

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to describe the introduction of the research. There are six parts in this chapter; presents and discusses the background of the research, statement of problems, purposes of research, significances of research, previous studies, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

Language is as important as the primary human needs. Humans will find it hard to live if there is no language. Humans as social creatures must be able to adapt, interact, socialize, and cooperate to survive since they cannot live by themselves. Language exists as a human tool to communicate and understand each other. By using a language, both oral and written language, people can express any ideas, thoughts, or feelings, share and get information, and maintain social relations through communication.

In the communication process, there must be at least the speaker/addresser and the hearer/addressee as the partners to share each other's meanings through the interaction of understanding and responding to the utterances of what they talk about. The existence of language as a social function is what underlies humans to learn a language. Hence, there is a deep science of language called linguistics that can be studied by humans to provide a broader understanding of the nature of language.

Pragmatics is one branch of linguistics that is concerned with the research of how language is used to communicate which is integrated in social context or certain circumstances. Learning pragmatics is considered to be important because it relates to human interaction. Pragmatics studies how the speakers use and understand the utterances of the interlocutor based on their knowledge in understanding the form of speech that is in the underlying context. According to (Levinson, 1983) pragmatics is the research of how language and context interact, as expressed in linguistic structure.

Within the field of pragmatics, there is a concept of politeness strategy. Every human being has a face or public self-image that hopes that their face can be respected by others. To be accepted in society, they have to pay attention to their politeness. Politeness not only means being polite in a simple way just like saying 'please' or 'thank you' but also how the way people behave and use their language appropriately in the right place and situation while considering the interlocutor's feelings.

When the speakers use language to communicate, it is possible to create different effects on the interlocutor in their utterances, depending on the politeness strategies they choose to use. The speakers need to choose and apply various certain communicative strategies to make it easier for them to have a conversation that runs well and goes easily since having a great discussion helps to maintain a good relationship between speech partners. The speakers must be able to see the face of

the interlocutor to avoid misunderstanding happens in interaction especially if within a different culture. Since it can be considered as polite in one culture but also can seem to be quite rude or simply strange in another.

In pragmatics, politeness is an essential concept to reverence the "face" or image of someone so that the image or face of the speaker is looked at well and to keep the hearer being respected. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), face refers to someone's self-image that every individual wants to claim for himself. It is applied as an attempt to reduce the negative consequences for self-image arising from the Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) carried out by speakers. Thus, an understanding of politeness strategy is needed and important to know so that the speech can be well conveyed and received by the speaker and the interlocutor.

The phenomenon of politeness strategies can be seen in various contexts of conversation in our daily lives and various ways, both in oral and written communication. For instance, it can be found in some kinds of media, entertainment, and literature such as novels, short stories, comics, mass media, movies, television, radio, video games, etc. However, the researcher will choose a video game as the object of the research.

Human beings spend almost one-third of their time on entertainment or leisure activities such as watching movies, listening to music, reading, and playing games. As one of the entertainment materials, a video game is an electronic medium that includes textual and character dialogue transcription project storylines with literary

elements. Thus, a videogame is a form of entertainment with an electronic interactive audiovisual media such as an animated image, sound, music, and human language that has a meaningful context through the depiction of fictional worlds, and narratives are designed well digitally so that they can be played. It is one of the most popular forms of entertainment that is mostly liked by people from all circles and can be played by children to adults.

As time goes by with the advancement of science, information, and technology in this modern era, the usage of language in multimedia has spread out into various aspects of human life, one of them; being in the gaming industry. Some video games contain elements such as characters, situations, and dialogues. The usage of language is varied with an interesting plot and a good storyline even the realism of games is almost near close to reality since it is not rare for us to find some games that are adaptations from books or movies or the contrary. There are many genres of games such as adventure, RPG, action, shooter, simulation, and many more. There are also various media provided by game console manufacturers such as PlayStation, PlayStation Vita, Nintendo, Xbox, PS4, PS5, Steam, etc.

On the other hand, problems might appear in the condition of the use of language. It is not rare that we can find the use of impoliteness or abusive language instead of politeness language in video games. That is why the researcher decided to choose the topic of politeness strategies based on the researcher's curiosity in analyzing four types of politeness strategies in a video game. The researcher

assumes that a game can also be a good medium to learn the language, especially in this case about politeness strategy since there is still less research that discusses about politeness strategy in a video game.

In this case, this research used the game entitled Persona 4 as the object of the research. Persona 4 is a Japanese-English PlayStation Role-Playing Game (RPG) game that was released on July 10th, 2008 in North America and Europe in March 2009 by Atlus. There are 5 series of Persona games with different stories of each of them. Specifically, Persona 4 takes place in the story in Japanese countryside and tells about a transfer student from the big city who comes to the rural town of Inaba where in that place, there is an urban legend called Midnight Channel which tells that if you stare alone at the turned off TV in the middle night on a rainy day, you will see a strange figure in the channel that appears on the screen since then there is always a murder case or the victim. Yu Narukami, as the main character in this game must solve this mystery and fight against the enemies called a shadow and dungeon while doing a journey to collect the social link along with a group of his friends where after they succeed in a fight, they will get a power called Persona. The main character of this game is played by the player of the game, and it is a silent character. In this game, the player can choose how they want to play or what kind of character they want to be based on what kind of dialogue the player chooses. Meanwhile, the other characters are more active and interactive in speaking and

almost appear a lot in the conversation and it helps to build the main character and the story of the game.

