

The Violation of Politeness Maxims by the Characters in the Movie *White House Down*

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Abstrak

Dalam penelitian ini, penulis menganalisa penyimpangan maksim kesopanan dalam percakapan antar karakter di film berjudul “White House Down”. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi bagian dari maksim kesopanan yang menyimpang dan untuk menjelaskan alasan terjadinya penyimpangan tersebut. Penulis mengumpulkan data dari ujaran para karakter di film “White House Down”, kemudian mengklasifikasikan penyimpangan maksim ke setiap maksim kesopanan yang dikemukakan oleh Leech (1983) dan teori pengaruh penggunaan maksim kesopanan yang dikemukakan oleh Holmes (2008).

Dari analisis tersebut, penulis menemukan enam jenis maksim kesopanan yang menyimpang dari tiap ujaran yang diujarkan oleh para karakter. Jenis maksim kesopanan yang dimaksud seperti: “Tact Maxim”, “Generosity Maxim”, “Approbation Maxim”, “Modesty Maxim”, “Agreement Maxim”, dan “Sympathy Maxim”. Setelah mengklasifikasikan jenis maksim kesopanan yang menyimpang kemudian menjelaskan pengaruh penyimpangan yang dilakukan oleh para karakter. Pengaruh yang sering muncul di dalam data adalah karena perbedaan status.

Kata Kunci: Maksim kesopanan, Penyimpangan, Karakter

1. Background of the Study

Talking about politeness, Leech (1983:132) states that politeness principle basically has to pay attention to the six maxims of the politeness; those are Tact maxim, Generosity maxim, Approbation maxim, Modesty maxim, Agreement maxim, and Sympathy maxim. The principles of violation politeness maxims are often violated by people thus resulting in hurting others’ feelings in daily life when making communication. Not only in daily life that we can find people violate politeness but also in “White House Down” movie violation utterances were found as the reflection of the life itself.

2. Problems of the Study

There are two problems that must be answered. Those are as follows.

- a) What types of politeness maxims are used by the characters in the movie *White House Down* and which utterances are violated?
- b) What are the main reasons of the used application maxims by the characters in the movie *White House Down*?

3. Aims of the Study

The aims of this study are:

- a) To describe the types of politeness maxims used by the characters in *White House Down* movie and to identify part of politeness maxims are violated among the characters.
- b) To explain the reasons why the politeness maxims are applied by the characters in *White House Down* movie.

4. Research Method

The data sources of this study were taken from the utterances in the conversation between the characters in movie entitled “White House Down”. This movie is 2013 American movie written by James Vanderbilt and directed by Roland Emmerich. However, not all the utterances used to be analyzed. The utterances used as the data sources were the utterances of the conversation which applied the politeness expressions that are violated in their utterances.

As a movie used as a data source, the steps for data collection are as follows: First, by watching and listening carefully the conversation to understand the plot of story and also their utterances. Second, the utterances that contain violation of politeness maxims were noted down to limit which one from the data were analyzed and picked as main data. The last process was to identify the data contain violated utterances. The note technique was used to collect the data in this writing.

The data collected were descriptively analyzed by describing the types of politeness maxims and which utterances are violated by the characters. The theories used are proposed by Leech (1983) to answer the first problem and the theory proposed

by Holmes (2008) used to answer the second problem. The last step was presented by showing the data in the form of sentences.

5. Result and Discussion

5.1 Tact Maxim

The tact maxim states that minimize the expression of beliefs which imply cost to other and maximize the expression of beliefs which imply benefit to other. The paradox of politeness functions as an antidote to a more dangerous kind of paradox. This more dangerous paradox is a violation of the logic of goal-oriented action; that is, a state in which two individuals, *a* and *b* have incompatible goals.

(5-1) ROY : Hey, we're gonna need backup?

JOHN CALE : **We are working.** Come on.

(00:05:51-00:05:58)

In their conversations John made a violation of tact maxim when conducting conversation with Roy. This was proven when Roy asked John for a help, however John refused his help. It is supposed to be implying benefit to others and that was successfully done by Roy when asking a help to John, however John had not given a good response. The reason why tact maxim was applied by Roy when they made a conversation to John is because of social distance. In this case, John was an US Capitol Police Officer and Roy maybe one of his staff.

5.2 Generosity Maxim

The Generosity Maxim states that minimize the expression of benefit to self and maximize the expression of cost to self. Unlike the tact maxim, the generosity maxim focuses on the speaker and says that others should be put first instead of the self. The violation of Generosity Maxim principles is violated by the people thus resulting in hurting to the other feelings and also found in the White House Down movie.

(5-2) JOHN : Jenna...Jenna. Did you get me in?

