



## An Analysis of Politeness Used in the Red One Movie

**Clarissa Cyndi Rose Angelique Tumbol<sup>1</sup>, I Gusti Ayu Agung Sintha Satwika<sup>2</sup>**

English Study Program Faculty of Foreign Languages, Mahasaraswati Denpasar University,  
Bali, Indonesia

Correspondence Email : [angeliquetumbol@email.com](mailto:angeliquetumbol@email.com)<sup>1</sup>, [agungsintha@unmas.ac.id](mailto:agungsintha@unmas.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

Politeness in communication does not always mean being gentle and soft-spoken, but is a social strategy to maintain relationships with interlocutors who feel valued. This research analyses the types of politeness maxims in the movie Red One (2024) based on Leech's theory (2014). The data source was obtained from the dialogue between characters in the movie, via the Prime Video platform. This study employs a qualitative method using observation and classification methods based on ten types of politeness maxims. The findings reveal that not all politeness maxims, according to Leech (2014), appear in the movie, but only four maxims with a total of 12 data as follows: generosity maxim 8%, tact maxim 42%, approbation maxim 33%, and sympathy maxim 17%. The tact maxim is the most dominant, which shows a strategy where the speaker minimizes the cost to the interlocutor and maximizes the benefit to the interlocutor.

**Keywords:** *politeness maxims, Leech's theory, red one movie*

### Abstrak

Kesopanan dalam berkomunikasi tidak selalu berarti halus, lembut dan pelan, melainkan merupakan strategi sosial untuk menjaga hubungan dengan lawan bicara agar merasa dihargai. Penelitian ini menganalisis jenis-jenis maksim kesantunan dalam film Red One (2024) berdasarkan teori leech (2014). Sumber data diperoleh dari dialog antar tokoh dalam film melalui platform Prime Video. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik observasi, dan klasifikasi tuturan berdasarkan sepuluh jenis maksim kesantunan. Hasil temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tidak semua prinsip kesantunan menurut Leech (2014) muncul dalam film, melainkan hanya empat maksim dengan total 12 data yang dikategorikan sebagai berikut: maksim kedermawanan 8%, maksim kebijaksanaan 42%, maksim pujian 33%, dan maksim simpati 17%. Maksim kebijaksanaan merupakan maksim yang paling dominan, yang menunjukkan di startegi mana lawan penutur meminimalkan kerugian terhadap lawan bicara dan memaksimalkan keuntungan terhadap bicara.

**Kata kunci:** *maksim kesopanan, teori Leech, film red one*

### Introduction

Language is a communication system used by humans to express thoughts, ideas, feelings, and information to others through symbols, words, and complex grammatical rules. The uniqueness of language lies in its ability as the primary means of communication that distinguishes humans from other creatures, as well as its role in building knowledge, culture, and social identity. In the context of communication,

the use of language is not merely about conveying messages but also about considering aspects of politeness. Linguistic politeness is a form of awareness of the dignity and respect for the interlocutor, whether in spoken or written language. According to Leech (2014), the principle of politeness means maintaining harmonious communication by minimizing harm or negative aspects for the interlocutor and maximizing benefits or positive aspects for the interlocutors in social relationships. Leech's theory (2014) develops the politeness principle into ten maxims, including generosity, tact, approbation, modesty, the obligation of S to O, the obligation of O to S, agreement, opinion-reticence, sympathy, and feeling-reticence maxims. This theory places more emphasis on politeness maxims, highlighting the importance of social and cultural values and how speakers can maximize politeness and minimize impoliteness.

Politeness serves as guidelines for choosing words and actions to ensure effective and harmonious communication. Politeness in movies is crucial, as it serves as a reflection of social interactions, mirroring the norms and cultural values of society. As a visual and verbal communication media, movies not only convey stories but also depict how characters interact using polite language to maintain harmonious relationships. The polite language in movies helps convey the intent and purpose of communication clearly without causing conflict, and allows viewers to understand the social and emotional context. Politeness in movies can influence viewers' perceptions of cultural values and communication ethics in society. A movie that displays appropriate polite language can educate and inspire viewers to apply principles of politeness in their daily lives, making movies not only a form of entertainment but also a media for social education.

