



General Strategies of Politeness in the Directive Utterances of How to Train Your Dragon (2025)

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-08-11 Revised: 2026-08-19 Accepted: 2026-09-10 Keywords: Pragmatics; directive utterances, general strategies of politeness, Leech, pragmatics, How to Train Your Dragon (2025) DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i2.12250 Corresponding Author: Sebastian Otniel Santoso A Sebastianoni84@gmail.com English Literature, Universitas Mahasarswati Denpasar	<i>Politeness plays an important role in maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships, particularly when speakers produce directive utterances that have the potential to impose on hearers. This study aims to analyze the General Strategies of Politeness employed in the directive utterances of the main characters in How to Train Your Dragon (2025). The study applied a qualitative descriptive method using Searle's (1979) theory of directive illocutionary acts to identify the directive types and Leech's (2014) General Strategy of Politeness to analyze the politeness strategies. The data were collected through observation and note-taking techniques from the movie script and selected based on representative directive utterances 10 representative utterances were analyzed in detail. The findings reveal that M2 (Tact Maxim) is the most frequently employed strategy, accounting for five occurrences (50%), followed by M1 (Generosity Maxim) with two occurrences (20%). Meanwhile, M3 (Approbation Maxim), M7 (Agreement Maxim), and M9 (Sympathy Maxim) each occur once (10%). These findings indicate that the main characters tend to reduce imposition while maintaining supportive interpersonal relationships when expressing directive utterances. This study demonstrates that the realization of politeness strategies is closely influenced by the communicative context and the relationship between the speaker and the hearer.</i>

1. Introduction

Language is an essential tool for human communication because it enables people to express ideas, intentions, and emotions while interacting with others. However, successful communication is not determined solely by the grammatical structure of an utterance but also by the speaker's ability to use language appropriately according to the context. This aspect is studied in pragmatics, which examines how meaning is interpreted through the relationship between language, speakers, hearers, and the situational context. Through pragmatics, speakers are able to convey their intentions effectively while maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships.

One important aspect of pragmatic study is politeness. Politeness refers to the strategies speakers employ to maintain social harmony and show consideration for others during communication. Polite language is particularly important when speakers produce directive utterances because these utterances attempt to influence the hearer's behavior. Requests, advice, suggestions, reminders, instructions, and encouragement may impose on the hearer if they are delivered without appropriate politeness strategies. Consequently, speakers often adjust the way they express directive utterances to minimize imposition and preserve interpersonal relationships.

Leech (2014) proposes the General Strategy of Politeness, which explains how speakers maintain politeness through ten interpersonal maxims, including the Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Agreement Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim. These strategies allow speakers to achieve their communicative goals while balancing their own interests with those of the hearer. Rather than focusing solely on linguistic forms, Leech emphasizes how politeness is realized through the speaker's communicative intentions and the social relationship between the participants. Therefore, this theory is appropriate for analyzing how politeness is employed in directive utterances.

Directive utterances constitute one of Searle's (1979) categories of illocutionary acts. Their primary function is to encourage the hearer to perform a particular action. Directive utterances may be realized in various forms, such as requests, advice, suggestions, reminders, instructions, encouragement, and requests for agreement. Because these utterances inherently direct or influence the hearer's actions, they frequently require politeness strategies to reduce imposition and maintain effective communication. Consequently, analyzing directive utterances through Leech's General Strategy of Politeness provides a deeper understanding of how speakers balance communicative goals with interpersonal considerations.

Several previous studies have examined politeness strategies in movie dialogues. Chaerdiani and Ekawati (2024) investigated politeness strategies employed by the characters in *Fast and Furious* using Brown and Levinson's theory. Hakim and Novitasari (2022) analyzed directive speech acts in movie dialogues, while Isabella et al. (2022) explored directive utterances from a pragmatic perspective. These studies demonstrate that directive utterances frequently employ politeness strategies to maintain interpersonal relationships. However, previous studies have generally focused on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory or on directive illocutionary acts separately. Limited attention has been given to Leech's General Strategy of Politeness as applied specifically to directive utterances in contemporary movies.

How to Train Your Dragon (2025) was selected as the data source because it presents numerous interactions involving family relationships, mentorship, friendship, and leadership. These interactions contain various directive utterances expressed by the main characters, particularly Hiccup, Stoick, and Gobber. The diversity of communicative situations provides valuable data for examining how General Strategies of Politeness are

realized in directive utterances according to different interpersonal relationships and communicative purposes.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the General Strategies of Politeness employed in the directive utterances of the main characters in *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025). By applying Leech's (2014) theory together with Searle's (1979) classification of directive illocutionary acts, this study is expected to contribute to pragmatic studies by providing a better understanding of how politeness strategies are realized in directive communication within movie dialogues.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the General Strategies of Politeness employed in the directive utterances of the main characters in *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025). A qualitative approach was selected because the study focuses on interpreting utterances based on their communicative context and interpersonal relationships.

The data source of this study was the movie *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025). The data consisted of 10 representative directive utterances produced by the three main characters, namely Hiccup, Stoick, and Gobber. These utterances were selected because they represent different directive types and General Strategies of Politeness analyzed in this study.

The data were collected using the observation and note-taking methods. The researcher watched the movie several times while referring to the English subtitles to identify directive utterances. After collecting the data, each utterance was transcribed and classified according to Searle's (1979) categories of directive illocutionary acts. The utterances were then analyzed using Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014) to identify the politeness orientation and the maxim realized in each directive utterance.

