

**POLITENESS STRATEGIES IN PUBLIC SPEECH: A CASE OF  
COMMENCEMENT SPEECHES IN GRADUATION CEREMONIES**

**PAPPIM CHUENJAI**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM  
IN ENGLISH FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

**FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS**

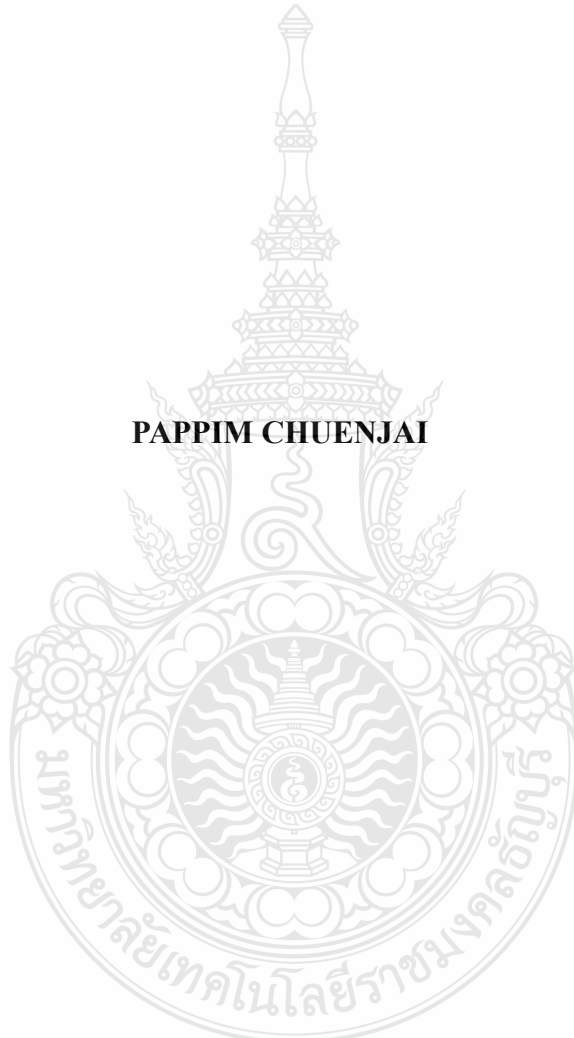
**RAJAMANGALA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY THANYABURI**

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2023**

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**Thesis Title** Politeness Strategies in Public Speech: A Case of  
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**Name – Surname** Miss Pappim Chuenjai  
**Program** English for Career Development  
**Thesis Advisor** Assistant Professor Thitapa Sinturat, Ph.D.  
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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to: 1) discover the types of politeness strategies employed in commencement speeches by Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman, 2) compare the politeness strategies found in the two speeches and 3) analyze the use of politeness strategies in the two speeches. The theoretical framework for the textual analysis and frequency counting was based on the six maxims of politeness proposed by Leech (1983).

The data consisted of Taylor Swift's commencement speech at New York University and Chadwick Boseman's at Howard University. The data was collected from the official YouTube channels of each University and analyzed by using textual analysis to determine the type of politeness strategies. The maxims of politeness were counted and revealed as frequency and percentage. Subsequently, the results were compared to find the differences applications.

The study results revealed that six maxims were employed in both commencement speeches. Generosity maxim was the most frequently applied in Taylor Swift's speech while Approbation maxim was the most frequently applied in Chadwick Boseman's speech. Despite the differences in dominant maxims, both speeches shared the same top three maxims: Tact, Generosity, and Approbation, indicating the similar purpose of the speeches.

**Keywords:** politeness strategies, six maxims of politeness, commencement speech

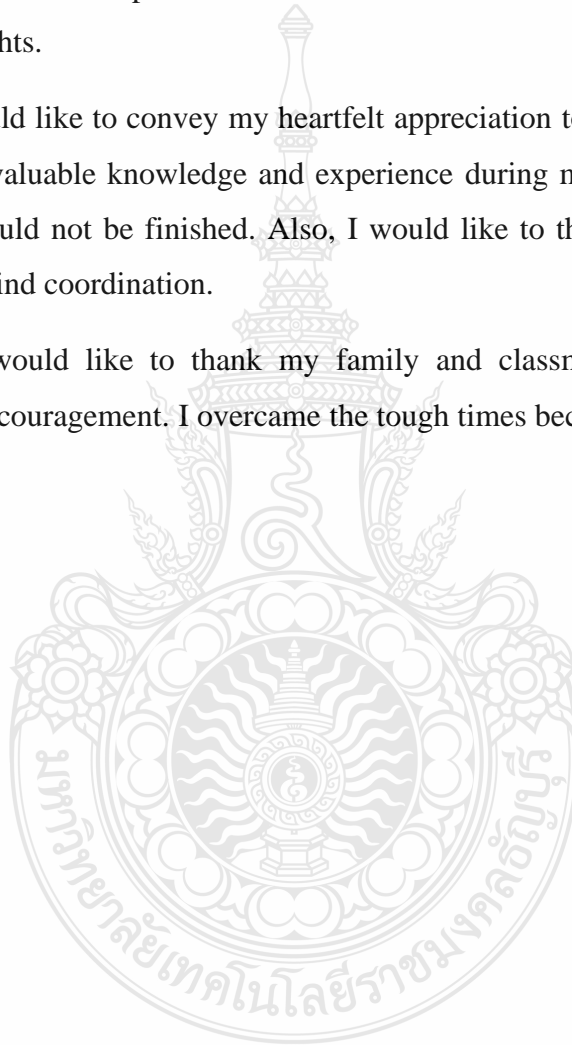
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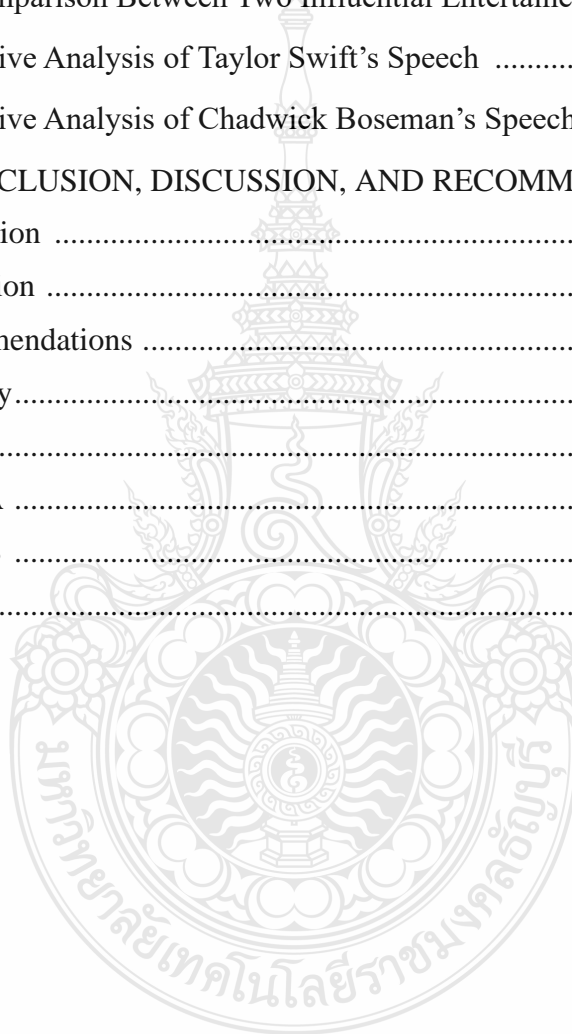


## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	(3)
Acknowledgement .....	(4)
Table of Contents.....	(5)
List of Tables .....	(7)
List of Figures .....	(8)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	9
1.1 Background of the Study .....	9
1.2 Conceptual Framework .....	15
1.3 Research Questions .....	16
1.4 Purpose of the Study .....	16
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	16
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	17
1.7 Limitations of the Study .....	18
1.8 Definition of Terms .....	18
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....	19
2.1 Politeness in Communication .....	19
2.2 Politeness Theories .....	20
2.2.1 Grice's Theory .....	20
2.2.2 Lakoff's Theory .....	21
2.2.3 Brown and Levinson's Theory .....	22
2.2.4 Leech's Theory .....	23
2.3 Gender and Politeness of Language .....	30
2.4 Related Literature .....	31
2.4.1 International Literature .....	31
2.4.2 National Literature .....	35
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	38
3.1 Research Design .....	38
3.2 Research Instruments .....	39
3.3 Data Collection .....	40
3.4 Data Analysis .....	41

## Table of Contents (Continued)

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH RESULT .....	46
4.1 The Politeness Theory employed in Commencement speech .....	46
4.1.1 Taylor Swift’s speech .....	46
4.1.2 Chadwick Boseman’s speech .....	47
4.2 The Comparison Between Two Influential Entertainers’ Speech .....	47
4.3 Qualitative Analysis of Taylor Swift’s Speech .....	49
4.4 Qualitative Analysis of Chadwick Boseman’s Speech .....	62
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	80
5.1 Conclusion .....	80
5.2 Discussion .....	81
5.3 Recommendations .....	83
List of Bibliography.....	85
Appendices.....	92
Appendix A .....	93
Appendix B .....	102
Biography.....	113



## List of Tables

	Page
Table 1: Leech's (1983) theory of politeness and its six maxims .....	29
Table 2: Number of words in each speech .....	39
Table 3: Politeness maxims proposed by Leech (1983) .....	39
Table 4: Abbreviation, type of context, and example statement of each maxim .....	42
Table 5: Abbreviation, type of context, and example statement of each maxim .....	42
Table 6: The number of maxims in Taylor Swift's speech .....	46
Table 7: The number of maxims in Chadwick Boseman's speech .....	47





## List of Figures

	Page
Figure 1: The IDG framework .....	9
Figure 2: Communication skills in IDG framework .....	10
Figure 3: Conceptual Framework of the study .....	15



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background of the study, the objectives of the study, and the research questions. The significance of the study, the scope of the study, the definition of terms, and the conceptual framework are also presented in this chapter.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Communication plays an important role in people's existence. It is a skill that can create good connections among people and develop relationships in society as well as helping people exchange information and knowledge with others. Communication skills appear in the Inner Development Goals framework or IDG framework as an important skill to develop for society. The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) is a non-profit and open-source initiative founded by the 29k Foundation, Ekskåret Foundation. IDGs have summarized and provided the IDG framework including 5 dimensions with 23 skills and qualities necessary to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that aim to protect the environment, end poverty, and make everyone enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. In the framework, the interesting point is dimension number 4 named "Collaborating - Social Skills" (Inner Development Goals, n.d.).

Figure 1: The IDG framework (Inner Development Goals, n.d.).

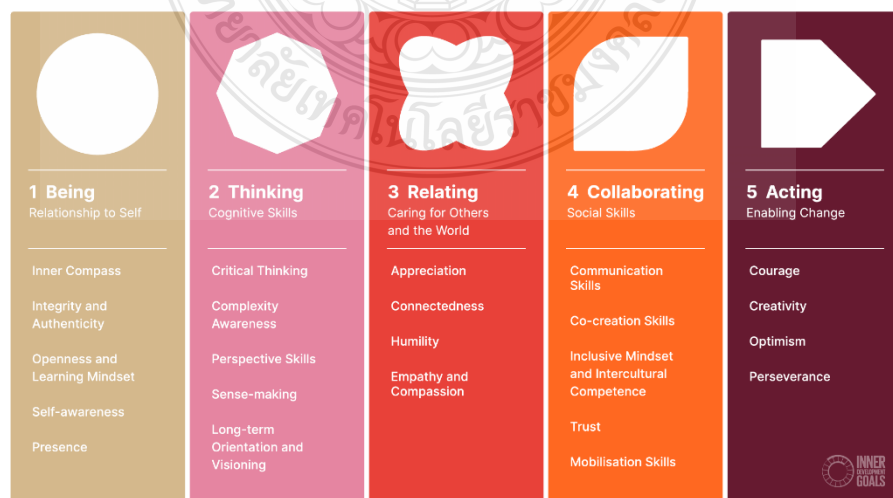
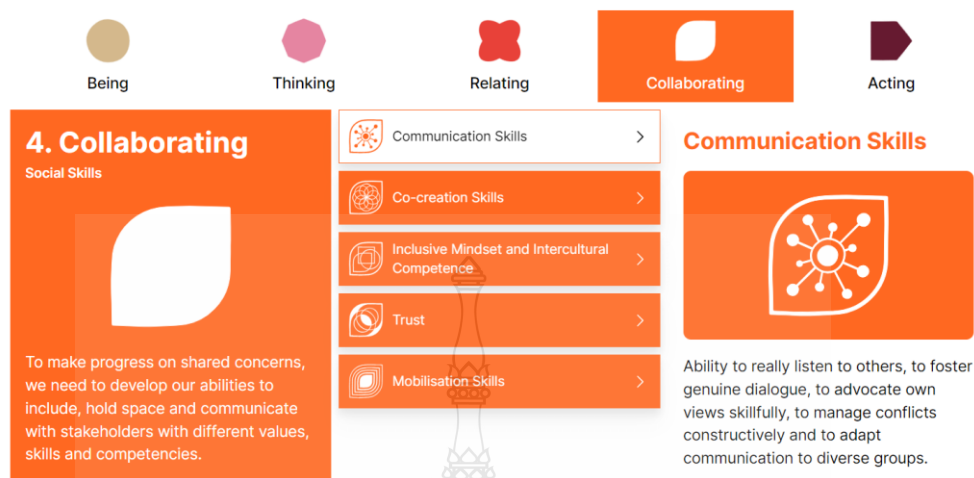


Figure 2: Communication skills in IDG framework (Inner Development Goals, n.d.).



The social skills include communication skills, co-creation skills, inclusive mindset and intercultural competence, trust, and mobilization skills. Regarding the IDG framework, communication skills are vital in the present and the future, IDGs defined communication skills as the capacity to communicate effectively with a variety of groups, encourage meaningful dialogue, expertly advocate one's viewpoints, and handle conflicts (Inner Development Goals, n.d.). In addition, the capacity to engage, respect, and communicate with stakeholders with diverse values, capabilities, and perspectives need to be improved; therefore, communication skills need to be developed to meet the development needs of society.

Communication is not only talking and conversing with a small group of people but also communicating with many people in public called public communication or public speaking. Public speaking is one important form of communication. It is a crucial social skill to communicate with diverse groups of people. The process of public speaking involves the interaction of speakers and hearers. In other words, it is a public transaction or trade between individuals. Speaker, message, listener, feedback, and context are the basic elements of public speaking (German, 2017). Therefore, delivering a message from the speaker to the listener is accomplished through public speaking and many people use public speaking as an important device to interact with many people. In history, there are many impactful public speeches, a well-known one is the speech of Martin Luther King,

“I Have a Dream”. During his speech, Martin Luther King addressed a large audience, advocated for civil and economic equality, and called for an end to racism in the United States at that time. His speech has been mentioned and has had an impact from the past until now. At present, public speaking has become an interesting topic to study due to its importance. There are various types of public speaking studied by using different theories such as prime ministers’ or presidents’ speeches, talk shows, and TED Talks. Kraisriwattana and Poonpon (2020), for example, investigated the moves and steps of speech in twenty-five most viewed TED Talks in 2019. Chen (2018) was another one whose study related to speech, he analyzes Donald Trump’s inaugural speech by using Systemic Functional Grammar to develop readers' analytical and critical faculties to uncover the speaker's political aim and aid in their comprehension of discourse. According to the previous example of speech and studies, different types of public speaking or speech have their technique used in each speech. Studying public speaking can provide a better understanding of the techniques, language used, and patterns that contribute to public speaking skills.

There are various kinds of speech and one of them is a speech delivered at the graduation ceremony. In the United States, there are speeches used to encourage and inspire new graduate students. Many universities invite first-class honor students, outstanding students, politicians, and influencers to give commencement speeches. Besides many universities offer an honorary doctoral degree to influencers or public people who are outstanding in their careers and invite them to express commencement speeches to new graduate students. In the past, it was unclear which university started inviting celebrities to speak at commencement ceremonies, but over the past three or four decades those numbers have increased from a few humorous speakers to the deluge of businesspeople, actors, writers, and comedians who dominate today's ceremonies. In Harvard’s first commencement in 1642, the commencement ceremonies focused more on hearing from the graduates than on external speakers (Fabry, 2016). Stanford Libraries report the commencement speeches organized by Stanford University; the first speech was in 1892 by the President of the National Charities Association. The commencement speeches are organized continuously almost every year. Most commencement speeches

were delivered by people in the academic and political fields such as presidents of the universities, professors, or presidents of the United States. In the 53<sup>rd</sup> speech in 1944, people from publication fields such as the editors and the directors of the magazine were invited to express the speech. From then until now, people in various fields besides academic or political fields were more invited as speakers such as actors, writers, poets, and TV hosts (Stanford Libraries, n.d.). At present, many people from the entertainment industry such as celebrities, politicians, athletes, CEOs, and artists have been invited by universities and colleges around the United States as the invited speakers to conduct commencement speeches in the graduation ceremony as a tradition and share a variety of life lessons. Oprah Winfrey, for example, was invited to give a commencement speech at Colorado College in May 2019 (Gajanan, 2019). According to the previous information, it is shown that actors, actresses, singers, or other people in the entertainment field who are well-known or successful in their careers are invited to express their speeches at the graduation ceremony. Furthermore, some of the influential entertainers were given honorary doctorate degrees and invited as speakers such as, Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman.

Taylor Swift is an American singer and songwriter who received the title of honorary Doctor of Fine Arts from New York University in 2022. Taylor Swift has become one of the most powerful and reputable women in music history. She has won many awards during her music career for instance GRAMMY Award, the VMAs, Billboard Music Awards, etc. In addition, she is an advocate for artists by calling out Apple Music to pay royalties to artists during the service's first three months (Sisario, B, 2015). In 2022, she was one of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women as listed by Forbes magazine (Mcgrath, 2022). Her commencement speech on behalf of the honorary degree recipients has been widely discussed, especially on social media. The speech has been viewed more than 1,700,000 times on the YouTube official account of New York University. In addition, her speech got much attention from many news agencies. They cut some parts of her speech and posted on their social media platform. The number of views are quite huge for example on BBC News's Instagram official account, there are more than 1,600,000 views of Taylor Swift's speech content.

Moreover, Chadwick Boseman was an American actor, writer, and director. He was well known for his portrayal of the character, King T'Challa in Black Panther movie, one of the superhero of Marvel superheroes. During his career, he received many accolades for his work and career such as Screen Actors Guild Awards, a Golden Globe Award, a Critics Choice Award, a Primetime Emmy Award, and an Academy Award nomination (IMDb, n.d.). In the same year, he was granted an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from Howard University. His commencement speech posted on the official account of the university has been viewed more than 2,500,000 times. Furthermore, his speech is one of the most memorable commencement speeches from years past established by CNN (Page & Haq, 2021).

Many commencement speeches at present, especially speeches from public figures are interesting to study the technique as well as the functional use of language which makes the speeches empowering. Jaroenkitboworn (2021), for example, analyzed Mark Zuckerberg's Commencement Speech at Harvard University to investigate the language used and the relationship between the speaker and the listener. Jaroenkitboworn stated that a well-written script used in parallel with non-verbal components such as eye contact, smiles, and hand gestures can make an engaging speech (Jaroenkitboworn, 2021). According to Jaroenkitboworn (2021), it is shown that a well-written script and good non-verbal communication are crucial tools for making a great public speech to interact with people. In addition, Harvard Extension School provides a guideline for writing a successful commencement speech. The guideline suggested that an effective commencement speech must deliver a message that is both unique to the speaker and significant to a large audience (Harvard Extension School, n.d.). Moreover, one technique of making communication through public speech successful is politeness.

