

## EXPLORING CODE-CROSSING: HIERARCHICAL POLITENESS IN BRITISH SOCIETY DEPICTED IN A MOVIE *THE KING*

<sup>1</sup>Agustin Rohmawati\*, <sup>1</sup>Syafira Luthfiana, <sup>1</sup>Syifa Salsabila, <sup>1</sup>Jaufillaili, <sup>1</sup>Setia Budiyantri

<sup>1</sup>English Education Department, Faculty of Science and Education, Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati,  
Indonesia

**\*Corresponding Author**

Email: [jaufillaili@ugj.ac.id](mailto:jaufillaili@ugj.ac.id)

Received:  
4 June 2025

Revised:  
13 July 2025

Accepted:  
26 July

Published:  
4 August 2025

---

**How to cite (APA 7<sup>th</sup> style):** Rohmawati, A., Luthfiana, S., Salsabila, S., Jauffillaili, & Budiyantri, S. (2025). Exploring code-crossing: Hierarchical politeness in British society depicted in *The King*. *Frasa: English Education and Literature Journal*, 6(2), 225–238. <https://doi.org/10.47701/frasa.v6i2.5003>

---

### Abstract

*This study investigated of code-crossing and hierarchical politeness in 15th-century English royal courts, as depicted in the film *The King* (2019) by using asymmetrical communication or code-crossing by Wadji, the concept of code-crossing as language choice reflecting social status, privilege, and identity influenced by social rules, and strategy politeness by Brown & Levinson, which encompasses bald on record, negative politeness, positive politeness, and off-record strategies. This research aims to analyze how these linguistic phenomena manifest within the film's social dynamics. Employing a descriptive-qualitative research method with thematic analysis, which focuses on describing and explaining topics. The data is obtained from the dialogue in the movie script explore how social status and age influence language use. The result show lower and middle class (inferior) prefer to address the upper class (superior) in high code as a sign of respect whereas the upper class frequently use low code, furthermore the result of hierarchical politeness reveal that bald on record and negative politeness strategies are mostly used. These results underscore how communication practices are shaped by social hierarchies, consistent with the continued relevance of politeness in social interactions. This research contributes to the field of sociolinguistics by empirically demonstrating the interplay of code-crossing and politeness theory in historical film context.*

**Keywords:** Code-Crossing, High Code-Low Code, Hierarchy, Politeness, Sociolinguistic.

### INTRODUCTION

Language is essential for removing obstacles from cross-cultural communication since it enables people to connect more deeply and comprehend one another's viewpoints. A basic instrument for human interaction, language allows people to express who they are, negotiate power dynamics, and navigate social relationships. Another well-known theory that has been proposed as a solutions for the majority of society's problems is communication (Jaufillaili,

Sujatna, Indira, & Indrayani, (2017). A subfield of linguistics known as sociolinguistics examines how language interacts with society and social context. Sociolinguistics is a subfield of linguistics that studies language in relation to its use in society, which also includes several aspect such as language variation, attitudes towards language, bilingualism and language change due to social interaction (Holmes & Wilson, 2022). In sociolinguistics, language is studied as a social practice influenced by hierarchy, culture, and context in addition to being a system of communication.

Some of the communication systems are language crossing and politeness. Language crossing or code-crossing in its original conceptualization, defined as referring to a speaker using a language that does not belong to him/her (Rampton, 2020). However, some experts give different opinions regarding code-crossing. According to Rampton, (2019), code-crossing is the use of linguistic elements from a language that often pertains to different communities or groups. Similarly, Wajdi, Laksana, Suastra & Budiarsa, (2013) argues that the concept of "code-crossing" involves communication shaped by asymmetries in both linguistic and social hierarchies. This implies that code-crossing occurs when two participants of unequal status — such as a superior and an inferior — communicate with each other.

According to Simpuruh, Mahmud, Salija, & Halim, (2020), in the implementation of code-crossing, there are some rules that restrict people from communicating, and these rules are established due to long-standing societal habits. Certain rules that prevent people from communicating when using code-crossing are the result of ingrained social practices (Indrayani Simpuruh & Syamsinar, 2023). This view is echoed by Mahmud, Halim, & Simpuruh, (2023), who stated that code-crossing in a socially stratified society functions as a social contract, that is collectively recognized by members of society as acknowledging the presence of two social groups: superior and inferior. In other words, Language use applied in code-crossing is influenced by several factors such as social status, social class, age, motivation, intelligence, attitude, personality, and cognitive style (Khasinah, 2014).

