CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language, as a fundamental part of human life, allows people to express what they feel, build connections, and maintain the order of society. Recent study by Ferré et al. (2025) also shows that language is not only used to express emotions, but also plays an important role in shaping and regulating them. They explain that language influences how emotions are experienced and understood in communication. This means that language is closely connected to emotional expression, including how speakers manage and control their feelings in interaction.

To understand how language works in interaction, the study of pragmatics is important. Pragmatics studies meaning in context, especially how speakers adjust their language based on the situation, relationship between speakers, and their communicative goals. (Levinson, 1983); (Yule, Pragmatics, 1996). Within pragmatics, politeness plays a role in maintaining harmony and prevents conflict. Politeness can be understood as the way speakers show awareness and respect toward others in communication.

According to Yule (2006) in Dewi et. al (2021) politeness is closely related to the concept of *face*, which refers to a person's public self-image or how they want to be seen and respected by others. When an utterance threatens this self-image, it is called a face-threatening act (FTA). For example, giving a direct command such as "Give me that paper" may sound too forceful and imply power over the hearer. To reduce this threat, speakers often use indirect expressions like "Could you pass me the paper?", which makes the request sound less imposing. The phrase "Could you" softens the request so that the speaker does not sound too commanding or rude toward the hearer. By using a more polite form, the speaker shows respect, good behaviour, and awareness of the hearer's feelings, which can make the hearer feel more comfortable during the interaction. Therefore, using polite expressions is important because it helps speakers express their intentions without sounding overly harsh or disrespectful toward others and maintain smooth social interaction.

Because FTAs are unavoidable in everyday interaction, speakers often use politeness strategies to reduce their impact. One of these strategies is negative politeness, which is used when speakers recognize that their utterances may impose on the hearer. Through indirect language, hedging, apologies, questions, or expressions of hesitation, speakers attempt to minimize the threat and show respect for the hearer's freedom of action. Therefore, negative politeness can be understood as a redressive action that helps soften face-threatening acts and maintain harmonious social relationships.

In this context, negative politeness refers to the way speakers use language to respect the hearer's independence and freedom of action. Negative politeness, as explained by Brown and Levinson (1987) in Erkinovna (2021), propose several negative politeness strategies, such as be conventionally indirect, hedge, question, be pessimistic, minimize imposition, give deference, apologize, impersonalize speaker and hearer, state the FTA as a general rule, nominalize, and go on record as incurring a debt. These strategies allow speakers to communicate potentially threatening intentions in a more respectful manner.

Negative politeness is also not only used to sound respectful. In certain situations, speakers may also use these strategies to hide emotions such as discomfort, anger, or disagreement while still maintaining good social relationships. For example, in a library, a lecturer who is seriously reading a book may notice a group of students talking loudly nearby. Even though the lecturer has higher authority and could directly say, "Lower your voice," he may instead say, "Can you lower your voice?" The phrase "Can you" is considered as a request and it is also a conventionally indirect expression. In this situation, the lecturer may also be trying to control irritation by choosing a more polite expression rather than sounding harsh or emotional. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the utterance is a request that is expressed in the form of a question rather than a direct command. This type of expression softens the request and reduces pressure on the hearer, making the speaker appear more respectful and considerate in interaction.

Negative politeness is also closely connected to context of the situation and non-verbal clues. This relates with the support of Mehrabian's Communication Theory as cited in Jitwiriyanont et al., (2025), which highlights that meaning in

communication is not carried by words alone, but also significantly shaped by tone of voice and facial expressions. In many situations, speakers may use negative politeness expressions while showing different emotions through their facial expressions and tone of voice.

One example can be found in Ranti and Mubarak's (2025) study of the movie *Uglies*. In one scene, Dr. Cable says to Tally, "Well, maybe a night back at the dorms will help you remember?" while questioning her about Shay's disappearance. Rather than directly accusing Tally of hiding information, Cable uses an indirect expression. However, the situation suggests that Cable is actually pressuring Tally to reveal what she knows. In this context, non-verbal cues such as a serious facial expression and a firm tone of voice may indicate authority and suspicion, even though the utterance itself sounds polite. This example shows that the speaker's real intention and emotional state cannot always be understood from words alone, but can also be revealed through facial expressions, tone of voice, and the surrounding context of the situation.

Erkinovna (2021) explains that negative politeness involves redressive actions, which are actions used to reduce the effect of face-threatening acts. These actions can appear both verbally and non-verbally. In addition, AlAfnan and MohdZuki (2023) state that politeness can also be reflected through behaviour that avoids imposition and softens interaction even without spoken language. This means that facial clues, tone of voice, and situational context are important in understanding the deeper meaning behind negative politeness utterances.

