



The Politeness Requesting Principle Found in “Titanic” TV Mini Series

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ARTICEL INFO

Keywords:

Politeness
Requesting Principle
TV Series
Film

History:

Received (18 October 2022)
Revised (7 January 2023)
Accepted (9 January 2023)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the strategy used in the Titanic television series for making politeness requests. In the course of this research, a descriptive qualitative methodology was utilized. The Titanic television series, which was directed by Robert Lieberman and broadcast in 1996, served as the source of the data. The information was gathered by going on YouTube and watching episodes of the Titanic television series. The data were analyzed by applying the theory that Brown and Levinson had proposed (1987). The findings demonstrated that the characters utilized strategies of politeness in order to lessen the likelihood of a threat to their own self-image. The research uncovered four distinct forms of politeness: bald on record, bald off record, positive politeness, and negative politeness.

INTRODUCTION

Film is an audio-visual medium that may present words, sounds, images, and their mashups as a type of electronic mass communication. One of the modern media platforms that emerged on the global scene during the second wave is film (Mikos, 2016; Elsaesser et al., 2021). The emergence of film as a new medium allows for the distribution of stories, events, music, dramas, comedies, and other technology offered to the general audience, as well as enjoyment that has previously been accustomed (Deuze & McQuail, 2020). According to Tyner (2014) and Kabooaha (2016), movie is a very effective mass communication tool that can be used for both enjoyment and instruction. The audience is affected by movies in some way, and the audience's response may be psychological or sociological. There are several different classification systems for movies in general. The widescreen and glass displays are the first two formats that distinguish movies. The second division is made up of the fiction and non-fiction categories. Documentaries, documentation, and science-related movies are the three subgenres of non-fiction films. Additionally, there are two subgenres of fiction movies: experimental and genre (Kristanto, 2007).

A film can be used as the data source in the study of pragmatics. A subfield of linguistics called pragmatics examines how language is employed in communication to externalize meaning. Pragmatic abilities in social interaction between the speaker and the hearer include civility and spoken requests. Being polite is the ability of the participants in a social encounter to interact in a setting of mainly harmonious relations. It is a collection of behavioral patterns that establish and maintain good relationships (Erlidawati & Rahmah, 2022). For civilized interpersonal communication, a single persona needs to be developed. The capacity to communicate effectively is essential and useful in daily life (Yuzar, 2020; Adityo, 2022). Any community or individual can engage with one another and behave socially through communication. Typically, this dialogue uses language that is deemed acceptable by society. As a result, two-person interaction is generally considered

to be a form of communication. For the person being spoken to understand the meaning or intent of the message given, a successful communication strategy is required (Savignon, 2018; Deuze & McQuail, 2020; Yuzar et al., 2022). There are two types of communication: direct and indirect. Direct statements or direct quotes from someone's perspective are examples of direct communication. In this study, the researchers focus solely on direct speech, particularly as it appears in the characters' dialogue. The use of politeness in communication is the subject of interest in this particular study.

According to Yule (1996), politeness is the behavior used to demonstrate awareness of another person's face throughout an interaction. According to pragmatics, being polite is a method to respect someone's appearance or sense of self. In order to maintain the speaker's or both parties' sense of appreciation while upholding the addressee's self-image, it is crucial to emphasize the concept of civility when giving speeches. It is an act of civility to refrain from hurting communication without consideration for others and oneself. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), requests are one type of face-threatening behaviour (FTA). A politeness technique must be used while making a request due to the nature of the request. In their definition of politeness, Brown and Levinson identify four strategies: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and bald off record. The use of particular tactics is supported by several factors. The urgency of the request itself, the relationship between the speaker and the listener, as well as the speaker's readiness to alleviate the burden on the listener are some of these factors. The application of civility techniques, however, is not always successful. To put it another way, the speaker does not always achieve his goals.

Several researchers have studied politeness, including Sari et al. (2015), Ayuningtyas (2012), and Indahsari & Surjowati (2021). The study conducted by Sari et al. (2015) discovered that politeness was used to teach EFL students to apply politeness in the learning process of their study. In contrast to current research, which is about how politeness is employed in the dialogue of TV series, the study conducted by Sari et al. focuses on how politeness is used to teach EFL students. Furthermore, Ayuningtyas (2012) investigated whether the politeness strategy in requests always works well. It was mentioned that request is a speech act phenomenon that we come across most commonly in regular social interactions. When making a request, the speaker wants the recipient to take action that will be advantageous to them. In this situation, the speaker is imposing on the listener, who must pay the expense of complying with the request. The difference between Ayuningtya's research and the current study is that she examines how politeness is used to clarify whether it always works effectively in casual social interactions, whereas the current research examines how characters in TV series employ politeness. Moreover, Indahsari & Surjowati (2021) investigated the politeness strategies employed in *Mata Najwa* program. The study found that the host of *Mata Najwa* employed various politeness strategies in interviewing the guests. The research differs from the current research in that it examines the various politeness strategies employed by *Mata Najwa*'s host when she conducts interviews with guests, whereas the current research examines the politeness techniques employed by characters in the dialogue of Titanic TV series.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of spoken or written words from subjects and observable behaviour (Polkinghorne, 2005). The data source in this study is the Titanic TV series. The television series was directed by Robert Lieberman and released in 1996. The series' cast members are Catherine Zeta-Jones, Peter Gallagher, George C. Scott, Eva Marie Saint, and Tim Curry. The series is about a love story that happened on the Titanic. One of the main characters passed away when the Titanic sank, which led to a sad ending to the love story.

