

Politeness Principles in Written Conversations: An Analysis of English Textbook

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify kinds of maxims of politeness principles used in written conversation in the English textbook for tenth-grade students. This study uses a qualitative design. This is descriptive qualitative research. The data is collected from written conversations in the English textbook for the tenth-grade students. To analyse the data, the researcher used Geoffrey Leech's politeness principles theory, which consists of six maxims. The data results show that there is a tact maxim, three generosity maxims, fourteen approbation maxims, four modesty maxims, two agreement maxims, and five sympathy maxims. The total data are twenty-nine. For the textbook produced by the government that uses the 2013 curriculum, which is concerned with character education, it should be the number of maxims of politeness to be found in the textbook's written conversation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language has a significant role in human life. It is used as a tool of communication. Every human communication conveys information which can be in the form of thoughts, ideas, intentions, feelings and emotions directly (Cahyani & Rokhman, 2017), but sometimes misunderstandings occur in communication. To avoid misunderstanding and conflict in communication, it is better to use language politely. Always trying to be polite in using language will show that we have good character.

Character is related to the overall performance of somebody and their interaction with the surrounding. It can see in daily habits. Somebody is considered to have good character if they know about good things (moral knowing), possess an interest in good things (moral feeling) and do good actions (moral action) (Rokhman, Syaifudin, & Yuliati, 2013). Nurhadi & Putra (2020) explain that character education is a process of shaping behaviour or character to distinguish between good things and bad things and apply them in life. Character education is a program to apply to all education levels in Indonesia. Character education at this time is a good solution for the development of students into ideal human beings (Hariandi, Rahmadini, Saputri, Sari, & Wahyuningsih, 2020). The curriculum used in Indonesia today, called 2013, is very concerned with character education. The Indonesian

government is very serious about character education. It is because nowadays is the era of technology that has a good impact but also a bad impact. Saputro (Saputro, 2020) said that in the era of globalization, which is as increasingly advanced as it is today, there are many positive and negative influences on society. The use of technology has a negative impact on children and adults (Mufaro'ah, Sumarni, & Sofiani, 2019). If someone is not good at taking advantage of technological advances, then someone will be mired in destruction. On the other hand, if someone is good at using it, they will become a successful human being.

In modern times, technology has always been developing from time to time and has progressed rapidly (Kartini, Utami, & Sari, 2020). Along with technology development, people can connect to everyone from all corners of the world through social media. It also makes digital information resources is a lot. Everyone is free to enter information in cyberspace without restrictions (Salim, Basri, Husain, Hidayah, & Nurhayati, 2020). Social media allows its users to have a conversation or comment on what appears on other people's accounts of social media. In recent years in Indonesia, many cases have occurred because people do not care about language politeness anymore. Some people write harsh words and insults to someone on social media, especially on celebrity accounts. The bullying that people do on social media is sometimes very excessive, so it has a bad impact on the person who receives it. The saddest thing is, it is not only adults who do it but also children. It shows that there are a lot of people in Indonesia still need to learn about how to behave properly especially in communication. So, character education is very important to always be encouraged.

The textbook is the learning media where the curriculum is implemented. Brown (2001) states textbooks are one type of text, a book for use in an educational curriculum. Textbooks are one source of learning and teaching materials widely used in learning. It is very useful not only for the teacher but also for the students textbook is not only media for the teacher to teach but also media for students to learn. It may be a conventional learning resource but is still quite capable of making a good contribution to learning. It is used as guidance in the teaching and learning process. Most of the textbooks are published in printed format. Still, some of them are available as online electronic books. There are two kinds of textbooks in Indonesia: government textbooks and textbooks from non-government publishers. Still, most of textbook that used in the school is the textbook from the government. The government's textbook is not only for certain levels of education but also for all levels of education. It also includes all subject matter.

As a learning source, the textbook is expected consists of good material. It is because good material leads to a good understanding. The right textbook can make teacher easier to implement character education. Besides that, choosing the right book is very important to prevent students from learning textbooks that have been filled with unfavourable things such as pornography and radicalism. In Indonesia, there have been found textbooks that allegedly contain pornography and also textbooks that contain radicalism. One of the online news portals, Okenews 2016, reported four incidents about books that have pornography content. The first is the English Dictionary which contains illustrations that are not suitable for students to see. The second is reading a book that has pornographic content. The third is a physical education book that consists of pornography material. Last but not least is a book containing pornography stored in the library. Books that have pornography contents and books that have radicalism contents were found as reported by the online news portal Tribunnews in 2016. Tribunnews reported that Islamic religious textbooks contain radical elements found in one kindergarten in Makassar. Therefore choosing the right textbook is very important for the teacher.

