

POLITENESS IN *FRIENDS* TV SERIES

Does it Represent American Value?

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Abstract— This research intends to analyze utterances of conversation in *Friend's* TV Series Season 1 of 24 episodes to find out whether or not politeness represents American value, especially the value of independence with which American Society is associated with. The method used is content analysis in which eleven speech situations with the theme of 'friendship' and sub themes of 'asking for favor' and 'gift giving' are analyzed. First, utterances are analyzed to see the form and meaning; second, they are identified of their politeness function. Third, they are analyzed to see their relation with the value of independence; fourth or lastly, language feature of each politeness is identified. The result of the research shows that politeness showing agreement is realized in 7 speech situations or 63.64%; politeness showing tact is realized in 4 speech situations or 36.36%; and politeness showing generosity is realized in only one speech situation or 9.09%. The language feature used are the words of support and agreement: *yeah, right, go, okay, sure, you got it, I can't believe.*

Keywords— American value of independence, politeness, representation, speech situation

I. INTRODUCTION

Language and culture are closely related believing that language as an important means of human communication is used to improve human's life quality. Some scholar of language, culture, and social assert the need to use language that reflects culture: "... to achieve the desired communication, culturally appropriate language use appears to be a must" (Peterson and Contrane, 2003 in Yagiz and Izadpanah, 2013).

The words, phrases and sentences which people employ in social discourse reflect their cultural framework; language provides amazingly valuable insight into the whole realm of social behavior and of culture. (Young, 1931) Language is one way a culture expresses its style and conveys a great deal of information about how culture sees the world. (Cote, 1985).

Related to language behavior, Lado stated that as culture is structured systems of patterned behavior, people can identify

various patterns of speaker' behavior as part of their system of culture. (Lado 1957: 11). The above view about culture and language requires people to consider contexts of situation in meaning interpretation.

Language use is related in both spoken and written media. In speech situation where interlocutors interact through utterances, some aspects are to be considered called context, that is a) participants (people, characteristics, their verbal and non-verbal acts); b) object and events involved in speech; c) impacts of the verbal speech (Firth in Tarjana: 2006).

To understand pragmatic aspect of language, people refer to Halliday's theory of 3 functions in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) which many scholars agree in the SFL's effective way of interpreting meaning (Djarmika, 2007; Santosa, 2003; Wiratno, 2003; Priyanto, 2003 in Priyanto, 2009). The three functions of language are 1) ideational function that language is ideas, views, and messages to be transmitted to other people; 2) interpersonal function that language reflects various forms related to establish interlocutors social relationship; and 3) textual function that language is the medium of language expression, either spoken or written.

Pragmatic view of language use as social fact is that speech is act, as Austin defined that "Speech act is the act performed in saying something" (Cumming, 2000:16 in Tarjana: 2006), which the term speech act was first formulated by Searle in 1969. Austin stated three functions of Language that is 1) locutionary function or the meaning of the language; 2) illocutionary function or the speaker's function; and 3) perlocutionary function or the hearer's function in the form of response.

Pragmatic competency requires clarity and politeness in communication, along with following the rules to reach successful interpersonal communication between interlocutors (Cutting, 2002: 44-49). In the condition of which one is crucial to decide between clarity and politeness, people will decide politeness, as it is more important to keep hearer's self esteem

rather than obtain clarity in an impolite way. In refers to politeness, Lakoff asserts three conceptions of politeness as a) don't impose; b) give option; and c) make a feel good (Lakoff: 1975 in Fraser: 1990: 219).

Language study with cultural perspective is possible to be carried out (Lado, 1957: 112) so that people could analyze the form, meaning, and the realization of culture, as a particular language has its own system and principles of denoting politeness that might be different from one language to other languages.

A film as mental evidence is defined as unity of meaning expressed in the level higher than just a sentence (Kridalaksana, 1985: 184), which Mey states that discourse is unity of some sentences and what makes the text context-bound (Mey, 1993: 187)

Friends TV Series produced by NBC from 1993 to 2004 presents ten seasons of 236 episodes that reveals about the life and the struggle of six friends towards gaining self-independence and maturity. The friendship of Monica, Phoebe, Rachel, Joey, Ross, and Chandler is maintained through friendship rituals that are categorized into 6 themes of time-honored/ traditional, social-fellowship/ casual, communication, share/ support/ vent, task, and friendship with romance.

