VERBAL EXPRESSIONS OF POLITENESS SHOWN BY
FEMALE CHARACTERS IN ‘DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES’

TV DRAMA SERIES

A THESIS

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in

English Language Teaching

By:

Maria Grace Nathanael

1213005039

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FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN

JURUSAN BAHASA DAN SENI

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Approval Sheet

This thesis entitled "Verbal Expressions of Politeness Shown by the Female Characters in 'Desperate Housewives' TV Drama Series" prepared and submitted by Maria Grace Nathanael has been approved and accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirement for Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in English Department Language Teaching by the following advisors.

Drs. Stefanus Laga Tukan, M.Pd.
First Advisor

Yohanes Nugroho Widianto, M.Ed.
Second Advisor
Approval Sheet
(2)

This thesis has been examined by the committee on Oral Examination with a grade of ____ on June 29, 2009.

Dr. B. Budiyono
Chairperson

Mateus Yumarnamto, M.Hum.
Secretary

Drs. Stefanus Laga Tukan, M.Pd.
Member

Yohanes Nugroho Widiyanto, M.Ed.
Member

Johanes Leonardi Taloko, M.Sc.
Member

Dra. Agites Santi Widiati, M.Pd.
Dean of the Teacher Training Faculty

Irvandy Sutris Winarlim, M.Sc.
Head of the English Department
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## Table of Contents

Approval sheet (I) ......................................................... i
Approval sheet (II) ......................................................... ii
Acknowledgement .......................................................... iii
Table of Contents ........................................................... v
List of Tables ............................................................... xi
Abstract ........................................................................... xiii

### Chapter I: Introduction ................................................ 1

1.1. Background of the Study .............................................. 1

1.2. Statements of the Problems .......................................... 5

1.3. Objectives of the Study ................................................. 6

1.4. Significance of The Study ............................................. 6

1.5. Theoretical Framework ............................................... 6

1.6. Scope and Limitation .................................................. 7

1.7. Definition of Key Terms .............................................. 8

1.8. The Organization of The Thesis .................................... 9
Chapter II: Review of Related Literature ............................................. 11

2.1. The Nature of Language ................................................................. 11
   2.1.1. Language Functions ............................................................. 12

2.2. Language and Society ................................................................. 14

2.3. Politeness ..................................................................................... 17
   2.3.1. Positive Politeness ................................................................. 17
   2.3.2. Negative Politeness ............................................................... 18

2.4. Politeness Maxims ....................................................................... 19
   2.4.1. Don’t Impose ....................................................................... 20
   2.4.2. Give Options ....................................................................... 22
   2.4.3. Make Your Receiver Feel Good ........................................... 23

2.5. Language and Gender .................................................................. 24
   2.5.1. Hedges ................................................................................. 26
   2.5.2. Tag Questions ...................................................................... 27
   2.5.3. Questions ............................................................................. 28
   2.5.4. Commands and Directives ................................................ 29
   2.5.5. Swearing and Taboo Language ........................................... 29
   2.5.6. Compliments ...................................................................... 30

2.6. ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series .................................... 32
   2.6.1. The Main Characters in Desperate Housewives TV Drama Series .... 34
   2.6.2. ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series: Season 1 ................. 36
   2.6.3. ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series: Season 2 ............... 37
2.6.4. ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series: Season 3 ................. 37
2.6.5. ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series: Season 4 ................. 38
2.6.6. ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series: Season 5.................. 39
2.7. Previous Study ........................................................................... 39

Chapter III: Research Methodology .............................................. 43
3.1. The Nature of the Study ............................................................ 43
3.2. The Research Design ............................................................... 44
3.3. The Data Source ...................................................................... 46
3.4. The Data ................................................................................... 46
3.5. The Research Instrument .......................................................... 46
3.6. The Procedures of Data Collection ............................................ 46
3.7. The Procedure of Analyzing the Data ....................................... 49

