



**AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGY TO
REFLECT SOCIAL BACKGROUND IN THE MOVIE
THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PYJAMAS (2008)**

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfilment of Thesis Requirements
for the S-1 Degree Majoring Linguistics in English Department,
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

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SEMARANG**

2026

PRONOUNCEMENT

I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and has not previously been submitted for any degree at undergraduate (S-1), master's (S-2), doctoral (S-3) or diploma level at any institution. All data, analyses, and conclusions presented herein are the result of my own independent work, except for those sections referenced from other sources, which have been clearly cited in the bibliography.

Semarang, 31 March 2026

Jesslin

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“Everything is temporary: emotions, thoughts, people and scenery. Do not become attached, just flow with it.”

Buddha

*This thesis is dedicated to
both of my dearest mom and dad*

APPROVAL

**AN ANALYSIS OF POLITENESS STRATEGY TO REFLECT
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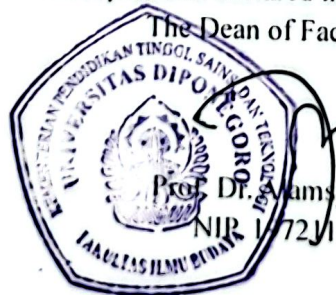
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the politeness strategies employed by a young child as depicted in the movie *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, focusing on the main character, Bruno, and how these strategies reflect his social background. The method of this study is descriptive qualitative. The data were collected from Bruno's interactions that contain politeness strategies. The observation method was applied to assess the relevance of the data, and the note-taking method was applied to mark Bruno's utterances. This study is based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, which proposes four types of politeness strategies, namely bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. Furthermore, two factors influence the use of politeness strategies, namely payoff and sociological variables. The results show that there are 34 Bruno's utterances containing politeness strategies, 18 data (53%) are categorised as bald-on record, 12 data (35%) reflect positive politeness, and 4 data (12%) demonstrate negative politeness. The findings indicate that Bruno most frequently uses bald-on record strategies, suggesting that he tends to be direct and explicit, particularly when interacting with interlocutors with whom he has a close social distance.

Keywords: politeness strategies, movies, social background, children

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas is a 2008 movie adapted from the novel of the same name by John Boyne. Set in the 1940s during the Second World War, the film tells the story of the Holocaust from a child's perspective through the main character, Bruno, an eight-year-old German boy. Bruno is forced to move from Berlin and leave behind his friends simply because his father is a Nazi commander assigned to oversee the operations of the Auschwitz concentration camp for Jews. As a result, Bruno must adapt to a new and strict environment located near the camp, where he experiences loneliness and spends much of his time exploring his surroundings out of curiosity. In this new environment, Bruno meets many new people from a wide variety of different social backgrounds, such as soldiers, servants, prisoners, and Shmuel, a Jewish boy who is imprisoned and starving. The movie becomes interesting to analyse because the writer aims to see how Bruno applies strategies of politeness when faced with people from different social backgrounds in the new environment

Brown and Levinson (1987) define politeness strategies as an objective, rational behaviour to mitigate face-threatening acts strategically. Therefore, the politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) aims to enhance politeness in everyday speech to prevent misunderstandings in communication. Thus, the movie *The Boy in*

the Striped Pyjamas was chosen as the object of this study because the writer sought to explain the types and factors of politeness strategies used by Bruno through his conversations with people of different social backgrounds in his surroundings. In addition, the writer also wanted to examine how Bruno's politeness strategy could reflect his social background.

This study aims to analyse the types of politeness strategies used by Bruno in the conversation, the factors that influence Bruno's use of certain politeness strategies, and how these politeness strategies reflect Bruno's social background. Based on Brown and Levinson (1987), there are four politeness strategies, namely bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. In addition, several factors influence these politeness strategies, including certain payoffs or advantages, and the circumstances. Thus, from the usage of politeness strategies by Bruno, conclusions can be drawn to determine his social background.

1.2 Research Problems

The writer formulates the following research problems based on the background data previously mentioned:

1. What types of politeness strategies does Bruno use in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* movie?
2. What factors influence Bruno in using certain politeness strategies, and how does his use of these strategies reflect Bruno's social background?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research problems outlined above, the study's aims are:

1. To analyse the types of politeness strategies used by Bruno in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* movie.
2. To identify the factors that influence Bruno to use certain politeness strategies and to examine how these strategies reflect his social background. .

1.4 Previous Studies

In writing this research, the writer found several previous studies that can be used as references for this research. The previous studies are divided into three different focuses, which are studies that focus on analysing the movie *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* in various fields as the object, studies that focus on analysing the politeness strategies, and studies that focus on analysing the social background.

These studies below are analysing the movie *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* in various fields as the object:

The first study is from Prajaningtyas et al. (2020), who investigated a film titled "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas" in their research, determining whether it could be classified as children's literature or not. To support the analysis, library research was undertaken alongside the novel and supplementary articles from reputable sources. However, the authors state that the film "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas" is not classified as children's literature because of the characterisation criteria according to

Nodelman. However, it is classified as high literature because it possesses high literature characteristics, particularly those found in novels.

Secondly, Utami et al. (2022) investigated how social issues are portrayed in the novel "The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas". They applied an interactive qualitative data analysis method developed by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014). Their study identified five main social issues presented in the novel: the Nazis' ethnocentric belief in German superiority, slavery, child labour, class inequality, and the marginalisation of women. These findings suggest that themes highlighting the atrocities of the Holocaust, which can foster awareness, are also present in children's literature

Lastly, Safrudi (2014) investigates the characterisations of the major characters and the state of children's personalities through the lens of psychology. This research aims to identify the main characters in the film, assess their characterizations, and examine the state of the children's characters through the lens of psychology condition via the lens of psychology. Based on the investigation, the writer found that Bruno and Shmuel are the film's main characters. According to children's psychology, children aged 6 to 12 still need friends and school, but the three kids, Bruno (eight years old) and Shmuel (eight years old), have an unpleasant experience that forces them to modify their behaviour.

