

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the research

Being polite to others demonstrates empathy and respect, which in turn improves our relationships. It can prevent conflict, foster peace with others, and maintain strong connections. Furthermore, politeness helps others feel comfortable, even with cultural differences, age, or viewpoints. Politeness makes social interactions more harmonious. Moreover, politeness is essential in communication on social media. As a platform for interaction among people from diverse backgrounds, politeness fosters a more supportive digital community and helps prevent conflicts arising from disrespectful comments.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 61), politeness strategies are created to protect the hearer's face. Politeness encompasses the strategies used to acknowledge and respect the face of others, particularly in close social contexts. Therefore, speakers must consider the concept of "face" as crucial in communication. "Face" refers to the image someone presents in public, encompassing emotions that can be lost, maintained, or improved. By being mindful of the other person's face, speakers can avoid making them feel uncomfortable while demonstrating respect in their communication. In distant situations, awareness of someone's face is often marked by respect or reverence.

One of the strategies in politeness is positive politeness. According to Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 101), Positive politeness is the speaker's strategy employed by the speaker to address the positive face of the hearer. In other

words, positive politeness is an approach to interaction that aims to build strong bonds, create a social environment characterized by kindness, and foster connection, respect, and focus between the speaker and the hearer. The goal of this strategy is to foster mutual respect, mitigate tension to prevent conflict or discomfort, promote cooperation through improved communication, and demonstrate empathy for the needs of others. In our daily interactions, we usually use the positive politeness strategies to be polite to another person.

An example of positive politeness can be seen in this sentence, "@selenagomez you are the best, love you so much (love)." This sentence from the Instagram account named Official Wondermind, which was uploaded on May 14, 2024, consisted of two slides that showed the importance of maintaining friendships despite busy work schedules. In the accompanying content, Selena emphasized the value of taking time to stay in touch, even if it's just through text messages or FaceTime. Moreover, this sentence was categorized as positive politeness because the netizen expressed admiration, affection, and positive recognition towards Selena, as reflected in the content of the post. This expression is also considered a gift [S15], as it satisfies the hearer, Selena, through feelings of being liked, admired, and listened to, which to build positive and supportive relationships in the digital environment while fostering a healthy online atmosphere.

In this context, various platforms can be used for communication, with many serving as effective channels for sharing information. One popular platform is Instagram, which allows users to post pictures and videos, often with captions,

and send messages. Instagram is a vital space for open interaction among users. One notable account that takes advantage of this is Official Wondermind.

Co-founded by singer and actress Selena Gomez, her mother Mandy Teefey, and entrepreneur Daniella Pierson, Official Wondermind focuses on promoting mental health through its website and social media channels. This account emphasizes the importance of mental wellness, highlighting that maintaining mental health requires daily effort, similar to how physical fitness needs regular exercise. According to Dolan (2002, pp. 1- 2), this platform aims to help people achieve mental fitness, reinforcing the significance of supportive communication in nurturing mental well-being.

However, the specifics of who can upload posts to the Instagram account have not been made public on this account. Official accounts like this are usually managed by a social media team allocated by the relevant business or organisation. By sharing private stories and educational resources, this account seeks to decrease the stigma associated with mental health conditions and promote mental health. Employing interviews, instructional materials, and personal accounts, @officialwondermind aims to create a community that facilitates open discussion about mental health and improves mental wellness. Only authorized individuals, such as Wondermind's social media team or official contributors, can post. This ensures that all content aligns with Wondermind's mission and maintains consistency in messaging.

Furthermore, the comments on this account provided clear examples of

online interactions characterized by support and mutual respect. Followers of this account were able to help one another, share helpful information, and openly discuss mental health challenges. Mental health, defined as a state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being, affects how individuals think, feel, and act. It encompasses the ability to adapt, manage emotions, establish relationships, and engage in positive behaviors.

This connection between mental health and positive politeness strategies was significant, as it facilitated warm communication and respect for others' feelings, thereby creating a more positive discussion environment. Therefore, this research investigated positive politeness on @officialwondermind. This case was particularly relevant to mental health on Instagram, as it allowed for the identification of how polite and supportive comments could enhance respect and acceptance, which in turn had a substantial impact on users' mental health. On the other hand, negative interactions from netizens could be detrimental, especially for individuals facing personal challenges. By fostering a culture of positivity and support, the account aimed to mitigate the potential harm caused by negative comments and promote overall mental well-being.

Therefore, the study became important for the field of linguistics, particularly pragmatics, because it aims to find out how netizens use positive politeness strategies to provide comments on social media, especially Instagram, to discuss mental health issues. The writer argued that implementing positive politeness in online communication was not just a matter of ethics but also important for building a safe environment for mental health, especially in the

analysis of netizens on the @officialwondermind account.

