

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Linguistic politeness has become one of major discussion in the study of language. There are many linguists of around the world who have conducted some researches about it. As a result, it makes variation in its definition and interpretation. Some of the linguists who propose the theory of politeness are Brown and Levinson (1978), Fraser (1990), Lakoff (1967), Yule (1996) and etc.

Politeness is a system of interpersonal relation designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange (Lakoff, 1990:34). Fraser (1990:233) views politeness as the implementation of conversational rights and obligations as speaker and hearer operate under the “terms and conditions of the conversational contract”. In most of the studies, the politeness has been conceptualized especially as strategic conflict-avoidance or as strategic construction of cooperative social interaction (Watts, 2003:47).

The most seminal theory of politeness was first introduced in 1978 by Brown and Levinson. Their names are always related with the term of politeness. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:61), the central

themes of politeness were rationality and face, which were claimed to be universal feature or possessed by all speakers and hearers.

Brown and Levinson (1987: 61) defined face as the public self-image that every member of society wanted to claim for himself. In their framework, face consists of two related aspects. Those faces are negative face and positive face. Negative face shows the right to territories, freedom of action, and freedom from imposition. It demands one's actions not to be constrained or inhibited by others. Positive face shows that people have desire to be appreciated and approved by the others.

In the rational actions, people take to preserve both kinds of face, for themselves and the people they interact with, add up to politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987:61) also argue that in human communication, either spoken or written, people tend to maintain one another's face continuously. As a speaker, people usually try to avoid making the hearer embarrassed or uncomfortable. Face-threatening acts (FTAs) are acts that infringe on the hearers' need to maintain his/her self-esteem, and be respected. Politeness strategies are developed for the main purpose of dealing with these FTAs.

In communication, listeners usually consider whether the speakers speak politely or not by understanding their utterances or their behavior. People are supposed to act politely when they speak and act respectfully toward the other people, especially to the superiors, including in disagreement.

The term disagreement has been captivating some researchers to conduct some research in linguistic area. Disagreement often occurs in every day conversation. It makes the discussion of disagreement becoming more and more popular in several decades. Koczogh (2013) believes that the term disagreements are complex and entail the widely-researched issues of impoliteness or politeness and inappropriateness or appropriate.

Speech act of disagreement could threaten positive face. It threatens positive face when the speaker does not care about the listener feelings or wants. Speaker still can show disagreement politely. The following examples show how speakers show disagreement politely and impolitely made by students:

Context I

Students' little brother (a junior high school student) says that their mobile phone is too old to use. They say:

- (1) It's not your business. It still works properly. That's enough.
- (2) Eh... I disagree. What's the matter? I love my phone. Whatever they talk about it, I don't care.

In context I, the speakers do not care about the listener face and show their strong disagreement impolitely by using such simple sentences "It's not your business" or "I don't care." These utterances are affected by the social distance and status levels between the speakers and listeners.

Context II

After graduating from college, students want to works as a teacher. Their father says that they should not become a teacher because a teacher only gets a little salary. They say:

- (1) But I am very happy when I teach the students. I want to be a teacher Dad.
- (2) I am sorry dad, but I really want to be a teacher. That is my dream.

In context II, the speakers show their disagreement politely. This disagreement is marked by the use words which mitigate the utterances (e.g. sorry). The speakers show their regard to the listener who has higher social levels.

Now days, there are some researches which are conducted in term of politeness strategy in disagreement. One of the examples is Fernandez (2013). She studied *The Linguistic Realization of Disagreements by EFL Egyptian Speakers* which aimed to explain expressions of disagreement used by Egyptian, the significant differences in the disagreement strategies employed, differences of Egyptian and American in the employment of disagreement, and the role of topic in the use of expressions of disagreement. She found that both Egyptian and American employed similar strategies. She also found that topic proved to play a crucial role in determining the kind of strategies participants use.

Even though there are some researches about politeness strategies used in disagreement by second/foreign language learners around the world (e.g. Sako, 2008 and Fahrani, 2013), but this is really rare to find such kind of research in Indonesian EFL learners context. This research is intended to fill the inanition which is related to that problem. Researcher hopes that this research will be useful as additional references and enrichment in studying politeness strategies. This research is conducted under pragmatic analysis, particularly focusing on politeness strategies used in disagreement by Indonesia EFL learners.

B. Scope of the Study

This research focuses on the study of politeness strategies used in disagreement by students of English Department in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The data are analyzed by using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987), Pomerantz's disagreement strategies (1984) and Wardhaugh sociolinguistics theory (2006). The disagreement utterances are collected through oral DCT scenario.

C. Problem Statement

There are some problems which are addressed by the researcher in process of analyzing disagreement utterances of the students. This research paper will answer to the following problems:

1. What types of politeness strategies are used in disagreement by students of English Department?
2. Is there any difference in politeness strategy used in disagreement by male and female students?
3. Does social distance affect to the type of politeness strategies?
4. Do status levels affect to the type of politeness strategies?

D. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the research are:

1. To describe politeness strategies used in disagreement by students of English Department

2. To explain the differences in politeness strategy used in disagreement by male and female students
3. To explain whether social distance affects to the type of politeness strategies or not
4. To explain whether status levels affects to the type of politeness strategies or not

E. The Benefit of the Research

The benefit of the research could be divided into theoretical and practical:

1. Theoretical Benefit

This research contributes to the pragmatics study especially on politeness strategies and disagreement strategies.

2. Practical Benefit

a. For the learners

The students can learn how to analyze utterances, especially on disagreement by using politeness strategies.

b. For teachers or lectures

1) The use of politeness by EFL learners may become an additional reference in teaching pragmatics, especially in Brown and Levinson politeness theory.

2) The use of disagreement by EFL learners may become an additional reference in teaching pragmatics, especially in Pomerantz's disagreement theory.

c. For other researchers

- 1) The result of this study may become additional reference in conducting research based on pragmatics analysis especially on politeness in disagreement.
- 2) This research is also significant for stimulating to the other researcher in conducting such kind of research in the future.
- 3) For UMS

This research paper could extend pragmatic research which is very limited in Indonesian EFL context.

F. Research Paper Organization

Research paper organization is conducted to give a clear guidance in reading and understanding the content of the study. This research consists of five chapters. Chapter I is introduction, which consists of background of the study, previous study, problem statement, objective of the study, Scope of the study, benefit of the study, and research paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory. It covers the understanding of pragmatics, speech act, politeness strategies, and disagreement. Chapter III is research method. It consists of the research type, the research object, data, method of data collection, and technique of data analysis, the result of pilot study. Chapter IV is data analysis and discussion. It elaborates the step in analyzing disagreement by using politeness strategies. Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion.