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Politeness Performed by Four Female in Imperfect The Series

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Abstract

The article describes the politeness performed by four females depicted in the Series Imperfect. The objective is to describe the maxims of politeness utilized by the female characters in the Series. The data were the polite utterances of four females collected by note-taking. The analysis uses the theory of appropriateness and context. Among six maxims of politeness, these females only utilized three of them: generosity, agreement, and sympathy. Generosity is mainly used (50%) because the females tried to minimize the benefit and maximize the cost in line with the women's language-- carefully speaking.

Keywords: female; maxims; politeness

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1.0 Introduction

Language is something that fundamentally differentiates humans from other creatures. In language, politeness is the most apparent language feature expressing the nature of humans socially as expressed in speech. Politeness is actually a matter of considering how others feel about how they should be treated in speech situations as they interact with people. Therefore, politeness is fundamental to creating and maintaining social relations between humans. In pragmatics, politeness is a strategy that involves two participants, self and others, used to make speech smooth and polite. This strategy is an effort that can be made to minimize threats to someone else's 'face.' Pragmatic as the study of meaning communicated by one participant as a speaker and interpreted by other participants as a hearer also deals with context. Context refers to the situation and conditions when an utterance takes place that could make communication run smoothly since it helps the speech partner understand the speaker's utterances.

When people speak, they cannot simply express their opinions without seeing the norm of cultural, social, or politeness that apply in the society where the language users live. This is why every intention that a person perceives regarding a speech act performed by a speaker can be different. According to Leech (1983: 34), people clearly cannot make any pragmatic claims about what is going on in someone's head because pragmatics is about meaning in speech situations. Misunderstandings could possibly happen when a speaker uses the wrong choice of language in a conversation. Speakers who actually mean to be polite could be interpreted as impolite if there is an error in using the choice of language used in the conversation. By using the politeness principle in any speech situation, kinds of misunderstandings can be minimized.

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The use of maxims of politeness can be found in any kind of speech situation, such as in daily conversation. Speech situations, for example, are depicted in films or drama series that depict human life as social beings. One example of a drama or web series that tells about the daily life of the speech community is Imperfect the Series. Imperfect the Series is the Indonesian drama-comedy web series starring Kiky Saputri, Zsa Zsa Utari, Neneng Wulandari, and Aci Resti as the female leads. This web series premiered on January 27, 2021, and its last episode was released on February 25, 2021. Imperfect the Series is a spin-off of the Imperfect: Karier, Cinta & Timbangan movie released in 2019. This series takes place a year before the Imperfect movie and focuses on the four young girls, Neti, Maria, Endah, and Prita, who live together facing their unique and twisted problems.

This research is about utterances that contain politeness uttered by the four female leads, Neti, Maria, Endah, and Prita, in the web series entitled Imperfect the Series as they are having interaction with the people around them. This web series is selected as the source of the data because the problems raised in this Series are problems that are indeed around the society and close to human life, such as the twists and turns of Neti's love story, Maria, who comes from Papua and has to adapt to life in the capital city, Prita who always fight with her sister, and Endah with her campus life and her parents' plan to marry her with someone she does not even know. Here is an example of the conversation between Endah and Prita:

Endah: "Tolongin saya."

"Help me."

Prita: "Kenapa lu?"

"What is wrong with you?"

Endah: "Abah saya teh mau dateng. Tolong beresin kamar saya, ya?"

"My father is about to come. Would you please clean up my room?"

Prita: "Ahh, males gua."

"I am so lazy."

Endah: "Saya setrikain baju kamu seminggu."

"I'll iron your clothes a week."

Prita: "Ngga mau gua. Gua maunya tujuh hari."

"No. Do it for seven days."

Endah: "Oke."

"Okay."

In this conversation, Endah explains that his father is about to come, and she asks Prita to help her clean up her room. Endah and Prita then make a deal for them, and Endah responds that she agrees with the deal they made by saying, "Oke (Okay)." This agreement is an implementation of the agreement maxim because the speaker minimizes the expression of disagreement between self and other and maximizes the expression of the agreement between self and other.

