

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

People are social beings; therefore, they need to interact with other people. Usually language is involved in their daily life interactions. Moreover, language itself is divided into two; verbal language, which can be oral and in written, and non-verbal language, which is facial expressions, gestures, etc. However, in this thesis, the focus will be on the verbal language only.

Language is usually used to convey a meaning which can be explicit or implicit. The implicit meaning which is used by a speaker in the language is covered in Pragmatics, which according to Korta and Perry (2019), deals with utterances that the speakers utter at certain times and places with certain intentional acts, which usually involve language. However, while interacting with others, people may sometimes make mistakes with the language they use while delivering their ideas to their speaking partner. In other words, people may accidentally or purposely use language to offend others and make their interaction end with a conflict. This may happen because the participants do not consider the social factors between them well enough.

In this thesis, I will discuss the use of politeness strategy by Brown and Levinson (1987), in which if it is miscalculated by a speaker, a conflict will probably happen or worse. I find out that it is interesting to analyze the issue of miscalculation of politeness strategy which makes the conflicts between people in a speech event occur or intensify.

The theory that I use in this thesis is Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson's (1987) politeness strategy. There are five politeness strategies which can help people to interact with others properly without offending them. Besides, Brown and Levinson (1987) also make a parameter which needs to be considered to make the interaction work well between people in their speech events. They introduce a parameter called the weightiness of the Face Threatening Act (FTA), which consists of three aspects known as the rate of imposition (R), distance (D), and power (P).

When someone asks his friend to lend him an amount of money, it involves high rate of imposition (R). Meanwhile, the rate of imposition (R) is low if the person asks his friend to open a window. The next aspect is distance (D), which deals with the relationship between two participants. For instance, the distance (D) between two best friends is close; however, the distance (D) between a king and a servant is far. The last aspect is power (P), which deals with the power or authority that the two participants have. For instance, a king is more powerful compared to a servant. By considering this parameter, people may avoid the occurrence of conflicts or the intensification of conflicts. However, people often consciously or unconsciously ignore this parameter while they are speaking

to others as usually the situation and the speaker's emotion are more dominant to get involved in the speech events.

I am interested in analyzing a movie because a movie is a reflection of the real world. This also means that the language used in the dialogues of the movie is also based on that in the real world.

In this thesis I use a British movie series entitled *The Last Kingdom* as the data source. According to IMDb (n.d.), the movie series was first released in 2015 and it is written by Stephen Butchard and directed by Nick Murphy, Anthony Byrne, Ben Chanan, and Peter Hoar (Carnival Film, n.d.). This movie is set in the year of 872 in the kingdoms in England (Carnival Film, n.d.).

Moreover, *The Last Kingdom* movie series shows a hierarchical system with distinctly different social statuses between the characters which will definitely affect the consideration of the language use. For this reason, I find *The Last Kingdom* movie series interesting to analyze as wrong considerations may lead to the intensification of conflicts.

The research is significant as it makes people more aware of the politeness strategies they use in communicating with others in their daily interaction. I hope this analysis can give people an overview of how the miscalculations of politeness strategy may create conflicts. Moreover, I also hope that this thesis may influence people to consider the use of the parameter of the weightiness of FTA in their speech. Therefore, people may avoid being offensive to their speaking partner, and the occurrence of conflicts can be reduced.

Word count: 733 words

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In this research I would like to analyze:

1. What types of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy are applied in *The Last Kingdom* movie series Seasons 1 – 4?
2. How do the miscalculations of politeness strategy intensify the conflicts between the characters of *The Last Kingdom* movie series Seasons 1 – 4?

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purposes of this study are as follows:

1. to find out the types of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy applied in *The Last Kingdom* movie series Seasons 1 – 4;
2. to find out how the miscalculations of politeness strategy intensify the conflicts between the characters of *The Last Kingdom* movie series Seasons 1 – 4.

## **1.4 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One is Introduction, which consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, and Organization of the Thesis. Next, Chapter Two is Literature Review, which provides the theory that I use to analyze this research. After this is Chapter Three, which presents the methods that are used for this research. Chapter Four contains the discussion of the findings. The last chapter is Conclusion. Finally, this thesis ends with References and Appendices.