

EVELYN HUGO'S POLITENESS STRATEGY ANALYSIS IN TAYLOR JENKINS REID'S THE SEVEN HUSBANDS OF EVELYN HUGO

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ABSTRACT

This research analyses the politeness strategy in the book entitled The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo by Taylor Jenkins Reid. The analysis is based on the chosen utterances of the main character in the book, Evelyn Hugo as a speaker or when the other characters are being the speaker while having an interaction with her. This research used Brown & Levinson theory to analyse the data. The aims of this study are to analyse how many politeness strategies found and the mostly used politeness strategy in The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo. The researcher used qualitative research and descriptive method in this study. The findings of this study found that positive politeness is the mostly used strategy. The book of The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo is telling a story about Evelyn Hugo, one of the most legendary Hollywood actresses who requesting Monique Grant, an ordinary magazine writer to write a story about her whole life journey and experiences including her seven ex-husbands and the love of her life where both are surprisingly unexpected.

Keywords : *Politeness strategy, Positive Politeness, Pragmatic, Utterance*

INTRODUCTION

Communication plays a vital role in human interaction, facilitating the exchange of messages and emotions (Hutahaeen et al., 2021) It encompasses not only verbal exchanges but also indirect actions aimed at achieving common goals. Pragmatics, a branch of communication studies, delves into understanding speakers' intentions based on context and background(Hutahaeen et al., 2021), aiding in clearer interpretation. Politeness, a key aspect of pragmatics, fosters smoother interactions by considering the emotional states of both speakers and listeners (Komang et al., 2021).

The importance of the utterance can take a scale from zero to one hundred as in a conversation with co-workers regarding works' related problems to the most basic and trivial conversation. Brown & Levinson (1987) every human also has their own options to showing off their self-image that they will use based on the context or situation and according to the group or to whom they are talking to as a face. There are two types of face: positive face and negative face. Positive face refers to a speaker's want to be accepted, approved, and deemed desirable by others, whereas

negative face involves the desire for freedom from imposition (Widyastuti, 2019). To build a face, each person needs to maintain their face to hold a position in some groups which create an FTA or face threatening acts, that is an act that could threaten one's face.

Studies analyzing politeness strategies in various contexts shed light on their applications, from cinematic dialogues to familial conversations (Ayuningrum et al., 2019; Fridolini et al., 2021; Syah, 2021; Winiharti & Salihah, 2017) examination of Taylor Jenkins Reid's novel, "The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo," focuses on the titular character's intricacies. Evelyn Hugo, a complex Hollywood icon, navigates personal and professional dilemmas while grappling with her identity. Her interactions, laden with politeness strategies and face-saving maneuvers, offer insight into the intricacies of communication. Through a linguistic lens, Evelyn Hugo's dialogues highlighting the interplay between communication tactics and social dynamics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher employs qualitative research in this study to analyse the politeness strategy in Taylor Jenkins Reid's *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*. In addition, to analysing word and reporting in-depth information, the researcher creates a complex and comprehensive picture. The qualitative research is supported by the descriptive method in which Whitney (1960) believed that descriptive is a fact finding with a proper and correct interpretation.

The primary source for this study is taken from the novel entitled *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid. Steps the researcher needs to do in order to take the correct and proper data to be analysed: Reading the novel, Finding the utterances that involves Evelyn Hugo, Filtering the chosen utterances that contain of politeness strategy in every sub-chapter in the book, Classifying the chosen utterances into each politeness strategy based on the politeness strategy theory, and Making code for the data

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis was presented in a tabular format and the researcher used narrative to elaborate as for how and when the each of the politeness strategy is being used based on the chosen utterances on the book.

Tabel 1. Result

No.	Politeness Strategy	Frequency
1.	Bald on Record	9
2.	Positive Politeness	20
3.	Negative Politeness	6
4	Off Record	11
Total		46

The table summarizes Brown & Levinson's politeness strategies as depicted in the novel. Despite expectations, the analysis reveals surprising findings given the protagonist's persona as a renowned Hollywood actress known for her feminist aura, adeptness at navigating personal matters discreetly, and achieving her desires.

Given her public scrutiny, one would anticipate her frequent use of positive politeness strategies to charm and maintain her elevated status, ensuring adoration from all societal groups.

Bald on Record

Known to be the most efficient and direct way of communicating. It is also suitable to be used when both parties are close or already know well of each other. Thus, bald on record has two kinds of usage that are: 1.) The cases of no-minimization of the face threat. 2.) Cases of FTA oriented bald on record usage.