Politeness could occur in every domain of life and being polite might have several impacts on the hearer's response (Revita et al., 2020). The politeness principle is actually a series of maxims. Leech (1983) proposed six types of maxims in politeness principle: tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. The example above is just one of the implementations of the politeness principle in Imperfect the Series uttered by two of four female leads. This article will analyze how the four female leads in the drama series Imperfect the Series use politeness principles in conducting conversations and identify the maxims used by the four female leads in the drama series entitled Imperfect the Series as they interact with the people around them.

2.0 Method

The intentions that a person perceives regarding a speech act performed by a speaker can be different. There can be misunderstandings when a speaker uses the wrong choice of language in a conversation so that speakers who actually mean to be polite are interpreted as impolite, which is caused by errors in using the right choice of language use in the conversation. This research analyzes how four female leads in the drama series Imperfect the Series use politeness principles in conducting conversations. This study aims to identify the maxims used by the four female leads in the drama series entitled Imperfect the Series as they interact with the people around them. Imperfect the Series is the Indonesian drama-comedy web series starring Kiky Saputri, Zsa Zsa Utari, Neneng Wulandari, and Aci Resti as the female leads. This web series premiered on January 27, 2021, and its last episode was released on February 25, 2021. Imperfect the Series is a spin-off of the Imperfect: Karier, Cinta & Timbangan movie released in 2019. This series takes place a year before the Imperfect movie and focuses on the four young girls, Neti, Maria, Endah, and Prita, who live together facing their unique and twisted problems.

The data used in conducting this research are utterances that contain politeness uttered by the four female leads in the web series entitled Imperfect the Series as they interact with the people around them. In collecting the data, the non-participant observational technique was used. Using this technique, the data can still be obtained without the need to be directly involved in the situation where the data source occurs. There were several steps in collecting the data. First, each episode of the web series was watched repeatedly. The conversations conducted by the four female leads in Imperfect the Series when interacting with the people around them were listened to carefully, and note-taking technique was applied to write any utterances that contain the maxims of the politeness principle used by the four female leads in their conversation with people around them. After the utterances that contain Leech's politeness principles were collected, the data were categorized according to the maxims in the principle of politeness. The results of the analysis were described

descriptively. A chart with percentages will be used to show the number of occurrences of the maxims that happened according to the findings.

3.0 Review of Related Studies

A scientific study cannot be separated from various previous studies because there will always be developments in the world of scientific research along with the development of science and society. In this review of the related study, the research position will be explained by presenting similar research in the context of research on the politeness principle and maxims of politeness. An article entitled "Maxims of Politeness Performed" by Female Sellers at Traditional Market in Sumatera Barat (2020) was conducted by Ike Revita, Sofia Marwati, Ainun Mardiah, and Ayumi is describing the maxims of politeness used by female sellers in a traditional market in Batusangkar, Sumatera Barat. The data used in this research are any utterances produced by the female sellers in a traditional market in Batusangkar and were taken by the observational method with note-taking, recording, and interviewing techniques. The research found that the female sellers in a traditional market in Batusangkar used three maxims in interacting with the buyers they are 1) tact maxim; 2) agreement maxim; and 3) modesty maxim. The other three maxims are not found yet, and the researchers admit that a limited number of data might cause it. This research conducted by Ike Revita, Sofia Marwati, Ainun Mardiah, and Ayumi further explained that in buying and selling transactions in the traditional market, there are two types of agreement between the sellers and the buyers they are verbal agreement and non-verbal agreement. It really provides a new point of view for the writer regarding the insincerity of the sellers of the price bargained by the buyers, which can be seen from the types of its agreement.

In other related studies, Eko Mulyono (2016) conducted research on the use of the politeness principle in a cartoon movie entitled "Stand By Me Doraemon." This article, entitled Politeness Principle Analysis in the Cartoon Movie Entitled Stand By Me Doraemon, describes the use of the politeness principle in the movie by looking for the tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. Similar to what will be done in this study, the research conducted by Mulyono is collected by note-taking technique and then analyzed descriptively. One of the findings from this research, which is also a new point of view for the writer, is that the research is looking for the maxims of politeness and focuses on the politeness scale, such as the formality scale, hesitancy scale, and equality scale. This research concludes that the characters in this movie try to create a comfortable environment to communicate, so they tend to avoid conflict.

