The International Journal of Social Sciences World
TIJOSSW is Available Online at:
https://www.growingscholar.org/journal/index.php/TIJOSSW
Vol. 7 No. 2, July- Dec 2025, Pages: 108 ~ 113
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17745273
ISSN 2690-5167
Growingscholar Publisher

An Analysis of Politeness Violations by the Shadow Master Character in Paddle Pop

Komang Ade Sarwidta[1], Ni Putu N. Widarsini [2], I Gusti Ngurah Mayun Susandhika[3]

Article history:
Received: 12/09/ 2025; Accepted: 10/11/ 2025; Displayed Online: 28/ 11/ 2025; Published: 30/ 12/ 2025

Keywords

Violation of Politeness;

Film;

Pragmatics;

Abstract

The purpose of this writing is to examine the violations of politeness maxims by the character Shadow Master as the antagonist and to explore the factors that contribute to his disregard for these maxims. The data were obtained through the "non-participant observation" method and analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative approach. The results of the analysis reveal that the character Shadow Master, as the antagonist in the film Paddle Pop, violates several politeness maxims, including the maxim of tact, the maxim of generosity, the maxim of approbation, the maxim of modesty, the maxim of agreement, and the maxim of sympathy. The factors causing Shadow Master's impoliteness are his strong emotions and ambition to dominate the world.

1. Introduction

Communication is a fundamental part of human life, using language. Communication aims to convey several things, one of which is fulfilling one's standard of living in activities, using both verbal and nonverbal language. The interconnected and mutually influencing interaction between individuals is called interaction. This interaction is based on each individual's cultural identity.

Cultural reflections of these interactions are often found in works such as short stories, novels, fairy tales, and of course, modern works like film. In films, there is a lot of interaction between the narrator and the narrator to fulfill their respective roles, making the film highly engaging, providing entertainment, moral messages, and emotions. To achieve all of this, there are naturally unequal interactions between characters. This is often called conflict. The dominant conflict occurs between the protagonist and the antagonist, who are the center of the film's luxury. One film that exhibits such conflict is Paddle Pop.

Paddle Pop is an animated film and TV series produced since 2007 by The Monk Studio (2007-present) and Egg Story Studio (2013-2015). The series is based on the lion mascot of the Australian ice cream brand, Paddle Pop. Launched as a film to promote the ice cream brand worldwide, the series later became a regular broadcast in Indonesia from 2009 to 2017.

[1] *Univeristas Udayana, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, Email : komangade66@gmail.com*
[2] *Univeristas Udayana, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, Email : n_widarsini@unud.ac.id*
[3] *Univeristas Udayana, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia, Email : mayunsusandhika@unud.ac.id*

According to the Assistant Brand Manager of Paddle Pop PT Univeler Indonesia Tbk, this is because the animation animators are from Singapore, but the story concept originates from Indonesia, thus reflecting several aspects of Indonesian cultural values, particularly in terms of politeness.

In a film, politeness is often associated with the protagonist because the protagonist is the main character. The protagonist fights to defend the truth, which then becomes the moral foundation for someone to do good in society in the simplest way, namely by communicating politely with the person they are talking to. The film Paddle Pop features a main character who lives up to its name, Paddle Pop. Paddle Pop is a lion destined to become king of his kingdom, but his journey is not easy due to the presence of the film's main antagonist, the Shadow Master. He is a shadowy figure who constantly prevents Paddle Pop from achieving his destiny.

Paddle Pop must ultimately embark on an adventure to various places to defeat the Shadow Master. He is accompanied on this adventure by Paddle Pop's friends, such as Leona, Professor Higgabottom, Twitch, Spike, and Kara. The presence of these characters forces the Shadow Master to reveal his true identity as an antagonist by acting in ways that deviate from his kindness and politeness, thus giving rise to violations of politeness. Based on the background above, there are two objectives to be achieved: (1) to identify violations of politeness by the Shadow Master as an antagonist and (2) to examine the factors that cause the Shadow Master to commit violations of politeness.