This is particularly evident the class system in British is a hierarchical structure that classifies individuals into different classes based on several factors such as wealth, occupations, and social status. Baubusse & Glaymann, (2004) as cited in Putri, Bahri, & Suswati, (2017), described a system of stratification known as social class creates a hierarchy of social positions within society. In this context British society classifies its people into several strata of classes, such as, upper class, middle class, and lower class. Individuals in the upper class category typically consist of royalty, such as kings, queens, and members of the royal family. Those classified as middle class are generally associated with landlords and members of parliament. Meanwhile, the lower class often referred to as the working class usually includes individuals with irregular incomes, the unemployed, the homeless, and others in similar socio-economic conditions.

Moreover, politeness maintain crucial roles of communication. According to Brown & Levinson, (1987) cited in Nor & Aziz, (2010), politeness is an essential component of human

language in conversation, and speakers' societal conventions have an impact on the politeness techniques they employ. Since politeness reflects an understanding of social norms and our desire to keep harmonious relationships, it is an essential part of human language in communication. Speakers follow certain social norms that specify how they should politely interact with others in every culture. Therefore, cross-cultural speakers need to be aware of the varying degrees of politeness parameters in order to realize appropriate levels of language politeness, as determined by the socio-cultural aspects that serve as benchmarks for polite behavior (Sapitri, Chasanah, Putri, & Paulima, 2020).

There are four types politeness strategies (link between benchmark for politeness) based on Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory namely: 1) Positive politeness, 2) Negative politeness, 3) Bald on record, and 4) Off-record. Positive politeness highlights positive face and tries to hold social bounds. Speakers who tend to use this strategy commonly know each other and want to make the communication efficient. While negative politeness includes the side of controlling the hearer. Bald-on-record focusing on clear statements and straightforward communication. And off-record involving and trying to prevent action that could directly threaten the face. By applying fourth politeness strategies, many specific aspects that cause speakers to employ politeness techniques of it is certainly for successful and meaningful communication. The common factor is the social status. This concept is also referred to as hierarchical politeness, which pertains to the specific social position within the upper, middle, and lower class. According to Nor & Aziz, (2010), the hierarchical relationship between superiors and inferiors is an essential factor that explains the choice of politeness strategies used by both. (example to strong argument discuss social status) In hierarchical politeness, individuals are acquainted and acknowledge their social disparities, which position one as 'higher' (superior) position and the other in a 'lower' (inferior) position (Wajdi et al., 2013)

Code-Crossing and politeness based on social status shown in the movie *The King*, which aired in 2019. Film as a multi-modal cultural documenter, provide as both a mirror and mediator of societal hierarchies particularly through its linguistic performances. A historical documentaries help introduce multicultural perspectives, ancient languages and social dynamics across time (Pratiwi, Saniro, & Hawa, 2023). *The King* is historical film about King Henry V is based on several works by William Shakespeare. Set in the 15th century, the film tells the story of Prince Hal, the heir to the British throne, who is initially reluctant to inherit the crown from his late father, King Henry IV. The film illustrates the hierarchical structure of British society during that period and showcases the use of language in the practice of code-crossing and politeness. Factors that cause the phenomenon of Code-Crossing such as individual differences, both from differences in social status and from age differences that exist between speakers. This linguistic phenomenon can be observed in interactions between upper-class individuals and those from the middle and lower classes, among members of the upper class themselves, and among those from the lower class. The problems above motivated

researchers to explore the existence of code-crossing and politeness in the British society based on the movie *The King*.

This study will explain the concept of code-crossing and politeness as linked linguistic phenomena, provides readers with a deeper understanding of the asymmetrical power dynamics present in social interactions depicted in the movie *The King*, as well as both politeness and code-crossing have significant impacts to the communication system, and they are closely related to how people interact in a variety of social contexts. While previous studies by Wajdi et al., (2013) have focused on the use of code-crossing in Javanese language in real-life speech communities and strategies politeness in a song by Ramadhanti & Andriani, (2024). This study will focus on a film with background British society which remains strong with social status and the well-known artwork of William Shakespeare. Through the integration of linguistics and society concept and film analysis, thus the following questions are discussed in this article: 1). How is Code-crossing and hierarchical politeness in the British Royal environment based on the movie titled *The King*? 2). What factors influence the occurrence of the Code-crossing and politeness in the movie?