Based on the explanations above, several scholars agree that negative politeness is not only relates with linguistic forms, but also with the speaker's effort to reduce imposition, maintain social relationships, and manage interaction in a socially acceptable way. This suggests that negative politeness utterances can reveal meanings behind polite language itself. In some situations, speakers use polite expressions not only to show respect, but also to control emotions or hide their true feelings. For example, a speaker may sound polite while actually feeling uncomfortable, uncertain, or emotionally pressured. These kinds of interactions are often found in movie dialogues, which present emotional conflict in a realistic way.

One example can be seen in Sinaga (2025) study. In one scene, Bernardo says, “I’m meditating. Two minutes to go,” and Ruby responds, “Okay. Do you want me to wait or—”. Sinaga explains that the phrase “Do you want me to wait” reflects the strategy of be conventionally indirect because Ruby expresses her intention through a question rather than directly deciding what to do. In researcher’s opinion, the phrase “Do you want” reduces imposition by giving Bernardo the freedom to choose the response.

However, behind its polite form, the utterance may also reflect Ruby’s hidden emotional state in the situation. Bernardo’s statement shows that he is focused on his meditation, which creates an awkward situation for Ruby. Instead of directly interrupting him or expressing impatience, Ruby carefully chooses an indirect polite utterance to avoid making the interaction uncomfortable. This suggests that Ruby may actually feel uncertain or worried about disturbing Bernardo, but she controls those emotions through polite language. Therefore, the utterance does not only function as a negative politeness strategy, be conventionally indirect, but also a way to manage and conceal emotional situation during the interaction.

By examining facial clues together with the situational context, this study seeks to identify the emotions reflected in the characters’ negative politeness utterances in *Wicked* (2024). The characters in the movie *Wicked* (2024) produce negative politeness utterances while their facial clues or tone of voice suggests a different emotion. Therefore, analysing both verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication help reveal the hidden emotions behind negative politeness utterances.

It is equally important to examine how the negative politeness utterances are handled when language is transferred from one language to another, as they do not always translate directly. Translation can be understood as the process of transferring meaning from a Source Language (SL) into a Target Language (TL), while translation techniques refer to the specific procedures a translator uses to achieve this transfer at the level of words, phrases, or sentences (Molina & Albir, 2002).

In simpler terms, translation techniques are deliberate choices used when translating to ensure that the meaning is transferred accurately and naturally in the target language. These techniques reflect the faithfulness of the translation to the original text with the need for the translation to feel natural and appropriate to the target language. In subtitling, this balance becomes even more challenging because the subtitle must be working within the strict limitations of space and time, which may influence the way utterances are translated. As a result, different translation techniques may be applied to negative politeness utterances, depending on the translation choice and the characteristics of the target language.

The elements of negative politeness can be seen when looking at specific examples. The English utterance "Can you lower your voice?" can be identified as a be conventionally indirect strategy because the phrase "Can you" functions as a polite request rather than a literal question about ability. When translated into Indonesian as "*Tolong kecilkan suaramu*," the translation adds the word "*tolong*" to produce a natural expression in the target language. According to Molina and Albir (2002), this can be classified as amplification, because an additional linguistic element is introduced in the target language that is not explicitly present in the source language. This example shows how translation techniques can be applied when translating negative politeness utterances from English into Indonesian subtitles.

For this reason, this study is expected to provide a broader understanding of negative politeness in movie dialogues. Negative politeness is often viewed only as a strategy for showing respect and reducing imposition, but this study argues that it is also closely related to face-threatening acts and the situations in which communication takes place. By examining the negative politeness strategies used by the characters, the face-threatening acts reflected in their interactions, the hidden emotions expressed behind the negative politeness utterances through verbal and non-verbal cues, and the translation techniques applied in the Indonesian subtitles, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how negative politeness functions in communication and how it is translated from English into Indonesian in the movie *Wicked* (2024).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background above, the research questions of this study are:

1. What negative politeness strategies are used by the characters in *Wicked* (2024)?
2. What translation techniques used to translate the negative politeness in the Indonesian subtitles?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the purposes of this study are:

1. To identify the negative politeness strategies used by the characters in *Wicked* (2024).
2. To identify the translation techniques used in translating the negative politeness utterances from English into Indonesian subtitles.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study contributes to the field of pragmatics, especially the study of negative politeness proposed by Brown and Levinson, by showing that negative politeness is not only used to maintain politeness, but can also reflect hidden emotions behind the characters' utterances in *Wicked* (2024) movie. This study also contributes to translation studies by Molina and Albir's translation techniques to analyse the translation techniques used in the in the movie subtitles.