2. Material and Method

The data sources for this study came from several YouTube channels featuring the Paddle Pop film series. The data used are considered primary data. Data collection was conducted using the free listening and conversational listening method. The data were analyzed using descriptive-qualitative methods and pragmatic matching, focusing on politeness theory. Finally, the data were presented using an informal presentation method based on word order.

Specifically, in examining politeness, this discussion utilizes politeness theory in the form of politeness maxims. According to Leech (1983) (in Rahardi), politeness maxims are divided into six: the tact maxim, the generosity maxim, the approbation maxim, the modesty maxim, the agreement maxim, and the sympathy maxim. These maxims serve as the primary basis for assessing the politeness of speakers and listeners. In addition to maxims, pragmatics also includes context as a factor in assessing politeness. Context is always present in every utterance made by speakers and listeners to provide a picture of events that occur between one interaction and another. Politeness is also related to the concept of SPEAKING, coined by Dell Hymes for effective communication in social and cultural contexts. The concept of SPEAKING is divided into eight parts: *setting*, *participant*, *ends*, *act of sequence* , *key* , *instrumentalities* , *norms* , and *genre*.

3. Results and Discussion

The linguistic behavior of the Shadow Master and his subordinates reveals systematic violations of politeness norms throughout the *Paddle Pop* narrative. An examination of these utterances demonstrates how the character's ambition, emotional instability, and moral disposition shape his speech patterns. This analysis is grounded in Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle, particularly the six maxims—Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, and Sympathy—each of which governs the promotion of interpersonal harmony. This section presents a detailed analysis of the Shadow Master's violations, drawing on examples from the narrative and situated within contemporary politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Culpeper, 1996, 2011).

3. 1. Violation of the Maxim of Tact

The Maxim of Tact requires speakers to minimize expressions that benefit themselves and maximize expressions benefiting others (Leech, 1983). Violation of this maxim often reflects egocentrism, competitiveness, or jealousy.

(Data 1) *Rex: "And that ship helped them a lot."*
Shadow Master: "Hmmm, yes, it's time we stop that help. Hmm ahahaha, you know your job? Time to go down to earth, Paddle Pop. Hahahahaa."

In this utterance, the Shadow Master displays clear jealousy toward Paddle Pop's success. Rather than responding neutrally, he immediately commands his subordinate to intervene destructively. By prioritizing his self-interest and actively obstructing Paddle Pop's progress, he disregards the tact maxim entirely. His speech demonstrates a coercive intention, aligning with what Culpeper (1996) identifies as *aggravated impoliteness*, where the aim is to provoke harm or intimidate.

3. 2. Violation of the Maxim of Generosity

The Maxim of Generosity obliges speakers to minimize self-benefit while maximizing benefit to others (Leech, 1983). Generous speech typically appears in the form of voluntary sacrifice or reduced imposition.

(Data 2) *Rex: "You promised me power… the scepter is a symbol of the king; it is mine."*
Shadow Master: "Don't make me ask twice, now take the scepter!"

Rather than fulfilling the promise or retrieving the scepter himself, the Shadow Master imposes a demanding command on Rex. His utterance shows no attempt to reduce burden or share responsibility, leading to a direct violation of the generosity maxim. This reflects what Brown and Levinson (1987) term a *face-threatening act (FTA)*, in which the speaker intentionally increases imposition and threatens the hearer's negative face (i.e., freedom from coercion).

3. 3. Violation of the Maxim of Approbation

The Maxim of Approbation encourages speakers to minimize dispraise and maximize praise of others. Polite speakers avoid insulting or humiliating others.

(Data 3) *Shadow Master: "Don't just stand there, you idiot! Take the ice cream while I hold off this giant chicken!"*

The term *"idiot"* constitutes overt dispraise and dehumanization of the hearer. The Shadow Master uses derogatory language to belittle Rex's fear, reinforcing his authority through verbal aggression. Culpeper's (2011) impoliteness framework identifies such direct insults as a strategy of *attacking the victim's quality face*, thereby asserting dominance while humiliating the subordinate. This utterance thus represents a clear violation of the approbation maxim.