## METHOD

This study uses a descriptive-qualitative research method. Qualitative methods focus on describing a topic rather than measuring it. This method is suitable for finding code-crossing and also exploring politeness because qualitative methods evaluate opinions, views, and characteristics of a topic (Ugwu, Chinyere, N; Eze Val, 2017). This study uses a qualitative method with thematic analysis to identify patterns in dialogue that reflect code-crossing and the use of politeness in the film *The King*. The primary data source is the film *The King* (2019) and the original script, written by David Michôd and Joel Edgerton. This film was selected purposively because of its explicit depiction of social hierarchy and rich dialogic interactions across social classes. However, subjective interpretation in qualitative film analysis is one of the limitations of this study.

Data were selected purposively based on the scenes involving interactions between different social classes (upper, middle, and lower classes) or containing asymmetrical interactions between superiors and inferiors. To collect data, researchers took four steps: 1). watching the film, 2). reading the original script of the film, 3). identifying data, and 4). classifying data. In the first step, authors accessed *The King* (2019) via Netflix streaming platform and reviewed it repeatedly for collecting the data. After watching the film, the next step was to read the film script. This was done to match the dialogue in the scenes with the original dialogue in the script. The third step was data identification, which involved marking the data obtained from watching the film and reading the original script. The final step was data classification, where the data was classified according to the problem formulation, namely code-crossing hierarchical politeness.

To ensure data trustworthiness, this study used researcher triangulation techniques. The data later reviewed manually by five independent authors to see multiple perspective and to ensure consistency in its interpretation. The data obtained subsequently analyzed in several

steps: 1). Coding, 2). Categorizations, and 3) Interpretation. In the first step, coding was performed to classify conversations based on the criteria of the superior-inferior theory concept from Wajdi et al, (2013). Where the *LC* (Low Code) code was used by the inferior party when speaking to the superior party, and the *HC* (High Code) code was used by the superior party when speaking to the inferior party. In the second step, categorization is performed based on based on the social class theory of Baubusse & Glaymann, (2004) and classified it into four categories: code-crossing between the upper and lower classes, code-crossing between the upper and middle classes, code-crossing between the upper class or members of the royal family, and code-crossing between members of the lower class. The authors also categories the type of strategies politeness using Brown & Levinson's, (1987) politeness theory. The final step is interpretation, following the coding and categorization of the obtained data. The authors then interpret the data in accordance with the research questions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Code Crossing Between Upper Class and Lower Class

*Extract 1 : Scene of King Henry IV talking to his war aides*

King Henry IV : "I understand battle with the rebel Scots was a hard fought." (*LC*)

A man : "It was, My Liege" (*HC*)

In the first extract, King Henry IV speaks directly without using any polite markers. This indicates that King Henry IV uses low code because he is a superior who talk to an inferior, he is a king who is talking to his aide. Unlike King Henry IV, his aide answered King Henry IV's statement using high code which is marked by the use of "My Liege "at the end of his answer. This demonstrates how the king's high status necessitates deferential language from his aide. There are two types of politeness strategies used in this scene. King Henry V uses bald on record, where the sentence "a hard fought" is clearly stated without any other meaning. On the other hand, the aide uses a negative politeness strategy in his speech to show respect. This patterns is further evidenced in extract 2 until extract 5.

*Extract 2 : Scene when a man from royal court asking Prince Hal to talk privately*

A man : "Prince Hal" (*HC*)

Prince Hal : "Who are you?" (*LC*)

A man : "We come from the royal court, we wish to speak with you privately" (*HC*)

Prince Hal : "For what?" (*LC*)

A man : "Please, Sire. Privately" (*HC*)

This is a scene where one of the officials from the royal court meets The Prince. "Prince Hal." Is a form of high code used by the royal official to indicate the title and social status of the son of the king. Prince Hal, on the other hand, responded to the royal servant's call with "who are you?" and "For what?" directly without any polite markers and using a slightly harsh

tone. Even though Prince Hal replied without polite markers, the royal servant still replied to Prince Hal's questions using high code, such as "Please, *Sire*." This is influenced by the social status gap between them. Similar to extract 1, the politeness strategy used in this scene is still the same. Prince Hal uses bald on record, as seen in the straightforward sentences "Who are you?" and "For what?" The royal servant uses negative politeness strategies in his speech to show respect and maintain distance. Similarly, in the next scene this type of code-crossing and type of politeness will be seen.

