



## Positive Politeness Strategies in “All the Bright Places” Movie

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**Abstract.** *This research explores positive politeness strategies in the 2020 film All the Bright Places by analyzing the characters' dialogue. It is based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of positive politeness, supported by Halliday and Hasan's (1989) context of situation framework. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the study analyzes the film script. Data is collected through documentation, including note-taking and recording techniques, to identify relevant utterances. The findings show that fourteen out of fifteen positive politeness strategies from Brown and Levinson's theory appear in the film. Strategy 4, which uses in-group identity markers, is the most common. The characters often try to build solidarity and emotional connection. Other frequently used strategies include noticing the listener, offering or promising, and seeking agreement. These strategies reflect the characters' efforts to build and maintain relationships, show empathy, and manage social interactions. The study concludes that positive politeness strategies are essential in shaping the film's interpersonal relationships and emotional development. Overall, the research highlights how language use in film reflects psychological and social aspects of communication, offering insights into the role of pragmatics in fictional narratives.*

**Keywords:** *Pragmatics, Politeness, Positive Politeness Strategies, Movie Script, All The Bright Places*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Humans and language are inseparable, as language is essential for communication. People use it to socialize, share ideas, and convey messages. To communicate effectively, understanding politeness is crucial to avoid misunderstandings. Yule (1998, p.60) defines politeness as "polite social behavior, or etiquette, within a culture," which involves respecting others' feelings and saving their face during communication. However, Watts (2003, p.2) notes politeness can be misunderstood as being distant, dishonest, or unfeeling between the speaker and the hearer. A "face-threatening act" (FTA) occurs when an action risks harming someone's self-image, though politeness strategies often reduce this risk.

Speech acts include expressing regret and dissatisfaction, offering praise, or making a request with the expectation that the listener would comprehend the speaker's objective. Context or speech events—the situation and related utterances—guide this process (Yule, 1996, p.47). Politeness theory, according to Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 66), emphasizes "face," a person's social self-image, and how politeness tactics preserve it, especially in face-threatening acts (FTAs). To promote intimacy and lower FTAs, Brown and Levinson (1987) list fifteen positive politeness techniques, including seeing and attending to the hearer, employing in-group indicators, seeking agreement, joking, gift-giving, and others.

Based on Brown & Levinson's (1987) approach, this study investigates the positive politeness techniques applied by the movie All the Bright Places' characters. These techniques respect the listener's self-image, guard their face, lower FTAs, and foster cordial contacts.

Researching this topic is crucial to show how real-life communication could be modelled by movie-like behaviour. It emphasizes techniques promoting empathy and respect since they help to enhance contacts and avoid misinterpretation. Knowing these techniques allows one to connect practical communication with cinematic storytelling, thus rendering this study relevant and vital.

As a result, This study aims to investigate the most effective positive politeness techniques used by the movie *All the Bright's* characters. This subject is interesting since it offers insightful analysis of daily contacts and offers wise communication advice. There is still a void in researching positive politeness strategies in movies; this area has been studied before, including in Arum Nurrosida's 2024 undergraduate thesis, *Positive Politeness Strategies in Different Gender on Main Characters of "Not Cinderella's Type,"* which concentrated on gender differences, and Fauziyah Putri Irfani's 2023 undergraduate thesis, *Positive Politeness Strategies in Directive Speech Act Used by the Characters in Turning Red Movie,* which examined directive speech acts. Applying Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory of positive politeness and supported by the theory of context of the situations created by Halliday & Hasan (1989) to this movie would bring new insights on how these methods are portrayed in films and how they relate to real-life social interactions.

## **2. THEORY**

Positive politeness strategies aim to reduce social distance between speaker and listener, promoting social harmony. They foster feelings of belonging, respect, and appreciation. By acknowledging the listener's positive face, speakers strengthen connections and minimize face-threatening acts (FTAs). In addition, characterized as "the need for respect and acceptance in any kind of social interaction for an individual." Brown and Levinson, in Cutting (2002, p. 48), "The positive politeness strategy aims to save the listener's positive face by expressing intimacy, engaging in friendship, making the listener feel good and showing that the speakers have a common purpose with the listener." Brown and Levinson identify fifteen positive politeness techniques, each with an example.

### **Strategy 1: notice, attend to H (her/his interests, wants, needs, goods)**

According to the positive politeness strategy, the speaker should focus more on the hearer, considering their needs, wants, and other aspects. Using praises is one way to put this tactic into practice, as it can create a favourable and friendly impression. An example of this tactic is the following:

What a beautiful vase this is! Where did it come from? (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 103)

**Strategy 2: exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)**

An exaggerated expression is used to accomplish this tactic, which is intended to preserve the hearer's favourable perception. It makes things like curiosity, desire, and the need for approval appear much more significant than they actually are by using exaggerated language. An example of this tactic is the following:

What a fantastic garden you have! (Brown, P., & Levinson, 1987, p. 104)

**Strategy 3: intensify interest to the hearer in the speaker's contribution**

Showing that the hearer and the speaker share similar objectives is another technique to engage the listener and maintain their attention in the speaker's contribution. This can be accomplished by using a suitable story that engages the listener in the discussion. An example of this tactic is the following:

Black I like. I used to wear it more than I do now, I very rarely wear it now. I wore a black jumper, and when I wear it my Mum says 'Ah', she said. But Len likes it, he thinks it looks ever so nice and quite a few people do. But when my Mum sees it she said, 'Oh it's not your colour, you're more for pinks and blues.' (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 106)

**Strategy 4: use in-group identity markers in speech**

In a conversation, use indicators of in-group identity to demonstrate intimacy or unity with the hearer, such as use a nickname or well-known name that a speaker uses with an audience. An example of this tactic is the following:

Here mate, I was keeping that seat for a friend of mine ... (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 108)

**Strategy 5: seek agreement in safe topics**

Finding common ground with the hearer on safe subjects is made possible by this tactic. An example of this tactic is the following:

A: John went to London this weekend! B: to London! (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 113)

**Strategy 6: avoid disagreement**

By using a white lie, the speaker, using this tactic, could try to conceal their disagreement. As Cutting (2002, p.40) states, "A white lie is a lie with good intentions." Additionally, by using hedges to appear as though they agree, the speaker can conceal their disagreement. Cutting (2002, p. 42) gives hedge examples. For instance, "I wonder," "if possible," "sort of," and "in a way." An example of this tactic is the following:

You really should sort of try harder. (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 117)

**Strategy 7: presuppose, raise, assert common ground**

With this approach, the speaker will actively include the audience in the discussion. The speaker will also include the hearer in the conversation using the pronoun "we." An

example of this tactic is the following:

Oh dear, we've lost our little ball, haven't we, Johnny?

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 119)

### **Strategy 8: joke to put the hearer at ease**

Making lighthearted jokes that the listener can easily relate to is a great way to implement this strategy. The intimacy and solidarity of the speakers and listeners are shown through it. The following is an illustration of this strategy in action:

How about lending me this old heap of junk? (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 124)

### **Strategy 9: assert or presuppose knowledge of and concerning for hearer's wants**

One way to show unity is to bring attention to the speaker's understanding of particular information about the listener. When a speaker is aware of this, they can better fulfill their listeners' needs by asking for help or making requests. The following is an illustration of this strategy in action:

Know you can't bear parties, but this one will really be good — do come! (request/offer)

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 125)

### **Strategy 10: offer and promise**

Offering or promising the audience something is one way to use this tactic. This tactic shows that the speaker genuinely wants to fulfil the listener's desires. Below is an example that serves as an example:

I'll drop by sometime next week. (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 125)

### **Strategy 11: be optimistic that the hearer wants what the speaker wants**

The speaker may also take an optimistic approach when expressing positive politeness, presuming that the hearer shares the speaker's goal. Hearer is willing to act in a manner consistent with the speaker's aims, this strategy maintains the hearer's favourable reputation. Below is an example that serves as an illustration:

I just dropped by for a minute to invite you all for tea tomorrow — you will come, won't you?

(Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 127)

### **Strategy 12: include both S and H in the activity**

Instead of "you" and "I," one of the speakers might choose to say "we," bringing the listener into the same action. As a connection builder, this strategy exemplifies the speaker's cooperative approach. Here is an example that illustrates the point:

Let's just go into the back room and see if we have any. (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 128)

### **Strategy 13: give or ask for reasons**

The speaker demonstrates cooperation with their audience by asking for or giving

reasons. The individual's intent can be more clearly understood in this way. Motives to provide or seek reasons indicate a desire to be of service. The following statement exemplifies this point:

Why don't we go to the seashore! (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 128)

**Strategy 14: assume or assert reciprocity**

A cooperative relationship between a recipient and a speaker may be demonstrated by the assertion of a reciprocal exchange. The following example illustrates the reciprocal transaction, sometimes known as the tit-for-tat method.

I helped you last time, so I'm sure you'll help me with this. (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 129)

**Strategy 15: give gifts to H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)**

Giving a recipient a gift is the last tactic of positive etiquette. In addition to offering tangible gifts, this tactic can also be used to show empathy, understanding, cooperation, and other kinds of constructive behaviour. This tactic is demonstrated in action in the following example:

"You've done such a great job. Here's a little something to show my appreciation." (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 129)

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

Brett Haley's 2020 feature film *All the Bright Places* served as the primary source of this research. The characters' use of constructive tactics for civility was the focus of this script analysis study. The researcher analyzed the film's dialogue, showcasing positive politeness using a qualitative descriptive approach. The researcher used a documentation approach to collect data, which included watching the movie several times and reading the script carefully to pick out key utterances. Brown and Levinson's (1987) theoretical framework of positive politeness techniques provided the basis for selecting these expressions. The focus was analyzing the characters' discussions to find examples of those tactics.

The data was analyzed by considering the scenario theory put out by Brown and Levinson's theory of positive politeness techniques (1987) and the theory of context of the situation by Halliday and Hasan (1989). The results were triple-checked by methodically checking, rechecking, and cross-checking the data, which is known as triangulation. The researcher then used the results to conclude. Using Sudaryanto's (1993) non-formal approach, we presented the data. This methodology aimed to reveal how the characters maintained societal peace and fostered interpersonal relationships using constructive politeness strategies.

#### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Maintaining the hearer's favorable image, strengthening the bond between speaker and listener, reducing conflict, and enhancing the hearer's sense of happiness, respect, appreciation, and well-being are key objectives of employing strategies of positive politeness. Using the film *All the Bright Places* as a case study, this section discusses the politeness approaches outlined in Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework, supported by the situational context theory developed by Halliday and Hasan (1989). Numerous examples are presented throughout to illustrate and clarify the analysis.

##### **Strategy 1: notice, attend to H (her/his interests, wants, needs, goods)**

In *All the Bright Places*, Strategy 1 illustrates a character's concern for another's emotional needs through the acknowledgment of their feelings and a compassionate, supportive response. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

##### **Data 1**

(00:36:46-00:37:01)

Finch : **So, I was thinking we should check out the Shoe Tree or the abandoned drive-in, depending on whatever you're feeling.**

Violet : What is this?

Finch : That's a reminder that sooner or later, you're gonna have to get back into the world all by yourself.

In this scene, the strategy reflects Finch's attentiveness to Violet's needs and his efforts to prioritize her comfort, as described in the politeness model developed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Instead of asserting control, Finch considers Violet's emotional condition by offering her options, which helps ease pressure and build trust. Through the lens of Halliday and Hasan's (1989) context of situation, the field involves a personal exchange centred on emotional recovery. The tenor conveys a warm and supportive dynamic between two close friends, while the mode consists of casual, spoken dialogue that encourages direct interaction. This combination creates a safe and compassionate space, enabling Violet to reengage with life and deepen their emotional connection.