It cannot be rejected that successful and potential communication comes together with politeness. Politeness is one strategy for improving good communication for everyone. It is an essential part of communication. Yu and Ren (2013) stated that politeness can create a suitable environment for communication as well as improve interpersonal relationships (Yu & Ren, 2013). It is significant in human communication, so people must be concerned the politeness before delivering some content to others.

Moreover, politeness is efficient communication which is a great tool for speakers to make good communication with hearers in many ways. According to Daulay et al., (2022), politeness is important to apply in formal circumstances such as during a presentation and delivering in public because politeness may help the speaker cultivate a respectful attitude, as well as provide a positive first impression for speaker (Daulay et al., 2022). Politeness plays a significant part in preventing or minimizing confrontations. Since every language and culture has its particular system for being courteous, politeness is universal (Pratama, 2019). Therefore, studying and applying politeness as a strategy will help the speakers communicate with hearers well and reduce the conflict between speakers and hearers.

Many scholars proposed politeness theories that can be applied to all types of verbal communication. Geoffrey Leech is one of the scholars who proposed the interesting theory of politeness. Leech believes that people apply politeness in their communicative activities (Jie & Feifei, 2016). "Minimize the expression of impoliteness" and "maximize the expression of politeness" are two outcomes of being courteous (Leech, 1983). The interesting point of this politeness theory is the six maxims that classify politeness clearly when compared with other strategies (Kamkaew, 2019). Therefore, studying Leech's (1983) theory of politeness in public figures' speech may show different aspects of using politeness by public figures. Moreover, it will help us understand the purpose or hidden agenda of communication of a speaker to the hearer.

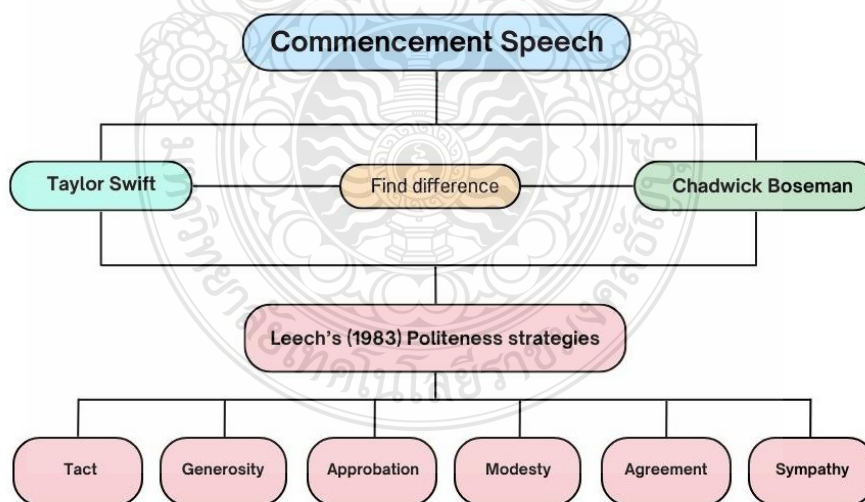
According to the reputation and success of Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman, it is interesting to study how they create good and impactful communication with people through their commencement speeches. Their commencement speeches are attractive to people and the media; therefore, the speeches of Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman are interesting to study what politeness strategies are hidden in their successful speeches. Although the studies of commencement speeches have gradually increased in recent years, the perspective of studying is the aspect of the functional use of language. In addition, many theories were applied to analyze the commencement speeches. The theory of politeness is one theory that was applied to analyze commencement speeches, but the theory of politeness of Leech (1983) is used less frequently.

Therefore, in this study, the commencement speeches delivered by Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman were analyzed to find out the politeness strategies of Leech (1983) employed in their speeches. These two influential entertainers also received honorary doctoral degrees and gave speeches. The success path and the endeavor of each influencer can motivate, encourage, and inspire many people, especially new graduate students. The two influential entertainers are well-known American artists in the entertainment industry, also their abilities are supported by many awards and a doctorate. The study will be advantageous to many people who would like to improve their public speaking skills as well as people who take responsibility for writing scripts used in speeches.

## 1.2 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework provides and explains the concept and process of this study that follows the research question and purpose of the study.

Figure 3: Conceptual Framework of the study.





### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. What are the politeness strategies employed in commencement speeches in graduation ceremonies by Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman?
2. What are the differences used in politeness strategies between the two influential entertainers?
3. How are politeness strategies used in commencement speeches by the two influential entertainers?

### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

1. To discover the type of politeness strategies employed in commencement speeches by Taylor Swift, and Chadwick Boseman.
2. To compare the politeness strategies found in the speeches of two influential entertainers.
3. To analyze the use of politeness strategies in commencement speeches in graduation ceremonies by the two influential entertainers.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study provided the result of politeness strategies utilized by two American influential entertainers. The study will be significant to people who are interested in improving their public speaking skills. They can practice their public speaking skills following the findings of this study. In addition, it will be beneficial to people who take responsibility for writing the speeches. The findings can guide how to create a speech politely based on the politeness theory. This study has also indicated the difference in language and politeness strategies produced by different genders, female and male. Moreover, this study will enhance the understanding of politeness strategies used in public speech and expand the linguistic data for the study in this field.

## 1.6 Scope of the Study

Taylor Swift's commencement addresses at a graduation ceremony in 2022 at New York University, the United States, and Chadwick Boseman at a Graduation ceremony in 2018 at Howard University, the United States were used to analyze the maxims of politeness by Leech (1983). All speeches were delivered on an honorary doctoral degree-receiving occasion by two influential entertainers. The data will be collected from the official YouTube of each university, New York University and Howard University.

This study is a textual analysis; therefore, the speeches were transcribed to text by finding the transcript version on the internet and using an online transcript program in case there is no transcript of that speech. However, the text of each speech had been re-checked for accuracy before being analyzed.

The politeness theory used to analyze the commencement speeches in this study is Leech's (1983) theory. In his politeness theory, there are six maxims set as the theoretical framework of this study as follows.

1. Tact maxim: Minimize cost to other; Maximize benefit to other.
2. Generosity maxim: Minimize benefit to self; Maximize cost to self.
3. Approbation maxim: Minimize dispraise of other; Maximize praise of other.
4. Modesty maxim: Minimize praise of self; Maximize dispraise of self.
5. Agreement maxim: Minimize disagreement between self and other; Maximize agreement between self and other.
6. Sympathy maxim: Minimize antipathy between self and other; Maximize sympathy between self and other.

### 1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study analyses the application of Leech's (1983) politeness strategies in only two commencement speeches delivered by two influential American entertainers. It is a case study, therefore; the number of speeches in this study is quite small and the result of this study may not be representative of all commencement speeches in the United States.

### 1.8 Definition of Terms

1. **Politeness strategy/Politeness theory/Theory of politeness** refers to the politeness principle or theory of politeness proposed by Geoffrey Leech in 1983. In the Politeness Principle, Leech (1983) also introduced six maxims including the maxim of Tack, Generosity, Modesty, Approbation, Agreement, and Sympathy.
2. **Commencement speeches** refer to the honorary doctoral degree recipient speeches in graduation ceremonies produced by Taylor Swift in 2022 at New York University, and Chadwick Boseman at Howard University in 2018.
3. **Graduation ceremonies** refer to the 188<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony of New York University, held at Yankee Stadium, on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and the 150<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony of Howard University took place in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, May 12, 2018.
4. **Two influential entertainers** refer to two American entertainers named Taylor Swift, a singer, and songwriter who has many popular songs such as *Love Story*, *You Belong with Me*, and *Shake It Off*, and Chadwick Boseman, an actor who is well-known as King T'Challa of *Black Panther* and the *Avengers* movies.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

This chapter presents the theoretical framework used in this study. Many theories of politeness are presented as well as politeness in communication and gender and politeness of language. Related studies both national and international are shown in this chapter.

#### **2.1 Politeness in Communication**

Politeness is a crucial behavior for communication especially for speakers because politeness can create a good feeling for hearers, leading to improved society and communication. Politeness means the consideration of speakers when they speak and act to listeners' feelings and wishes (Al-Deleimi, et al., 2016). "The behavior that is socially correct and shows an understanding of and care for other people's feelings" is the definition of politeness according to the Cambridge Dictionary. "Good manners and respect for the feelings of others" as well as "the reality of being socially acceptable but not always authentic" are another definition of politeness provided by the Oxford Dictionary.

Many academics are studying English communication behavior and assume that politeness is a normal behavior of people (Qodirberganovna, 2020). Kate Fox, a social anthropologist explained English politeness which the English is used as a sort of civility when driving, using transit, and traveling. Fox explained that the negative politeness culture of the British emphasizes caution, restraint, and avoiding touch when using public transit, however, Americans mostly employ positive-politeness (Fox, 2004). The negative and positive courtesy are called a Face concept by Brown and Levinson. The negative and positive are also mentioned in Searle's categories of illocutionary acts (1979). Searle proposes five types of illocutionary acts (Weda & Mustakim, 2022). Politeness also affects two in five categories of Searle including 1) assertive, 2) directive, 3) commissive, 4) expressive, and 5) declarations. Negative politeness is categorized as the directive class, the second category, and positive politeness is found in the commissive and

expressive classes, the third and fourth categories (Leech, 1983). In addition, depending on the circumstances, many forms and levels of politeness are employed. The four types of illocutionary functions including 1) competitive, 2) convivial, 3) collaborative, and 4) conflictive were proposed by Leech in his book (1983). Competitive, the first type of illocutionary function involves negative politeness. It seeks to minimize implied disagreement (Weda & Mustakim, 2022). Convivial functions, the second type involve positive politeness. It adopts a more positive attitude by looking for opportunities to show kindness (Leech, 1983).

Furthermore, the principle of negative politeness is part of a general communicative strategy of politeness or tact maxim, one of the maxims of Geoffrey Leech. Politeness in terms of Geoffrey Leech can be connected to a set of scales containing a negative and a positive pole. In terms of Leech's politeness, positive politeness is related to maximizing the politeness of polite illocutions while negative politeness is related to minimizing the impoliteness of impolite illocutions (Ryabova, 2015).

## **2.2 Politeness Theories**

There are several politeness theories that have been proposed to prove that any aspect of communication is related to politeness.

The Cooperative Principle of Paul Grice (1975), Lakoff's politeness theory (1973), the Face concept of Brown and Levinson (1987), and the Politeness Principle of Leech (1983) are reviewed here.

### **2.2.1 Grice's Theory**

Paul Grice proposed the Cooperative Principle in 1975. Shahrokhi et. al (2013) stated that the foundation of politeness studies is based on the Cooperative Principle of Grice. It is "the foundation of politeness's model" (Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013). The Cooperative Principle was introduced and explained conversational implicature and maintained the conversation for people (Hadi, 2013). Grice proposed 4 maxims of

conversation under the Cooperative Principle including 1) Quantity maxim, 2) Quality maxim, 3) Relevance maxim, and 4) Manner maxim (Pfister, 2010). These maxims are explained as follows:

1. Maxims of Quantity: Makes the information truthful. Do not make claims for which there is insufficient support.
2. Maxims of Quality: Provide the necessary information in your submission. Never claim that you know to be untrue or for which you lack sufficient support.
3. Maxims of Relevance: Be relevant.
4. Maxims of Manner: Be concise and organized in your contribution, speak clearly, and avoid from ambiguity or obscurity.

Furthermore, Grice proposed violating maxims and flouting maxims, he believed that people often break the rules or maxims during communication. Violating maxims will happen when speakers purposefully fail to apply particular maxims in their speech to produce confusion on the part of their participants or to further some other objectives, this is considered a violation. Flouting maxims will happen when someone intentionally stops using a maxim to get their listeners to infer the underlying meaning behind their statements, this is called implicature, and this is when maxims are flouted (Khosravizadeh & Sadehvandi, 2011).

### **2.2.2 Lakoff's Theory**

Lakoff formulated politeness theory in 1973. She adapted Grice's conversational maxims under the Cooperative Principle to her politeness theory and expanded Grice's view. In Lakoff's politeness theory, she proposed 2 rules including 1) "Be clear", and 2) "Be polite" (Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013). The explanation of each of Lakoff's rules is as follows.

#### **1) The rule of "Be clear"**

In the first rule, "*Be clear*", Lakoff incorporated Grice's maxims because their major focus is on making communication understandable. This rule deals with the formality and distance that combine people of the same society or people of other societies in a particular act of communication (Al-Duleimi, et al., 2016).

## 2) The rule of “Be polite”

The second rule, “*Be polite*” focuses on the communication among interlocutors in specific circumstances that are controlled by the social factor. Therefore, Lakoff introduced the sub-rules of the second rule as follows.

- (1) don't impose
- (2) give options
- (3) make a good feeling - be friendly.

Thus, this second rule considers courtesy while speaking to others (Al-Duleimi, et al., 2016). Lakoff (1977) stated that "distance and formality" are the subjects of the first sub-rule, "don't impose." The second sub-rule, “give an opinion” is concerned with “hesitancy”. "Make a good feeling – be friendly," the third sub-rule, addresses "equality." (Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013).

### 2.2.3 Brown and Levinson's Theory

Brown & Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness proposed 1) Positive face and 2) Negative face which are two different types of "face". It is also called “a face-saving theory of politeness” (Zhang, 2017). The face-saving theory is based on Goffman's notion of the face and builds on the Gricean model of the Cooperative Principle (Al-Duleimi, et al., 2016). Brown and Levinson (1987) define a person's face as something that we want or desire from others. The definitions of positive and negative face are as follows.

#### 1) Positive face

A positive face is based on a desire for other people's acceptance and approval or to be respected in particular ways. The desires cover a wide range, from the principles we wish to uphold to the activities we want to engage in. The components of “face” that are shown when we communicate with others are desires (Redmond, 2015).

## 2) Negative face

A negative face is based on the desire to not be hindered by other people. In another way, it is the principle when we desire other people to let us do what we desire, for example, People will presume from your negative face that you should be left alone to study while you are sitting in the library. Someone interrupts your attempts to maintain your need for your negative face if they approach you and start a discussion. (Redmond, 2015).

Brown and Levinson (1987) also focused on three social factors 1) power, 2) social distance, and 3) the degree of imposition. These social factors focus on what speakers should consider when communicating with each other (Al-Duleimi, et al., 2016). The definition of each social factor is as follows.

- 1) Power is defined as the social status of both the hearer and the speaker.
- 2) Social distance is the factor that reveals the familiarity level between interlocutors.
- 3) The degree of imposition is defined as a speaker's position and his capacity to force his ideas and desires on other people.

### **2.2.4 Leech's Theory**

According to Leech (1983), Grice's concept of the Cooperative Principle is necessary but insufficient because the Cooperative Principle cannot explain the reason for expressing indirect communication between individuals, the relation between sense and force. The politeness theory of Leech (1983) focuses on "Maximizing the expression of polite beliefs" and "minimizing the expression of impolite beliefs" (Leech, 1983). There are two types of politeness scales: 1) absolute politeness, and 2) relative politeness. The difference between "absolute politeness" and "relative politeness" is a vital characteristic of Leech's Politeness strategy as follows.



### 1) Absolute politeness

Absolute politeness has a positive and negative pole, for example, in “offers” and “orders”, the offers seem polite while orders seem impolite. Therefore, It is possible to "maximize the politeness of polite illocution" and "minimize the impoliteness of inherently impolite illocution" by using absolute politeness (Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013). According to Leech (2005), on an absolute politeness scale, an order statement “Help me” is less polite than a request statement “Can you help me?” (Leech, 2005).

### 2) Relative politeness

Relative politeness is related to a specific cultural, given group, or linguistic community, and different language speakers interpret the politeness principle differently (Shahrokhi, et al., 2013). Leech (2005) said that the relative politeness scale is a bi-directional scale and context-sensitive. In relative politeness, it measures "politeness appropriate to the situation", "over politeness", and "under politeness." (Leech, 2005).

Zhang (2017) said that Leech focused on absolute politeness which is the an area of academic research that has been conducted by several scholars (Zhang, 2017). Consequently, Leech proposed the Politeness Principle and six maxims that deal with polite behavior and focus on two strategies, "maximizing polite expression" and "minimizing impolite expression". The maxims include 1) Tact, 2) Generosity, 3) Approbation, 4) Modesty, 5) Agreement, and 6) Sympathy (Pfister, 2010). The definition of the six maxims is as follows.

#### 1) Tact Maxim (in impositives and commissives)

(a) *Minimize cost to other*

(b) *Maximize benefit to other*

In impositives, ordering, commanding, inquiring, advising, recommending, and inviting are examples of tact maxims that are utilized.. In commissives, the maxim is used as promising, vowing, and offering (Shahrokhi, et al., 2013).

## 2) Generosity Maxim (in impositives and commissives)

*(a) Minimize benefit to self*

*(b) Maximize cost to self*

Generosity maxim and Tact maxim work together in impositives and commissives; however, in Leech's book (1983), he stated that the observation revealed that omission of reference to the cost to hearers can make impositive be softened, and more polite. Hence, it is the hypothesis that the Tact maxim is more powerful than the Generosity maxim (Leech, 1983, and Shahrokhi & Bidabadi, 2013).

## 3) Approbation Maxim (in expressives and assertives)

*(a) Minimize dispraise of other*

*(b) Maximize praise of other*

Approbation maxim, Leech (1983) stated that it is the Flattery maxim but in the case of sincerity or compliment. This maxim is used to avoid talking about unpleasant things to hearers (Leech, 1983), for example, the statement of congratulation, compliment, and praise (Kamkeaw, 2019).

## 4) Modesty Maxim (in expressives and assertives)

*(a) Minimize praise of self*

*(b) Maximize dispraise of self*

Modesty maxim is applied when it is appropriate to concur with another's praise unless it is a compliment to oneself. It is often found in Asian societies especially in Japanese society, and more specifically among Japanese women. The action of the Modesty maxim sometimes seems self-denigration. It is different from English-speaking societies where people appreciate and accept the compliment, but in Asian societies, people reject the compliment (Leech, 1983, and Shahrokhi, 2013).

### 5) Agreement Maxim (in assertives)

*(a) Minimize disagreement between self and other*

*(b) Maximize agreement between self and other*

Agreement maxim is applied to show sorrow and partial disagreement to relieve a dispute or disagreement on the other hand as well as to maximize the speaker's agreement with other persons view just one hand (Shahrokhi, 2013).

### 6) Sympathy Maxim (in assertives)

*(a) Minimize antipathy between self and other*

*(b) Maximize sympathy between self and other*

Sympathy maxim shows maximizing sympathy with others and minimizing antipathy with others through condolences and congratulatory statements, for example, expression of sympathy for misfortune (Shahrokhi, 2013, Leech, 1983).

According to Leech (1983), the first four maxims - Tact, Generosity, Approbation, and Modesty - deal with bipolar scales, such the cost-benefit and praise-dispraise scales. While the Sympathy and Agreement maxims deal with unipolar scales like the Sympathy and Agreement scales (Leech, 1983).

