

## Maintaining Social Harmony Through Leech's Neg-Politeness: An Analysis of the Persuasion Movie Adaptation

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### Abstract

Language is used to convey message in digital platform such as movie. *Persuasion* movie is based on Jane Austen's novel which is rich of polite language considering this movie take Regency-era as the background. In this era, social status, age, gender are become aspects the language use. This study aims to find the utterance which consist of maxim in Neg-Politeness by Leech (2014) that delivered by the characters in *Persuasion* movie 2022 version. This research uses qualitative research method with descriptive approach through an observation since analyzing the data of Neg-Politeness requires context of situation. Other than that, this approach can lead into a deeper analysis and explanation of the language use and chosen word by the speaker, then linking it to the background context through paragraph structure. The data collection arranged with library method and followed by observation while note-taking. The result shows that there are 18 utterances that consist of Neg-Politeness, they are 5 utterances of Tact Maxim, 3 utterances of Modesty Maxim, 7 utterances of Obligation Maxim, 2 utterances of Opinion Reticence Maxim, and 1 utterance of Feeling Reticence Maxim. In order to maintain the social harmony and maintain relationship among the society, Obligation maxim is the most used maxim which applied in the dialogue of *Persuasion* movie since the background setting of this movie is in Regency Era where the social class impacting the language use. Most of the characters applied this maxim because they can less burden of feeling uneasy while maintaining the social harmony.

**Keywords:** Neg-politeness; Movie analysis; Pragmatic

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## INTRODUCTION

Language is a crucial tool of communication which has been used by the mankind since long time ago. Other than communication, language is also used to express feeling, convey the message and the key for social interaction between the society (Silitonga, 2022). Meanwhile Helmaliya et al (2024) stated that language takes an important role in doing the communication. Communication is the process in conveying information among the people in society. Communication is done by several ways, and one of them is through the verbal communication where the information is transferred by words (Pramaidana and Gunawan, 2022). Ladita and Jazadi (2024) stated that people can deliver anything that they want through a communication. During the communication, people tend to find a way in order to speak politely and not make their interlocutors being offended by our utterances. It is done by the society to maintain a positive relationship among the people. A positive relationship usually can be maintained with a good communication where both of the speaker can utter a polite utterance. According to Isabella et al (2022), there are several aspects which are encompassed in uttering polite or impolite language, such as distance, solidarity, social status and interaction. Politeness in communication is more

than just apologizing or thanking people. The language of Politeness is important to less the burden from speaker to the interlocutor, then the harmony during the conversation can be reated.

In Pragmatics study, the politeness philosophy is important in linguistic framework and take crucial role in daily communication (Shen, 2023). The theory proposed by Yule (2010) stated that Politeness is a concept related to tactfulness, modesty, and being nice to other people. The purpose of Politeness is to avoid misunderstanding and prevent social conflict, maintain solidarity and relationship in the society. Similarly to Aporbo (2022) which stated that the observation of politeness in daily conversation aim to decrease conflict possibilities, create collective interaction, impression-making, stipulate power, establish compliance. Other than that, Politeness also related to the utterance that showing awareness and maintain other's face. The face which is being mentioned is not the physical face or refers to part of human body, it refers to other self-worth.

Face means that the public self-image which we need to keep, in order to maintain the relationship among the society (Yule, 2017). However, if our utterance consists a threat to our interlocutor or to other's self-image it can be called as face-threatening act. Giving a direct order to make someone do something, such as (*Give me that paper!*), will give impolite behaviour because that order is likely showing a higher social power of the speaker. In contrary, if a person delivers an indirect order, such as (*Could you pass me that paper?*), it will less the burden to the hearer because the speaker only asks if it possible to be done. An utterance which consists of a less threatening act and give less burden to the hearer, it is called face-saving act (Yule, 2017; 375).

According to Leech (2014; 11), there are 2 types of the politeness strategy. Firstly, Pos-Politeness. In Pos-Politeness, the addressee will be given a positive value. Offering help, giving invitations, stating compliments and congratulating others are part of Pos-Politeness. Although when saying thank you and apologizing assume a position where A is owning something to B, as a repair strategy, they still be considered as the parts of Pos-Politeness sub-category. It is because the speaker creates a positive gesture to cancel the imbalance of giving benefit to the speaker or disfavoring the interlocutor.