##### **Strategy 2: exaggerate (interest, approval, sympathy with H)**

In *All the Bright Places*, Strategy 2 serves to highlight a character's emotions of interest, approval, or sympathy through the amplification of praise or admiration. Exaggeration serves to foster a sense of encouragement, enhancing the listener's feeling of significance and connection. This excerpt from the movie exemplifies the strategy in question:

## Data 2

(00:19:46-00:19:59)

Finch : Maybe they can mean something to you and me. **Jesus, they call me anti-social.** Two wanders. That's all. We can do more if you end up loving it.

Violet : I won't.

In this scene, the main male character adopts a positive politeness strategy by expressing his feelings through the remark, "Jesus, they call me anti-social." As outlined in the framework proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987), such emotional expression gains empathy and strengthens closeness by revealing personal vulnerability. He intensifies his frustration to receive emotional reassurance from Violet, signalling a desire to be understood. Based on Halliday and Hasan's (1989) situational context, this exchange revolves around a personal discussion on identity and self-worth. The tenor reflects growing emotional closeness between the two characters, as the speaker feels secure enough to disclose his inner thoughts. The mode involves informal spoken language, allowing for open and sincere communication. This honest and direct exchange helps solidify their emotional connection and demonstrates the development of mutual trust in their relationship.

### Strategy 3: intensify interest to the hearer in the speaker's contribution

In *All the Bright Places*, Strategy 3 entails the speaker incorporating additional details or highlighting their words to maintain the listener's interest and demonstrate their investment in the conversation. The speaker enhances the conversation by providing detailed insights into their thoughts or emotions, which fosters a more engaging and personal interaction. This excerpt from the movie illustrates the application of this strategy:

## Data 3

(00:68:20-00:68:25)

Finch : **Please, just don't blame her. Please. I'm sorry.**

Violet : It's not his fault!

Violet's dad : Just get in the house. We'll talk about it later.

In this scene, Finch employs Strategy 3 of positive politeness—intensifying interest in the hearer—in this scene when he says, "Please, just don't blame her," and repeats "Please" while simultaneously stating "I'm sorry." Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that this approach draws the listener's attention and expresses genuine feelings. Finch's despair and remorse are highlighted by the usage of "I'm sorry" and the repetition of "Please," both of which lend emotional weight. This encourages empathy and keeps Violet concentrated on what he is saying. According to Halliday and Hasan's (1989) context of the situation, the field is an

emotional time where Finch defends Violet, the tenor shows a close, protective connection, and the mode is casual spoken language that allows honest emotional expression. Finch increases their emotional connection, gets support, and closes emotional distance using this.

#### **Strategy 4: use in-group identity markers in speech**

In *All the Bright Places*, characters like Finch use expressions that signal shared group identity—such as informal names or affectionate language—to convey a special bond with the listener. These linguistic choices create a more personal, friendly, and relaxed tone in conversation, effectively reducing social distance and promoting a sense of belonging. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

#### **Data 4**

**(00:07:22-00:07:30)**

Kate : Your guidance counsellor called...

Finch : **Embryo?**

Kate : What?

Finch : His name is Embry. I call him Embryo. It's the little things, Kate.

In this scene, Finch refers to the guidance counsellor as "Embryo" in this scenario to foster intimacy and shared awareness with Kate. This is Strategy 4 from Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory—using in-group identity markers—to indicate that he and Kate belong to the same social group. The nickname helps to lower social distance by making the connection more intimate and casual. Finch's remark, "It's the little things, Kate," underlines how tiny events and shared laughs deepen their relationship. Halliday and Hasan's (1989) context of situation define the field as a personal discourse centered on shared experience, the tenor as a friendly and close relationship, and the mode as casual spoken language fostering emotional connection. The in-group language used in this way fosters a pleasant, intimate environment among the people.

#### **Strategy 5: seek agreement in safe topics**

In *All the Bright Places*, Finch and Violet frequently discuss neutral subjects to ensure a peaceful and friendly environment. This approach emphasizes the selection of neutral or straightforward topics that are less prone to inciting disagreement or conflict. By reaching consensus on these clear topics, the characters can preserve a sense of harmony in their interactions, resulting in a conversation that flows more seamlessly and feels more comfortable. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

## Data 5

(00:07:07-00:07:10)

Brenda : Wait, if you don't think you're weird, well...

