

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The introduction chapter consists of the background of the study that explains the phenomenon, statement of the problem stating the research questions of the study, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

A successful social interaction among people depends on the will of the people in the society. Politeness is one of the strategies to create harmony and an understanding among the people, while the impoliteness strategy is used to trigger social conflict and disharmony (Culpeper, Bousfield and Wichmann 2003). Impoliteness strategies are ways of attacking someone's face instead of enhancing and support the face. It is considered an offensive linguistic behavior and it is the "parasite of politeness" (Culpeper 1996). Today, many people deliberately practice impoliteness strategies when interacting with each other; it is something that cannot be easily avoided in human interaction. Some people assume that performing impoliteness strategy is normal in social interaction (Sari, Emmiyati and Maharani 2019).

The phenomenon of impoliteness is interesting to be researched and it becomes more interesting when it is used by different gender. Regarding to the impoliteness phenomenon, Lakoff (1973) stated that women are generally more

polite than men. In society, women will be scolded and intimidated if they speak harshly. Society considers that the impolite language should only be spoken by men. In every society, women and men do not speak precisely the same way since they probably socialize in different society. They tend to use different forms, words, and vocabulary items. Women use language in communication to build and develop personal connections while men mostly focus on obtaining, conveying information, pursuing conflict and competition (Holmes 1995).

Moreover, modern technology which is continuously growing has many effects on various aspects of human life including the way people communicate with each other. Due to the rapid development of technology, impoliteness can be practiced not only in oral or face-to-face interaction but also in virtual and written form on various social media platforms, for instance Twitter. Twitter is a free social networking platform commonly used to send and receive short messages or usually called as 'tweets' and can be accessed through a computer or mobile phone. In Twitter, the words are limited to no more than 140 characters. The use of keywords or hashtags in Twitter searching can be used to discover specific tweets (Maclean et al, 2013). Twitter is used for publicly expressing any opinion about what people see, feel, and experience, and it has a significant impact on other users. However, many people still misuse this point to perform some unacceptable acts such as racism, hate speech, bullying, offense, and other negative activities (Cahyono 2018).

Nowadays, people can interact with each other on social media as parts of their needs as human beings. One of the social interactions that many people do

through social media is expressing complaints. Customers, especially the young generation, prefer to contact the service provider company on social media such as Twitter when they have issues with their products or services. Twitter has been very popular and familiar among people nowadays. Furthermore, it can also be found some of the impoliteness strategies used by people when they complain about something they do not like because complain could threaten the hearer's positive face as they perform negative evaluations toward the hearer's actions (Wijayanto, Prasetyarini and Hikmat 2017).

According to Meenan (2016), complaining is part of everyday language use; it is categorized as an expressive act in which complainers are dissatisfied with unpleasant events or situations that have made them in trouble. When someone complains, he or she proposes a specific idea, thus voicing his/her frustration with a certain state of affairs. Someone formulates a complaint to get the readers or the persons being complained to do or fix something. Trosborg (1995) also defined a complaint as an expression of displeasure toward a situation that irritates the complainer.

Compared with a complaint by contacting the call center number, social media has a transparent and open format where the public can view a customer's complaint and the company's response. To interact with its customers and to broaden its marketing, the official website and other social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram profiles, are used by IndiHome. IndiHome's Twitter account represents the interaction between IndiHome's customer service and its customers, such as complaints, compliments, and even inquiries regarding

the product or service. However, once the customers' expectations are not fulfilled, some of them will write unpleasant messages by mentioning the company's social networking. In this case, there are still many customers who are not aware of complaints status that they post on twitter may contain hate speech which may offend or even hurt the customer's service feeling of IndiHome. Many people often express their complaints without realizing and paying attention to the language used. Moreover, customers who often complain often ignore politeness in the online interaction.

The phenomenon of impoliteness relates to the theory of impoliteness strategies. The impoliteness theory is based on the politeness theory. The study about politeness is done by Brown and Levinson (1987); he proposed several strategies to represent FTA (Face Threatening Act) about the politeness theory. Then, it is improved and constructed by Culpeper (1996). Both of these theories cannot be separated from the term "face" by Goffman (1967) as cited in Yule (2006). There are three social factors which are influenced the use of impoliteness such as relative power, social distance, and the rank of imposition (Brown and Levinson 1987). Furthermore, this study also used the supporting theory of language, impoliteness and gender by Holmes (1995) and Lakoff (1973) to investigate the differences of impoliteness strategies performed by male and female complainers. This theory is used to analyze and compare the impoliteness strategies used by males and females in expressing their dissatisfaction and negative evaluation on social media. The further explanation of Culpeper's, Brown and Levinson's, Lakoff's, and Holmes's theories are explained in the next chapter.

Compared with the politeness strategy that has been researched for a long time, the impoliteness strategy has only been explored and developed recently. There have been several valuable studies on the phenomena of impoliteness strategies that have been done by several scholars; Wibowo and Kuntjara (2012) conducted a study of impoliteness phenomenon within online interaction in a football website. The results showed that there are four types of impoliteness strategies used by Indonesian participants in giving comments and they mostly used positive impoliteness in expressing their negative attitude and showing disagreement toward other comments. Meanwhile, Mirhosseini, Mardanshahi and Dowlatabadi (2017) have conducted a study on impoliteness phenomenon based on gender differences by two characters in a movie. This study has revealed that the most common strategy used by the two characters is positive impoliteness. This study showed that the male character used more impoliteness strategies in the interaction. Furthermore, Ghani (2018) researched impoliteness strategies within customers' complaint comments that occurred on Facebook. The study found only four types of impoliteness strategies in the data and concluded that male commenters tend to be more hostile than females.

