

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

Traditionally, people talk to express their feelings. Speaker and hearer construct a good dialogue to understand each other correctly what exactly the speaker's means to decrease misunderstanding. Grundy (2000:146) states that politeness is an indication of the wider concept of etiquette or appropriate behaviour. In short, politeness is not only about how we communicate to other people through verbal language, but also through non-verbal one. It is because meaning of the utterance can be derived from the speaker's expressions covered by the context. In this case, speaker tries to maintain hearer's face and avoid embarrassing other people.

Politeness has different effects on each of us because polite utterance depends on the intimacy of the speaker and hearer. Grundy (2000:146) states that being on the receiving end of politeness effects of each of us differently because polite utterances encode the relationship between the speaker and ourselves as addressee. To converse politely, the speaker should choose the strategies appropriately; otherwise it will offend the hearer's feeling.

The phenomenon of politeness strategies can be encountered in any context of conversation. Movie contains conversations in which the politeness strategies occur. *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* is an interesting object to be analyzed because this movie has what other works like novel, poem and drama do

not have. The movie involves four genres including action, adventure, fantasy and drama-comedy.

The Avatar: The Legend of Korra (book 1) aired on Nickelodeon on April 14, 2012 by Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko. The story happens after the end of the hundred year war, the Avatar Aang and the Fire Lord Zuko changed the fire Nation Colonies into The United Republic of Nation, a society where benders and non-benders (Equalists) from all over the world could live and thrive together in peace and harmony. In this case, the Equalists led by Amon want to reject a bending because he is considered that bending is the wrong thing. Amon wants to create a society which there is no superiority between (benders and non-benders).

This movie tells the journey of the Avatar named Korra in the Republic City against the Equalist and completing the training of airbender with Tenzin (Aang's son). Korra, the Avatar after Aang, is a hot-headed and rebellious young woman from the Southern Water Tribe who is "ready to take on the world". She faces the difficult challenges, duties, and responsibilities as the new young Avatar in Republic City (http://avatar.wikia.com/wiki/The_Legend_of_Korra). From the brief synopsis, it can be said that the characters of the Avatar Korra is tough, impatient, headstrong, sarcastic, and assertive. Therefore, studying politeness strategies from the movie through her utterance as well as her behaviour/face expression are one of the best reasons to know how to behave well to other people.

Besides, in this movie there is a struggle from the new Avatar (Korra) who wants to be accepted in her new environment in Republic City (RC). One of her achievements to be accepted is because of the use of politeness strategy. In this case, as a newcomer, Korra adapts and interacts with many people. She feels there are many culture shocks when she is in the country but her own characters decide how she behaves and communicates with other people to have a polite conversation. So, Korra certainly uses some kinds of politeness strategies to speak to other people she met, as the following example:

Context

The utterance is uttered by Korra to White Lotus Leader in a place used to perform a bending. Korra has been passed the fire-bending examination.

White Lotus leader :“Ever since you were a little girl, you've excelled at the physical side of bending, but completely *ignored* the spiritual side.” “The Avatar must master both.”

Korra :“**I haven't ignored it, it just doesn't come as easy to me.**” “But that's why I should start training with Tenzin immediately.” “He's Mister Spiritual.”

The utterance “*I haven't ignored it, it just doesn't come as easy to me.*” “ is a direct speech using negative politeness strategy more specifically under the sub-strategy of redressing action and being pessimistic. In this case Korra is expressing doubt with the condition that the avatar must master both physical and spiritual side of bender. It is proved through the utterance “*it just doesn't come as easy to me*”. It is told that she wanted to learn more and start training with Tenzin immediately. The speaker (Korra) wanted to save their negative face by giving the reason to the older.

The research analysed Korra's utterances through politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson. The strategies are divided into five categories: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, off-record and don't do the FTA (Face-threatening Act). However, this study focused on analysing positive and negative politeness strategies.

This study described what and how the politeness strategies was used by Korra in *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* movie. The analysis focused on the positive and negative politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson's theory.

1.2. Statements of the problem

1. What politeness strategies are used by Korra in *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* movie?
2. How are the politeness strategies used by Korra in *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* movie?

1.3. Objectives of the study

1. To describe the politeness strategies used by Korra in *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* movie.
2. To explain how politeness strategies used by Korra in *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* movie.

1.4. Significance of the study

Based on the statements of the problem and objectives of the study above, there are two kinds of significance.

1. Theoretical significance

Theoretically the result of this study gave the examples of analysis of politeness strategies in pragmatics field.

2. Practical significance

The result of the research was beneficial for those who want to see the movie, especially to understand the Korra's utterances. What strategies she used when she is doing a conversation. This study gave some explanation about politeness strategies in daily communications. Therefore, this study revealed some strategies to keep a good communication.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the study

The scope of the study was pragmatics because the research analyses the meaning of an utterance through studying the context surrounding politeness strategies.

The study concerned on the Korra's utterances toward positive and negative politeness strategies in the movie *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* (book 1 chapter 1 "*Welcome to Republic City*") because in this chapter, Korra adapted to the culture and interacted to the other people in a new place namely Republic City. This research focused on two politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's theory, those were positive and negative politeness strategies.

1.6. Definition of key terms

1. **Politeness** is a matter of minimising the negative effects of what one says on the feelings of others and maximising the positive effects (known as ‘negative politeness’ and ‘positive politeness’ respectively) (Cruse, 2006:131).
2. **Positive Politeness** is oriented toward the positive face of H, the positive self-image that he claims for himself (Brown and Levinson, 1987:70).
3. **Negative Politeness** is oriented mainly toward partially satisfying (redressing) H’s negative face, his basic want to maintain claims of territory and self-determination (Brown and Levinson, 1987:70).
4. *The Avatar: The Legend of Korra* is an American animated television series set in the Avatar universe as a sequel series to *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. (http://avatar.wikia.com/wiki/The_Legend_of_Korra)