The data were analyzed descriptively by examining the relationship between the communicative context, the directive type, and the General Strategy of Politeness employed in each utterance. The findings are presented in tables and followed by detailed discussions to explain how each politeness strategy functions in the interactions between the speaker and the hearer.

3. Result

This section presents the findings of the General Strategies of Politeness employed in the directive utterances of the main characters in *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025). The analysis is based on Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014). A total of ten directive utterances were identified and analyzed based on their communicative context and the interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the hearer. The analysis shows that the ten directive utterances realize different politeness strategies according to the communicative context and the relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

Table 1. Distribution of General Strategies of Politeness

Orientation	General Strategy of Politeness	Frequency	Percentage
Pos-Politeness	M1 – Generosity Maxim	2	20%
	M3 – Approbation Maxim	1	10%

Orientation	General Strategy of Politeness	Frequency	Percentage
Pos-Politeness	M7 – Agreement Maxim	1	10%
	M9 – Sympathy Maxim	1	10%
	Subtotal	5	50%
	M2 – Tact Maxim	5	50%
	Subtotal	5	50%
Neg-Politeness			
Total		10	100%

Table 1 presents the distribution of General Strategies of Politeness identified in the directive utterances. The findings show that the representative data are equally distributed between Pos-Politeness and Neg-Politeness, with five occurrences (50%) each. Within Pos-Politeness, four different maxims are identified. M1 (Generosity Maxim) appears twice (20%), while M3 (Approbation Maxim), M7 (Agreement Maxim), and M9 (Sympathy Maxim) each occur once (10%). Meanwhile, Neg-Politeness is represented solely by M2 (Tact Maxim), which appears five times (50%). These findings indicate that the speakers tend to balance supportive interpersonal relationships with respect for the hearers' autonomy when expressing directive utterances.

Table 2. Distribution of General Strategies of Politeness

No.	Time	Speaker	Directive Illocutionary Act	Orientation	Politeness Strategy	Utterance
1	4:11	Gobber	Request	Neg-Politeness	M2 (Tact Maxim)	"Shouldn't you be in bed?"
2	5:00	Gobber	Advice	Neg-Politeness	M2 (Tact Maxim)	"Stop being all of you."
3	22:38	Stoick	Request for Agreement	Pos-Politeness	M7 (Agreement Maxim)	"Deal?"
4	14:57	Stoick	Suggestion	Pos-Politeness	M1 (Generosity Maxim)	"Let's go!"
				Politeness	(Generosity Maxim)	
5	16:38	Gobber	Advice	Pos-Politeness	M9 (Sympathy Maxim)	"You can only prepare him."
6	21:23	Stoick	Instruction	Pos-Politeness	M1 (Generosity Maxim)	"You'll need this."
7	12:33	Stoick	Reminder	Neg-Politeness	M2 (Tact Maxim)	"But may I remind you..."

				Politeness	(Generosity Maxim)	
8	1:20:29	Gobber	Encouragement	Pos-Politeness	M3 (Approbation Maxim)	"Show 'em everything I taught you!"
9	4:25	Hiccup	Request	Neg-Politeness	M2 (Tact Maxim)	"Give me two minutes."
10	21:03	Stoick	Advice	Neg-Politeness	M2 (Tact Maxim)	"I think it's time you learn to fight dragons."

Table 2 presents the 10 representative directive utterances selected for detailed analysis. Each datum is classified according to its directive type, politeness orientation, and General Strategy of Politeness proposed by Leech (2014). The findings demonstrate that different directive types, including requests, advice, suggestions, instructions, reminders, encouragement, and requests for agreement, realize different politeness strategies depending on the communicative context. These representative data provide the basis for the detailed discussion presented in the following section.

4. Discussion

This section discusses the representative directive utterances identified in *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025). Each datum is analyzed according to its directive type based on Searle's (1979) theory and its General Strategy of Politeness based on Leech (2014). The analysis explains how the selected politeness strategy is realized through the directive utterance and how it functions within the communicative context between the speaker and the hearer.

Datum 1

Scene (00:04:11–00:04:15)

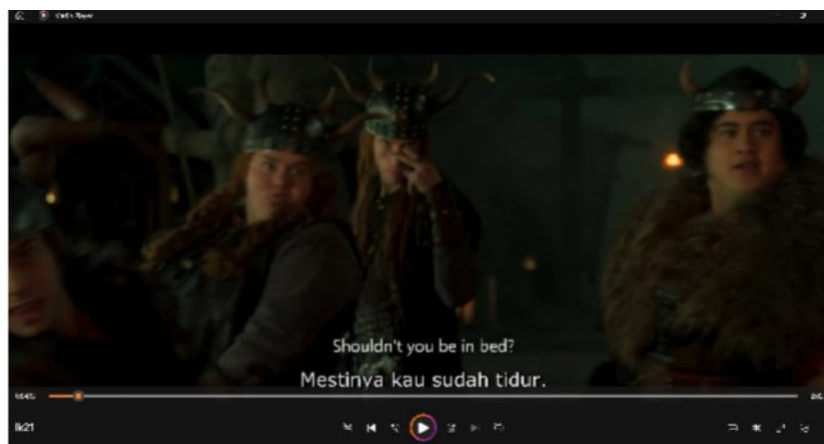


Figure 1. Gobber indirectly asks Hiccup to return home after the dragon attack.