The second strategy proposed by Leech (2014) is Neg-Politeness. Leech (2014; 12) stated that Neg-Politeness is more important in general. According to Afriana et al (2023), in having a face work, Negative Politeness is a preferable approach universally. When a person is failure to deliver Neg-Politeness, it will cause misunderstanding and taking offended to the interlocutor, create a disharmony in society. Neg-Politeness consist of several most-studied polite language such as: indirect speech or order, hedging, and understatement. Applying neg-Politeness can be done while delivering speech and having conversation or dialogue. Other than daily life, Neg-Politeness can also be found in movie dialogue which the utterances are being delivered by the character in the movie.

Movie can be defined as “a film shown in a cinema or on television and often telling a story” (Cambridge Dictionary Press, 2025). Movie also means moving pictures which combine two aspects, audio and visual. It is along with Hang and Azahari (2023), they stated that movie is cinematic work combined with the combination of audio and visual. The fame and more various providers of media streaming service leads to the enhancement of consumers who are interested in classification of movie genre (Mangolin et al, 2022). The movie genre is increasing because of the editing video application development. In 1930s, among thousands movie which has released by Hollywood, there are over than 400 movies that took romance genre in USA. It is more than any other movie that has released in the 20<sup>th</sup> (Dowd et al, 2023).

Persuasion (2022) is an American historical movie based on novel by Jane Austen in 1817. This movie is directed by Carrie Cracknell and Alice Victoria Winslow. Persuasion movie is staring by several well-known actors and actresses, such as: Dakota

Johnson as Anne Elliot, Cosmo Jarvis as Captain Frederick Wentworth, Nikki Amuka-Bird, Mia-McKenna Bruce, Richard E. Grant and more. Persuasion was released in USA theaters in 8<sup>th</sup> July, 2022. This movie tells a story of eight years after Anne's relationship breakup, confronting the social status and pressure. This movie took early 19<sup>th</sup> as the background of time, especially in England Regency-era. In this era, social class or status, gender, age, and family relationship were the strong aspects that influence how people would deliver their utterance. In this era, the society tend to speak politely since social status still ruled the society strongly.

Regency Era reflects to a part of the English History, where this era is happened between 1795-1837 (Sari & Amalia, 2023). Based on ebsco.com, Regency Era is a short period which only happened for 9 years when the King George IV, The Prince of Wales ruled England. In this era, the social class was strongly ruled the society aspect. For example, people who were born in the low social status will be despised by the society. Eventhough later the person who was born in less high class earned a good amount of wealth, it did not erase one's identity and origin (Gautam, 2024). Persuasion movie describe this phenomenon well when Anne and Frederick had to break up due to different social status that they had. However, even after Frederick become navy and earned a wealth, they still find difficulties to run back the relationship since Frederick came from a lower class than Anne.

Several related studies have been conducted previously, such as a study from Murni, Simanjuntak, and Setyawan (2024) entitled "Analyzing Language of Politeness of Maxim of Courage". This study focuses on analyzing the impact of online gaming to the students' level of language politeness. This result found several vulgar languages which are spoken by the participants such as: "damn", "fuck you", and others. The finding of this previous research underlining the self-awareness in applying language during the daily conversation. The importance of environment also influencing the use of polite language. The other related study is entitled "Politeness Strategy in Sasak Language: Avoiding Rudeness in Conversation with Elders" (Sugianto and Tawali, 2024)". The theory which proposed in this study is from Brown and Levinson (1987). It will be the differentiate this article with this previous study, because this article uses theory which is proposed by Leech (2014). The highlight of this previous study is how language helps the harmony in the society and the willingness of Sasak's people preserve the culture through language.

The next previous study is proposed by Pradita et al (2024) entitled "Language Politeness in Elementary Students Learning Activities". This research is conducted to analyze the function of language which related to the students' character. The data is collected by listening, recording, and taking note the observation result. The result showed that the maxims of consensus and generosity are included to the violation of language politeness since code mixing often occurs among the students because they use both Indonesian and Javanese Language in daily life. In similar with this research, previous research entitled "A Pragmatic Analysis of Politeness Strategies in Mulan Movie" by Fitri (2022) also used movie as the data source. However, this previous research analyzed the Politeness strategy and proposed the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) in explaining the data collection. The finding showed that all the strategies of Brown and Levinson can be found in the dialogue of *Mulan* movie with Positive Politeness as the most used strategy. It is influenced by the cultural background of the characters in that movie.

