



Politeness Strategies of the Main Characters of *Pride and Prejudice* Movie

Lulu Atul Musyafaah[✉], Issy Yuliasri, Hendi Pratama

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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Abstract

In conversations, people tend to speak politely to keep their interlocutors' feelings so the conversation can be maintained in harmony. They follow several rules and principles that already exist in society. They apply politeness strategies so that the communication can run effectively. This study aims to discover the politeness strategies performed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie and explain the pattern of different types of strategies used in the movie. The data were taken from the movie's transcript as the primary source. A descriptive qualitative method was used to analyze politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. Based on the analysis, the politeness strategies were used by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The types of politeness strategies employed are bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategy. The most frequent strategy was positive politeness which occurred 98 times from 149 data. The patterns of politeness strategies applied are in declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. All types of sentences contain bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategies. By using politeness strategies, people appreciate their interlocutors so that the conversation will be well-maintained. Besides, this study contributes to English language teaching in comprehending cross-cultural understanding (CCU) through the movie, especially in western culture.

✉ Correspondent Address:

Kampus Pascasarjana Unnes, Jl. Kelud Utara III

Semarang 50237, Indonesia

E-mail: luluatulmusya206@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

In daily conversations, people tend to speak politely so that the conversation can be maintained in harmony and cohesion can be achieved (Lakoff, 1990). It means that the speakers give attention to the content and how to transfer it. By applying politeness strategies, people prefer to use bald on record strategy if they face the minimal risk of conflict during the conversation, they tend to use negative politeness strategy for middle risk, and they choose off-record strategy for high risk of conflict can make the communication runs smoothly. Pratama (2019, p. 5) argues that “communication is prone to conflicts and politeness is a failsafe.” In communication, they try to create good vibes in communicating with the interlocutors by applying the politeness strategy, so that the communication can run effectively.

Effective communication can be achieved by transferring the message successfully and creating comfortable communication. Politeness strategy is a suitable strategy that needs to be applied to achieve it. Brown and Levinson (1978) state that politeness is rational behavior with the purpose of soft face-threatening acts. Having polite communication could not be separated by the culture in which the language is spoken. It means politeness is getting along with the culture of the society. It is crucial to understand both politeness and culture. *Pride and Prejudice* movie is chosen as the object of this study because the main characters' lives are affected by these legal and cultural norms. This paper aims to discover the politeness strategies performed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie and to know the pattern of different strategies used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

Studies have been conducted such as politeness strategies in confrontations of prejudice (Lewis & Yoshimura, 2017), some but not all dispreferred turn markers help to interpret scalar terms in polite contexts (Bonneton et al., 2015), verbal expression of politeness (Percival & Pulford, 2019), politeness strategies deployed by Filipinos in asynchronous computer-mediated discourse (Correo, 2014), used by the character of *The Great Debaters* movie (Rosari, 2016) politeness in dissertations (Koohzad et al., 2019), politeness in speech (Eshreth & Draweesh, 2018). These studies confirm that the more indirect a speech is, the more the speech will be polite. In addition, applying politeness in communication can also be

done by using a long pause or mitigating devices, such as *please* and *well*.

Politeness strategies applied in English language teaching such as politeness constructions in written business communication (Nyangiwe & Tappe, 2021), politeness strategies during disagreement (Fuentes & McDonough, 2016), a politeness theory of cell-phone usage (Miller-Ott & Kelly, 2017), implications for directive compliance behavior (Miller et al., 2012), effect of a hearers' politeness on multimodal behavior in speech (Suzuki et al., 2018), Politeenes in English debate (Nurrahman, 2020), and politeness in business English course (Kuzhevskaya, 2019) were also used to support the study. These studies confirm that politeness can help students communicate more effectively. Politeness improves students' attitudes, and still, the mitigating devices are tools that enable the speakers to speak politely.

Some studies have been conducted on the politeness in the workplace (Friess, 2013; Yin et al., 2012; Putri, 2017). In those studies, the main factors that affect speakers in choosing politeness strategies are social distance, the speaker's relative power, and the rank of the imposition in a specific culture. One of the findings declares that doctors use politeness in the medical sector to make their patients feel satisfied with their service. Studies focus on the interaction in society (Yazdanfar & Bonyadi, 2016; Kelly et al., 2019; Ruansyah, 2018; Sukarno, 2015; Das & Zubaidi, 2021). The findings are politeness strategies applied by both western and non-western culture societies. Such American English speakers use *please*, and mitigation devices in their daily conversation with friends and relatives than Persian speakers. While in Indonesia, they frequently use off-record strategies to avoid engaging in a face-threatening act.

