Politeness Maxim Applied by Characters in Victoria & Abdul Movie

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Abstract: This research is entitled "Politeness Maxim Applied by Characters in Victoria & Abdul Movie". This research aims at finding out the kinds of politeness maxim in Victoria & Abdul movie and its politeness scale. This research used descriptive qualitative method. The data were taken from the script of Victoria & Abdul movie. Politeness Maxim proposed by Geoffrey Leech (1983) in his book entitled The Pragmatics of Politeness was used in analyzing the data. Based on the results, six kinds of politeness maxims were found in this movie, such as tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. On the other hand, for the politeness scale found in the movie were cost-benefit scale, authority scale, indirectness scale, optionality scale, and social-distance scale.
Keywords: politeness maxim, politeness scale, Victoria & Abdul

INTRODUCTION

Language in the simple term is the system of vocals that are agreed upon by a group of people to use to relate with each other. Language could be discussed by its essence and its function. Basically, if we discuss the essence of language, we will automatically discuss the system and the element of language, but if we discuss about function, we will somehow discuss about the basic function of language which is communication.

As described above, communication is the basic function of language. Without communication, there will be no interaction among people. There will be no group of people if communication does not exist. Therefore, it is why communication has an important role in language. When we communicate with people, we must pay attention to politeness. Politeness has a crucial role in society. It is used to identify the social-culture in some of the group of people. Politeness also can be considered as a social norm that is determined by the group of people. Sometimes they have to be polite to other people in order to show that they are civilized or cultured people. Besides, politeness should be used when talking to the elders. People that do not know the essential of politeness when they talk, will be considered as rude or people with improper manner. Although politeness could be used to profess social culture, politeness is also a universal norm.

Geoffrey Leech on his theory of PP said that Politeness Principle is minimizing the expression of impolite beliefs, and there is a corresponding positive version or maximizing the expression of polite beliefs which is somewhat less important. The purpose of Politeness principles itself is to establish the feeling of community and social relationship. Furthermore, Leech proposed six maxims, they are Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim.

Victoria & Abdul is a movie that tell us about Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland who had a friendship with her Indian Muslim servant Abdul Karim. This movie is quite interesting to use as a data because the set of this movie was taken when India was ruled by British Empire. There are absolutely more Politeness Maxim which could be found here. In this movie's scene, there are some Politeness Maxim used by some characters when talking to the Queen. The use of politeness here is essential to be applied when talking to the members of Royal Family. One of the examples of Politeness Maxim that are found in this movie is as follows:

Dr. Reid : "And your movements, Your Highness?"
Queen Victoria : "None to speak of."

That dialogue contained Tact Maxim which refers to minimizing the cost to others and maximizing the benefit to others. In this case, Dr. Reid uses the low tune when talking to the Queen. In

addition, he uses form of address "Your Highness" that refers to the Queen. Evidently, this topic is interesting to discuss because unwittingly, people usually use this Politeness Maxim into daily conversation. In addition, this topic has been infrequently discussed by researchers. Therefore, this study aims to analyze kinds of politeness maxim and its scales in Victoria & Abdul movie.

METHODS

In writing a paper, method of research is the basic procedure that must be done because a good paper depends on its method. The methods applied in this research were data source, data collection, and data analysis. The further information of each is explained as follows.

The data source of this paper is the movie script entitled Victoria & Abdul. This movie was about the friendship of Queen Victoria and an Indian slave named Abdul. The data source was chosen because, in this movie script, there are many politeness expressions employed by the characters in the story. The use of politeness here is essential to be applied when talking to the members of the Royal Family. Therefore, all the data were taken from the conversation of all characters in this movie's script. The politeness maxim uttered by the characters in this movie's script was considered unique. It was reflected in the script, where the setting of time was mostly in England during the Victorian era, thus the characters' utterance style in the conversation was influenced by the environment, society, and social status.

The data were collected by observation method. In this case, the first step was downloading script. The script or the data source was taken from internet on thescriptavant.com. The next step was downloading and watching the movie. The purpose of watching the movie was to get information in details related to the context of situation, and in line with it, it was essential to be done in order to observe if the script is exactly the same as what is written on the script. The next step was note-taking technique. This technique was applied in order to write down and note the particular scene of conversation employed by the characters who apply the politeness strategy. After finding out the particular scene where the characters apply politeness strategy, the script or dialog where the scene occurs was highlighted in order to classify the data easier.