Gobber : "Shouldn't you be in bed?"

Hiccup : "I need to talk to my dad."

Classification

Directive Type : Request

Orientation : Neg-Politeness

Maxim : M2 – Give a Low Value to O's Right to Impose (Tact Maxim)

Analysis

Gobber's utterance, "Shouldn't you be in bed?", is classified as a directive request because he intends to encourage Hiccup to return to bed without expressing the directive in a direct imperative form. Instead of saying "Go to bed," Gobber chooses an interrogative sentence that allows Hiccup to infer the intended action from the context of their conversation. This indirect form softens the force of the request and provides the hearer with greater freedom to decide how to respond, making the utterance more polite than a direct command.

According to Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), this utterance realizes Neg-Politeness, specifically M2 (Give a Low Value to O's Right to Impose / Tact Maxim). By framing the request as a question, Gobber minimizes the degree of imposition placed on Hiccup while still conveying his communicative intention clearly. This strategy demonstrates the speaker's effort to respect the hearer's autonomy and avoid creating unnecessary pressure during the interaction.

This finding is consistent with Chaerdiani and Ekawati (2024) and Hakim and Novitasari (2022), who found that speakers frequently employ indirect requests in movie dialogues to reduce the force of directive utterances and maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships. In this scene, Gobber's indirect request illustrates how a speaker can effectively communicate an intended action while minimizing imposition and preserving politeness.

Datum 2

Scene (00:05:00–00:05:09)

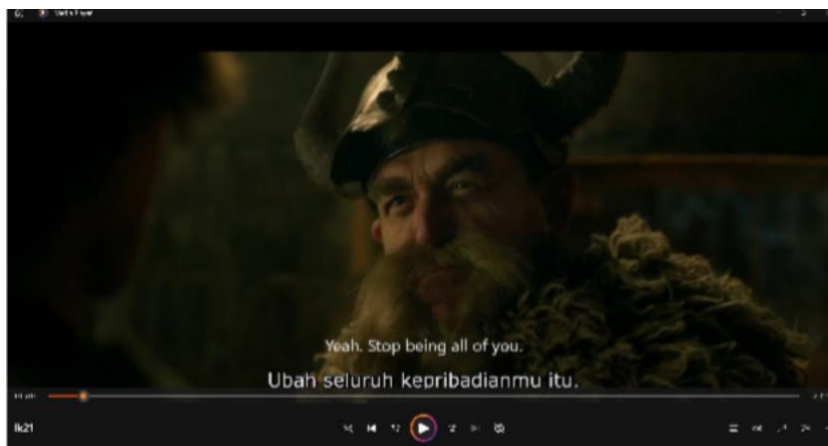


Figure 2. Gobber advises Hiccup to change his behavior in order to become a better Viking.

Gobber : "Yeah. Stop being all of you."

Hiccup : "oh..., You, sir, are playing a dangerous game."

Classification

Directive Type : Directive Advice

Orientation : Neg-Politeness

Maxim : M2 – Give a Low Value to O's Right to Impose (Tact Maxim)

Analysis

As Hiccup becomes frustrated after failing to meet the expectations of dragon training, Gobber responds by saying, "Stop being all of you." Although the utterance is expressed in an imperative form, it is classified as directive advice because Gobber intends to encourage Hiccup to change his attitude rather than to exercise authority over him. The utterance functions as guidance that encourages Hiccup to improve himself instead of imposing an

obligation. Therefore, its primary purpose is to advise the hearer for his own benefit rather than to force immediate compliance.

According to Leech's (2014) General Strategy of Politeness, this utterance realizes Neg-Politeness, particularly M2 (Give a Low Value to O's Right to Impose / Tact Maxim). Although Gobber uses an imperative form, the advice is delivered within a close mentor-student relationship and is intended to help Hiccup become a better Viking. Rather than emphasizing authority or demanding obedience, Gobber minimizes the interpersonal imposition by offering guidance that respects Hiccup's opportunity to reflect on his own behaviour. As a result, the directive functions as advice rather than a coercive command.

This finding is consistent with Aspitasari et al. (2022), who explain that directive advice is commonly used to guide hearers toward beneficial actions while maintaining interpersonal harmony. Likewise, Abdul Aziz and Hashim (2025) argue that speakers frequently express advice in ways that reduce imposition so that the intended message is more acceptable to the hearer. Therefore, this datum demonstrates that directive advice can realize the Tact Maxim by minimizing imposition while encouraging the hearer to improve his behaviour.