However, Leech's (1983) theory of politeness was criticized for having Western cultural bias with as Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory because the six maxims were based on Grice's model of the Cooperative Principle, however, Leech attempted to propose the revision of politeness as Leech's (2005) theory of politeness or Grand Strategy of Politeness which provide a different degree of politeness. The previous six maxims were reconstructed and modified to be ten maxims that can be applied to all cultures (Al-Duleimi, et al., 2016). To be polite in the concept of the Grand Strategy of Politeness, the speaker makes statements or inferences that either place a high priority on what is relevant to others or a low value on what is relevant to the speaker. The Grand

Strategy of Politeness's maxims avoids utilizing the term “maxims” as much as possible Leech; rather, they are different expressions of the same super-constraint.

The modified 10 maxims of Leech's (2005) Grand Strategy of Politeness include (Leech, 2005).

1) Place a high value on other wants.

The related previous maxim is Tact and Generosity. The term for this restriction is Generosity. “Commissives” is the usual speech-act format.

2) Place a low value on the speaker's wants.

The related previous maxim is Tact and Generosity. The term for this restriction is Tact. The typical speech-act type is “directives”.

3) Place a high value on others' qualities.

The related previous maxim is Approbation and Modesty. The term for this restriction is Approbation. The usual speech-act format is “compliments”.

4) Place a low value on the speaker's quality.

The related previous maxim is Approbation and Modesty. The term for this restriction is Modesty. The usual speech-act format is “self-evaluation”.

5) Place a high value on the speaker's obligation to others.

The term for this restriction is the obligation of the speaker to others. The common speech-act format is “apology, thanks”.

6) Place a low value on others' obligation to the speaker.

The term for this restriction is the obligation of the speaker to others. “Responses to apologies and thanks” is the usual speech-act format.

7) Place a high value on others' opinions.

The term for this restriction is Agreement. The typical speech-act type is “agreeing, disagreeing”.

8) Place a low value on the speaker's opinions.

The level for this constraint is opinion reticence. The typical speech-act type is “giving opinions”.

9) Place a high value on others' feelings.

The term for this restriction is Sympathy. The common speech-act format is “expressing feelings”.

10) Place a low value on the speaker's feelings.

The term for this restriction is feeling reticence. “Suppressing feelings” is the common speech-act format.

Leech (2005) called speaker-oriented ones include 2) *Place a low value on the speaker's wants*, 4) *Place a low value on the speaker's quality*, 6) *Place a low value on others' obligation to the speaker*, 8) *Place a low value on speaker's opinions*, and 10) *Place a low value on speaker's feelings* as “primary constraints” and hearer-oriented ones include 1) *Place a high value on other wants*, 3) *Place a high value on others' qualities*, 5) *Place a high value on speaker's obligation to others*, 7) *Place a high value on others' opinions*, and 9) *Place a high value on others' feelings as secondary constraints*. It is important to remember that “secondary constraints”, in general, secondary restrictions that are speaker-oriented are weaker than those that are hearer-oriented (Leech, 2005).

According to many theories discussed in this chapter, Leech's (1983) theory of politeness is proper to apply to this study for many reasons. First, although Leech (2005) proposed the modified ten maxims of the Grand Strategy of politeness which are avoiding Western cultural bias and relevant to all cultures, Leech's (1983) theory of politeness which has six maxims is still chosen to be the theory that uses in this study because this study focuses on the commencement speeches from Native Americans whose speeches are categorized as western culture. Therefore, there is no need to be concerned about the Western cultural bias in Leech's (1983) theory of politeness. In addition, there are many studies that apply the politeness theory and the six maxims of Leech (1983).

Second, there are many theories of politeness proposed by several scholars such as Lakoff (1973), Brown and Levinson (1987), and Leech (1983), however, Al-Duleimi, et al. (2016) provided a critical review of the strong points and weak points of politeness theories proposed by Lakoff's (1973), Brown and Levinson's (1987), and Leech (1983) in "A Critical Review of Prominent Theories of Politeness". In his work, he concluded that Lakoff (1973) offered a theory of politeness that is complicated, unnecessary, and fails to fulfil the criteria for being considered a universal phenomenon. Meanwhile, Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory of politeness has argued for the lack of universality and applicability to all cultures because of Western bias (Al-Duleimi, et al., 2016)

Third, even though Western bias continued to be critiqued in Leech's theory of politeness (1983) same as Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory (Al-Duleimi, 2016), the politeness strategy of Leech (1983) seems to be more proper for applying in this study because the six maxims proposed by Leech classified the definition of each maxim distinctly and covered the situations of the speaker to hearer (Kamkeaw, 2019).

Consequently, the politeness strategy and the six maxims of Leech (1983) are chosen for this study for analyzing the commencement speeches of two American influential entertainers.

Table 1: Leech's (1983) theory of politeness and its six maxims.

Maxim of politeness	Meaning
1. Tact maxim	Minimize cost to others; Maximize benefit to other.
2. Generosity maxim	Minimize benefit to self; Maximize cost to self.
3. Approbation maxim	Minimize dispraise of others; Maximize praise of other.
4. Modesty maxim	Minimize praise of self; Maximize dispraise of self.
5. Agreement maxim	Minimize disagreement between self and other; Maximize agreement between self and other.
6. Sympathy maxim	Minimize antipathy between self and other; Maximize sympathy between self and other.

### 2.3 Gender and Politeness of Language

Socio-cultural factors influence the different behavior of males and females. In the past, men played important roles and important positions in society such as politicians, lawyers, and other careers that were led by men. The major change occurred around the 1940s and 1950s, there was the political activism of the Women's Movement that made women treated as equals to men (Coates, 2015). Even though men and women are increasingly thought of as being on equal terms nowadays, the use of language and the way communication between men and women are certainly different. Women have a greater emphasis on the emotional rather than communication's informative aspects; therefore, many linguists believe that women are more polite than men (Furkatovna, et al., 2021). In addition, men and women are different in many aspects of language use. Women are better at pronunciation than men. For showing feelings, men and women typically use different word choices, for example, women avoid using swear words and dirty words while men employ more swear words. Compared to men, women are more conscious of using formal language and linguistic forms of politeness (Xia, 2013 & Coates, 2015).

To prove the statement that women are more polite and use more formal styles than men, the language of women and men in the Mayan community, in Mexico was studied by Penelope Brown (1980). The lifestyles of women and men in the Mayans were different. Mayan women worked and stayed at home as housekeepers while men worked outside the home. After studying the language use between men and women in the Mayan community, it is shown that women in the Mayan community are more polite than men and women employed positive politeness when they talked to women and employed negative politeness when they talked to men (Brown, 1980). Brown's findings are supported by Holmes' (1995) thorough analysis of gender disparities in the expression of politeness. The language of women and men in New Zealand was studied and found that men are more focused on the referential purposes of communication, whereas women are more attuned to affective, interpersonal meanings (Coates, 2015). Ambarita and Mulyadi (2020) also studied gender and language politeness. The findings showed four aspects. Firstly, language and gender showed that men and women speak in various and different

ways such as phonology, morphology, and diction. Secondly, Ambarita stated the relationship between language and gender. There are three different types of relationships between language and gender 1) Gender division is reflected in language; 2) Gender division is created by language; and 3) Language and social structure interact. Thirdly, men and women have different linguistic patterns, as well as different personality types and abilities. Men are creative and renewable, while women are more inclined to preserve the language. Finally, regarding the relationship between gender and politeness of language, Ambarita stated that politeness may reflect speakers' power dynamics (Ambarita & Mulyadi, 2020).

According to the studies above, it can be concluded that the style of politeness, and formal communication are employed more frequently by women than men. The reason that women are more polite as shown in many studies may be influenced by the different roles in society between men and women from the past to the present. Although there is equality between genders nowadays, the behavior is transferred from generation to generation.

## **2.4 Related Literature**

Leech's (1983) theory of politeness was applied in many studies. The politeness theory and six maxims were analyzed in many aspects of communication such as political speeches, communication or dialogue in movies or drama, online communication, and application letters. This part of the chapter will provide the previous study and research related to Leech's (1983) theory of politeness in international and national studies.

### **2.4.1 International Literature**

This part shows the international studies that apply the politeness theory of Leech (1983) to analyze various contents. The studies that apply Leech's (1983) politeness theory such as political speeches, movies, general communication, and business letters are presented below.



Politeness plays an important role in the political field. The six-politeness maxims of Leech (1983) were found to apply to many speeches of politicians as a crucial strategy for improving the effectiveness and success of diplomatic communication. The study of Pakzadian (2012) investigated the Politeness Principle in three presidential debates in 2008 between two American candidates to be president, John Mc Cain and Barack Obama. The result revealed that all six maxims were employed in all three debates by both John Mc Cain and Barack Obama. In addition, the findings indicated that Barak Obama not only utilized six maxims in all three debates but also utilized the maxims more than John Mc Cain (Pakzadian, 2012). Another politician who applied six maxims to his speech was Donald Trump. Mariani (2019) examined the use of the maxims of politeness in the victory speech of Donald Trump on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The findings indicated that six maxims of Leech's (1983) politeness theory appeared in 21 statements and the most used politeness maxim was the maxim of Tact. In addition, the study by Mariani (2019) showed the aspect of using the Tact maxim of Trump that he tried to maximize the benefit of others and minimize the cost to others through his speech (Mariani, 2019).

Additionally, there are other studies about the Politeness Principle related to communication in movie or dramas. In Jie and Feifei's (2016) study, they analyzed the dialogues in the *Teahouse* by using the Politeness Principle of Leech (1983). Jie and Feifei (2016) explored the cultural and social aspects of dynamic communication under Leech's politeness principle. This study revealed that there are six maxims of the Politeness Principle used in the dialogues in the *Teahouse*. They concluded that the Politeness Principle can help a better comprehension of personality and the connection between the characters and mental activities in the drama analysis (Jie & Feifei, 2016).

The politeness that was applied under cultural communication appears in *Kung Fu Panda 1* movie in Rosyidha, et al., (2019) study. Rosyidha, et al., (2019) found out the types of maxims, the most and least maxims applied in the movie, and how the figures used politeness in communication. The result of the study showed that all politeness maxims were utilized in the movie. The interesting point was the most frequent use of the maxim in the movie. It was the maxim of Agreement. Rosyidha, et al., (2019) explained that the reason for applying the Agreement maxim is related to the culture. Students

mostly agree with the master's statement in Kung Fu culture. Disagreement reflects indiscipline in the relationship between students and the Master. The least frequent use of the maxim in the movie was the maxim of Generosity because the most significant characteristic of a Kung Fu situation is the students' and teachers' submissiveness, which is demonstrated in the agreement between students and Master (Rosyidha, et al., 2019).

Another study of politeness in the movie is the study of Pardede, et al., (2019). They studied the Politeness Principle in the *Big Hero 6* Movie to find Leech's (1983) politeness maxims utilized by characters in the movie. The findings indicated there were a total of 90 politeness maxims employed by characters in the movie, and all six maxims including maxims of Tact, Generosity, Modesty, Approbation, Agreement, and Sympathy were found. The most frequent maxim found in the movie was the Tact maxim, it was found 32 times. Pardede (2019) stated that the reason for applying the Tact maxim mostly was the characters take great care to reveal their connection, so they do not make the other receive the cost (Pardede, et al., 2019).

All six maxims were employed in the communication of the three movies above showing that every communication employed politeness and politeness is very important in human communication. In Yu and Ren's (2013) study, the Politeness principle was analyzed with some examples of context in daily life. The result found that there is every maxim employed in daily communication, for example Tact maxim which significantly increases the hearer's cost while being more polite. Approbation maxim is used to praise in daily life, Yu and Ren (2013) gave an example of a statement such as "What a delicious cake you cooked", case Approbation also can be used to avoid some statements such as "What an awful cake you cooked" Therefore, to achieve successful communication in daily life, people should utilize the politeness maxims appropriately (Yu & Ren, 2013).

Nowadays, messages are a way of communication in daily life that needs to be polite in the same way as face-to-face communication. Nurdyani and Sasongko (2022) investigated polite communication or messages sent by students to lecturers through the WhatsApp application. The data of this study was WhatsApp messages of students sent to lecturers. The messages were analyzed in language forms to identify and classify the category of Leech's politeness principles. The results of the study indicated the frequency

of each maxim. The most popular method for students to communicate with instructors was a maxim of Modesty while the sympathy maxim was not used. Nurdiyani and Sasongko (2022) concluded that students used polite communication with lectures by applying the maxims of Tact, Approbation, Modesty, and Agreement. They also discussed that students utilized the theory of Politeness while communicating with lecturers online (Nurdiyani & Sasongko, 2022).

The idea of applying politeness in written communication such as persuasive English business letters, sales letters, and application letters was explored in Zheng's (2015) study. The findings indicated that positive and negative politeness should both be used in persuasive English business letters to avoid the readers' unfavorable reactions. Sales writers should be able to draw readers' attention because their attempts to persuade them are threatening the readers' negative faces same as the application letters are also threatening readers' negative faces because the purpose of the letter is to convince readers to hire without being overbearing and to show their skills in performing the tasks readers demand, therefore it will be preferable to focus on how readers will gain from hiring the applicants by maximizing readers' benefit by applying Leech's politeness strategies. In addition, the result revealed that in a sales letter, the cost is the price, and the benefit is some nice service or product, therefore according to Leech's (1983) Tact and Generosity maxim, the readers' benefit should be maximized while their cost should be reduced (Zheng, 2015).

According to all the studies above, it can be concluded that the six-politeness maxims of Leech (1983) were employed in many international studies and many types of communication. Many studies pointed out that politeness is important for communication in daily life (Yu & Ren, 2013). It can help with a better understanding of personality and the relationships between people in society (Jie & Feifei, 2016). In addition, some studies indicated that politeness maxims can show the cultural and social aspects of communication.

### 2.4.2 National Literature

Leech's (1983) theory of politeness and its six maxims were found to apply in various national studies. There are many types of content that were analyzed and for politeness maxims use, such as political speeches, application letters, cross-culture communication, and Thai literature.

Kamkeaw (2019) examined the six maxims of the Politeness Principle as they applied to Donald Trump and Barack Obama's public remarks. In this study, Inaugural speeches and The U.S.-ASEAN conference speeches of the two presidents were analyzed to find out Leech's (1983) maxims of politeness. The result revealed that in the first inaugural speech, Obama employed 36 Politeness Principle statements while Trump used 34 statements. Approbation maxim was the most frequently used in both presidents' speeches. In addition, Obama delivered 26 statements of the Politeness Principle in the U.S.-ASEAN conference, while 19 statements of the Politeness Principle were utilized by Trump in the U.S.-ASEAN conference. At the same time, both presidents most frequently used Agreement maxim. Kamkeaw (2019) stated that the ways in which the two presidents persuade an audience during remarks in public are comparable. Additionally, throughout their addresses, Obama and Trump both applied the politeness principle and six maxims in order to avoid conflict and animosity (Kamkeaw, 2019).

Duangkhot (2017) analyzed the discourse components of a sample of job application letters by using Leech's (1983, 2005) principles of politeness. The sample job application letter that was used as the data for this research was written by Kiana Johnson while applying for the position of Assistant Safety Supervisor at CUNA Mutual Insurance. The findings demonstrated how the maxim of Modesty and Approbation interact, while the maxim of Tact also contributes to the reading of the letter. Duangkhot (2017) discussed that the relationship between the Approbation maxim and the Modesty maxim, which showed the asymmetries of politeness, was identified by Politeness theory. In addition, the letter showed a clear, convincing style that accomplished its goal of promoting the job application to land an interview with a potential company and potential employment in the future. (Duangkhot, 2017).

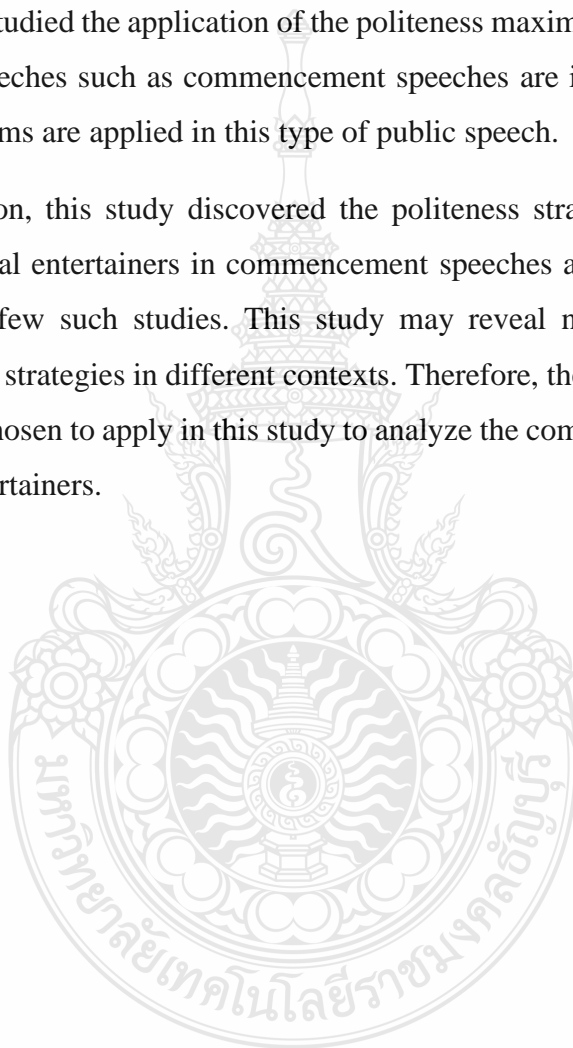
Tejarajanya (2016) studied and compared cross-cultural compliment responses among Thai and Japanese speakers. 20 Thais and 20 Japanese were the subject of this study. An electronic questionnaire which included four situations of friend-to-friend compliments such as appearance, character, ability, and possession was used to collect the data. The result indicated a constant tendency toward 'Accept' most, 'Evade' less, and 'Reject' least across macro complement response techniques employed by Thai and Japanese speakers in the four situational circumstances. Tejarajanya (2016) stated that appreciation, agreement, and downgrading/qualifying compliments were utilized as the same micro strategies by Thai and Japanese speakers even though they used different combination patterns. It reflected the two maxims of Leech's (1983) Politeness Principle such as the maxim of Agreement and Modesty which were the fundamental compliment response strategies of Thais and Japanese (Tejarajanya, 2016).

Waraaeksiri (2013) studied the Politeness Principle and six maxims of Leech (1983) and the face concept and face-threatening act of Brown and Levinson employed in two groups of characters including the Plup-Pla group and Long-Ka group in Ramkien's King Rama I. The findings revealed that politeness of speech which was used by characters in Ramkien's King Rama I was affected by power, social distance, size of imposition, and rights and obligations. In addition, five maxims of Leech (1983) including the maxim of Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, and Sympathy were found and only the maxim of Agreement was not found in the study. This indicated that the communication of characters in Ramkien's King Rama I was similar to real society. Moreover, positive and negative faces were found when the characters communicated with opposite characters which threatened to reduce prestige (Waraaeksiri, 2013).

Regarding the previous national studies above, Politeness strategies were applied in many contexts to make great communication. In many contexts, Politeness strategies were applied to convince people (Kamkeaw, 2019, Duangkhot, 2017). In political communication, politeness was applied to avoid hard feelings and conflict the same as communication in Asian cultures such as Thai and Japanese (Kamkeaw, 2019, Tejarajanya, 2016).

Both international and national studies applied the politeness strategies of Leech (1983) to analyze many types of content, for instance, political speeches, presidential debates, letters, and communication in movies and daily life. Many studies applied only Leech's theory, and some works applied Leech's theory and compared it with other politeness theories. However, commencement speeches are rarely studied especially in terms of analysis with theory of politeness. Although some public speeches, for instance, political speeches studied the application of the politeness maxims of Leech (1983), other types of public speeches such as commencement speeches are interesting to study how the politeness maxims are applied in this type of public speech.