The section below is a study analysing politeness strategies in several movies. Aathifah et al. (2022) used a qualitative approach in their study. This study aims to identify various types and factors influencing politeness strategies. The researchers discovered four politeness techniques in the movie: **Bald On-Record, Positive**

Politeness, Negative Politeness, and Off-Record. The Bald On-Record is the most employed strategy in the movie "Flipped". Thus, the movie includes three Politeness Strategies factors, namely Power, Social Distance, and Rank of Imposition.

Rosari (2016) examines the politeness strategies employed by the characters in the film "The Great Debaters". This study focuses on the language-based social behaviour of the characters and identifies four types of politeness strategies: off-record, bald-on record, positive politeness, and negative politeness. The study also highlights several factors that influence the characters' politeness in communication, including language and style, register and domain, as well as slang and solidarity.

Maharani et al. (2023) discuss the film "Gifted". This film depicts the narrative of gifted children's education and parenting and is based on real-life challenges in the learning world. This research tries to examine the main character's politeness technique in this film. The researcher used a qualitative descriptive method and an audio-visual collecting approach. This study's results show that 37 positive politeness strategies and 23 negative politeness strategies were used among 512 utterances from the major characters.

Wati and Puspani (2020) investigated politeness strategies spoken by characters in the "The Patriot" movie, as well as the effect of gender on the degree of politeness in the film. The authors employed the note-taking and documenting method to acquire study data. The analytical results suggest that the characters in the film "The Patriot" use eleven of the fifteen strategies described by Brown and Levinson (1978). In terms of the characters' gender, ladies regularly employ a neutral tone when conversing with

both men and women. Men, on the other hand, engage in talks with varied degrees of formality.

Puti and Fitrawati (2022), in their study on the movie *Yes Day* (2021), also used the theory of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) and used a qualitative descriptive method. In their research, they found four types of politeness strategies which are bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. The results of their research found that bald-on record was the most widely used type of politeness strategy, while off-record was the least used in the movie *Yes Day*.

Safitri and Kusumaningtyas (2022) conducted research on the animated film 'Moana' using Politeness Strategies theory by Brown and Levinson's (1987). This study used a descriptive qualitative method to analyse the main characters' speech. The study identified four types of politeness strategies: bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record, with a focus on the use of bald-on record strategies.

Permadi (2018) researched the use of positive politeness strategies in Woody Allen's film 'Midnight in Paris' using Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory. This study employed qualitative methods to analyse the characters' utterances in the movie. This study's findings revealed 13 types of positive politeness strategies, with the most dominant strategy being exaggerating interest, agreement, or sympathy, while some strategies, such as giving gifts or emphasising knowledge about the hearer's desires, were the least frequently used.

Sigarlaki et al. (2025) conducted a pragmatic analysis of positive vs negative politeness in the 'Coco' (2017) movie by using Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness

strategy theory. This research used a qualitative descriptive method to analyse the conversation between Miguel and Héctor. The results of this study indicate that positive politeness is the most dominant strategy, while negative politeness appears less frequently, especially in moments of disagreement or emotional tension. This study also found that the politeness strategies in 'Coco' (2017) not only reflect linguistic politeness but also support the film's themes of empathy, respect, and family harmony.

The last one in this section investigates sociological elements from the Enola Holmes movie as well as Brown and Levinson's (1987). Sari (2023) used the theory of politeness strategies to examine her research. The author then used descriptive qualitative research to explain the findings of the study. The study claims that the author found 82 instances of politeness strategies in the Enola Holmes movie, including 32 instances of bald on-record politeness, 25 instances of positive politeness, 10 instances of negative politeness, 14 instances of off-record politeness, and one instance of the say nothing/no FTA strategy. Additionally, three sociological factors, social distance (D), relative power (P), and absolute rating of imposition (R), have an impact on how the characters in the Enola Holmes movie employ politeness techniques.

In this last section, the writer found previous studies related to social background. Kuswartiningrum (2020), in her study, analyses the "Parasite" (2019) movie. The writer examined how characters from diverse socioeconomic classes use distinct politeness strategies to deal with face-threatening acts. She discovered that the high-class Park family mostly employed positive politeness and indirectness to maintain social distance and exert authority, whereas the lower-class Kim family

tended to use more negative politeness and deference tactics to avoid confrontation and earn favour.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, many researchers have discussed politeness strategies in various movies, using Brown and Levinson as their primary source. Other researchers have also discussed how a person's social background is reflected in their use of politeness strategies. However, no research has examined how the social background of the main character in a film is reflected when dealing with different social classes of different age groups. To respond to this question, this study uses Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness to analyse how Bruno's politeness strategies reflect his social background in *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* movie.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study is grounded in the politeness theory proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). It is specifically limited to examining the types of politeness strategies employed by Bruno, the factors that influence his choice of these strategies, and the ways in which his social background is reflected through his use of politeness strategies.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study has several theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study yields more resources and references on the different types of politeness

strategies, the factors that influence the use of certain politeness strategies, and how these strategies relate to an individual's social background. Practically, this study is expected to provide readers with more in-depth knowledge of the use of politeness strategies, identify the reasons individuals employ them, and help them use them appropriately, while also helping readers identify a person's social background in their use of politeness strategies.

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This chapter focused on the theoretical framework and research methods. Using Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness as the primary source, the writer discussed the types and factors of politeness strategies used by Bruno throughout the movie. In the research methods section, the author uses a distributional approach to present the data.

