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A Pragmatic Study of Selected Impolite Expressions in American Movies

A Thesis

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 The Problem

Impoliteness is defined by Culpeper (1996:349-367) as engaging in powerful face work in particular contexts to cause social disruption. This can be done in different ways: the speaker intentionally attacks face and the listener perceives face attacks.

Impoliteness strategy is a kind of bad communication, which is found in many dialogues in the selected movies. It focuses on impolite words in action that are used by the characters in the movies. This is all the more surprising since commentators and participants in verbal interaction are more likely to comment on behaviour which they perceive to be 'impolite', 'rude', 'discourteous' etc. than on polite behaviour.

To know the language is polite or impolite, it should know and understand the language and the sociocultural values of the community in communication in order to speak politely. Avoid using word or language that makes people inconvenient. Impolite expressions usually used in informal situation and used to someone in same level or common people involve the dimension of formality.

Impoliteness in communication allows people to know and interact with each other in their life closely. It is exceedingly needed, as people are created in different genre, social background and culture.

According to Cutting (2008: 52), in some cultures, the word used is polite, but in other culture may be impolite. When speaking, the speaker should know the culture who is speaking to; moreover, if he is someone

recently known. Therefore, the uses of polite and impolite expressions are very influenced in cross cultural communication. Misunderstanding in cross cultural communication can be happened because of the word. For example, British lecturers are unused to being praised by their students, whereas for Chinese, this is a standard politeness routine. Studies about pragmatics especially for impoliteness strategies are uncommon.

The researcher knows how to make a good communication, maintain and develop a relationship. In this study, the researcher tries to analyze impoliteness strategies in terms of certain pragmatic aspects and criteria in selected movies.

People usually use impolite expressions in their daily communication. Further, nowadays there are many movies that use impolite expressions in their communication. They recently use some rude expressions. That is why the researcher selected the current movies in the study which reflect impolite expressions.

There are many possible topics which can be analyzed in American movies. First, the topic of implicature which means further explained meaning. As other characters do not believe in the characters, they often express their disbelief in the character through their utterances. The other characters have certain meaning behind their utterances that are conveyed implicitly. Moreover, the character usually feels something which other characters do not feel. S/he often expresses those strange feelings by using her/his utterances. The utterances must be more than just what the words mean.

Second, the unique character of the character with his ability can be analyzed in terms of the use of speech acts. The researcher can analyze the linguistic phenomena of a person with ability. The researcher will be

able to understand the meaning of the characters' utterances through speech act analysis; the meaning or the reason of the character uses one of the types of speech act dominantly.

Third, the topic of impoliteness can be analyzed in American movies. As previously mentioned, the other characters in these movies do not believe in the characters, hence they often express their disbelief impolitely. Moreover, the responses of the character to the impolite acts can also be analyzed.

Based on the identification of the problems above, the researcher limits the research problem to the impoliteness aspect. The researcher focuses on analyzing the impoliteness aspect through utterances such as the types of impoliteness strategies, the realizations of impoliteness strategies, and the responses of impoliteness strategies. Those aspects appear on the characters' utterances in American movies and become the problems that can be analyzed in this research. Some problems in American movies dealing with impoliteness aspects are as follows:

The first problem is the types of impoliteness strategies employed by the characters in American movies often experiences bullying and impolite language.

The second problem is the realizations of the impoliteness strategies that are used by the characters. There are some types of the realizations of impoliteness used in these movies to express the characters' feelings.

The third problem is the characters' responses to the impoliteness strategies addressed to them. The characters have three choices of

responses when facing impoliteness strategies, i.e. choosing not to respond, accepting the face attack, and countering the face attack.

Based on the identification and limitation of the problems, the formulation of the problems can be seen as follows:

1. What are the types of impoliteness strategies addressed to the characters in selected American movies?
2. How are the impoliteness strategies addressed to the characters realized in selected American movies?
3. How do the characters respond to the impoliteness strategies addressed to them in selected American movies?

Based on the explanation above, the researcher focuses on impoliteness strategies. The researcher decides that impoliteness strategies are important to learn. People will know many kinds of impoliteness strategies that can be used in daily life.

This study attempts to find out when and how impoliteness strategies are used in communication. The problem that comes up which can be formulated in the following questions:

1. What are the kinds of the impoliteness strategies used by the characters in the selected movies, the comedy movie '**Analyze This**' and the action movie '**Face off**'?
2. What are the kinds of impoliteness strategies most frequently used?
3. To what extent do these strategies affect people's opinions and attitudes?

1.2 The Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. Positive impoliteness strategies are more frequent than the other types of strategies in American movies.
2. Impoliteness strategies are frequently realized in the form of taboo words.
3. Characters in selected American movies often tend to accept face attacks.

1.3 Aims

Based on the formulation of the problems, the aims of this study are:

1. to highlight the types of impoliteness strategies employed in selected American movies,
2. to explain the realizations of the impoliteness strategies in these movies,
3. to describe the characters' responses to the impoliteness strategies addressed to them in the movies under study.

1.4 Research Questions

In this study, the researcher tries to answer the following questions:

1. What are the basic principles of impoliteness strategies in the contexts and settings of the selected movies, being a linguistic and social phenomenon?
2. To what extent is the model practical to identify the basic features of the impoliteness?
3. What kind of impoliteness strategies are frequently manipulated compared to other strategies, and why?

1.5 Procedures

The current steps are followed in carrying out the study include:

1. surveying the concept of impoliteness concerning definitions, different strategies and other related topics,
2. selecting two scripts of American movies as a sample for the analysis of impoliteness strategies,
3. adopting Culpeper's model to identify the various impoliteness strategies employed by the characters in the movies in a variety of contexts,
4. collecting Data about the impolite expressions used by characters in the selected movies. Data covers the information about the movies '**Analyze this**' and '**Face Off**',
5. analyzing the data statistically to identify the kind of impoliteness strategies employed, i.e. classifying the data, and then finding out the kind of impoliteness strategies most frequently used in the selected American movies and
6. drawing conclusions and recommending some aspects that might contribute effectively in TEFL, and then putting forward some topics for further study.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to the comedy movie "Analyze This" and the action movie "Face Off" as the subject and focus of the study. It emphasizes the impoliteness strategies used by the characters in the two movies. The study focuses on the realizations of these strategies and the characters' reaction to these strategies.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The results and findings of the study is hoped to elevate the readers' basic knowledge on more linguistic aspects of English in communication purpose domain. The study is expected to provide some information about impoliteness strategies for those who are interested in pragmatics. This study can be of considerable significance for improving the readers' comprehension about impoliteness strategies used in English. The results of this study can contribute to the local study of English communication.

For others, the study might give more information or additional reference, especially for the same kind of the study. This study is expected to give some benefits to researchers who are expected to improve their knowledge to understand impoliteness. It also can improve the researchers' ability to conduct qualitative research.