Chapter IV: Data Analysis, Findings and Discussions of the Findings .... 52
4.1. The Data Analysis ..................................................................... 52
   4.1.1. Conversation 1 ................................................................. 53
      4.1.1.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 1 .......... 53
      4.1.1.2. Conversation 1 Analysis ........................................... 54
      4.1.1.3. The Findings of Conversation 1 Analysis................. 56
      4.1.1.4. Discussions of the Findings of Conversation 1 Analysis .. 59
   4.1.2. Conversation 2 ................................................................. 63
4.1.2.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 2 .......... 63
4.1.2.2. Conversation 2 Analysis .................................... 64
4.1.2.3. The Findings of Conversation 2 Analysis ............... 68
4.1.2.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 2 Analysis .... 71
4.1.3. Conversation 3 .................................................... 77
  4.1.3.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 3 ........... 77
  4.1.3.2. Conversation 3 Analysis .................................... 78
  4.1.3.3. The Findings of Conversation 3 Analysis ............... 79
  4.1.3.4. Discussions of The Findings in Conversation 3 Analysis ... 81
4.1.4. Conversation 4 .................................................... 82
  4.1.4.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 4 .......... 82
  4.1.4.2. Conversation 4 Analysis .................................... 83
  4.1.4.3. The Findings of Conversation 4 Analysis ............... 86
  4.1.4.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 4 Analysis .... 88
4.1.5. Conversation 5 .................................................... 92
  4.1.5.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 5 .......... 92
  4.1.5.2. Conversation 5 Analysis .................................... 92
  4.1.5.3. The Findings of Conversation 5 Analysis ............... 94
  4.1.5.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 5 Analysis .... 96
4.1.6. Conversation 6 .................................................... 99
  4.1.6.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 6 .......... 99
  4.1.6.2. Conversation 6 Analysis .................................... 99
4.1.6.3. The Findings of Conversation 6 Analysis .................... 100
4.1.6.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 6 Analysis ... 102
4.1.7. Conversation 7 ............................................................... 103
  4.1.7.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 7 .......... 103
  4.1.7.2. Conversation 7 Analysis ....................................... 104
  4.1.7.3. The Findings of Conversation 7 Analysis ................. 106
  4.1.7.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 7 Analysis ... 108
4.1.8. Conversation 8 ................................................................. 110
  4.1.8.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 8 .......... 110
  4.1.8.2. Conversation 8 Analysis .................................... 111
  4.1.8.3. The Findings of Conversation 8 Analysis ............... 113
  4.1.8.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 8 Analysis .. 115
4.1.9. Conversation 9 ............................................................... 117
  4.1.9.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 9 .......... 117
  4.1.9.2. Conversation 9 Analysis .................................... 117
  4.1.9.3. The Findings of Conversation 9 Analysis ............... 120
  4.1.9.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 9 Analysis .... 122
4.1.10. Conversation 10 ............................................................ 124
  4.1.10.1. Background of the Situation in Conversation 10 ........ 124
  4.1.10.2. Conversation 10 Analysis .................................... 125
  4.1.10.3. The Findings of Conversation 10 Analysis ............... 127
  4.1.10.4. Discussions of the Findings in Conversation 10 Analysis 129
4.2. Recapitulation of the Findings of the Ten Conversation Analysis ............. 131

4.3. Discussions of the Findings of the Ten Conversation Analysis .............. 135

4.3.1. Women Speak more Polite than Men ......................................... 136

4.3.2. Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness Uttered by Female Characters in Whole Conversation .................................................. 137

4.3.3. Politeness Maxims Used in Female Characters’ Utterances in Whole Conversation .................................................................................. 139

4.3.4. The Relations between Politeness Strategies by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Politeness Maxims by Lakoff (1973) ......................... 139

Chapter V: Conclusions ........................................................................... 141

5.1. Summary ......................................................................................... 141

5.2. Conclusion ....................................................................................... 143

5.2. Suggestions .................................................................................... 143

References ............................................................................................ 145

Appendices ............................................................................................ 147
List of Tables

1. Table 2.7. The Comparison between Previous Studies and the Study Under Report ................................................................. 42
2. Table 3.6. The Source of Data Collection of the Ten Conversations .......... 48
3. Table 4.1.1.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 1 ........ 58
4. Table 4.1.2.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 2 .......... 69
5. Table 4.1.3.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 3 ......... 80
6. Table 4.1.4.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 4 ........ 87
7. Table 4.1.5.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 5 ....... 95
8. Table 4.1.6.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 6 ....... 101
9. Table 4.1.7.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 7 ....... 107
10. Table 4.1.8.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 8 ....... 114
11. Table 4.1.9.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 9 …… 121

12. Table 4.1.10.3. Table of Findings on Types of Verbal Expressions of Politeness and Frequency of the Use of Politeness Maxims in Conversation 10 ……………………………………………………………………………………………………… 128

13. Table 4.2.1. Frequency of Characteristics of Positive Politeness Applied in Whole Conversations ………………………………………………………………………………… 132

14. Table 4.2.2. Frequency of Characteristics of Negative Politeness Applied in Whole Conversations ………………………………………………………………………………… 133

15. Table 4.2.3. Frequency of the Characteristics of Each Politeness Maxims Applied in the Verbal Expressions from Whole Conversation ……………………………………… 134
Abstract

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**Key words:** Verbal Expressions, Politeness, Verbal Expressions of Politeness, ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness.

Verbal expressions are the main instruments of communication that make human beings interact with one another. In interacting with others, people do not only make use of cooperative principles to maintain an effectiveness of communication but also politeness principles in order to achieve successful communication.

The aims of this study are to identify types of verbal expressions of politeness and to discuss the politeness maxims applied in the daily conversations by female characters in ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series. The data of this study was taken from the utterances of the female characters of ‘Desperate Housewives’ TV Drama Series and analyzed by using the parameters of positive politeness and negative politeness, along with the politeness maxims of Robin Lakoff (‘Don’t Impose’, ‘Give Options’, and ‘Make Your Receiver Feel Good’). The research found out that there are 53 verbal expressions of politeness encountered in the 10 conversation analyzed. Out of these 53 verbal expressions of politeness, 37 (69,81%) belong to positive politeness and 20 (37,73%) belong to negative politeness. The use of Politeness Maxims is also revealed from the 53 verbal expressions of politeness. There are 19 (33,96%) verbal expressions of politeness belongs to the maxim of ‘Don’t Impose’, 11 (20,75%) verbal expressions of politeness as ‘Give Options’ and 27 (49,05%) verbal expressions of politeness belongs to the maxim of ‘Make Your Receiver Feel Good’. From the results of this study, it could be concluded that female characters of “Desperate Housewives” TV Drama Series speak politely. In line with Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness (1987), they tend to use positive politeness rather than negative politeness. Based on Politeness Maxims by Lakoff (1973), female characters use the maxim of “Make Your Receiver Feel Good” more than the other two maxims.

This study is far from being perfect. Therefore, the writer suggests that the future researchers of the same topic be carried out with using broader data source including real life verbal communication in real life speech events and real life speech communities.