After collecting the data, the next step was classifying the data. This step was applied by classifying the data based on the scope of the problems. Then the data were analyzed by using the qualitative descriptive method based on the theories. In this case, the data were analyzed by applying Leech's theory related to the kinds and politeness scale applied by the characters in the movie.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the result, there are 18 data which contain politeness maxim found this film. There are 18 data, such as 5 data of tact maxim, 2 data of generosity maxim, 6 data of approbation maxim, 2 data of modesty maxim, 3 data of agreement maxim, and 2 data of sympathy maxim. Because of the maximum capacity of each subchapter, the data will be presented 1 data for maximum in each subchapter.

Tact Maxim

First maxim that will be discussed is tact maxim. As described before, tact maxim is a maxim which behooves participants to minimize the cost to others and maximize the benefit to others. Tact maxim's requests are often indirect, tentative, giving an opportunity to refuse, and also softening or mitigating. In tact maxim, it could be found a directive utterance that contains command both directly or indirectly, requesting, commanding, ordering, volunteering, and advising. The data that are categorized as tact maxim are analyzed and could be seen below:

Tact Maxim/Abdul
EXT. ON DECK AT SEA. DAY
Abdul and Mohammed standing in front of Bigge, who has a chart on tripod
Abdul: We both have a cushion?
Bigge: No, there'll only be one cushion. Between you.

Abdul: **Can we have a cushion now, sir?**
Bigge: You'll have to mime the cushion.

In this scene, Bigge act as addressee because Abdul asks Bigge about the cushion. The goal of Abdul's utterancein this conversation is to ask Bigge if they could have the cushion now. The act form of the Abdul's utterance is directive also the verbal act of this data is asking. The context of situation on this scene takes place on the deck of the ship at the sea when Abdul and his friend, Mohammed on their way to England for presenting the Mohar for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee ceremony. Bigge is a British who in charge to take Abdul and Mohammed to England. Bigge gives the information about Queen Victoria's staffs and suddenly Abdul asks about the person who has the Mohar. Bigge replied that he did not sure who is the person that has the Mohar. He suspected Abdul and Mohammed will carry it on a cushion. After that, Abdul asks Bigge again if both of them will have a cushion. Bigge replied that there will be only one cushion between them. Abdul asks the question again if they could have the cushion now. Bigge answered that they had to mime the cushion.

The data above shows that Abdul uses tact maxim when he talks to Bigge by asking Bigge, "Can we have a cushion now, sir?". In Abdul's utterance, it can be seen that he minimizes the cost to Bigge by using the word "can" which is the auxiliary used by Abdul to ask Bigge's willingness in form to express Abdul's politeness to Bigge. Abdul is asking Bigge instead of forcing him to give Abdul the cushion frankly. Therefore, Bigge had a right to accept or reject it because Abdul's question was not a coercion. At the end, it could be concluded that Abdul maximized benefit to Bigge.

In this data there are some politeness scales found in Abdul's utterance, they are cost-benefit scale, optionality scale, and indirectness scale. Cost-benefit scale was identified in this data because it influenced tact maxim. Abdul put the cost to himself by asking Bigge about the cushion. Another politeness scale that identified in Abdul's utterance is optionality scale. It could be seen in Abdul's utterance that he gave the choice to Bigge whether he accepts it or not by using auxiliary "can". Bigge had a choice to accept the request or refuse it. The more option given to the hearer, the more polite the speaker is. The last scale that is identified in Abdul's utterance was indirectness scale. Indirectness scale refers to the indirect utterance considered polite. The more indirect the utterance is, the more polite the speaker is considered. As can be seen in this utterance, indirectness scale was identified here because the speaker use auxiliary "can" to expressed his desire. The speaker expected the hearer to did such action, whereas the hearer had a choice whether accept or reject the speaker's desire.

Generosity Maxim

Another maxim that is identified in this data is generosity maxim. Generosity maxim refers to minimize the expression of self-benefit and maximize the expression of cost to self. Directed and commissive is applied in this maxim. This maxim emphasizes the speaker's self-awareness and prioritizes the other. The data that are contain as generosity maxim will be presented as follows:
Generosity Maxim/Abdul
EXT. THE SAME, TABLE AT THE GARDEN PARTY
A wobbling jelly. We pull up to see Abdul carefully carrying it, followed by Mohammed who has his own. Queen Victoria is at the table, looking dour and fearsome. Abdul starts to panic as the jelly starts wobbling perilously on the plate. The more he nears the Queen the more errant the giant jelly becomes. With a great deal of sweat and consternation Abdul navigates the jelly to Her Majesty.
Abdul: **Jelly, Your Majesty.**

In this scene, it can be seen that Abdul is implementing generosity maxim by offering the jelly to Her Highness. The context of situation of this scene takes place at the garden party at Windsor Castle. Abdul and his friend, Mohammed were asked to be a waiter in that event and they assigned to brought the jelly to the guests in that event, especially to Queen Victoria. As can be seen on the script above that Abdul started to panic when he sees the Highness Queen Victoria. After that, Abdul delivers the jelly to Her Highness and said, "Jelly, Your Majesty". The speech situation on this scene is Abdul as the speaker and Queen Victoria is an addressee because Abdul is the one who offered the jelly to Her Highness. The goal of Abdul's utterance is to offer the jelly to the Queen. Directive is applied here as a form of act of Abdul's utterance. The result of Abdul's vocal act is offering.