*Extract 3 : Scene when Prince Henry ordered his aide*

Prince Hal : "You! Come here!" (LC)

A man : "My Lord" (HC)

Prince Hal : "Go to rebel camp, deliver the following message to Percy Hotspur" (LC)

A man : "Yes, My Lord" (HC)

Similar with extract 2, code-crossing in this scene influenced by the power dominant. It can be seen on how Prince Hal uses low code to talk with his war aide. "You! Come here!" is the phrase used by Prince Hal when calling his aide. In this sentence, there are no polite markers used by Prince Hal. This indicates that Prince Hal uses low code which is influenced by his position. Unlike Prince Hal, the aide responded to Prince Hal's call with an answer that is categorized as high code, which can be seen from the use of "My Lord" in his answer. The politeness strategies used are also different. Prince Hal uses bald on record politeness because his request is straightforward without any niceties, while his aide uses negative politeness to show politeness and respect for the titles and social status differences between them.

*Extract 4 : Scene of battle*

A man : "My Liege... they have surrendered" (HC)

King Henry V : "Our debate now, it seems for nothing" (LC)

In this scene, a battle was held and Prince Hal was crowned as the new king, succeeding his father, King Henry IV. With the title of King V, his social status rose significantly. In this scene, one of the king's aides approached and provided important information about the outcome of the war. The man used high code by saying, "My Liege..." and King Henry V responded with low code. Once again, different social statuses became a factor influencing the use of the code. King Henry V in this scene employs a bald on record strategy. This is evident from his response to his aide's statement, which prioritizes conveying his message without considering whether it might offend the listener. Meanwhile, the aide continues to use a negative politeness strategy to show respect.

*Extract 5 : Scene where the aide talks to Cambridge (King Henry V's cousin)*

Cambridge : "Who is it?" (LC)

A man : "A Frenchman, Sire" (HC)

In extract 5, Cambridge, King Henry V's cousin, is seen with his aide. Cambridge uses low code when speaking to his servant, "Who is it?" here, Cambridge speaks to his aide without using any signs of politeness. Meanwhile, his aide answers Cambridge's question using a high code marked by "Sire" in his response. Since he is King Henry V's cousin, he belongs to the upper class in English society. Code-crossing in this scene is influenced by the difference in social hierarchy between them. The use of bald on record is also a strategy used by Cambridge, while his servant uses negative politeness to respect Cambridge's title and highlight the social status gap between them.

Thus, the findings from the five extracts involving the upper and lower classes show that the use of high code in code-crossing is dominated by lower-class individuals when speaking to upper-class individuals. The use of titles such as "My Lord" by the lower class and "You" with exclamation marks by upper-class individuals shows differences in social status and hierarchical power. Additionally, in these five extracts, bald on record is always used by the upper class, while negative politeness is always used by the lower class. These findings also show that social status and relative power are factors in code-crossing and the selection of politeness strategies. Wajdi et al., (2013) state that asymmetrical communication occurs when the two parties have different social statuses. This is in line with Nor & Aziz, (2010) which states that it is important to choose a strategy of politeness in hierarchical relationships. Moreover, in Brown & Levinson's, (1987) theory stated that bald on record is a direct way of saying something, and negative politeness is used by speakers who wish to impose social constraints on the course of their interactions

## **2. Code Crossing Between Upper Class and Middle Class**

*Extract 6 : Scene where Thomas (Prince Hal's brother) asked the commander*

Thomas : "Lord Dorset, are your men ready for the day?" (HC)

Lord Dorset : "They are, Sire" (HC)

In this scene Thomas uses high code while called and asks questions for his commander by saying "Lord" before their name and the commander answers with high code by saying "Sire." Both speakers use High Code in this scene. Thomas uses HC because of the age difference between them and Lord Dorset's social status as a war commander respected by Thomas. Another factor is the closeness between Thomas and Lord Dorset, where Lord Dorset has successfully entered the superior's territory because he has met certain qualifications from the superior. The use of low code and high code when they are used in code-crossing communication is a kind of "personal identification code", who the participants are and what roles of social class they perform (Wajdi, 2009). Positive politeness was the strategy used by Thomas and Lord Dorset. This was because they already knew each other and also wanted to show their friendliness and sincere intentions. This pattern is further evidenced in extract 7 until extract 9.

