ⇒ Presupposing/raising/asserting common ground: gossip, small talk, point of view operations, presupposition manipulations,
 - ⇒ Joking.
- Conveying that S and H are co-operators
 - ⇒ Asserting or presupposing S's knowledge of and concerning for H's wants,
 - ⇒ Offering, promising,
 - ⇒ Being optimistic,
 - ⇒ Including both S and H in the activity,
 - ⇒ Giving (or asking for) reasons,
 - ⇒ Assuming or asserting reciprocity.
- Fulfilling H's want for some X.
 - ⇒ Giving gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation).

In this study, there are 56 cases of positive politeness strategies but the researcher will only give one example of discussion. The strategy is described as follow:

Data 3

CONTROL : Matt, do you have a visual on just what Mission Specialist Shariff is doing up there?

Kowalski : **He appears to be doing some form of the Macarena. But that would be just a best-guess scenario on my part.**

The bold utterance is the example of positive politeness strategy used in the movie. One of the parts of positive politeness strategy is joking.

c. Negative Politeness

The *negative politeness* also recognizes the hearer's face. However, it also admits that the speaker is in some way imposing on the hearer. Negatively polite constructions contain negative face by demonstrating distance and wariness.

The sub-strategies of *negative politeness* include:

- Being indirect
 - ⇒ Being conventionally indirect.
- Not presuming/assuming
 - ⇒ Questioning, using hedge: hedge on illocutionary force, prosodic/kinesic hedges.
- Not coercing H
 - ⇒ Being pessimistic,

- ⇒ Minimizing the imposition,
- ⇒ Giving deference.
- Communicating S's want to not impinge on H
- ⇒ Apologizing: admitting the impingement, indicating reluctance, giving overwhelming reasons, begging for forgiveness,
- ⇒ Impersonalizing S and H: using performatives, imperatives, impersonal verbs, passive and circumstantial voices, replacing the pronouns 'I' and 'you' by indefinites, pluralizing the 'I' and 'you' pronouns, using point-of-view distancing,
- ⇒ Stating the FTA as a general rule,
- ⇒ Nominalising
- Redressing other wants of H's.
- ⇒ Going on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebted to H.

The example of negative politeness strategy is as follows:

Data 4

CONTROL : Engineering says thank you.
KOWALSKI : **Tell them I still prefer my '67 Corvette, though.** Speaking of which, did I ever tell you—

The utterance by Kowalski is identified as the negative politeness strategy. It has been mentioned above that negative politeness strategy has several situations in which the negative politeness strategy could be uttered. One of the examples is being indirect.

d. Off-Record

Off-record takes some of the pressure off of the speaker. Its utterances are indirect uses of language which precise meaning has to be interpreted. The hearer cannot know with certainty that a hint has been broached; the speaker can credibly claim an alternative interpretation. Inviting conversational implicature and being vague or ambiguous are the sub-strategies of off-record.

- Inviting conversational implicatures
- ⇒ Giving hints,
- ⇒ Giving association rules,
- ⇒ Presupposing,
- ⇒ Understating,
- ⇒ Overstating,
- ⇒ Using tautologies,
- ⇒ Using contradictions,
- ⇒ Being ironic,
- ⇒ Using metaphors,
- ⇒ Using rhetorical questions.
- Being vague or ambiguous: Violating the manner maxim
- ⇒ Being ambiguous,
- ⇒ Being vague,
- ⇒ Over-generalizing,
- ⇒ Displacing H,
- ⇒ Being incomplete, using ellipsis.

The example of off-record in the script is explained as follows:

Data 5

KOWALSKI : How you feeling?
Dr. Stone : **Like a Chihuahua that's being tumble-dried.**
KOWALSKI : Well, it's been a rough week. If it makes you feel any better. **I coughed up everything but my kidneys on my first ride.**
Dr. Stone : Shit.

The off-record strategy is expressed by the bold utterances.

2. Cooperative Principle

From the data of utterances in *Gravity* movie, the researcher has found 18 utterances of cooperative principles that are dominated with flouting maxim of relation.

Data 1:

KOWALSKI : Houston, I have a bad feeling about this mission.
CONTROL : Please expand.
KOWALSKI : Okay, let me tell you a story. It was '96. I'd been up here for 42 days. Every time I passed over Texas, I looked down knowing that Mrs. Kowalski was looking up, thinking of me. Six weeks I'm blowing kisses at that woman. Then we land at Edwards and I find out that she's run off with this lawyer. So I packed my car, and I headed to--
CONTROL : Tijuana. You've told this story, Kowalski. As Houston recalls, she, uh, took off in your '74 GTO. Engineering requests fuel status on the jetpack prototype

Data 2:

Dr. Stone : Yes, yes. Mayday, mayday.
MAN : Mayday.
Dr. Stone : Mayday, mayday.
MAN : Aningaaq.
Dr. Stone : Aningaaq, is that your name?
MAN : Aningaaq.
Dr. Stone : Aningaaq is your name? Is that your name?
MAN : Mayday. Aningaaq. Aningaaq. mayday-
S : No, no, no. No, my name is not mayday. I'm Stone. Dr. Ryan Stone. I need help. I am--

V. Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that there are 88 utterances of politeness strategies used in the movie. Out of four strategies from Brown and Levinson (1987), bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness and off record, positive politeness is mostly used by the characters as they uttered something. The cooperative principles, in addition, there are 18 utterances which is dominated with flouting maxim of relation. This may happen because they know each other very well and they have worked together for a long time. For the further research, the researcher suggests to do the research in the context of politeness strategies and cooperative principles not only in movie, but also in other text, like short story or novel.

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