

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with background of the study, delimitation of the study, problems of the study, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and definition of key terms. Each section is described below: the first section describes the researcher's rationale for selecting the topic, the second section defines the scope of the research to maintain focus, the third section presents the central research questions, the fourth section describes the main objectives of the study, and the fifth section highlights the expected theoretical and practical contributions. The final section defines key terms to avoid ambiguity and increase the clarity of the study.

### **A. Background of the Study**

Humans as social beings interact to develop mutual understanding and live in harmony. Through communication, people gain knowledge and understanding of their environment (Pardede et al., 2019). All interactions should be guided by the prevailing values and norms of society, as these elements lay the foundation for fostering respectful and constructive exchanges. Communication functions as a social process regulated by certain roles and expectations that participants must fulfill (Hasan et al., 2021). Practicing politeness is essential for maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships. Therefore, choosing the appropriate language for each situation is key to ensuring effective and respectful communication (Hikmahwati et al., 2021). Language is an essential tool for human

communication. In everyday life, it provides the means by which we communicate emotions, thoughts, and perspectives. Without language, meaningful interactions and social relationships between people would be nearly impossible. Language is composed of symbols with meanings that allow people to communicate messages through linguistic communication. These symbols act as tools for expressing thoughts effectively. Since effective conversation helps build a positive relationship, people tend to desire smooth and harmonious interactions when using language. Therefore, communication should not only be grammatically correct but should also pay attention to the emotional state of the interlocutor. Similarly, Leech (1983:4) emphasizes that the main purpose of the principle of politeness is to reduce any discomfort or unpleasant feelings that may arise during the interaction between the speaker and the listener.

Politeness plays a vital role in human relationships and is a key component of effective communication. It occurs when the speaker considers the listener's feelings and avoids uncomfortable or embarrassing feelings. Essentially, politeness reflects a respectful attitude toward others and is essential for fostering harmonious human relations in society. Brown & Levinson (1987:66) developed a theory of politeness based on the concept of face or social self-image. According to their theory, speakers use various politeness strategies in communication to protect their own face and that of the other person. The choice of strategy depends largely on the relationship between the speaker and the listener, especially the situation in which a face-

threatening act (FTA) may occur. Politeness encompasses a range of behaviours that show respect for how others wish to be treated. Brown & Levinson (1987) classified politeness strategies into four types: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record. Each strategy is applied according to the social dynamics and the communicative context. Furthermore, the phenomenon of politeness is not limited to real-world conversations but also appears in fictional conversations, such as those in movies. As a popular form of entertainment, movies tell stories through visual narratives and spoken words, and they often reflect real social interactions, making them an excellent medium for analyzing communication patterns.

In this study, each character's level of politeness was assessed by applying Leech (1983) maxims of politeness. These maxims serve as criteria for determining whether an expression is polite or not. Leech (1983:35) described six main maxims that underpin the principle of politeness: the maxim of tact, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of approbation, the maxim of modesty, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy. These maxims were used as initial analytical tools to evaluate the dialogue in the film *The Day After Tomorrow*. After assessing the politeness of the expressions according to Leech's framework, a more in-depth analysis was conducted using Brown & Levinson (1987) politeness strategies. Through this two-step approach, the study seeks not only to identify the politeness strategies used by the characters but also to explain how these strategies

align with the basic principles of politeness. This method allows the researcher to explore how politeness contributes to effective communication, especially in emotionally charged or stressful situations, such as those depicted in film.

Film represents a combination of action, images, and language that reflects real-life experiences. Therefore, the researcher chose film as a subject of study because it offers valuable examples of everyday communication and social interactions. The film *The Day After Tomorrow* was chosen because it shows how language use changes in crisis situations. In scenes of high tension and emotion, characters adapt their speech to the intensity of the situation. From a pragmatic perspective, films function as representations of social reality, capturing how people use language to build relationships, communicate emotions, exercise power, and resolve conflicts. As shown in *The Day After Tomorrow*, in critical situations such as disasters, language is not simply a means of expression but transforms into a strategic resource for giving instructions, managing relationships, and conveying urgency. The characters' dialogues offer valuable insights into how civility is maintained or ignored in crisis situations, providing for analyzing the deeper social and psychological functions of language from a pragmatic perspective.

*The Day After Tomorrow* is a story about a global climate disaster caused by rapid environmental change. The story begins with climatologist Jack Hall leading a research mission to Antarctica, where he discovers

evidence of a drastic change in the Earth's climate. Series of extreme weather events begin to occur around the world, including severe storms, sudden drops in temperature, and rising sea levels, causing global panic. Jack warns government authorities of the impending disaster, but is initially ignored. As the situation worsens, Jack's son, Sam, is stranded in New York City for an academic competition. Jack's struggle to navigate a dangerous situation and rescue his son. Directed by Roland Emmerich and released by 20th Century Fox on May 28, 2004, *The Day After Tomorrow* is a science fiction disaster film that combines environmental warnings with human drama. According to IMDb, the film was made with an approximate budget of \$125 million and grossed over \$552 million worldwide, making it one of the most commercially successful disaster films of its time. It stars Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal, Emmy Rossum, and Ian Holm.

More than just a survival story, the film also portrays relationships and communication under extreme pressure. The dialogue between characters in crisis situations provides an excellent example for analyzing how norms of etiquette change under stressful circumstances. These elements make it a valuable resource for linguistic and pragmatic studies. *The Day After Tomorrow* received widespread acclaim and won numerous awards, including the BMI Film & Television Awards, BAFTA Award (2005), Environmental Media Award, MTV Movie & Television Award, Visual Effects Society Award, and Jupiter Award (2004), and was nominated for numerous international film festivals.

The researcher chose to analyze *The Day After Tomorrow*, which features varied dialogues in extreme situations. The film depicts characters facing emotional tension, difficult choices, and high-stakes communication, making it a valuable resource for studying how politeness is expressed under pressure. These interactions reflect how language is used to defuse conflict and maintain cooperation, which is consistent with the study of politeness strategies and maxims. To analyze these interactions, this study applied two primary frameworks: Leech's Politeness Principles (1983) and Brown & Levinson's Politeness Strategies (1987). Leech is used to measure the level of politeness, while Brown & Levinson helps identify how politeness is communicated through four primary strategies. These two theories complement each other. While Brown & Levinson focus on the form and function of politeness in communication, Leech emphasizes the social value behind each utterance. Combining these two theories allows researcher to analyze not only what is said, but also how and why it is said. This integrated approach allows for a deeper understanding of politeness in film dialogue, particularly in the context of crisis communication.

Numerous previous studies have explored the functioning of politeness strategies in various communicative contexts, which has significantly contributed to our understanding of pragmatic interactions. For instance, the study conducted by Aditiawarman and Elba (2018) *The Politeness Strategies Used in the Movie The Chronicles of Narnia* explored politeness strategies within family dynamics. Their findings showed that all

four politeness strategies were used, with bald on record being the most frequent. This was primarily due to the informal and intimate relationships between the characters, which allowed for more direct communication without being perceived as rude.

The study conducted by Fitria et al., (2020). *Politeness Strategies Reflected by The Main Character in "Bridge to Terabithia" Movie*. Found that bald-on-record and positive politeness were the most dominant strategies. This study highlighted that intimacy and emotional closeness often lead to more direct expressions of politeness in fictional conversations, as these strategies help maintain connections and reduce social distance. However, these studies primarily focus on emotionally stable or casual situations.

Wildan et al., (2024). *Maxim of politeness to improve language principles: Case study on Mata Najwa Trans7 Talk Show Program* highlight how polite language was used to maintain ethical communication between the host and guests, as well as to ease verbal tensions during the conversation. Their findings indicate that politeness acts as an intentional tool to maintain civility in public discussions.

Probosini, N. (2020). *Politeness Strategies in the Main Characters of "The Devil Wears Prada" Movie*, the study aims to analyze the politeness strategies used by the main characters in the movie *The Devil Wears Prada*. This study focuses specifically on how these strategies function in communication in the workplace. The researchers sought to identify the

types of politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory and how these strategies manifest in the characters' speech to maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships.

Harianja et al., (2024). *An Analysis of Maxim of Politeness Principle in Joe Rogan Experience Podcast*. The objective of this study is to identify and classify the types of politeness principles used in The Joe Rogan Experience podcast, specifically in the episode with Miley Cyrus. The researchers also sought to determine which maxims are the most dominant and to provide insight into the practical strategies used in the podcast conversation dynamics.

Previous studies applying the theories of Brown & Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) have been conducted in relatively calm and intimate social situations, such as within families or among friends, or in informal media environments such as podcasts. These studies typically explore how politeness contributes to maintaining interpersonal relationships and social harmony in everyday situations. However, this study takes a different direction by examining how politeness strategies function in a high-stakes situation, specifically an environmental film depicting a global climate crisis. This study is unique not only for its unique thematic context but also for its methodological approach. Brown & Levinson's framework is used to classify the types of politeness strategies used by the film's characters, and Leech's Politeness Principles are used as criteria to assess the level of politeness in each utterance. This dual approach allows for a more nuanced

analysis of language use under stress. This study focuses on the film *The Day After Tomorrow*, which despite its popularity and message about environmental issues, has rarely been studied from the perspective of pragmatic politeness. By examining the film's dialogue in the context of disasters and emotional tension, this study provides new insights into how people communicate politely in emergency situations. The film depicts various interactions in which language plays an important role in managing information and emotions, such as warning others, asking for help, and making difficult decisions.

The difference between this study and previous studies are in the subject of analysis and the situational context. While previous studies focused on everyday interactions, this study focuses on language use in environmental crises. Due to the different settings, contexts, and communication purposes, it is expected that the study's results will also reveal new patterns of politeness that have not been thoroughly studied to date. Therefore, this study significantly contributes to the development of politeness research by extending the analysis to highly tense emergency situations.

