

Chapter 1

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents the background of research that contains basic consideration, research question, objective of research, significant of research, and scope of research.

Basic Consideration

In order to always be connected with others, people need to communicate. By communicating, people are able to express what they feel, to say what they think, and to share idea. It can be said that the purpose of communication or conversation itself is allowing people to be able to send and receive message one another. Moreover, to make a good conversation, speaker needs to exert certain strategy so then the conversation can run well or the hearer can receive the speaker's message without a misunderstanding.

In our daily life, we usually interact with different people in different situation. In this sense, we also usually communicate in different ways. It is caused because generally social relationships (i.e. social distance or closeness) determine what we say and what we communicate (Yule, 1996, p. 59-60). For example, someone will use different strategy when he talks to his friend and when he talks to his lecturer. It has to be more polite when he talks to his lecturer. Yet, someone may talk less polite when it comes to his friend. This strategy is well-known as politeness. As Hao and Chi (2013, p. 54) stated that in human communication, politeness strategy is one of the most effective strategies modulating interpersonal relationship.

Politeness is one of the discussions in pragmatics. As Brown and Levinson (1987, p.5) stated that in the case of pragmatics, the mismatch between what is said and what is implicated can be attributed to politeness. It is known that politeness is about respecting other people emotion or feeling. Brown and Levinson (p. 5) state, “politeness has to be communicated, and the absence of politeness may be taken as absence of the polite attitude.” People need to be polite as a way to make the conversation run in harmony. By being polite, people have been showing their polite attitude. But more than that, people can be recognized as a good member of their respective society. Also, they can prove and show their existence and maintain their public self-image as what they expect to be respected. This is what Yule (p. 60) called as the concept of face which means as the public self-image that is owned by everyone and wants to be recognized by everyone.

Similarly, Brown and Levinson (p. 62-63) defined face as a public self-image that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and it must be always presented in interaction. They elaborated the notion of face into two aspects, positive and negative. Positive face refers to hearer’s desire to be complimented or appreciated while the negative face refers to the wants of hearer to be claimed as the one who has the freedom from imposition.

Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (p. 65) noticed that certain kinds of acts may run contrary to the face wants of speaker and or hearer and that can threaten face which is well known as Face Threatening Act (FTA). They argued that the nature of FTA must be realistically estimated by speaker during social interaction.

In order to avoid FTAs, Brown and Levinson sum up four strategies of human politeness behavior, namely:

- a. Bald on record as a strategy that is usually saying something directly to hearer.

For example, “*Come home right now!*” The utterance indicates that the speaker does nothing to minimize the threat to the hearer’s face.

- b. Positive politeness as a strategy that is used to satisfy hearer’s positive face.

For example, “*What a fantastic garden you have!*” In this utterance, the speaker wants to satisfy the hearer’s positive face by giving a compliment.

- c. Negative politeness as a strategy that is used to avoid imposition on hearer.

For example, “*Can you post this letter for me?*” The utterance above is in question form, but it is actually considered as the indirect request from the speaker to the hearer. It can be seen that in this utterance the speaker does not want to impose the hearer.

- d. Off-record is used by speaker to avoid the potential of imposition by using indirect language or saying something more general. For example, “*This soup is a bit bland*”. By being indirect, the speaker aims to avoid an FTA by directly asking the hearer to pass the salt. Thus, the speaker just expects that the hearer can interpret his aim by saying it.

Moreover, Brown and Levinson considered some factors that influence the choice of politeness strategy such as the payoffs or advantages and the circumstance (i.e. social distance, relative power, and the absolute ranking of impositions). It needs to be emphasized that in pragmatics, the circumstance or social factors that is mentioned previously, only intends to the actors’ assumptions.

Based on the preceding explanations, the researcher is more interested in analyzing the negative politeness strategy. It is known that politeness always refers to the all good things, while negative always refers to bad things. The researcher used to think that negative politeness strategy is about bad things that can be called as polite. Yet, the researcher found that negative politeness strategy is expressions that can be used by the speaker to express politeness in particular situation that also related to the hearer. For example, in the utterance "*I'm sorry for disturbing you, but ...*" This kind of expressions may be uttered by someone to the one that she meets in a street for asking a direction and this expressions are included in negative politeness strategy. It is because negative politeness strategy is mostly used by the participants who do not know each other very well because the orientation of negative politeness strategy is to respect the hearer's freedom. It is even said that negative politeness strategy is more polite than positive politeness strategy.