In addition to kinds of maxim, Abdul's utterance is identified as generosity maxim which is minimize the self-benefit expression, while the speakers maximize the self-cost expression. Abdul is offering the jelly to Her Highness shows that he minimizes his self-benefit following by he delivers the Queen by terms "Your Majesty". This terms usually use to deliver the nobles.

This utterance contains two politeness scales which are cost-benefit scale and authority scale. The cost-benefit scale is identified in Abdul's utterance because he minimizes the self-benefit expression whereas he maximizes the self-cost expression to Her Highness from offering the jelly to Queen Victoria. The authority scale is also identified in this data. Authority scale refers to the social status between the speaker and the hearer. The authority scale could be seen when Abdul utters "Your Majesty" to the Queen Victoria because she is the Queen of England and Abdul is a servant so that is why Abdul address The Queen with the terms "Your Majesty.

Approbation Maxim

The third maxim identified in this movie is approbation maxim. As described before, approbation maxim refers to minimize dispraise to other whereas maximize other people's praise. Approbation maxim contains expressive utterance such as praising, welcoming, congratulation, thankfulness and apologizing. Besides expressive utterance, approbation maxim also contains assertive utterance for declaring the truth. It provides in utterance in case the speaker express their opinion, suggestion, complaint, comment, claim. This maxim requires to avoid any utterance that can hurt the addressee. As previously explained, Leech proposed another name for approbation maxim, which is 'the flattery maxim'. The term 'flattery' is usually used to describe insincere approbation. The data that contained and categorized as generosity maxim will be presented as follows:

Approbation Maxim/Queen Victoria

EXT. THE SAME, AVENUE OF TREES

Queen Victoria continues talking to Abdul as they walk.

Queen Victoria : But what happened to Shah Jahan?

Abdul : He was overthrown by his son and died in Agra Fort.

Queen Victoria : The wickedness of children.

Abdul : They buried him in the Taj Mahal next to his wife. They put an inscription: 'Here lies Shah Jahan who left this world to the Banquet Hall of Eternity.'

Queen Victoria : The Banquet Hall of Eternity?

Abdul : Oh yes, it is a banquet when we leave here.

Queen Victoria : I rather like that idea. **You seem very well informed, Mr. Abdul.**

Queen Victoria's utterance is identified as approbation maxim. As can be seen above, the context of situation of the utterance takes place on the avenue of trees. Queen Victoria has a conversation with her servant, Abdul. They talk about the background of how the Taj Mahal was built. Abdul tells Her Majesty about what happened to Shah Jahan. He said that Shah Jahan was overthrown by his son after that he died in Agra Fort. The Queen responded it by saying "The wickedness of children." Afterwards, Abdul replied that Shah Jahan is buried in the Taj Mahal next to his wife and the people put an inscription: 'Here lies Shah Jahan who left this world to the Banquet Hall of Eternity.' Queen Victoria asks Abdul what The Banquet Hall of Eternity is. Abdul answered that it is a banquet when we leave here. The Queen liked that idea and she praised Abdul by saying, 'you seemed very well informed, Mr. Abdul.' The goal of Queen Victoria's utterance is praising and the form of act from this utterance is expressive and Abdul is an addressee.

The Queen Victoria is implemented approbation maxim on her utterance. Approbation maxim refers to maximize praise to other and minimize dispraise to other. From Queen Victoria's utterance it can be seen clearly that she praises Abdul about how well-informed he is when he told her the background of the Taj Mahal. Moreover, Queen Victoria's utterance shows that Her Highness maximizes the praise to Abdul by saying 'you seemed very well informed, Mr. Abdul' and technically it minimizes dispraise to Abdul. From the description above, it can be concluded that Queen Victoria successfully applied approbation maxim through her utterance to Abdul.