In conclusion, this study discovered the politeness strategies of Leech (1983) applied to influential entertainers in commencement speeches are challenging to locate because there are few such studies. This study may reveal new or other aspects of applying politeness strategies in different contexts. Therefore, the politeness strategies of Leech (1983) are chosen to apply in this study to analyze the commencement speeches of two influential entertainers.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents how the study is designed. The data and instrument of the study are shown in this chapter. In addition, data collection and data analysis are going to be presented.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study was designed with the characteristics of qualitative corpus-based analysis as the methodology for analysis. This method concentrates on an interpretive paradigm of how knowledge is positioned within social situations (Smith, 2017). Descriptive analysis is conducted in this study. The statistics employed in this study are frequency and percentage to count the politeness maxims used in each speech, and textual analysis is applied to analyse the speeches. According to Bernard and Ryan (1998), textual analysis is used for the objectives of exploratory and confirmatory. Furthermore, the social sciences and humanities depend significantly on text analysis as a research tool, and the variety of text analysis techniques available is remarkable. In text analysis, words, phrases, paragraphs, pages, documents, concepts, meanings, paralinguistic aspects, and even what is missing from the text are studied by translating, marking, and counting (Bernard & Ryan, 1998).

In this study, the commencement speeches given by the two influential entertainers were the data that were analyzed. The data were collected and converted from sound into text before analysis. To answer the research questions, the commencement speeches were analyzed as a textual analysis to determine the politeness strategy and the six maxims of Leech (1983) which were employed in the speeches. In addition, the findings of politeness strategies found in the two commencement speeches were compared and analyzed.

### 3.2 Research Instruments

The instruments of this study are the graduation addresses given by Taylor Swift at New York University's 188<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony in 2022 and Chadwick Boseman at Howard University's 150<sup>th</sup> Commencement Ceremony in 2018. The number of words in each speech is presented in the following table.

Table 2: Number of words in each speech.

Speakers	University	Number of words
Taylor Swift	New York University	2,790
Late Chadwick Boseman	Howard University	3,588
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,378</b>

In addition, the theory of politeness proposed by Leech (1983) was applied in this study to analyze the speeches of two influential entertainers. In the theory, there are six maxims revealed in the following table.

Table 3: Politeness maxims proposed by Leech (1983).

Maxim	Description
Tact	Minimize cost to other.
	Maximize benefit to other.
Generosity	Minimize benefit to self.
	Maximize cost to self.
Approbation	Minimize dispraise of other.
	Maximize praise of other.
Modesty	Minimize praise of self.
	Maximize dispraise of self.
Agreement	Minimize disagreement between self and other.
	Maximize agreement between self and other.
Sympathy	Minimize antipathy between self and other.
	Maximize sympathy between self and other.



### 3.3 Data Collection

Many influential entertainers have received honorary degrees and delivered speeches. These two influential entertainers were proposed to receive honorary degrees and delivered powerful speeches that were widely watched, talked about, and discussed among people and the media. Taylor Swift and the late Chadwick Boseman are powerful American influential entertainers. They achieved in their careers and are well-known widely around the world. Throughout 2022, Taylor Swift set many new records, for example, the artist sold the most concert tickets in one day, the most won American Music Awards in history, the highest Spotify streaming in history with over 228 million listens in one day, and the honorary degree recipient in Fine Arts. The late Chadwick Boseman is one of the most famous quality actors. TIME Magazine categorized him as one of the most influential people of 2018. In the same year, he proposed to receive an honorary doctorate in Fine Arts. His speech has more than 2 million views on the official YouTube channel of Howard University. Even though he passed away, his ability, reputation, and performance are being talked about and praised. Therefore, the speech of these two influential entertainers are selected to analyze the use of politeness in their speeches.

The commencement speeches delivered by Taylor Swift in 2022 and Chadwick Boseman in 2018 were collected to analyze the politeness maxims of Leech (1983). Two influential entertainers delivered the speech on behalf of the honorary degree recipients. The commencement speeches were collected from the official YouTube channel of each university and prepared for analysis as following procedures.

1. The speech by Taylor Swift was collected from the official YouTube account of New York University (@newyorkuniversity). Her speech was posted on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and the length of the speech is around 20 minutes.
2. The speech of Chadwick Boseman was collected from the official YouTube account of Howard University (@howarduniversity). His speech was posted on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and the length of speech is around 25 minutes.
3. The commencement speeches of two influential entertainers were converted from sound into text for analysis. The text versions of each speech were discovered on the internet. The text version of Taylor Swift's speech collected

from the website Billboard ([www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com)). The text version of the late Chadwick Boseman's speech collected from the website of the Washington Post ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)).

4. An online transcribe program was used to convert the beginning part, around 2 minutes of Chadwick Boseman's speech because there was no text version.
5. The text version was re-checked for accuracy by the researcher. To verify the accuracy of the two speeches before applying the text version, the researcher listened to the full video of the speeches along with the script.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the politeness strategies employed in commencement speeches in graduation ceremonies by Taylor Swift and the late Chadwick Boseman?
2. What are the differences used in politeness strategies between the two influential entertainers?
3. How are politeness strategies used in commencement speeches by the two influential entertainers?

The commencement speeches in graduation ceremonies produced by the two influential entertainers were analyzed by using textual analysis to determine the type of politeness strategies utilized by the two influential entertainers. To answer the first question, the politeness maxims of each speech were counted as the frequency and shown as the percentage of each speech. The results of politeness strategies found in the two commencement speeches utilized by the two influential entertainers compared to the different use of strategies for answering the second question. Finally, the politeness strategies that appeared in each speech were analyzed and discussed to answer the third question.

To facilitate analysis of the speeches, the maxims of the politeness strategy were coded as abbreviations of each maxim. Moreover, the type of statement and example statement of each maxim is indicated to be a guideline for analysis in the following table.

Table 4: Abbreviation, type of context, and example statement of each maxim.

Maxim	Abbreviation	Type of statement	Example statement
<b>Tact</b>	TM	The statement of ordering, commanding, requesting, advising, recommending, and inviting, promising, vowing, and offering	“I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you” (Duangkhot, 2017). “May I have the honor to have a cup of coffee with you?” (Yu & Ren, 2013).
<b>Generosity</b>	GM	1. Expression of generosity. The statement of offering and invitation. 2. Focusing more on self than others.	“To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you” (Kamkeaw, 2019). “You must come and have dinner with us” (Leech, 1983).
<b>Approbation</b>	AM	The statement of congratulation, compliment, express gratitude, and praise.	“Thank you very much, Everyone” (Mariani, 2019). “What a marvelous meal you cooked” (Leech, 1983).
<b>Modesty</b>	MM	1. Expression of modesty and self-dispraise.	“How stupid of me” (Leech, 1983). “I’m honored to represent the United States of

		2. Mostly found in Asian behavior and apology context.	America” (Kamkeaw, 2019)
<b>Agreement</b>	AM	<p>1. The statement of reducing disagreement and conflict.</p> <p>2. The statement to gain agreement and support from the audience.</p> <p>3. The consistency of the speaker and listener's opinions.</p>	<p>“Are you willing to be my group supervisor?” (Nurdiyani, 2022).</p> <p>“For the world has changed, and we must change with it” (Kamkeaw, 2019)</p>
<b>Sympathy</b>	SM	<p>1. Expression of sympathy for misfortune, and condolence.</p> <p>2. The statement of showing sincerity.</p>	<p>“You’d better have a rest these days” (Yu &amp; Ren, 2013).</p> <p>“I’m terribly sorry to hear about your cat” (Leech, 1983)</p>

## Examples of analysis

### Statement 1:

*“I’d like to say a huge thank you to NYU’s Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Bill Berkeley, and all the trustees and members of the board, NYU’s President Andrew Hamilton, Provost Katherine Fleming, and the faculty and alumni here today who have made this day possible” (Taylor Swift, 2022).*

*NYU's 2022 Commencement Speaker Taylor Swift*

*May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022*

### Analysis 1:

This statement by Taylor Swift shows the expression of praise to NYU’s management team, faculty members, and alumni for making the event happen. She also showed praise by mentioning the individual names of each person, which means a lot to the people who were mentioned. This kind of statement can be categorized as the “Approbation maxim.”

### Statement 2:

*“I want to say something to that. You know, sometimes your grades don’t give a real indication of what your greatness might be. So, it really is” okay (Chadwick Boseman, 2018).*

*Chadwick Boseman's Howard University 2018 Commencement Speech*

*May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018*

### Analysis 2:

“Sympathy maxim” is the category of the above statement. The late Chadwick expressed sympathy for students who got grades against their hopes. The statement “So, it really is okay” shows his sympathy and empathy for students suffering.

Table 5: Summary of the research process.

This table reveals data analysis and instruments used for each purpose that leads to the findings of this research. The table summarized the research process and provided a simple understanding.

<b>Purpose of the study</b>	<b>Instrument.</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
1. To discover the type of politeness strategies employed in commencement speeches by Taylor Swift, and Chadwick Boseman.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taylor Swift's speech</li> <li>• Chadwick Boseman's speech</li> <li>• Politeness strategies of Leech (1983)</li> </ul>	Textual analysis and categorization
2. To compare the politeness strategies found in the speeches of two influential entertainers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taylor Swift's speech</li> <li>• Chadwick Boseman's speech</li> <li>• Politeness strategies of Leech (1983)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency</li> <li>• Percentage</li> <li>• Textual analysis</li> </ul>
3. To analyze the use of politeness strategies in commencement speeches in graduation ceremonies by two influential entertainers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taylor Swift's speech</li> <li>• Chadwick Boseman's speech</li> <li>• Politeness strategies of Leech (1983)</li> </ul>	Textual analysis

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH RESULT

This chapter presents the results of this study. Two speeches were analyzed the number of maxims in statistics and explanations was reported according to the research questions. In addition, two speeches were compared and analyzed to reveal the reason of applying.

#### 4.1 The Politeness Strategies Employed in Commencement Speech

##### 4.1.1 Taylor Swift's speech

Table 6: The number of maxims in Taylor Swift's speech.

Maxim	Frequency	Percentage
Tact	15	32%
Generosity	16	34%
Approbation	7	15%
Modesty	2	4%
Agreement	5	11%
Sympathy	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.1.1 shows the maxims employed in Taylor Swift's commencement in frequency and percentage in each maxim. According to the table above, Taylor Swift's speech contains 47 statements. Generosity maxim is employed the most in this speech, which are 16 times, 34%. Followed by Tact maxim, which is found 15 times, 32%. Approbation maxim is utilized 7 times, 15%. Then, Agreement maxim appears 5 times, 11%. While Modesty and Sympathy maxims are found the least at 2 times, 4% of each maxim.

#### 4.1.2 Chadwick Boseman's speech

Table 7: The number of maxims in Chadwick Boseman's speech.

Maxim	Frequency	Percentage
Tact	14	24%
Generosity	14	24%
Approbation	18	31%
Modesty	1	2%
Agreement	9	16%
Sympathy	2	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table shows the use of each maxim employed by Chadwick Boseman in commencement speech. In Chadwick's speech, there are a total of 58 statements. The most used maxim is Approbation maxim. There are 18 times, 31% in this speech. Then, Tact maxim and Generosity maxim are employed similarly 14 times, 24% in this speech. Next, Agreement maxim is found 9 times, 16%. Sympathy maxim is utilized 2 times, 3%. While Modesty maxim is found the least at only one time, 2% in this speech.

#### 4.2 The Comparison Between Two Influential Entertainers' Speech

Table 8: The comparison of maxim used between two commencement speeches.

Maxim	Frequency	
	Taylor Swift	Chadwick Boseman
Tact	15	14
Generosity	16	14
Approbation	7	18
Modesty	2	1
Agreement	5	9
Sympathy	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>58</b>



This table presents the comparison of maxims used by two influential entertainers in commencement speeches. The total statement of Taylor Swift are less than Chadwick Boseman's because the total number of words in their speech is different. However, the aspect of using between two influential entertainers is not different that much. This part will discuss the reason for the use of the top three maxims applied by two influential entertainers.

When the two speeches are compared, it is shown that Taylor utilized Generosity maxim the most while Chadwick applied Approbation maxim the most. However, these two influential entertainers applied the top three maxims as Tact, Generosity, and Approbation similarly. Even though these two influential entertainers are different in several aspects, they are both public figures who face societal pressure and discrimination. Moreover, the purpose of expressing the commencement speech of two influential entertainers is the same. They would like to share their experiences, give some advice, and encourage people. Therefore, Tact, Generosity, and Approbation maxim are applied as the top three.

In Taylor Swift's speech, she usually told her story to show examples through her life. She shared her experiences, mistakes, and how to overcome them. She maximized cost to herself and also showed the generosity to share her story with others even though it was not always a happy story. Since she began her career at 14 years old, she has had many experiences both good and bad to share with people. Therefore, Generosity was applied the most by Taylor Swift. At the same time, Tact maxim was utilized because she also gave some advice, suggestions, and recommendations to the audience. She maximized benefit to the audience. In addition, Taylor maximized praise to many people. She expressed gratitude to New York University and the concerned people who allowed her to receive a doctoral degree. Moreover, Taylor praised the audience in some statements. This is why Approbation maxim has appeared in her statement.

In Chadwick's speech, it appears that Chadwick applied Approbation maxim the most. He maximized praise to the audience, Howard University, and many people in the university. In his speech, Chadwick showed familiarity with Howard University because he was an alumnus. He had many people to express gratitude. He had many memorable

stories here. He understood what students' life at Howard University was like. He also encouraged students. At the same time, Chadwick is a person of colour who has fought discrimination in society. He understood the situation of students at Howard University. He had generosity to share his story with students and give them some advice. Therefore, Generosity maxim and Tact maxim are found to follow the Approbation maxim.

In conclusion, these two influential entertainers applied the politeness maxims quite similarly as it shown in the result. The difference between the two influential entertainers is in from the background and the relationship between themselves and the university. The same aspect also applied to various experiences in their life and careers. They shared and provided some life hacks to the audience. Therefore, it can be concluded that the reasons for differences in these two speeches are the result of the different relationship between the two speakers and the university and not as a result of gender.

### 4.3 Qualitative Analysis of Taylor Swift's Speech

#### **Tact maxim**

*“Someone read stories to you and taught you to dream and offered up some moral code of right and wrong for you to try and live by. Someone tried their best to explain every concept in this insanely complex world to the child that was you, as you asked a bazillion questions like ‘how does the moon work’ and ‘why can we eat salad but not grass.’ And maybe they didn’t do it perfectly. No one ever can. Maybe they aren’t with us anymore, and in that case I hope you’ll remember them today. If they are here in this stadium, I hope you’ll find your own way to express your gratitude for all the steps and missteps that have led us to this common destination”.*

The sentence *“I hope you’ll find your own way to express your gratitude for all the steps and missteps that have led us to this common destination”* shows the maximizing benefit to others. In this statement, Taylor seems to recommend all graduated students to thank anyone who is part of today's success. Consequently, this statement can be classified as Tact maxim.

*“You get what you get. And as I would like to say to you, you should be very proud of what you’ve done with it. Today you leave New York University and then you go out into the world searching for what’s next. And so will I”.*

Taylor maximized benefit to all graduated students and told them to feel pleased with themselves. The sentence *“you should be very proud of what you’ve done with it”* supports this statement that this is Tact maxim.

*So I won’t tell you what to do because no one likes that. I will, however, give you some life hacks I wish I knew when I was starting out my dreams of a career, and navigating life, love, pressure, choices, shame, hope and friendship.*

Taylor will give some advice on living life to the audience. The sentence *“I will, however, give you some life hacks”* made this statement classified as Tact maxim because the speaker maximizes the benefit to other.

*“The first of which is...life can be heavy, especially if you try to carry it all at once. Part of growing up and moving into new chapters of your life is about catch and release. What I mean by that is, knowing what things to keep, and what things to release”.*

In this statement, Taylor advised graduated students to choose things to keep and release because carrying everything makes life difficult. This statement can be classified as Tact maxim.

*“You can’t carry all things, all grudges, all updates on your ex, all enviable promotions your school bully got at the hedge fund his uncle started. Decide what is yours to hold and let the rest go. Oftentimes the good things in your life are lighter anyway, so there’s more room for them. One toxic relationship can outweigh so many wonderful, simple joys. You get to pick what your life has time and room for. Be discerning”.*

The sentences *“Decide what is yours to hold and let the rest go”* and *“You get to pick what your life has time and room for. Be discerning”* made this statement classified as Tact maxim. Taylor gave some advice about being discerning in life. She maximized the benefit to other through this statement.

*“Secondly, learn to live alongside cringe. No matter how hard you try to avoid being cringe, you will look back on your life and cringe retrospectively. Cringe is unavoidable over a lifetime. Even the term ‘cringe’ might someday be deemed cringe.”*

Taylor advised the audience to “*learn to live alongside cringe*” because “*Cringe is unavoidable over a lifetime*” She maximized benefit to others by advising them and telling them the truth of being in society after college life. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“I promise you, you’re probably doing or wearing something right now that you will look back on later and find revolting and hilarious. You can’t avoid it, so don’t try to. For example, I had a phase where, for the entirety of 2012, I dressed like a 1950s housewife. But you know what? I was having fun. Trends and phases are fun. Looking back and laughing is fun”.*

Taylor used the phrase “*don’t try to*” as a recommendation for the audience to enjoy the funny things that have been done in the past because everyone cannot escape from the past, just having fun with it. Therefore, this statement can be classified as Tact maxim.

*“And while we’re talking about things that make us squirm but really shouldn’t, I’d like to say that I’m a big advocate for not hiding your enthusiasm for things. It seems to me that there is a false stigma around eagerness in our culture of ‘unbothered ambivalence”.*

This sentence “*I’m a big advocate for not hiding your enthusiasm for things*” shows the maximizing benefit to other. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“This outlook perpetuates the idea that it’s not cool to ‘want it.’ That people who don’t try hard are fundamentally more chic than people who do. And I wouldn’t know because I have been a lot of things but I’ve never been an expert on ‘chic.’ But I’m the one who’s up here so you have to listen to me when I say this: Never be ashamed of trying. Effortlessness is a myth. The people who wanted it the least were the ones I wanted to date and be friends with in high school. The people who want it most are the people I now hire to work for my company”.*

The sentence “*you have to listen to me*” makes this statement fall under with the Tact maxim. It can be seen as an ordering sentence, but it can also be an advice sentence. Taylor gave some advice to the audience by saying “*Never be ashamed of trying. Effortlessness is a myth*”. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“We are all literary chameleons and I think it’s fascinating. It’s just a continuatiOn of the idea that we are so many things, all the time. And I know it can be really overwhelming figuring out who to be, and when. Who you are now and how to act in order to get where you want to go. I have some good news: It’s totally up to you. I also have some terrifying news: It’s totally up to you”.*

Taylor compared everyone to chameleons because we could choose who to be and when. This good and profound news she gave to the audience is some pieces of advice for everyone that they can be whoever they want to be, it’s up to you. Therefore, this statement can be classified as Tact maxim.

*“And being embarrassed when you mess up is part of the human experience. Getting back up, dusting yourself off and seeing who still wants to hang out with you afterward and laugh about it? That’s a gift”.*

Taylor told the audience that the human experience is not perfect. However, there will be someone, who is still with you even though you make some mistakes, which is a gift. Taylor advised the audience to accept the mistake or embarrassment and enjoy themselves with people who are still standing with them. This statement can be classified as Tact maxim.