Further, from the explanation above, the researcher can make an assumption that there is a possibly that negative politeness strategy will be also used by the participants who are close each other (i.e. family and friend). As explained by Barešová (2008, p. 42) that preserving social distance is only one aspect of expressing politeness in negative politeness strategy. Based on the explanation, it can be said that whenever or wherever or whoever it is, when people interact and communicate with the others, their utterance may contain negative politeness strategy with its own purpose such as giving deference to the hearer, respecting the hearer's independence, and so on.

Moreover, an American romantic comedy film entitled *The Proposal* starring by Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds directed by Anne Fletcher and written by Peter Chiarelli is selected in order to complete this research. This film tells about Margaret Tate (Sandra Bullock), a Canadian, that faces deportation for an expired visa. In order to retain her position as a chief editor at a New York publisher, she asks her assistant, Andrew Paxton (Ryan Reynolds), to be her fiancé and hatch a scheme that they will get married soon. Andrew agrees with her idea because of a promotion that is promised by Margaret. Their love story is begun when they fly to Andrew's home in Sitka, Alaska, where his family stays.

As mentioned that negative politeness can be used by the participants who are not close enough or even close each other. The reason of choosing this film itself is because the interactions or the conversations in this film are mostly done by them who are close each other as family member or as colleague who they meet everyday in home or in office. In this sense, there are some different interactions in different situation that occurred in this film such as friend, employee, boss, and family interacts. So, it is expected that the characters will employ negative politeness strategy when they communicate to the others. Moreover, the problems that happened among the characters may require them to employ negative politeness strategy too.

In addition, the reason of conducting this research is because fundamentally people always expect that their conversation with the others can run well without a misunderstanding and without offending the others' feeling. So through this research, it's expected that the reader can learn how to manage a

good conversation with the others. Especially as a student, we can know how to be polite when having a conversation with the lecturers by using negative politeness strategy. And the using of a film as the object in this research is because according to Nadar (2009, p. 108) film or the dialog in film is a representation of human life and the film entitled *The Proposal* itself can be said as a representation of human life. In this respect, the researcher is interested to conduct the research entitled “*An Analysis on Negative Politeness Strategy Used in The Proposal Film*”.

Research Question

Based on the background, the researcher has four main problems as follow:

1. What are the utterances that contain negative politeness strategy?
2. What types of negative politeness strategies are used by the characters in *The Proposal* film?
3. What are the factors influence the use of negative politeness strategy when the speaker's power is higher or lower than the hearer, and or equal?
4. What are the factors influence the use of negative politeness strategy when the speaker's and the hearer's distance is high or low?
5. How is the ineffectiveness of the use of negative politeness strategy?

Objective of Research

This research is aimed to:

1. To identify the utterances that contain negative politeness strategy in *The Proposal* film.

2. To describe the choice of sub-strategies of negative politeness strategy.
3. To analyze the use of negative politeness strategy when the speaker's power is higher or lower than the hearer, and or equal.
4. To analyze the use of negative politeness strategy when the speaker's and the hearer's distance is high or low.
5. To explain the ineffectiveness of the use of negative politeness strategy.

Scope of Research

This research focuses on the utterances which contain negative politeness strategy and the factors that affect the characters to use negative politeness strategy in *The Proposal* film.

Significances of Research

Theoretically, it is expected that this research could give an understanding about politeness strategy and specifically negative politeness strategy to the reader, so they can enrich their knowledge about it. It is also expected that this research could be a guideline and reference or source which will provide information for the next researcher who wants to extend a research that relate to Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness strategy and specifically the negative politeness strategy itself.

Practically, it is expected that after having an understanding about negative politeness strategy, both researcher and reader could employ negative politeness strategy in daily interaction appropriately. Equally important, both researcher and reader are able to recognize when people use negative politeness strategy when

they talk to us and we also can know when and to whom we have to employ negative politeness strategy so we can make the conversation better. Moreover, it is expected that this research or this topic will be useful in English learning. Teacher could give an understanding about some polite expressions that is included in negative politeness strategy that usually use by native speaker in commanding, suggesting, requesting in particular situation without offending someone's feeling.