

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the topic, the aim, and the importance of the study. It consists of the background of the study, problems statements, purposes of the research, scope of the research, significance of the study, research methodology and clarification of terms.

### 1.1 Background

When involved in a conversation, linguistically, male and female seem to be different. It is because of the differences in behavior that affect their use of language in a conversation. Female speakers are considered to be more polite speakers (Holmes, 1995) and cooperative speakers according to Coates (as cited in Hannah & Murachver, 1999) than male speakers. The argument is in line with Fishman (as cited in Hannah & Murachver, 1999) who finds that men are less cooperative in conversation than female speakers. Moreover, men are eager to control the conversation by holding the floor and control the topic. It makes male speakers dominate the conversation (Rosenblum, as cited in James and Clarke 1993; Zimmerman & West, 1975; and Smith-Lovin & Brody, 1989). As a result, male speakers are considered to be more powerful than female speakers, and it leads them to interrupt more than female speakers in mixed-gender conversation. According to some researcher like Rosenblum (as cited in James and Clarke, 1993), Smith-Lovin & Brody (1989) and West & Zimmerman (1975), men tend to interrupt women more than the reverse.

Interruption is considered impolite because it shows disrespect to others. According to Fei (2010, p. 12) interruption occurs when “Another speaker cuts off the current speaker’s utterances”. Interruption is a violation of turn taking and it is seen as an intentional action that has a negative connotation. Interruption, not only works as a means to take turns, it also has the function to show that the speaker is highly involved in the conversation. Interruption can be analyzed by using Conversational Analysis (CA). Conversation analysis is first developed by Harvey Sacks, Emmanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson in 1978. Conversation analysis aims to

understand how people manage their interaction and how they develop their social relation (Paltridge, 2006).

Interruption can be categorized into types and functions: based on the functions of interruption (French & Local, 1983) and based on the types of interruption (Ferguson, 1977). The functions of interruption are divided into two: cooperative and competitive, while types of interruption are divided into four: simple interruption, silent interruption, butting-in interruption, and overlap.

Speakers sometimes violate turn taking by interrupting the current speaker. The phenomenon of interruption has attracted many scholars; one of them is West & Zimmerman (1975). West & Zimmerman (1975) analyzed interruption, overlap, and silence in the same-gender and mixed-gender conversation. The study analyzed two-party interactions in coffee shop, drug stores, and other public places in a university community. The data of the conversations are equaled among sex-paired: male-male, female-female, and male-female. The study found that male speakers interrupt and overlap more than female speakers. Moreover, female speakers show silence more than male speakers. However, in contrast to West and Zimmerman (1975), Faizah (2015) found that female speakers used interruption more than male speakers. Her study analyzed two features of turn taking: overlap and interruption in a mixed-gender conversation in the talk show *Mata Najwa*. The result showed that female speakers interrupt more than male speakers and competitive interruption is the interruption frequently used by the speakers. Furthermore, turn-noncompetitive overlaps are dominant in the conversation. The different results may have emerged because the contexts are different. The study from West and Zimmerman (1975) analyzed conversation in public places while the research from Faizah (2015) analyzed a conversation in the talk show.

Unlike the previous studies, this research does not only try to reveal interruption in a mixed-gender conversation but also to see the politeness strategies that are used by the speakers to avoid face-threatening act. Moreover, this research also examines the possible factors that affect the speakers to interrupt. It is interesting to analyze politeness strategies because interruption is an act that potentially threatens the speaker's face. It is because interruption mostly is an act to take the floor or change the topic, thus it sometimes contradicts with what the speaker's want. For

instance, when the current speaker was speaking and the second speaker interrupted by complaining, it makes the current speaker's want to be appreciated by the hearer is violated.

In order to analyze the interruption, this research used conversation analysis proposed by Sacks *et al* (1974). The theory that is used to analyze types of interruption were analyzed by using Ferguson (1977) theory while the functions of interruption were analyzed by using French & Local (1983) theory. Moreover, the politeness strategies were analyzed by using Brown & Levinson (1987) politeness theory.

## **1.2 Statements of Problems**

This research attempts to answer the following questions focusing on a mixed-gender conversation as stated below:

- a. What are the types of interruption that occur?
- b. What are their functions?
- c. What are the politeness strategies to interrupt?
- d. What are the factors which affect the interruption of male and female speakers?

## **1.3 Purpose of the research**

In the context of mixed-gender conversation, the purposes of this research are:

- a. To discover the types of interruption that occurs,
- b. To discover the functions of interruption that occurs,
- c. To discover the politeness strategies when interrupting,
- d. To discover the factors which affect the male and female speakers when interrupting.