The utterances of politeness can be identified to find whether or not it is influenced by culture, in particular American value of Independence interpreted from meaning. Then to identify what language features are used in realizing politeness whose politeness principles are founded by Leech (1983)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are quite extensive writing on the topic of pragmatics have been done, as well as a lot of experts and scholars interested in pragmatics have contributed their fruitful ideas to make pragmatics the new branch of linguistics that are effective to analyze utterances of speech situations from the perspective of pragmatic aspects, one of which is politeness. Some politeness studies have been conducted. Marshal (2007) wrote dissertation entitled 'I'll be there for you if you are just like me'. She analyzed dominant ideologies and social hegemony that determine relationship patterns among the six friends from the aspects of gender, race, and social stratification. The research methodology is qualitative content analysis that was able to find out that friendship can be established with the spirit of family life on the condition that each member show care and concern to each other.

In addition, their friendship grows intensively that they exclude new friends to be involved in their circle. The research views *Friends* TV Series of the friendship and family as social structure. Friendship rituals are identified through analyzing the story to explain type of how friendship is maintained and the frequency of friendship rituals.

Research on politeness was conducted by Isabelle van der Bom and Sara Mills in 2015 using discourse approach criticizing Brown and Levinson Theory of politeness which is considered not valid in data analysis. Bom and Mills

conducted research of intercultural friendship interaction among four people of different backgrounds that is Netherland and Italy. The research is done by recording the 4 interlocutors while they interacted. Data analysis is done including the interlocutors' comment on their own and others' communication done previously. Bom and Mills could identify politeness choice done by the speakers and whether or not the utterance is polite or impolite.

This research is termed politeness level 2 which allows the use of more complex model of analysis and more varied principles of analysis on intra and intercultural interaction. Brown and Levinson theory is term politeness level 1 which is traditional in nature that concerns on utterances as politeness from the view of the linguists, not the language users; beside this theory sees utterance which is polite, not the one that is impolite.

Research on politeness in *Friends* TV Series was conducted by Indrawati (2010), in which she analyzed politeness strategy realized in the film and find out what strategy is applied in case there are utterance of face threatening acts (FTA). The three themes of story are decided to analyze politeness strategy. The finding shows that in case of FTA, speakers applied positive strategy from Brown and Levinson theory. Speakers show care and sympathy towards the hearer by showing exaggerated attention verbally and non-verbally and involving the hearer in the communication more intensively.

Research on the relationship between language and culture have been conducted extensively; however, research of the same topic with language politeness and its influence by American value of independence has never been done. The writer considers that politeness as aspect of pragmatics is possible to be carried out in relation to culture in this case American value of Independence.

American culture is closely linked to American Dream. People believe that American Dream is revealed through the Declaration of Independence that say: We hold these truths to be self evidence that all men are created equal that they are endowed by creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. (Indrawati: 2010)

Research on politeness is to find out the value of independence that influences politeness. Analysis of utterances of the six friends are decided based on friendship themes and sub themes of sharing and supporting friends and gift giving.

Western values are seen as different from eastern values. American values state individualism, independence, equality, democracy, achievement, as the core of American values. Hofstede mentioned the most prevailing values are individualism and independence. Freedom and independence are fundamental values of the new nation in its building that many people settled in the land of America in the 17th century.

Independence is considered the most respected value as the key to understand people's behavior. In order to be independent, the ideal people of America have possess individualistic character and self confidence. They take care of

themselves, manage problems in life on their own. In addition, to become ideal American nation, people can do whatever they want to do to realize their dream to be successful people and nation. (Hofstede, 1984: 18-19 in Indrawati 2017) In relation to American Culture, media becomes the links to relate the content of culture and the public. Media such as television will spread culture in this case popular culture so that the ideology of particular value can be internalized by the public. (Medved, 1992: 15)

Independence is a requirement for leading one's life. It does not mean one never needs other people. Independence is not just a personal virtue, it is a moral virtue. In his article entitled 'The Value of Independence', Scott H Young mentions that there are independence of financial, social, and intellectual. Intellectual independence is the most important form of independence and as long as one can make decisions for one self, one can move closer towards complete independence. While it is known that independence is important to maintain as a person, one cannot ignore other people, because the ultimate ideal is to be independent and use that independence to help other people by freeing them from their dependencies.