*Extract 7 : Scene where King Henry V declares war on France*

King Henry V : "My Lord Grey and Cambridge, I would ask you to deliver this message to France. Given your familiarity with the recipient. But i believe in the morning you be otherwise engaged" (HC)

Lord Grey : "Pray how, My Liege" (HC)

In the extract 7 where King Henry V and his parliament were gathered in his room to talk about the situation and King Henry V decides to declare war on France and ask to deliver the message to France. In this scene King Henry V and Lord Grey both used high code. Similar to extract 2, in this scene, high code is used by both speakers. Lord Grey's social status as a member of parliament makes him someone who must be respected by King Henry V. This is also a "personal identification code" owned by Lord Grey to enter the superior territory built by King Henry V. The use of high code, for inferior, is a kind of "driving license" in order to be able to enter an exclusive territory of superior (Mahmud et al, 2023). In this scene, the politeness strategies used by King Henry V and Lord Dorset are also mutually positive politeness. King Henry V uses positive politeness strategies to create a sense of togetherness and a desire to build good relations, as indicated by the phrase "I would ask you."

*Extract 8 : Scene where the king argues with the archbishop*

King Henry V : "I will not sacrifice my man so flagrantly nor speculatively" (LC)

Archbishop : "Well then, why do you not simply go around? If they insist on hiding on their castle, why do you not simply go around it?" (LC)

From extract 8 above, is the scene where King Henry V argues with an archbishop regarding the ongoing war. In this conversation King Henry V uses low code because of the absence of polite markers in his sentence "I will not sacrifice my man so fragrantly nor speculatively!" and the intonation he uses also gives the impression of anger and disgust. Then the archbishop also replied to King Henry V's sentence by using low code and without polite markers "Well then, why do you not simply go around? If they insist on hiding in their castle, why do you not simply go around it?" This happened because of the age difference and the archbishop was also a respected person who was trusted to give advice to the kingdom. In this scene, King Henry V uses bald on record King Henry V, who rejects it directly. And the archbishop's response uses negative politeness because he gives advice to the king subtly without offending him since the person he was giving advice to is a king.

*Extract 9 : Scene when King Henry V organizing war strategies with Sir John*

Sir John : "The first command i'll head, the second you'll have to carry out that mass execution yourself." (LC)

King Henry V : "What did you say to me?" (LC)

Sir John : "You are not that man." (LC)

King Henry V : "How dare you defy me?!" (LC)

This scene occurs when King Henry V orders Sir John, a former royal warlord, to carry out a mass murder of the prisoners. Similar with extract 8, Sir John uses low code in his

sentence which is characterized by the absence of polite markers, "the second you'll have to carry out that mass execution yourself." And King Henry V who has a higher social status would have replied to the sentence also using low code because of the absence of polite markers in his sentence, "What did you say to me?!" From this sentence we can see that the king did not accept the reply from his commander. "How dare you defy me?!" in this sentence there is an indication that the orders of a king who has a very high social status should not be denied and must be carried out. Use of low code in this scene happened because the position of Sir John who is a former commander and close to King Henry V became the "personal identification code" owned by Sir John to enter the superior territory built by King Henry V.

In this scene, several strategies of politeness are found. Sir John uses bald on record, as seen in "...the second you'll have to carry out that mass execution yourself," where the refusal is stated bluntly without any pretense. In addition, Sir John also uses the off-record strategy in the sentence "You are not that man," which is an implicit criticism of the king. Meanwhile, King Henry V continues to use bald on record, as seen in the rhetorical question "What did you say to me?" which conveys surprise. Additionally, "How dare you defy me?!" demonstrates anger and asserts the power held by King Henry V.

Findings from the four extracts involving the upper class or royal family and the middle class or parliament member such as, archbishop or commander war. This shows that in code-crossing, characters from the middle class can use low code when speaking with people from the upper class, and vice versa. This happened because of age difference between two characters and "a personal identification" owned by selected middle class people because they have managed to cross the superior boundaries established by upper class people such as royal families. The use of low code, when used by the inferior in the presence of the superior, is a kind of "password" that can be used to open and access the superior's territory (Wajdi, (2009) cited in Mahmud et al, (2023)).