The present study aims to describe the types of politeness strategies and the pattern of different types of strategies used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The researchers were interested in evaluating the use of politeness in this movie to understand the use of politeness in western culture. Every place has its own culture. Even though some people try to speak politely, they do not understand the culture of their interlocutors. In some cases, it will be considered impolite. i.e., when we meet a stranger, we directly speak up using bald on record strategy. In this case, it considers an impolite one because based on the use of the bald on record strategy, we may apply this strategy

to someone who has a close relationship with us, and knows each other very well, such as our close friends and family. In addition, Mujiyanto (2017, p. 289) argues that the “politeness act restricted by the socio-cultural setting where it is used.”

Levine and Adelman (1982) clarify that all cultures do not have the same rules governing this area of communication. Maintaining the society’s culture should be the priority when the speakers want to apply politeness in their communication. Politeness strategies became the study’s focus leading to EFL’s contribution to comprehending cross-cultural understanding (CCU) through this movie, especially in western culture. This study can be one of the sources for students to understand politeness in western culture applied by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

Therefore, the study aimed to investigate: (1) the use of bald on record strategy; (2) the use of positive politeness strategy; (3) the use of negative politeness strategy; (4) the use of off-record strategy; and (5) the pattern from different types of strategies used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

METHODS

This study was carried out with some assumptions. The first is that many politeness strategies are performed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The second assumption is that there are some patterns from different types of politeness strategies.

The study employs qualitative research. The data were taken from the utterances of the main characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The data are in the form of words, phrases, and sentences. The data are described based on the politeness strategies used by the main characters. The politeness strategies are proposed by Brown and Levinson. By analyzing the characters’ utterances, the writers try to know the types of politeness strategies used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

The unit of analysis is the politeness utterances used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie conversation. The conversation is observed to find out the politeness strategies. Then, the reason for employing politeness strategies are explained. In addition, the pattern from different types of those politeness strategies is presented.

Collecting the data is the significant step in this study. The technique of gathering the data applied in this study uses several steps. The first step of collecting the data was watching the video taken from YouTube to understand the content. While watching the video, the movie’s transcription was checked.

After collecting the data, the data were analyzed. It is elaborated below the steps of analyzing data.

Identifying the data.

After watching the video and making the transcript, some notes were made as the data. They contain many kinds of politeness strategies. The notes existed bold in the form of sentences or noun phrases in the conversation.

(1) Classifying

After getting the data from the transcript, the data were classified based on the politeness strategies used by the main characters.

(2) Interpreting

The data contained politeness strategies were interpreted, and the patterns from different types of politeness strategies were revealed.

Conclusion and suggestion

The ultimate step in this study was drawing conclusions and suggestions. It is made from the result of the study.

This study uses investigator triangulation. The investigator triangulation was done by the researchers and asked for the expert about the data interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings were presented along with examples of evidence found in the analysis. The previous study focusing on politeness strategies (Rosari, 2016) proved that the characters of *Great Debaters* movie prefer to apply politeness strategies to keep their interlocutors’ feelings. This present study is in line with the previous studies on the result that the politeness strategy can maintain communication in harmony. Besides, this present study also analyzes the pattern from different types of strategies used in the movie.

Another previous study confirmed that Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory applies to non-western culture, especially in Japan (Kiyama et al., 2012). Other previous studies (Mujiyanto, 2017; Hindawi, et.al, 2016) confirmed that politeness is restricted by the society’s culture. This present study focused on the western movie

in line with Brown and Levinson's politeness theory as a universal theory to avoid bias.

This study contains the description of politeness strategies of the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The result of the data analysis is shown, and the frequency of occurrences of those strategies is described.

Super Strategy: Bald on Record

Bald on record strategy is most often utilized by speakers who have a close relationship with their interlocutors, such as between close friends and families. Moreover, there are two other possible reasons for doing this strategy. First, the speaker does not minimize the face threat. Second, the speaker wants to speak directly and reduce the impact of the face-threatening act by imposition. Bald on record means conveying utterances directly to get maximum efficiency in communication. In Table 1, bald on record strategy and its realization are employed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

Table 1. Bald on record Strategy and its Realization in *Pride and Prejudice* movie

Politeness Strategy	The realization	Frequency
Bald on record	Great urgency or desperation	5
	Speaking as if great efficiency is necessary in attention getters	4
	Task oriented	5
	Sympathetic advice or warning	8
	Granting permission for something	2
	Invitations	1
	Welcoming	1
	Greeting and Farewell	4
Sub- total		30