Numerous studies analyse politeness maxims in their research, as related to daily human interactions and the implementation of the principle of politeness demonstrated in their research. The first study by Satwika and Susanthi (2024) in the article "Utilizing the Tact Maxim as a Host When Interviewing Guests on the Kick Andy Talk Show 2019" analysed the use of the tact maxim interaction between the host and the data resource from the YouTube channel. The objective research is to investigate how the tact maxim is employed and developed as a tool for achieving polite communication. There are similarities between previous research and this study, which uses Leech's (2014) theory. The research method involves observing videos and taking notes on the politeness principles found in the dialogue. The difference between this study and previous studies is the analyzed action-comedy movie, showing that politeness is not only relevant in communication but also a tool for shaping emotions and character relationships in the movie. The data source for this study comes from Prime Video.

The second study, entitled "The Maxim of Quantity Application in The *Valley of the Lanterns* Movie" by D. P. S. and Satwika (2024), uses Grice's Cooperative Principle (1975) and Halliday and Hasan (1985) to determine politeness in the characters' conveyance of sufficient information. The focus is on the informative aspect, not the relational. The results of the study show that the quantity maxim appears most frequently in character interactions. The similarity between this study and previous studies is that it employs qualitative research methods to collect relevant data. Meanwhile, the differences between this study and prior studies lie in its analysis of

two genres of action-comedy movies and its use of Leech's theory (2014), which is oriented toward social values and norms, not just informational efficiency.

The third study, titled Harianja, Napitupulu, and Sinaga (2024) in "Analysis of the Principles of Politeness in the Joe Rogan Experience Podcast," aims to identify the types of politeness and maxims that most frequently appear in podcast conversations. This creates a different textual and narrative approach. The type of maxim that often occurs in this movie is the maxim of agreement (35%) from a total of 60 data. Approbation maxim 8,33%, Generosity maxim 8,33%, Modesty maxim 18,33%, Sympathy maxim 1,7%, and Agreement maxim 35%. Additionally, the use of movies as a medium enriches the analysis because these principles not only reflect the speaker's intentions but also the director's strategies in shaping character imagery. There are differences; the previous research used data sources from YouTube podcast channels, while the data source of this study was from the Prime Video streaming platform. This study uses Leech's (2014) analyses of the ten principles of Leech 2014 in movie scenarios. On the other hand, the previous studies use Leech's (1983) research method.

The fourth study by Ishaq and Putra (2023), entitled "An Analysis of Maxim Relevance by Main Character in Taxi Driver Film", focuses on the principle of relevance from Grice (1975), which highlights whether the main character's dialogue remains relevant amidst psychological pressure. This study emphasizes the aspect of politeness in the social and emotional relationships between the characters and shows how even in the action-comedy genre, politeness strategies can be maintained and become an integral part of the narrative. The similarity of this study is that it uses action-comedy movies as objects and employs qualitative methods by observing movie scripts. The difference is that this study utilizes Leech's (2014) theory of ten types of maxims.

The last study conducted by Nisa, Rustono, and Haryadi (2021), entitled "The Violations of the Politeness Maxim Found in *Skinnyindonesian24* YouTube Channel", observes violations of politeness maxims in the context of digital entertainment on the YouTube channel. Previous studies have shown that violations such as modesty maxims and tact maxims are used to create humorous effects. In contrast, this study shows how politeness can be maintained even in humorous and action-packed narratives, and how maxims are used strategically in building characters and storylines. The similarities between the previous studies and this study are that both use qualitative methods by observing and note-taking relevant dialogue and using Leech's (2014) theory to analyse ten types of maxims. However, the difference in data sources from the previous study came from YouTube channels, while this study uses movies from the Prime Video streaming platform.

