CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, the communication between students and lecturers of English Department of Universitas Andalas mostly relies on WhatsApp communication. The communication between students and lecturers that used to be face to face, now it is often conducted via WhatsApp groups or personal chat to inform the things related to learning activities such as assignments, schedule of the meeting, attendance list, etc. The frequency of WhatsApp communication between students and lecturers has increased since the outbreak of Covid-19 in Indonesia that made learning activities should be conducted from house in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Even though learning activities begin to be conducted in the classroom again, WhatsApp communication between students and lecturers still goes on because it is considered effective to have a discussion without having to meet in person.

However, sometimes, there will be misunderstandings in WhatsApp communication if the student or the lecturer cannot get the point of what is intended to be conveyed in the message. Different from face to face interaction, WhatsApp communication is more possible to get involved in a conflict because written language still can evoke misunderstanding in which the student or the lecturer can interpret it in different meaning.

Misunderstanding in WhatsApp communication between students and lecturers can be avoided with the usage of politeness. Politeness can be described

as the way the speaker and the hearer avoid to hurt the feeling of each other (Nurdiyani and Sasongko, 2022, p.110). Politeness has functions to avoid misunderstanding and maintain the relationship within the communication by fulfilling the individual expectations. Therefore, politeness is the main aspect that should be aware in written language, spoken language, body language, etc.(Shalihah and Zuhdi, 2022, p.135). In this case, students need to use politeness in sending WhatsApp messages to their lecturers in order to have smooth communication with their lecturers.

However, politeness should also be performed in the appropriate way because every people, country, language, and culture has a different way of expressing politeness. According to this case, Brown and Levinson (1978) explained about 4 types of politeness strategies that can be used to express politeness properly. They are positive politeness strategies, negative politeness strategies, bald on record, and off record. The usages of those politeness strategies are influenced by 3 factors of sociological variables influencing the choice of strategies. They are social distance, absolute ranking, and relative power (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.74). Those factors of sociological variables can help the students to choose the appropriate politeness strategies, so they can express politeness properly. Thus, they can avoid misunderstandings in the WhatsApp communication with their lecturers through the usage of politeness.

In this case, the writer finds that some of English Department students of Universitas Andalas use the same forms of sentences in expressing politeness to their lecturers through WhatsApp messages. One of those forms of sentences that are often used by the students is question form that also indicates hedge for asking

the lecturers to do something for them. For example : **Do you mind + request + ?** They believe that those forms of sentences are the appropriate ways to show politeness to the lecturers because the lecturers only ask why the students use the sentences that are almost the same but never correct the usage of those sentences. Accordingly, the students use the same form of sentences because they are worried about choosing inappropriate words or expressions that cause misunderstanding from what is trying to be communicated with the lecturer. Therefore, the students tend to use the same form of sentences that are believed as the right way for expressing politeness than using other forms of sentences that they are not sure whether it is appropriate or not.

As the result of that case, the writer feels interested to analyze the types of politeness strategies that are involved in the forms of sentences that are used by the students through all this time. The writer also wants to know about the factors of sociological variables that influence the students in using those politeness strategies to their lectures. Hopefully, this research can give examples of the usage of politeness strategies in real life. Therefore, it can help other people to express politeness properly in order to avoid conflict and maintain the relationship in the communication with other people such as the example below. The example below is a personal WhatsApp message sent by an English Department student to her lecturer that contains one of the forms of sentences that are mostly used by the students to their lecturers :
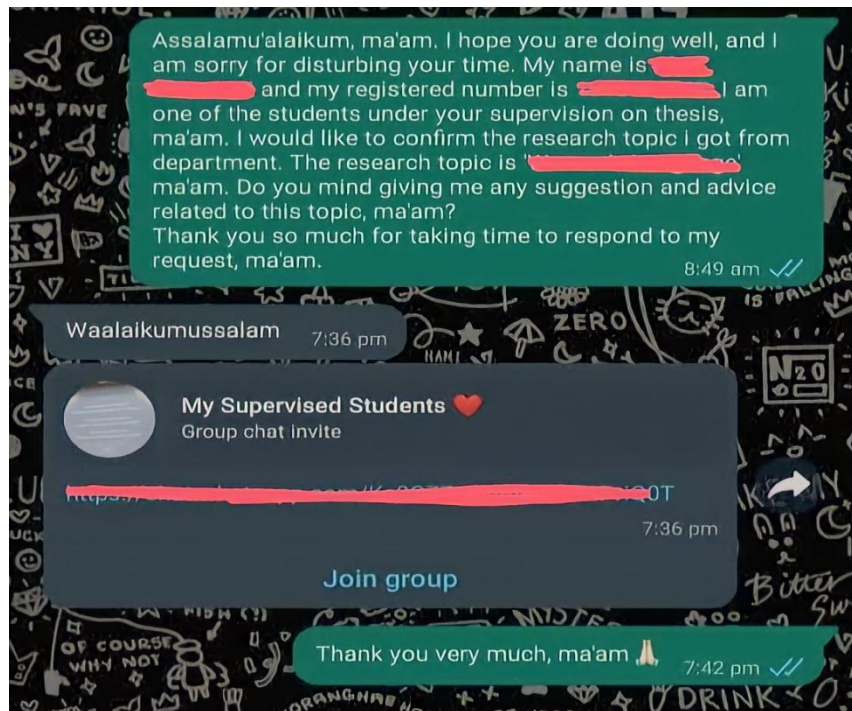
Student : Assalamu'alaikum, ma'am. I hope you are doing well, and I am sorry for disturbing your time.