JENNA : What do I get if I did?

JOHN : What do you want?

JENNA : **Dinner, candlelight, and a promise that you will try to get to second base.**

JOHN : Done.

(00:08:36-00:08:49)

Jenna was an assistant to the vice president; it meant that she also had an authority in the White House. John asked her help to give him a pass ticket for his daughter to enter the White House. However, Jenna wanted many things when she would give a pass ticket. Jenna perfectly violated generosity maxim by maximized benefit to self and minimized cost to self. The reason why generosity maxim was applied in this dialogue is influenced by the context of situation (the relation between participants).

5.3 Approbation Maxim

The approbation maxim states that minimize the expression of beliefs which express dispraise of other and maximize the expression of beliefs which express approval of other. This maxim is used in an utterance that expresses the speaker's feeling. The first part of the maxim is to avoid disagreement; the second part intends to make other people feel good by showing solidarity.

(5-3) JOHN : What did she do?

MELANIE : She was a flag twirler.

JOHN : **That is a talent?**

MELANIE : She practiced for six weeks, John. She thought you were gonna be there.

(00:10:42-00:10:53)

The conversation took place in Melanie's house. Melanie was John's ex-wife. John asked his ex-wife about their daughter Emily by *That is a talent?* This utterance perfectly violated approbation maxim because he maximized the expression of beliefs which express dispraise of other. John was supposed to support his daughter by saying congratulation to Emily rather than he underestimated her. The reason why approbation

maxim was applied in this conversation is because of kinship. Kinship is a term for blood relation.

5.4 Modesty Maxim

The modesty maxim states minimize the expression of praise of self and maximize the expression of dispraise of self. The modesty maxim sometimes comes into conflict with some other maxim or in asymmetry, in which case we have to allow one maxim to take priority over the other.

(5-4) CAROL : Mr. President, it isn't a good idea to deviate from the flight plan.

MR.PRESIDENT: Pretty please, Carol? **Leader of the free world** saying "pretty please"? That ought to count for something.

(00:01:54-00:02:04)

Mr. President ordered Carol to deviate a plan when the flight was running because he wanted to do a thing. In this case, Mr. President violated modesty maxim by saying *Leader of the free world saying pretty please*. He maximized praise of self as well as minimized dispraise of self. He was actually a leader of the United States, however he supposed to not make himself proud because of his power. The reason why politeness modesty was applied in this conversation is because of social status.

5.5 Agreement Maxim

The agreement maxim runs as minimizing the expression of disagreement between self and other, maximizing the expression of agreement between self and other. It is simply observed that they are much more direct in expression agreement, rather than disagreement. However, the violation of this maxim was violated not only in daily life but also in this movie.

(5-5) MR. SPEAKER : John, what do you think of the president's proposal?

JOHN : I don't know Sir. It is good to have less enemies. I guess.

MR. SPEAKER : You are a military man. You don't think he is putting us at risk?

JOHN : **That's a little above my pay grade.** If you feel that way,

why don't you run against him?

(00:07:47-00:08:01)

Mr. Speaker wanted to know John's opinion about what had been said by Mr. President's speech in front of the people. John answered Mr. Speaker's question in a polite way to keep maintain a good feeling. John said *That's a little above my pay grade*, these words absolutely violated agreement maxim because he maximized disagreement between self and other. The reason why agreement maxim was applied in this conversation because of age, Mr. Speaker was older than John.

5.6 Sympathy Maxim

The Sympathy Maxim states that minimize antipathy between self and others and maximize sympathy between self and other. This maxim is usually used in representative utterances and includes in a small group of speech acts such as congratulations, commiseration, and expressing condolences.

(5-6) The bell ring again...

JENNA : John, have you heard what's happening? It is not a good time.

JOHN : I am with the president. We are in the White House.

JENNA : That's not funny, John.

JOHN : Does this sound like a joke to you?

JENNA : **(End the call)**

(01:01:07-01:01:15)

John wanted to need help to Jenna in order to go out from the White House with Mr. President, however Jenna did not believe in John's statement. She hung up the called rather than has a curiosity what was going next. In this case, she obviously violates sympathy maxim because she maximized antipathy between herself and John. The reason why sympathy maxim was applied in this conversation is because of the context of situation (setting). The situation was not in a good time and in the hard situation.

6. Conclusion

It can be concluded that there were found six maxims which are violated in the movie “White House Down”, those are: tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. Approbation maxim was the mostly used in this movie which are violated, if being compared to the other maxims. The most reason for the use of the politeness maxim is because of power difference, because this movie having some persons who have an authority to do something, for instance the one who acting as Mr. President.

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