From the data that is analyzed above, the politeness scale that influence Queen Victoria's utterance is cost-benefit scale. As mentioned before that Her Highness maximizes the benefit to the

addressee, Abdul by praising him as well-informed person after Abdul told Her Majesty the story behind how Taj Mahal was built. Certainly, Queen Victoria minimized the cost to the hearer. Evidently from the explanation above, Queen Victoria's utterance was influenced by cost-benefit scale.

Modesty Maxim

The next maxim which proposed by Leech (1983) is modesty maxim. As its name, modesty maxim refers to the speaker minimize self-praise whereas they maximize self-criticism or self-dispraise. Modesty maxim applies the expressive, assertive maxim to the utterance, just like approbation maxim. Thanking, congratulating, pardoning, blaming are the examples of expressive speech act, whereas stating, boasting, complaining, claiming, and reporting are assertive acts. The data which contained modesty maxim will be presented as follows:

Modesty Maxim/Abdul

EXT. THE LITTLE HOUSE, GLASSALT SHIEL. DAY

Queen and Abdul on the promontory. Abdul is trying to cheer up Her Majesty with his enthusiasm.

Abdul : There are 114 Surahs containing 6,236 verses.
Queen Victoria : And you know every word?
Abdul : Many Muslim people know the Koran.
Queen Victoria : I thought you were a Hindu.
Abdul : I am a Muslim, Your Majesty. I learnt the Koran from my father. And he taught me all the great poets: Kabir, Rumi. He is my Munshi.
Queen Victoria : Munshi?
Abdul : Yes, Munshi. My teacher.
Queen Victoria : Then we would like you to be the Queen's Munshi.
Abdul : But **I am a servant. A servant cannot be a Munshi**.

Queen Victoria and Abdul are in Glassalt Shiel, he is trying to cheer up Her Highness with his enthusiasm by talking about Koran and the total of the Surah. From Abdul's statement, Queen Victoria just realizes that Abdul is not a Hindu. Abdul confirmed to Her Highness that he is a Muslim. He learns the Koran from his father and he called his father his Munshi or in English it means 'teacher'. Heard that, Queen Victoria wants Abdul to be her Munshi. Abdul replied that he just a servant. A servant cannot be a Munshi. The goal of the utterance above is claiming that he is a servant. The product of verbal act is claiming and for the form of act of Abdul's utterance is assertive. The addressee is The Queen because Abdul talks to The Queen.

Abdul tells Her Majesty that he is a servant and a servant cannot be a Munshi or a teacher. From Abdul's utterance it could be seen that he is applied modesty maxim. He minimizes the self-praise while he maximizes self-dispraise to himself by saying that he just a servant and a servant cannot be a Munshi.

Cost-benefit scale is identified in Abdul's utterance. He puts the cost to himself by doing self-dispraise and saying that he was a servant. On the other hand, he puts the benefit to the addressee which was The Queen Victoria by saying such a thing. Another politeness scale that is influenced Abdul's utterance is social-distance scale. It is said like that because there is a different social status between Queen Victoria which is the Queen of British Empire and Abdul which is a servant from India. That is why, Abdul uses politeness to Queen Victoria. In conclusion, Abdul's utterance is influenced by two politeness scale. They are cost-benefit scale and social-distance scale.

Agreement Maxim

Fifth maxim which proposed by Leech (1983) is agreement maxim. This maxim requires the speaker to reduce the disagreement to the addressee while they have to maximize the expression of agreement to the addressee. This maxim speaks in an assertive manner by the speaker. Claim, assert, affirm, admit, assure, state, inform, notify, and report is included in the utterance. The data that contains agreement maxim will be presented as follows:

Agreement Maxim/Queen Victoria

INT. CORRIDOR, OUTSIDE THE WRITING ROOM

A new fat arse is on shows its owner bends in to look through the keyhole. The door fly open. The arse stands up straight.

Bertie : Were you learning Urdu?!
Queen Victoria : Yes, I was, as a matter of fact.
Bertie : Do you think that's entirely appropriate?
Queen Victoria : I am the Empress of India. What could be more appropriate than learning Urdu?
Bertie : But in front of the entire Household –
Queen Victoria : **You are absolutely right**. I can't have all of these distractions. Ponsonby, I wish to go to Glassalt Shiel.

Bertie, Queen Victoria's son asks Her Majesty, if she is learning Urdu. Queen Victoria answered that she learns Urdu. Then, Bertie asks her if that is appropriate. Queen Victoria said that she is the Empress of India so why it called inappropriate by Bertie. Her son said, 'But in front of the entire Household'. Afterwards, Queen Victoria agreed with him that she has to move for avoiding the distractions. Then, she instructed her servant, Ponsonby to move her to Glassalt Shiel. The addressee is Bertie because Queen Victoria talks to him, the goal of Queen Victoria's utterance is for giving agreement to Bertie, and for the form of act of Her Highness' utterance is assertive. The product of verbal act from Queen's utterance is stating.