2.1.1 Politeness Strategies

Politeness strategy, as discussed by Brown and Levinson in their book (1987), refers to linguistic or social features that individuals use in social interactions to regulate or mitigate potential threats to face. These are tools for people to communicate appropriately to avoid misunderstandings in conversation (Kuwastiningrum, 2020). In general, they can be described as communication techniques or methods that aim to respect the listener and maintain the speaker's self-image, so that communication can take place cooperatively (Maharani et al., 2023). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), 'face' refers to the image that each person desires for themselves. In this case, 'face' is categorised into two aspects, namely positive face and negative face (Brown and Levinson, 1987, 61).

1. Negative face relates to boundaries, freedom, and the right not to be disturbed. Where individuals want to maintain freedom of action and freedom from coercion without feeling coercion and burdens.
2. Positive face refers to a consistent positive self-image that is expected by others. Positive feedback is expected to make a person feel valued and accepted for their personality. Therefore, they want their desires, opinions, and actions to be valued and accepted by others.

For the purpose of demonstrating people's awareness of other people's faces, Brown and Levinson (1987) identified four types of politeness strategies: bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record.

2.1.1.1 Bald On-Record

According to Brown and Levinson (1987; 94-96), the use of the bald on-record strategy occurs when someone wants to make a threat to face (FTA) directly and efficiently, without paying attention to or prioritising the feelings of others or the hearer, which means the speaker is more focused on the action than on maintaining face or good manners. Based on Brown and Levinson (1987; 96-100), there are two main situations where the speaker uses this strategy:

First, non-minimised or ignored threats to face, this case happens when both the speaker and the hearer are mutually known, where maximum efficiency is essential, and no effort of save face is required, for instance:

1. 'Help!'

2. 'Watch your step!'
3. 'Give me just 5 more days!' (in situations to pay something) (p. 96)

Second, situations where the speaker uses the FTA directly but still minimises the impact on the hearer's face through implications. For example:

1. 'Come here! Don't hesitate!'

This example may happen in farewells, welcoming, and offering context. In situations like these, the speaker is usually bald-on record to minimise the impact on the hearer's face.

2.1.1.2 Positive Politeness

Brown and Levinson (1987: 101) stated that positive politeness is a way of showing respect by addressing someone's desire to be liked or appreciated. It involves showing that you share similar wants or values with the other person. Unlike negative politeness, which focuses on minimising an imposition, positive politeness goes beyond that by expressing appreciation or connection. It's often seen in friendly conversations where people show interest in each other's personalities, shared values, or common knowledge. One of the strategies in positive politeness is the element of exaggeration. This exaggeration shows the speaker's intent to make the other person feel good (e.g. "*What an amazing house you have!*") (1987; 104). Positive politeness is also a way to build a sense of closeness, even with people who aren't close yet, by creating common ground. This makes it useful not just to minimise the impact of a

face-threatening act (FTAs), but also to foster a more friendly, intimate interaction overall.

2.1.1.3 Negative Politeness

Based on Brown and Levinson (1987; 129), negative politeness is a way of showing respect by addressing someone's desire for freedom and privacy. It focuses on not interfering with the other person's actions or decisions. Negative politeness is about being respectful and careful; it's like following rituals of avoidance, ensuring that no imposition is placed on the hearer. This strategy is specifically focused on reducing the impact of a face-threatening act (FTA), which includes things like being indirect, using hedges (e.g., "*maybe*" or "*perhaps*") (1987; 145), expressing doubt about the success of a request, or emphasising the other person's power. These strategies create distance and reduce pressure in the conversation. They are often used when a speaker wants to slow down or control the interaction more respectfully and formally.

2.1.1.4 Off-Record

According to Brown and Levinson (1987; 211), off record is an act where it's communicated in a way that doesn't have a clear, single intention. This gives the speaker a way to avoid responsibility for the act by allowing multiple interpretations. Thus, if someone wants to perform a face-threatening act (FTAs) without fully take the responsibility, they can do it off-record, leaving the listener to decide how to understand it. This strategy is indirect, which means the speaker says something unclear or different

from what they intend. The hearer must make an inference to figure out the real intention. It's not quite clear how to understand this procedure, although it usually consists of two parts. The speaker first provides a hint that the hearer must deduce (e.g. "*It's cold in here*"), which may be interpreted as the speaker wants the hearer to close the window (1987; 215), and then the hearer uses the hint to conclude what the speaker truly wants.

2.1.2 Factors Influencing the Use of Politeness Strategies

According to Brown and Levinson (1987; 71), there are several factors, such as payoff and social variables affect the use of politeness strategies. The payoffs are known as the credit someone receives from employing a particular politeness strategy. Furthermore, sociological variables are categorised into three categories, which are social distance, relative power, and rank of imposition.

2.1.2.1 The Payoffs

According to Brown and Levinson's (1987; 72) theory, the use of certain politeness strategies has the expected results for the speaker related to the strategy used. Payoff refers to the advantages or credit that someone gets when using politeness strategies in social interactions. This factor is the reason why a person chooses a particular strategy to maintain social relations or the interlocutor's 'face'. For instance, by expressing it through a positive politeness strategy, the speaker might reduce the FTA aspect by reassuring the hearer that they share similar kinds of values, interests,

or perspectives as the speaker. Another possible payoff is that the speaker minimises the debt for doing the FTAs by including the hearer and himself equally in the request or offer (e.g., with an inclusive 'we' as in '*Let's get on with dinner* ') (1987; 72). Another example is when positive politeness strategies begin with praise, thereby encouraging a sense of appreciation for participation. This can be seen in the context of classroom interactions between teachers and students (e.g., "*I'm glad to see you all actively participating in today's discussion. But don't forget, every opinion should be shared respectfully*"). By applying this positive strategy, the teacher gain payoff as a maintaining positive classroom environment (Sutyrajmi, et.al, 2025; 3).