Practically, this study is expected to help students, researchers, and translators better understand the use of negative politeness in movie dialogues and its relationship with face-threatening acts, emotional expression, and contextual meaning. This study may also provide insight into how verbal and non-verbal elements work together in conveying meaning during interaction. Furthermore, the findings may serve as a useful reference for future studies on politeness, emotion in communication, and in the analysis of subtitle translation techniques in films.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach with Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) as the method of data analysis. A qualitative descriptive

approach is appropriate because this study focuses on describing and interpreting negative politeness utterances in their natural context within the movie *Wicked* (2024). Qualitative Content Analysis is a systematic method used to examine and interpret textual or communicative data by identifying patterns, categories, and meanings within the data. According to Archer (2018) , QCA is a systematic approach that enables researchers to analyse qualitative data through the development of categories and the interpretation of meanings relevant to the research questions.

Similarly, Lyhne et al. (2025) explain that QCA is a rigorous and transparent analytical method that focuses on identifying meaning units, categorising them, and interpreting their meanings within context. Through QCA, the researcher is able to analyse linguistic expressions, facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures, and translation choices systematically in order to answer the research questions of this study. QCA is particularly suitable for this research because it allows the researcher to examine not only what is said by the characters, but also the meanings, emotions, and functions behind the utterances.

In conducting the analysis, this study adopts three stages of Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), namely open coding, recontextualization, and categorization and compilation, as explained by Archer (2018). Archer states that qualitative data analysis begins with a coding process, in which researchers identify meaningful sections of qualitative data and assign codes to organize and interpret the data systematically. Through these stages, the researcher is able to identify relevant patterns, interpret the data within its context, and classify the findings according to the theoretical framework used in this study. The steps are as follows:

The first stage is open coding. In this stage, the researcher repeatedly watched *Wicked* (2024) to gain a comprehensive understanding of the storyline, character relationships, and situational contexts. The English movie script and Indonesian subtitles were collected and compared. Each utterance that potentially contained negative politeness was identified and given preliminary codes based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) negative politeness strategies. At this stage, the researcher also identified the face-threatening acts (FTAs) associated with the utterances and noted relevant non-verbal elements such as facial expressions,

gestures, eye behaviour, pauses, and tone of voice that appeared during the interaction.

The second stage is recontextualization. In this stage, each coded utterance was re-examined within its complete situational context. The researcher analysed the relationship between the characters, the social setting, the purpose of the interaction, and the events happening before and after the utterance. This stage is important because negative politeness cannot be fully understood through linguistic form alone. The researcher therefore analysed the utterances together with the face-threatening acts reflected in the interaction and interpreted the emotions conveyed through verbal and non-verbal communication based on Caffi and Janney's (1994) theory of emotive communication and the supporting framework of Sharkov et al. (2022). Through this process, the researcher was able to obtain a deeper understanding of why the characters chose particular negative politeness strategies in specific situations.

The third stage is categorization and compilation. In this final stage, the data were classified according to the theoretical frameworks employed in the study. The negative politeness utterances were categorised based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) ten negative politeness strategies. The face-threatening acts associated with the utterances were identified to determine how face concerns influenced the speakers' language choices. The Indonesian subtitle translations were then analysed using Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques to identify the techniques applied in translating the utterances. After the categorisation process was completed, the findings were compiled into tables and analysed descriptively to identify patterns in the use of negative politeness strategies and translation techniques. The results were then interpreted to answer the research questions and presented in the discussion section.

The data of this research are taken from two sources. The English movie script *Wicked* (2024) from the website Springfield! Springfield! is used as the Source Language (SL), while the Indonesian subtitles, that the researcher transcribed from a streaming website, *Idlix*, are used as the Target Language (TL). Both sources are compared to examine how the utterances of negative politeness in the original English dialogues are translated into Indonesian subtitles.

The data are collected using documentation techniques. The documentation process involved watching the movie repeatedly, collecting the full English dialogues on the movie and the movie script, in order to understand the hidden meaning behind the utterances and matching the dialogues with the Indonesian subtitles. After that, the researcher selected utterances that contain negative politeness based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory.