The reason of the researcher choose *Persona 4* game as the object of the research is because this game is almost liked and played by people all over the world. This game has succeeded got much appreciation and has won many Game of The Year awards from many game critics and media review games (gamespot.com). *Persona 4* was praised for its unique visual style, sound, deep characters and interesting powerful stories. It is regarded as one of the best RPG games of its generation. Although this game takes the main story from the Japanese culture's point of view because it was published by Atlus, a Japanese video game developer company in Tokyo but this game also takes English culture and uses the English language since it has spread out and is popular in America and Europe. However, the object used is using English language. It contains formal, informal, and casual language which is used in daily conversation.

In addition, the scope of interaction in this game has a limited scope, which mostly occurs between close friends or between participants who have an equal relationship, so that the social distance between participants does not need to be shown; thus allowing the occurrence of politeness strategies that speakers take as a problem in this study.

Moreover, the researcher finds an example of a phenomenon related to the use of politeness strategies, as the following example:



Figure 1. 1 Example Strategy

Context of Situation

The participants of the conversation are Ryotaro Dojima, Yu Narukami, and Nanako Dojima. The addresser is Ryotaro and the addressee is Yu. This scene happened on April, 11th 2011 in the afternoon at the front of the Yasoinaba station. Yu had to move from a big city to a small rural town called Inaba due to his parents' overseas business affairs for one year so that he had to live with his uncle and cousin. This scene happened when Dojima and Nanako were already waiting for him in front of the station to greet him and pick him up. Dojima welcoming Yu and he had not seen met Yu for a long time since he was a kid.

Ryotaro: **Well, you're more handsome in person than in your photo. Welcome to Inaba.** I'm Ryotaro Dojima. **I'll be looking after you.** Let's see..I'm your mother's younger brother..and that about sums it up.

Yu: It's nice to meet you.

(In Persona 4)

From the example of the conversation above, it can be seen that there are some utterances that can be categorized into types of politeness strategies. For instance, in the bold utterances and the picture above, the utterances, "**Well, you're**

more handsome in person than in your photo” can be categorized into a positive politeness strategy in the sub-strategy 2: exaggerate interest and approval with the hearer. This is an exaggerating form and indicates that Ryotaro shows his emotional interest in Yu’s appearance by giving him a compliment which makes Yu feel good of himself. It can be seen from the use of stressful words and strong intonation that ‘more handsome’ is exaggerating his feeling and first impression towards Yu because he hasn't seen him in a long time. Moreover, he wanted to satisfy Yu’s positive face. Besides that, there is also an utterance, “*Welcome to Inaba*”, that can be categorized into welcoming sub strategy of Bald on Record politeness strategies. Moreover, the utterance, “*I’ll be looking after you.*” can be categorized as positive politeness in sub-strategy promising.

Considering the phenomenon above, the researcher is interested in analyzing the types of politeness strategies expressed by the characters in *Persona 4* game for the reason that politeness strategies can be delivered in several different strategies, besides there must be a reason or factors influenced by the characters to use it. Based on the explanation of the research background above, the researcher aims to conduct the research of “**Politeness Strategies Used by The Main Characters in *Persona 4* Game**”.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

There are some problems found that can be analyzed from *Persona 4* Game Video such as speech acts, language variations, politeness, etc. However, it is impossible for the researcher to analyze all the problems because of limited time, knowledge, fund and others. Thus, in order to reach the purpose of the research appropriately, the researcher has to limit and decide what the problems that will be investigated and formulate the problems as clearly as possible. The researcher assumes that many utterances can be related to types of politeness strategies could be found in *Persona 4* Game Video which interesting to be discussed. Thus, as a limitation of the problem, the researcher formulates two research questions that will be the main focuses of this research, they are:

1. What types of politeness strategies are used by the main characters found in *Persona 4* Game?
2. What factors influence the main characters to use certain politeness strategies in *Persona 4* Game?

1.3 Purposes of the Research

Based on the formulation of the research questions above, the researcher is intended:

1. To find out the types of politeness strategies used by the main characters in *Persona 4* Game.
2. To understand the factors influencing the main characters use politeness strategies in *Persona 4* Game.

1.4 Significances of the Research

This research can contribute to give some advantages, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research can give a contribution to increase knowledge and give more understanding in the field of pragmatics especially about politeness strategies that focuses on types and factors based on Brown and Levinson theory and also provide insight into works in the form of games that can also be used as materials in language learning.

Practically, this research is expected to give interest to readers about linguistics, especially in pragmatics. This research is also to enrich knowledge and increase readers' understanding regarding the importance of politeness strategy in daily life. Moreover, practical significance for other researchers as a comparison for related studies or as a reference in finding ideas for those who are interested in the same topic of politeness strategy.