2.1.2.2 Sociological Variables

According to Brown and Levinson (1987;74), the politeness strategies used by speakers affected by FTA involve sociological variables. Sociological variables are categorised into three aspects: social distance, relative power, and rank of imposition.

2.1.2.2.1 Social Distance

In Brown and Levinson's (1987; 74) politeness theory, social distance refers to the degree of closeness or social distance between the speaker and interlocutors. In social distance, interaction and good message delivery between speakers and interlocutors are seen based on background, age, and cultural background.

For instance, "*Are you alright, ma'am? Are you alright, sir? Perhaps you shouldn't do this in public, Sir. I understand, but I'm talking to you. Why don't you just*

calm down?” In this example, the speaker and the interlocutor do not know each other and the speaker is younger which can be seen why he chose the addressee terms ‘ma’am’ and ‘sir’ to call the woman and the man to maintain social distance (Suyono and Andrianti, 2021), even more the age gap between them are quietly far so the speaker tend to use the negative politeness to show respect (Jeanyfer and Tanto, 2018).

2.1.2.2.2 Relative Power

Brown and Levinson (1987; 74) stated that relative power is the level of power or hierarchy between speakers and interlocutors, so it affects the politeness strategy used. If the speaker has higher power than the interlocutor, then the speaker tends to use a low level of politeness. Conversely, speakers use a high level of politeness if he or she has lower power than the interlocutor (e.g., *could you show a little more sensitivity?*”), in this example, a customer demanded his right to be served well and instructed the writer to also serve deaf customer. As a customer, he had the right and authority to give instructions, however, he did not directly ask for it but used a certain negative strategy to respect his ‘face’ (Suyono and Andrianti, 2021).

2.1.2.2.3 Rank of Imposition

Based on Brown and Levinson (1987; 74), the rank of imposition refers to the level of demand of the request or action performed by the speaker. If the request is large and in demand, then the politeness used is also high. Otherwise, the rank of imposition becomes low if the demand is small (e.g., *why don't you get a job and get*

them by yourself, okay? So, you get a job and you can get them yourself.”) this sentence is one of the high ranks of imposition illustration because the request is large and in demand besides the hearer of this sentence is a child (Suyono and Andrianti, 2021).

2.2 Research Methods

The research method applied in this study is divided into five parts, namely the type of research, data and data sources, data collection methods, population and sampling techniques, and data analysis procedures.

2.2.1 Type of Research

This research used a descriptive qualitative method. In the descriptive qualitative method, the writer used qualitative data and analysed social phenomena descriptively, particularly the politeness strategies found in the film. The data collection process was based on the politeness theory by Brown and Levinson (1987). This study collects and analyses the data from the utterances in the movie and from the movie script to strengthen the utterances.

2.3 Data and Data Source

This study's data is based on Bruno's utterances in the movie *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* that contained the politeness strategies. Bruno's utterances were taken from his conversations with several characters surrounding him, namely Shmuel, a Jewish boy; Ralf and Elsa, Bruno's parents; Gretel, Bruno's sister; Maria, the family

maid; Lieutenant Kotler, a German soldier; and Pavel, a Jewish prisoner, who represent Bruno's main interlocutors throughout the movie. The writer collected this data by watching the film on official platforms such as Netflix. Furthermore, the writer also saw the subtitles of Bruno's utterances, so the data collected would be clearer and more accurate.

2.3.1 Data Collection Method

Data were collected through observation and note-taking methods. Through observation, the writer observed relevant data related to the politeness strategies employed by Bruno. Subsequently, the note-taking method was used to identify and classify Bruno's utterances containing politeness strategies. The function of this method was to distinguish which utterances employed politeness strategies and which did not. In the process, while watching the movie, the writer carefully observed and noted Bruno's utterances that were considered to contain politeness strategies. After the data were collected, the writer analysed and validated the utterances based on Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategies.

2.4 Population and Sample Technique

This study used total sampling. In this sampling technique, the total sample number is proportional to the total population number, where the sample will be selected according to specific criteria. Thirty-four Bruno's utterances contain politeness strategies and become the population as well as the sample. From the sample, the writer

analyses the type of politeness strategy used by Bruno, the factors that influenced Bruno to use the politeness strategy and how Bruno's social background is portrayed throughout the movie.

2.4.1 Method of Data Analysis

The data analysed refers to Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness. First, the writer analysed the types of politeness strategies used by Bruno, including the bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record strategies. Then, the writer analysed the factors that influenced Bruno in using certain politeness strategies, namely payoffs and sociological variables. Thus, from the analyses conducted, Bruno's social background can be concluded.

CHAPTER III

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

The results section describes the types of politeness strategies used by Bruno throughout the film. The data presented is the result of Bruno's utterances to his interlocutors that contain politeness strategies.

3.1.1 Frequency of Politeness Strategies

The data below shows the frequency of Bruno's utterances that contain politeness strategies throughout the movie.

Politeness Strategies		Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Bald-On Record	18	53%
2	Positive Politeness	12	35%
3	Negative Politeness	4	12%
Total		34	100%

Table 3.1.1 Bruno's utterances that contained politeness strategies

Based on Bruno's utterances in the movie, his utterances only contain three politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). According to the data collected, the writer found 34 of Bruno's utterances that contained politeness strategies. For analysis, the author classifies the data based on the type of strategy. The politeness strategy most frequently used by Bruno is bald-on record, with 18 utterances (53%).