Compared to those several studies which have been conducted, this research will fill the literature gap by analyzing Neg-Politeness based on Leech's latest theory about politeness strategy. Analysis will be followed by the social factors which caused the use of Neg-Politeness were applied in the movie dialogue of Persuasion. By adding the explanation of the social aspects, will also describe how the use of applying Neg-Politeness

can maintain social harmony in Regency Era, where in this era was strongly ruled by the social status.

Based on that, the focus of this research is analyzing the utterances which are spoken by the characters in that movie. The questions that is delivered in this research is: What maxim in Neg-Politeness are found in the movie dialogue of Persuasion movie? What social factors are influencing the use of Neg-Politeness in the movie dialogue of Persuasion?

## METHOD

### Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research method in explaining and exploring the finding with a descriptive approach through an observation. Observation is a process of examining the phenomenon which happens in society based on people's behaviour (Denny and Weckesser, 2022). Bangu, Provost, and Caduff (2023) stated that the Qualitative Research Method is an analyzing technique which relies on the non-numerical and non-statistic data collection. Qualitative research focuses on analyzing certain phenomena such as social behaviour, cultural phenomenon, or people's behaviour. Collecting and analyzing the data based on a direct observation. Unlike the quantitative research method that focuses on explanation based on countable data with numeric tables or diagrams (Ghanad, 2023), qualitative research method focuses on the explanation through a descriptive paragraph and words.

The advantage of using qualitative research method in this research is to explore and observe the indirect language and formal expression from the data collection. Politeness is impacted a lot by social and cultural context, especially in this movie of Persuasion which took Regency Era as the background setting where the social status strongly ruled the society. By applying qualitative research method, it allows an in-depth analysis, not only in explaining the maxim of Neg-Politeness and linking it to the context of situation but also to describe the social factors which caused the use of those maxim in Neg-Politeness. These explanation can be achieved well through paragraph description. Qualitative research is also effective for a deeper understanding in analyzing the maxims of Neg-Politeness which consist in the data source, it can elaborate the explanation of how the characters utter several utterances of Neg-Politeness through a descriptive paragraph based on the background context in the movie scene.

### Data Collection and Data Analysis

The analysis unit in this research is the utterances which consist of Neg-Politeness that delivered by the characters in Persuasion. That makes the participants in this research came from the characters in the Persuasion movie that deliver Neg-Politeness utterances. The data collection is arranged with library method and observation technique with some steps. The first is watching the data source which comes from a movie entitled *Persuasion* that released in 2022 starring Dakota Johnson. The movie was downloaded online and watched multiple times to understand the whole context of the movie. Other than that, reading the subtitle carefully is also done during the movie observation to make sure there is no misheard will happen which can lead into misexplanation in discussion part.

The observation phase started by watching the data source in Persuasion movie multiple time. This step is done to ensuring a deep understanding to the movie and identifying while focusing to the movie scene that relate to the research question. The identification is purposed to study the context of the situation through the dialogue, and background of each character. These are important elements to analyze the social aspects which causing the Neg-Politeness implementation in the utterances of the characters.

The final step is the data collection which are done by capturing and taking note. Firstly, the observation will be stopped when there is a specific scene and dialogue which

consist of Neg-Politeness appear in the movie scene. The dialogue will be scanned to ensuring the accuracy of Neg-Politeness by analyzing the dialogue based on Leech's theory while observing the background context of the movie. Then, the movie scene will be captured by screenshotting to keep the data before continuing to observe the movie. Taking note will be done to classify the dialogue and arrange them into 5 maxim of Neg-Politeness which proposed by Leech (2014).

The discussion part is explained with formal and informal methods. The formal method is described with table which shows the amount of utterances that consist of Neg-Politeness, and presents the frequency differences of each maxims in Neg-Politeness. Meanwhile the informal table uses the descriptive paragraph and words to explain the Neg-Politeness utterances based on the background context of the movie scene.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The findings in this research were based on the utterances from *Persuasion* movie dialogue. The objects of this research are the characters in *Persuasion* movie which released in 2022. The data were found with several observations through watching the movie several times and marking the utterances which consist of Neg-Politeness strategy which suit the theory proposed by Leech (2014). After marking the dialogue, those utterances were classified into several types of Neg-Politeness. Politeness is very essential to be applied while having conversation with others. It includes the way we talk to others politely, delivering the thought, information and express feeling but still maintain the interlocutor's public face-image. People in the society should know and apply a polite utterance while communicating to create and maintain a good relationship and avoid misunderstanding, other than that, it is also done to prevent a disharmony in the society.

