

MAXIMS OF POLITENESS PRINCIPLES IN *ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS* MOVIE

¹Adelle Trisnaningtyas

²Suci Budiwaty

¹Universitas Gunadarma, adelley0823@gmail.com

²Universitas Gunadarma sucibudiwaty@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Politeness is a basic human behavior to build a harmonious relationship. This research discussed the maxims of the politeness principle that were found in a movie named 'Alice Through the Looking Glass. The aims of this research were to find out that the maxims of the politeness principle that were used by the characters in 'Alice Through the Looking Glass' movie based on Leech's theory. The method for this research was the qualitative method. This research used the movie script as the source of data. The result of this research showed that there are six maxims of politeness principles that were found in the movie, they are Tact Maxim with 6 data, Generosity Maxim with 7 data, Approbation Maxim with 5 data, Modesty Maxim with 5 data, Agreement Maxim with 5 data and Sympathy Maxim with 5 data. Generosity Maxim is the most dominant maxim that was used by the characters. Furthermore, this research can be concluded that the characters tend to be generous to show their politeness to one another

Keywords: Alice Through the Looking Glass, politeness principle, maxim, movie

INTRODUCTION

Language is known as one of the most important tools of human beings to communicate with each other. It conveys information, ideas and feelings in a form of word that contains something. Therefore, there comes conversational exchanges between human as social beings because of language. It is a nature occurrence that people seek for comfort and entertainment through conversation.

Conversation is considered as a basic form of communication that we face in various situations. A good conversation will help people build a healthy social environment between one another. Moreover, it is a matter of fact that people want to be understood in conversation. That is the reason why we have to choose our words nicely and talk kindly to other people. It is a means to avoid conflict between each other.

In order to avoid misunderstanding between the speaker and the hearer, the hearer has to look

carefully at the words and utterances that are produced by the speaker. This also helps the hearer to understand the aspect of contextual meaning. That being so, there comes a study to understand further the meaning of utterances namely pragmatics.

One of the topics that is being discussed in pragmatics is politeness. It is an important value of human beings to interact with each other. In conversation, being polite will help us to build a positive image to other people and to create a healthy environment in our communication process.

Geoffrey Leech (1983) proposes several maxims of the politeness principle they are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim and sympathy maxim. Whether we realize it or not, these maxims can be found in daily conversations.

Furthermore, a conversation occurred not only in reality but also in

literary works such as movies, novels, and dramas. The characters in the literary works played a role as the speaker and the hearer in conversation. In analyzing a movie, we can use some theories of politeness principle. Therefore, in this research, the researchers focused on the script of *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and analyzed the conversation based on Leech's theory of politeness principle.

The researchers chose this movie due to the maxims of politeness principle that were found in the conversation between the characters and there is no research about maxims of politeness principle has been conducted by using this movie.

The objective of this research was to find out the maxims of politeness principles that were found in *Alice Through the Looking Glass* movie and to find out the most dominant maxim of politeness principle that was used in *Alice Through the Looking Glass* based on Leech's theory.

According to Cruse (2006, p. 131), politeness is a way of reducing the negative effects of what the speaker says on the feelings of others and increasing the positive effects. It is a term of having or displaying good manners and respect towards others. Furthermore, politeness is a basic human value to accomplish a good interpersonal relationship.

As stated by Leech (1983, p. 81), Politeness principle is minimizing the expression of impolite beliefs, and maximizing the expression of polite beliefs which is somewhat less important. In addition, Leech has proposed several politeness principles that were divided into six maxims of politeness principles: tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim.

1. Tact Maxim

Tact maxim is minimizing cost to other and maximizing benefit to other.

In this maxim, the speaker also displays good manners to avoid envy and jealousy to the hearer.

2. Generosity Maxim

Generosity maxim is minimizing benefit to self and maximizing cost to self. In this maxim, the speaker tends to show the feeling of being generous.

3. Approbation Maxim

Approbation maxim is minimizing the expression of beliefs which express of other and maximizing the expression of beliefs which express approval to other. To sum up, in this maxim the speaker tends to praise the hearer.