Datum 3

Scene (00:22:38–00:22:41)

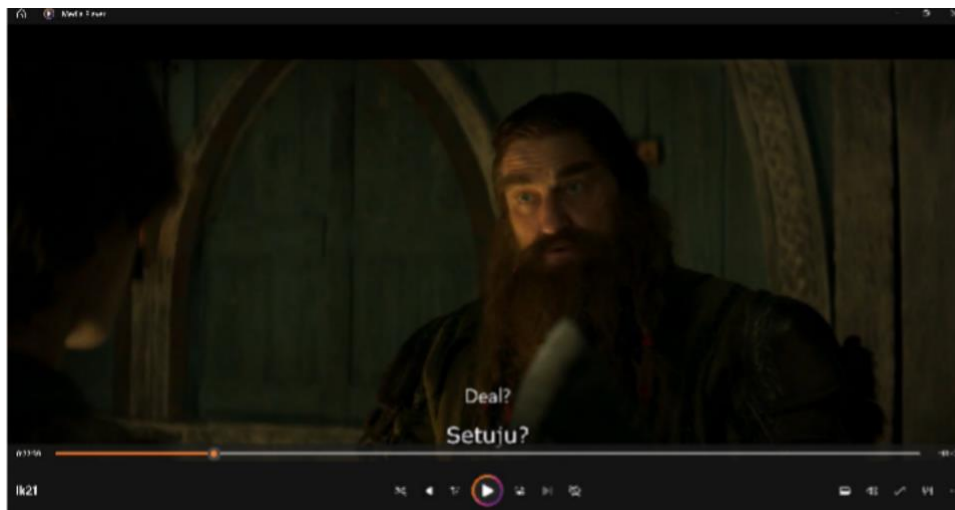


Figure 3. Stoick seeks Hiccup's agreement before leaving for the dragon expedition.

Stoick : "No more of... this. Deal?"

Hiccup : "Deal."

Classification

Directive Type : Request for Agreement

Orientation : Pos-Politeness

Maxim : M7 – Agreement Maxim

Analysis

Rather than ending the conversation with a direct decision, Stoick invites Hiccup to confirm their mutual understanding by asking, "Deal?". The utterance is classified as a request for agreement because its primary purpose is to obtain Hiccup's voluntary acceptance of the proposed agreement instead of demanding immediate compliance. By expressing the directive in the form of a brief question, Stoick provides Hiccup with the opportunity to respond willingly, creating a more cooperative interaction between the speaker and the hearer.

From the perspective of Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), this utterance realizes Pos-Politeness, particularly M7 (Agreement Maxim). Instead of imposing his decision unilaterally, Stoick seeks common ground by encouraging Hiccup to reach a shared agreement. This strategy reflects the speaker's intention to maintain mutual understanding and strengthen interpersonal cooperation, allowing both participants to become involved in the decision-making process.

A similar pattern was identified by Isabella et al. (2022), who reported that directive utterances in movie dialogues are often employed to encourage cooperation rather than simply demanding obedience through authority. Likewise, Imama and Shofiyuddin (2024) explain that speakers frequently invite the hearer's agreement as a politeness strategy to preserve harmonious interpersonal relationships. Taken together, this datum demonstrates that a request for agreement can function as a polite directive by promoting cooperation and mutual consent while still enabling the speaker to achieve the intended communicative goal.

Datum 4

Scene (00:14:57–00:15:00)



Figure 4. Stoick invites Hiccup to leave together before departing for the dragon expedition.

Stoick : "Let's go!"
The Vikings : (The villagers immediately prepare themselves and depart together in response to Stoick's invitation.)

Classification

Directive Type : Directive Suggestion

Orientation : Pos-Politeness

Maxim : M1 – Generosity Maxim

Analysis

After announcing the expedition, Stoick concludes his speech with the expression, "Let's go!". This utterance is classified as a directive suggestion because it invites the hearers to participate in a shared action rather than instructing them to act individually. The use of the inclusive expression "let's" indicates that Stoick also takes part in the proposed activity, creating a sense of cooperation instead of emphasizing his authority. As a result, the directive encourages collective participation and reduces the social distance between the speaker and the hearers.

Viewed through Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), this utterance realizes Pos-Politeness, particularly M1 (Generosity Maxim). By including himself in the suggested action, Stoick demonstrates his willingness to share the responsibility with the hearers

instead of placing the entire burden on them. This strategy promotes solidarity and reinforces the idea that both the speaker and the hearers work toward the same objective.

These findings correspond with Aspitasari et al. (2022), who explain that inclusive directive expressions are commonly used to strengthen cooperation and maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships. Likewise, Tumbol and Satwika (2025) argue that inclusive expressions encourage hearers to participate voluntarily without creating the impression of coercion. Overall, this datum shows that directive suggestions expressed through inclusive language can effectively strengthen group solidarity while motivating hearers to engage willingly in a shared activity.

Datum 5

Scene (00:16:38–00:16:42)

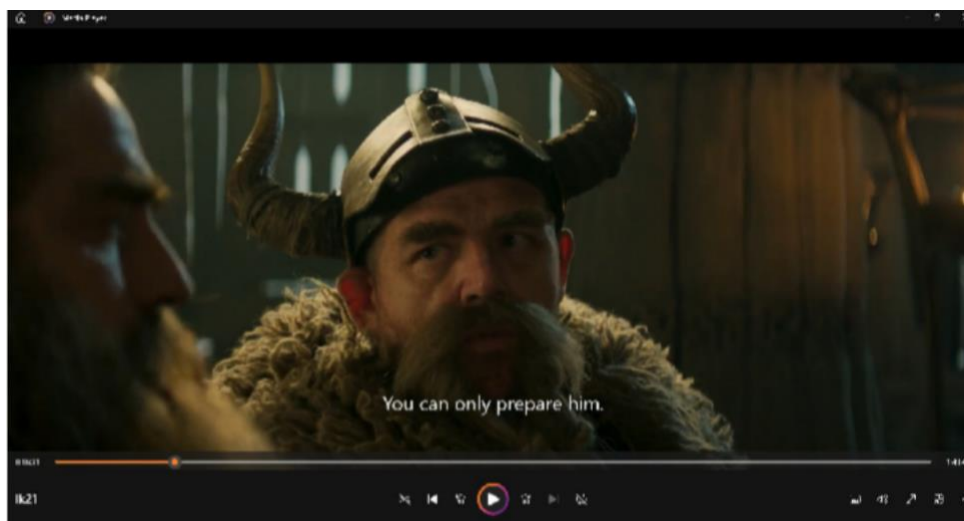


Figure 5. Gobber reassures Stoick by advising him that they can only prepare Hiccup for the future.

Gobber : "You can't stop him, Stoick."

Gobber : "You can only prepare him."

Stoick : (Stoick remains silent, reflecting on Gobber's advice.)

Classification

Directive Type : Directive Advice

Orientation : Pos-Politeness

Maxim : M9 – Sympathy Maxim

Analysis

As Stoick worries about Hiccup's readiness to face dragons, Gobber responds by offering a different perspective instead of telling him what to do. Through the utterance, "You can only prepare him," Gobber advises Stoick to accept that their responsibility is limited to preparing Hiccup, while the final outcome depends on Hiccup's own choices and abilities. Rather than exercising authority, the advice is intended to ease Stoick's concerns and help him approach the situation more calmly.

In terms of Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), this utterance reflects Pos-Politeness, particularly M9 (Sympathy Maxim). Gobber acknowledges Stoick's anxiety as a father and expresses his advice with understanding and emotional support instead of criticism or blame. By recognizing the hearer's feelings before offering guidance, the speaker demonstrates sympathy and strengthens their interpersonal relationship during a difficult moment.

This result supports the findings of Isabella et al. (2022), who explain that directive advice in movie dialogues is often used not only to provide guidance but also to maintain positive interpersonal relationships through emotional support. Likewise, Mudzayyanah (2025) argues that advice delivered with sympathy can reduce emotional tension and encourage the hearer to respond more positively. Therefore, this datum illustrates that directive advice may function as both practical guidance and an expression of empathy, allowing the speaker to support the hearer while preserving a close interpersonal relationship.

Datum 6

Scene (00:21:23–00:21:27)

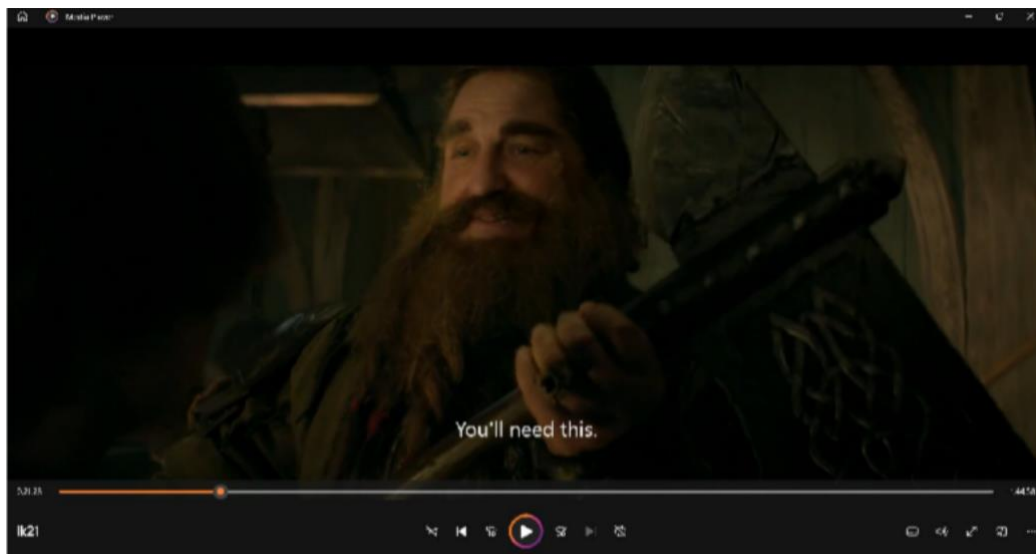


Figure 6. Stoick hands Hiccup a helmet before beginning his dragon training.

Stoick : "You'll need this."

Hiccup : "Dad... I don't want to fight dragons."

Classification

Directive Type : Instruction

Orientation : Pos-Politeness

Maxim : M1 – Generosity Maxim

Analysis

Instead of instructing Hiccup through a direct imperative, Stoick hands him a helmet while saying, "You'll need this." Although the utterance is expressed in a declarative form, it functions as a directive instruction because Stoick implicitly directs Hiccup to wear the helmet before participating in dragon training. The intended directive is understood from the accompanying action of giving the protective equipment, allowing Hiccup to recognize what he is expected to do. Therefore, the utterance is classified as directive instruction, since its primary purpose is to guide the hearer in preparing for the upcoming activity rather than merely providing information.

According to Leech's (2014) General Strategy of Politeness, this utterance realizes Pos-Politeness, particularly M1 (Generosity Maxim). Stoick prioritizes Hiccup's benefit by providing protective equipment before the training begins. Rather than emphasizing his own interests, he performs an action that directly supports Hiccup's safety and wellbeing.

This generosity reduces the potential burden on the hearer while demonstrating the speaker's concern.