PRAGMATICS

Pragmatics is the study of the context based language. The language users and language are the core of all things pragmatic as a truly existential condition. (Mey, 2001: 39) in pragmatics, speech acts are the way to interpret meaning. There are two forms of utterance. Constative utterance relates to truth condition; and performative utterance relates to velocity condition. (Gunawan, 2005: 5). Austin (1962) stated that language use concern three functions. First, locutionary function. It is the function that correspond with the meaning. For example it's going to rain. The utterance is made because it gives information and came from the speaker at the time he/she notice the dark cloud on the sky. Second, illocutionary function. This function lies on the speaker. When the speaker wants someone else to lift the clothes being dried at the back of the house, the speaker could use utterances directly or indirectly for example (direct utterance: *Please, lift the clothes* or indirect utterance: *oh it's going to rain*. The speaker expects that she/he communicates the message to lift the clothes). Third, perlocutionary function relates to the function lies in the hearer. It is the respond of the hearer to lift the clothes. Those language function is realized into five types of speech acts.

Searle (1975: 59-82) categorized speech acts into representative, directive, expressive, comisive, and declaration. Representative speech act binds the speaker of the truth of the utterance. Representative utterance are stating, demanding, reporting, mentioning. The example of representative utterance are *there are five people in the room*, *Jakarta is the capital city on Indonesia*.

Directive utterance is meant by the speaker that the hearer do something as told. Directive utterances are asking, suggesting, commanding, and challenging. The example of directive utterance are *how old is he? Sit down please!*

Expressive utterance is the form to show the emotional state of the speaker. The utterances are: congratulating, praising, complaining, blaming. The example of expressive utterances are *happy birthday John!* And *oh thank you for your gift Mommy*.

Comisive utterance binds the speaker to do something in the future. The utterances are promising, stating, committing, and swearing. The example of comisive utterances are *I'll call you tonight* and *I swear I didn't do it*.

Declaration utterance binds the hearer of status change into a new condition as spoken by the speaker. The utterance are prohibiting, granting, permitting, cancelling, legalizing, declaring. The examples of declaration are *I declare you husband and wife* and *Students, you are now UNNES students*.

Communication will succeed on the condition that interlocutors follow cooperative principle (CP) which is essential for both the speaker and the hearer. This CP was stated by Grice (1975): *Make your conversation contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs by the accepted purpose and direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged*. This CP relates to the maxims of 1) quality, 2) quantity, 3) relevance, and 4) manners. In case this cooperative principle is violated, politeness is realized. This strategy of using politeness is to compensate the absence of Cooperative Principle (CP)

POLITENESS

One of the language functions as a means of interpersonal communication is to establish successful communication. (Wardough: 1986: 233) One of the linguists provides politeness theory is Leech (1983: 132). Leech concept of politeness contains four concepts: 1) cost and benefit, 2) agreement, 3) approbation, 4) sympathy. Leech provides complete politeness principles covering six maxims as follows. 1) tact maxim, 2) generosity maxim, 3) approbation maxim, 4) modesty maxim, 5) agreement maxim, 6) sympathy maxim.

III. METHOD

This qualitative research applied content analysis by using the utterances of the characters in *Friends* TV Series as the data. The writer focused on the rhetorical analysis through identifying the form and the meaning of utterances and also the politeness and the function in the conversation.

This research is based on the research method toward media. *Friends* TV Series was aired on TV in which discourse that contains American culture ideology can influence the production of new culture that basically based on its own culture.

This research is aimed to identify the form and the function of utterances; and in doing so, the form of utterances that shows the dominant politeness can be analyzed. Finally, the form of the utterances consisting politeness were identified to analyze the linguistic features. It is expected that the consistency of form or linguistic features can be identified to draw conclusion about the particular linguistic features related to politeness. After identifying the consistency of language

features, the writer tried to identify the value of American value; thus, the politeness and the language features influenced by American value could be determined.

The data analysis as samples are taken from friendship rituals in particular this study decide to use one theme of Task. The data consisted of 52 utterances arranged into eleven speech situations. The utterances are identified in terms of form and meaning of utterances; than function of politeness and independence value related to the context of American culture. After that, the frequency of politeness type and the frequency of language feature are identified to answer the research question about whether or not politeness in *Friends* TV Series is influenced by American value of independence. The methodology is carried out by presenting the tables of utterances form and meaning, politeness type, and its influence. (Santosa, 2017).