### **3. Code Crossing Between Upper Class**

*Extract 10 : Scene where King Henry IV meets his son Prince Hal*

King Henry IV : "My son, come in... you will not inherit this crown." (HC)

Prince Hal : "Nor, have i sought" (LC)

King Henry IV : "That privilege and responsibility will instead fall to your brother Thomas" (LC)

In this extract, Prince Henry comes to the palace to meet his father King Henry IV. in this scene King Henry IV said to his son with high code by saying "my son" but Prince Hal responded with low code without any politeness, and The King respond with low code with politeness. Having equal social status means that the use of high code and low code in this scene is not a major concern. Bald on record is also a strategy used by these two characters. King Henry IV uses bald on record seen in "you will not inherit this crown" to convey a clear and straightforward message that is also wrapped in a little positive politeness marked by "My

son..." which is an intimate form of address. Prince Hal uses bald on record because of his straightforward response. This pattern is also further evidenced in extract 11 until extract 12.

### *Extract 11 : Scene between Prince Henry and his brother Thomas*

Prince Hal : "When do you fight?" (LC)

Thomas : "I set off tomorrow, we fight by the weekends." (LC)

Prince Hal : "You need no fight... These feuds need not be yours" (LC)

This scene takes place between Prince Henry and his younger brother Thomas. That means they both have equal standing as heirs to the kingdom, although it is certain that Prince Henry will succeed his father as king. "When do you fight?" In this sentence, there are no polite markers spoken by Prince Henry, which means Prince Henry uses low code when talking to his younger brother. "I set off tomorrow..." The reply from Thomas to Prince Henry is also not found with any polite markers, so in this case it can be concluded that in this conversation only low code is used.

There are two strategies of politeness in this scene. Prince Henry uses the bald on record strategy shown in "when do you fight?" The age difference between him and his younger brother allows Prince Hal to ask questions efficiently. Thomas answers the question using bald on record strategy with a clear response. Prince Hal also employs Positive Politeness in "You need no fight..." where the intent of this statement is to offer advice because they are family, which is they familiar with each other.

### *Extract 12 : Scene between King Henry V and his sister Philippa*

Philippa : "Choose your step wisely, dear brother" (HC)

King Henry V : "Hmmm" (LC)

In the extract 12, where king Henry and his sister have a conversation about their father and in this conversation, Philippa uses "dear brother" in the last of sentences when she gives advice to King Henry and that is a high code of age difference to offer advice to King Henry as a brother. In this scene, Philippa uses a positive politeness strategy. She has a familiar relationship with her brother, and based on this, Philippa gives King Henry V warm advice that he can accept. Meanwhile, King Henry V uses an off-the-record strategy, which is characterized by an ambiguous response, neither accepting nor rejecting his sister's advice.

The findings in conversation between upper class individuals shows that they can use both low and high code in their conversations. This happened because they are in the same status and social class. However, high code is still used to show the age gap and respect for the older brother as given by Philipa for her brother King Henry V. Politeness strategy such as "dear brother" used by Philippa indicates a form of respect given by the younger sister to his older brother. This align with Koizumi, (2001), as cited in Santoso, (2024), who stated that politeness is not only expressed through language, but also through ways of conveying a sense of closeness and familiarity between the speaker and the interlocutor. It also includes strategies that help confirm an action in a manner that makes the interlocutor feel comfortable and unburdened.

#### 4. Code Crossing Between Lower Class

*Extract 13 : Scene when the aide (a commoner) throws out everyone in the bar*

A man 1 : "All leave! Now!" (LC)

A man 2 : "You! Stay!" (LC)

A man 1 : "You! Leave!" (LC)

A Woman : "This is my place!" (LC)

From extract 13 above, this scene occurs when the aide who is in the lower class in British society orders everyone in the bar to get out. This scene involves the common people in it. "All leave! Now!" and "you! Stay!" These two sentences are low code, because there are no polite markers in these sentences. They are also command sentences used by the aide to evict the people in the bar. "This is my place!" is the sentence issued by the shop owner in this scene. In that sentence, there are also no polite markers used by the bar owner. From this conversation, low code is applied because they have equal social status and they also do not have dominant power which can be a reason for the use of high code in conversation. The politeness strategy used in this conversation is bald on record because of efficiency and urgency.

*Extract 14 : Scene in the bar when the bar owner is angry because of an unpaid debt*

Bar owner : "You are not welcome here, unless you've come to pay me what you owe me" (LC)

A man : "I have paid you" (LC)

Bar owner : "You've paid me a snatch of what you owe" (LC)

From extract 14. In the scene the man comes into the bar and wants to order something but the owner said "you are not welcome here" which means low code and the man answers with low code too. they used low code because they were both common from the same social status with nothing requiring them to use high code. Similar to extract 13, in this scene the characters employ a bald on record strategy because the tone used is commanding and angry, and the message is conveyed bluntly and clearly.