Finch : Yeah, that's true. Very true.

In this exchange, Finch uses Strategy 5 of positive politeness—seeking agreement—by saying, “Yes, that’s true. Very true,” in response to Brenda’s comment about being “weird.” According to Brown and Levinson (1987), agreeing on a neutral topic helps maintain a friendly and peaceful interaction. Finch’s agreement shows he wants to avoid conflict and build mutual understanding. This keeps the conversation light and cooperative. In terms of Halliday and Hasan’s (1989) context of the situation, the **field** is a casual discussion on a harmless topic, the **tenor** reflects a friendly and easygoing relationship between Finch and Brenda, and the **mode** is the informal spoken language that supports relaxed communication. By showing agreement, Finch helps create a more comfortable and respectful connection.

## Strategy 6: avoid disagreement

In All the Bright Places, Finch and Violet frequently employ Strategy 6 avoiding disagreement to facilitate seamless, amicable dialogues while minimizing potential conflict. Rather than expressing outright disagreement, both characters choose to moderate their responses to prevent any potential conflict. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

## Data 6

(00:04:25-00:04:28)

Mr. Embry : How's everything going?

Finch : **Everything is a really big word.**

In this scene, Finch uses Strategy 6 of positive politeness by humor when he responds to Mr. Embry’s question with, “Everything is a really big word.” According to Brown and Levinson (1987), using humor helps reduce tension and avoid confrontation. Instead of giving a direct answer about how he feels, Finch lightens the moment by joking, which allows him to protect his emotions without rejecting the question. This shows that he’s not entirely comfortable expressing his mental state but still wants to keep the interaction positive. Based on Halliday and Hasan’s (1989) context of the situation, the field is a conversation about emotional well-being, the tenor reflects a somewhat open but cautious relationship between student and counsellor, and the mode is informal spoken language that allows humor to soften the exchange. By joking, Finch keeps the mood light while maintaining personal boundaries and a good relationship with Mr. Embry.

### **Strategy 7: presuppose, raise, or assert common ground**

In *All the Bright Places*, Strategy 7 is employed when the speaker presumes a shared understanding of knowledge, experiences, or opinions between themselves and the listener. This fosters an inviting and reassuring environment, ensuring that the listener feels acknowledged and comprehended. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

#### **Data 7**

(00:06:13-00:06:24)

Charlie : **Yo, do you think it'd be weird if I named my kid after a famous person?**

Like, if I named him Danny DeVito Donahue, do you... do you think he'd be mad about it?

Finch : Is "DeVito" the middle name?

In this scene, Charlie uses Strategy 7 of positive politeness by presupposing common ground when he asks Finch if it would be weird to name a child after someone famous, like "Danny DeVito." As outlined in Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness model, this approach promotes closeness by drawing on assumed mutual knowledge or shared interests. Charlie anticipates Finch will recognise the name and appreciate the humour, fostering a sense of connection and familiarity. It encourages Finch to engage with an amusing topic, further strengthening their relationship. Based on Halliday and Hasan's (1989) context of the situation, the field is a lighthearted discussion about baby names and celebrities, the tenor reflects a friendly and casual relationship, and the mode consists of informal spoken language, as seen in Charlie's relaxed greeting, "Yo." By referencing a shared cultural figure, Charlie keeps the conversation personable, engaging, and easygoing.

### **Strategy 8: joke to put the hearer at ease**

In *All the Bright Places*, Finch employs Strategy 8 to minimize tension and enhance the listener's comfort level. Finch's incorporation of humor into conversations effectively minimizes tension and fosters a more relaxed and easy-going atmosphere. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

#### **Data 8**

(00:06:27-00:06:28)

Charlie : Yeah

Finch : Follow up question, **how high are you right now?**

In this scene, Finch uses Strategy 8 of positive politeness by joking when he asks Charlie, "How high are you right now?" This unexpected and playful question helps ease any tension and makes the conversation feel more relaxed. As Brown and Levinson's (1987)

politeness theory describes, humour reduces interpersonal distance and fosters a friendly atmosphere. Finch's joke shifts the tone to something more lighthearted, allowing both characters to feel at ease. Based on Halliday and Hasan's (1989) context of the situation, the field is a casual exchange between friends, the tenor reflects a close and laid-back friendship, and the mode is informal spoken language, which invites natural humour. Finch's humour strengthens their bond and keeps the interaction fun and carefree.