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Below is the presentation of the result of the analysis of eleven speech situations as taken from *Friends* TV Series Season 1 consisting of 24 episodes. Before the discussion, the tables will be presented.

No	Setting/ Episode	Form	Utterance	Meaning
1	Aptm Ep. 3	D	(1) M: Do you all promise?	Ask for commitment
		R	(2) All: Yeah! We promise! We'll be good!	
2	Aptm Ep. 11	D	(4) Rs : Hey, is Chandler here?	
		R	(5) J : Yeah. (Ross drags Joey into the hall and slams the door)	
		R	(6) Rs : Okay, uh about last night, um, Chandler ... you didn't tell (Joey shakes his head) okay, 'cause I'm thinking- we don't need to tell Chandler, I mean, it was just a kiss, right? One kiss? No big deal? Right?	
		R	(7) J : Right. No big deal.	Agreement
		R	(8) Rs : Okay.	
3	Aptm Ep. 11	R	(9) J : In Bizarro World! You broke the code	Judgement
		D	(10) Rs : What code?	
		R	(11) J : You don't kiss your friend's mom! Sisters are okay, maybe a hot-lookin' aunt... but not a mom, never a mom!	Advice
4	Central Perk Ep. 14	D	(12) Rs : An egg?	
		D	(13) J : Yeah, you're gonna go up to her and say." Here's your egg back, I'm returning your egg"	
		R	(14) Ch : I think its	Compliment

5	Aptm Ep. 15	R	(15) J : I think it is insane	Kidding
		D	(16) Ch : She'll love it. Go with the egg, my friend.	
		R	(17) M : Wendy is bailed. I have no waitress.	Complaining
		R	(18) Rch : Ohh that's too bad. Bye bye	
		R	(19) M : ten dollars/hour (20) Rch : No	
		R	(21) M : Twelve dollars/hour	
		K	(22) Rch : Mon. I wish I could, but I've made plans to walk around	
6	Hospital Ep. 17	R	(23) M : You, know Rachel, when you ran out of your wedding, I was there for you. I put a roof over your head and if that means nothing to you.. twenty dollar/hour	Pleading
		R	(24) Rch : Done.	
		R	(25) Rch : Um..unless, I use yours	
		R	(26) M : Hah, no no no no no	
7	Central Perk Ep. 18	D	(27) Rch : Well, now , wait a second , who did I just put as my "in case of emergency" person?	Pleading
		R	(28) M : That's insurance fraud	Prohibition
		D	(29) Rch : Well, alright, then, forget it. Ow ow ow ow!	
		R	(30) M : Okay, okay. I hate this	Agreement
		E	(31) Rch : Thank you. Thank you. I love you	
8	Aptm Ep. 19	D	(32) Rch : hey..., hi, ladies ..uh, can I get you anything? Did you bring the mail?	
		R	(33) M : Lots of responses	
		D	(34) Rch : Really?	
		R	(35) M : Sure, we have scones left!	Agreement
9	Central	R	(36) Rch : OK, read them to me	
		R	(37) Rch : Oh, my God, c'mon, you guys! He's gonna be home any minute!	Warning
		K	(38) M : Okay, we'll start with the building. You guys take the first and second floor, Phoebe and I'll take third and fourth.	
		R	(39) Ch : (stops) I have	

	Perk Ep.4		no idea.	
		D	(40) J : C'mon, Ross!	
		K/ D	(41) R : Alright, alright, maybe I'll take my mind off it. Do you promise to buy me a big thumb finger?	Pleading
10	Restaur ant Ep. 5	R	(42) Ch : you got it.	Agreement
		R	(43) J : Wait, wait, wait. You want him, I want her. He likes you.	
		D	(44) M : really?	
11	Aptm Ep. 24	R	(46) Ch : Oh, that's Ross's.	
		E	(47) Rch : Oh... (opens it ... (sees it is a pin) Oh my God. He remembered.	
		D	(48) Ph : Remembered what?	
		R/ E	(49) Rch : It was like months ago. We were walking by this antique store, and I saw this pin in the window, and I told him it was just like one my grandmother had when I was a little girl. Oh! I can't believe he remembered!"	
		D	(50) Ch : Well, sure, but can you play it on a plane? (pats his <i>Travel Scrabble</i> game)	
		E	(51) Ph : Oh, It's so pretty. This must have cost him a fortune.	Mocking
		E	(52) M : I can't believe he did this.	Unexpected Surprise

