

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter presents the brief elaboration of several elements covered in the study. They are background of study, statement of problems, aims of study, research methods, scope of study, significance of study, clarification of related terms, and organization of paper.

1.1 Background of study

While doing social interaction, there is a particular self-image which a person attempts to maintain for each other. This is what Goffman (1967, p. 222) called 'face' which was defined as a self-image that people share "in terms of approved social attributes...by making a good showing for himself". Individuals save each other's face due to the necessity of being polite. In sum, politeness can be regarded as the expressions that are used to take care of individuals' faces in order to preserve good relationship among them.

However, during communication, it is frequent that the speaker's desire might not be in line with the hearer's or vice versa. This condition leads to the acts which are against "the face wants of the speaker and/ or the hearer" namely 'Face Threatening Acts (FTAs)' (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 65). Dealing with FTAs, people, whether consciously or not, will perform some strategies. Those strategies are known as 'politeness strategies' and used for redressing messages in order to save the interlocutor's face when FTAs are unavoidable.

In terms of politeness strategies, Brown and Levinson (1987) listed four major types of politeness strategies: 1) Bald on record; 2) Positive politeness; 3) Negative politeness; and 4) Off-record. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1987) also stated that the use of politeness strategies depends on three factors, which are 1) the social distance between participants; 2) the power relation of participants; and 3) the rank of impositions (the threat of the FTAs). The detailed explanation is discussed in Chapter II of the study.

Related to politeness strategies usage of Indonesians, several studies have reported various findings. A study conducted by Nanda (2010) explored politeness strategies of Indonesian presenters in a television show and found that positive politeness became the strategy which was mostly used by the Indonesian presenters. It is in line with the results of Vistiari's study (2002) which revealed that Indonesian native speakers performed positive politeness most often among the other strategies in the course meetings.

Nevertheless, different findings were obtained from Sa'diyah's study (2008). She investigated politeness strategies usage of Indonesian chatters in Internet Relay Chat (IRC). The study evidenced that the most frequently used strategy among them was bald on record. It was probably because the Indonesian chatters thought it was the fastest and most effective way in internet chatting. Moreover, since they did not meet in the real world so there might not be really necessary to maintain each other face.

The previous studies mentioned earlier have explored politeness strategies usage of Indonesian speakers with various participants. Yet, none of them focused on the factors which influence Indonesians in utilizing politeness strategies. In fact, analyzing the factors may be useful for knowing the notion behind their usage of politeness strategies. Furthermore, there are still a few studies concerning politeness strategies in casual conversation whereas it is also worthwhile to be examined because it actually happens in our daily life.

Regarding those phenomena, the present study attempted to investigate politeness strategies applied by an Indonesian native speaker in a casual conversation. It aimed at revealing types of politeness strategies which were utilized by the Indonesian participant towards a friend and a senior. In addition, it was intended to explore the factors which affected the use of politeness strategies by the Indonesian participant in the casual conversation.

1.2 Statement of problems

The present study began with phenomena which afterwards aroused several enquiries. The questions covered in this study were as follows:

1. What types of politeness strategies are used by an Indonesian native speaker to a friend in the casual conversation?
2. What types of politeness strategies are used by an Indonesian native speaker to a senior in the casual conversation?
3. What are the factors that influence the use of politeness strategies by the Indonesian participant in the casual conversation?

1.3 Aims of study

Based on the research questions above, the present study aimed to reveal:

1. Types of politeness strategies which are applied by an Indonesian native speaker to a friend in the casual conversation.
2. Types of politeness strategies which are applied by an Indonesian native speaker to a senior in the casual conversation.
3. The factors which influence the use of politeness strategies by the Indonesian participant in the casual conversation.

1.4 Research Methods

The design of this study is a qualitative study since the aims of the study were in line with the basic purpose of qualitative study namely “to describe the characteristics of a particular group, event, or phenomena” (Alwasilah, 2000, p. 151). Particularly, it belongs to a case study which explored the use of politeness strategies by an Indonesian native speaker. The data were collected by means of video-recording and interview. Video-recording was employed to record the conversation performed by the participants, while interview was used for confirming the data obtained from the recording. There were three Indonesian students involved in the conversation, but only the utterances delivered by an Indonesian participant which were analyzed in this study.

In order to reveal the types of politeness strategies utilized by the Indonesian participant (henceforth, IS) to a friend and a senior, the utterances said by IS in the recorded conversation were analyzed according to Brown & Levinson's politeness strategies (1987). Afterwards, it was investigated whether IS applied the same or different strategies towards the friend and senior to find out the factors which influenced the use of politeness strategies by IS in the casual conversation. The data were obtained from the analyzed conversation as well as the interview.

1.5 Scope of study

The present study focused on revealing politeness strategies which were performed by an Indonesian native speaker to a friend and a senior in a casual conversation. It also attempted to discover the factors which influenced the use of politeness strategies by the Indonesian participant in the casual conversation.

1.6 Significance of study

The present study is expected to give significance for some people in case of theories, professions, and practices related to this area. The results of this study is hoped to add more valuable data about the use of politeness strategies by Indonesian speaker in casual conversation. Teachers and scholars may use it as an example of language use realizations which can be shared to students or other people. It also appears to be a reference for further studies concerning this topic.

1.7 Clarification of key terms

The main terms used in this paper would be clarified here in order to avoid misunderstandings, they are as follows:

1. Politeness strategies are the strategies people perform in order to minimize the FTAs (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Here, it refers to the politeness strategies utilized by an Indonesian native speaker towards a friend and a senior in a casual conversation.
2. Casual conversation in this study refers to a daily conversation between three Indonesian native speakers who are regarded as the main participant, the friend, and the senior.

1.8 Organization of paper

This research paper comprises five chapters including Introduction, Theoretical Foundation, Research Methodology, Findings and Discussion, and Conclusions and Suggestions. Chapter I, Introduction, consists of background, statement of problems, aims of study, research methods, scope of study, significance of study, clarification of key terms and organization of paper. Chapter II, Theoretical Foundation, reviews the underlying theories and previous related studies. Chapter III, Research Methodology, elaborates the research design, data collection, and data analysis of the study. Chapter IV, Findings and Discussion, presents results of the study along with the discussion. Chapter V, Conclusions and Suggestions, covers some conclusions of the study and suggestions regarding the research topic.