Table 1 gives information related to the frequency of bald on record strategy realized by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The table shows that there are 30 data of bald on record strategy. The dialogue in extract 1 is an example of bald on-record strategy employed by Elizabeth as one of the main characters in *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

Extract 1

This dialogue happened when Mr. Bingley left Jane. Jane already loved Mr. Bingley when they met at a ball. Unfortunately, Mr. Bingley suddenly went to London. Jane had a prejudice that Mr. Bingley did not love her. Jane was sad because of it. Knowing Jane's condition, Elizabeth motivated Jane and asked Jane to go to London to meet Mr. Bingley. Elizabeth used a task-oriented strategy by asking Jane to go to their uncle's house in London. In London, Jane would meet with Mr. Bingley.

Jane : It's far more likely that he doesn't love me and never has.

Elizabeth : He loves you, Jane. Do not give up. Go to our aunt and uncle's in London, let it be known you are there, and I am sure he will come to you.

Elizabeth revealed bald on record strategy that was the use of task-oriented utterances. This strategy was used to give a task to a hearer to get the desired result. Elizabeth asked Jane to go to London to let Jane meet Mr. Bingley and fight for her love.

Extract 2

Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner, together with Elizabeth, came to Mr. Darcy's house. They would have dinner together with Mr. Darcy in Mr. Darcy's place. They came in the afternoon before dining time. Because the weather was sunny, Mr. Darcy invited Mr. Gardiner to fish. Mr. Darcy asked Mr. Gardiner whether Mr. Gardiner liked to fish or not. After knowing Mr. Gardiner's answer that he wanted fishing, Mr. Darcy invited Mr. Gardiner to fish together at the lake.

Darcy : Can I persuade you to accompany me to the lake this afternoon? It's very well stocked and its occupants left in peace for far too long.

Mr. Gardiner: I would be delighted.

Inviting someone to do something was one of the sub-strategies of the bald on record strategy. Mr. Darcy applied bald on record strategy that was invitations. Mr. Darcy invited Mr. Gardiner to fish together in the lake.

Super Strategy: Positive Politeness

Positive politeness is applied to balance the hearer's positive face. The speaker wants to satisfy the hearer by showing that both have the same wish. Generally, it is found when the speakers try to minimize distance with the hearer because they know

that the hearer deserves to be respected. Positive politeness is the most frequent strategy used by the main characters. The main characters prefer to apply this strategy to show their solidarity; in table 2, positive politeness strategy and its realization are employed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

Table 2. Positive politeness strategy and its Realization in *Pride and Prejudice* movie

Politeness Strategy	The realization	Frequency
Positive politeness	Noticing attending to H	9
	Exaggerating	5
	Intensifying interest	3
	Using in-group identity markers	13
	Seek agreement	6
	Presupposing	4
	Avoiding disagreement	4
	Joke	4
	Offer, Promise	3
	Being optimistic	9
	Including both S and H	11
	Give or ask for reasons	8
	Give gifts to hearer	19
	Sub- total	98

Table 2 gives information related to the frequency of positive politeness strategy realized by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The table shows that there are 98 data on this strategy. The utterances in extract 3 show the example of this strategy.

Extract 3

This dialogue happens when Elizabeth and her family come to the ball. When they entered the room, Mr. Bingley, the one who conducted the ball, directly greeted them. Mr. Bingley welcomed Elizabeth and her family to the ball. Unfortunately, Elizabeth ignored Mr. Bingley's greeting because she was looking for Mr. Wickham at the ball. Mr. Bingley

realized that Elizabeth was looking for someone from her gesture. Mr. Bingley asked Elizabeth related to someone that she was looking for.

Bingley : *Miss Elizabeth, are you looking for someone?*

Elizabeth : *No. No, not at all. I was just admiring the general splendour.*

Elizabeth did not answer Mr. Bingley's question honestly. She tried maintaining the hearer's positive face by doing white lies to avoid disagreement. Here, Elizabeth applied white lies as one of the sub-strategies of positive politeness.

Extract 4

This dialogue happened when Mr. Darcy gave his opinion about Mr. Bingley's couple dancing. Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley came to the ball. Mr. Darcy did not join the dance vice versa Mr. Bingley did it. When they had already danced, Mr. Bingley came to Mr. Darcy and conversed with him. Mr. Darcy was impressed with the appearance of the girl who had already danced with Mr. Bingley. Mr. Darcy told his opinion about the girl who danced with Mr. Bingley. He exaggerated his interest by saying the girl was the only beautiful girl at that ball.