Politeness can be one indicator in choosing the right textbook. Politeness is habits regarding behaviour in society (Halawa, Erizal, & Syahrul, 2019). In line with Halawa, Erizal & Syahrul, Imbowati, Mardikantoro, & Indiatmoko (2018) said that politeness is manners, behaviour, or habits that the community applies and agrees upon so that it becomes a condition for social interaction. Politeness is very important, especially in using language when communicating with other people. Santoso (2016 in Kumalasari, Rustono, & Santoso, 2018) said that politeness in the language is an important aspect of communication and achieving the intentions that speakers want to convey to their speaking partners. One of the theories of politeness is the theory of Geoffrey Leech. Leech divided the politeness principles

into six maxims. First is tact maxim; tact maxim is minimizing cost to others and maximizes the benefit to others. Communication must be polite, wise, and not burdensome to the other person and use subtle diction (Cahyaningrum, Andayani, & Setiawan, 2018). The second is the generosity maxim. This maxim expected the participants of speech could respect others. Respect for others will occur when people can reduce benefits for themselves and maximize the benefit for others (Dari, Chandra W., & Sugiyati, 2017). The third is the approbation maxim; the approbation maxim asks the speaker to minimise dispraise of others and maximizes praise. So, people who like to ridicule, chide, or belittle others will be considered rude. Therefore, participants in the speech should not ridicule, insult, or belittle each other, which may hurt someone's heart (Akbar & Sariyati, 2017).

Fourth is the modesty maxim. According to this maxim, speech participants are expected to be humble by minimizing praise of self and maximising dispraise of self. They are expected not to be arrogant (Tarigan, 1986 in Hartini, Faizah AR, & Charlina, 2017). Fifth is the agreement maxim, which focuses on the speaker and the hearer. They need to minimise disagreement between self and others and maximize agreement between self and others. Therefore, this maxim emphasizes that the speaker should avoid rejecting an opinion absolutely to avoid misunderstanding (Osman & Wahab, 2018). Last but not least is the sympathy maxim which minimizes antipathy between self and other and maximizes sympathy between self and other. If the speaking partner gets success or happiness, the speaker is obliged to congratulate him. On the other hand, if the speaking partner gets into trouble or disaster, the speaker expresses condolences as a sign of sympathy (Nurfamily, 2015).

Politeness, as previously said, is a sign of moral character. Therefore, the instructor can use these maxims as a guide to select a textbook that is full of civility. The researcher undertook a study about politeness principles in written conversations as an analysis of the English Textbook for tenth grade Indonesian Students. The research issue is whether politeness maxims are used in Indonesian tenth-grade students.

2. METHODS

This study is descriptive qualitative research. The data is in the form of words, phrases and sentences. The data was collected from written conversations in the English textbook for the tenth-grade students of Indonesia. The title of the textbook is Bahasa Inggris. It is the 2017 revised edition. This textbook was published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. The instrument of this study is a human instrument. It means the research instrument is the researcher herself. Qualitative research studies human experiences and situations. Researchers need an instrument flexible enough to capture the complexity of the human experience, an instrument capable of adapting and responding to the environment. Only a human instrument is capable of this task. (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010). The researcher uses the observation method and note-taking technique to collect the data. After collecting the data, the next step is analyzing the data. In analyzing the data, the researcher uses several steps. The first step is reading and understanding the whole written conversations in the textbook. The second step is choosing the utterances related to the maxim of politeness principles and classifying them into tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim or sympathy maxim. The last step is explaining each classification.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Bahasa Inggris is a textbook that the tenth-grade students of Indonesia use. It was published by the government and used the 2013 curriculum. It consists of English material. Some English materials are in the form of dialogue or written conversations. Some written conversations in this textbook are fulfilling the politeness principles. The researcher uses Leech's Politeness theory to determine what maxims are in it. The results of the study are as follows table 1

Table 1 Maxim in bahasa inggris textbook

No	Name of Maxim	Number of Maxim
1	Tact Maxim	1
2	Generosity Maxim	3
3	Approbation Maxim	14
4	Modesty Maxim	4
5	Agreement Maxim	2
6	Sympathy Maxim	5
	Total	29

From the table above, we can know all kinds of politeness principles maxim are found in the *Bahasa Inggris book*. The approbation maxim is the most widely found in the written conversations in the *Bahasa Inggris book*. The approbation maxim is much more than the other maxims, which there are only one to five. There is some conversation found in written conversations in the *Bahasa Inggris book* as follows:

Tact maxim

Tact maxim is the maxim that minimises cost to other and maximizes the benefit to others. The tact maxim found in the *Bahasa Inggris book* is only one, as follow:

Edo : Hello, I 'am Edo. May I know your name, please?
Slamet: Sure, I am Slamet. I am from Jepara. What about you?

Conversations between Edo and Slamet above fulfil the tact maxim. The conversations above are considered tact maxim because he uses long utterances when Edo asks Slamet's name. He said "Hello, I 'am Edo. May I know your name please?". He uses long utterance. The longer utterance is more polite than short utterance. Chaer (2010) said that the longer utterance someone uses, the greater the person's desire to be polite. Instead of saying "what is your name?" Edo said, "May I know your name please?" which is more polite because it is spoken indirectly. Speech expressed indirectly is more polite than speech expressed directly (Chaer, 2010). Soepriatmadji (2012) gives an example of an indirect expression, May I help you? What the seller says to the buyer is a good example of stimulating similar expressions so that students learn to use interpersonal and transactional expressions well. Moreover, using indirect speech is one way to make what we say sound more polite.