Queen Victoria is applied agreement maxim on her utterance above. As explained above, Bertie though that Queen Victoria learnt Urdu in front of the Household was inappropriate but the Queen misunderstood it and she agreed with Bertie by saying, 'you are absolutely right'. Then the Queen requested her servant, Ponsonby to move her to Glassalt Shiel. From Queen's utterance it can be seen that Her Majesty applies agreement maxim. She minimizes the disagreement while maximizes the agreement expression. Though it is misunderstanding between Queen Victoria and Bertie, but Queen's utterance still shows that the Queen applies agreement maxim.

Cost-benefit scale is implicated in Queen's utterance. Her Highness puts the benefit to the addressee which is Bertie by agreeing his statement, while the Queen puts the cost to herself at the same time. It is suitable with the concept of cost-benefit scale which is the speaker put the cost to themself while they put the benefit to the addressee. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that cost-benefit scale is influenced Queen Victoria's utterance.

Sympathy Maxim

The last maxim that proposed by Leech (1983) is sympathy maxim. The concept of sympathy maxim is the speaker minimize the antipathy to the addressee while the maximize the sympathy expression between them. Sympathy maxim has an aim to comfort the addressee's feel that have the bad condition by showing care to them. Sympathy maxim usually used in assertive utterances like remind, claim, state, suggest, complain, and report. The data shown below are the utterance which contains sympathy maxim:

Sympathy Maxim/Ponsonby
INT.OSBORNE, CORRIDOR APPROACHING DURBAR ROOM, DAY
The Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, is marching up a corridor, followed by his private secretary and deputy private secretary, with a face filled with fury. Bertie and Ponsonby are running alongside.
Ponsonby : It is a celebration of all things Indian inspired by the Mughal Emperors, Prime Minister.
Lord Salisbury : But I don't understand. Who gave her permission to build this in the first place?
Bertie : Don't blame me. I was in Monte Carlo.
Ponsonby : **I'm afraid she is a law unto herself, Prime Minister.**
Lord Salisbury : For God's sake. She'll be wearing a burqa next. I am holding you entirely responsible, Ponsonby.

Data above contains sympathy maxim. Prime Minister is angry because of the Queen's behavior. He asks the Queen's servant, Ponsonby about who gave Her Highness permission to build Durbar Room. Bertie replied that he was in Monte Carlo. Ponsonby is afraid that the Queen is a law unto herself. Lord Salisbury is in a fury and he said that it is possible that the Queen will wear burqa next if it continues. Prime Minister asks Ponsonby to take the responsibility for that. Lord Salisbury as an addressee here because Ponsonby talks to him. The form of act of Ponsonby's utterance is assertive. The goal of Ponsonby's utterance is concern while the product of act of Ponsonby's utterance is stating.

Ponsonby is identified applied sympathy maxim in his utterance. It can be said like that because in his sentence, he stated that he was afraid that the causes of all of the fuss that made Prime Minister was in a fury because of Queen Victoria's wish. Ponsonby seem minimizes the antipathy while he maximizes the sympathy expression. It is suitable to the concept of sympathy maxim itself.

From the explanation before, it could be identified that cost-benefit scale is influenced Ponsonby's utterance. He puts the cost to himself by worrying the Queen. On the other hand, he also puts the benefit by did such an act. It can be concluded that Ponsonby's utterance is influenced by cost-benefit scale.

CONCLUSION

Based on the scopes of discussion above, it could be concluded that there are 6 kinds of politeness maxims proposed by Leech (1983) found in this movie. Those kinds of politeness maxim are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. The most maxim found in this movie was approbation maxim. There are some situations that make the characters employ the approbation maxim. It is essentially used when the characters get some praise from the others. It happened because this movie talks about the friendship between the main characters. Moreover, the least maxim found in this movie were modesty maxim and sympathy maxim. It is due to the topic of the movie portraying a friendship between Queen Victoria and Abdul. Besides, there is no such tragic scene in this movie that made the cast apply little maxim of sympathy.

Regarding to the scales, there are some politeness scales influences the politeness maxim in this movie, namely cost-benefit scale, indirectness scale, optionality scale, authority scale, and social-distance scale. Moreover, based on the results, it was found that some of the utterances contain more than one politeness scales. The maxim containing more than one politeness scale is tact maxim. In some data of tact maxim, it was found that some utterances contain at least 3 politeness scales.

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