This is followed by positive politeness in second place with 12 utterances (35%), and negative politeness in third place with a total of 4 utterances (12%). On the other hand, a strategy that Bruno never used throughout the movie is off record

3.2 Discussion

The discussion section delves deeper into the types and factors that influence Bruno to use certain politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness, namely bald-on record, positive politeness, and negative politeness, as well as payoff and sociological variables as the factors. Therefore, based on the analysis conducted, conclusions can be drawn to see how Bruno's social background is reflected through the politeness strategies he uses throughout the movie.

3.2.1 Types of Politeness Strategies Used by Bruno

Bruno's utterances, which contain politeness strategies, appear to differ depending on his interlocutor, whether he is speaking to someone close to him or to an authority figure.

3.2.1.1 Bald-On Record Strategy of Bruno

Based on Table 3.1, bald-on record is the politeness strategy most often used by Bruno, with a sum of 18 utterances (53%). Bruno used this strategy with the aim of maximally and efficiently performing a face-threatening act without attempting to

satisfy the hearer's face. Bruno used this strategy because he was influenced by sociological variables and payoff.

Datum 1

Maria: *"I'll wrap it properly for you."*

Bruno: *"No, it's none of your business"*

(00:45:37)

In the dialogue above, Bruno is seen putting a lot of food into his satchel to secretly give to Shmuel. Maria, his maid, saw it and wanted to help Bruno pack the food so it wouldn't spill, but he refused. The first datum above is an example of the bald on record strategy that Bruno used. He responds to Maria's question with *"No, it's none of your business,"* which is an illustration of the bald-on record strategy. Datum 1 is categorised as task-oriented and expresses a face-threatening act to the maximum extent. This occurs because of the urgency of the situation. When the speaker feels that face is unnecessary and wants efficiency to avoid wasting time, the bald on-record strategy will be used. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the use of the bald on-record strategy occurs when the speaker intends to use a face-threatening act to the maximum, without considering the hearer's face needs. The urgency in this context is seen when Bruno must put the food into the satchel discreetly without anyone else knowing. However, if this context occurred in a regular situation without urgency, maybe Bruno would be expected to reduce his refusal.

By using the bald-on record strategy efficiently and optimally, Bruno put pressure on Maria to obey him without any intention of opposing him. The use of this strategy in Bruno's utterances is also influenced by sociological variables, which

relative power. Beside Maria is Bruno's maid, which means that they have a close social distance; they still have different social statuses in the house. Bruno felt that the person he was talking to did not have much power in the house, so he employed a bald-on record strategy without considering Maria's face.

Datum 2

Shmuel: "*Have you got any food on you?*"

Bruno: "No"
(00:33:59)

The dialogue happened when Bruno was exploring his house, and he met Shmuel on the edge near the barbed wire around his house. When Bruno said that his house was near the concentration camp, Shmuel asked if he had brought food. This datum 2 above also illustrates the bald-on record, which is categorised as maxims of quality (Brown and Levinson, 1987; 95). Bruno's answer, "No," to Shmuel's question shows adherence to the principle of honesty, as he speaks truthfully without exaggeration or pretence. His statement is delivered directly, without regard for his hearer's face, indicating one category of bald on record.

The directness in this interaction can be partly attributed to the age-based social distance between Bruno and Shmuel, which is relatively close because they are almost the same age. Their closeness in age may have made Bruno feel less need to be careful in his responses, allowing him to feel more comfortable being direct and not worrying about Shmuel's feelings. However, this strategy depends on the context; if Bruno used

the same responses when talking to his parents or others who had more authority or control over him, his words would clearly threaten their negative face.

Datum 3

Bruno: *"It's not fair, you having this view."*

Gretel: *"Well, I'm not swapping."*

(00:28:57)

The conversation above happened when Bruno was in Gretel's room, looking at the view from Gretel's bedroom window, which was beautiful and different from the view from his bedroom window. This dialogue serves as an example of the bald on record strategy. According to Brown and Levinson (1987; 95), this strategy is used in situations where the threat to the hearer's face is not minimised, maximum efficiency is essential, and both the speaker and hearer are mutually aware of this, so there is no need for face-saving. In the dialogue between Bruno and Gretel, both characters use direct utterances without any mitigation. As shown in datum 3, Bruno's honest complaint, *"This is not fair; you having this view"*, is a typical illustration of a bald-on record utterance. Likewise, Gretel responds directly with, *"Well, I'm not swapping."* Here, both Bruno and Gretel are using maximum face threat because they are mutually aware that no face redress is necessary.

By using the bald on record strategy in this conversation, Bruno, as the speaker, can gain credit for his honesty. Bruno's utterance about his complaint regarding Gretel's room is honest and based on the payoff. This advantage allows him to replace anything he may have taken from doing the FTA. This indicates that the utterances in datum 3 show Bruno's honesty in complaining about Gretel's room and his willingness to return

the FTA, which could potentially damage Gretel's positive face. In this context, Bruno and Gretel have a close social distance, and their equal relative power is also a sociological variable that influences Bruno to use the bald-on record strategy.

3.2.1.2 Positive Politeness of Bruno

Positive politeness is the second most used strategy by Bruno throughout the movie, with a total of 12 utterances (35%). This strategy is used when Bruno wants to reduce his use of FTA and wants to express respect or interest in something or someone. In general, Bruno uses this strategy when communicating with Shmuel. Bruno is a child who likes to play and interact with people who he thinks share his interests. These interests explain why Bruno used positive politeness.

Sociological variables influenced Bruno's use of positive politeness. By using this strategy, the writer observed that Bruno gained advantages for himself as a speaker.

Datum 4

Bruno: "I've got some bad news, too. I'm going away."

Shmuel: "How long for this time?"

Bruno: "That's why it's bad. It's forever, I think. Mom says this is no place for children, which is just stupid."

