

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Thomas (1995, p.149), in the past twenty-five years, there is a great deal of interest in politeness. It is discussed in pragmatics. Thomas (1995, p.150) argues that politeness can be defined as the real-world goal which becomes a genuine desire to be pleasant to others. Meanwhile, Yule (1996, p.59) states that politeness is a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange. In addition, Yule (1996, p.60) states that politeness in interaction can be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person's face. Both of the linguists argue that everyone should have a self-public image and social sense of self and expects everyone to recognize, which is commonly called as face. From the definition above, politeness is the strategy used by people to communicate with others in order to show awareness of hearer's face.

It follows from politeness strategy that there will be different kinds of politeness associated with the assumption of relative social distance. Face is a crucial concept in pragmatics since it captures all aspects of a person's public image. Yule (1996, p.60) define face as "the public self-image that every member (of society) wants to claim for himself". Meanwhile, Goffman in Thomas (1995, p.168) says that *face* is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes. From both definitions, we can conclude that face is best understood as every individual's feeling

of self-worth or self-image; this image can be damaged, maintained or enhanced through interaction with others.

Yule (1996, p.60) divides politeness into two. They are to show awareness for a socially distant person's face (respect, deference) and to show awareness for a socially close person's face (friendliness, solidarity). The first type can be found in a student's question to his teacher, shown as first example. The second type can be found in the friend's question to his friend.

Yule (1996, p.61) divides face into two related aspects. There are positive face and negative face. Positive face is the positive consistent self-image of people and their desire to be appreciated and approved of by at least some other people. Negative face is desired for autonomy, personal space, freedom from imposition, freedom of action, not be imposed or inhibited by others. In simple terms, positive face is the need to be connected and negative face is the need to be independent.

There are four strategies in politeness as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987, p.94). They are bald on-record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. Bald on record does nothing to minimize threat to hearer's face. On the other hand, bald on record is to control people with power and loud tone. Positive politeness is someone's desire to be respected because of they want to be accepted in specific group as same member, to be understand, get attention and appreciation. Negative politeness is a need to be independent, to have freedom of action, and also desire to be not imposed and impressed by others. Off record is indirect type to take some pressure off of the hearer. Off record is aimed to avoid the direct Face Threatening Acts (FTA).

The application of certain strategies of politeness above are used to make the speaker realizes that the hearer needs to be understood. The speaker can be imposed because of the speaker loses their face. Other aspect of politeness strategies is their relation between power and solidarity. Yule states about power and solidarity. that power is thing that someone uses to command with loud tone meanwhile, solidarity is space that someone use to build friendship and to be friendly. The application of politeness strategies in daily communication can be seen in situational comedy.

A situational comedy or often shortened into sitcom is a genre of comedy which features characters. They share the same setting, such as at home or at workplace. The setting is build up in humorous dialogues. One of the famous sitcom is *How I Met Your Mother* or HIMYM. HIMYM is an American sitcom that creates by Craig Thomas and Carter Bays ran on CBS from September 19, 2005, to March 31, 2014. This comedy is known for its unique plot and eccentric humor. HIMYM already won the American Latino Media Arts Award for Outstanding Writing for a Television Series and Emmy Outstanding Art Direction and many other awards. HIMYM is set in 2030. The center actor of this comedy is Ted Mosby and his friends in Manhattan. This sitcom began when Ted in the 2030 retells his long story to meet their mother to his children.

In this study, the writer is interested in analyzing politeness strategy that occurred in HIMYM. This study can be useful because in this study, it shows which type of politeness strategy that mostly occurred within close friends that have close relationship. In this case, the example in analyzing data can be found in:

Police officer : Passenger Mosby and Stinson? **Please come with us, gentlemen. Keep hands where I can see them.**
Ted : Barney, I am going to kill you
Barney : Don't say you're gonna kill someone in front of the security.
Not cool. Not cool.

The conversation above takes place when Barney and Ted are going to take off from the plane. When they want to leave the plane, two police officers come and arrest them because Barney leave something suspicious in the airport before. Ted does not know anything about it. He gets angry and upset and threatens to kill Barney.

The officer's utters "**Please come with us, gentlemen. Keep hands where I can see them**" is related to bald on record strategy. This strategy happens when the speaker speaks directly to the hearer. This politeness strategy is most direct, clear, and unambiguous. This strategy is commonly used when there are difference power between the speaker and hearer. It is because of the speaker is more powerful than hearer and does not fear about retribution or non-cooperation from hearer. In this case, the speaker is as the speaker realizes that the speaker has more power than hearer. The officer speaks directly about what he are needed by Ted and Barney and, the officer is not afraid if there is no cooperation from them.

1.2 The Research Question

In doing this research, the writer proposes one research question:

1. What are the politeness strategies applied in the American Situational Comedy *How I Met Your Mother*?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Politeness is defined as the strategy which employs by speaker to achieve a variety of goals, such as promoting or maintaining harmonious relationship. Through this study, the writer analyzes politeness strategies applied in this American situational comedy *How I met Your Mother*. The theory about politeness strategies is proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987, p.94). To limit this research, the writer only focuses to answer the research question:

1. To describe the politeness strategies that are applied in American Situational Comedy *How I Met Your Mother*.

1.4 Scope of the Research

In this study, the writer analyzes and identifies the politeness strategies that applied in the American Situational Comedy *How I Met Your Mother* which is run in CBS. The writer is interested in studying and discussing the politeness strategies which applied by the characters in the series. This study employs Brown and Levinson's theory (1987, p.94). The data is only taken from 1 until 22 from season 1 (2005). It is because of season 1 is one of the most watched comedy series and considers as the worthy successor of FRIEND as the best sitcom ever (<https://web.archive.org/web/20051030012001/http://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/tv/orl-tvcomedy05sep18%2C0%2C6080227.story?coll=orl-ent-promos-tv>). It shows the application of politeness strategies considering their situation and their relationship. The series duration is about 22 to 27 minutes.

1.5 Method of the Research

Sudaryanto (1993) proposed three procedures that applied in conducting this study. They are collecting the data, analyzing the data and presenting the result of analysis. The writer groups the data based on the theory as proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987, p.94). The data in this research are the characters' utterances which reflect the politeness strategies.

In collecting the data, the writer applies observational method as proposed by Sudaryanto (1993, p.13). The writer watches the series and the writer listen to the conversation between the characters. The writer then transcript the conversation that uttered in the series which consist the politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson theory (1987, p.94) in the American situational comedy, *How I Met Your Mother*. After watch all the episodes from the series season 1, the writer find 27 conversations that consist the politeness strategies. The technique applied in collecting the data is non-participant observational technique proposed by Sudaryanto (1993, p.134). The writer is not involved in the conversation so the writer just watch the subjects of the study but without taking an active part in the situation. The data of this study are from the utterances from the character of the series.

In analyzing the data, the writer uses pragmatic identity method that proposed by Sudaryanto (1993, p.15). Pragmatic identity method contains the participant which can be referred to the conversation of the series. There are at least two people who make the conversation proceeds. The data are analyzed based on the context of speaking or situation. The writer categorizes the data into politeness strategies which

are divided into positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on record and off record based on Brown and Levinson theory (1987, p.94).

The last step is presenting the result of analysis. According to Sudaryanto, there are two methods of presenting data, they are formal and informal method (1993, p.145). In formal method, the result of analysis is presented by providing table frequencies. The writer uses the table and winding sign (\surd) to describe the politeness strategies that occurred in the conversation. Informal method is used in narration to give explanation about the data. In this case, the writer decides to apply both of these two methods.