In analysing the data, the researcher first identified and classified the negative politeness utterances found in the movie dialogues. The classification was based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) negative politeness strategies, including strategies such as be conventionally indirect, hedge, question, apologize, give deference, and other related strategies. After identifying the strategies, the researcher examined the situational context of each utterance to determine the face-threatening acts (FTAs) reflected in the interaction. This process allowed the researcher to explain how the speakers used negative politeness strategies to reduce potential threats to face while maintaining social relationships.

Then, the researcher uses Caffi and Janney's (1994) emotive communication theory to find the hidden emotions the utterances may carry. To support this process, the researcher also observes the characters' non-verbal cues based on Sharkov et al. (2022), including facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, pauses, and body language, to determine the emotional meanings behind each utterance. Making sure the analysis goes deeper than just describing what was said and focuses on understanding what each negative politeness utterance truly means in its context.

After identifying the negative politeness strategies, face-threatening acts, and emotions behind the utterances, the researcher compared the English utterances with their Indonesian subtitle translations. This comparison was conducted to identify the translation techniques used in translating the negative politeness utterances. The analysis was based on Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques, such as literal translation, adaptation, modulation, amplification, reduction, and other relevant techniques. Through this process, the researcher identifies the translation techniques used in the Indonesian subtitles and determines

which techniques are most frequently applied in translating negative politeness utterances.

Finally, the categorized data were analysed descriptively and presented in tables. The findings were interpreted based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of negative politeness, Caffi and Janney's (1994) theory of emotive communication supported by Sharkov's et al. (2022) emotions through non-verbal cues, and Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques in order to answer the research questions of this study.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses specifically on the analysis of negative politeness utterances used by the characters in *Wicked* (2024), the linguistic reasons that indicate the negative politeness strategies, the face-threatening acts reflected in the interactions, the context and hidden emotions behind the utterances, and the translation techniques used in the Indonesian subtitles. The analysis also pays attention to non-verbal aspects such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and situational background to support the interpretation of hidden emotions in the interactions. The data of this study are limited to selected dialogues that clearly contain negative politeness utterances in the movie. The English dialogues of the movie are used as the Source Language (SL), while the Indonesian subtitles from a streaming website *Idlix* are used as the Target Language (TL). This study only analyses negative politeness based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, Caffi and Janney's (1994) emotive communication theory supported by Sharkov et al. (2022), and translation techniques based on Molina and Albir's (2002) theory.

1.7 Status of the Study

Several previous studies have discussed negative politeness and subtitle translation in movies. Yolanda et al. (2022) analysed negative politeness strategies in *Charlie's Angels* (2019) and found out that indirectness was one of the most common strategies. Ranti and Mubarak (2025) studied the movies *Uglies* and showed that deference and hedging are useful for maintaining harmony. Ardilla (2017) applied Brown and Levinson's negative politeness theory in *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* and found that be conventionally indirect was the most

frequently used negative politeness strategy in the film. In the area of translation, Kuswardani and Septiani (2020) analysed the subtitles of *Maleficent* and found that the translations were mostly clear, accurate and natural. Meylisa (2019) examined the translation techniques used in the Indonesian subtitles of *IT* and found that reduction, adaptation, and modulation were the most dominant techniques.

However, most previous studies mainly focus on identifying strategies or translation techniques separately. Few studies examine the relationship between negative politeness strategies, the face-threatening acts that motivate their use in interaction, and how negative politeness utterances can reflect hidden emotions, emotional tension, and the background situation behind the characters' interactions. In addition, previous studies rarely analyse negative politeness not only through dialogues, but also through context, facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its integrated analysis of negative politeness strategies, face-threatening acts (FTAs), hidden emotions, and translation techniques in *Wicked* (2024). Unlike previous studies that mainly focus on identifying negative politeness strategies or translation techniques separately, this study examines the relationship between negative politeness strategies and the face-threatening acts that motivate their use. In addition, this study analyses how emotions are reflected through verbal and non-verbal cues, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, and situational context.

The study also identifies the translation techniques used in translating negative politeness utterances into Indonesian subtitles. By combining Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, Caffi and Janney's (1994) emotive communication theory, and Molina and Albir's (2002) translation techniques, this study provides a more detailed understanding of how negative politeness functions both as a way to sound respectful and as a way for characters to manage and hide emotions in communication.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research is organized into five chapters. Chapter I presents the introduction, including background, research problems, purposes, significance, methodology, scope, novelty, and organization of the study. Chapter II reviews relevant literature, covering theories of politeness, translation techniques, and

previous related studies. Chapter III explains the research methodology, including research design, data sources, and analytical approaches. Chapter IV presents the findings and discussion of the analysis. Finally, Chapter V concludes the study and offers suggestions for future research.