4. Modesty Maxim

Modesty maxim is minimizing the expression of praise of self and maximizing the expression of dispraise of self. In other words, the speaker can display the feeling of being modest.

5. Agreement Maxim

Agreement maxim is minimizing the expression of disagreement between self and other, and maximizing the expression of agreement between self and other. In this maxim, the speaker can show their fully agreement to someone's statement or opinion. Then, the speaker must give a reason if there is a partial agreement or disagreement.

Sympathy Maxim

Sympathy maxim is minimizing antipathy between self and other, and maximizing sympathy between self and other. In this maxim, the speaker can show their politeness by displaying that they care about someone's problem and validate their feelings.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a qualitative method, according to Creswell (1994), "Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem." The aim of this research was to understand the discovery of language

phenomena of politeness principles used by the characters in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. Therefore, the result of the research were presented descriptively. By using the qualitative method, the researchers interpreted the data richly.

Moreover, this research was done based on the source of data, that is *Alice Through the Looking Glass* movie and the data were taken from the utterances that contained the maxims of politeness principle used by the characters in the dialogues from the movie. The data was presented in a form of written text that was collected from the dialogues in movie script, such as words, phrases, clauses and sentences that are uttered by the characters.

The steps in collecting the data were done as follows: first, watched the *Alice Through the Looking Glass* movie in order to know the plot of the movie; second, read the script of *Alice Through the Looking Glass* movie to understand the storyline; third, checked both the movie and the script in order to achieve an exact data; fourth, read the transcript of the movie as required to determine the utterances that will be collected into data sheet; fifth, identified the utterances that contain the politeness principles that are uttered by the characters; sixth, classified the maxims of politeness principles by color. In this research, the researchers used red for tact maxim, blue for generosity maxim, yellow for approbation maxim, green for modesty maxim, purple for agreement maxim and turquoise for sympathy maxim; the last, wrote down in data sheet the politeness principles that were found.

The data in this research was analyzed by using some steps as in the following: first, presented the data in the form of written text and based on the classification. Second, analyzed the data by using the qualitative method; third, interpreted the data according to

Leech's theory of the politeness principles; fourth, discussed the use of the maxims of politeness principles by character's utterances; the last one, drew a conclusion after analyzing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The researchers presented the data that were taken from *Alice Through the Looking Glass* utterances which contained the maxims of politeness principles by using Geoffrey Leech's theory. Based on the results of the analysis, the researchers found six maxims of politeness principles. There are 33 utterances found and analyzed. The utterances consisted of Tact Maxim with 6 data, Generosity Maxim with 7 data, Approbation Maxim with 5 data, Modesty Maxim with 5 data, Agreement Maxim with 5 data and Sympathy Maxim with 5 data. The most dominant maxim of politeness principles that was used in the movie was Generosity Maxim.

Discussions

After all the maxims of politeness principles found, the researchers presented the dialogues as the data from the film and then discussed the data that had been found in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*.

Tact Maxim

Datum 1

Helen: I'm afraid the invitation must have been lost in the post.

Alice: Nonsense. **Lady Ascot once said we would always be welcomed.**

This is the example of tact maxim uttered by Alice. The conversation occurred between Alice and her mother, Helen. It took place in their home right after Alice had come back home from her voyage to China. Helen then informed her that there will be a succession that night. However,

Helen thought she has lost the invitation in the post. Then Alice applied the tact maxim in her utterance. She maximized the benefit to Helen by saying *Lady Ascot once said we would always be welcomed*. This sentence implied that the speaker wanted to please the hearer.

Alice maximized the benefit to Helen because she convinced that they would always be welcomed to Lady Ascot's residence whether they have the invitation or not.

Generosity Maxim

Datum 7

Alice: How could you sell our shares? Helen: **Everything I do is for you, Alice**. So, you can make a decent start in life.