*“And so this may be hard for you to hear: In your life, you will inevitably misspeak, trust the wrong people, under-react, overreact, hurt the people who didn’t deserve it, overthink, not think at all, self sabotage, create a reality where only your experience exists, ruin perfectly good moments for yourself and others, deny any wrongdoing, not take the steps to make it right, feel very guilty, let the guilt eat at you, hit rock bottom, finally address the pain you caused, try to do better next time, rinse, repeat. And I’m not gonna lie, these mistakes will cause you to lose things”.*

Taylor maximized benefit to others by telling the truth that mistakes will cause them to lose things. She told the audience about many mistakes that may have happened in her life to be an example. This statement can be classified as Tact maxim.

*“I’m trying to tell you that losing things doesn’t just mean losing. A lot of the time, when we lose things, we gain things too”.*

The sentence *“when we lose things, we gain things too”* is the truth for everyone. Taylor maximized benefit to others. Hence, this statement can be classified as Tact maxim.

*“There will be times in life when you need to stand up for yourself. Times when the right thing is to back down and apologize. Times when the right thing is to fight, times when the right thing is to turn and run. Times to hold on with all you have and times to let go with grace. Sometimes the right thing to do is to throw out the old schools of thought in the name of progress and reform. Sometimes the right thing to do is to listen to the wisdom of those who have come before us. How will you know what the right choice is in these crucial moments? You won’t. How do I give advice to this many people about their life choices? I won’t. Scary news is: You’re on your own now. Cool news is: You’re on your own now”.*

Taylor told everyone that they wouldn’t know what the right or wrong choice in life will be. Everyone has their own decision to make without knowing what choice is good or terrible. Although she said that she wouldn’t advise others, the hidden meaning of this statement says it all. She gave indirect advice that everyone has their own path to live, it’s yours. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“As long as we are fortunate enough to be breathing, we will breathe in, breathe through, breathe deep, breathe out. And I’m a doctor now, so I know how breathing works”.*

This statement shows a suggestion from Taylor. The sentence *“And I’m a doctor now, so I know how breathing works”* shows that she is expert enough to give a piece of advice. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

### **Generosity maxim**

*“As for me, I’m...90% sure the main reason I’m here is because I have a song called ‘22’. And let me just say, I am elated to be here with you today as we celebrate and graduate New York University’s Class of 2022”.*

This statement of Taylor can be classified as Generosity maxim because she maximized cost to herself by saying that she was there because of a song called ‘22’ which is one of her famous songs. Then, she minimized benefits to herself by celebrating with the graduated students.

*“Not the type of doctor you would want around in the case of an emergency, unless your specific emergency was that you desperately needed to hear a song with a catchy hook and an intensely cathartic bridge section. Or if your emergency was that you needed a person who can name over 50 breeds of cats in one minute”.*

Taylor told the audience what type of doctor she was and what she was an expert in. She focused on her expertise not only about song but also about cats. This statement can be classified as Generosity maxim because she maximized the cost of herself.

*“I never got to have the normal college experience, per se. I went to public high school until tenth grade and finished my education doing homeschool work on the floors of airport terminals. Then I went out on the road on a radio tour, which sounds incredibly glamorous but in reality it consisted of a rental car, motels, and my mom and I pretending to have loud mother daughter fights with each other during boarding so no one would want the empty seat between us on Southwest”.*

Taylor talked about her life experience when she was a student. As she started her career when she was 14, most of her experience was related to her life as a singer, not as a student. According to the statement, she showed her generosity by sharing her experiences. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“As a kid, I always thought I would go away to college, imagining the posters I’d hang on the wall of my freshmen dorm. I even set the ending of my music video for my song “Love Story” at my fantasy imaginary college, where I meet a male model reading a book*

*on the grass and with one single glance, we realize we had been in love in our past lives. Which is exactly what you guys all experienced at some point in the last 4 years, right?”*

Taylor maximized cost to herself. She shared her imagination about college life that she wrote the song from it. She focused on herself. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“So as a rule, I try not to give anyone unsolicited advice unless they ask for it. I’ll go into this more later. I guess I have been officially solicited in this situation, to impart whatever wisdom I might have and tell you the things that helped me in my life so far”.*

In this statement, Taylor focused on the advice that she was solicited to share regarding the things that have helped her life so far. This statement shows the kindness of Taylor to give some advice to the audience even though it breaks her own rule, she minimized benefit of herself. Consequently, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“I started writing songs when I was twelve and since then, it’s been the compass guiding my life, and in turn, my life guided my writing. Everything I do is just an extension of my writing, whether it’s directing videos or a short film, creating the visuals for a tour, or standing on stage performing. Everything is connected by my love of the craft, the thrill of working through ideas and narrowing them down and polishing it all up in the end”.*

Taylor shared her songwriter path with the audience, how it can connect with her life. In this statement, she minimized benefit to herself. She revealed generosity by sharing her life experience to others. Hence, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“Editing. Waking up in the middle of the night and throwing out the old idea because you just thought of a newer, better one. A plot device that ties the whole thing together. There’s a reason they call it a hook. Sometimes a string of words just ensnares me and I can’t focus on anything until it’s been recorded or written down”.*

Taylor shared her experience and feeling of writing and making songs. She showed generosity to share her story. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.



*“I said to you earlier that I don’t ever offer advice unless someone asks me for it, and now I’ll tell you why. As a person who started my very public career at the age of 15, it came with a price. And that price was years of unsolicited advice”.*

The sentence *“I said to you earlier that I don’t ever offer advice unless someone asks me for it, and now I’ll tell you why”* shows that Taylor maximized cost to herself. She started to share her life experience with all audiences. She minimized benefit to herself by showing an example of her life and the price she had to pay to the audience. This statement can be classified as Generosity maxim.

*“Being the youngest person in every room for over a decade meant that I was constantly being issued warnings from older members of the music industry, the media, interviewers, executives. This advice often presented itself as thinly veiled warnings. See, I was a teenager in the public eye at a time when our society was absolutely obsessed with the idea of having perfect young female role models”.*

Taylor told the story of herself. She focused on what she had gone through since she was the youngest person in the music industry. As she minimized benefit to herself and showed generosity by sharing her story, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“It felt like every interview I did included slight barbs by the interviewer about me one day ‘running off the rails.’ That meant a different thing to everyone person said it me. So I became a young adult while being fed the message that if I didn’t make any mistakes, all the children of America would grow up to be perfect angels. However, if I did slip up, the entire earth would fall off its axis and it would be entirely my fault and I would go to pop star jail forever and ever. It was all centered around the idea that mistakes equal failure and ultimately, the loss of any chance at a happy or rewarding life”.*

Taylor minimized benefit to herself by telling everyone about the pain she had faced in the past she has faced. In addition, in this statement, she focused on herself and her story. Therefore, the statement can be classified as Generosity maxim.

*“This has not been my experience. My experience has been that my mistakes led to the best things in my life”.*

Taylor maximized cost to herself. She focused on her mistake and what mistakes led the best things to her life. Consequently, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“The times I was told no or wasn’t included, wasn’t chosen, didn’t win, didn’t make the cut...looking back, it really feels like those moments were as important, if not more crucial, than the moments I was told yes”.*

In this statement, Taylor focused on sharing her disappointment. She maximized cost of herself. She would like everyone learn from her experiences. Therefore, this statement can be classified as Generosity maxim.

*“Not being invited to the parties and sleepovers in my hometown made me feel hopelessly lonely, but because I felt alone, I would sit in my room and write the songs that would get me a ticket somewhere else”.*

Taylor shared her disappointment and feelings of loneliness that she had in the past. Even though she was not happy with that moment and feeling, she fixed it by doing what she loves, writing songs. This statement shows that Taylor minimized benefit to herself. Consequently, it can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“Having label executives in Nashville tell me that only 35-year-old housewives listen to country music and there was no place for a 13-year-old on their roster made me cry in the car on the way home. But then I’d post my songs on my MySpace and yes, MySpace, and would message with other teenagers like me who loved country music, but just didn’t have anyone singing from their perspective”.*

Taylor shared her career experience with the audience. In this statement, she showed generosity in telling her story and minimized benefit to herself. Therefore, this statement can be classified as Generosity maxim.

*“Having journalists write in-depth, oftentimes critical, pieces about who they perceive me to be made me feel like I was living in some weird simulation, but it also made me look inward to learn about who I actually am. Having the world treat my love life like a spectator sport in which I lose every single game was not a great way to date in my teens and twenties, but it taught me to protect my private life fiercely”.*

Taylor minimized benefit to herself. She talked about what she had learned from the past and shared that story and feeling with everyone. She implied how life taught her and showed it to the audience as an example. This statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“Being publicly humiliated over and over again at a young age was excruciatingly painful but it forced me to devalue the ridiculous notion of minute by minute, ever fluctuating social relevance and likability. Getting canceled on the internet and nearly losing my career gave me an excellent knowledge of all the types of wine”.*

Once, Taylor was publicly humiliated and cancelled on the internet without her mistake. It was painful, but it taught her many things. She praised herself that she could finally pass it. Additionally, in this statement, she showed generosity in sharing the painful story with everyone, so that everyone learn from her. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

### **Approbation maxim**

*“Hi, I’m Taylor. Last time I was in a stadium this size, I was dancing in heels and wearing a glittery leotard. This outfit is much more comfortable”.*

Taylor started her speech by introducing herself. Then, she told everyone how she felt comfortable with the graduation outfit. This statement can be classified as Approbation maxim because Taylor expressed the compliment to the outfit. Moreover, she would like to say that she was pleased to be there.

*“I’d like to say a huge thank you to NYU’s Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Bill Berkeley and all the trustees and members of the board, NYU’s President Andrew Hamilton, Provost Katherine Fleming, and the faculty and alumni here today who have made this day possible”.*

Taylor mentioned many people related to New York University and expressed her gratitude to them for making the ceremony happen. This statement can be categorized as Approbation maxim.

*“I feel so proud to share this day with my fellow honorees Susan Hockfield and Felix Matos Rodriguez, who humble me with the ways they improve our world with their work”.*

Susan Hockfield and Felix Matos Rodriguez received honorary degrees in other fields on the same day as Taylor. She mentioned their name to express praise for them, for their work. This statement can be classified as Approbation maxim.

*“I know that words are supposed to be my ‘thing’, but I will never be able to find the words to thank my mom and my dad, and my brother, Austin, for the sacrifices they made every day so that I could go from singing in coffee houses to standing up here with you all today because no words would ever be enough”.*

Taylor expressed gratitude to her family. She praised them for everything they had done for her during her career life. Therefore, this statement absolutely can be one of Approbation maxim.

*“To all the incredible parents, family members, mentors, teachers, allies, friends and loved ones here today who have supported these students in their pursuit of educational enrichment, let me say to you now: Welcome to New York. It’s been waiting for you”.*

This statement shows the maximized praise of others. Taylor mentioned to everyone who was in the ceremony and welcomed them to the ceremony. She showed praise to all of them. This statement can be categorized as Approbation maxim.

*“I’d like to thank NYU for making me technically, on paper at least, a doctor”.*

Taylor expressed gratitude to New York University which gave her a doctoral degree. The statement can be classified as Approbation maxim.

*“I know the pressure of living your life through the lens of perfectionism. And I know that I’m talking to a group of perfectionists because you are here today graduating from NYU”.*

Taylor indirectly complimented all graduated students that they were perfect. At the same time, she praised NYU because they all are perfectionists who graduated from NYU. That implicitly praises NYU as a perfect university. Consequently, this statement can be classified as Approbation maxim.

### **Modesty maxim**

*“Please bear in mind that I, in no way, feel qualified to tell you what to do. You’ve worked and struggled and sacrificed and studied and dreamed your way here today and so, you know what you’re doing. You’ll do things differently than I did them and for different reasons”.*

The sentence *“I, in no way, feel qualified to tell you what to do”* shows the self-dispraise. Taylor doesn’t want to tell all graduated students what they must do because she thinks she is unqualified. She minimizes praise of herself. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Modesty maxim.

*“I know I sound like a consummate optimist, but I’m really not. I lose perspective all the time. Sometimes everything just feels completely pointless”.*

This sentence *“I know I sound like a consummate optimist, but I’m really not. I lose perspective all the time”* shows the minimizing praise of herself. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Modesty maxim.

### **Agreement maxim**

*“I imagine the idea of a normal college experience was all you wanted too. But in this case you and I both learned that you don’t always get all the things in the bag that you selected from the menu in the delivery service that is life”.*

In this statement, Taylor told the audience that life is not all you want it to be. The sentence *“you and I both learned”* shows that Taylor employed the Agreement maxim. She maximized the agreement between her and the audience to understand that we cannot receive everything we need in our lives. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as the Agreement maxim.

*“Not a single one of us here today has done it alone. We are each a patchwork quilt of those who have loved us, those who have believed in our futures, those who showed us empathy and kindness or told us the truth even when it wasn’t easy to hear. Those who told us we could do it when there was absolutely no proof of that”.*

Taylor used the words “we” and “us” to gain everyone’s agreement that she and everyone face the same thing. She maximized agreement between herself and others. Consequently, this statement is categorizable as Agreement maxim.

*“As a songwriter I’ve never been able to sit still, or stay in one creative place for too long. I’ve made and released 11 albums and in the process, I’ve switched genres from country to pop to alternative to folk. This might sound like a very songwriter-centric line of discussion but in a way, I really do think we are all writers. And most of us write in a different voice for different situations. You write differently in your Instagram stories than you do your senior thesis. You send a different type of email to your boss than you do your best friend from home”.*

Taylor tried to gain the support that everyone is a songwriter by giving examples that everyone writes their own story in a different way same as she wrote the song. She maximized the agreement between herself and the audience. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Agreement maxim.

*“I leave you with this: We are led by our gut instincts, our intuition, our desires and fears, our scars and our dreams. And you will screw it up sometimes. So will I. And when I do, you will most likely read about on the internet. Anyway...hard things will happen to us. We will recover. We will learn from it. We will grow more resilient because of it”.*

Taylor maximized the agreement between self and other. She applied the words “we” and “us” to gain agreement from the audience. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Agreement maxim.

*“I hope you know how proud I am to share this day with you. We’re doing this together. SO let’s just keep dancing like we’re the class of ’22”.*

The sentence “We’re doing this together” matches Agreement maxim. To make an agreement between speaker and audience, Taylor used the word “we” to make all graduated students feel the same feeling as her.

### **Sympathy maxim**

*“But I really can’t complain about not having a normal college experience to you because you went to NYU during a global pandemic, being essentially locked into your dorms or having to do classes over Zoom. Everyone in college during normal times stresses about test scores, but on top of that you also had to pass like a thousand COVID tests”.*

Taylor expressed sympathy to all graduated students. The situation with COVID was a big problem for students. She was sympathetic to the situation they have faced and passed. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Sympathy maxim.

*“Now you leave the structure and framework of school and chart your own path. Every choice you make leads to the next choice which leads to the next, and I know it’s hard to know sometimes which path to take”.*

Taylor shows sympathy to all graduated students. She understands how hard it is to choose the right path because she faced this situation before. The sentence *“I know it’s hard to know sometimes which path to take”* classified the statement to be Sympathy maxim.

## **4.4 Qualitative Analysis of Chadwick Boseman’s Speech**

### **Tact maxim**

*“It is a great privilege, graduates to address you on your day, a day marking one of the most important accomplishments of your life to date”.*

This statement shows that Chadwick maximized benefit to graduated students. The sentence *“a day marking one of the most important accomplishments of your life to date”* made this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“But beyond the physical campus, the Hilltop represents the culmination of the intellectual and spiritual journey you have undergone while you were here. You have been climbing this academic slope for at least three or four years”.*

The sentence *“the Hilltop represents the culmination of the intellectual and spiritual journey you have undergone while you were here”* shows the maximizing benefit to the students. Their journey was filled with spirit and academic study. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“Most of you graduating here today struggled against one or more of the impediments or obstacles I’ve mentioned in order to reach this hilltop. When completing a long climb, One first experiences dizziness, disorientation and shortness of breath due to the high altitude, but once you become accustomed to the climb, your mind opens up to the tranquility of the triumph”.*

Chadwick tried to tell everyone that their success may face many obstacles, but when you succeed you will find the tranquility of triumph. In this statement, he maximized benefit to the audience. Consequently, this statement is categorizable as Tact maxim.

*“Oftentimes, the mind is flooded with realizations that were, for some reason, harder to come to when you were at a lower elevation. At this moment, most of you need some realizations because right now you have some big decisions to make”.*

Chadwick gave some advice to students by saying *“most of you need some realizations because right now you have some big decisions to make”* This statement shows the maximizing benefit to other. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“Right now, I urge you in your breath, in your eyes, in your consciousness — invest in the importance of this moment and cherish it. I know some of you might’ve partied last night. You should, you should celebrate, but this moment is also a part of that celebration”.*

Chadwick advised the audience to enjoy this moment and cherish it because it was an important one. Chadwick maximized benefit to other. Hence, this statement is categorizable as Tact maxim.



*“So, savor the taste of your triumphs today. Don’t just swallow the moment whole without digesting what has actually happened here. Look down over what you conquered and appreciate what God has brought you through”.*

Chadwick recommended all students enjoy the flavor of the victories today. He maximized benefit to the audience. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“A Howard University education is not just about what happens in the classroom, students. In some ways, what you were able to do exemplifies some of the skills you learned in the classroom. It takes the education out of the realm of theory and into utility and practice. Obviously, your organizational skills were unprecedented”.*

Chadwick advised students to utilize the skills from school in real life. The sentence *“It takes the education out of the realm of theory and into utility and practice”* shows the advice that Chadwick gave to the audience. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“But what do you do when the principle and the standards that were instilled in you here at Howard closed the doors in front of you? Sometimes you need to get knocked down before you can really figure out what your fight is and how need to fight it”.*

This statement shows that Chadwick advised the audience. This sentence *“Sometimes you need to get knocked down before you can really figure out what your fight is and how need to fight it”* shows the maximizing benefit to the audience produced by the speaker. Consequently, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“Sometimes you need to feel the pain and sting of defeat to activate the real passion and purpose that God predestined inside of you. God says in Jeremiah, “I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”.*

Chadwick advised the audience what they needed to make them get something. He mentioned what God said in Jeremiah to support his statement. He maximized benefit to the audience. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Tact maxim.

*“Graduating class, hear me well on this day. This day, when you have reached the hilltop and you are deciding on next jobs, next steps, careers, further education, you would rather find purpose than a job or career. Purpose crosses disciplines. Purpose is an essential element of you”.*

The sentence *“Graduating class, hear me well on this day”* shows the advice that Chadwick would give to the audience. He maximized benefit to the audience by telling them that *“Purpose is an essential element of you”*. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“It is the reason you are on the planet at this particular time in history. Your very existence is wrapped up in the things you are here to fulfill. Whatever you choose for a career path, remember, the struggles along the way are only meant to shape you for your purpose”.*

This statement can be classified as Tact maxim because Chadwick would like to give some advice to the audience. The word *“remember”* shows that the speaker tried to advise about choosing a career path for the audience.

*“When God has something for you, it doesn’t matter who stands against it. God will move someone that’s holding you back away from the door and put someone there who will open it for you if it’s meant for you”.*

In this statement, Chadwick maximized benefit to the audience by saying that *“God will move someone that’s holding you back away from the door and put someone there who will open it for you if it’s meant for you”*. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Tact maxim.