Shmuel: "When do you go?"

Bruno: "Tomorrow. After lunch"

Shmuel: "So, I won't ever see you again?"

Bruno: "Yes, you will. You can come to Berlin if you like, when everybody's getting on with each other again."

(01:14:30)

The conversation above happened when Bruno told Shmuel that he would be moving away with his family soon. Shmuel looked sad because he would lose his

friend, and Bruno responded by saying that their friendship would remain even though Bruno had to move away, which illustrates a positive politeness strategy. In the dialogue above between Bruno and Shmuel, Bruno risks threatening Shmuel's positive face by moving away and leaving him for a long time. However, to reduce this threat, Bruno uses a positive politeness strategy. Bruno's utterance "*Yes, you will. You can come to Berlin if you want...*" in Datum 4 is categorised as an offer. However, an offer is one of many methods of implementing positive politeness. By employing this strategy, Bruno has expressed his willingness to cooperate by offering Shmuel the opportunity to participate in the same activities as Bruno. Therefore, by stating that they are cooperating, this can serve to improve Shmuel's positive face wants.

The above dialogue is also influenced by Payoff because by applying this positive politeness strategy, Bruno gains the advantage of minimising FTA. This is accomplished because Bruno is sensitive to Shmuel's desires and considers himself to have the same wants as Shmuel. Furthermore, Bruno maintains their closeness, solidarity, and social involvement using positive politeness. Bruno's usage of positive politeness is also influenced by sociological variables, which include close social distance and a low rank of imposition.

Datum 5

Shmuel: "*I've got to go*"

Bruno: "*Tomorrow then?*"

Bruno: "*I'll bring an extra-big sandwich, and don't forget the pyjamas!*"

(01:16:30)

When Shmuel wanted to find his father in the concentration camp, Bruno intended to help him. After finding a way to get into the concentration camp, Bruno said he would meet him again tomorrow to help Shmuel find his father and bring him a sandwich from his house. The dialogue above illustrates the use of positive politeness, particularly in Bruno's statement, "*I'll bring an extra-big sandwich.*" This utterance exemplifies gift-giving, one of the types of positive politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 129). Bruno is aware that Shmuel desires food, as shown earlier in datum 2 when Shmuel asks whether Bruno has brought any food for him. By offering an "*extra-big sandwich,*" Bruno directly attends to Shmuel's wants and shows concern for his well-being.

Through delivering this positive politeness strategy, Bruno redresses Shmuel's face by fulfilling his needs, thereby satisfying Shmuel's positive face and reinforcing their sense of solidarity. Thus, one of the factors influencing Bruno's use of positive politeness is the payoff. By offering an "*extra-large sandwich,*" Bruno gained recognition as a caring, kind, and empathetic individual. This helped build a strong image of their friendship. In addition, close social distance was also one of the factors that influenced Bruno to use positive politeness.

3.2.1.3 Negative Politeness of Bruno

Negative politeness is the least used strategy by Bruno. Negative politeness is used to reduce the effects of a face-threatening act (FTAs). This strategy aims to provide the hearer freedom and privacy. Bruno often employs this strategy when

interacting with people older than him, thereby conveying the impression that he respects others' choices and decisions. This shows that Bruno's use of negative politeness is influenced by sociological variables.

Datum 6

Bruno: "*Can I ask you a favour?*"

Lieutenant Kotler: "*Well, you can ask.*"

Bruno: "*Are there any spare tyres around? An old one from one of the trucks or something*"

(00:22:35)

In this dialogue, Bruno is on the terrace of his house and asked Lieutenant Kotler, who is cleaning the car with Gretel (his sister), to fetch a spare tyre for a swing. This dialogue indicates an example of negative politeness used by Bruno in the movie. Bruno's negative politeness strategies above refer to conventional indirect and hedges. By going indirect, the speaker wants the hearer to give an 'out' of what the speaker said (Brown and Levinson, 1987; 132). As seen in datum 6, Bruno says, "*Can I ask you a favour?*" which is followed by "*Are there any spare tyres around?*" This is an indirect form, even though it is in the question form, but it still contains a request according to the context in the movie. Bruno used this indirect request because he didn't want his request to sound coercive to Lieutenant Kotler, so Bruno showed that he was trying to lessen the impact of his request. In addition, Bruno's question, "*Can I ask you for a favour?*" also contained a felicity condition (Searle, 1969), in which Bruno already knew exactly what he wanted to ask Lieutenant Kotler, so his request would be successful because Bruno knew that Lieutenant Kotler could comply with his request.

Furthermore, Bruno also used hedges when speaking with Lieutenant Kotler. His statement, “*An old one from one of the trucks or something*”, presents the hedge ‘or something’, which serves as a weakening word and reduces his assertiveness so that his request does not sound forceful, thereby redressing his face-threatening act.

By using negative politeness, Bruno shows respect and gives his interlocutor space to refuse without losing face due to a face-threatening act. This is evident when Kotler replies, “*Well, you can ask,*” which does not indicate direct agreement. Bruno has anticipated the possibility of refusal by using a non-urgent form of questioning. In addition, sociological variables such as power inequality (asymmetry) between Bruno and Kotler and high social distance influence Bruno to use negative politeness to lessen the impact of his request and preserve Kotler’s negative face.

Datum 7

Bruno: “*Will you tell my mum what happened?*”

Pavel: “I think she’s going to see it for herself.”