### **Strategy 10: offer and promise**

In *All the Bright Places*, Finch employs Strategy 10 to extend offers or promises to the listener, showcasing a readiness to take action on their behalf. This technique contributes to the establishment of trust and enhances the overall relationship. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

#### **Data 9**

(00:19:30-00:19:43)

Finch : Because there are places that need to be seen. **Maybe even the smallest of places can mean something. At the very least, maybe they can mean something to us.**

Violet : Not an us.

In this scene, Finch uses Strategy 10 of positive politeness by offering or promising to invite Violet to explore places with him, suggesting that even small or random spots can be meaningful. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), offering something creates a sense of togetherness and care. Finch doesn't make a firm promise but gently suggests they go on this journey together, which shows his desire to build a deeper emotional connection with Violet. Based on Halliday and Hasan's (1989) context of the situation, the field is a discussion about finding meaning in shared experiences. The tenor reflects their growing emotional closeness, and the mode is casual and friendly, making Finch's invitation feel sincere and comforting. His words open up the chance for connection and shared memories, which helps strengthen their relationship.

### **Strategy 11: be optimistic that the hearer wants what the speaker wants**

In *All the Bright Places*, Strategy 11 is employed when the speaker conveys assurance or optimism that the listener will support or possess a similar aspiration. This strategy fosters a supportive and friendly atmosphere by demonstrating the speaker's optimism and promoting a sense of shared objectives. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

#### **Data 10**

(00:05:24-00:05:36)

Mr. Embry : I really wanna help you, but you've gotta take this seriously. I mean, you agreed to these terms, these weekly counseling sessions, maintaining a B-average, extracurricular participation.

Finch : **And I am loving pottery.**

In this scene, Finch uses strategy 11 of positive politeness by expressing optimism when he says, "And I am loving pottery." He shows confidence that Mr. Embry will view his interest in pottery as a sign of progress and dedication to their agreement. As Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory outlines, expressing optimism helps foster connection and conveys hope for shared understanding. Finch's response is upbeat and intended to meet Mr. Embry's expectations, helping to preserve a positive relationship. Drawing on Halliday and Hasan's (1989) theory, the field focuses on Finch's personal growth. The tenor reflects a student-teacher relationship, with Finch aiming to build a supportive rapport, and the mode is informal, allowing him to speak in a relaxed and encouraging tone. His optimistic approach eases tension and promotes cooperation and emotional reassurance.

### **Strategy 12: include both speaker and hearer in the activity**

In *All the Bright Places*, Finch employs Strategy 12 to engage the listener in a shared activity through the use of inclusive language, notably the pronoun "we." This strategy promotes collaboration and intimacy, ensuring that the listener perceives themselves as engaged, appreciated, and emotionally linked to the speaker. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

#### **Data 11**

**(00:18:59-00:19:10)**

Violet : What do you want from me?"

Finch : **I was just thinkin' that we should be partners. For the wandering project.** I think it would be good for you to get out.

In this scene, Finch applies Brown and Levinson's (1987) twelfth politeness strategy, emphasizing shared participation between the speaker and the listener, when he says, "We should be partners." This inclusive statement invites Violet to participate in the "wandering project," narrowing the social gap and fostering collaboration. The use of "we" conveys mutual responsibility and contributes to building a stronger connection. The conversation focuses on initiating a joint activity, the tenor reflects the developing emotional closeness between Finch and Violet, and the informal mode makes the invitation feel genuine and effortless (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). Finch's warm and cooperative tone makes Violet feel included, deepening their bond through shared involvement.