## **1.4 Scope of the Research**

This research focuses on revealing interruption in a mixed-gender conversation. Types and functions of interruption are analyzed in this research. Furthermore different from previous research, politeness strategies that are used by the male and female speakers were analyzed to know how the speaker avoids or minimizes to threaten the current speaker's face. This research only analyzed politeness strategies used by the speakers when they interrupting because

according to Brown & Levinson (1987), interruption can threaten either positive or negative face. Since the interruption mostly is an act to take the floor or change the topic, it sometimes contradictory with speakers' wants. This research also examined the possible factors influencing speakers to interrupt.

There is still a debate on the nature of interruption and overlap. This debate revolves around the issue whether interruption and overlap are similar or not. Some researcher like Coates (1986) and Bannet (1981) differentiate between overlap and interruption while Leffler, Gillespi and Conatry (1982), and Ferguson (1977) do not differentiate between overlap and interruption. This research includes overlap into one of the types of interruption because the act of overlap and interruption are the same: the speakers cut off the current speaker's utterance. Besides, both overlap and interruption can be considered as competitive and cooperative.

### **1.5 Significance of the Research**

This research tries to give a contribution in analyzing gender in turn taking violations; which is an interruption in a mixed-gender conversation in the talk show. Some studies already analyze interruption in a mixed-gender conversation whether in public places, talk show, or TV series. This research categorizes interruption and finds which speaker mostly initiates the interruption. More specifically, this research analyzes how male and female organize the conversation in the talk show. Thus, this research only focuses on analyzing the guests. The host and co-hosts are not analyzed because the host will dominate the conversation since talk shows are in a form of question and answer and the host has the right to control the conversation. Different from other research, this research also sees the way the speakers use politeness strategies when interrupting to avoid or minimize threat the current speaker's face since interruption is an act that potentially threatens other's face.

### **1.6 Research Methodology**

The length of the video is 90 minutes and is divided into six parts. However, this research only analyzed the third part that contains 14 minutes because of several reasons: first, in analyzing how the speakers interrupt in a mixed-gender conversation, it requires male and female speakers in equal numbers. In the particular part analyzed, there are four guests: Maia, Monita, Ricky, and

Virzha. Second, since the analysis requires a natural conversation, the host and co-hosts were excluded in the analysis. It is because basically, the host has the right to control the conversation, and thus it will make the host dominates the conversation. Besides, the distractions from co-host are not natural since they are controlled by the script. The distractions from co-hosts are not as many as in other parts. In this part, unlike in other parts the co-hosts do not dominate the conversation; hence, the third part is the most appropriate one to be used for analysis. Moreover, a qualitative method is used in collecting and analyzing the data. However, a simple quantitative measure in the form of categorical measurement is also used in order to count the frequency of occurrence of particular data. This research follows interruption theory from Ferguson (1977) and French & Local (1983), politeness strategies theory from Brown & Levinson (1987) and possible factors that affect speakers to interrupt following Wardhaugh (1985)'s theory of factors to interrupt.

## 1.7 Clarification of Terms

- a. Turn taking: How the speakers manage the turns in conversation to make the conversation run smoothly. There are three rules of turn taking according to Sacks *et al* (1947): Current Speaker Select the Next Turn (CS2TNS), Self Select (SS) and Current Speaker Continuous (CSC).
- b. Transition Relevance Place (TRP): A location that a change of a turn may take place and can be indicated by failing intonation, pausing, and many more. (Sacks *et al*, 1974)
- c. Turn-constructional unit (TCU): The basic units of conversation. (Sacks *et al*, 1947)
- d. Interruption: A phenomenon that happened when another speaker cuts off the current speaker's utterances. (Fei, 2010)
- e. Face-threatening act: Certain kinds of an act that can threaten face because the act is in contrary with the hearer's wants. (Brown & Levinson, 1987)
- f. Politeness Strategies: A strategies to achieve social goals and avoid social friction. (Brown & Levinson, 1987)
- g. Positive face: The want to be appreciated and approved by others. (Brown & Levinson, 1987)
- h. Negative face: The want to be independent and free from imposition. (Brown & Levinson, 1987)

- i. Gender: Social roles that are built by a stereotype of how male and female should act. (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003)

## **1.8 Organization of Paper**

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction that presents the background of the research. It includes problems statements, purpose of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, methodology, key terms and organization of the paper. Chapter II is Theoretical Background that presents related theories and framework that are used in this research. It also presents previous research that are related to the interruption in a mixed-gender conversation. Chapter III is Methodology that presents the explanation about the method that is used in this research. This chapter also explains data collection and analysis that shows how it was collected and analyzed. Chapter IV is Finding and Discussion that provides the result of the analysis and the discussion of the results. Chapter V is Conclusion and Suggestion that provides the conclusion of the research based on findings and discussion. This chapter also provides the writer's suggestion for further research.