

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the study generally. There are five subchapters that will be discussed. The five subchapters are background of the study, research question, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitation of the study. Those subchapters are important to help the readers understand about this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language plays an important role in daily life as a system of meaningful sound symbols used for interacting and exchanging information between individuals. Language is a fundamental tool of human communication, which enables individuals to exchange information, express emotions, and maintain social relationships. Beyond its basic communicative function, language also serves as a means of social interaction, where speakers must be careful in choosing their words to maintain harmony and avoid conflict. In addition to functioning as a tool for communication, language also plays an important role in maintaining social harmony and building interpersonal relationships. One important aspect of communication that facilitates this is politeness, which refers to the use of language strategies that show respect, consideration, and sensitivity toward others.

The study of politeness is at the core of the field of pragmatics, which examines how language is used in context and how meaning is shaped by social interaction. Yule (1996) defines politeness as a way to show awareness of others' face, the public self-image that individuals want to maintain in interactions. According to Yule, politeness involves strategies to protect the positive face or the negative face of the interlocutor. Positive face reflects the desire to be liked, valued, and included in a group, while negative face represents the desire to be independent and free from imposition. In communication, speakers adopt various politeness strategies to maintain these aspects of face and minimize face-threatening acts (FTA). Based on Yule's concept, Brown and Levinson (1987)

developed a comprehensive framework of politeness strategies that systematically explains how individuals manage face in interactions. They proposed four main politeness strategies: Bald on Record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off Record. Bald on record refers to the act of speaking directly and clearly without any effort to mitigate face threats, often used in urgent situations or by those in positions of authority. Positive politeness aims to reduce social distance by expressing friendliness, showing solidarity, or giving compliments, appealing to the listener's positive face. Negative politeness minimizes imposition and respects the listener's negative face through indirectness, apologies, or formal requests. Off record involves implying meaning rather than stating it explicitly, which allows the listener to interpret the intent independently. Brown and Levinson further argue that the choice of politeness strategies is influenced by three main social factors: Power (P), Social Distance (D), and Rank of Imposition (R). Power refers to the hierarchical relationship between the speaker and the listener, social distance represents the level of familiarity, and rank of imposition refers to the severity of the request. These factors determine whether the speaker will use direct or indirect strategies and how much effort they will invest in maintaining politeness.

Although politeness theory has been widely applied in real-life communication, there is a lack of research on how politeness operates in fictional narratives, particularly in dystopian movies. In fact, dystopian movies often depict societies with extreme social structures, where language is used as a tool to maintain power or express resistance. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by analyzing politeness strategies in the newly released 2024 film “Uglies,” which offers an interesting context for this study. The movie is set in a futuristic world where each individual is required to undergo surgery at the age of 16 to become “beautiful.” The division of society into two groups: “Uglies” (those who have not undergone surgery) and “Pretties” (those who have undergone surgery) to create a clear social stratification. The highly regulated structure of society not only affects social behavior but is also reflected in the communication patterns between characters, making this film an ideal object to analyze politeness strategies in the context of strict social hierarchy.

This research aims to analyze politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory (1987) in a dystopian film context. Politeness plays an important role in maintaining social relationships, especially in societies where power, hierarchy, and social control strongly influence communication. In such contexts, language is not only used to convey meaning but also to manage authority, obedience, and resistance. Previous studies have shown that the choice of politeness strategies is influenced by social distance, power relations, and the level of imposition. Speakers with higher authority tend to use more direct strategies, while speakers in closer social relationships often use strategies that emphasize solidarity. In situations involving unequal power relations or sensitive topics, indirect strategies are commonly used to reduce face threats. These findings suggest that politeness strategies reflect the social structure in which communication takes place.

The film *Uglies* (2024) describes a dystopian society with strict social hierarchy, beauty standards and power control over individual identity. This social setting makes the film relevant for pragmatic analysis because communication in a highly regulated society is closely related to issues of power, control, and social distance. Additionally, as a film adaptation of a popular novel, "*Uglies*" also reflects the use of language relevant to contemporary social issues. Thus, this film not only presents a critique of beauty standards set by society but also serves as an appropriate object for pragmatic research, particularly in understanding how politeness strategies are used in various complex communication situations in a dystopian world.

Using the concept of face proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), against the backdrop of the dystopian world of the film *Uglies* (2024), this research provides new insights into how politeness functions in extreme social conditions. This research focuses on identifying the types of politeness strategies and the factors influencing their use in the film *Uglies* (2024). This study is expected to contribute to pragmatics by providing a deeper understanding of how politeness strategies function in context and controlled social environments.

1.2 Research Question

1. What are the types of politeness strategies found in *Uglies* movie?
2. What social factors influence the use of politeness strategies found in *Uglies* movie?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the types of politeness strategies found in *Uglies* movie.
2. To explain social factors that influences the use of politeness strategies that found in *Uglies* movie.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is important for both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it contributes to the field of pragmatics by providing new insights into how politeness strategies are used in a dystopian context, especially in the movie *Uglies*. It helps us understand how language is used to navigate social hierarchies and power dynamics in complex settings. Practically, this study can be useful for student: As a teaching resource to explain politeness strategies in communication. The public: To raise awareness about the importance of politeness in everyday interactions. Filmmakers: To create more realistic and meaningful dialogues that reflects social dynamics.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this research is pragmatics because it discusses the politeness strategies that proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). This research focused on analysing the politeness strategies in *uglies* movie. This research is limited to examining the politeness strategies used by the main characters in *uglies* movie (2024) based on Brown & Levinson (1987) theory.