The theory proposed by Leech (2014) about Neg-Politeness is divided into several maxims. Maxim is a rule in the interaction of linguistics which standardizes language use, control the way people respond, act, and construe the other's action and utterance. Other than that, maxim is also part of pragmatic since maxim is based on the principle of cooperation and politeness. Based on the data analysis, this research found that there are five maxims of Neg-Politeness which proposed by Leech (2014) found in the data source, such as: tax maxim, modesty maxim, obligation maxim, opinion reticence maxim, and feeling reticence maxim. The total of the data finding can be seen in Table 1.

Table. Tyeps of Maxim

No	Types of Maxim	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Tact Maxim	5	28%
2.	Modesty Maxim	3	17%
3.	Obligation Maxim	7	39%
4.	Opinion Reticence Maxim	2	11%
5.	Feeling Reticence Maxim	1	5%
Total		18	100%

This research found that there are 5 types of Neg-Politeness which applied in the dialogue of *Persuasion* movie. There are 18 utterances which include the type of Neg-Politeness. Based on the data collection from the movie, all those utterances is used by the characters with several purposes, such as decrease the burden of speaker's feeling to the interlocutor, create self-devaluation when someone give compliant to eliminate the impression of arrogance, less the possibility of conflict caused by disagreement, and diminish the obligation of interlocutors to apologize.

### Tact Maxim

This maxim is used to give less burden in delivering a directive. Giving indirect order and giving opportunity to reject a directive are part of Tact Maxim

*Datum 1*

Mr. Elliot : *Oh, you must come, if your father can spare you. Mr. Shepherd do you think you can spare Penelope?*  
 Mr. Shepherd : *Hmm (nodding)*  
 Penelope : *Good, fine, exquisite, Sir Walter. You really are too generous for your own good!*

*(Persuasion Movie, 12:15-12:29)*

Based on the data above, an utterance of Tact Maxim can be found which is being delivered by Mr. Elliot. The background context showed that Mr. Elliot as the speaker, offered Penelope to join Mr. Elliot's family for a trip to the north. The utterance which represents Tact Maxim is appeared when Mr. Elliot gave indirect order to Mr. Shepherd to allow her daughter coming with his family to move to the north, by saying "Mr. Shepherd, do you think you can spare Penelope?". Rather than directly give order to Mr. Shepherd, Mr. Elliot give him a chance to choose his decision for his daughter. It can be observed that Mr. Elliot applied Tact Maxim in order to give less burden of directive to the hearer, which Mr. Shepherd. It is proven by Mr. Shepherd's respond which giving permission to his daughter without any coercion since Mr. respect Mr. Shepherd who is on the same age as Mr. Elliot.

However, it is important to be highlighted that even both the speaker and hearer are on the same age, applying a polite utterance is still necessary to respect the interlocutor and maintain the social harmony. This can be done by implying Tact Maxim which is used to reduce the coercion and soften the directive. Someone whose delivered a direct directive or order can sound rude. It can lead into a misunderstanding or Face threatening-act (FTA). Face threatening-act is a term which proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), FTA describes an utterance that can threat the image of the interlocutor. The term "face" is used to describe someone's image. It is also a term to describe motives of the speaker to decrease the face threats to certain Face threatening-acts. By applying positive and negative politeness strategies, face threatening-acts can be avoided (Yule, 1996).

### Modesty Maxim

Self-deprecation is the part of Modesty Maxim. Other than that, self devaluation and being modest is the part of Modesty maxim to suppress haughty feeling when someone gives compliment. This maxim is used to value compliment but at the same time also being modest to the interlocutor.

*Datum 2*

Mr. Wentworth : *My most grim moment at sea, when I felt most completely lost and confused and inadequate, I would ask myself, "what would Anne do here?". That's how I know how to proceed, pretending I was you.*  
 Anne : *You lie*  
 Mr. Wentworth : *I truth*