*“I don’t know what your future is, but if you are willing to take the harder way, the more complicated one, the one with more failures at first than successes, the one that has ultimately proven to have more meaning, more victory, more glory then you will not regret it”.*

Chadwick suggested that the harder way would give the result that they would not regret. This statement can be categorized as Tact maxim.

*“Now, this is your time. The light of new realizations shines on you today. Howard’s legacy is not wrapped up in the money that you will make but the challenges that you choose to confront. As you commence to your paths, press on with pride and press on with purpose. God bless you. I love you, Howard. Howard forever!”*

Chadwick maximized benefit to students. The sentence *“As you commence to your paths, press on with pride and press on with purpose”* shows that Chadwick advised students to begin the path with purpose. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Tact maxim.

### **Generosity maxim**

*“During my junior and senior years, I lived in a house off campus at Bryant Street. For those of you... That’s right, Bryant Street. For those of you who don’t know what that means, that’s at the bottom of the hill where the incline gets real. Almost every day I would walk the full length of the hill to Fine Arts, where most of my classes were, carrying all of my books, because once you walked that far on foot, you are not walking back home until it’s time to go home for good”.*

Chadwick shared his time at the university with the audience. This statement focused on Chadwick’s life at that time. He maximized cost to himself to show that he also had a memorable time there as other students. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“Although we took over the A building for several days and presented our arguments to President Swygert and the administration, the schools were still merged. Thus, the current collection or formation of schools exists. That’s why I view your recent protest as such an accomplishment for both sides of the debate, student and administration. I didn’t come here to take sides. My interest is what’s best for the school”.*

Chadwick maximized cost to himself. He talked about his protest in the past. In addition, the sentence *“I didn’t come here to take sides. My interest is what’s best for the school”* shows that he focused on himself. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“I’m told that you organized shifts so that you could at least continue some of your classes. We missed all our classes. We were in the A building. I’m told that through donations, there was always an ample helping of food. I probably ate a slice of pizza during the entirety of our three-day protest”.*

Chadwick maximized cost to himself. In this statement, he focused on what he managed when he was protester. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“I was on a roll when I entered the system of entertainment, theater, television and film. In my first New York audition for a professional play I landed the lead role. From that play, I got my first agent. From that agent, I got an on-screen audition. It was a soap opera. It wasn’t Third Watch. It was a soap opera on a major network. I scored that role, too”.*

Chadwick told everyone about the beginning of his career. In this statement, he maximized cost to himself and focused more on himself. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“I felt like Mike Tyson when he first came on the scene knocking out opponents in the first round. With this soap opera gig, I was already promised to make six figures, more money than I had ever seen. I was feeling myself. But once I got the first script, with soap operas you very often get the script the night before and then you shoot the whole episode in one day with little to no time to prepare”.*

Chadwick shared the experience of being an actor in a soap opera. He saw that it was not easy because there was less time to prepare for the role. In this statement, Chadwick maximized cost to himself and focused on his story. Consequently, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“It was just my luck that after filming the first two episodes, execs of the show called me into their offices and told me how happy they were with my performance. They wanted me to be around for a long time. They said if there was anything that I needed, just let them know. That was my opening. I decided to ask them some simple questions about the background of my character, questions that I felt were pertinent to the plot. Question*

*number one: Where is my father? The exec answered, "Well, he left when you were younger." Of course. Okay. Okay. Question number two: In this script, it alluded to my mother not being equipped to operate as a good parent, so why exactly did my little brother and I have to go into foster care? Matter-of-factly, he said, "Well, of course she is on heroin.""*

Chadwick showed his generosity in sharing the story of himself as an example of fighting for the justness of the Black community's existence to the audience. He minimized benefit to himself. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*One of the execs pulled out my resume and began studying it. The other exec wore a smile and was now trying to live up to what they had promised me only a few moments before — "If there is anything you need, just let us know." She said, "As you have seen, things move really fast around here, but we are more than happy to connect you with the writers if you have suggestions". "Yeah," I said, "that would be great." I said, "because I'm just trying to do my homework on this. I didn't know if you guys have decided on all the facts, but maybe there are some things we could come up with, some talent or gift that we can build. Maybe he is really good at math or something. He has to be active. I'm doing my best not to play this character like a victim."*

Chadwick shared how he fought for the character he got. This is not only sharing the past story of Chadwick but also a lesson for anyone about how hard to prove yourself and your community in a discriminated society. He shows his generosity for the community. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*"So, you went to Howard University, huh?" the exec holding my resume interrupted, peeking over the pages. "Yes," I said proudly. He slid my resume back in his desk and said, "Thank you for your concerns. We will be watching you."*

Chadwick maximized cost to himself. He shared his story in the past with the audience. He tried to show what he had faced in the past. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“I left the office. I shot the episode I had come in to shoot on that day. Probably the best one I did out of the three because I got one that was bothering me off my chest. I was let go from that job on the next day. I got a phone call from my agent. They decided to go another way. The questions that I asked set the producers on guard and perhaps paved the way for less stereotypical portrayal for the Black actor that stepped into the role after me”.*

Chadwick maximized cost to himself. Additionally, he showed generosity to black actors by questioning about the stereotypical representation of the black actor. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“Even if you really don’t want the job, when they let you go, it’s like any break-up, you act like you don’t care. I didn’t need that damn job anyway. I didn’t need them. But when you have those moments alone, you start to wonder if there was a better way to handle it. If you could have handled it better maybe you could help your family. Then before you know it, you are broke. You find yourself scraping together change just so you can ride the subway, so that you could get the next job. Maybe if you could book something else that would eclipse the feeling of doubt that’s building, but it seems like you can’t pay them to hire you now”.*

In this statement, Chadwick tried to make the audience see what he faced in the past by giving examples of losing a job by breaking up. Additionally, he shared his feelings of that time. He maximized cost to himself. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“My agents at the time told me it might be a while before I got a job acting on screen again. Well, that was fine because I never wanted to act in the first place. And I definitely didn’t want to be caught dead going after a fake Hollywood pipe dream. I’m more of a writer, director anyway, so forget their stories. I can tell my own stories. But am I actually blackballed? “We are hesitant about sending you out to some people right now because there is a stigma that you are difficult.” As conflicted as I was before I lost the job, as adamant as I was about the need to speak truth to power, I found myself even more conflicted afterwards”.*

Chadwick shared the story after he talked with the producer about the stereotype of black people in the script. In this statement, Chadwick tried to show the audience how it is hard for black people to live in the society. He shows generosity by sharing his experience. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Generosity maxim.

*“When I dared to challenge the system that would relegate us to victims and stereotypes with no clear historical backgrounds, no hopes or talents, when I questioned that method of portrayal, a different path opened up for me, the path to my destiny”.*

Chadwick tried to present that he fought with an unfair system for black people. He showed himself as an example for the audience that his bravery in fighting for black people in the past gained him many good things in the future. This statement shows the maximizing cost to self. Therefore, it can be categorized as Generosity maxim.

*“At some point, my mind reverted back to my experiences here, to the professors that challenged me and struggled against me, Professor Robert Williams, Doctor Singleton, George Epstein, to name a few, the ones that will fail you out of the goodness of their hearts”.*

This statement can be categorized as Generosity maxim. Chadwick focused on his experience in the past and shared that feeling with the audience.

*“This may be hard to grasp for some of you right now, but I even considered President Swygert and how negotiating with him was practice for a world that was considerably more cruel and unforgiving than any debate here, one that had no interest in my ideals and beliefs. How would I maneuver through all of this?”*

This statement can be classified as Generosity maxim. Chadwick focused on his story in the past. He shared it with the audience.

### **Approbation maxim**

*“First, giving honor to the creator and my ancestors on whose shoulders. I stand happy mother's day to my m0m she is not here in attendance but but by tomorrow she will have seen this. Let me also acknowledge my professors who have passed on to the other side because of work obligations over”.*

Chadwick praised his ancestors and professors. He also mentioned his mother and blessed her on the occasion of Mother's Day. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“The past few years I miss memorials that were held here for them Professor AL Freeman JR, Professor Mike Malone, Professor Reggie Ray, Dr. Henrietta Edmonds, Professor Joe Selman, Dr. Johnson and Dr. Singleton. Professors and instructors, instructors that may be present George Eppteen Tony Starnes, Denise Sanders, Professor Roberts Williams, and Professor Vera Katz. Your lessons continue to guide and enlighten me to this day. To president Wayne Frederick and the board of trustees, thank you for bringing me back here and giving me this distinguished award it's overwhelming to be recognized amongst”.*

Chadwick praised and expressed gratitude to professors, instructors, and the board of trustees for giving him the doctoral degree and bringing him back to the university. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“This year's other honorees, I can think of no better place to be right now after the Black Panther and Avengers campaigns that to return and participate in these graduate graduation ceremonies with you”.*

Chadwick praised Howard University and the audience. He was happy to attend the ceremony at the university. This statement can be categorized as Approbation maxim.

*“This is a magical place, a place where the dynamics of positive and negative seem to exist in extremes”.*

Chadwick maximized praise to Haward University. The sentence “This is a magical place” shows the praise of the university. Consequently, this statement can be categorized as Approbation maxim.



*“I was game to play along with him, to act as if I was a worthy opponent. What an honor to be challenged by the GOAT, the greatest of all time, for a brief moment. His face was as serious as if I was Frazier in the Thrilla in Manila”.*

Chadwick talked about playing a game with Muhammad Ali. He felt honored to be challenged by Ali. He maximized praise of Ali with the word *“the greatest of all time”*. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“His movements were flashes of a past greater than I can imagine. His security let the joke play along for a second before they ushered him away, and I walked away floating like a butterfly. I walked away amused at him, amused at myself, amused at life for this moment that almost no one would ever believe. I walked away light and ready to take on the world. That is the magic of this place. Almost anything can happen here. HU!”*

Chadwick maximized praise to Howard University. The statement shows that Chadwick was thinking about the memorable moments that happened when he was at the university where about is the magic of this place. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“You worked hard. You did your best, but you didn’t make A’s or B’s, sometimes C’s. You never made the dean’s list, but that’s okay. You are here on top of the hill”.*

Chadwick minimized dispraise to all graduated students. Additionally, the sentence *“that’s okay. You are here on top of the hill”* shows the praise of students who worked hard but did not achieve what they desired. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“I want to say something to that. You know, sometimes your grades don’t give a real indication of what your greatness might be. So, it really is okay”.*

The sentence *“It really is okay”* reveals praise to others. Chadwick encouraged anyone who got lower grades that grades cannot show what greatness they have. He minimized dispraise to students. Consequently, this statement can be categorized as Approbation maxim.

*“For others it was financial, you and your family struggled to make ends meet. Every semester of your matriculation you had to stand in one line to get to another line, to get to another line for somebody that might help you. You had to work an extra job, or two, but you are here”.*

Chadwick minimized dispraise to the audience. Many people worked hard during their student lives because of the financial struggle. He praised them that they had already passed that hard time and done a good job by saying *“You are here”*. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“For a lot of you, not all, but a lot of you, your hardest struggle was social. Some of you never fit in. You were never as cool and as popular as you wanted to be, and it bothers you. So, your social struggles here became psychological. Even though you made it up to hill, you carried the baggage of rejection with you, but you are here”.*

Chadwick showed minimizing dispraise to the audience. He praised the audience that even though they had to struggle with social norms or their own expectations, they passed. The sentence *“you are here”* is the expression of praise to the audience. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Approbation maxim.

*“Sometimes you forgot you were in school. You probably could have graduated with honors, but instead you are getting an “Oh yeah” degree today. Oh yeah, I have class. Oh yeah, I have that paper due. Oh yeah, I have a final. You were literally too cool for school”.*

This statement shows minimizing dispraise to all graduated students. Chadwick told everyone that school life was not everything. No matter what you got from the school, *“you were literally too cool for school”*. The sentence *“you were literally too cool for school”* shows praise of other. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“Some of you here struggled against the university itself. This year, students protested and took over the A building, formulated a list of demands and negotiated with our president and administration to determine the direction of our institution. It’s impressive”.*

The sentence “*It’s impressive*” shows the maximizing praise to the protesters. Chadwick expressed compliments to all protesters who fought for the university. He felt grateful because he was the one who protested for the university in the past. Consequently, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“Your organization and planning was impeccable. You received the majority of your demands, making a significant impact on those who came after you. As is often the case, those that follow most often enjoy the results of the progress you gained. You love the university enough to struggle with it”.*

Chadwick praised the protesters not only for the organization and planning but also for the impact that will have on others in the future. The sentence “*You received the majority of your demands, making a significant impact on those who came after you*” shows that Chadwick expressed congratulations and gratitude to all protesters. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“Now, I have to ask you that you have to continue to do that even now that you received your demands. Even if you are walking today, you have to continue to do that. Everything that you fought for was not for yourself. It was for those that come after. You could have been disgruntled and transferred, but you fought to be participants in making this institution the best that it can be. But I must also applaud President Wayne Frederick and the administration for listening to the students”.*

Chadwick expressed gratitude to students who protested and fought for themselves and others. Additionally, in this statement, he thanks the president and administration for listening to them. The statement shows the maximizing praise to others. Consequently, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“Your freedom of speech was exercised in a way where you can contribute to this place. It also shows that you can contribute to the democracy”.*

Chadwick expressed a compliment to students who promoted the freedom of speech in the university because it shows that they are supporters of democracy. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“Students, your protests are also promising because many of you will leave Howard and enter systems and institutions that have a history of discrimination and marginalization. The fact that you have struggled with this university that you love is a sign that you can use your education to improve the world that you are entering”.*

Chadwick maximized praise to the protesters that they were promising to fight for rights. Since black people were often discriminated against and marginalized for a long time, the protests will be a promising sign of destroying discrimination this world. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Approbation maxim.

*“The administration and the campus police at the time when I was protesting were not nearly as open-minded as this current one. I know this was a difficult time, but because of both of you, I believe Howard is a few steps closer to the actualization of its potential, the potential that many of us have dreamed for it”.*

Chadwick expressed gratitude to the administration and the campus about being open-minded regarding the protesters' demands. He believed that this open-mindedness would make Howard better than it was before.

*“Finally, I thought of Ali in the middle of the yard in his elder years, drawing from his victories and his losses. At that moment I realized something new about the greatness of Ali and how he carried his crown. I realized that he was transferring something to me on that day. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter in me. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter to me. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter to me”.*

Chadwick maximized praise to Ali who transferred the spirit of the fighter in him. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Approbation maxim.

### **Modesty maxim**

*“I stand here today knowing that my Howard University education prepared me to play Jackie Robinson, James Brown, Thurgood Marshall and T’Challa”.*

Chadwick maximized dispraise of himself. He said that Howard University prepared him to play many important roles in the movie industry. He gave credit to the university for his ability. This statement is categorizable as Modesty maxim.

### **Agreement maxim**

*“I remember walking across this yard on what seemed to be a random day, my head down lost in my own world of issues like many of you do daily. I’m almost at the center of the yard. I raised my head and Muhammad Ali was walking towards me. Time seemed to slow down as his eyes locked on mine and opened wide. He raised his fist to a quintessential guard”.*

The sentence *“my head down lost in my own world of issues like many of you do daily”* shows the relevance of opinion between the speaker and hearer. Chadwick tried to maximize the agreement between him and the audience. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Agreement maxim.

*“Howard University, I was riding here and I heard on the radio, somebody called it Wakanda University, but it has many names, the Mecca, the Hilltop. It only takes one hour, one tour of the physical campus to understand why we call it the Hilltop. Every day is leg day here. That’s why some of you have cars”.*

This statement shows the relevance of opinion between Chadwick and the audience. Everyone would agree with him why Howard University is called Hilltop. The statement *“That’s why some of you have cars”* was spoken to gain the agreement of the audience. Consequently, this statement can be categorized as Agreement maxim.

*“Some of you went through something traumatic. You made it to the top of the hill but not without scars and bruises. Some of you fit in too much. You were on the yard rapping on your frat block when you were supposed to be in class. Or you got caught up into DC party life. I know how that is. I mean, we are right here in the midst of the city”.*

The sentence *“I know how that is. I mean, we are right here in the midst of the city”* shows the relevance of opinion between Chadwick and the audience. The word “we” can show the support from Chadwick to the audience. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Agreement maxim.

*“Similarly, during my years here at Howard, we also protested and took over the A building in order to preserve Howard’s alum, in order to preserve Howard’s annual appropriations from Congress. President H. Patrick Swygert decided to reduce the number of colleges at the university. By his plan, engineering would need to merge with architecture. Nursing would merge with allied health and the fine arts, my school, will be absorbed by arts and sciences. That’s how we saw it, absorbed”.*

Chadwick maximized agreement between him and the audience. He shared his experience of protest when he was at Howard University. This shows that Chadwick reduced the conflict between him and the audience by telling them that he was the one supported the protest of students. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Agreement maxim.

*“For many of us in Fine Arts, this signaled to us that our curriculums, all the curriculums of students following us, might become watered-down concentrations. This undermined the very legacy we were proud to be a part of and aimed to continue. The Fine Arts program had produced Phylicia Rashad, Debbie Allen, Isaiah Washington, Richard Wesley, Donny Hathaway, Roberta Flack, just to name a few. We felt that... Yes, yes. You could go on and on. You can go on and on. You can go on and on. We felt that we could compete with students from Juilliard, NYU and Carroll Arts as long as we continued to have a concentrated dosage that rivaled a conservatory experience, but without it”.*

Chadwick tried to gain agreement from the audience of continuing the Fine Arts program. He gave other universities as examples to make everyone see what he would like to say. Therefore, this statement can be categorized as Agreement maxim.

*“Once I saw the role I was playing, I found myself conflicted. The role wasn’t necessarily stereotypical. A young man in his formative years with a violent streak pulled into the allure of gang involvement. That’s somebody’s real story. Never judge the characters you play. That’s what we were always taught. That’s the first rule of acting. Any role played honestly can be empowering, but I was conflicted because this role seemed to be wrapped up in assumptions about us as Black folk”.*

This statement shows the conflict that emerged when Chadwick when he got the script of his role. Even though he felt conflicted with himself, about the role he would play. Additionally, he tried to gain agreement from the audience that this thought was true because it affected the black community. The sentence *“this role seemed to be wrapped up in assumptions about us as Black folk”* can gain agreement between him and the audience. This makes the statement can be categorized as Agreement maxim.

*“The writing failed to search for specificity. Plus, there was barely a glimpse of positivity or talent in the character, barely a glimpse of hope. I would have to make something out of nothing. I was conflicted. Howard had instilled in me a certain amount of pride and for my taste this role didn’t live up to those standards”.*

Chadwick tried to minimize the conflict with himself. Additionally, the sentence *“Howard had instilled in me a certain amount of pride and for my taste this role didn’t live up to those standards”* shows the consistency of him and the audience's opinions about what Howard teaches them. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Agreement maxim.

*“That could be real, I guess, but I didn’t want to assume that’s what it was. If we are around here assuming that the Black characters in the show are criminals, on drugs and deadbeat parents, then that would probably be stereotypical, wouldn’t it? That word stereotypical lingered”.*

Chadwick tried to gain support from the audience that black characters in the show shouldn't be assumed as criminals, on drugs and deadbeat parents. The "wouldn't it?" in the statement can support the explanations. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Agreement maxim.