Other related studies, entitled The Violation of Politeness Maxims by the Characters in the Movie White House Down conducted by Gusti Ayu Oka Cahya Dewi, Ketut Artawa, and I

Nyoman Udayana, analyzes the violation of politeness maxims in conversations between the characters in "White House Down" movie. This research explains the reasons for these violations happened. After collecting data from the characters' of "White House Down" utterances, the data were classified based on Leech's maxims of politeness (1983), and the theory of the use of maxim proposed by Holmes (2008) is also used in this research. The analysis results show that six types of maxims violate the utterances of each character in "White House Down" movie. Those are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. After that, it was explained what the influence of the violation was carried out by these characters and the influence that often appears in the data is due to differences in status. This research conducted by Gusti Ayu Oka Cahya Dewi, Ketut Artawa, and I Nyoman Udayana is almost the same as what will be done in this research. If this research must find the polite utterances by the characters in the web series, then the research conducted by Dewi et al. needs to find the impolite utterances by the characters in the movie. In fact, in a recent study, in the Middle East, especially in Jordan, the element of women's character used in the political themes was mentioned in the cartoons (ALjrah, 2021).

The previous studies above contribute to this study by analyzing data, outlining the theory, and giving other perspectives on the study. These previous studies are helpful since they help the writer to understand step-by-step how to conduct this research in detail. This research will focus on politeness uttered by the four female leads, Neti, Maria, Endah, and Prita, in the web series entitled Imperfect the Series by using the theory proposed by Leech (1983).

4.0 Theoretical Framework

4.1 Politeness

Politeness is a principle related to two conversation participants, self and others. Politeness is a term that refers to how good and refined a person's language is. When speaking, language speakers cannot simply express their opinions without considering the norms of politeness or the cultural norms that apply in the society where the language used is located. The ideas and thoughts of a language speaker must be able to be conveyed in accordance with the existing norms in society because language can reflect the culture of a society. Maintaining politeness in speaking is closely related to the problem of maintaining self-esteem. This, of course, aims to make the atmosphere of the conversation that occurs in ety the could run pleasantly and effectively and does not threaten others' faces.

4.2 Politeness Principle

The politeness principle known in pragmatics has been explained by several linguists, one of whom is Geoffrey Leech. Leech, in his Principles of Pragmatics (1983), introduces the politeness principle as the principle which minimizes (all things being equal) the expression

of impolite beliefs and maximizes (all things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs. Leech, in his book, generally states that the principle of politeness has six maxims that must be considered so that the speech made by the participants is genuinely polite. The six maxims include: (1) the tact maxim; (2) the generosity maxim; (3) the approval maxim; (4) the modesty maxim; (5) the agreement maxim; and (6) the sympathy maxim.

The following is an explanation of each maxim in the principle of politeness:

a) Tact Maxim

It was explained before that politeness is a principle related to two conversation participants, self and others. The tact maxim explains that speakers must try to minimise others and maximise the benefits of others. This tacit maxim wants to show the dimension of 'others' and not the dimension of minimising 'self.' An example of tact maxims can be seen in the following conversational situations: when the speaker (A) and speaker (B) have just finished eating, and then the speaker (A) offers to wash speaker (B)'s dish because he also wants to wash his dishes.

- A: "Just put down your plate." Let me wash it. "You must be tired after a long day at work."
- B: "Is it okay if you wash these dishes by yourself?" A: "It's okay."

Based on the principle of politeness, the conversation above can be categorized as a polite speech act because the speaker (A) seems to obey the tact maxim by minimizing the cost to others and maximizing his benefit.

b) Generosity Maxim

According to Leech (1983: 133), the maxim of generosity aims to minimise benefits to the self and maximise costs to the self. The example of the generosity maxim can be seen in the following speech:

- (1) "You can lend me your car."
- (2) "I can lend you my car."
- (3) "You must come and have dinner with us."
- (4) "We must come and have dinner with you" (Leech, 1983: 133)

Based on the politeness principle, utterances (2) and (3) are categorised as kinds of politeness because both utterances obey the generosity maxim. As previously explained, the maxim of generosity aims to minimize the self's benefit and maximize the self's cost. Thus, offer (2) and invitation (3) are considered polite for two reasons first because the two utterances imply the minimal benefit that the speaker can obtain, and secondly because the utterances cause the speaker to suffer more costs than they should be. Otherwise, utterances (1) and (4) violate the principle of politeness, especially the maxim of generosity, because the two utterances are not minimising benefits to self and maximising cost to self but maximising cost to others and minimising cost to the benefits of others.