My name is ***** and my registered number is ***** I am one of the students under your supervision on thesis, ma'am. I would like to confirm the research topic I got from department. The research topic is ***** ma'am. ***Do you mind giving me any suggestion and advice related to this topic, ma'am?*** Thank you so much for taking time to respond my request, ma'am.

Lecturer : Waalaikumussalam

Lecturer : My Supervised Students (giving link of WhatsApp group)

From the example above, the sentence **"*Do you mind giving me any suggestion and advice related to this topic, ma'am?"*** is considered as a negative politeness strategy in the form of question, hedge. According to the message, the

student as the speaker intends to ask for suggestions and advice for the topic of her thesis from her thesis supervisor as the addressee. In asking this matter, the student uses the form of a question to minimize the imposition on the lecturer. In this case, the student actually did something that could disturb the lecturer with the message and the matter that she asked the lecturer to give her suggestion and advice for her thesis. The lecturer might not want to be bothered because she is teaching a certain class or attending a certain meeting at the moment. Thus, the student uses the form of a question to minimize coercion on the lecturer to do it, so the lecturer will not feel imposed by the student's request and can decide whether she is willing to do it or not.

As far as it is concerned, most of the sentences that are often used by the students to their lecturers contain negative politeness strategies such as the example above. Therefore, the writer decides to find out the kinds of negative politeness strategies and the factors of sociological variables influencing the choice of negative politeness strategies in the WhatsApp chatting between students and lecturers of English Department of Universitas Andalas.
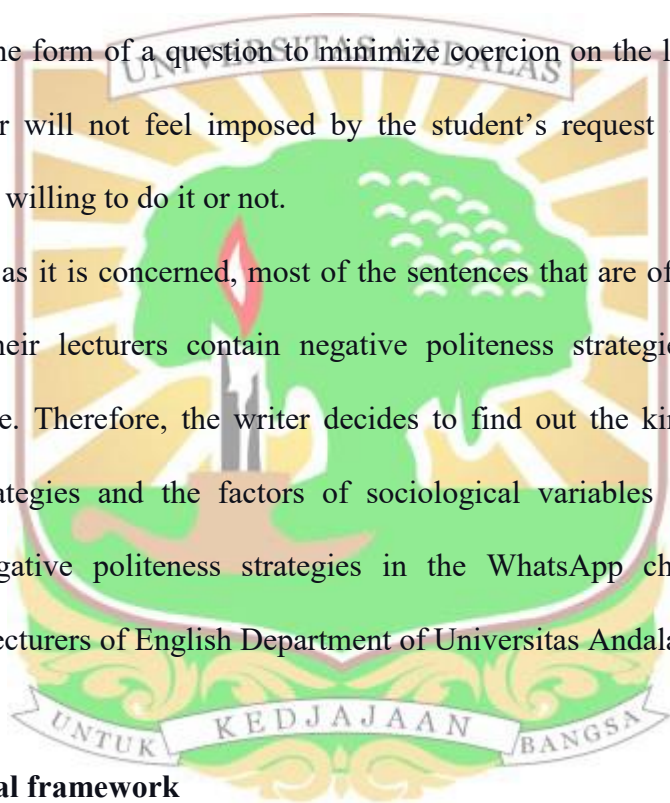
1.2 Theoretical framework