As well as the previous study, the present study aimed to explore impoliteness strategies and used Culpeper's (1996) as the main theory to analyze the data. Unlike the previous studies, this study focused only on impoliteness strategies in complaints status or it is called 'tweets' from IndiHome's male and female customers which are posted on Twitter since there are not enough studies that concerned with complaint tweets as the main objects to analyze the

impoliteness phenomenon. Moreover, the present study also investigated the factors that may influence the complainers in performing impoliteness strategies. Besides, there are not many researchers who have examined how gender differences in performing impoliteness strategies through complaint tweets. The writer chose IndiHome's Twitter account as the media to obtain the data because people need internet to do anything and stay up to date on social media. Internet has become something essential in our lives and IndiHome is one of the biggest and best-known internet services providers in Indonesia.

Unfortunately, IndiHome was unable to satisfy the customer data service needs (Dewiani, Achmad and Ananda 2019). Until now, IndiHome has often suddenly slowed and disrupted customers' comfort in accessing the internet (cnnindonesia.com 2020). Its slower connection and other problems occur frequently, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic; this may lead to an increase in the number of unpleasant and impolite complaints to IndiHome. This impoliteness phenomenon on social media is often ignored by society. Therefore, the writer is curious about this impoliteness phenomenon by male and female customers' complaint tweets on Twitter @IndiHome.

Since IndiHome is a company from Indonesia, most of the users and complainers are mostly Indonesians. However, some people tend to express their complaints on Twitter by using two languages (code-mixing and switching) between Bahasa Indonesia and English. This phenomenon happened because, in this modern era, many people can use more than one language. People who live in multilingual environments are more likely to communicate in multiple languages

on a regular basis. They enjoy switching or combining their mother tongue with other languages, whether local or international language, such as English, English as a language “lingua franca” is the language commonly used in this world, including Indonesia (Novedo and Linuwih 2018). Therefore, the present study analyzed complaint tweets written in fully English or Bahasa Indonesia and code-mixing and/or switching between English and Bahasa Indonesia.

The study of impoliteness is very important to improve our understanding of its functions and roles in social interactions. Furthermore, this study, entitled *Impoliteness Strategies by Indonesian Male and Female Customers' Complaint Tweets in @IndiHome* urgently proposed the IndiHome's male and female customers to post their complaint tweets in the right way and they have to consider politeness when they make a complaint because everyone can see and respond to what they are posting and if they share something that is not good on social media then it can be a boomerang for themselves, the wrong interaction between the customer service and the complainers may endanger both sides. This study is also important for the readers, especially, for internet provider companies to provide better service towards the users' complaints.

This study has also a purpose to broaden the application of Jonathan Culpeper's theory of impoliteness strategies by identifying and analyzing kinds of impoliteness strategies in complaint tweets to @IndiHome. The study also investigated what factors that may influence the use of impoliteness strategies done by male and female complainers on their tweets. Moreover, it also analyzed

the difference between impoliteness strategies used by Indonesian male and female customers in expressing negative evaluation, dissatisfaction, and anger.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the explanation of the background of the study above, the writer's purpose for conducting the study is to find the appropriate answers to the following problems:

1. What are the types of impoliteness strategies used by male complainers in their tweets to @IndiHome?
2. What are the types of impoliteness strategies used by female complainers in their tweets to @IndiHome?
3. What are the possible factors that influence male and female complainers to perform impoliteness strategies in their tweets to @IndiHome?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In accordance with the statements of the problem above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To know the types of impoliteness strategies used by male complainers in their tweets to @IndiHome.
2. To know the types of impoliteness strategies used by female complainers in their tweets to @IndiHome.
3. To reveal the possible factors that influence male and female complainers to perform impoliteness strategies in their tweets to @IndiHome.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study aims to develop the application of Culpeper's (1996) theory about Impoliteness Strategies since research on impoliteness has not been done much and might help the readers to comprehend more about the theory. It may also give new insights into the phenomena of impoliteness strategies and gender within social media interactions, especially on Twitter, and be useful for the readers. Moreover, the results of this study are expected to contribute to linguistics especially pragmatics study. Practically, this study can provide insights for the complainers to become better at expressing their complaints. By knowing politeness and impoliteness strategies, this study hopefully may remind the readers especially the customers of IndiHome to communicate properly. Furthermore, this study is also expected for internet provider companies to provide better service towards their complainers on social media.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Complaint	: Expression of grief, pain, or a feeling of dissatisfaction (Merriam Webster 2021).
FTA (Face Threatening Act)	: Certain kinds of acts in which the speaker says something that threaten the addressee's face (Brown and Levinson 1987).
Impoliteness	: It is a behavior that is face-aggravating in a certain context (Bousfield and Locher 2008).
Impoliteness Strategies	: Impoliteness strategies are ways of attacking

someone's face instead of enhancing and support the face (Culpeper 2005).

Twitter Account : Twitter is a free social networking platform used to send and receive short messages (Maclean et al, 2013).

Tweets : Short public messages that posted on social media application Twitter (Maclean et al, 2013).