c) Approbation of Maxim

This maxim aims to minimize dispraise of others and maximize praise of others (Leech 1983: 135). This maxim expects the conversation participants to not mock, deride, or degrade each other. So, according to the approbation maxim, a person will be considered polite if he avoids saying unpleasant things about other people, especially about the hearer, and prefers to say good things. A person who says "Wow! The meal you cooked is so delicious" when eating someone else's cooking is someone who speaks politely according to the approbation maxims. Leech then gives some examples of a conversation situation between (A) and (B) after watching a music performance:

- (5) A: "Her performance was outstanding!"
 - B: "Right!"
- (6) A: "Her performance was outstanding!"
 - B: "Really?"

With the assumption that (A) and (B) have just watched the same show, the answer given by (B) in utterance (6) is evasive and has implications for unpleasant opinions. By questioning statement (A), (B) implies that he is not sure whether (A)'s opinion is correct. Accordingly, (B) in the utterance (6) has violated the approbation maxim because he did not try to minimize dispraise of others. Instead, he questioned the praise that was given to others.

d) Modesty Maxim

This modesty maxim is a maxim that aims to minimize praise of self and maximize self-criticism or dispraise of self. According to this modesty maxim, the more often a person praises himself or, the more he brags about himself, the less polite that person will be. The example of this modesty maxim can be seen in the following utterances:

- (7) "Mohon terima hadiah kecil ini sebagai tanda terima kasih dari kami."
 - "Please accept this small gift as a token of our esteem."
- (8) "Mohon terima hadiah kami yang mahal ini sebagai tanda terima kasih dari kami."
 - "Please accept this large gift as a token of our esteem." (Leech, 1983: 136)

Utterance (7) contains a modesty maxim because the speaker has minimised praise for himself. This is different when compared to what the speakers say in utterance (8). In this utterance, the speaker violates the modesty maxims because the speaker is in a context that is deliberately praising and boasting about himself.

e) Agreement Maxim

In social life, humans often encounter people who try to reject and disagree with other people's opinions, even though their rejection or disagreement is unreasonable. Rejection or disagreement of other people's opinions or ideas is contrary to the maxims of agreement. In Leech (1983: 138), it is emphasised that the maxim of the agreement will be achieved when the speakers and the hearer try to minimise disagreements between self and other and also maximize agreement between self and other. The example of this agreement maxim can be seen in the following utterances as in Leech (1983: 138):

- (9) A: "It was an exciting exhibition, wasn't it?"
 - B: "No, it was very uninteresting."
- (10) A: "The book is tremendously well written."
 - B: "Yes, well written as a whole, but there are some rather dull patches, don't you think?"
- (11) A: "A referendum will satisfy everybody."
 - B: "Yes, definitely."

In conversation (9), (B) gave a pretty rude answer and did not attempt to agree. In contrast to conversations (10) and (11), both speakers and hearers try to agree with their arguments. In Conversation (9), the hearer violates the maxims of agreement. The more elements of a conformity or agreement there is between the two participants in the practise of speaking, the more it can be said that the agreement maxim has been jointly strived for by both participants, speakers, and speech partners or hearers, to create conditions of politeness in conversation.

f) Sympathy Maxim

In conducting a conversation in society, there must be an effort to maximise sympathy and minimise antipathy between the speakers and the speech partners or hearer or between oneself and others. If someone shows their antipathy to other participants, disharmony will emerge between these two conversation participants. If this happens, one participant and other participants will not be able to respect each other, so politeness in speaking will not appear in the practice of speech. According to Leech (1983: 138), congratulations and condolences are polite speech acts in the sympathy maxim. So, utterances (12) "I am so happy to hear about your cat." and (13) "I am terribly sorry to hear about your cat." give a different impression. With the knowledge of the sympathy maxim that we have, we can interpret that utterance (12) is a form of congratulations, while utterance (13) is condolence. If the concept is correct, then utterances (12) and (13) can be said to fulfil the sympathy maxim so that the condition of politeness is reached. But if the context of the speech changes, for example, utterance (12) "I am so happy to hear about your cat." was uttered when the hearer's cat died, the speaker has undoubtedly violated the sympathy maxim because he does not show sympathy at all, so there is no condition of politeness happen.