3. 4. Violation of the Maxim of Modesty

The Maxim of Modesty requires speakers to minimize self-praise and emphasize humility. Violations usually indicate arrogance, self-aggrandizement, or a desire to display superiority.

(Data 4) *Paddle Pop: "It's not that easy, Shadow Master, get ready!" Shadow Master: "Mhahahahaha, it's useless, Paddle Pop. My black magic is no match for yours."*

Here, the Shadow Master openly boasts about his superior magical power, exaggerating his dominance. Self-praise of this kind directly violates the modesty maxim and reinforces his inflated ego. Such self-aggrandizing discourse is consistent with villainous character construction, in which linguistic displays of power serve to emphasize threat, superiority, and control (Simpson, 2004).

3. 5. Violation of the Maxim of Agreement

The Maxim of Agreement urges speakers to minimize disagreement and maximize shared viewpoints. Polite conversation is typically characterized by cooperative alignment.

(Data 5) *Prof. Higgabottom: "You guys won't get away with it… Paddle Pop will—" Shadow Master: "What?! … He's always interrupting. Now it's time to finish everything!"*

Shadow Master interrupts Prof. Higgabottom mid-sentence, demonstrating an explicit refusal to engage collaboratively. His interruption constitutes a violation of conversational norms, particularly turn-taking conventions (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). Through this disruption, he suppresses counterarguments and asserts communicative dominance, reflecting a deliberate violation of the agreement maxim.

3. 6. Violation of the Maxim of Sympathy

The Maxim of Sympathy requires speakers to maximize expressions of empathy and minimize those of antipathy.

(Data 6) *Shadow Master: "Goodbye Paddle Pop… you'll never get out of here, hahaha."*

Instead of expressing empathy toward Paddle Pop's dangerous situation, the Shadow Master mocks him and revels in his potential demise. This demonstrates a complete disregard for sympathy and human concern. His laughter underscores a form of *Schadenfreude*, a pleasure taken in another's misfortune, which directly contradicts the sympathy maxim.

Character Motivation and the Roots of Linguistic Impoliteness

The Shadow Master's recurrent violations of politeness principles cannot be separated from the underlying psychological and narrative drivers that shape his behavior. Two major factors explain his persistent impoliteness: ambition and emotional volatility.

3.7. Ambition as a Source of Impoliteness

Ambition is a strong desire to gain status or achieve a particular objective. In the *Paddle Pop* series, the Shadow Master's ambition to seize the throne and dominate the world fuels his unethical actions and hostile speech. His linguistic aggression functions as an extension of his pursuit of power.

(Data 7) *"It's been a long time since we met, Paddle Pop. Your reign is over. I have mastered black magic, and now you will be my slave!"*

This utterance exemplifies the Shadow Master's desire not only to defeat Paddle Pop but to humiliate and dominate him. The impoliteness here is instrumental—he employs language to belittle, intimidate, and assert superiority, aligning with Culpeper's (1996) model of strategic impoliteness used to gain power advantages.

3.8. Emotional Volatility and Impulsive Impoliteness

The Shadow Master is consistently portrayed as emotionally unstable—prone to anger, envy, vengeance, and frustration. These emotional surges frequently trigger spontaneous outbursts of verbal aggression. For Examples; (Data 8) "Don't just stand there, you idiot!"; (Data 9) "Don't make me ask twice! Now take that stick!"; (Data 10) "Hmmm yes, it's time to eliminate that aid… Time to go down to earth, Paddle Pop!"

In these instances, impoliteness emerges as a reaction to emotional provocation rather than a calculated strategy. Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework suggests that emotional arousal reduces a speaker's inclination to protect the hearer's face, resulting in direct FTAs delivered without mitigation.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the linguistic and pragmatic features embedded within the character interactions reveal deeper ideological and behavioral patterns that shape the narrative. The Shadow Master, as the primary antagonist in the *Paddle Pop* film series, presents a consistent pattern of violating core politeness maxims as articulated by Leech (1983), including the tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy maxims. These violations are evident through his speech acts, which frequently display dominance, coercion, and a disregard for social harmony. Such pragmatic deviations are not merely stylistic choices, but rather serve to reinforce his characterization as a figure driven by egocentrism and unrestrained ambition.