The data was collected by watching the video of the Titanic miniseries on YouTube. At the same time, the researchers conducted note-taking of the relevant data. There were various steps involved in the data collection: finding request forms from the characters in the “Titanic 1996” TV series, classifying politeness strategies of requests, explaining and interpreting to address the research problems, and reporting or providing conclusions. The data was analyzed by using the theory proposed by Brown & Levinson (1987). According to the theory, there are four politeness strategies recommended to reduce the likelihood of face-threatening acts. The politeness strategies are bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researchers discovered that several politeness strategies were employed in the dialogue of the Titanic TV series. Based on the theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), there are four politeness strategies found in the Titanic TV series: off-record, bald on-record, negative politeness, and positive politeness.

Positive politeness

The goal of a positive politeness strategy is to save the listeners’ good faces by exhibiting intimacy, engaging in friendship, making the listeners feel good, and demonstrating that the speakers and the listeners share the same goal.

Data 1

Mr. Astor: “You can do it, Bella.”

In data 1, one of the characters named Mr. Astor gives Bella encouragement by saying, “You can do it, Bella.” He helps her to believe in her ability and do her best. By outlining this plan, Mr. Astor endows Bella with authority through his words, enabling her to be self-assured. The line is an example of positive politeness because Mr. Astor encourages and motivates Bella through his words.

Data 2

Mrs. Ellen: “Cold in your condition. It’s chilly out here, Mrs. Astor.”

In data 2, Mrs. Ellen shows her care for Mrs. Astor by saying, “It’s chilly out there”. She expressed concern for Mrs. Astor’s health by saying that. She does not want Mrs. Astor to get sick from being outside for too long because the weather is cold and certainly not good for her health. The dialogue is an example of positive politeness since it conveys a positive message that makes the listeners feel good.

Negative Politeness

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the addressee’s need for unconstrained action and attention is represented by a negative face and oppressive behavior, which is the target of negative politeness.

Data 3

Mr. Park: “Please forgive me. I was wrong.”

In the statement quoted in data 3, Mr. Park expressed regret for blaming Isabella for his family's problems. Whoever it was that enraged Mrs. Park with Mr. Park, the statement lost its civility because it conveyed guilt for blaming Mrs. Bella without providing any proof. The remarks can be classified as negative politeness because he was sorry for talking carelessly about her.

Data 4

Mrs. Bella: "I changed my mind. I am completely comfortable here. Thank you."

When the ship clerk arrived, Mrs. Bella changed her mind and opted not to swap rooms, for which she expressed regret in her speech. She wanted to change the room because she had a conflict with Mr. Park. After Mr. Park said sorry, she did not want to change the room and chose to stay there. The regret expressed by her can be categorized as negative politeness.

Bald On-Record

In this strategy, the speaker makes no effort to lessen the threat to the hearer's reputation in the speech. However, bald on-record politeness still has some methods for attempting to reduce face-threatening behaviours.

Data 5

Mr. Dicky: "Well, played. If you don't join, I will tell your rottenness to your lovers."

Giving others a warning signal is the focus of the bald-on record strategy. The speaker can reduce the face-threat action by having a tight relationship with the audience. Giving a warning allows the speaker to express meaning and intent without worrying about their communication style. In the clause, Mr. Dicky issues a warning that if he does not accompany him, he will reveal his immorality to his lover.

Bald Off-Record

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), bald off-record strategy is an implicit form of courtesy. The statements do not directly address the listeners.

Data 6

Mr. Astor: "Why you don't ask your wife?"

In data 6, Mr. Park was asked, "Why you don't ask your wife?" by Mr. Astor as he was trying to explain something. It can be a problem that needs to be solved without causing harm to others. Based on the question, Mr. Astor did not want to directly tell Mr. Park what he meant. He wanted Mr. Park to ask his wife about what he meant. Since the question conveys an implied intention, it can be classified as bald off-record strategy.

CONCLUSION

Following the completion of the investigation and analysis, it was discovered that the Titanic TV miniseries 1996 utilized a number of different politeness strategies. Positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on-record, and bald off-record were the four forms of politeness strategies that were utilized in the miniseries. After finishing this research, the researchers thought about several of the suggestions that were given to them. The findings of this study can be practically applied as a conceptual contribution to address issues of direct speech in pragmatic studies. Further, the findings of this study could also serve as a guide for future research that includes pragmatic investigations if the right considerations are taken into account. In addition, the findings of this research were intended to act as a roadmap for additional research that may be conducted in the future. In addition, by analyzing how direct speech is used in movies/films/TV series, this research makes a contribution to the field of linguistics.

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