*"As the Scripture says, 'I planted the seed and Apollos watered it, but God kept it growing.' God kept it growing. Yet and still, when you invest in a seed, watching it grow without you, that is a bitter pill to swallow, a bitter pill. Anybody that has ever been fired knows what I'm talking about".*

Chadwick tried to gain agreement from the audience by saying "Anybody that has ever been fired knows what I'm talking about". In this statement, he maximized agreement between himself and other. Therefore, this statement can be classified as Agreement maxim.

### **Sympathy maxim**

*"You waited until the last minute to do your best work and it's a wonder that you made it up the hill at all because you carry the baggage of too much acceptance".*

Chadwick showed that he realized the reason that people try to do the best work is because they need acceptance. He showed sympathy to people who were faced with that situation. Therefore, this statement is categorizable as Sympathy maxim.

*"For some of you, maybe even a little bit more. Throughout ancient times, institutions of learning have been built on top of hills to convey that great struggle is required to achieve degrees of enlightenment. Each of you had your own unique difficulties with the hill. For some of you, the challenge was actually academics. When you hear the words magna cum laude, cum laude, you know that's not you. That's not you".*

Chadwick showed that he understands how difficult it is to achieve the degree, especially with the award. In this statement, he showed sympathy to the students. Therefore, this statement can be classified as Sympathy maxim.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the conclusion of this study. The result will be explained briefly and discussed with the theory and other related studies. Additionally, recommendations are contained in this chapter to guide readers and other researchers.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

This study provided the discovery of types of politeness strategies by Leech (1983) that were employed in two commencement speeches by two American influential entertainers, Taylor Swift, and Chadwick Boseman. The politeness strategies applied as the main theory in this study contained six maxims including Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, and Sympathy. To complete the purpose of this study and answer the research questions, two commencement speeches delivered by Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman were compared to identify the different uses of politeness strategies and how the strategies were applied. Before analysis, the two speeches were collected from the official YouTube of the university. The text version of each speech was collected from the internet and some parts were converted from sound into text. Then, the speeches were analyzed by using textual analysis to determine and categorize the type of maxims of Leech's politeness strategies and revealed the results as frequency and percentage, and on explanation of the reasons for justifying this analysis.

The results of this study indicated that there were 47 statements in Taylor Swift's commencement speech. The most employed maxim was Generosity (16 times), followed by Tact (15 times), Approbation (7 times), Agreement (5 times), Modesty (2 times), and Sympathy (2 times), respectively. In her speech, she shared her experiences from her career life, her mistakes and disappointments, how to overcome them, and her achievements. Consequently, Generosity was the most applied maxim in Taylor Swift's speech because she maximized cost to self. In addition, Tact and Approbation maxims were applied because Taylor Swift gave some advice and suggestions, encouraged, and

praised the audience, and expressed gratitude to the university and lecturers. Applying Tact and Approbation maxim revealed that she tried to maximize benefit to other and maximize praise of other.

While Chadwick Boseman's commencement speech contained 58 statements, the most applied maxim was Approbation (18 times), followed by Tact (14 times), Generosity (14 times), Agreement (9 times), Sympathy (2 times), and Modesty (1 time) respectively. In his speech, Approbation maxim was applied the most because he encouraged and praised the audience, he maximized praise of other. Additionally, he showed much gratitude to the lecturers. Furthermore, in his speech, he provided some advice and shared life experiences with the audience. He also showed his familiarity with the university by sharing some experiences that related to the audience and the university. This is the reason for applying Tact maxim and Generosity maxim, he tried to maximize benefit to other and maximized cost to self.

Although the number of statements and application of each maxim between the two influential entertainers were different because of the background and relationship with the university, the use of politeness strategies was similar in some ways because they have similar aspects of life and career paths. They applied the same three strategies in the top three range, Tact maxim, Generosity maxim, and Approbation maxim. The result can be concluded that the commencement speeches' goal is to inspire, share the speaker's experience, and give some advice to the audience; therefore, two influential entertainers applied those three maxims as the same top three even though they have different experiences and backgrounds.

## 5.2 Discussion

This study revealed that all six maxims of Leech's politeness strategies were applied in the two commencement speeches of Taylor Swift and Chadwick Bosman. It is similar to many studies that applied all maxims to make successful communication, for example, applying politeness strategies in political speeches to express appreciation, make some agreement between speaker and audience, and make an impression on the

audience (Pakzadian, 2012; Mariani, 2019; Kamkeaw, 2019) or applying six maxims of politeness in communication to achieve some purposes such as making the connection (Jie & Feifei, 2016; Rosyidha, et al., 2019; Pardede, et al., 2019). Speech of Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman showed good communication from speaker to hearers. Their speeches were considered successful and mentioned a lot in the news and on social media. Therefore, the result of this study support the idea that applying the six maxims of politeness can help successful communication (Yu & Ren, 2013).

Moreover, in Taylor Swift's speech, Generosity maxim was the most applied. Generosity maxim propose is to minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self. The explanation is the expression of generosity. The frequent application of Generosity maxim of Taylor Swift showed that she minimized benefits to herself and had much generosity in sharing her story. The result of analyzing Taylor Swift' speech is similar to Zheng's (2015) study. Even though Zheng studied the idea of applying politeness in business letters, not speeches, it had some points supporting the result of Taylor Swift's speech as that in a sales letter, the benefit to the readers should be maximized and the cost to the readers should be minimized. Therefore, Tact and Generosity maxims in Leech's politeness strategies should be applied for that reason (Zheng, 2015).

In addition, Approbation maxim was the most applied in Chadwick Bosman's speech. It can be said that the use of maxims follows the purpose of the speech and the intention of the speakers. The maxim applied reflects what speakers would like to share or express to the audience. There is a similarity that shows the relationship of applying the maxim following the purpose of the speaker. The inaugural speeches of Barack Obama and Donald Trump were studied by Kamkeaw in 2019. In the result of Kamkeaw's study, six maxims were applied. Furthermore, it appeared that the most frequently applied maxim was Approbation maxim similar to Chadwick's result in this study. The reason for applying Approbation maxim of both presidents was to express appreciation and praise the audience (Kamkeaw, 2019). This is also similar to Chadwick's commencement speech. The reason for applying was to praise and encourage the audience.

Therefore, the purpose of speech and the speakers' intention is the main reason for applying maxims of politeness. Applying all six maxims can help the communication

from speaker to hearer and make communication were successful. This study revealed that the results of the analysis of applying politeness strategies of Leech in the commencement speeches between Taylor Swift and Chadwick Boseman are not different, and the two speeches are not different from other studies either. Moreover, this study revealed that all six maxims can be applied in the commencement speech, especially, Tact maxim, Generosity maxim, and Approbation maxim.

In conclusion, using politeness strategies would give the learners a positive message, encourage a respectful attitude, and help create a good impression. Being polite was being conscious and respectful toward the impression to others. Politeness could develop relationships with others, raise confidence, and improve effective communication skills. This study is helpful in contributing to the understanding of politeness strategies.

### **3.3 Recommendations**

This study provided the result of two commencement speeches from two public figures which is a case study and analysis of politeness strategies in commencement speeches by two public figures. However, there are many public speeches from various people not only from public figures that can be studied for politeness strategies. Other researchers who are interested in studying these kinds of fields can expand the number of commencement speeches to provide deeper results that may indicate the exact use of politeness strategies in commencement speeches.

In addition, for further studies, politeness strategies can be applied to analyze various kinds of speech such as political speeches or speeches after receiving awards. The different purposes of a speech may reveal different aspects of applying politeness strategies in communication.

Furthermore, the politeness strategies of Leech can be studied in different cultural perspectives such as in Asian to find any different uses based on culture. There will be other social factors including the place and atmosphere, the subject, and the meaning of

the speech that can determine the use of politeness strategies. Other researchers who would like to study this field could consider these issues.



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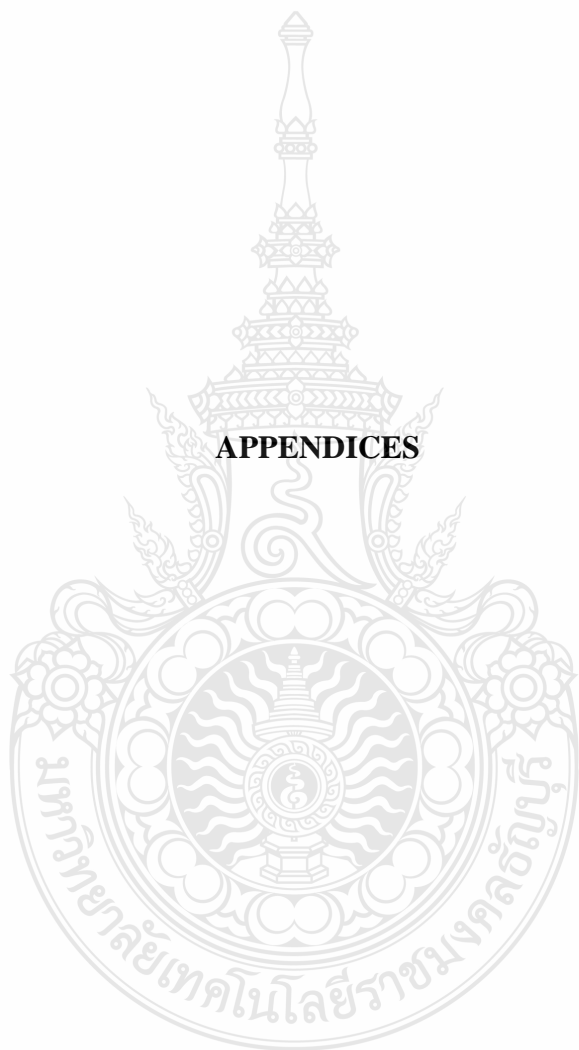
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## APPENDICES





## **APPENDIX A**

### **Taylor Swift's Commencement Speech**

Hi, I'm Taylor. Last time I was in a stadium this size, I was dancing in heels and wearing a glittery leotard. This outfit is much more comfortable.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to NYU's Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Bill Berkeley and all the trustees and members of the board, NYU's President Andrew Hamilton, Provost Katherine Fleming, and the faculty and alumni here today who have made this day possible. I feel so proud to share this day with my fellow honorees Susan Hockfield and Felix Matos Rodriguez, who humble me with the ways they improve our world with their work. As for me, I'm...90% sure the main reason I'm here is because I have a song called '22'. And let me just say, I am elated to be here with you today as we celebrate and graduate New York University's Class of 2022.

Not a single one of us here today has done it alone. We are each a patchwork quilt of those who have loved us, those who have believed in our futures, those who showed us empathy and kindness or told us the truth even when it wasn't easy to hear. Those who told us we could do it when there was absolutely no proof of that. Someone read stories to you and taught you to dream and offered up some moral code of right and wrong for you to try and live by. Someone tried their best to explain every concept in this insanely complex world to the child that was you, as you asked a bazillion questions like 'how does the moon work' and 'why can we eat salad but not grass.' And maybe they didn't do it perfectly. No one ever can. Maybe they aren't with us anymore, and in that case I hope you'll remember them today. If they are here in this stadium, I hope you'll find your own way to express your gratitude for all the steps and missteps that have led us to this common destination.

I know that words are supposed to be my 'thing', but I will never be able to find the words to thank my mom and my dad, and my brother, Austin, for the sacrifices they made every day so that I could go from singing in coffee houses to standing up here with you all today because no words would ever be enough. To all the incredible parents, family members,

mentors, teachers, allies, friends and loved ones here today who have supported these students in their pursuit of educational enrichment, let me say to you now: Welcome to New York. It's been waiting for you.

I'd like to thank NYU for making me technically, on paper at least, a doctor. Not the type of doctor you would want around in the case of an emergency, unless your specific emergency was that you desperately needed to hear a song with a catchy hook and an intensely cathartic bridge section. Or if your emergency was that you needed a person who can name over 50 breeds of cats in one minute.

I never got to have the normal college experience, per se. I went to public high school until tenth grade and finished my education doing homeschool work on the floors of airport terminals. Then I went out on the road on a radio tour, which sounds incredibly glamorous but in reality it consisted of a rental car, motels, and my mom and I pretending to have loud mother daughter fights with each other during boarding so no one would want the empty seat between us on Southwest.

As a kid, I always thought I would go away to college, imagining the posters I'd hang on the wall of my freshmen dorm. I even set the ending of my music video for my song "Love Story" at my fantasy imaginary college, where I meet a male model reading a book on the grass and with one single glance, we realize we had been in love in our past lives. Which is exactly what you guys all experienced at some point in the last 4 years, right?

But I really can't complain about not having a normal college experience to you because you went to NYU during a global pandemic, being essentially locked into your dorms or having to do classes over Zoom. Everyone in college during normal times stresses about test scores, but on top of that you also had to pass like a thousand COVID tests. I imagine the idea of a normal college experience was all you wanted too. But in this case you and



I both learned that you don't always get all the things in the bag that you selected from the menu in the delivery service that is life. You get what you get. And as I would like to say to you, you should be very proud of what you've done with it. Today you leave New York University and then you go out into the world searching for what's next. And so will I.

So as a rule, I try not to give anyone unsolicited advice unless they ask for it. I'll go into this more later. I guess I have been officially solicited in this situation, to impart whatever wisdom I might have and tell you the things that helped me in my life so far. Please bear in mind that I, in no way, feel qualified to tell you what to do. You've worked and struggled and sacrificed and studied and dreamed your way here today and so, you know what you're doing. You'll do things differently than I did them and for different reasons.

So I won't tell you what to do because no one likes that. I will, however, give you some life hacks I wish I knew when I was starting out my dreams of a career, and navigating life, love, pressure, choices, shame, hope and friendship.

The first of which is...life can be heavy, especially if you try to carry it all at once. Part of growing up and moving into new chapters of your life is about catch and release. What I mean by that is, knowing what things to keep, and what things to release. You can't carry all things, all grudges, all updates on your ex, all enviable promotions your school bully got at the hedge fund his uncle started. Decide what is yours to hold and let the rest go. Oftentimes the good things in your life are lighter anyway, so there's more room for them. One toxic relationship can outweigh so many wonderful, simple joys. You get to pick what your life has time and room for. Be discerning.

Secondly, learn to live alongside cringe. No matter how hard you try to avoid being cringe, you will look back on your life and cringe retrospectively. Cringe is unavoidable over a lifetime. Even the term ‘cringe’ might someday be deemed ‘cringe.’

I promise you, you’re probably doing or wearing something right now that you will look back on later and find revolting and hilarious. You can’t avoid it, so don’t try to. For example, I had a phase where, for the entirety of 2012, I dressed like a 1950s housewife. But you know what? I was having fun. Trends and phases are fun. Looking back and laughing is fun.

And while we’re talking about things that make us squirm but really shouldn’t, I’d like to say that I’m a big advocate for not hiding your enthusiasm for things. It seems to me that there is a false stigma around eagerness in our culture of ‘unbothered ambivalence.’ This outlook perpetuates the idea that it’s not cool to ‘want it.’ That people who don’t try hard are fundamentally more chic than people who do. And I wouldn’t know because I have been a lot of things but I’ve never been an expert on ‘chic.’ But I’m the one who’s up here so you have to listen to me when I say this: Never be ashamed of trying. Effortlessness is a myth. The people who wanted it the least were the ones I wanted to date and be friends with in high school. The people who want it most are the people I now hire to work for my company.

I started writing songs when I was twelve and since then, it’s been the compass guiding my life, and in turn, my life guided my writing. Everything I do is just an extension of my writing, whether it’s directing videos or a short film, creating the visuals for a tour, or standing on stage performing. Everything is connected by my love of the craft, the thrill of working through ideas and narrowing them down and polishing it all up in the end. Editing. Waking up in the middle of the night and throwing out the old idea because you just thought of a newer, better one. A plot device that ties the whole thing together.

There's a reason they call it a hook. Sometimes a string of words just ensnares me and I can't focus on anything until it's been recorded or written down.

As a songwriter I've never been able to sit still, or stay in one creative place for too long. I've made and released 11 albums and in the process, I've switched genres from country to pop to alternative to folk. This might sound like a very songwriter-centric line of discussion but in a way, I really do think we are all writers. And most of us write in a different voice for different situations. You write differently in your Instagram stories than you do your senior thesis. You send a different type of email to your boss than you do your best friend from home. We are all literary chameleons and I think it's fascinating. It's just a continuation of the idea that we are so many things, all the time. And I know it can be really overwhelming figuring out who to be, and when. Who you are now and how to act in order to get where you want to go. I have some good news: It's totally up to you. I also have some terrifying news: It's totally up to you.

I said to you earlier that I don't ever offer advice unless someone asks me for it, and now I'll tell you why. As a person who started my very public career at the age of 15, it came with a price. And that price was years of unsolicited advice. Being the youngest person in every room for over a decade meant that I was constantly being issued warnings from older members of the music industry, the media, interviewers, executives. This advice often presented itself as thinly veiled warnings. See, I was a teenager in the public eye at a time when our society was absolutely obsessed with the idea of having perfect young female role models. It felt like every interview I did included slight barbs by the interviewer about me one day 'running off the rails.' That meant a different thing to everyone person said it me. So I became a young adult while being fed the message that if I didn't make any mistakes, all the children of America would grow up to be perfect angels. However, if I did slip up, the entire earth would fall off its axis and it would be entirely my fault and I would go to pop star jail forever and ever. It was all centered

around the idea that mistakes equal failure and ultimately, the loss of any chance at a happy or rewarding life.

This has not been my experience. My experience has been that my mistakes led to the best things in my life. And being embarrassed when you mess up is part of the human experience. Getting back up, dusting yourself off and seeing who still wants to hang out with you afterward and laugh about it? That's a gift.

The times I was told no or wasn't included, wasn't chosen, didn't win, didn't make the cut...looking back, it really feels like those moments were as important, if not more crucial, than the moments I was told 'yes.'

Not being invited to the parties and sleepovers in my hometown made me feel hopelessly lonely, but because I felt alone, I would sit in my room and write the songs that would get me a ticket somewhere else. Having label executives in Nashville tell me that only 35-year-old housewives listen to country music and there was no place for a 13-year-old on their roster made me cry in the car on the way home. But then I'd post my songs on my MySpace and yes, MySpace, and would message with other teenagers like me who loved country music, but just didn't have anyone singing from their perspective. Having journalists write in-depth, oftentimes critical, pieces about who they perceive me to be made me feel like I was living in some weird simulation, but it also made me look inward to learn about who I actually am. Having the world treat my love life like a spectator sport in which I lose every single game was not a great way to date in my teens and twenties, but it taught me to protect my private life fiercely. Being publicly humiliated over and over again at a young age was excruciatingly painful but it forced me to devalue the ridiculous notion of minute by minute, ever fluctuating social relevance and likability. Getting canceled on the internet and nearly losing my career gave me an excellent knowledge of all the types of wine.

I know I sound like a consummate optimist, but I'm really not. I lose perspective all the time. Sometimes everything just feels completely pointless. I know the pressure of living your life through the lens of perfectionism. And I know that I'm talking to a group of perfectionists because you are here today graduating from NYU. And so this may be hard for you to hear: In your life, you will inevitably misspeak, trust the wrong people, under-react, overreact, hurt the people who didn't deserve it, overthink, not think at all, self sabotage, create a reality where only your experience exists, ruin perfectly good moments for yourself and others, deny any wrongdoing, not take the steps to make it right, feel very guilty, let the guilt eat at you, hit rock bottom, finally address the pain you caused, try to do better next time, rinse, repeat. And I'm not gonna lie, these mistakes will cause you to lose things.