## **B. Delimitation of the Study**

This research focuses on the analysis of characters' dialogue in the film *The Day After Tomorrow*, set at a critical moment in the climate change crisis. The main objective is to explore how politeness is expressed in the characters' conversations and how it affects implication for communication

effectiveness. The first research question is to identify and classify the types of politeness strategies used according to Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory, which includes four main strategies. Before classifying these strategies, the researcher evaluated the politeness of each utterance using Leech's (1983) six maxims of politeness. This step is crucial for determining whether an utterance can be considered polite and for understanding the speaker's way of expressing themselves. After evaluating the utterances and identifying the politeness strategies, this study moves on to the second research focus: examining how these strategies affect overall communication effectiveness. Their impact is analyzed in relation to the emotional and social context of the scene, revealing how characters adapt their language to tense and emergency situations. For example, if the frequent use of positive politeness may indicate a desire to maintain solidarity and support, while if off record strategies were dominant, this suggest an attempt to avoid conflict through indirect communication.

These two research questions are closely related, the first identifies the strategies used, and the second explains why these strategies are chosen and how they affect the outcome of communication. Therefore, this study does not limit itself to listing politeness strategies but rather interprets how these strategies are conditioned by the emotional state, interpersonal relationships, and the pressured environment in which they are developed. By limiting the research topic to verbal exchanges in crisis situations, this

study focuses on the original objective of better understanding the role of politeness in ensuring effective communication in emergency situations.

### **C. Problems of the Study**

1. What types of politeness strategies are employed by the characters in *The Day After Tomorrow* during high-stakes crisis situations?
2. What are the implications of these politeness strategies for the effectiveness of communication?

### **D. Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to identify and describe the types of politeness strategies used by the characters in the film *The Day After Tomorrow*, especially in situations of extreme stress or crisis. This analysis is based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, which classifies it into four main strategies. By analyzing how the characters use these strategies in stressful situations, the researcher hopes to understand how language is used not only to convey meaning but also to maintain social relationships in emergency communication.

To strengthen the analysis, this study also incorporates Leech's (1983) principles of politeness as criteria for determining whether an expression is polite or not. In this study, first applied Leech's maxims to assess the level of politeness based on the content of each dialogue. Once an utterance is deemed polite, it is classified as one of the four strategies described by Brown and Levinson.

By combining these two frameworks, this study not only identifies the types of strategies used but also explains how these strategies affect the fluency and success of communication between characters. The researchers investigate how politeness helps avoid conflict, promote mutual understanding, and maintain emotional balance in critical situations. Through the characters' dialogue, they reveal how polite language contributes to effective communication, even in times of fear, emergency, and disaster. In this way, this study contributes to the field of pragmatics and deepens understanding of how politeness serves as an important tool to guide communication in crisis situations.

#### **E. Significances of the Study**

This research contributes both theoretically and practically by providing a deeper understanding of politeness strategies in crisis communication, as depicted in the film *The Day After Tomorrow*. Theoretically, it expands the field of linguistics and communication by exploring how politeness strategies operate in stressful situations. It enriches the literature on politeness by applying the framework of Brown and Levinson, and Leech to examine the role of politeness in cinematic depictions of crises. These findings can encourage other scholarly exploration of how language use adapts under stress and how it relates to culture and crisis management.

From a practical perspective, this study will be valuable for various stakeholder groups. For educators and students, this can also be used to

teach students ways around a hard conversation in personal and professional life. It can also be used as teaching material to guide students in managing difficult conversations in the workplace and in personal situations. Furthermore, for professionals involved in crisis communication, this study will help them develop effective communication strategies in emergency situations. This study helps parents and community members understand the importance of polite language in maintaining social harmony, not only in academic and professional settings, but also in times of crisis. Ultimately, this study sheds light on how differences in speech can influence communication outcomes and why reflective language is crucial for fostering connection and understanding. In conclusion, this study not only strengthens pragmatics and communication theory but also provides meaningful practical applications that can help promote better communication for educators, students, professionals, and the community at large, especially in times of crisis.

#### **F. Definition of Key Terms**

This section provides an overview of the key terms used in this study to improve mutual understanding between researchers and readers. Defining these terms will bring clarity and consistency to the interpretation of politeness strategies in the context of crisis communication in *The Day After Tomorrow*.

1. **Pragmatics:** Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics that studies how context shapes meaning. It focuses on how language is used in real-life situations and how speakers understand each other beyond the literal meaning of words.
2. **Politeness:** Politeness refers to how people express themselves in interactions with respect and consideration. It involves using appropriate language to avoid offending others and maintain social harmony in conversations.
3. **Politeness strategies:** These are specific approaches or techniques that speakers use to communicate respectfully, reduce tensions, and build good social relationships. These strategies help maintain smooth conversations and avoid conflicts in various social situations.
4. **Politeness Principle:** Politeness principles proposed by Leech (1983) in the Politeness Principles framework. These include the Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim.
5. **Communication:** Communication is the process of sharing information, ideas, and feelings between individuals or groups. Communication occurs not only through spoken or written words but also through gestures, facial expressions, and other nonverbal cues.
6. **High-stakes crisis:** Refers to situations that involve risk, stress, or serious consequences, whether emotionally, physically, socially, or economically.

In such situations, communication becomes essential for managing relationships and resolving problems effectively.