This study aims to describe how politeness strategies based on Leech's (2014) theory are analysed in character dialogues in the action-comedy movie "Red One" (2024) on Prime Video. Through qualitative methods with observation, watching, and note-taking of the dialogue. This study thoroughly explores the use of maxims such as generosity, tact, approbation, modesty, the obligation of S to O, the obligation of O to S, agreement, opinion-reticence, sympathy, and feeling-reticence maxims. The aim of this study is to show that politeness does not always have to appear in formal or serious

situations, but can be an important part of building stories, emotions, and characters in entertainment genres such as action and comedy.

## Method

The data of this study were derived from the script of the movie Red One (2024), directed by Jake Kasdan and authored by Chris Morgan, based on the original narrative by Hiram Garcia. This research utilized a qualitative method. The data were gathered through observing the dialogue and taking notes on each type of politeness maxim found in the *Red One* movie, according to Leech's (2014) theory. These include the maxims of generosity, tact, approbation, modesty, the obligation of S to O, the obligation of O to S, agreement, opinion-reticence, sympathy, and feeling-reticence maxims. This method was selected to describe and examine the politeness strategies presented in the movie. The qualitative approach revealed hidden intentions, politeness, and communication interactions between characters as the data were in the form of transcripts and excerpts of movie dialogues. This method was suitable for classifying data.

## Result and Discussion

### Result

This study aimed to analyse the politeness maxims contained in the *Red One* movie dialogue. Based on the results of the interim research and the discussion presented, it was concluded that the principles of politeness proposed by Leech (2014) identified in the movie's conversations included four maxims, namely generosity maxim, tact maxim, approbation maxim, and sympathy maxim.

Table 1. Types of Politeness Maxim in the *Red One* 2024 movie.

Types of Politeness Maxim Used in the <i>Red One</i> Movie	The data shows	Percentage (%)
1. Generosity	1	8%
2. Tact	5	42%
3. Approbation	4	33%
4. Sympathy	2	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100%</b>

As the table shows, the total data of politeness maxim found in the action-comedy movie. Based on the theory of politeness maxims by Leech (2014), four types of maxims were found to be used in dialogue movies.

## **Discussion**

### **Generosity Maxim**

Generosity is a maxim that gives a high value to O's want (Leech, 2014:91). Here, the speaker is considered polite if they respect or put the interests of the other person above their own. The generosity maxim emphasises the speaker's willingness to sacrifice something uncomfortable for them so that others feel valued or accommodated.

Data 1 (*Red One 2024*: 00:15:40)



Gracia: "Phil is blaming wrapping. Wrapping says Phil's being overdramatic. Everybody's feeling the heat."

Call: "**All right. I'll talk to him.**"

Gracia: "Please. Phil's driving everybody nuts."

The scene happened when Phil blamed the wrapping team for a problem. Phil's reaction was excessively harsh, and the disagreement generated tension that spread throughout the entire group. "Everybody's feeling the heat," Gracia informed Callum Drift or Call the head of Santa's security about the situation. Callum responded with a sense of responsibility by saying, "All right. I'll talk to him." Because everyone feels stressed, Call's statement reflects the maxim of Generosity as he minimizes his own benefit and chooses to sacrifice his own comfort to alleviate team tension and prioritize the well-being of others.

## Tact Maxim

According to Leech's theory, the tact maxim is to give a low value to S's wants (Leech,2014:93). Here, the speaker is considered polite if they do not overly emphasise their own interests or needs in conversation. The principle of maximum politeness aims to ensure that communication runs smoothly and politely, and to provide subtle suggestions in situations that because discomfort to the interlocutor. The subsequent examples illustrate the tact maxim, identified as the most frequently occurring maxim in the *Red One* movie.

