

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the point of this present study. It consists of a background of the study, research questions, and purposes of the study. Additionally, this chapter also involves significance of the study, research methodology as well as clarification of several related terms. Furthermore, at the end of this chapter, there is also an organization of the paper as a general description of how this paper is organized.

1.1 Background of the Study

Speech act is an essential element in people's daily interaction since it takes an important role for the success of a communication. When two people communicate, they don't only utter sentences grammatically, yet they actually have other goals in mind that have to be achieved through the communication. Speech act is divided into several classifications; one of them is commissives act (Austin, 1962). Commissives are when the speaker in an interaction commits to perform certain future actions (Austin, 1962; Grewendorf & Meggle, 2002). One example of commissives is refusal (Yule, 1996). Basically, refusal is a kind of face-threatening acts that often occurs in people's daily interaction, in which the refusers intend to reject something that interlocutor has said to them (Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Al-Kahtani, 2005; Genc & Tekyildiz, 2009). Aziz (2000) declares that refusal is regarded as a negative response of directive speech act such as offer, invitation, request, argument, suggestion, and command (as cited in Septiany, 2013).

For several reasons, exploring and understanding refusal as well as its strategies is important since refusal itself often occurs in human's everyday communication. First, it is obvious that refusal is actually a kind of negative action that can offend an interlocutor in a conversation, and then to deliver it, someone has to know and understand first several refusal strategies so that they can apply those strategies properly and minimize errors in communication.

Moreover, due to its sensitivity, refusal strategies have to be employed properly when it comes to the situation where the refusee is different with the refuser in terms of several social variables like social status (e.g. high, low, or equal) and also the imposition of things which are uttered by the refusee (Septiany, 2013). By applying the proper refusal strategies with the right people, the communication which is maintained will flow well without any party feeling offended.

Studies on the realization of refusal strategies have in general been discussed in certain languages. Some of the studies concern the realization of refusal strategies within one language, while others focus on the realization of refusals involving more than one language. Studies that investigate how refusal strategies realized in one set of culture have been conducted; for example in Persian (Ahangar, Sarani & Zeynali, 2012), in Malaysian (Sattar et al, 2011), Javanese (Utomo, 2007; Wijayanto, 2013), Sundanese (Aziz, 1996; Mulyani, 2013; Sukmawan, Wahya & Darmayanti, 2014) and Indonesian (Septiany, 2013; Hartuti, 2014; Chojimah, 2015; Nurweni, Sudirman & Mahpul, 2016). On the other hand, instead of examining refusal strategies within one language, some researchers preferred examining the refusal strategies across cultures and involve different types of speakers with different backgrounds. One type of this study is those studies which involve native and non-native speakers, for instance the realization of refusals in English by speakers of Japanese (e.g. Takahashi & Beebe, 1987; Yamagashira, 2001), Taiwanese (Liao & Bresnahan, 1996), Chinese (Tanck, 2002 and Bresnahan, Cai & Rivers, 2009), Arabian (Al-Kahtani, 2005; Al-Eryani, 2007 and Alhaidari, 2009), Vietnamese (Nguyen, 2006), Turkish (Genc & Tekyildiz, 2009), Persian (Allami & Naeimi, 2011), Iranian (Abarghour, 2012) and Javanese (Wijayanto, 2013). Other kind of study is the comparative studies examining how two groups of native speakers realize refusal strategies in their own languages, such as the refusal realization in Sundanese and Javanese (e.g. Umale, 2011; Aliakbari & Changizi, 2012; Ghanzanfari, Bonyadi & Malekzadeh, 2012; Guo, 2012 & Morkus, 2014). Another category is the studies examining the realization of refusals in one language by speakers with different ethnicities, for instance, the realization of refusal strategies in English by Chinese

and Malay students (e.g. Ilmiani, 2016). Additionally, in Indonesia, it was found that only a few researchers have conducted this kind of study (e.g. Aziz, 2000).

However, the issues regarding the realization of refusal strategies in Indonesia, specifically by Indonesian students which involve ethnic groups have not received much attention. Therefore, the present study is conducted to address this gap by revealing types of refusal strategies which are used by Indonesian students with different ethnic groups. Additionally, this study is accordingly conducted to disclose the types of refusal strategy which are realized by Sundanese and Minangnese students in their daily lives and point out the effect of the realization of refusal strategies in relation to three social variables namely power relation, social distance, and rank of imposition.

1.2 Statement of Problems

The purposes of the study are formulated into the following research questions:

- 1) What types of refusal strategies are employed by Sundanese and Minangnese students in refusing direct requests that appear within their day-to-day interactions?
- 2) How do power relation, social distance, and rank of imposition contribute to the realization of refusal strategies by Sundanese and Minangnese students?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

This research attempts to reveal types of refusal strategies which are realized by Indonesian students with two different ethnic groups (i.e. Minangnese and Sundanese) in several given situations. The refusal strategies which were observed are the situations in which the refusers have to refuse several direct requests from various parties that are addressed to them. Furthermore, this study also aims to point out the contribution of power relation, social distance, and rank of imposition towards the realization of the refusal strategies.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on the realization of refusal strategies performed by two Sundanese and Minangnese students from one of the universities in Bandung. The context involved in the study is academic context where almost all of the situations in the DCT take place in the campus. The decision of choosing students

is due to the fact that they are varied in terms of the background (hometown), so it is expected that they can represent how Sundanese and Minangnese realize the refusal strategies. In addition, the decision of choosing academic context is based on the consideration that in their everyday lives, students do much interactions in the campus. This study also focuses on analyzing how the realization of the refusal strategies if it is related with social variables namely power relation, social distance, and rank of imposition.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be useful for students in Linguistics major since this study consists of information which is related to the study of pragmatics, sociolinguistics and other fields of study. This study is also expected to be beneficial for those who are interested in learning and discovering the way Indonesian people which come from different ethnic groups communicate especially in realizing the speech act of refusals. Due to the presence of this study, it is also hoped that people can learn how to perform a good manner whether it is verbally or non-verbally in daily life through the information and data which are presented in this study. This study is important to be conducted since for some people it is hard sometimes to articulate "no" towards a request that is addressed to them directly, especially if the interlocutor has different cultures (comes from different ethnic groups), because if the speaker do not say the "no" appropriately, it will result in making the interlocutor feels that he or she is being offended. Therefore, by learning and understanding refusal strategies performed by people that will be involved in this study, it is expected that the readers will gain something that can enlarge their knowledge as well as their ways of communicating with other people especially with those who come from different ethnic groups and reduce the possibility of misunderstanding and other problems.

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Research Design

This study employs generally a descriptive qualitative design because mainly the findings involve data in the form of words rather than in the form of numbers (numerical way). However, some of the data were also analyzed quantitatively to

show some trends of the refusal strategies performed by the participants. Additionally, since the research questions involve investigating and observing how people behave in some particular situations in which this investigation and observation can be described mostly by words, the descriptive qualitative method is the good method to be applied (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009). In short, descriptive qualitative method is an appropriate design to be employed because this study aims to analyze, describe and interpret people's response towards particular situations.

1.6.2 Site and Subjects of the Study

In conducting the study, the researcher uses purposeful sampling, specifically maximal variation sampling which is proposed by Creswell (2015). According to him Maximal variation sampling (*Sampling variasi maksimal*) is a strategy where the researcher takes different individuals with specific characteristic to be the sample of the study. (Creswell, 2015). This study involves 20 students from one of the universities in Bandung. Those students are varied regarding their hometown. The Sundanese consists of students from Sumedang, Bandung city, Majalengka, Tasikmalaya, Garut, Kuningan, Subang, Lembang, and Cibiru. Meanwhile the Minangnese consists of students from Padang city, Payakumbuh, Solok, Bukittinggi, Pasaman and Padang Pariaman. Therefore, the students' backgrounds which are varied are expected to represent the Sundanese and Minangnese, so that it can produce a valid and comprehensive result of study. In addition, the students should fulfill several characteristics that have been made by the researcher. Those characteristics are as follows:

