

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Language as means of communication holds an important role in every human interaction. It is used to socialize and to interact with each other. Without language people will be difficult to cooperate and understand each other. In communication there are also different styles either in written or spoken language. However, in human daily interaction, spoken language is used more because it can express directly easily to the interlocutors. Through language, people can understand what other people want and think.

In interaction, people have to be aware on people's face in order to consider other's feelings or maintaining relationship with others. According to Yule (1996:60), "as a technical term, face means the public self-image of a person". Therefore, it refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize.

One way to maintain one's face is using politeness. In every society there is a rule called politeness, which serves as the basic to the production of social order and precondition of human cooperation. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:17), "politeness is how people behave in a way that attempts in considering of the feelings of their addressee". Politeness also means that being polite is not simply way like saying 'thank you' or 'please' in the right place. It is the matter of how people can use their language appropriately toward their addressee (Holmes,

2001:267). Politeness is an important point to maintain a good relationship with other people.

According to Yule (1996:60), “it is possible to treat politeness as a fixed concept, as in the idea of ‘polite social behavior’ or etiquette, within a culture”. It is also possible to specify a number of different general principles for being polite in social interaction within a particular culture. Some of this might include being tactful, generous, modest, and sympathetic toward others. Within an interaction, however, there is a more narrowly specified type of politeness at work. Politeness, in an interaction, can then be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person’s face. Politeness can be accomplished in situations of social distance or closeness. Showing awareness for another person’s face when that other seems socially distant is often described in terms of respect or deference.

In every interaction people have different way of dealing with each other. Their way of speaking may sound different toward people who have different status from them. According to Holmes (1992:260-261), the way people talk is influenced by the social context in which they talk. It matters who can hear them and where they talk, as well as how they feel. People use different styles in different social contexts and indicate aspects of their social identity through the way they talk. The same message could be delivered differently to the different people.

Holmes (1992:296) said that one of the factors influencing an interaction is relationship to someone, especially solidarity. It means being linguistically polite involves speaking to people appropriately in the light of their relationship to

others. Inappropriate linguistic choices may be considered rude. Positive politeness is solidarity oriented. It emphasized shared attitudes and values. On the other hand, negative politeness pays people respect and avoids intruding on them. Negative politeness involves expressing oneself appropriately in terms of social distance and respecting status difference. To reveal politeness, people need certain strategies and usually each people have their own different strategies. Thus, the researcher wants to observe more about these strategies.

The researcher's observation is based on a movie because there are many researches about politeness strategies in our real life, and also there are many researches from films or movies. The movie that the researcher wants to investigate is "Memoirs of a Geisha" which is based from a book by Arthur Golden. The reason why the researcher chooses this movie are firstly because this movie is one of the box office movies, and secondly the book has the same title as one of the best seller books and has been printed several times since 1997. The story is about a Japanese girl who struggles to be a famous geisha in order to find the man that she loves. The movie describes someone's struggling for life to reach her life purpose and it can also happen to everybody. The author of this book uses Japanese cultural loaded to the story and it makes us know a little bit about Japanese customs. This movie also provides a lot of politeness strategies in the characters' conversation.

In the movie "Memoirs of a Geisha" the researcher only chose two characters to be investigated, they are Sayuri Niita and Mameha. Sayuri is the major character in this movie and Mameha plays an influential role in Sayuri's

life. In this movie, Sayuri and Mameha use a lot of politeness strategies in their conversation compared to other characters. Thus, the researcher wants to investigate more about the politeness strategies and the factors that influence the choice of certain strategies.

### **1.2. Statements of the Problem**

This present study is about politeness strategies used in the movie “Memoirs of a Geisha”. In order to make the investigation operational, the research questions are as follows:

1. What politeness strategies occur in Sayuri and Mameha’s conversations?
2. What kinds of factor influence the choice of certain politeness strategies in Sayuri and Mameha’s conversations?

### **1.3. Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study is discourse analysis with the focus on politeness strategies because the researcher is interested in knowing more about these strategies. Due to the limited time available, the researcher discerns to observe only the politeness strategies used in the conversation between Sayuri and Mameha. Other conversations that are produced by other characters are excluded in this research.

#### **1.4. Objective of the Study**

The researcher chooses this research study because she wants to reveal the way politeness strategy that is used the most by Sayuri and Mameha when they are conversing each other. The researcher also would like to investigate politeness strategies that occur in Sayuri's conversation towards Mameha and in Mameha's conversation toward Sayuri.

The researcher also wants to know the factors of both characters in choosing certain politeness strategy in their conversation.

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The significance for the researcher herself is she can understand more about the use of politeness strategies in her daily life. Also the researcher hopes that this study can give the readers some insights on the using of politeness strategies in their daily life. Thus, they can understand and use the appropriate politeness strategies in dealing and maintaining their relationship with others. Moreover, this study could be as a reference for those who want to conduct further studies.

#### **1.6. Thesis Organization**

The researcher organizes the study by dividing her discussion into five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction. It consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, scope of the study, objective of the study, significance of the study, and thesis organization.

Chapter II is the review of related literature, which is about theories used to analyze the data in this research.

Chapter III contains research method, consisting of research design, unit of analysis, source of data, technique of data collection and technique of data analysis.

Chapter IV contains data analysis which explains about the finding and discussion about it.

Finally, the researcher concludes all of the analysis and gives the suggestion on the Chapter V.