Data 2 (*Red One* 2024: 00:17:18)

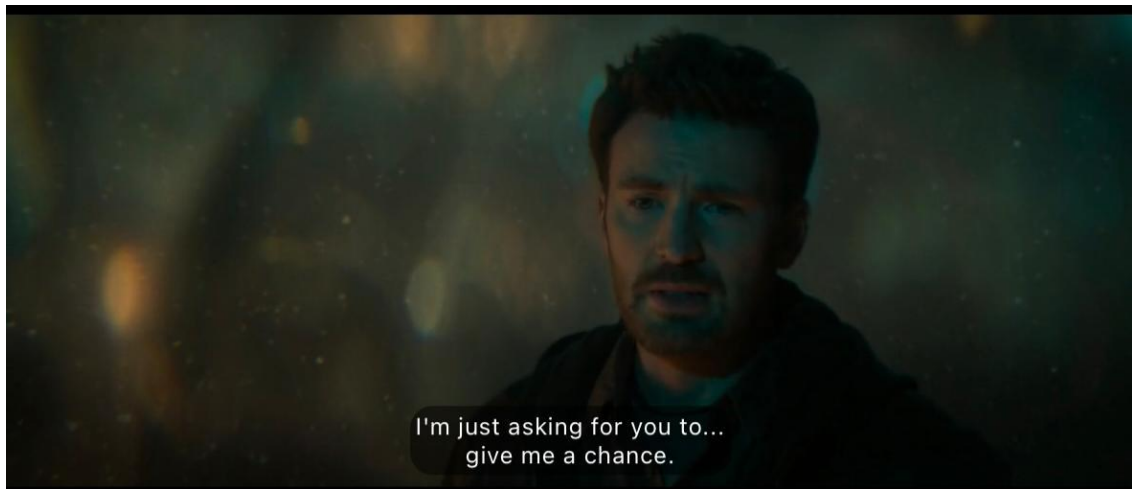


Santa Claus: “Yeah, I heard you. **And I’ll respect your decision, but I want to know why.**”

Call: Yeah. Got it. Santa Claus: [grunts] You’re looking strong. We work for the kids, Cal.”

This statement above emerged when Santa Claus is reducing the burden on his conversation interlocutor, giving him space to refuse and explain without direct pressure, by showing that he is not imposing his will on him and that he respects his opinion. Santa Claus is reducing the potential burden that he might feel if he pressures Cal to change his decision. If he imposes his will, it is harmful to their cooperative relationship. The phrase “You’re looking strong.” It is a polite strategy that adds positive value and boosts the interlocutor’s confidence. The phrase “We work for the kids, Cal.” Explains their noble goals so that the interlocutor feels that their actions contribute to something significant.

Data 3 (*Red One* 2024: 01:38:05)



Dylan: “What are you talking about?”

Jack: “I’ve been a terrible father.”

Dylan: “That’s not true.”

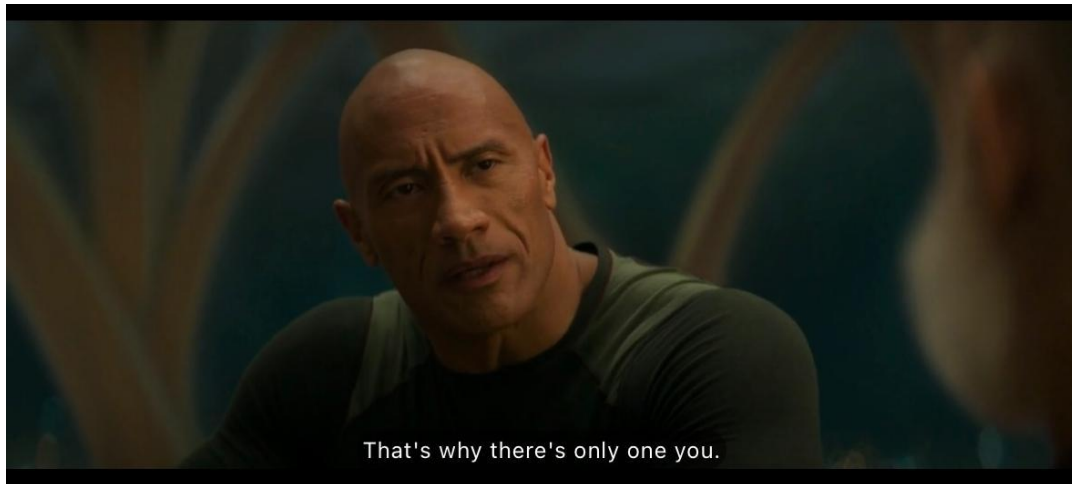
Jack: “Yes, it is. It is. I haven’t been around. I told myself I was doing you a favor, which is bullshit. It was bad for you, and it was terrible for me. I’ve made some mistakes, pal. I know that. But I also know that I can do better. And I know that’s easier said than done. I know it’s a lot of work, and I hope it’s not too late. Every day, every decision is an opportunity. And I want to start taking some of those. So I’m not asking you to believe me. **I’m just asking for you to...give me a chance.** I know I may never be the greatest father in the world, but I know I can do better, and I’m telling you right now that I promise I will never stop trying.”