4.3 Context

Pragmatics is a study of meaning that depends on the context, and context is an important factor in interpreting someone's utterances and expressions (Cruse, 2006: 35). It is the background of knowledge shared by the speaker and hearer, which contributes to the hearer's interpretation of the speaker's utterance (Leech, 1983: 13). Context refers to the situation and conditions when an utterance takes place. When we analyze a speech, the context plays an essential role in explaining the situation and conditions of the speech. Context can help the speech partner understand the utterances the speaker says. If there is a misunderstanding between the speaker and the hearer in understanding a speech in communication, it is related to the context or situation. The context is something that is dynamic because it is related to the interaction between speaker and hearer and depends on things when the speech occurs.

5.0 Result and Discussion

In society, being polite is closely related to outstanding behavior (Kecskes & Kecskes, 2014; Revita et al., 2020). When humans interact, society will see people's behavior and attitudes from the way they speak, whether they speak politely or impolitely. Therefore, in every aspect of life, humans will always try to communicate politely to create a good relationship between conversation participants. In the conversation uttered by the four female leads in the web series entitled Imperfect the Series, there are three maxims of politeness used by these female characters. They are tact maxim, generosity maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim.

A. Generosity Maxim

The generosity maxim aims to minimize benefits to self and maximize cost to self. The generosity maxim found in Imperfect the Series, for example:

Prita: "Endah, gimana nih kita bisa kelaperan."

"Endah, what to do? We will starve."

Endah: "Iya (sambil menangis)"

"I know, right (while crying)."

Prita: "Bisa meninggal kita."

"We might die."

Endah: "Saya teh sakit nanti, Prit."

"I could be sick, Prit"

Neti: "Ada. Ada, ada ada. Gua ada (uang). (sambil menyelipkan uang ke tangan Endah) Tapi maaf ya, gua ga bisa bantu banyak. Semoga

bisa mengatasi dan membantu ya.

"I have. I have (some money). (while tucking money into Endah's hands). Nevertheless, I am sorry, I cannot help much. I hope this

helps you."

Endah: "Iya ga apa-apa. Makasih ya, Net."

"It is okay. Thank you, Net."

The conversation above involves Prita, Endah, and Neti. The conversation happens after Neti, Endah, and Prita's money is stolen by their friend named Jeje. Even though their money was just stolen, Neti still has savings that she can use for her urgent needs. Unfortunately, Endah and Prita truly run out of money and have no savings. Prita and Endah pity their own situation because they no longer have money. Neti then decides to help Prita and Endah by lending them some money. When deciding to lend Prita and Endah her money, Neti uses tact maxim that she tries to minimize benefits to herself and maximize cost to herself by saying that she has money she can lend even though it is not too much. By using informative utterances, Neti lends Prita and Endah the money she also needs and applies generosity to maxim and minimize benefits to herself and maximize costs to herself.

(2) Maria: "Neti, tapi, torang minta maaf sekali belum bisa temani ko. Kalau ada apa- apa ko bisa langsung telepon saya, e?"

"Neti, but I am really sorry that I cannot be here with you. If there is anything wrong just can call me as soon as possible, okay?"

Neti: "Siap"
"All right"

The conversation above involves Maria and Neti. The context of the above conversation is that Neti, who recently broke up with her boyfriend, is feeling sad and down. Maria, who has to go to work, cannot accompany Neti at home nor accompany her to go out to comfort her. Since Maria feels guilty, sorry, and worried, she asks Neti to contact her if there is anything wrong. She tries to comfort Neti by promising her existence even if she has to sacrifice her work. By saying "Kalau ada apa-apa ko bisa langsung telepon saya, e? (If there is anything wrong just can call me as soon as possible, okay?)", The Maria as the speaker, is actually minimizing benefits to herself and maximizing the cost to herself.

Agreement Maxim

The maxim of the agreement will be achieved when the speakers and the hearer try to minimize disagreements between self and other and also maximize agreement between self and other. The agreement maxim found in Imperfect the Series, for example:

(3) Prita: "Di kamar lu kan ga ada apa-apa, ga ada narkoba juga."

"There is nothing in your room, no drugs either."