Darcy : You were dancing with the only handsome girl in the room.

Bingley : She is the most beautiful creature I have ever beheld.

Mr. Darcy applied exaggerating strategy as one of the sub-strategies of positive politeness to satisfy the hearer's positive face. Mr. Darcy gave a compliment to Mr. Bingley's dancing couple. Mr. Bingley also agreed with Mr. Darcy's opinion that his couple was beautiful.

Super Strategy: Negative Politeness

Negative politeness is applied to minimize the imposition on the hearer. Typically, the speakers will use this strategy when distant from the hearer. The utterances produced are not directly connected to the forms and function, so the hearer's comfort can be maintained. The speaker supports the hearer's negative self-image by starting the conversation by apologizing before conveying their need and want; in table 3 negative politeness strategy and its realization are employed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

Table 3 Negative politeness strategy and its Realization in *Pride and Prejudice* movie

Politeness Strategy	The realization	Frequency
Negative Politeness	Being pessimistic	1
	Giving deference	1
	Apologizing	7
Sub-total		9

Table 3 gives information related to the frequency of negative politeness strategy realized by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The table shows that there are 9 data on this strategy. The main characters rarely use this strategy. The example is found in extract 5 and extract 6. Elizabeth spoke with Mr. Darcy by starting the conversation by apologizing. It happens in extract 5.

Extract 5

This conversation happened when Elizabeth, together with her aunt and uncle, visited Mr. Darcy's house was opened to the public. Elizabeth walked around to see the statues and the design of Mr. Darcy's house. Elizabeth admired all things in this house. Everything looked beautiful. While enjoying the design, Elizabeth is shocked to see Mr. Darcy in front of her.

Elizabeth : I'm so sorry to intrude. They said that the house was open for visitors. I had no idea
 Darcy : May I see you back to the village?
 Elizabeth : No!

After meeting with Mr. Darcy unintentionally, Elizabeth asked for forgiveness. She explained that she knew Mr. Darcy's house was open to the public. She asked forgiveness for maintaining the hearer's negative face because Elizabeth intruded on Mr. Darcy.

Extract 6

This dialogue happens when Elizabeth in her way to London together with Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner. Jane, Elizabeth's sister, told Elizabeth that Lydia had run away from the house with a soldier. Mr. Gardiner was afraid of Lydia's condition. Lydia was his niece. He asked Elizabeth related to her father's effort to recover Lydia. Elizabeth knew that her father had already gone to London to find her little sister, but

Elizabeth was pessimistic that her father would be able to see her little sister.

Mrs. Gardiner : Has anything been done to recover her?
 Elizabeth : My father has gone to London. But I know very well that nothing can be done. We have not the smallest hope.

In this case, Elizabeth applied to be pessimistic strategy. Elizabeth was suspicious about her father's ability to recover Lydia. Being pessimistic about the power of someone to do something was included in the sub-strategies of negative politeness.

Super Strategy: Off Record

This strategy is simply described as an indirect strategy. The speaker lets the hearers have their own interpretation. It can be in the form of conversational implicature. It also has an ambiguous meaning. Off-record strategy is applied when the speaker faces a high risk of conflict; in Table 4 off record strategy and its realization are employed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie.

Table 4. Off record strategy and its Realization in *Pride and Prejudice* movie

Politeness Strategy	The realization	Frequency
Off Record	Giving hints	1
	Use tautologies	1
	Use contradictions	2
	Use metaphors	2
	Use rhetorical question	2
	Be incomplete-use ellipsis	4
Sub-total		12

Table 4 gives information related to the frequency of off record strategy realized by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The main characters use as many as 12 times out of 149 data. Elizabeth applied using metaphors as one of the sub-strategies of off-record in extract 7.

Extract 7

Bennet's family was coming to the ball to see Mr. Bingley. Mr. Bingley was wealthy, and Mr. Bennet wanted him to marry one of his five daughters.

Unfortunately, Mr. Bingley was coming together with his friend. As one of Mr. Bennet's daughters, Elizabeth was curious about which one was Mr. Bingley. She asked her friend, Charlotte, to explain it.

Elizabeth : *So, which of the painted peacocks is our Mr. Bingley?*

Charlotte : *Well, he's on the right, and on the left is his sister.*

Elizabeth was pleasant because she got an opportunity to meet Mr. Bingley directly when she was at the ball. After listening to her father's story about Mr. Bingley, she admired him. She asked a question to Charlotte using metaphor. However, in this situation, Elizabeth used a metaphor painted peacocks to indicate that Elizabeth certainly had good judgment toward Mr. Bingley. Besides, Elizabeth included Charlotte in conversation by using the term "our" which meant that Elizabeth included both speaker and hearer inactivity.