The following conversation consists of the utterance of data BoR1:

(Data BoR1) Evelyn: "I'm giving you my life story, Monique. I'm going to tell you the whole truth. **And you are going to write a book about it.**"

(The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo, page 23)

The scene is about the first encounter between the present Evelyn Hugo and Monique Grant face to face to discuss about the autobiography she wanted in the first place. As shocking as she thought, the 79 years old Evelyn Hugo suddenly asked her for a favour to individually write her autobiography and publish it when she died instead of hiding behind the name of her company. In this scene, Evelyn Hugo is using bald on record number 3: task-oriented or paradigmatic form of instruction, where she tries to make Monique doing her a favour by leading the conversation as what it seems on the utterance while also stating out her plan directly to Monique as a task to be done.

Positive Politeness

Positive politeness strategy is rather be used to fulfil the hearer's positive face by making them feel loved, welcomed, and belonged to the group they are into. Positive politeness has high percentage to minimize or redress the cause by the existence FTA before, this strategy is also related strongly of being close or intimate that the speaker could also be using jokes and nicknames toward the hearer.

The following conversation consists of the utterance of data PP1:

(Data PP1) Evelyn: "**We're not doing s Vivant cover story,**" *she says.*

(Data PP1) Evelyn: "**We're waiting a book.**"

(The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo, page 23)

Monique Grant is unaware of Evelyn Hugo's plan. Employing positive politeness strategy number 3, she intensifies Monique's interest by commanding her full attention with the statement "*We're not doing a Vivant cover story.*" She then proceeds to reveal her shocking plan, using inclusive language like "*we're waiting on a book,*" signifying that the project is exclusively between them, with no external parties involved.

Negative Politeness

The third strategy of politeness is the opposite of positive politeness where in positive politeness strategy, the speaker aims to the positive's face of the hearer to be fulfilled while the negative politeness which is known to be the heart of respect behaviour is the regressive action that is focusing on the negative face of the hearer so that it will be performed completely unhindered.

The following conversation consists of the utterance of data NP1:

(Data NP1) Monique: **"I apologize,"** *I say.* **"That was a poor choice of words."**

(Data NP1) Monique: **"I'm sorry, Ms. Hugo. This is all a bit surreal for me."**

(The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo, page 22)

Recognizing Monique's error in describing Evelyn's life story as "*confessing sins*," Monique quickly apologizes for her poor choice of words, acknowledging the potential upset they may have caused. Monique employs negative politeness strategy number 6: apologizing, repeatedly expressing regret and providing justification to explain her initial shock and disbelief.

Off Record

Off Record The last type of politeness strategy is off record which is the politest strategy that the hearer will decides themselves of what meaning they would be believing on. Moreover, by using off record, the speaker has the advantage to do an FTA with minimal effects since the speaker is applying the off record strategy that the hearer's answer will completely depends on their interpretation toward the speaker only.

The following conversation consists of the utterance of data OR1:

(Data OR1) Harry: **"That guy makes us a lot of money,"** *he said as I sat down.*

(Data OR1) Harry: **"I'm not saying you should be dallying around too much with these actors you don't like,"** *he said.* **But it would do you some good, if you liked one, if things progressed past a photo op or two. The studio would like it. The fans would like it."**

(The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo, page 61)

In a meeting between Harry, Evelyn, and actor Brick Thomas, Harry notices Evelyn's discomfort with Brick's self-centered and narcissistic personality. Harry attempts to subtly convey his purpose of using Brick for business and Evelyn's fame by employing off-record strategy number 1: giving hints. Initially, Harry hints at the financial benefits of associating with Brick, stating, "*That guy makes us a lot of money*," implying that being close to Brick could yield profitable outcomes. Through these hints, Harry aims to convey his intentions indirectly while respecting Evelyn's feelings.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis conducted on the utterances involving Evelyn Hugo in the book "The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo" by Taylor Jenkins Reid, four politeness strategies were identified. Positive politeness emerged as the most frequently applied strategy, followed by off-record strategy, bald-on-record strategy, and negative politeness strategy. Despite Evelyn Hugo's portrayal as an independent and brutally honest character, the majority of her utterances were found to align with positive politeness strategy, aimed at nurturing positive interactions and making others feel welcomed. This approach is consistent with Evelyn's professional persona as a renowned actress, where maintaining a charming and perfect public image involves pleasing those she interacts with.

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