In this part, there are described the theories that relate to the phenomenon of this research. Here are the explanations of the theories :

1.2.1 Pragmatics

According to the definition of pragmatics by Yule (1996), there are four points that can explain pragmatics. First, pragmatics is the study of the meaning of

what is intended to be conveyed within the communication. It means that pragmatics analyzes the meaning of the things that try to be conveyed in the communication. Furthermore, pragmatics is the study of meaning that deals with context. In other words, pragmatics deals with the context in interpreting the meaning of the thing that will be conveyed within the communication, because without considering the context we might not have any idea about where the thing in the communication refers to. Next, pragmatics also can be defined as the study of the meaning of the unsaid things. It means that sometimes, a sentence can be interpreted in more than one meaning since there might be implicit meanings that the speaker plans to be conveyed but it is not uttered. Moreover, pragmatics is the study of the relationship between the speaker and the hearer according to what is conveyed directly or indirectly (Yule, 1996, p.3).

1.2.2. Politeness

Politeness refers to the act of respecting the other people's face (Yule, 1996, p.60). Face is a self-image that every individual has and expects other people to fulfill it. Face can be divided into two including positive face and negative face. Yule (1996) defines positive face as an individual desire to be accepted, liked, and recognized by other people such as sympathy. Meanwhile, negative face refers to an individual desire to have personal space and not be bothered by other people such as an apology to disturb other people. Thus, the goal of politeness is to fulfill the face wants of other people in order to maintain the relationship and avoid conflict or misunderstanding. Accordingly, Leech in the book "Meaning in Language" divides politeness into two. They are positive

politeness that refers to the act of asserting the positive status of the hearer, and negative politeness that refers to the act of minimizing the expression of belittling the hearer (Cruse, 2000, p.362).

1.2.3 Negative Politeness

According to Brown and Levinson (1978), negative politeness refers to the action that is aimed to fulfill other people's negative face who want to be independent and do not want to be bothered. Negative politeness focuses on minimizing the effect of FTA (Face-Threatening-Acts) on the hearer. Thus, negative politeness is intended to avoid or reduce the effect of doing FTA. Negative politeness can also be described with the word "manner" that represents certain behavior on respecting the other people wants (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.130).

1.2.4 Negative Politeness Strategies

Negative politeness consists of ten strategies including be conventionally indirect, question, hedge, be pessimistic, minimize the imposition, Rx, give deference, apologize, impersonalize S and H, state the FTA (Face-Threatening-Acts) as a general rule, nominalize, and o on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting H (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.130-211). Here are the explanations of each strategy :

a. Be conventionally indirect

This strategy is used when the speaker speaks by using both on record and off record strategy (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.132). The speaker expresses

his/her request directly that in his/her utterances implies his/her desires. For example :

"Can you shut the door?" (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.133)

In this example above, the speaker asks directly to the hearer whether the hearer can shut the door or not, but in the speaker's utterance also implies the speaker's desire that the speaker indirectly wants the hearer to shut the door.

b. Question, hedge

This strategy points out that the speaker should not assume or show the expression of coercion on the hearer through the speaker's request (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.146). It means that the speaker should respect the hearer's desires whether he/she is willing to do it or not. For example :

"Would you close the window, if you don't mind?" (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.163).

From the example above, the speaker asks the hearer to close the window that is conveyed in the form of question. The speaker also use the expression *"if you don't mind"* to indicate the usage of the hedge in order to minimize the imposition on the hearer.

c. Be pessimistic

This strategy tends to show the expression of doubt of the speaker because the speaker has no idea about the hearer's feelings (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.173). For example :

"Here you wouldn't have brought money, would you? (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.174)."

From the example above, the speaker express his/her doubt in asking the hearer to stop bringing money in the future by using the negation of subjunctive as the form of politeness for expressing indirect request.

d. Minimize the imposition, Rx

This strategy is used by minimizing the nearest imposition among possible meanings of the utterances. For example :

"I just dropped by for a minute to ask you..." (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.176).