Table 1. Table Showing the Form and the Meaning of the Utterances

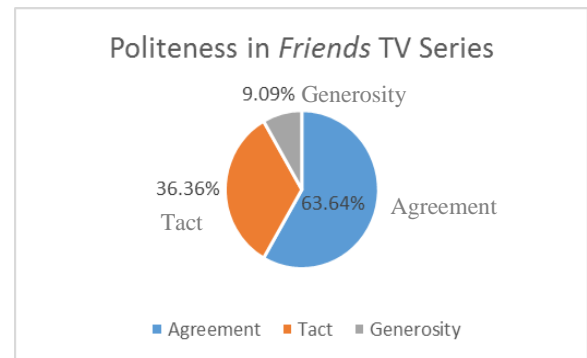
The second table presents the value of independence shown in the politeness of the eleven speech situations.

No	Politeness	Value of Independence	Language Features
1	Agreement	All support Monica's decision to establish relationship with a man	A promise <i>Yeah</i>
2	Agreement	Give freedom to Ross	<i>Right</i>
3	Tact	State good moral value	Philosophical Views
4	Tact	Give encouragement	<i>Go ...</i>
5	Generosity	Fulfill Rachel's demand	Instead of saying it's a deal, Monica mention
		Monica believes that Rachel is professional	

			amount of money.
6	Agreement	Monica believes that Rachel will someday be financially independent	<i>Okay.. okay</i>
7	Agreement	Support Rachel to get a better job	<i>Sure</i>
8	Tact	Independently solve problem	<i>Okay</i>
9	Tact	Support Rachel and Ross as lovers	<i>You got it</i>
		Both be independent for future happiness	
10	Agreement	Joey and Monica pursue their loved one	<i>Yeah</i>
11	Agreement	Monica is happy for Ross that he could get Rachel and be independent from his ex wife	<i>I can't believe ...\</i>

Table 2. Table Showing the Value of Independence shown in the Politeness of Eleven Speech Situations.

The pie-chart shows the percentage of politeness realized in eleven speech situations.



Speech Situation 1

Episode/Setting : Episode 3/ Apartment
 Interlocutors : Monica, All (Phoebe, Rachel, Joey, Ross, Chandler)
 Background : Monica's boyfriend is visiting Monica. She asked her friends to be good to him.
 Politeness shown : Agreement.

All of Monica's friends support her decision to establish a relationship with a man. Monica is under stress for she feels that her mother is in favor of Ross her brother. Among her friends she becomes the one who gives special attention to her friends and let them hang out in her apartment. There, her friends enjoy themselves and Monica's hospitality.

She is a perfectionist; however, she still has not found a perfect love and job. Her friends believe that Monica deserves happiness. They support her and give a chance to be free to decide her new love. The word of Agreement is *yeah*.

Speech Situation 2 and 3

Episode/Setting : Episode 11/ Apartment
Interlocutors : Ross and Joey
Background : Ross asked Joey not to tell Chandler that he kissed his Mom.
Politeness shown : Agreement and Tact.

Ross kissed Chandler's mom. Ross told Joey not to tell Chandler, thinking that what he did was not important. Joey agreed not to tell Chandler. Joey is of the opinion that Ross is free to do what he did and probably has to be responsible of what he has done as an adult. Joey utters the word *Right*.

However, later on Joey shows his concerns of Ross's previous action. He gave his judgement and advice Ross not to do the indecent act through philosophical view. Joey gave Ross advice and believed that Ross can be trusted and be a responsible adult who has freedom in action of a good cause in the future. The utterances showing philosophical view: *You don't kiss your friend's mom*.

Speech Situation 4

Episode/Setting : Episode 14/ Central Perk
Interlocutors : Ross, Joey, and Chandler
Background : Chandler and Joey encourage Ross to talk to the girl he is interested in.
Politeness shown : Tact.

In speaking to Ross tactfully, Joey and Chandler meant to give encouragement or support to Ross to talk to the girl he seems to be interested in. Joey and Chandler believe that Ross deserves happiness in Love and be independent from feeling missing his ex wife, Carol. He must be also free from being disappointed that Carol is in love with Susan a woman that both of them are lesbian. The utterance showing support is *Go*.