This finding supports Isabella et al. (2022), who explain that directive instruction may also be realized through supportive actions that facilitate the hearer's task. Likewise, Mudzayyannah (2025) argues that generosity in interaction is reflected when speakers provide benefits or assistance while directing others to perform an action. Therefore, this datum illustrates that directive instruction can realize the Generosity Maxim by placing the hearer's welfare at the center of the interaction.

Datum 7

Scene (00:12:33–00:12:37)

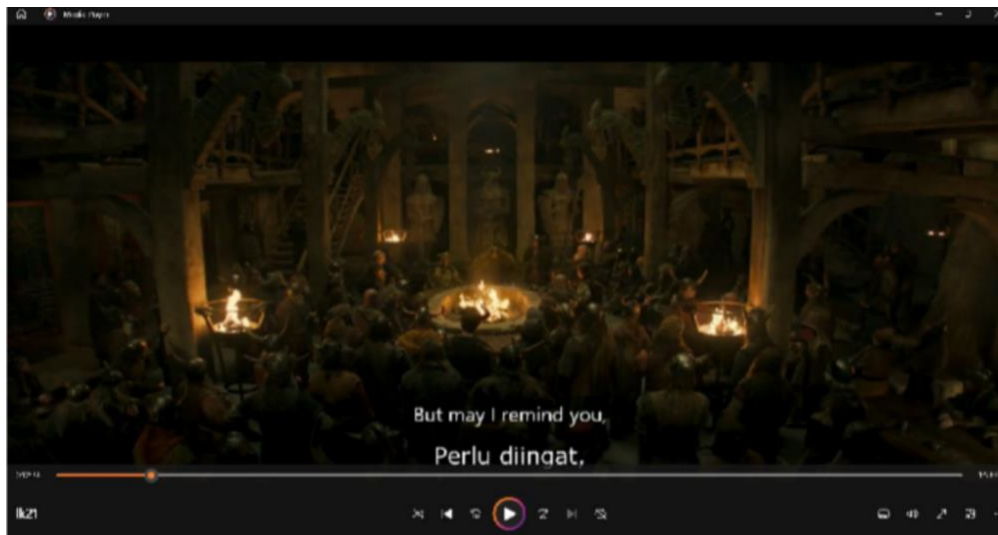


Figure 7. Stoick reminds the villagers of their shared responsibility before continuing his statement.

Stoick : "But may I remind you..."

The Villagers : (The villagers remain silent and listen attentively as Stoick continues his speech.)

Classification

Directive Type : Directive Reminder

Orientation : Neg-Politeness

Maxim : M2 – Give a Low Value to O's Right to Impose (Tact Maxim)

Analysis

Before reinforcing his argument, Stoick introduces his reminder with the expression, "But may I remind you...". The utterance is categorized as a directive reminder because its purpose is to draw the hearers' attention to information they already know before presenting his main point. Instead of expressing the reminder directly, Stoick chooses the phrase "may I", which softens the directive and allows the hearers to reconsider the shared knowledge without feeling pressured. This indirect approach makes the reminder sound more respectful while maintaining the speaker's persuasive intention.

According to Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), the utterance realizes Neg-Politeness, specifically M2 (Give a Low Value to O's Right to Impose / Tact Maxim). The phrase "may I" minimizes the degree of imposition before the reminder is delivered, demonstrating the speaker's respect for the hearers' autonomy. Rather than forcing them to accept his viewpoint, Stoick politely invites them to recall a common understanding, enabling him to guide their attention while preserving mutual respect during the interaction.

This interpretation is supported by Abdul Aziz and Hashim (2025), who explain that speakers frequently employ indirect directive forms to maintain politeness and reduce the coercive force of their utterances in interpersonal communication. Similarly, Basyar (2022) argues that directive reminders delivered politely encourage hearers to reflect on familiar information without creating the impression of obligation. Therefore, this datum illustrates that a reminder introduced through the expression "may I" effectively realizes the Tact Maxim by reducing imposition while maintaining respectful communication.

Datum 8

Scene (01:20:29–01:20:33)

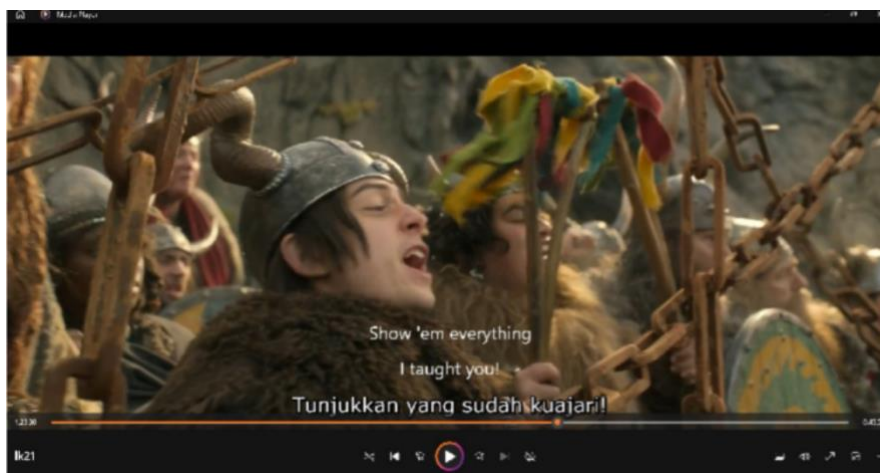


Figure 8. Gobber encourages Hiccup to demonstrate the skills he has learned during the dragon training.