From the example above, the speaker says "for a minute" instead of saying "only" or "merely" as the nearest literal meaning to minimize the FTA (Face-Threatening-Acts).

e. Give deference

Give deference is used when the addressee has a higher status than the speaker, therefor the speaker attempts to treat the addressee with honor as the way to satisfy the face wants of the addressee (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.178). For example :

"We look forward very much to dining with you." (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.190).

From the example above, the expression that is used by the speaker is aimed to point out the positive face of the addressee by showing that the speaker respects the addressee who has a higher position than the speaker.

f. Apologize

This strategy is used when the speaker did FTA by showing his/her reluctance to bother the negative face of the hearer. For example :

"I'm sorry to bother you…." (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.189).

From the example above, the speaker says sorry for showing his/her reluctance to bother the hearer with his/her business.

g. Impersonalize Speaker and Hearer

This strategy is performed by trying to explain that the agent who did the FTA was not the speaker or not only the speaker and the addressee was not the hearer or only the hearer. For example :

"It is so." (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.190).

From the example above, the speaker avoids using the pronoun "I" to generalize the addressee that it is not only aimed to the hearer.

h. State the FTA as a general rule

This strategy can be performed by explaining that the speaker did the FTA because of a certain condition that made the speaker should do that such as regulation. In this strategy, the speaker should avoid using pronouns because they should be able to be interpreted in general. For example :

"Passengers will please refrain from flushing toilets on the train." (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.206).

From the example above, the speaker shows that he/she actually does not want to do the FTA but the condition forces him/her to do it. Therefore, the

speaker refers to the hearer with a general pronoun which in this case is "Passengers" to make it as an obligation.

i. Nominalize

This strategy tends to end the utterances with the endurance of noun as the form of politeness in formality. For example :

"You made a favourable impression on us". (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.207).

From the example above, the speaker ends the utterances with noun as the formal expression to show politeness.

j. Go on record as incurring a debt, or as not indebting Hearer

This strategy can be performed by claiming the indebtedness of the speaker to the hearer or disclaiming any indebtedness of the hearer to the speaker. For example :

"I'll never be able to repay you if you…" (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.210).

From the example above, the speaker explicitly shows his imposition as the burden of the hearer to politely force the hearer to do it.

1.2.5 Sociological Variables Influencing the Choice of Strategies

Based on the distinction of sociological variables that influence the selection of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1978), there are three factors including social distance, the absolute ranking, and the relative power (p.74). Social distance refers to the frequency of interaction between speaker and

hearer that can be analyzed by seeing the closeness of both actors. Meanwhile, the absolute ranking refers the range of imposition based on the matter that is asked. This factor can usually be investigated if there is imposition in asking something. Furthermore, the relative power refers to different position between the speaker and the hearer by considering two sources including material control (economic distribution and physical force) and metaphysical control (action to others) (Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.77).

1.2.6 Context

Context is an important thing in politeness as one of pragmatics studies since pragmatics deals with the context. In other words, context is needed to find out what the thing refers to. Yule (1996) explains that context can influence the meaning of the thing that is trying to be conveyed in the communication and the way it is conveyed. Therefore, context becomes the consideration in interpreting what is tried to be said in the communication. According to Cummings (2009), context involves several aspects including physical, linguistic, epistemic and social element (p.18). Physical context refers to the time of speaking while linguistic context refers to the relevant context that influences the responses within the communication. Furthermore, the epistemic context refers to the background and the social element refers to the relative distance of the participants (Cummings, 2009, p.19). Thus, in analyzing politeness strategies in WhatsApp chatting between students and lecturers of English Department of Universitas Andalas, the context is needed to identify what is tried to be communicated and how the way it is communicated.

1. 3 Review of Previous Studies

There are six previous studies that analyze the usage of politeness strategies that relate to the object of this current research that is negative politeness strategies. These previous studies also used the same theory as this current research for analyzing the data that is the theory of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1978). The previous studies consist of three theses from the seniors and three journals.