Speech Situation 5

Episode/Setting : Episode 15/ Apartment
Interlocutors : Monica and Rachel
Background : Monica asks Rachel to be her waitress for serving Steve
Politeness shown : Generosity

Monica agrees to pay Rachel 20 dollars an hour for assisting her as waiter in the restaurant. Monica believes in Rachel's professionalism and commitment in doing the job as waiter. Monica shows support in the form of being generous. Her agreement to pay Rachel the amount of money is stated: *twenty dollars an hour*.

Speech Situation 6

Episode/Setting : Episode 17/ Hospital
Interlocutors : Rachel and Monica
Background : Rachel asked Monica to claim her insurance to cover her medical check.
Politeness shown : Agreement

Monica at first objected on Rachel's proposition for Monica to cover her medical check, for fear that this will be prosecuted for being insurance fraud. At the end; however, Monica agrees on Rachel using her insurance. Monica believes that Rachel will someday be financially independent. The utterance that signifies the agreement is *okay... okay*.

Speech Situation 7

Episode/Setting : Episode 18/ Central Perk
Interlocutors : Rachel and Monica
Background : Rachel asked Monica to read the email for her.
Politeness shown : Agreement

The politeness shows agreement to support what Rachel is now pursuing or looking for. Monica agrees to read the emails that Rachel is expecting. Rachel is looking for a job which is more appropriate and fit for her.

Monica supports Rachel to get a better job with the hope that Rachel will be more independent financially. The utterance showing support is *sure*.

Speech Situation 8

Episode/Setting : Episode 19/ Apartment
Interlocutors : Rachel and Monica
Background : Monica asked other friends to look for Marcel.
Politeness shown : Tact

Monica initiates Rachel to look for Marcel, Ross's Monkey, for fear that Ross will be angry or more complicated when the police is involved. Monica's initiative shows the act of independence. The utterance realized is *okay*.

Speech Situation 9

Episode/Setting : Episode 4/ Central Perk
Interlocutors : Chandler, Joey, Ross
Background : Joey and Chandler gave Ross 'big thumb finger' as a gift with one condition that Ross would forget the memory he shared with his ex-wife, Carol.
Politeness shown : Tact

Joey and Chandler are so thoughtful and supportive toward Ross's happiness. They expect Ross to be free and independent of his bitter marriage life with Carol previously. The utterance used is *you got it*.

Speech Situation 10

Episode/Setting : Episode 5/ Restaurant
Interlocutors : Joey and Monica
Background : Joey asked Monica to agree to separate Angela and Bob. Joey will get Angela and Monica will get Bob.
Politeness shown : Agreement

Monica agrees on Joey's proposition that Angela and Bob have to be separated. Monica and Joey are both concern about their happiness. Monica deserves to have freedom to be happy with Bob; whereas Joey deserves to have freedom to be happy with Angela. The utterance realized is *yeah*.

Speech Situation 11

Episode/Setting : Episode 24/ Apartment
Interlocutors : Chandler, Rachel, Phoebe, Monica.

Background : Rachel felt surprised to receive Ross's gift
Politeness shown : Agreement

Monica uttered *I can't believe he did this*. It means that Monica feels surprised that Ross gave such memorable birthday gift for Rachel. To Monica, Ross's act as if showed that Ross had special attention and affection to Rachel.

Monica agrees to Rachel's utterance that said: *Oh, I can't believe he remembered*. She expects Ross to leave behind the memory of Carol. Rachel sounds very happy with the pin she received from Ross inspite of the fact that Rachel did not meet Ross who had flown to China for a lecture. The utterance realized is: *I can't believe*.

V. CONCLUSION

After analyzing the eleven speech situations consisting of fifty two utterances, the writer can conclude that the dominant politeness is politeness showing agreement found in seven speech situations or 63.64%; politeness showing tact is found in four speech situations or 36.36%; politeness showing generosity is found only in one speech situation or 9.09%. Those politeness utterances are influenced by American value in particular, the value of Independence in which the value is revealed in the verbal attitude and utterances which mean being supportive. All speech situations reveal the meaning of giving support to the others in doing actions. The linguistic features applied in the utterances of politeness are: *yeah; right; go; okay; sure; you got it; I can't believe*.

In short, the answer of the question: Does politeness in *Friends* TV Series represent American value is: Yes, politeness in *Friends* TV Series represents American value, particularly the value of independence.

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