Villahers : "Go, Hiccup!"

Gobber : "Show 'em everything I taught you!"

Classification

Directive Type : Directive Encouragement

Orientation : Pos-Politeness

Maxim : M3 - Approbation Maxim

Analysis

As Hiccup prepares to enter the dragon arena, Gobber encourages him to demonstrate the skills he has developed throughout his training. Rather than simply ordering Hiccup to act, the utterance "Show 'em everything I taught you!" is intended to strengthen his confidence before facing a difficult challenge. Gobber expresses his belief that Hiccup has acquired the necessary abilities and motivates him to perform at his best in front of the villagers.

In terms of Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), this utterance reflects Pos-Politeness, particularly M3 (Approbation Maxim). Gobber places a high value on Hiccup's abilities by emphasizing the knowledge and skills that he has taught him. Instead of focusing on Hiccup's weaknesses, Gobber highlights his strengths and potential. Through this positive evaluation, the speaker shows admiration for the hearer's qualities while encouraging him to act with greater confidence.

This finding supports the study of Chaerdiani and Ekawati (2024), who argue that directive encouragement in movie dialogues is commonly used to motivate hearers by emphasizing their strengths rather than imposing obligations. Similarly, Fitri (2022)

explains that encouragement often functions as both a directive and a form of positive evaluation, allowing speakers to inspire confidence while maintaining harmonious

interpersonal relationships. Therefore, this datum demonstrates that directive encouragement can realize the Approbation Maxim by recognizing the hearer's abilities and motivating them to perform confidently.

Datum 9

Scene (00:04:25–00:04:29)

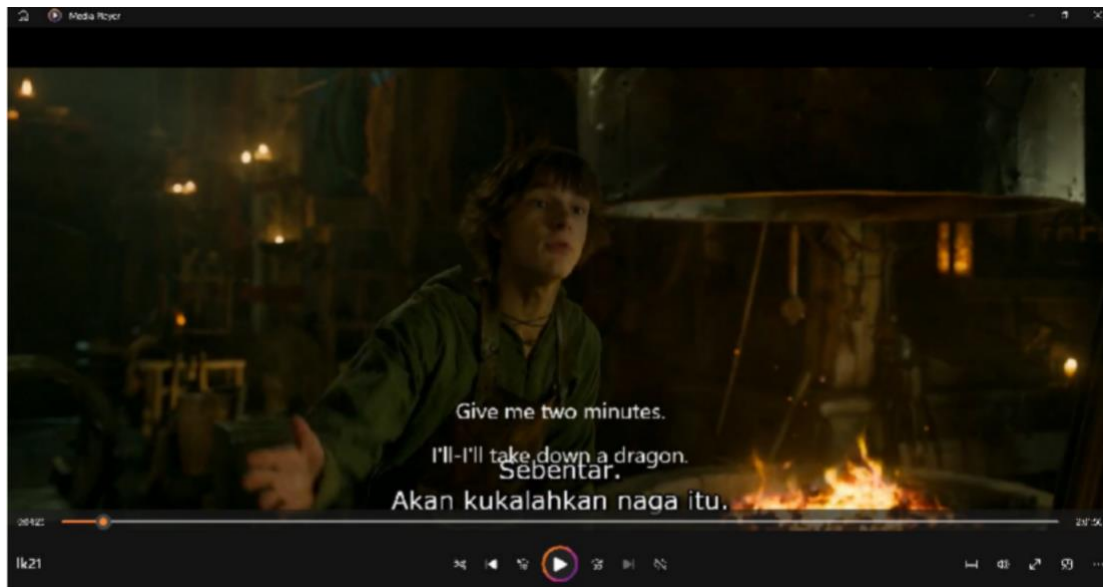


Figure 9. Hiccup requests additional time to explain himself before his father responds.

Gobber : "You've made plenty of marks, all in the wrong places."

Hiccup : "Give me two minutes."

Hiccup : "I'll-I'll take down a dragon."

Classification

Directive Type: Directive Request

Orientation: Neg-Politeness

Maxim: M2 - Tact Maxim

Analysis

As Gobber criticizes Hiccup's performance, Hiccup responds by saying, "Give me two minutes." This utterance is classified as a directive request because Hiccup asks Gobber for a brief opportunity to explain himself before attempting to prove his ability. Although the utterance is expressed in an imperative form, its primary function is not to command the hearer but to request a short amount of time to continue the conversation. By limiting his request to only two minutes, Hiccup presents it as reasonable and minimizes the burden placed on the hearer.

In terms of Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), this utterance reflects Neg-Politeness, particularly M2 (Tact Maxim). Hiccup minimizes the imposition on Gobber by restricting the scope of his request to a very short period of time. This limitation acknowledges the hearer's right not to be inconvenienced while increasing the likelihood that the request will be accepted. Rather than demanding attention, Hiccup carefully frames his request in a way that respects the hearer's freedom to respond.

This finding supports the study of Hakim and Novitasari (2022), who explain that directive requests in movie dialogues are commonly employed to obtain cooperation while

maintaining politeness. Likewise, Isabella et al. (2022) argue that requests become more polite when speakers reduce the degree of imposition placed on the hearer. Therefore, this datum demonstrates that the speaker realizes the Tact Maxim by limiting the scope of the request, thereby respecting the hearer's autonomy while seeking cooperation.