*(Persuasion Movie, 56:50-57:15)*

A piece of dialogue above shows the example of Modesty Maxim. The previous context showed a conversation between the main characters of *Persuasion* which Anne and Mr. Wentworth who used to be a couple yet through a breakup due to different social status. Anne suggested Mr. Wentworth to pursue the admiralty position, and gave compliment to him of how capable he is. However, Mr. Wentworth explained what he usually does during his lowest time while working by implicitly compliment Anne and his opinion towards her. The modesty maxim appeared after Mr. Elliot said "my most grim moments at sea, when I felt completely lost and confused and inadequate, I would ask

myself, "What would Anne do here?". That's how I know how to proceed, pretending I was you". This utterance implicitly shows that Mr. Wentworth amazes of how Anne can handle every situation very well, considering that both of them were once in a relationship 8 years ago. Based on that, Mr. Wentworth knows Anne very well and admired the way Anne handle situation. Anne replied by saying "you lie" which indicate a respond of lowering value or self-devaluation. This reply shows that Anne doesn't believe the implicit compliment which delivered by Mr. Wentworth, because previously Anne has stated that she believes that he can pursue the admiralty position and Anne believe that he is capable for that. Anne doesn't believe that a man like Mr. Wentworth will adopt the way she handles situation in his lowest time.

The main point of Modesty maxim is showing self-devaluation and give low value to qualities. By replying with "you lie" toward an implicit compliment from Mr. Wentworth, to Anne has done the self-devaluation. It is done to avoid the arrogant impression, rather than directly agreeing the compliment and being arrogant, giving response as if the hearer refusing the compliment will show modest impression to the speaker who gave the compliment. Based on the context of situation, Anne and Mr. Wentworth through a breakup due to different social status, however after joining the navy, Mr. Wentworth has earned good amount of money and wealth. This is triggered as to why Modesty maxim were applied in the dialogue.

### **Obligation Maxim**

The response of thank you's and apologize can minimize the feeling of guilty and minimize the debt.

*Datum 3*

<i>Louisa</i>	: <i>I won't have you speak ill of Anne, she I too dear to me. I don't know what happened between you and I am not asking. I do see the best in her and I implore you to look for it too</i>
<i>Mr. Wentworth</i>	: <i>I've been too harsh, thank you for calling me to task</i>
<i>Louisa</i>	: <i>If I forgive you, will you teach me how to read a sextant</i>
<i>Mr. Wentworth</i>	: <i>On such short acquaintance?</i>
<i>Louisa</i>	: <i>I am free this evening.</i>

*(Persuasion Movie, 42:50 -43:14)*

Based on the data above which has found in the dialogue of Persuasion movie, it can be seen that Obligation maxim can be found in the movie. This maxim is the type of Neg-Politeness which most found in the dialogue. Obligation maxim is used to less the obligation from others (in this case, Mr. Elliot) to apologize. Thus, the others will not feel much guilty after the mistake they did that make them apologize to the speaker. It is used to avoid a tenuous relationship between the speaker and the hearer after one party accidentally made a mistake and lighten the mood.

The background context of this maxim is start when Louisa and Mr. Elliot have a conversation. In the middle of the conversation, they talked about Anne, where Mr. Elliot compared Anne and Louisa then conclude that Louisa is better than Anne. However, Louisa felt offended and disagree with Mr. Elliot who spoke ill about Anne since both Anne and Louisa are friends. The utterance which implied Obligation Maxim appeared after Mr. Elliot apologized to Louisa about what he just said. Louisa replied with "If I forgive you, will you teach me how to read a sextant?". By saying that respond, Louisa tried to distract the guilt feeling of comparing those friends and lessen the burden of apologizing from Mr. Elliot and gave less guilt feeling after what he said previously. In the regency era, gender also ruled the society strongly along with the social class. The women in that era were received a pressure of patriarchy system in the society (Sari & Amalia, 2023). This aspect triggered the application of Obligation maxim in the dialogue above. The female, Louisa forgives what Mr. Wentworth said about Anne, since she is a female

where she could not freely express her feeling due to Patriarchy system. Other than that, Mr. Wentworth was nicely apologized for his utterance which also the reason as to why this maxim was applied.

### Opinion Reticence Maxim

This maxim is used to deliver opposite opinions from the speaker in a softer way. In some cultures, such as Japanese, giving opinions can create an offended party because delivering opinions means giving criticism implicitly.