The first previous study is a journal entitled *Politeness Strategies Conveyed by the Students in Online Discussions* conducted by Riris Handayani, Rachmawati, and Tubagus Zam Zam Al Arif in 2022. This research concerned on politeness strategies conveyed by students of English study program at Jambi University through online discussion in WhatsApp group. In conducting this research, the writers used the theory of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson (1978) for analyzing the data. According to the result finding of this research, there are all types of politeness strategies found in this research. They are positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on record, and off record in which the students realized about those politeness strategies because of the context and their abilities in using language appropriately. There are many data that all of that are included in this journal. However, this research is not supported by many references.

The next journal is *The Positive Politeness Strategies Used on WhatsApp Conversation between Student and Teacher in English Learning at Al-Lutfah Islamic School* was conducted by Dwi Santoso and Novita Inderiani in 2021. This research focused on the types of positive politeness strategies used by students at

Al-Lutfah Islamic School. In this case, the writer collected the data from WhatsApp conversations between the students and teachers in teaching activities. In analyzing the data, the writer used the theory of Brown and Levinson (1978) to define positive politeness strategies found in the research. Accordingly, this research found all types of positive politeness strategies involved in the data. The most used strategy found in this research is using solidarity in group identity markers. Furthermore, the writer found that the functions of positive politeness strategies in this research consist of two parts: those that are aimed to indicate some respect and the others are aimed to minimize the impact of FTA. Generally, this research are supported by many references that can relate to this current study. However, this research did not include all of the data and explain the context of the data.

The next research is a thesis from the senior entitled *Politeness Strategies As Found In Little Big Shots Talk Show With Kid As The Guests Star* was conducted by Syarah Febiani in 2020. The research concerns on the types of Politeness strategies and dominants of politeness strategy used in the Little Big Shots talk show with kids as the guest star. According to the research, the writer pointed out that politeness is one of the best ways to communicate with others. The purpose of her research is to analyze the use of politeness in the talk show. The writer analyzed the data by using the pragmatics methods and theory by Brown and Levinson regarding the politeness strategy. In the finding result, the writer found that four politeness strategies are used in Little Big Shot talk show. Thus, the writer found that the strategy bald on record is used by the speaker who performs the utterances directly without trying to reduce the impact of FTA.

Meanwhile, positive politeness strategy is used by showing the friendliness in order to minimize the distance of the speaker and the guest. Furthermore, negative politeness strategies are used by minimizing the expression of bothering the other subject that makes the distance. The last one is off record strategy that is used for saying something indirectly so that the hearer can interpret the meaning by her/himself. Based on collected data, the writer found fourteen positive politeness, six utterances used off record, four utterances for bald on record, and an utterance as the data of positive politeness. As far as it is concerned, there are some grammatical errors and typos in several sentences and words in the thesis. But, besides that weaknesses, this thesis is supported by several theories from many references that can enrich the knowledge regarding the topic of politeness.

The next research is a journal entitled *Politeness Strategies in Teacher-Student Whats App Communication* was conducted by Herri Mulyono, Debby Rizki Amalia, and Gunawan Suryoputro in a journal published in 2019. The study focuses on politeness strategies in teacher-student communication via WhatsApp. The study is aimed to investigate politeness strategies in communication teacher-student via WhatApp and to find out the differences between the upper EFL lower and upper secondary school teachers' and the students' in using politeness strategies. Accordingly, the collected data were taken from 50 lower secondary school EFL students in ages between 13 and 14 years old, 50 students from upper secondary school EFL in ages between 16 and 17 years old , and 10 female teachers in ages between 25 and 40 years old. Thus, the finding result of this study shows that students often apply politeness strategies more than their teachers. Moreover, there are differences between upper and lower EFL students in using

politeness strategies. Upper EFL students use all types of politeness strategies including bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. Meanwhile, lower EFL students tend to use three kinds of politeness strategies including negative politeness, positive politeness, and bald on record. The study also found out that both upper and lower EFL students tend to use negative politeness then followed by positive politeness in communicating to their teachers via Whats App. Generally, this study relates to the current study that also analyzes the interaction between students and lecturers via Whats App. This study is supported by many references, but unfortunately, the researcher does not show and explains all the collected data since there are only five examples taken from the data in this journal.