Generosity Maxim

The generosity maxim asks the speaker to respect others. Respect for others happens by minimizing benefits for themselves and maximize the benefit for others. There is three generosity maxim that can be found in the *Bahasa Inggris book*, one of them as follow:

Santi: Fishing? Are you going to go fishing in the river near your house?
Bayu: No. We plan to go fishing in a lake near my uncle's house.
Would you like to come with us?

Bayu is offering Santi to go fishing with him even before Santi asked for it. It shows Bayu's respect to Santi. Attitudes and speech that minimizes benefit for self and maximizes the benefit for others rarely happen because, in general, people prefer to talk about other people and do not want themselves to struggle for the needs of others (Abdulloh, 2019). So, Bayu is minimizing his benefit by offering Santi to fish with him first. It means he is fulfilling the generosity maxim.

Approbation Maxim

Approbation maxim asks the speaker to minimise dispraise of others and maximizes praise of others. The speaker should not hurt someone's heart by ridiculing, chiding, or belittling because it is considered rude (Rahardi, 2005). It would be better and more polite if someone gave compliments to others as the conversations found in the Bahasa Inggris book as follow:

Rahmi: Really? Hey, what a beautiful skirt you are wearing. It matches your blouse.
Sinta : Thanks a lot. My sister bought it for me last month.

Rahmi is fulfilling the approbation maxim. She compliments what Santi wears by saying "what a beautiful skirt you are wearing. It matches your blouse". A compliment certainly makes others people happy rather than an insult that will hurt the heart. Cahyani (2017) State that the speaker must consider the hearer's feelings and not say things that are unpleasant to others people. In short, we can say that Rahmi maximizes praise of others by giving Santi a compliment of her dress. This is by the approbation maxim.

Modesty Maxim

According to modesty maxim, speaker should not be arrogant. People will be said to be arrogant if they always praise and favour themselves (Rahardi, 2005). Speaker is expected to be humble by minimizing self praise and maximising dispraise of self. The modesty maxim is expressed in expressive and assertive sentences (Abdulloh, 2019). One of the conversations found in the Bahasa Inggris book that shows humility is as follows:

Ivan: That was great. You must be very proud of your achievement.
Alif: Thanks. I'm glad you think so. But I still have to learn a lot.

Ivan gives Alif a compliment for Alif's achievement by saying, "That was great. You must be very proud of your achievement", but Alif is not arrogant about what he has achieved. He says that he still has to learn a lot. The way Alif responds to Ivan's compliments shows that he is a humble person. Humility is widely used as a politeness parameter (Rahardi, 2005). Alif is minimizing praises of self and maximizes dispraise of self. So, he is fulfilling the modesty maxim.

Agreement Maxim

This maxim asks the speaker to minimise disagreement between self and others and emphasises maximising agreement between self and others. But it doesn't mean we have to always agree with the opinions of others. Therefore, to avoid looking arrogant and still polite, disagreement can be expressed by statements containing partial disapproval (Chaer, 2010). Here is an example of an agreement maxim found in Bahasa Inggris book:

Rima: He is one of the geniuses from Indonesia. He studied in Germany.
Nadia: You're right.

Nadia is fulfilling the agreement maxim because she agreed to the Rima's statement. She expressed her agreement by saying "You're right". Her reaction shows that she completely agreed with Rima's statement. If someone is speaking, the speaker must not directly contradict the person who is speaking. Many factors can be considered, such as age, position, or even social status (Setiawan & Rois, 2017).

Sympathy Maxim

Sympathy maxim asks the speaker to minimize antipathy between self and other and maximise sympathy between self and other. According to this maxim, if someone gets success or happiness, we

must congratulate him in the other hand, if someone gets into trouble or something bad happens to him we must express condolences as a sign of sympathy. Antipathy towards one of the speech participants will be considered disrespectful (Rahardi, 2005).

Eny: Please accept my warmest congratulations, Sir.

Alif: It's very kind of you to say so. Thank you.

Eny congratulates Alif for his achievement. She said "Please accept my warmest congratulations, Sir". This sentence is proof of Eny's sympathy to Alif. Eny fulfilling the Sympathy maxim because she is maximizes sympathy between self and others. Setiawan & Rois (2017) said that the speaker is obliged to congratulate if the hearer gets success or happiness. Speakers can grieve or express condolences as a sign of sympathy if the hearer gets into trouble or misfortune.

CONCLUSION

From the results above, we can conclude that in the written conversation of English textbooks for the tenth-grade students of Indonesia, the number of the maxim that can find is very less. Although all kinds of maxim are found, the total of the data is only twenty-nine. For the textbook that produced by the government, it should be more maxims of politeness to be found in the written conversation of the textbook. The textbook is based on the 2013 curriculum that concerns character education and politeness is one of the important aspects of character education. For the other researcher who would take research politeness in the textbook, researching impoliteness in the textbook would be appropriate enough to be considered. It is because the research results can be considered to improve the textbook.

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