

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Politeness is an essential part of communication. According to Holmes (1996, p. 296), linguistically, politeness includes speaking appropriately with people based on the context. Politeness is not just being polite but also being linguistically polite. It means how communicating properly at the right time and place. Showing consideration by using the appropriate language can reflect a good attitude.

In politeness, people need to know how to get a good response and show awareness of others' feelings. In this case, people use appropriate politeness by considering differences in social background. The existence of differences depends on various factors, including age, relationship, culture, and the context of the situation. For instance, when a student is having a conversation with a teacher. The teacher has more power than the student in the classroom. The student applies formal speech to the teacher in order to show deference. Thus, the student uses politeness to keep the conversation running well. Regarding this, if people speak in an inappropriate form, there will be communication misunderstandings. Therefore, politeness strategies are the best way to choose appropriate forms in different situations to maintain social harmony.

Politeness strategy is a way to choose several kinds of communication strategies and consider using appropriate language and social behavior. It can minimize the effect of what is said and reduce face threats to maintain social

relationships with comfortable interaction. An example can be seen in the video Caught in Providence (2022):

Judge : *I'm gonna release the boot for 60. I'm not gonna leave you broke. I understand it, okay.*
Mr. Glovin : *Yep, I appreciate it.*

This conversation occurs between the Judge and Mr. Glovin (the defendant) in the courtroom. Mr. Glovin had violated traffic rules and had to pay a fine for his mistake. The judge knows the condition of Mr. Glovin because he was in a bad financial situation, supporting his daughter, and he had to pay many penalties. In this case, the judge sympathizes with Mr. Glovin on his condition by providing leniency. The judge notices Mr. Glovin by saying, "I'm not gonna leave you broke. I understand it." This is an example of politeness strategies by giving sympathy for worrying about the listener's state. Politeness is concerned with how clearly a message is conveyed and considers the effect that will arise from what is said. Therefore, politeness strategies are essential to establish a relationship and avoiding uncomfortable conversations with others.

Politeness strategies can be observed in every situation. One of them is the American court of law. American court law is a legal system that uses a formal place. The conversation in the courtroom differs in many ways from ordinary conversation. Regarding the court's objectives, language is usually done efficiently and logically to reach the truth. Brown and Levinson (1987) point out that the formal protocol in the courtroom can effectively manage and reduce a potential offensive action between parties. (p. 1). In this case, politeness strategies also play a vital role in saving and

reducing any potential aggression that interferes with the trial process without disturbing the purpose of the courtroom.

In the courtroom, there are many types of specific utterances. One of them is denial. During the trial process, the defendants gave statements admitting or denying their case. A denial is a speech act used by the defendant to give a statement to the judge that aims to be self-defence. Denial can be said to contradict a statement or refute the truth of the previous statement. When carrying out a speech act of denial, there are ways to reduce negative impacts such as damaging relationships or potential aggression during the trial. Therefore, the defendant can minimize this impact by using a communication strategy, namely politeness strategies, in making a denial statement.

Concerning this research, the writer uses the American court of law as shown in “Caught in Providence” TV show posted on its official Facebook account. It is used as the source data to identify the politeness strategies used by the defendant in making denials. It is important to be analyzed because denial is specific to happen in the courtroom and to see the pattern of politeness strategies that the defendants mostly use. To conduct this research, the author has analyzed the types of politeness strategies, the ways to deliver the strategy, and the social variables that influence the defendants when selecting the politeness strategies in making denials in the court as demonstrated in “Caught in Providence” TV shows.