(00:26:24)

The incident above is when Pavel (a Jewish man who worked at Bruno’s house) helped Bruno, who had fallen from a swing, and tried to treat his injuries. The datum 7 above is a demonstration of the second negative politeness strategy used by Bruno. Bruno’s utterance, “*Will you tell my mum what happened?*” illustrates the negative politeness strategy he used. This utterance is classified as a pessimistic strategy, which is one of many forms of negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987: 173). Bruno’s choice of the modal structure “*Will you. . .?*” functions as an indirect request, allowing the listener to retain the option of refusal. In this movie context, Bruno appears to avoid

making assumptions about Pavel's willingness or ability to convey an explanation to his mother. By presenting the request indirectly rather than as a command, Bruno attempts to mitigate the face-threatening act on Pavel's negative face.

By using a strategy of negative politeness that avoids coercion and offers Pavel options. However, Bruno gains the payoffs or benefits by using negative politeness to maintaining social distance and to avoid face loss between them. Besides the far social distance, there is also a high rank of imposition power asymmetry. Although Bruno has the status of being the son of a captain, Pavel is still much older than him, which is one of the reasons Bruno uses negative politeness.

3.3 Factor Influence Bruno in Using Politeness Strategies

The factors that influence Bruno in using politeness strategies are payoff and sociological variables, namely social distance, relative power, and rank of imposition. Furthermore, social background is also discussed in this section, where Bruno's social background is reflected through the factors and types of politeness strategies he uses.

3.3.1 Payoff Factors

According to Brown and Levinson's theory (1987; 71), payoff is the benefit gained by the speaker in using a particular politeness strategy. Therefore, each strategy has its own advantages that can be achieved. Thus, by using bald on-record, Bruno, as the speaker, can gain credibility for honesty by showing that he trusts the hearer. In addition, Bruno can earn recognition for his outspokenness while also reducing the risk

of being misunderstood and obtain the opportunity to retract what he has said by performing a face-threatening act. As seen in datum below:

Ralf: "*Sit down, sit down*".
 Ralf: "*Well, what do you think?*"
 Bruno: *(silent)*
 Ralf: "*Oh, dear*"
Bruno: "*I want to go home.*"
(00:16:30)

Bruno uttered directly by saying '*I want to go home*', which could earn him credit for honesty in response to his father's question. By speaking honestly, Bruno shows that he trusts his interlocutor, leaving no ambiguity in the conversation. This directness also indicates a close social distance in their relationship, so that no face mitigation is needed. However, Bruno's father, Ralf, provides environment to developed Bruno's confidence in voicing his opinions as in datum 8 in this study's appendices, which also explain why Bruno often speaks directly to adults, asks questions, and expresses dissatisfaction or curiosity. This pattern characterised as concerted cultivation or commonly associated with middle-class families where children are socialised to question adults or authority figures and express their opinions (Lareu, 2011; 2)

In addition, by using positive politeness, Bruno can minimise the effects of face-threatening acts by assuring that he and the hearer share the same will or 'the same kind' as him. Another possible payoff is that Bruno can minimise the debt incurred by doing FTA by including himself and the hearer as participants or benefitters in the activity. Based on the data collected in this study's appendices, it appears that Bruno

often uses positive politeness when he wants to become closer to someone he interacts with. It's evident that Bruno often used the positive politeness strategy throughout the movie to become closer to Shmuel, as in datum 31 illustrates below;

Bruno: *"I wish I could've helped you find your dad."*

Shmuel: *(nodding)*

Bruno: *"I really want to make up for letting you down like I did."*
(01:15:12)

From the datum above illustrate that Bruno sought to emphasise the closeness of their relationship and show that he cared about Shmuel. Shmuel's nod in response indicated his acceptance of Bruno's attitude. By using positive politeness, Bruno gains the payoff of becoming closer to Shmuel and minimises the social distance between them. This finding aligns with the study by Permadi (2018) entitled "Positive Politeness in Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris*", in this study, the character Scott using positive politeness that influenced by payoff factor to assuring himself that he has the same similarities with Zelda and Gil, and he uses the addressee form 'sweetheart' to minimise the distance and to show intimacy or solidarity between them. However, there are differences between the findings of this study and those of previous research. In this study, the use of positive politeness served not only to maintain an existing close relationship but was also employed as an effort to build and strengthen intimacy. Bruno used this strategy to demonstrate care and build a closer relationship with Shmuel. Meanwhile, in Permadi's (2018) study, the strategy of positive politeness focused more on maintaining the solidarity and familiarity that had already been established between the characters.

Meanwhile, Bruno employs negative politeness strategies as redressive actions toward the hearer's face to reduce or minimise the face-threatening acts he performs. Additionally, Bruno's use of negative politeness aims to show recognition and respect for the 'negative face' of the hearer. It will not interfere with the decisions or freedom of choice of the hearer. By using this strategy, he can gain benefits by showing respect to the addressee in return for performing a face-threatening act, avoiding future debts, maintaining social distance and avoiding face loss.

3.3.2 Sociological Variables

In addition to payoffs, Bruno's politeness strategy is also influenced by sociological variables, which, according to Brown and Levinson (1987; 74), are divided into three variables, namely social distance, relative power, and rank of imposition.

3.3.2.1 Social Distance Factor

Bruno's politeness strategies are influenced by social distance. Typically, Bruno uses the Bald on Record strategy when his interlocutor has a close social distance. This finding is related to research by Shofa and Jannah (2024), whose study titled "Bald on Record Strategies Used by Characters in Secret Society of Second-Born Royals" shows that the main character, Samantha, used the bald on-record strategy with the hearers who have a close relationship with her. For example, when Samantha applies the bald

on record strategy to Catherine, using a maximum face-threatening act that could make Catherine feel uncomfortable or threaten her face.