Extract 8

Jane feels in love with Mr. Bingley. Unfortunately, Mr. Bingley went to London and left her. Jane received this condition. She told Elizabeth that she was okay. She could stand even without Mr. Bingley in her life. Elizabeth had a different opinion from Jane because Elizabeth believed that Mr. Bingley was so much in love with Jane.

Jane : *No, you cannot think me so weak as to be in danger now.*

Elizabeth : *I think you are in great danger of making him as much in love with you as ever.*

Jane told Elizabeth that she could meet with Mr. Bingley under different conditions. She felt so fine, so Elizabeth did not need to worry again. Vice versa, Elizabeth already knew that Mr. Bingley also fell in love with Jane, but Elizabeth revealed the contradiction. She said that Jane was in great danger of making Mr. Bingley fall in love with her. In fact, Jane was not in great danger, but she would enjoy the happy moment because both Mr. Bingley and Jane had the same feeling. They loved each other. Here, Elizabeth revealed using contradiction strategy as the sub-strategy of off record.

Pattern from different types of strategies used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie

There are some patterns of politeness strategies applied by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. Both Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy

applied the politeness strategy in the declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentence.

The pattern of politeness strategies applied by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie is found in declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. Bald on-record strategy was used by the main characters in the form of the declarative sentence when they were granting permission for something. The positive politeness strategy was performed mainly by reducing the threat of face. They applied the strategies in the form of declarative sentences for making the statement, expressing emotion, and asking a question. It is used when they are having a joke, exaggerating, noticing, being optimistic, giving a gift, and soon. They apply negative politeness strategies in the form of declarative sentences when they apologize. Off-record strategies were applied by them in the form of declarative sentences when they were using contradiction, using metaphor, giving hints, and being incomplete.

The main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie used the interrogative sentence to ask a question. The bald on-record strategy was applied by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie in the form of a question when they wanted to invite someone to do something. The positive politeness strategies were applied as a question when they tried to include both in activities, giving gifts, seeking agreement, asking for a reason, offering, promising, and using identity markers. The negative politeness strategies were applied as a question when they wanted to apologize and gave deference.

The main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie applied four strategies of politeness using an imperative sentence. In giving commands and warnings, they mostly applied bald on-record strategies such as great urgency, task-oriented, welcoming, advice, and farewell. They used positive politeness strategies such as using identity markers, noticing, including both inactivity, joke, and gossip when the hearer had a higher position than the speaker. The sub-strategy of negative politeness used by the main characters was apologizing. Besides, they also used an off-record strategy when they realized they faced a high risk of conflict during the conversation. The strategy applied was an incomplete strategy. The last one was an exclamatory sentence. Bald on-record strategies were used in an exclamatory sentence when they gave a warning. The exclamatory sentence is also used to express the emotion of the

main characters. They applied a positive politeness strategy that was noticing sub-strategy to notice what the hearer needs and wants.

CONCLUSIONS

In accordance with the research problems of the study to scrutinize the politeness strategy, it is clarified that politeness strategies are dominantly used. It can be concluded that the more politeness strategies used by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie, the better the communication will be. There are four types of politeness strategies employed by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie. They are bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategy. The most frequent strategy is positive politeness strategy; the second rank is bald-on record then followed by off-record and negative politeness.

The pattern of politeness strategies applied by the main characters of *Pride and Prejudice* movie found in declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences. The main characters used Bald on-record strategy when they were granting permission for something, asking questions, great urgency, task-oriented, welcoming, warning, giving advice, and farewell. They applied the positive politeness strategies for making the statement, expressing emotion, asking a question, seeking agreement, asking for a reason, offered, promising, and using identity marker. They applied the negative politeness strategies when they apologized, and give deference. Off-record strategies were applied by them when they were using contradiction, using metaphor, giving hints, and being incomplete.

Henceforth, to what extent these politeness strategies for teaching speaking English to students be strengthened by the fact that the politeness strategies make the students easier to communicate with their interlocutors because the interlocutors feel appreciated by the speakers. Of course, teachers are also demanded to teach politeness strategies suitable to their culture. In addition, this study can be a reference for students in understanding the pattern of different types of strategies used in *Pride and Prejudice* movie. The students also need to analyze the factors that influence the characters in applying those politeness strategies and go further with other subjects such as novels or even other movies. To the reader in general, this study's finding can be a reference in

comprehending politeness strategies so they can use them appropriately.

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