The analysis further shows that these violations stem from several interrelated psychological and narrative factors. Shadow Master's overarching ambition to seize control of the Paddle Pop kingdom—and ultimately the world—functions as the central motivating force behind his discursive aggression. His linguistic behavior is shaped by heightened emotional states, including anger, vengeance, jealousy, and arrogance, which manifest in speech acts aimed at undermining, threatening, or belittling both his adversaries and his own allies. These emotional impulses frequently override the cooperative principles of communication (Grice, 1975), illustrating how character psychology influences pragmatic expression.

When viewed holistically, the character's speech behavior contributes to the broader thematic structure of the narrative, positioning him as a symbolic representation of unchecked power, ego-driven ambition, and the breakdown of communicative ethics. Simultaneously, the contrast between his linguistic behavior and the protagonist's more cooperative communication emphasizes moral and relational values central to the film's message. Therefore, the Shadow Master's pragmatic violations not only function as narrative devices that enhance conflict, but also serve as pedagogical reflections on the consequences of emotional instability and ethical decay in interpersonal communication.

In sum, the study highlights the intricate interplay between linguistic choices, character development, and narrative ideology. By examining the antagonist's speech through the lens of politeness theory and pragmatic analysis, this research underscores how language operates as a powerful tool for revealing moral tension, constructing character identity, and advancing narrative conflict.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the completion of this study. Special appreciation is extended to the participants who generously provided their time and insights, as well as to the reviewers and editorial team for their valuable feedback and support throughout the publication process. Their contributions have significantly enhanced the quality of this research.

References

Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, K. P. (2024, September 20). *Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa*. KBBI VI Daring. https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/ambisi

Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics: Vol. 3. Speech acts* (pp. 41–58). Academic Press.

Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. Longman.

Moleong, L. J. (2017). *Metodologi penelitian kualitatif*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Putri Laras Sati, P. P. (2023). Prinsip kesantunan berbahasa dalam film *Layangan Putus* dan implikasinya terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SMP. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Budaya (Mateandrau)*, 111–115.

Rahardi, K. (n.d.). *Pragmatik kesantunan imperatif bahasa Indonesia*. Erlangga.

STEKOM, U. (2011, February 3). *Ensiklopedia Dunia: Paddle Pop Adventures*. https://p2k.stekom.ac.id/ensiklopedia/Paddle_Pop_Adventures

Sudaryanto. (2016). *Metode dan aneka teknik analisis bahasa*. Universitas Sanata Dharma.

Sudarsono, S. C. (2023, January 16). *Pragmatik dalam linguistik: Pengertian, tujuan, hasil, dan manfaat*. Sastranesia.id. https://sastranesia.id/pragmatik-dalam-linguistik-pengertian-tujuan-hasil-dan-manfaat/

Sudarsono, S. C. (2023, February 20). *Teori konteks Dell Hymes: SPEAKING*. Sastranesia.id. https://sastranesia.id/teori-konteks-dell-hymes-speaking/

Syaifudin, N. W. (2020). Kesantunan berbahasa dalam tuturan film *My Stupid Boss 1*. *Jurnal Sastra Indonesia*, 9(1), 23–26.

Winda Gunansi, K. K. (2021). Pelanggaran prinsip kesantunan berbahasa dalam film *Bumi Manusia* karya Hanung Bramantyo dan implikasinya terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SMA. *Jurnal Ilmiah SEMANTIKA*, 2(1), 31–33.

Wiraspati, R. (2013, November 25). Inovasi promosi Paddle Pop. *Swa.co.id*. https://swa.co.id/read/72847/inovasi-promosi-paddle-pop