Ultimately, this research aimed to enhance our understanding of the types of positive politeness strategies used by netizens in their comments. Furthermore, it highlighted the role of language in creating polite, supportive interactions and in fostering a caring community on social media. By exploring this topic, the study offers valuable insight into how language is used in discussions about mental health on digital platforms.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the explanation above, this research investigates positive politeness strategies in netizens' comments on mental health posted in @officialwondermind. Therefore, the research question is:

1. What positive politeness strategies are found in netizens' comments on mental health posted on @officialwondermind?

1.3 Objectives of the research

This research aims to analyse the positive politeness strategies in Instagram comments on the account @officialwondermind, which contains information about mental health and other topics.

1. To identify the positive politeness strategies in netizens' comments on the Mental Health posted in @officialwondermind.

1.4 Focus of the research

From the pragmatic study, the writer limits the research to discussing positive politeness strategies of mental health posted on the @officialwondermind

account. In this research, an analysis of the most common comments from netizens who use positive politeness strategies from 3 posts in the period January to May 2024. Posts that focus on mental health with comments that employ positive politeness strategies can help create a supportive environment, reduce stigma, and provide adequate emotional support. Another reason is that mental health is the number one issue in 2024. The writer uses 15 positive politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987, pp. 103-129).

1.5 Methods of the research

The method employed in this study is qualitative research. The purpose of this method in qualitative research is to comprehend how individuals or groups perceive and interpret social or human issues. This method involves formulating questions and methodologies throughout the research process, gathering data directly from participants within their natural environments, and analyzing the data to identify themes that emerge from specific details. Ultimately, the findings are interpreted to reveal their significance (Cresswell, 2014, p. 4). In this research, the writer focuses on netizen comments on Official Wondermind posts that discuss mental health. This research focused on how positive politeness strategies were used by netizens who used Brown and Levinson's theory (1987). The aim was to explain the content of the comments by categorizing them into the types of strategies employed and the contexts in which they appeared.

1.5.1 Data Collection

a) Data and Source of Data

The data source referred to where the data was obtained. The

source of this study was Instagram posted related to mental health from the official account @officialwondermind. Official Wondermind was a mental health account that aimed to eliminate the stigma associated with mental health and encourage open discussions about mental health issues. This account provided netizens with access to comments on mental health posts. This data source was used because it offered direct insight into how individuals interacted with mental health content in the social media environment.

The data for this study consisted of comments from netizens who used positive politeness strategies in response to posts from the Official Wondermind account discussing mental health issues. Ten posts were initially considered; however, the analysis was limited to three specific posts from January to May 2024. The posts selected included one post from January 25, 2024, which received 14 comments; another from May 14, 2024, with 21 comments; and the final post from May 21, 2024, which received 6 comments.

The decision to limit the data to only three posts out of the original ten was made to ensure a focused and in-depth analysis. These three posts were selected because they contained the highest number of comments using positive politeness strategies. By focusing on fewer posts, the researcher was able to manage the data more effectively, maintain relevance, and gain deeper insights into the interactions. It can improve the quality and clarity of the findings.

b) Methods and Techniques of Collecting Data

The data were collected using the observation method. The comments on Instagram in some posts by @officialwondermind were directly observed. According to Fry et al. (2017, p. 5), observation was described as one of the methods commonly used in data collection to obtain information about a particular group systematically and to understand the phenomenon under research directly in its natural context. Furthermore, the information was obtained directly from the writer's observations without asking the respondents.

To collect the data, this research employed a random sampling technique, as it was not feasible to examine the entire population represented by the content of posts on the Official Wondermind account. Besides, every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, and it helps to reduce bias.

c) The procedure of data collection

The writer followed some steps to collect the data on mental health issues. First, the writer logs in to the Instagram application and searches for the account using the username @officialwondermind. The reason why Instagram @officialwondermind was chosen was because this account discussed issues related to mental health and was founded by a public figure, Selena Gomez, who had previously experienced mental health challenges. This made the comments from netizens interesting, as they tended to provide positive and supportive responses. Besides, the content

shared on this account was consistently focused on mental health education and advocacy, making it relevant to the research subject.