The next research is a thesis from the senior entitled the research that is conducted by Rendy in 2018 with the title *Politeness Strategies Found in the American Situational Comedy* **How I Met Your Mother.** The research focuses on the politeness strategies applied in the American Situational Comedy *How I Met Your Mother.* According to his research, the writer stated that four combinations of politeness strategies including bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off record can achieve the harmonic relationship. The purpose of this research is to analyze and identify the politeness strategies that are applied in the American Situational Comedy *How I Met Your Mother.* The writer referred to the theory of politeness strategies by Brown and Levinson in analyzing his research. According to the result, the writer found that most of the collected data are included in positive politeness strategies. The writer found that most of the participants in the relation with close friends use positive politeness in order to

fulfill their desires to be respected. Thus, the writer concluded that politeness strategy can be used to build a good relationship and make good interaction. In the thesis, there still can be found some errors on the grammar and the words that were used. However, this research is supported by many theories and methods that can strengthen the research.

The next thesis from the senior is about *Politeness Strategies Found 'At Night At The Museum (2006)' Movie* conducted by Nia Multia Ariesta in 2018. The research focuses on the types of politeness strategies found at *'Night at the Museum (2006)'* characters. The writer used the theory by Brown and Levinson regarding politeness strategies. According to the research, the writer stated that politeness strategy can help people know about other people's desires to be treated. Based on the finding result, this research found that politeness is used in the characters of the movie to respect and understand the participants' desires. Meanwhile, bald on record is used to avoid the possibility for doing FTA by apologizing. Furthermore, negative politeness is used to minimize the possibilities for doing FTA such as imposition to others' feelings. The last one is bald off record is also used to avoid for doing FTA. This thesis seems to lack of supporting theories on the explanation of the research in which the explanation is mostly based on the writer's understanding and the format of the thesis is still not neat and complete. There can not be found the abstract written in English, whereas this thesis is written in English. But, there are many collected data from the movie that can be references regarding the use of politeness strategies in the daily conversation.

Different from all of the previous studies above that concern on politeness strategies, this current research focuses on negative politeness strategies and factors influencing the choice of negative politeness strategies. There are also different sources of data between this research and the previous studies in which three theses of the seniors above collected data from the movie, talk show, and TV show and the journals collected data from WhatsApp messages between students and teachers, and between students with other students. Meanwhile, this current research collects the data from personal WhatsApp chatting from students to their lecturers. The differences on the objects researches and the sources of data mean that there are also differences on data between this current study and the previous studies above. Data of the previous studies are the dialogues of the characters in the movie, the guests in the talk show and TV show, the WhatsApp messages from students to the teachers in the schools that I have mentioned above, and the WhatsApp messages from students to other students in a group of discussion of an University that I have mentioned above that contain politeness strategies. Whereas the data of current research are personal WhatsApp chatting between students and lecturers of English Department of Universitas Andalas that contain negative politeness strategies. Generally, it can be concluded that there are differences on the object of research, data of research, and source of data between this current study and the previous studies.

1.4 Research Questions

This research is aimed to find out negative politeness strategies that are used in WhatsApp chatting between students and lecturers of English Department

of Universitas Andalas. The writer also attempt to investigate the factors influencing the choice of negative politeness strategies in WhatsApp chatting between students and lecturers. This research is intended to answer these following questions :

1. What are the negative politeness strategies used by English Department students in communicating with their lecturers through WhatsApp ?

2. What are the factors of sociological variables that influence the English Department students in using the negative politeness strategies to their lecturers?

1.5 Objectives

This research is aimed to analyze the usage of negative politeness strategies in WhatsApp chatting between students and lecturers of English Department of Universitas Andalas. The purposes of this thesis are to find these three points :

1. To find out the negative politeness strategies used by English Department students in communicating with their lecturers through WhatsApp.

2. To find out the factors of sociological variables that influence the English Department students in using the negative politeness strategies to their lecturers.

1.6 Scope

This research are analyzed by using the theoretical framework of pragmatics studies. The object of this research is negative politeness strategies. Data for this research are personal WhatsApp messages from English Department of students 2019 of Universitas Andalas to their lecturers that contain negative

politeness strategies. The data are collected from the screenshots of recent personal WhatsApp messages from the students to their lecturers by considering the requirement that they have learned pragmatics, especially about politeness. This research concerns on the usage of negative politeness strategies and the factors of sociological variables influencing the choice of strategies in the WhatsApp chatting between students and lecturers. Thus, in analyzing negative the object of research, the writer uses the theory of politeness strategies and sociological variables influencing the choice of strategies by Brown and Levinson (1978).