The findings on categories code-crossing that occur among lower class indicate that most of them use low code in their conversations. This is characterized by their constant use of "you" and exclamation marks. Low code is applied because of the familiarity between the lower people and their similar social status makes them feel comfortable using low code towards each other. In addition, the use of bald on strategy is a strategy used in both scenes by the characters. The factor causing this to happen is that the characters have the same social status, none of them have dominance over the others, so they are less concerned with formal politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

This discussion section presents an in-depth analysis of how code-crossing and hierarchical politeness are portrayed in the 15th century English royal court as depicted in the movie *The King* (2019), while exploring the social and contextual factors that influence this

linguistic phenomenon. The detailed findings, fourteen extracts from the movie were examined as examples of code-crossing. The findings reveal that code-crossing occurs in different types of interactions: between the upper class and the lower class (the royal family and royal servants), between the upper class and the middle class (the royal family and members of parliament), among members of the upper class (within the royal family), and among members of the lower class. These interactions show both high-code and low-code usage, indicating that code-code is not limited to class boundaries but is also shaped by context, power dynamics, and level of formality.

The most prominent pattern in the interaction between the upper and lower classes in this film is the use of low code by the superior party and high code by the inferior party. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this phenomenon reflects the dynamics of power and hierarchical social structures. The use of high code by subordinates serves as a form of respect and recognition of the superior status of the interlocutor. Conversely, the use of low code by superiors actually affirms their authority, indicating that they are not bound by rigid norms of politeness. This concept is in line with Rampton's (2020) view that code-crossing often occurs in contexts of linguistic hierarchy inequality. In this film, the inferior party uses high code as a kind of "social permission" to enter the exclusive realm of interaction reserved for the upper class. Therefore, code selection is not merely a linguistic choice but also a symbolic strategy in responding to power inequality.

This study found that the selection of code-crossing and politeness strategies is influenced by various factors, particularly dominant power differences that include social status, age, and structural position in society. In line with Wajdi's findings (2009, 2011), individuals with higher power tend to have greater linguistic freedom and are not burdened with the obligation to save face for their interlocutors. Meanwhile, inferior parties must use more cautious linguistic strategies to maintain harmonious social relationships and avoid breaches of politeness. The findings in this study contradict other studies such as Ramadhanti & Andriani, (2024), which show the dominance of positive politeness strategies in more egalitarian social contexts. The differences in the distribution of these strategies indicate that the choice of politeness strategies is not universal but rather highly dependent on social, cultural, and power dynamics. In a royal context that emphasizes formality and social distance, strategies such as bald on record and negative politeness are more relevant, while in more intimate and egalitarian contexts, positive strategies become more prominent.

This study makes an important contribution to the field of sociolinguistics by empirically demonstrating how the concepts of code-crossing and Brown and Levinson's politeness theory operate in the depiction of historical social hierarchies through the medium of film. In addition, this study has practical implications for language education. Film as an educational medium can be used to introduce sociolinguistic concepts to foreign language learners, enabling a more contextual understanding of cross-cultural communication norms and social structures.

Overall, the results of the analysis show that the use of code-crossing and politeness strategies in the film *The King* (2019) reflects the social hierarchy and power dynamics in 15th-century British society. The choice between high code and low code, as well as the dominance

of bald on record and negative politeness strategies, confirms the important role of social status in shaping communication practices.

## CONCLUSION

This study explores the role of how code-crossing and politeness strategies depicted in the British royal hierarchical culture in the movie *The King*. The findings indicate the factors that influence the occurrence of code-crossing are age difference and social status. Therefore, politeness takes the crucial role of maintaining communication between the King and the people under his rule. Politeness provides an understanding that every language that was spoken provides implementation and a good image for each of its speakers. In conclusion, dominant power such as age difference and social status usually the reason for how communicate; it could be that one of the speakers has respect.

All the data show that there are 21 data containing code-crossing and politeness strategies, which consist of 13 bald-on-record strategies, 6 negative politeness, 6 positive politeness, and 2 off record. In the movie *The King* most of the conversation used bald-on-record as a strategy of politeness. Based on these data, it can be reported that bald-on-record, means the speaker avoids the feelings of the listener because of the differences of relative power and social distance. These findings validate Brown and Levinson's politeness theory as a sociolinguistic tool. For the next study, the authors suggest to explore code-crossing and strategy politeness among EFL learners through various methods and sources, not only films and songs.