The statement above was produced by Dylan’s father when they were hit by magic and trapped in a magical snowball called ‘Glaskafig’, which was used to imprison children who were considered naughty. Now, Jack admitted that he had been a bad father who was rarely present for his child, and he asked for a chance to learn how to be a better father in the future. He committed to trying to improve himself so that Dylan could feel the presence of a real father. “So I’m not asking you to believe me. I’m just asking for you to...give me a chance.” In this opportunity, to ensure the listener felt safe and not disadvantaged, while maximising the benefits for the listener.

### **Approbation Maxim**

The principle of approbation maxim is to give a high value to O’s qualities (Leech 2014:93). In this statement, the speaker tries to respect, compliment, or flatter the listener and avoid criticism or reproach.

Data 3 (*Red One* 2024: 00:18:41)



Call: “But I look around, and they act like none of it matters.”

Santa Claus: “If nothing matters to them, it seems to me they need us now more than ever.”

Call: “**That’s why there’s only one you.** And no one with my doubts should be so close to you.”

In this conversation, Call said, “That’s why there’s only one you.” He expresses explicit compliments to Santa’s qualities as a unique, strong, and confident person. Call’s statement is in line with the principle of approbation maxim. Call acknowledges that Santa has greater authority and ability than he does. Now, Call feels inferior, stating that he is full of doubt and therefore unworthy of an important position, “And no one with my doubt should be so close to you.” On the other hand, Santa emphasises that the community that has lost its sense of care needs them more, “If nothing matters to them, it seems to me they need us now more than ever.”

### **Sympathy Maxim**

Based on the Leech theory, the principle of sympathy is to give feelings a high value on O’s (Leech, 2014:97). The purpose of the principle of sympathy is to maintain harmonious relationships by respecting the feelings of others when they experience difficulties, failure, or even successes, and to offer congratulations. In here, the speaker responds to complaints with empathy and respect for the feelings of the other person, thereby alleviating their emotional burden.

Data 4 (*Red One 2024*: 00:31:35)



Jack: "Thought labor wasn't progressing."

Olivia: "Yeah, then it did. Thanks for picking him up, though. I don't know what's going on with him these days. He's acting out."

Jack: **"Yeah, well, you know, growing up is tough."**

In the conversation above, Olivia (Jack's ex-wife) is conveying her concerns about their son Dylan, who is having problems at school. Jack responds with empathy, emphasising that Olivia's concerns are natural by saying, "Yeah, well, you know, growing up is tough." Jack tries to ease Olivia's anxiety by saying that Dylan's problems are not solely the result of parenting mistakes but rather part of the process of growing up.

## **Conclusion**

There are simple sentences, complex sentences, compound sentences, and compound-complex sentences found in this study. Most of the sentence types used in BBC NEWS "US Bombs Syria targets after deadly drone attack" are in the form of complex sentences, followed by compound-complex sentences with 15 percent and the last are simple and compound sentences. For the functions of the subordinate clause, there are 4 functions of the subordinate clause found by the researcher. There are subordinate clauses such as Direct Object, Adverbial, Subject Complement, and Object Complement. The most common functions of subordinate clauses that are used in BBC NEWS "US Bombs Syria targets after deadly drone attack" are Adverbial and Subject complement followed by a subordinate clause as Object Complement and the last as Direct Object.

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