

ABSTRACT

Legally Blonde (2001) is a film about Elle Woods, a sorority girl who follows her ex-boyfriend to Harvard Law School but becomes a clever lawyer. This study analyses the politeness strategies used by Elle Woods in her assertive speech acts using Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory and Searle's (1979) Speech Acts Theory. The purpose of this study is to examine how Elle Woods' politeness strategies in her assertive speech acts reveal power relations across different social contexts in the film. The observation method with a note-taking technique was used in collecting the data, while the analysis was done through a socio-pragmatic approach. The results show that Elle Woods uses all four types of politeness strategies across seven types of assertive speech acts: bald-on-record (50,00%), negative politeness (23,33%), positive politeness (16,67%), and off-record (10,00%), with claiming as the most dominant assertive speech act (53,33%). The findings show that Elle's politeness strategies reveal her transformation from a powerless to a powerful person, shifting from deferential strategies such as negative politeness and off-record to protect herself, toward direct strategies such as bald-on-record to assert her authority as she gains legal knowledge and confidence. Her shift from deferential to direct strategies shows that the way people speak is not just a reflection of who has power, but can also be a tool to change power relations in schools and workplaces.

Keywords: *Legally Blonde*, Brown and Levinson, politeness strategies, assertive speech acts, power relations