## REFERENCES

- Baubusse, G., & Glaymann. (2004). *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective. 2nd ed.* (2nd ed.; D. Grusky, Ed.). Boulder, Colo: Westview Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429306419>
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511813085>
- Holmes, J., & Wilson, N. (2022). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics, Sixth Edition. In *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics, Sixth Edition*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367821852>
- Indrayani Simpuruh, & Syamsinar. (2023). FACTORS INFLUENCING THE USE OF CODE CROSSING IN EFL CLASSROOM INTERACTION. *JLE: Journal of Literate of English Education Study Program*. <https://doi.org/10.47435/jle.v4i02.2322>
- Jaufillaili, Sujatna, E. T. S., Indira, D., & Indrayani, L. M. (2017). Vague languages implied through disparagement functions in comic strips. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*. <https://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2017-2304-06>
- Khasinah, S. (2014). FACTORS INFLUENCING SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION. *Englisia Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v1i2.187>
- Koizumi, T. (2001). *Nyumon Goyouron Kenkyuu "Riron to Ouyou" Japan: Kabushiki Kaisha kenkyuusha*.
- Mahmud, M., Halim, A., & Simpuruh, I. (2023). Student's Perception on The Use of Code-Crossing in The Online Classroom Interaction (Zoom Cloud Meetings). *Interference:*

*Journal of Language, Literature, and Linguistics.*

<https://doi.org/10.26858/interference.v4i1.44559>

- Nor, N. F. M., & Aziz, J. (2010). Discourse analysis of decision making episodes in meetings: Politeness theory and critical discourse analysis. *3L: Language, Linguistics, Literature*.
- Pratiwi, D. P., Saniro, R. K. K., & Hawa, A. M. (2023). The Functions of Films for Children as Learning Media in Children's Education. *MUKADIMAH: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sejarah, Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*. <https://doi.org/10.30743/mkd.v7i1.6528>
- Putri, M. A., Bahri, S., & Suswati, R. (2017). SOCIAL CLASS IN BRITISH SOCIETY IN JANE AUSTEN'S PRIDE AND PREJUDICE. *LINGUISTICA*. <https://doi.org/10.24114/jalu.v6i1.13396>
- Ramadhanti, D. A., & Andriani, D. I. (2024). Politeness strategies used in "Taylor Swift's songwriting process on Evermore" interview. *Leksika: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Dan Pengajarannya*, 18(2), 73. <https://doi.org/10.30595/lks.v18i2.22819>
- Rampton, B. (2019). Epilogue: crossing, interactional sociolinguistics and North/South research relations. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17447143.2019.1666135>
- Rampton, B. (2020). Language crossing and the problematisation of ethnicity and socialisation. *The Bilingualism Reader, Second Edition*, (April), 177–202. <https://doi.org/10.1075/prag.5.4.04ram>
- Santoso, T. (2024). *Strategi Kesantunan Mengkritik dalam Dunia Kerja di Jepang : Kajian Pragmatik Politeness Strategies for Criticizing in The Japanese Workplace : A Pragmatic Study*. 11(2), 118–136.
- Sapitri, P. A., Chasanah, A., Putri, A. A., & Paulima, J. (2020). Exploring Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies: An Explanation on the Nature of the Politeness Phenomenon. *REiLA : Journal of Research and Innovation in Language*, 1(3), 111–117. <https://doi.org/10.31849/reila.v1i3.3801>
- Simpuruh, I., Mahmud, M., Salija, K., & Halim, A. (2020). Code-crossing in Indonesian EFL classroom interaction. *International Journal of Language Education*. <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v4i3.13969>
- Ugwu, Chinyere, N; Eze Val, H. U. (2017). International Digital Organization for Scientific Research IDOSR. *Idosr Journal of Science and Technology*, 3(1), 37–46. Retrieved from [www.idosr.org](http://www.idosr.org)Asuketal
- Wajdi, M. (2009). Alih Kode Dan Silang Kode: Strategi Komunikasi Dalam Bahasa Jawa. *International Conference on Applied Linguistic (CONAPLIN) 2*.
- Wajdi, M., Laksana, I, Ketut, D., Suastra, I, M., & Budiarsa, I, M. (2013). E-Journal CODE-CROSSING : HIERARCHICAL POLITENESS IN JAVANESE. *E-Journal of Linguistics*, (Jan), 1–16.