However, several utterances show that Bruno used the bald on-record strategy with those who have a far social distance from him, such as data number 25 in this study's appendices. This case can occur in situations of great urgency, where maximum efficiency is necessary, and no face redress or mitigation is considered necessary. Conversely, if redressive action is applied, it will reduce the intended level of urgency. One example in the movie that shows the use of great urgency is seen in the conversation between Bruno and Lieutenant Kotler, where Kotler appears angry because Bruno gave Shmuel food. However, Bruno denies that he gave Shmuel food because he knew Kotler would be very angry, saying, "*No, I just walked in, and he was helping himself. I've never seen him before in my life.*" He says this directly, clearly, and without mitigation due to the urgency and efficiency of not getting caught. In addition, similarities were also found in research by Safitri and Kusumaningtyas (2022) entitled "Strategies of Politeness: The Use of Bald-On Record Strategies in the Animated Film Moana." In this study, Moana, as the main character, uses the bald-on-record strategy in a great urgent situation with Maui. Moana and Maui use the politeness strategies with a direct request that explicitly expresses what they want and do not intend to minimise the threat to their face due to the urgent situation, even though both have a far social distance.

However, there are identifiable differences between this study and previous research. In this study, Bruno employed a bald on-record strategy towards Lieutenant

Kotler, who was older and held relatively greater power than Bruno. Despite the power asymmetry and far social distance between them, Bruno still used direct speech because the situation was urgent and required maximum efficiency. In contrast, the study conducted by Safitri and Kusumaningtyas (2022) shows that Moana and Maui have relatively equal power, although they also have a far social distance. Therefore, these findings suggest that the use of bold on-record strategies can occur both in relationships characterised by relative equality of power and in those marked by power asymmetry, particularly in urgent situations that require efficiency and accuracy in conveying a message.

Furthermore, a far social distance encouraged Bruno to use a positive politeness strategy. According to the frequency, most of the data shows that Bruno often used positive politeness when he interacts with Shmuel. It indicates that Bruno used positive politeness as a tool to express that he intended to build a close relationship or minimise the social distance with Shmuel since he didn't have a peer in his new home. The findings of this study are the same as the study by Permadi (2018) entitled "Positive Politeness in Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris*," in which the character Gabrielle shows her interest in Gil by demonstrating that she shares similarities with her even though they have only met a few times and are socially distant. However, because they are the same age, Gabrielle uses positive politeness strategies as a tool to get closer to Gil.

3.3.2.2 Relative Power Factors

The difference in relative power between Bruno and his interlocutor became apparent when Bruno used negative politeness, not only to maintain social distance and reduce threats to face, but also because of power asymmetry. This can be seen in datum 9 in this study's appendices, where he used negative politeness influenced by the high social distance factor and the power asymmetry.

Meanwhile, high relative power also often occurs when Bruno used a bald on-record strategy with interlocutors who have a low social distance. This happened because of the urgency of the situation, so that no redressive action was needed. This can be seen in datum numbers 2 and 6 in this study's appendices, where Bruno is seen using bald on record when talking to his father and mother. Even though both of his parents have higher relative power than him, Bruno still used the bald on-record strategy, which was also influenced by the close social distance factor and the context of the situation in the movie.

3.3.2.3 Rank of Imposition Factors

Bruno's utterances throughout the movie contain more low-rank impositions. His utterances tend to use bald on-record and positive politeness, which usually carry a low rank of imposition, close social distance, and equal relative power. However, Bruno's utterances containing negative politeness are usually influenced by high-rank impositions. This happens because of the far social distance, thus necessitating the need to maintain face which aligns with the study by Sigarlaki et al. (2024), entitled

“Pragmatic Analysis on Positive vs. Negative Politeness in *Coco* (2017) through the Lens of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Strategy”, which states that the level of threat often varies depending on the relationship between the speaker and the hearer; a request from someone in a position of authority generally feels more demanding than one from a close friend. Moreover, the characters in the study use negative politeness to maintain mutual respect and boundaries. This suggests that negative politeness tends to appear when speakers need to maintain respect or distance, which explains why Bruno used negative politeness less frequently, as many of his interactions occur within familiar or close relationships.

However, this study found that Bruno used negative politeness strategies in his utterances to hearers who were close to him, as shown in datum below:

Bruno: “Can I ask you something about the farm?”

Gretel: *“Bruno, you don’t still think it’s a farm, do you?”*

Bruno: *(sobbing)*

Gretel: *“It’s a camp. What’s called a work camp. For Jews, obviously.”*

Bruno: *(sobbing)*

(00:55:15)

The utterance in the dialogue above contains a high rank of imposition, which explains why Bruno uses negative politeness besides to minimise the FTA, this is in line with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory, which states that the higher the burden contained in an utterance, the higher the politeness strategy that will be used.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This study examines how the use of politeness strategies reflects the social background of the main character, Bruno, in the movie *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*. By using Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness strategies to examine the types and factors of politeness used by Bruno, and through the politeness strategies he uses in the movie portrayed his social background. The data found 34 Bruno's utterances that contained politeness strategies, the most dominant used by Bruno being bald-on record, with 18 utterances (53%), then followed by positive politeness with 12 utterances (35%), and negative politeness with a total of 4 utterances (12%). Bruno frequently uses the bald-on record strategy with the hearer who has a close distance relationship with him. He employs this strategy in high-urgency situations to achieve clarity and directness in his utterances. The positive politeness that Bruno uses typically involves a low rank of imposition to build or maintain good relationships with the interlocutor. Furthermore, Bruno employs a negative politeness strategy to maintain social distance; he usually applies this strategy towards figures of authority as a way of granting them freedom and showing them respect in response to the threat to his face that Bruno has already done. Seeing that the politeness strategy most frequently used by Bruno is bald on record, it can be concluded that Bruno's social background is concerted cultivation or being raised by an upper-middle-class family (Lareu, 2011).

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