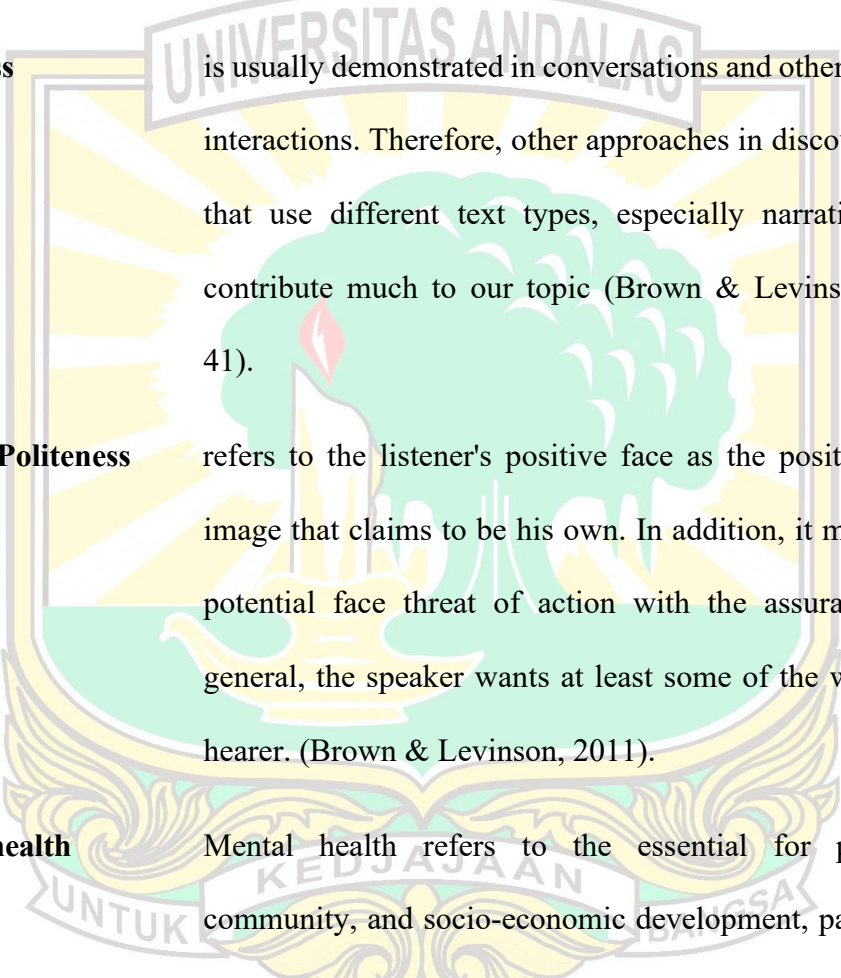
Second, the writer identified three posts that occurred from January to May 2024. From the ten posts that had been selected, the writer included only three posts because they had the most comments that employed positive politeness strategies from netizens. To ensure that the data remained relevant and well-managed, this limitation was made. Data were collected from three account posts whose comments were selected using positive politeness strategies from the @officialwondermind account: the post dated January 25, 2025, which contains 14 data points, May 14, 2025, which contains 21 data points; and the post dated May 21, 2024, which contains 6 data items. Third, the writer read the comment, which contains positive politeness. Next, the writer screenshots comments that have been collected. In the last step, the data were analyzed by using Brown and Levinson's theory.

1.5.2 Data Analysis

The data analyses positive politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory (1987, pp. 103-129) used in netizens' comments on Selena Gomez's mental health posted on @officialwondermind. The analysis results are presented in the form of sentences and a table. Positive politeness has fifteen categories: *noticing attending to the hearer, exaggerating, intensifying interest to the hearer, using in-group identity markers, seeking agreement, avoiding disagreement, presupposing/raising/asserting common ground, Joke, asserting or presupposing speaker knowledge and concern for*

the hearer offer promise, be optimistic, Include both speaker and hearer in the activity, give (or ask for) a reason, assume or assert reciprocity, giving gifts to the hearer based on Brown and Levinson's theory.

1.6 Definition of key terms



Pragmatics	is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of those forms (Yule, 1996, p. 4).
Politeness	is usually demonstrated in conversations and other face-to-face interactions. Therefore, other approaches in discourse analysis that use different text types, especially narratives, do not contribute much to our topic (Brown & Levinson, 2011, p. 41).
Positive Politeness	refers to the listener's positive face as the positive self-image that claims to be his own. In addition, it minimizes the potential face threat of action with the assurance that, in general, the speaker wants at least some of the wishes of the hearer. (Brown & Levinson, 2011).
Mental health	Mental health refers to the essential for personal, community, and socio-economic development, particularly as it relates to mental well-being that enables a person to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, and contribute to their community (World Health Organization, 2022).
Context	Context includes the background information that both the speaker and the listener rely on to understand the purpose of a statement. This information covers the situation, social

connections, time, place, and cultural background that affect the meaning of what is said. If the context is not understood, the real meaning of a statement might not be communicated clearly (Brown and Levinson, 1983, pp. 22- 23).