Datum 4

Louisa : *Well, the, he just sounds like the man for you. I insist you to pursue him*  
 Anne : *Louisa...*  
 Louisa : *No, no I've made up my mind, Anne. No more hiding your light underneath the bushel*  
 Anne : *You are very sweet, but I am not interested in receiving instruction to put my light or my bushel*

(*Persuasion Movie, 20:23-20:40*)

The conversation above which happened between Louisa and Anne is the example of Opinion Reticence Maxim. Both of these characters are good friends in the movie. This maxim is used to deliver an opposite argument which is delivered by the interlocutor. Giving appreciation before delivering disagreement is also the way to avoid misunderstanding and feeling offended which probably will be felt by the interlocutor. It happened because in some cultures such as Japanese, showing disagreement can be considered as delivering criticism. The example of Opinion Reticence Maxim is applied in the dialogue above. The context is about Anne who explained the characteristic of Mr. Elliot. Louisa delivered an opinion which stated that Mr. Elliot will be a good partner for Anne. Thus, Anne shouldn't hide her feeling anymore by saying "No, no, I've made up my mind, Anne. No more hiding your light underneath a bushel". However, Anne has different opinion, rather than directly gives rebuttal, Anne answers by saying "You are very sweet". This compliment is delivered by Anne to avoid offended feeling which probably will be happened to Louisa, since Anne has different opinion with her. Then continued with her response with "but I am not interested in receiving instruction to put my light or my bushel". The sentence "you are very sweet" is delivered by Anne in order to avoid misunderstanding and conflict since Anne is disagreeing with Louisa's opinion. Then, that sentence is being followed by Anne's rebuttal which is being delivered in a polite way.

This phenomenon often happens in real life, especially this movie took English Regency era as the movie background. Social status and age gap were still important aspects in the way of delivering their utterance. In the movie. Louisa and Anne are in the different social class where Anne is in the higher class than Louisa, however Anne still applied Opinion Reticence maxim in the conversation to respect Anne and showed that Anne refused to be arrogant and offended Louisa, even though there is different social class between both parties. This method can be applied, even in this era to maintain the social harmony.

### Feeling Reticence Maxim

Suppressing feeling is what is highlighted in Feeling Reticence Maxim. This maxim shows self-control and avoids being over-shared about what someone feels, especially when it gives burden to the hearer's comfort

Datum 5

William : *I heard about the terrible accident that befell your party after I left Lyme. How is she?*  
 Anne : *She is still confined to her bed, but much recovered I received word this morning. Thank you for asking.*  
 William : *You must have suffered terribly*

Anne : *I suffered the least, truly*

(*Persuasion Movie*, 01:13:54-01:14:11)

Feeling Reticence maxim highlights self-control of not being over-sharing to others. The perfect example of this maxim appeared in Persuasion movie from 01:13:54-01:14:11. William heard about Louisa's accident and he knew that Anne and Louisa are good friends. William showed his concern by saying "I heard about the terrible accident that befell your party after I left Lyme. How is she?" and continued by stating that "You must have suffered terribly". Responding to this utterance, Anne said "I suffered the least, truly". This response is being delivered by Anne in order to suppress her feeling. Thus, she will not be over-sharing and leave the burden of feeling bad which probably will be felt by her interlocutor, Mr. Elliot. This maxim is applied since both of the speaker are of the opposite gender, Mr. Elliot tries to respect and understand the feeling of the woman he is speaking to which is Anne by asking how she feels about her friend's accident. Anne as a female, tries to hide her feeling and avoid to give burden that can threaten William's comfort by her truth feeling which actually feel worry about her friend's condition. The social expectation in Regency Era, influenced the women's behaviour especially to the men. The society expect them to marry a wealth-being men, which make Anne applied Feeling Reticence Maxim to suppress her feeling towards William. In the movie, William who is in a higher social class than Anne, have a romantic feeling to Anne. This is also triggered Anne to applied this maxim and suppress her feeling due to the society expectation of marriage which burden the women in that era.

## Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that the *Persuasion* (2022) movie adaptation demonstrates a significant use of Leech's (2014) Neg-Politeness maxims, which serve to maintain social harmony within the Regency-era context. The analysis identified five types of maxims—Tact, Modesty, Obligation, Opinion Reticence, and Feeling Reticence—with the Obligation Maxim appearing most frequently. This outcome indicates that in a society governed by rigid social hierarchies and expectations, neg-politeness functions as a linguistic strategy to reduce imposition, minimize conflict, and preserve interpersonal relationships. To deepen the interpretation of these results, it is essential to compare them with previous studies on politeness, both in literary works and in real-life interactions, and to situate the findings within the broader framework of pragmatics and sociolinguistics.