I'm trying to tell you that losing things doesn't just mean losing. A lot of the time, when we lose things, we gain things too.

Now you leave the structure and framework of school and chart your own path. Every choice you make leads to the next choice which leads to the next, and I know it's hard to know sometimes which path to take. There will be times in life when you need to stand up for yourself. Times when the right thing is to back down and apologize. Times when the right thing is to fight, times when the right thing is to turn and run. Times to hold on with all you have and times to let go with grace. Sometimes the right thing to do is to throw out the old schools of thought in the name of progress and reform. Sometimes the right thing to do is to listen to the wisdom of those who have come before us. How will you know what the right choice is in these crucial moments? You won't.

How do I give advice to this many people about their life choices? I won't.

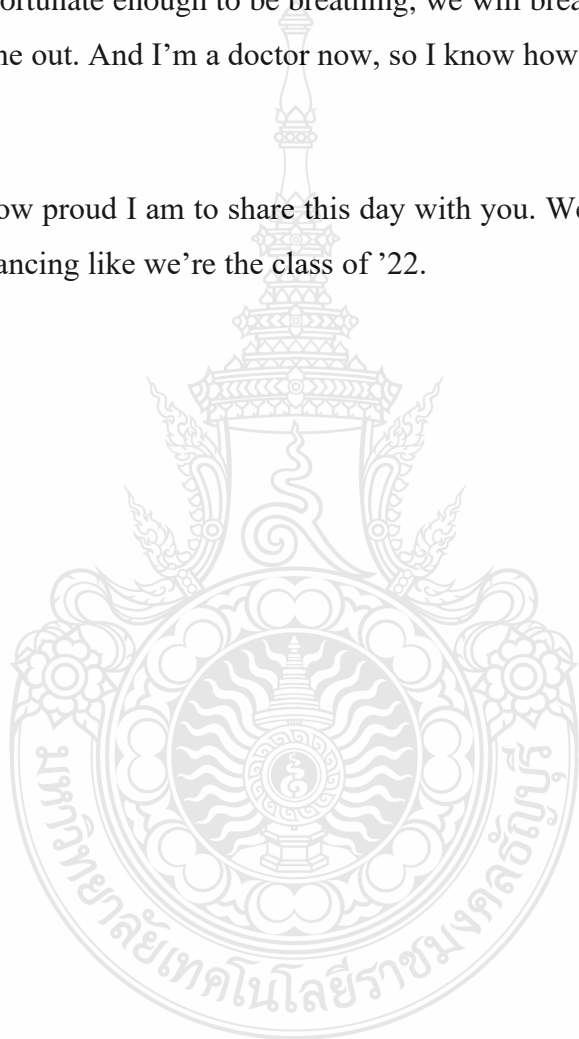
Scary news is: You're on your own now.

Cool news is: You're on your own now.

I leave you with this: We are led by our gut instincts, our intuition, our desires and fears, our scars and our dreams. And you will screw it up sometimes. So will I. And when I do, you will most likely read about on the internet. Anyway...hard things will happen to us. We will recover. We will learn from it. We will grow more resilient because of it.

As long as we are fortunate enough to be breathing, we will breathe in, breathe through, breathe deep, breathe out. And I'm a doctor now, so I know how breathing works.

I hope you know how proud I am to share this day with you. We're doing this together. So let's just keep dancing like we're the class of '22.





## **APPENDIX B**

### **Chadwick Boseman's Commencement Speech**

First, giving honor to the creator and my ancestors on whose shoulders. I stand happy mother's day to my mom she is not here in attendance but but by tomorrow she will have seen this. Let me also acknowledge my professors who have passed on to the other side because of work obligations over. the past few years I miss memorials that were held here for them professor AL freeman JR, Professor Mike Malone, Professor Reggie Ray, Dr. Henrietta Edmonds, Professor Joe Selman, Dr. johnson and Dr. singleton. Professors and instructors, instructors that may be present george Eppteen Tony Starnes, Denise Sanders, Professor Roberts Williams, and Professor Vera Katz.

Your lessons continue to guide and enlighten me to this day. To president Wayne Frederick and the board of trustees, thank you for bringing me back here and giving me this distinguished award it's overwhelming to be recognized amongst. This year's other honorees, I can think of no better place to be right now after the black panther and avengers campaigns that to return and participate in these graduate graduation ceremonies with you.

It is a great privilege, graduates to address you on your day, a day marking one of the most important accomplishments of your life to date. This is a magical place, a place where the dynamics of positive and negative seem to exist in extremes. I remember walking across this yard on what seemed to be a random day, my head down lost in my own world of issues like many of you do daily. I'm almost at the center of the yard. I raised my head and Muhammad Ali was walking towards me. Time seemed to slow down as his eyes locked on mine and opened wide. He raised his fist to a quintessential guard.

I was game to play along with him, to act as if I was a worthy opponent. What an honor to be challenged by the GOAT, the greatest of all time, for a brief moment. His face was as serious as if I was Frazier in the Thrilla in Manila. His movements were flashes of a past greater than I can imagine. His security let the joke play along for a second before they ushered him away, and I walked away floating like a butterfly. I walked away



amused at him, amused at myself, amused at life for this moment that almost no one would ever believe. I walked away light and ready to take on the world. That is the magic of this place. Almost anything can happen here. HU!

(crowd) You know!

Howard University, I was riding here and I heard on the radio, somebody called it Wakanda University, but it has many names, the Mecca, the Hilltop. It only takes one hour, one tour of the physical campus to understand why we call it the Hilltop. Every day is leg day here. That's why some of you have cars. During my junior and senior years, I lived in a house off campus at Bryant Street. For those of you... That's right, Bryant Street. For those of you who don't know what that means, that's at the bottom of the hill where the incline gets real. Almost every day I would walk the full length of the hill to Fine Arts, where most of my classes were, carrying all of my books, because once you walked that far on foot, you are not walking back home until it's time to go home for good.

But beyond the physical campus, the Hilltop represents the culmination of the intellectual and spiritual journey you have undergone while you were here. You have been climbing this academic slope for at least three or four years. For some of you, maybe even a little bit more. Throughout ancient times, institutions of learning have been built on top of hills to convey that great struggle is required to achieve degrees of enlightenment. Each of you had your own unique difficulties with the hill. For some of you, the challenge was actually academics. When you hear the words magna cum laude, cum laude, you know that's not you. That's not you. You worked hard. You did your best, but you didn't make A's or B's, sometimes C's. You never made the dean's list, but that's okay. You are here on top of the hill.

I want to say something to that. You know, sometimes your grades don't give a real indication of what your greatness might be. So, it really is okay. For others it was financial, you and your family struggled to make ends meet. Every semester of your matriculation you had to stand in one line to get to another line, to get to another line for somebody that might help you. You had to work an extra job, or two, but you are here.

For a lot of you, not all, but a lot of you, your hardest struggle was social. Some of you never fit in. You were never as cool and as popular as you wanted to be, and it bothers you. So, your social struggles here became psychological. Even though you made it up to hill, you carried the baggage of rejection with you, but you are here.

Some of you went through something traumatic. You made it to the top of the hill but not without scars and bruises. Some of you fit in too much. You were on the yard rapping on your frat block when you were supposed to be in class. Or you got caught up into DC party life. I know how that is. I mean, we are right here in the midst of the city. Sometimes you forgot you were in school. You probably could have graduated with honors, but instead you are getting an "Oh yeah" degree today. Oh yeah, I have class. Oh yeah, I have that paper due. Oh yeah, I have a final. You were literally too cool for school. You waited until the last minute to do your best work and it's a wonder that you made it up the hill at all because you carry the baggage of too much acceptance.

Most of you graduating here today struggled against one or more of the impediments or obstacles I've mentioned in order to reach this hilltop. When completing a long climb, one first experiences dizziness, disorientation and shortness of breath due to the high altitude, but once you become accustomed to the climb, your mind opens up to the tranquility of the triumph.

Oftentimes, the mind is flooded with realizations that were, for some reason, harder to come to when you were at a lower elevation. At this moment, most of you need some

realizations because right now you have some big decisions to make. Right now, I urge you in your breath, in your eyes, in your consciousness — invest in the importance of this moment and cherish it. I know some of you might've partied last night. You should, you should celebrate, but this moment is also a part of that celebration. So, savor the taste of your triumphs today. Don't just swallow the moment whole without digesting what has actually happened here. Look down over what you conquered and appreciate what God has brought you through.

Some of you here struggled against the university itself. This year, students protested and took over the A building, formulated a list of demands and negotiated with our president and administration to determine the direction of our institution. It's impressive. Similarly, during my years here at Howard, we also protested and took over the A building in order to preserve Howard's alum, in order to preserve Howard's annual appropriations from Congress. President H. Patrick Swygert decided to reduce the number of colleges at the university. By his plan, engineering would need to merge with architecture. Nursing would merge with allied health and the fine arts, my school, will be absorbed by arts and sciences. That's how we saw it, absorbed.

For many of us in fine arts, this signaled to us that our curriculums, all the curriculums of students following us, might become watered-down concentrations. This undermined the very legacy we were proud to be a part of and aimed to continue. The fine arts program had produced Phylicia Rashad, Debbie Allen, Isaiah Washington, Richard Wesley, Donny Hathaway, Roberta Flack, just to name a few. We felt that... Yes, yes. You could go on and on. You can go on and on. You can go on and on. We felt that we could compete with students from Juilliard, NYU and Carroll Arts as long as we continued to have a concentrated dosage that rivaled a conservatory experience, but without it...

Although we took over the A building for several days and presented our arguments to President Swygert and the administration, the schools were still merged. Thus, the current

collection or formation of schools exists. That's why I view your recent protest as such an accomplishment for both sides of the debate, student and administration. I didn't come here to take sides. My interest is what's best for the school.

A Howard University education is not just about what happens in the classroom, students. In some ways, what you were able to do exemplifies some of the skills you learned in the classroom. It takes the education out of the realm of theory and into utility and practice. Obviously, your organizational skills were unprecedented. I'm told that you organized shifts so that you could at least continue some of your classes. We missed all our classes. We were in the A building. I'm told that through donations, there was always an ample helping of food. I probably ate a slice of pizza during the entirety of our three-day protest.

Your organization and planning was impeccable. You received the majority of your demands, making a significant impact on those who came after you. As is often the case, those that follow most often enjoy the results of the progress you gained. You love the university enough to struggle with it. Now, I have to ask you that you have to continue to do that even now that you received your demands. Even if you are walking today, you have to continue to do that. Everything that you fought for was not for yourself. It was for those that come after. You could have been disgruntled and transferred, but you fought to be participants in making this institution the best that it can be. But I must also applaud President Wayne Frederick and the administration for listening to the students.

Your freedom of speech was exercised in a way where you can contribute to this place. It also shows that you can contribute to the democracy. The administration and the campus police at the time when I was protesting were not nearly as open-minded as this current one. I know this was a difficult time, but because of both of you, I believe Howard is a few steps closer to the actualization of its potential, the potential that many of us have dreamed for it. Students, your protests are also promising because many of you will leave Howard and enter systems and institutions that have a history of discrimination and

marginalization. The fact that you have struggled with this university that you love is a sign that you can use your education to improve the world that you are entering.

I was on a roll when I entered the system of entertainment, theater, television and film. In my first New York audition for a professional play I landed the lead role. From that play, I got my first agent. From that agent, I got an on-screen audition. It was a soap opera. It wasn't Third Watch. It was a soap opera on a major network. I scored that role, too. I felt like Mike Tyson when he first came on the scene knocking out opponents in the first round. With this soap opera gig, I was already promised to make six figures, more money than I had ever seen. I was feeling myself. But once I got the first script, with soap operas you very often get the script the night before and then you shoot the whole episode in one day with little to no time to prepare.

Once I saw the role I was playing, I found myself conflicted. The role wasn't necessarily stereotypical. A young man in his formative years with a violent streak pulled into the allure of gang involvement. That's somebody's real story. Never judge the characters you play. That's what we were always taught. That's the first rule of acting. Any role played honestly can be empowering, but I was conflicted because this role seemed to be wrapped up in assumptions about us as Black folk. The writing failed to search for specificity. Plus, there was barely a glimpse of positivity or talent in the character, barely a glimpse of hope. I would have to make something out of nothing. I was conflicted. Howard had instilled in me a certain amount of pride and for my taste this role didn't live up to those standards.

It was just my luck that after filming the first two episodes, execs of the show called me into their offices and told me how happy they were with my performance. They wanted me to be around for a long time. They said if there was anything that I needed, just let them know. That was my opening. I decided to ask them some simple questions about the background of my character, questions that I felt were pertinent to the plot. Question

number one: Where is my father? The exec answered, “Well, he left when you were younger.” Of course. Okay. Okay. Question number two: In this script, it alluded to my mother not being equipped to operate as a good parent, so why exactly did my little brother and I have to go into foster care? Matter-of-factly, he said, “Well, of course she is on heroin.”

That could be real, I guess, but I didn’t want to assume that’s what it was. If we are around here assuming that the Black characters in the show are criminals, on drugs and deadbeat parents, then that would probably be stereotypical, wouldn’t it? That word stereotypical lingered. One of the execs pulled out my resume and began studying it. The other exec wore a smile and was now trying to live up to what they had promised me only a few moments before — “If there is anything you need, just let us know.” She said, “As you have seen, things move really fast around here, but we are more than happy to connect you with the writers if you have suggestions.”

“Yeah,” I said, “that would be great.” I said, “because I’m just trying to do my homework on this. I didn’t know if you guys have decided on all the facts, but maybe there are some things we could come up with, some talent or gift that we can build. Maybe he is really good at math or something. He has to be active. I’m doing my best not to play this character like a victim.”

“So, you went to Howard University, huh?” the exec holding my resume interrupted, peeking over the pages. “Yes,” I said proudly. He slid my resume back in his desk and said, “Thank you for your concerns. We will be watching you.”

I left the office. I shot the episode I had come in to shoot on that day. Probably the best one I did out of the three because I got one that was bothering me off my chest. I was let go from that job on the next day. I got a phone call from my agent. They decided to go

another way. The questions that I asked set the producers on guard and perhaps paved the way for less stereotypical portrayal for the Black actor that stepped into the role after me.

As the Scripture says, “I planted the seed and Apollos watered it, but God kept it growing.” God kept it growing. Yet and still, when you invest in a seed, watching it grow without you, that is a bitter pill to swallow, a bitter pill. Anybody that has ever been fired knows what I’m talking about. Even if you really don’t want the job, when they let you go, it’s like any break-up, you act like you don’t care. I didn’t need that damn job anyway. I didn’t need them.

But when you have those moments alone, you start to wonder if there was a better way to handle it. If you could have handled it better maybe you could help your family. Then before you know it, you are broke. You find yourself scraping together change just so you can ride the subway, so that you could get the next job. Maybe if you could book something else that would eclipse the feeling of doubt that’s building, but it seems like you can’t pay them to hire you now.

My agents at the time told me it might be a while before I got a job acting on screen again. Well, that was fine because I never wanted to act in the first place. And I definitely didn’t want to be caught dead going after a fake Hollywood pipe dream. I’m more of a writer, director anyway, so forget their stories. I can tell my own stories. But am I actually blackballed? “We are hesitant about sending you out to some people right now because there is a stigma that you are difficult.” As conflicted as I was before I lost the job, as adamant as I was about the need to speak truth to power, I found myself even more conflicted afterwards. I stand here today knowing that my Howard University education prepared me to play Jackie Robinson, James Brown, Thurgood Marshall and T’Challa.

But what do you do when the principle and the standards that were instilled in you here at Howard closed the doors in front of you? Sometimes you need to get knocked down before you can really figure out what your fight is and how need to fight it. At some point, my mind reverted back to my experiences here, to the professors that challenged me and struggled against me, Professor Robert Williams, Doctor Singleton, George Epstein, to name a few, the ones that will fail you out of the goodness of their hearts.

This may be hard to grasp for some of you right now, but I even considered President Swygert and how negotiating with him was practice for a world that was considerably more cruel and unforgiving than any debate here, one that had no interest in my ideals and beliefs. How would I maneuver through all of this?

Finally, I thought of Ali in the middle of the yard in his elder years, drawing from his victories and his losses. At that moment I realized something new about the greatness of Ali and how he carried his crown. I realized that he was transferring something to me on that day. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter in me. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter to me. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter to me. Sometimes you need to feel the pain and sting of defeat to activate the real passion and purpose that God predestined inside of you. God says in Jeremiah, "I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

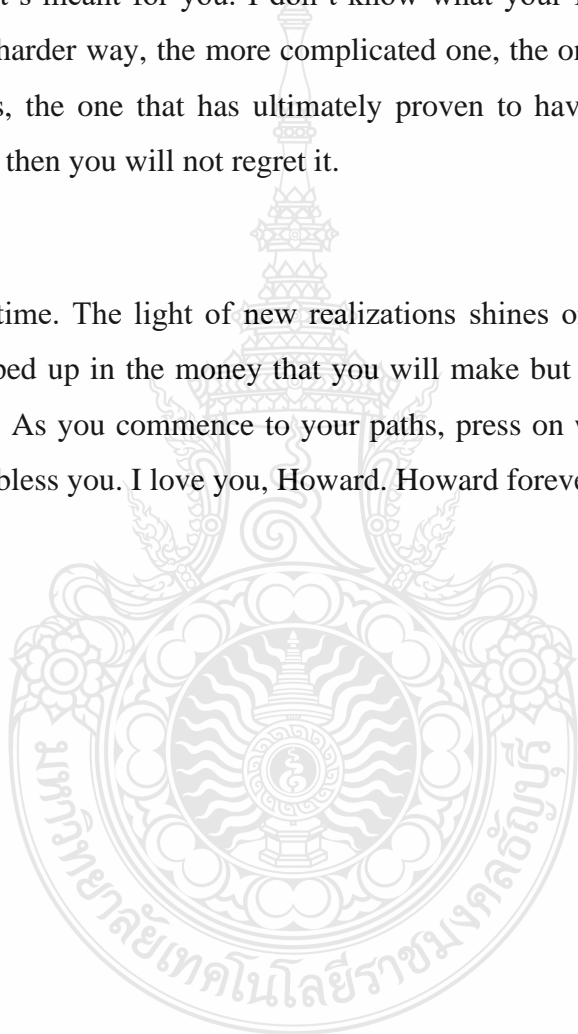
Graduating class, hear me well on this day. This day, when you have reached the hilltop and you are deciding on next jobs, next steps, careers, further education, you would rather find purpose than a job or career. Purpose crosses disciplines. Purpose is an essential element of you. It is the reason you are on the planet at this particular time in history. Your very existence is wrapped up in the things you are here to fulfill. Whatever you choose for a career path, remember, the struggles along the way are only meant to shape you for your purpose. When I dared to challenge the system that would relegate us to victims and stereotypes with no clear historical backgrounds, no hopes or talents, when I



questioned that method of portrayal, a different path opened up for me, the path to my destiny.

When God has something for you, it doesn't matter who stands against it. God will move someone that's holding you back away from the door and put someone there who will open it for you if it's meant for you. I don't know what your future is, but if you are willing to take the harder way, the more complicated one, the one with more failures at first than successes, the one that has ultimately proven to have more meaning, more victory, more glory then you will not regret it.

Now, this is your time. The light of new realizations shines on you today. Howard's legacy is not wrapped up in the money that you will make but the challenges that you choose to confront. As you commence to your paths, press on with pride and press on with purpose. God bless you. I love you, Howard. Howard forever!



### Biography

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