### **Strategy 13: give or ask for reasons**

In *All the Bright Places*, Finch employs Strategy 13 to either justify his actions or to prompt Violet to clarify hers. This approach elucidates the dialogue and fosters an environment conducive to reciprocal comprehension. A cinematic case study exemplifies this approach:

#### **Data 12**

**(00:58:28-00:58:30)**

Finch : **What are you afraid of?**

Violet : It's cold.

In this scene, Finch uses Strategy 13 from Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory—asking for reasons—when he gently asks Violet, “What are you afraid of?” This question reflects his desire to understand her feelings and encourages her to express her fears. Brown and Levinson identify this strategy as showing care and involvement, which helps reduce emotional distance in conversation. The field of the interaction is emotional exploration, the tenor indicates a supportive and deepening relationship between Finch and Violet, and the mode is informal, creating a safe and comforting atmosphere (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). Finch builds trust and empathy through this approach, strengthening their emotional bond through open and honest dialogue.

### **Strategy 14: assume or assert reciprocity**

In *All the Bright Places*, Finch employs this strategy to establish or claim reciprocity, which is essential for nurturing mutual support in relationships. This strategy entails the speaker providing something—whether a favor, a kind gesture, or words of encouragement—while subtly anticipating or prompting the listener to reciprocate the favor.

#### **Data 13**

**(00:20:03-00:20:36)**

Violet : No, I won't.

Finch : Oh, I found another quote for you. "I feel a thousand capacities spring up in me." *The Waves*. It's from *The Waves*. **You've got at least a thousand capacities in you. Even if you don't think so.** You can keep that one.

In this scene, Finch uses strategy 14, assume or assert reciprocity, by telling Violet, “You’ve got at least a thousand capacities in you.” This motivational quote acts as a form of emotional support, showing Finch’s belief in Violet and encouraging her to see her own potential. His supportive words imply a mutual exchange of care, where both give and receive emotional reassurance. According to Halliday and Hasan (1989), the field is personal growth and encouragement; the tenor shows their close and caring relationship, and the mode is casual

and sincere. Through this statement, Finch builds trust and reinforces their emotional connection, reflecting the spirit of reciprocity in their relationship.

**Strategy 15: give gifts to the H (goods, sympathy, understanding, cooperation)**

In *All the Bright Places*, Finch uses reassurance to provide Violet with emotional support, demonstrating his care and appreciation. This strategy entails providing the listener with something—be it sympathy, understanding, or a tangible gift—to enhance their sense of value and support.

**Data 14**

**(00:41:06-00:41:19)**

Violet : No, Finch. I'm not getting in a car!

Finch : **Look, here. I'll take the keys, and... I swear not to drive faster than 30 miles per hour through town or 50 on the interstate.** If at any time you wanna stop, we stop.

In this scene, Finch comforts Violet by saying he'll take the keys, drive carefully, and stop whenever she wants. That is an example of giving a "gift" through understanding and cooperation. Finch's words make Violet feel safe and in control, showing that he respects her feelings. This act builds trust and shows he's willing to work with her to ease her fears. Based on Halliday and Hasan's theory, the **field** is about emotional support and reassurance, the **tenor** reflects their growing bond and Finch's caring attitude, and the **mode** is informal, making the message feel honest and warm. Finch's response strengthens their connection by showing sympathy and shared responsibility.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

In conclusion, this study explores the primary politeness approaches employed by *All the Bright Places* characters. The analysis is grounded in Brown and Levinson's (1987) model of positive politeness, and the contextual understanding is further supported by Halliday and Hasan's (1989) theory of situational context. The findings reveal that the characters frequently apply these communicative strategies to maintain social harmony, foster closeness, and express empathy during interactions. The most commonly used technique is Strategy 4, which involves using in-group identifiers. The film highlights attempt to build rapport and minimise social distance. Tactics such as "notice, attend to the hearer," "seek agreement," and "offer, promise" demonstrate how language conveys emotional depth and contributes to character development. This study illustrates how positive politeness techniques influence character relationships and contribute to the narrative's emotional progression.

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