The prominence of the Obligation Maxim in the findings reflects the centrality of apology, forgiveness, and gratitude in maintaining social order in the Regency era. Characters' use of expressions that reduce the weight of guilt or soften the burden of apologies is consistent with Holmes and Wilson's (2022) argument that age, gender, and social status strongly influence politeness strategies. In this study, women in particular often mitigated conflict or reduced men's sense of obligation, reflecting the gendered norms of Regency society. This is consistent with Sari and Amalia's (2023) findings on the representation of Regency-era social dynamics, where women were constrained by patriarchal expectations but still played an important role in preserving harmony through indirect and deferential language. Thus, the frequent use of the Obligation Maxim in *Persuasion* aligns with both historical accounts of gendered speech practices and theoretical understandings of how politeness strategies manage face-threatening acts.

When these findings are compared to research on other media, an interesting contrast emerges. Fitri's (2022) study on politeness strategies in the *Mulan* movie, for example, found that Positive Politeness was the most frequently employed strategy, reflecting cultural values that emphasize solidarity and encouragement. In contrast, *Persuasion* demonstrates a heavier reliance on Neg-Politeness, particularly in its focus on obligations and reticence. This divergence highlights how cultural and historical contexts

shape linguistic strategies: while solidarity dominates in collectivist settings such as Chinese society in *Mulan*, restraint and deference dominate in the hierarchical and status-conscious Regency England depicted in *Persuasion*.

The use of the Tact Maxim in *Persuasion* also reinforces Leech's (2014) principle that minimizing imposition is a universal aspect of polite communication. Instances where characters gave indirect orders or framed directives as questions demonstrate how speakers sought to respect interlocutors' autonomy, even when social power was unequal. This finding resonates with Yule's (2017) distinction between face-threatening acts and face-saving acts, where indirect speech reduces the threat to the hearer's face. Similarly, Afriana, Ambalegin, and Suhardianto's (2023) study of business correspondence in Batam companies found that negative politeness strategies, especially indirectness, are universally preferred to avoid offense. The overlap between historical fictional dialogue and contemporary professional contexts suggests the enduring relevance of tact as a pragmatic principle across different times and cultures.

Another significant theme is the use of the Modesty Maxim, which appeared when characters engaged in self-deprecation or downplayed compliments. This linguistic strategy reflects a cultural expectation to avoid arrogance, a feature especially relevant in class-conscious societies. The finding aligns with Pradita et al. (2024), who observed that elementary school students frequently employed modesty and consensus maxims to maintain harmony in group activities, even though they occasionally violated them through code-switching. Similarly, in the *Persuasion* movie, modesty serves as a tool for mitigating social imbalances and maintaining relationships, particularly in interactions between men and women of differing social standings. This suggests that modesty is a cross-contextual strategy that functions to soften hierarchical relationships in both educational and social domains.

The analysis also highlights the importance of the Opinion Reticence Maxim, where characters delivered disagreement in softened, indirect forms. This finding supports the observations of Sugianto and Tawali (2024) in their study of Sasak politeness strategies, where avoiding rudeness in conversations with elders required indirect disagreement and respectful hedging. In *Persuasion*, this strategy was particularly evident in interactions where younger or lower-status characters disagreed with higher-status individuals, showing that indirect opposition was a culturally appropriate way of balancing honesty with deference. The implication here is that politeness strategies not only function as linguistic devices but also as mechanisms for negotiating social power.

Feeling Reticence Maxim, though least frequent, is equally significant as it reflects the suppression of personal emotions to avoid burdening others. In the *Persuasion* dialogues, characters minimized their emotional suffering in order to maintain composure and not impose on their interlocutors. This finding connects with Aporbo's (2022) discourse analysis of workplace interactions, which showed that professionals often concealed personal frustrations to uphold harmony and avoid conflict. Both in Regency-era fiction and in modern organizational settings, the suppression of feelings operates as a politeness strategy to protect social relationships.

Comparing the findings of this study with research on impoliteness further underscores the significance of neg-politeness in preserving harmony. Murni, Simanjuntak, and Setyawan (2024) found that in online gaming contexts, students frequently used vulgar language, reflecting environments where politeness norms were minimized. The contrast with *Persuasion* is stark: while online gaming environments foster impoliteness and face-threatening acts, Regency-era interactions relied heavily on politeness to prevent social discord. This comparison illustrates how politeness strategies are context-dependent, shaped by the goals of interaction and the cultural value placed on harmony versus competitiveness.