The datum above is a proper use of generosity maxim. The conversation occurred between Alice and Helen, her mother. It took place in Ascot's residence when Alice found out that her mother had sold their family shares to Hamish, a snobbish Lord, who once tried to marry Alice. After Hamish had broken the news, Alice confronted her mother. Helen then tried to comfort Alice by saying *Everything I do is for you, Alice*. Helen applied the generosity maxim because she minimized the benefit for herself and maximized cost to herself. She sacrificed everything for Alice and that she was willingly to do everything for Alice.

Approbation Maxim

Datum 14

Young Hatter: Hello. **You have a very nice head**. Alice: Thank you. The conversation above occurred between Alice and the Young Hatter. The utterance was spoken when Alice stumbled upon the Young Hatter when he walked on the street with a group of his friends. Therefore, he showed the expression of admiration towards Alice's head. In the conversation,

Young Hatter then maximized praise to Alice by saying *You have a very nice head*. Furthermore, the utterance belongs to the approbation maxim because it contained a compliment directed to Alice.

Modesty Maxim

Datum 20

Time: You ask the impossible, my dear. I cannot give you the Chronosphere. Iracebeth: You would if you loved me. **No one loves me. No one fears me**.

The conversation above took place in Time's chamber. When Iracebeth arrived at the Castle of Eternity, she asked Time to borrow her the Chronosphere. However, Time refused to lend it. Iracebeth felt unhappy with the answer. In the middle of her self-deprecating speech, Iracebeth started to dispraise herself. She maximized dispraise of herself by saying *No one loves me. No one fears me*. Iracebeth, who was also known as The Red Queen, was feared by everyone who lived in Wonderland. In this case, she belittled herself and her power.

Agreement Maxim

Datum 24

Mr. Phelps: Captain, the Malay pirates have us cornered. We must surrender. Alice: **Surrendering my father's ship will not guarantee survival, Mr. Phelps**.

The conversation occurred between Alice and one of the crews, Mr. Phelps. The ship that was captained by Alice was on the way back to London. However, they were being cornered by the Malay pirates in the Strait of Malacca. This led Mr. Phelps asked Alice to surrender. Alice minimized disagreement by saying *Surrendering my father's ship will not guarantee survival, Mr. Phelps*. The utterance showed that Alice did not

agree with Mr. Phelps's opinion. It contained Alice's disagreement of something but she expressed her utterance politely.

Sympathy Maxim

Datum 29

Alice: Good evening, gentlemen. The world has opened to us, but we must move quickly. It is my belief that further expeditions along the Wu River...

Hamish: **I'm sorry, Miss Kingsleigh. There will be no further expeditions.**

The utterance was spoken when Hamish told Alice that she could not go to other expedition anymore. Hamish took the advantage of Alice and her mother's poor financial situation, he forced them to sell their house and their ship. In the dialogue, Hamish maximized sympathy by saying *I'm sorry, Miss Kingsleigh. There will be no further expeditions.* Hamish maximized sympathy because he knew how much Alice wanted to do the expeditions but yet he had to take the chance away from her.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

After the researchers had analysed the data, it can be concluded that there were six maxims of politeness principles performed by the characters found in *Alice Through the Looking Glass* movie with 33 utterances which contained the maxim of politeness principles. They were: Tact Maxim with 6 data, Generosity Maxim with 7 data, Approbation Maxim with 5 data, Modesty Maxim with 5 data, Agreement Maxim with 5 data and Sympathy Maxim with 5 data. While the most dominant maxim of politeness principles that was used by the characters in the movie was generosity maxim because there were 7 utterances which contained generosity maxim found. Therefore, it can be concluded

that the characters tend to show their politeness by showing the feeling of being generous to one another. It also implied the characters were putting others before oneself in order to build a harmonious relationship.

Suggestion

The researchers believed that maxims of politeness principles can be found in daily conversation. People can learn how to communicate properly and politely with each other through a movie. By using politeness when we interacted can also avoid misunderstanding between others and it helpful to build a good relationship. In line with previous research, it was important to make it as research in order to improve new findings about the six maxims of politeness principles and their application. Moreover, other researchers may analyze the maxims of politeness principles with different topics such as interview and speech. It was also important to develop knowledge of the researcher and the readers about politeness principles.

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