1.5 Previous Studies

There are many studies that use pragmatics as the topic of the research. Politeness is one part of the pragmatics topic that many discussed by the researcher. The researcher has found some previous research on some journal articles and undergraduate thesis that have similar topics to this research. Those previous researchers have their own differences such as the theme, the topic, the object even the problem itself that will be used as a reference for this research.

The first previous research is from the journal *Aspikom* that was written by Probosini (2022) entitled *Politeness Strategies in the Main Characters of “The Devil Wears Prada Movie”*. In her research, the researcher used the movie as the object of the research. The findings of his research are all kinds of politeness strategies in the main characters' utterances based on the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987). With a keen eye for detail, she meticulously dissected the utterances of the main characters, scrutinizing their dialogues within various scenes. Through this methodical analysis, the researcher unearthed a myriad of politeness strategies

intricately woven into the fabric of the characters' interactions. These findings not only shed light on the nuanced ways in which politeness manifests in cinematic discourse but also offered valuable insights into the broader spectrum of interpersonal communication dynamics portrayed on screen.

The second previous research is from the journal entitled “*The Analysis of Politeness Strategy Used by the Main Character of Novel The Sun Also Rises*” that was written by Widyastuti (2019) and published in the Journal of Pragmatics Research, Vol.01, No.02. This research focused on politeness strategies which discussed four types of politeness strategies used by the main characters in a novel entitled ‘The Sun Also Rises’ as the object of the research. The theory used for this research is the theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1983) with the descriptive qualitative by using documentation and observation method. The result of this journal research is the researcher found that the main character of the novel used four types of politeness strategies including bald-on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record and there are also some factors affecting the characters’ politeness in speaking, they were language styles, registers and domains, and slang and solidarity and language and gender.

The third previous research is entitled “*The Use of Politeness Strategies in Oprah Winfrey’s 2020 Vision Tour with Lady Gaga as a Guest Star*” that was written by Wartini (2023) in her thesis. This research focused on the analysis of types politeness strategies employed by Lady Gaga as a Guest Star and the factors

that influenced the choice of politeness strategies in the Oprah Winfrey's 2020 Vision Tour based on Brown and Levinson's theory. The finding of this research indicated that there are two types of politeness strategies used in the tour, namely Positive Politeness and Negative Politeness strategies. These two types of politeness strategies were influenced by the Social Distance factor and the Relative Power factors.

The fourth previous research is entitled *Politeness and Impoliteness Strategies Used in the Sleeping Beauty Movie* was written by Emeliya Sukma Dara, et.al (2022) and published in *Linguistics and English Language Teaching Journal* Vol. 10 No.1. This research focused on the analysis of politeness and impoliteness by using a *Sleeping Beauty* movie as the object of the research and using the concept of Brown and Levinson, Geoffrey Leech and Bousfield and Locher theory which related to pragmatics study. The finding of this research shows that there are 19 examples of politeness strategies, politeness maxims, and impoliteness strategies.

The last previous research is entitled "*Positive and Negative Politeness Strategies by the Characters Every Walking Breath Movie*" was written by Ni Putu Febri Aspitasari (2022) and published in the *Journal of Language and Literature*. This research only focused on the analysis of how positive politeness and negative politeness strategies are applied by the characters in the "*Every Waking Breath*" movie. By expanding upon this precedent and examining a broader spectrum of

politeness strategies within a different cinematic context, the current study enriches our understanding of the intricate interplay between language, culture, and social dynamics depicted on the silver screen.

As a result, this research has some similarities of terms to the other researchers as the analysis of politeness strategy, but it has differences in the use of the object of the research, and problems arose. This research used a video game as the object of the research which is different from the first until the last previous studies such as in movies, novels, and tour video. However the research problems from the first and last previous studies are similar in that they discuss the types and factors that influence the use of politeness strategies, this research has a different explanation of the context, and from fourth previous research is more deeply concerned on discussing politeness and impoliteness strategies with some theories related to pragmatics, meanwhile, this research is only focused on discussing four types and factors of politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson as the main theory and the last research is only discussed two types of politeness strategies that are positive and negative politeness strategies.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding on terms used in this research, some definitions are disclosed as follows:

a. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the research of the speaker's meaning and interpreted by the hearers by considering the context of the conversation, (Yule, 1996).

b. Politeness

Politeness is an act to show awareness of other people's faces or public-self-images to be respected by minimizing the threats or potential conflict that may happen by the speech partner, (Yule, 1996).

c. Context

Context is all the background knowledge shared by the speaker and the interlocutor that accompanies and accommodates a speech event.

d. Persona 4 Game

Persona 4 is a Japanese-English PlayStation *Role-Playing Game* (RPG) video game that was released on July 10th, 2008 in North America and Europe in March 2009 created by Atlus which is a spin-off of the Shin Megami Tensei (SMT) series with the simple beginnings on PS1 until expanded into some various game platforms that can be played on PC.