Theoretically, the study contributes to the pragmatics of politeness by reaffirming Leech's (2014) framework as a valuable tool for analyzing linguistic behavior in historical and literary contexts. Unlike studies that rely on Brown and Levinson's (1987) model, which emphasizes face management, Leech's model provides more fine-grained categories, particularly in the realm of neg-politeness. By identifying specific maxims such as obligation and modesty, this study shows how *Persuasion*'s dialogue conforms to, and expands upon, established theories of pragmatic politeness. Moreover, by situating the findings within the broader sociocultural context of the Regency era, the study demonstrates how pragmatic theories must always be interpreted against the backdrop of social structures, including class, gender, and power relations.

Practically, the findings have implications for both pedagogy and intercultural communication. In language teaching, film adaptations like *Persuasion* can serve as authentic resources for demonstrating how politeness strategies function in real interactional contexts. Teachers can use film excerpts to highlight the pragmatic functions of different maxims and to contrast historical forms of politeness with contemporary usage. This approach not only develops learners' pragmatic competence but also fosters cultural awareness by showing how politeness is deeply embedded in social norms. In intercultural communication, the findings underscore the importance of recognizing that politeness strategies are not universal but vary by cultural and historical context. Training individuals to recognize and adapt to different politeness systems can reduce miscommunication and foster mutual understanding in international interactions.

The study also suggests that media representations of politeness strategies contribute to shaping contemporary audiences' perceptions of historical language use. By analyzing *Persuasion* through the lens of neg-politeness, audiences can better appreciate how the film reflects and critiques the gendered and class-based dynamics of its time. This aligns with Isabella et al. (2022), who argued that movies provide valuable opportunities for learners and audiences to observe politeness strategies in action. Thus, beyond linguistic analysis, the findings also contribute to cultural and literary studies by demonstrating how film adaptations translate historical social norms into modern media.

This study demonstrates that the *Persuasion* (2022) movie heavily employs Leech's neg-politeness maxims to maintain social harmony in a context shaped by class, gender, and age. The predominance of the Obligation Maxim illustrates the emphasis on reducing guilt and smoothing social relations, while the presence of Tact, Modesty, Opinion Reticence, and Feeling Reticence maxims highlights the nuanced strategies characters use to avoid offense and maintain face. When compared with previous research, these findings align with broader patterns observed in both literary and real-life contexts, while also highlighting the unique features of Regency-era communication. Theoretically, the study affirms Leech's model as a comprehensive framework for analyzing politeness, and practically, it suggests pedagogical and intercultural applications that bridge historical insights with modern communication needs. By situating the findings within existing scholarship, the study underscores the enduring relevance of politeness strategies as tools for preserving harmony, both in fictional narratives and in everyday life.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of \**Persuasion*\* (2022) demonstrates that Leech's (2014) framework of Neg-Politeness is not only applicable but also highly relevant for understanding how language maintains social harmony in contexts where class, gender, and age hierarchies are deeply influential. The study revealed that all five maxims of Neg-Politeness—Tact, Modesty, Obligation, Opinion Reticence, and Feeling Reticence—were employed by characters, with the Obligation Maxim appearing most frequently. This predominance reflects the social fabric of the Regency era, where individuals sought to reduce guilt,

minimize conflict, and maintain respect in interpersonal relationships. The findings highlight that politeness strategies in the film functioned as a powerful tool for mitigating face-threatening acts and ensuring the preservation of dignity, harmony, and balance within interactions. In connecting these results with previous studies on politeness, the research underscores the role of social structures and cultural norms in shaping linguistic choices, illustrating that neg-politeness is not merely a linguistic strategy but a reflection of broader societal values.

Beyond contributing to the field of pragmatics, this study also provides practical implications for pedagogy, intercultural communication, and literary appreciation. In the classroom, films like \*Persuasion\* can serve as authentic teaching materials for illustrating how politeness strategies operate in specific sociohistorical contexts, enabling students to develop both pragmatic competence and cultural awareness. The findings also stress the importance of adapting communication to different cultural expectations, which is particularly relevant in intercultural settings where misunderstandings often arise from divergent politeness norms. From a literary perspective, the film adaptation of \*Persuasion\* reveals how historical social conventions are reconstructed through dialogue, offering audiences insights into the interplay between language and social order in Regency England. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that the study of neg-politeness provides a valuable lens for understanding how language sustains harmony, negotiates power, and reflects cultural identity across both historical and contemporary contexts.

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