Student of the selected university

Has ability to speak Sundanese or Minangnese language

Belong to either Minangnese or Sundanese ethnic group

Has minimum 2 years period of study in the selected university

The two different ethnic groups which are involved are then Minangnese and ten Sundanese students. Those students were given sheets of test that should be filled in the blank in which the answers should be described by words.

1.6.3 Data Collection and Instruments

The data of this study are collected by using Discourse Completion Test (DCT) that is given to all of the participants in this study (20 students with 2 different ethnic groups). DCT can be said as a form of open-ended questionnaires which was firstly used in 1982 by Blum-Kulka et al (Ahangar, Sarani & Zeynali, 2012). However, by using DCT as the instrument, the data may be not as natural as the data which are obtained through direct observation of the respondents' daily conversations. Nonetheless, due to time constraint and efficiency of the research, therefore DCT is used as the instrument of the present study. The Discourse Completion Test (DCT) contains several hypothetical situations that need to be answered by the participants descriptively. This DCT consists of several hypothetical situations in which those situations belong to the situations which oblige the participants to refuse several direct requests from other individuals which are different from the participants in terms of power relation and social distance, for instance, lecturer, classmate, junior, and neighbor. The hypothetical situations are also different in terms of its rank of impositions (high and low).

1.6.4 Data Analysis

As what has been stated in the data collection, the data in this study were collected from a DCT that was distributed to the participants of the study. Additionally, to gain a comprehensive analysis and findings, three general steps were applied in this study. Firstly, after retrieving data from the DCT, those data were coded one by one using sixteen classifications of refusals proposed by Takahashi and Beebe (1987). Actually Beebe et al. also have another lists of refusal classification, which is the one published in 1990, yet the difference between these two versions (the 1987 and the 1990) is not so significant. In the 1987 one, Takahashi and Beebe merge the strategy of *statement of principle* and *statement of philosophy* into one strategy, while in the 1990 version, they separate in into two strategies. Secondly, after coding the respondents' answers, the next step is quantifying the refusal strategies retrieved from the coding step. After that, the next step is analyzing and describing the participants' answers based on the refusal classification and the social variables involved (power relation, social distance,

rank of imposition, and gender). Last but not least, after doing all the steps above, the last step was drawing conclusion from the findings.

1.7 Clarification of Terms

In order to guide the analysis, particular terms need to be clarified. The terms are as follows:

Speech Acts: A speech act is a unit of speaking and performs different functions in communication (Austin, 1962).

Request: A request is a directive speech act whose illocutionary purpose is to get the hearer to do something in circumstances in which it is not obvious that he or she will perform the action in the normal course of events (Searle, 1969).

Refusal: Refusal is a negative response performed by a refuser to a requester's request that may threatened the requester's face (Aziz, 1996).

1.8 Organization of the Paper

This paper is organized within five chapters namely Introduction, Theoretical Framework, Research Methodology, Findings, and Discussions, as well as Conclusion and Suggestions. The first chapter provides general information about the present study which is illustrated by background of the study, research questions, and purposes of the study. Additionally, this chapter also involves significance of the study, research methodology, and clarification of several related terms as well as organization of the paper. This paper also consists of theoretical frameworks of this study which are presented in the second chapter. The third chapter focuses on the research methodology which involves research design, site, and subjects of the study, data collection and instrument along with the data analysis. The next is the fourth chapter which presents the findings and the analysis of the collected-data. The last chapter which is the fifth chapter covers the conclusion of the study which then followed by suggestion for further research.