Datum 10

Scene (00:21:03–00:21:08)

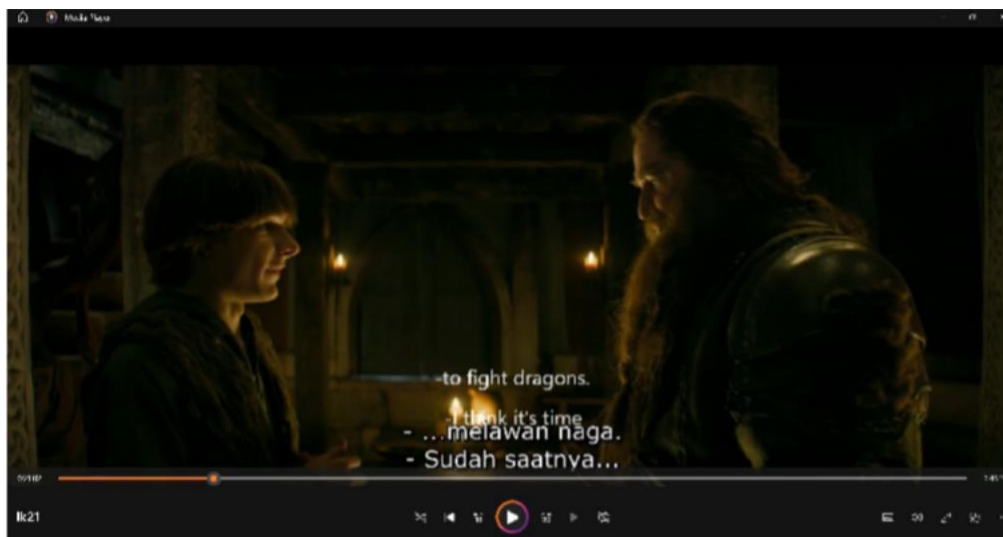


Figure 10. Stoick advises Hiccup to prepare himself by learning how to fight dragons.

Hiccup : "I've decided I don't want to fight dragons."

Stoick. : "I think it's time you learn to fight dragons."

Classification

Directive Type : Directive Advice

Orientation : Neg-Politeness

Maxim : M2 - Tact Maxim

Analysis

As Hiccup tells Stoick that he no longer wants to fight dragons, Stoick responds by saying, "I think it's time you learn to fight dragons." This utterance is classified as directive advice because Stoick encourages Hiccup to begin preparing himself for the responsibilities expected of him. Rather than issuing a direct command, Stoick frames his advice with the expression "I think," presenting his statement as a personal judgment instead of an absolute order. This mitigated form allows him to guide Hiccup while reducing the force of the directive.

According to Leech's General Strategy of Politeness (2014), this utterance realizes Neg-Politeness, particularly M2 (Tact Maxim). The hedge "I think" minimizes the imposition placed on the hearer by softening the advice and acknowledging Hiccup's freedom to respond. Instead of explicitly ordering Hiccup to learn how to fight dragons, Stoick chooses a less imposing expression that makes the advice sound more considerate and respectful of the hearer's autonomy.

This finding is consistent with Aspitasari et al. (2022), who argue that directive advice in movie dialogues is frequently employed to guide the hearer toward constructive actions while maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships. Likewise, Abdul Aziz and Hashim (2025) explain that speakers often deliver advice in a supportive rather than authoritative manner to increase its acceptability. Therefore, this datum demonstrates that directive advice can realize the Tact Maxim by reducing the level of imposition through mitigated expressions, allowing the advice to be perceived as polite rather than coercive.

5. Conclusion

This study analyzed the General Strategies of Politeness employed in the directive utterances of the main characters in *How to Train Your Dragon* (2025). By applying Searle's (1979) classification of directive illocutionary acts and Leech's (2014) General Strategy of Politeness, the study demonstrates how politeness is realized through various directive utterances in different communicative contexts.

The findings reveal that five General Strategies of Politeness are employed in the representative data, namely M1 (Generosity Maxim), M2 (Tact Maxim), M3 (Approbation Maxim), M7 (Agreement Maxim), and M9 (Sympathy Maxim). Among these strategies, M2 (Tact Maxim) is the most frequently employed, indicating that the main characters often minimize imposition when expressing directive utterances. This finding suggests that the speakers tend to respect the hearers' autonomy while still achieving their communicative purposes. Meanwhile, M1 (Generosity Maxim), M3 (Approbation Maxim), M7 (Agreement Maxim), and M9 (Sympathy Maxim) are employed in specific situations to express cooperation, appreciation, agreement, and sympathy according to the communicative context.

Furthermore, the representative data demonstrate that directive utterances are not always expressed through direct commands. Instead, they are frequently realized through advice, requests, suggestions, reminders, instructions, encouragement, and requests for agreement, depending on the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. These findings indicate that the realization of politeness strategies is closely influenced by communicative goals and interpersonal relationships.

It is expected that this study contributes to the development of pragmatic studies, particularly those concerning General Strategies of Politeness in directive utterances. Future researchers are encouraged to investigate different genres, media, or pragmatic theories to provide broader insights into the realization of politeness in various communicative contexts.

6. References

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