Endah: "Tapi kan di kamar saya teh ada poster sama CD Korea. Abah saya ngga suka. Dia teh anti budaya asing. Yaa? please, please,

please."

. "But there are posters and Korean CDs. My dad does not like it. He is an anti-foreign culture. Please."

Prita: "Ahh, males gua."

"I am so lazy."

Endah: "Saya setrikain baju kamu seminggu."

"I will iron your clothes a week."

Prita: "Ngga mau gua. Gua maunya tujuh hari."

"No. Do it for seven days."

Endah: "Oke."

"Okay."

The conversation above involves Endah and Prita. The context of the above conversation is Endah, who has to leave immediately to go to campus, suddenly got a call from her father and mother that they will visit her. Endah, a big fan of Korean boybands, has so many Korean posters and saves so many Korean music CDs. Endah's father, who does not like things about foreign cultures, certainly will not like his only daughter doing such a thing. Since Endah feels so worried his father would be really mad and she does not have time to clean up her room because she has to go to campus immediately, she asks Prita to help her. Prita, who did not want to help at first, then is offered an agreement by Endah. Endah promises to iron Prita's clothes for a week if Prita wants to help her. Prita then joked that she did not want a week but seven days. In the conversation above, politeness is implemented by Endah and Prita because there are elements

of conformity or agreement between them. Endah and Prita both try to minimize disagreements between them and maximize agreement between them so they can create conditions of politeness in conversation.

Sympathy Maxim

The sympathy maxim is an effort to maximize sympathy and minimize antipathy between the speakers and the speech partners or hearer or between self and others. The sympathy maxim found in Imperfect the Series, for example:

(4) Neti: "Kenapa sih, Ndah?"

"What happened, Ndah?"

Endah: "Ambu saya teh baru ngabarin kalo bulan ini ga bisa kirim uang dulu."

"My mother just told me that she cannot send me money this month."

Prita: "Lah, kenapa emangnya?"

"Why?"

Endah: "Abah saya naek motor, nabrak mobil. Terus disuruh ganti, kalo engga dilaporin ke polisi. Jadi pake uang kiriman saya dulu."

"My father rode a motorcycle and then hit a car. He had to pay compensation, or he will be reported to the police. So they used

the money that was supposed to be sent to me."

Neti: "Astagfirullahaladzim."
Prita: "Tapi Abah kaga apa-apa?"

"But your father is okay, right?"

Endah: "Ngga apa-apa. Jarinya aja yang lecet sama sikut berdarah, kaki sobek."

"He is okay. Only his fingers were scratched, his elbows were bleeding, and his legs were torn."

The conversation above involves Neti, Endah, and Prita. The context of the above conversation is Endah suddenly got a call from his mother. His mother said that she could not send money to Endah because the money must be used to pay compensation for cars hit by Endah's father. By hearing this, Neti and Prita show their condolences and worries over what happened to Endah's father. Neti and Prita try to maximize sympathy between Endah and them by saying "Astagfirullahaladzim" and "*Tapi Abah kaga apa-apa?* (But your father is okay, right?)". By expressing these utterances, they can respect each other, and they also could create conditions of politeness. From the data that have been presented above, the four female leads in Imperfect the Series try to create a comfortable and polite environment when interacting. The occurrence of the maxim is various in the sense that the generosity maxim occurs at the most, which is 50%, followed by the agreement maxim, 25%, and the sympathy maxim, 25 % (Fig.1).

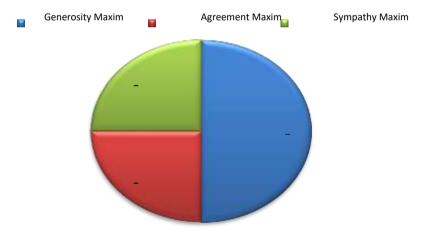


Fig.1. Occurrence of Maxim of Politeness

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

In conducting conversations, every human being has to be polite in all situations. Moreover, women are expected to be more polite than men as human beings. The four female leads in Imperfect the Series still try to speak in a polite way as they interact. At least, there are three maxims of politeness used by the four female leads in Imperfect the Series: generosity maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim. As proposed by Leech (1983), the other three maxims are not found yet. A limited number of data due to it taking a lot of time to watch the series over and over again might cause it. If further research related to politeness is conducted, other maxims will be found.

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