

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

In the morning day many Indonesian women begin their activity by watching television. Several of them prefer to choose infotainment program to fulfill their desire for up-to-date gossip experienced by their favorite celebrities. At noon they are still wondering about the progress of the celebrities' gossip, then attempt to obtain the newest one in the evening.

Recently, gossip infotainment programs become popular because people want to follow the newest celebrities' lifestyle. People tend to imitate what celebrities do, includes all aspects of live. In other side, some newspapers carry *gossip column* which detail the social and personal lives of celebrities in certain communities. It seems like gossiping indicates that people like to talk about others. Cameron stated that gossip talk is about the personal qualities and private business of other people (2003). People tend to gain as much as possible the information about their celebrities even they like or dislike the content of it. It seems like a kind of li fe style to survive themselves in the social circumstance which reinforces them to be aggressive in obtaining it. People including the writer, catch the information delivered and share it with society as an important topic to be talked.

McArthur stated that we communicate daily with each other by talking and it is the most basic and widespread linguistic means of conducting human affairs (in

Pridham 2001). Talk between neighbors over the fence at the weekend about a celebrity issue, for instance, is more likely a form of gossip talk. The writer often hears a housewife, as the speaker utters *Tamara menikah sama brondong loh* ‘Tamara has married with a young man.’ which shows us that gossip is an interesting topic to open our conversation. The addressee may answer *Kok bisa ya?* ‘How come?’ which shows his/her interest to continue the conversation deeper. The conversation above becomes an evidence that gossip establishes a close networking between people. Furthermore it maintains solidarity between them. However, gossiping is a way people gather in a talk closely.

According to Holmes, gossip is described as the kind of relaxed in-group talk that goes on between people in informal contexts. In Western society, gossip is defined as ‘idle talk’ and considered particularly characteristic of women’s interaction. Its overall function for women is to affirm solidarity and maintain the social relationships between the women involved (1992). Power (1998) argued that for gossip to function as a means of social bonding, it necessarily coevolved with another independent mechanism for establishing commitment to alliances (in Knight et al., 2000). From the explanation above we can see that not only women as the subject of gossip talk, but can be men and women. Gossip might be a way for people being up to date and survive in their society in order not to be isolated from others.

When we are talking about men and women, of course, there will be differences between them, including the way they are gossiping. Holmes claims that women’s gossip focuses predominantly on personal experiences and personal relationships, on personal problems and feelings. It may include criticism of the

behavior of others, but women tend to avoid criticizing people directly because this would cause discomfort (1992). Maltz and Borker (1982) state that female speech can be characterized as collaboration oriented, or affiliative (in Tannen, 1993). In other hand, male equivalent of women's gossip is difficult to identify. In parallel situations the topics men discuss tend to focus on things and activities, rather than personal experiences and feelings. Topics like sport, cars and possession turn up regularly. The focus is on information and facts rather than on feelings and reactions (1992). Maltz and Borker (1982) claim that male speech can be characterized as competition oriented or adversarial (in Tannen, 1993).

In this study the writer does not compare the differences of gossip style between men and women, but she focuses on women's way of talking when they are gossiping. Holmes argues that, when gossiping, women have their own way; they tend to be more cooperative, agreeing and supportive (1992). Further Coates claims that the strategy of women's style of talking which is built by all participants as a group to construct a meaning called as collaborative style, includes several features such as topic and topic development, minimal responses, hedges, question, and turn taking pattern (2004).

Knowing that women use collaboration style when they are gossiping, the writer started to pay attention in analyzing gossip talk between presenters of infotainment television program to prove whether the presenters referred to also produce this kind of style in their talk. She was interested in analyzing gossip talk between them including their certain conversational features during the show. However, she chose *Obsesi* infotainment as the infotainment television program as

the substantial source of this study. In this program the objects of the study include two participants; two females Obsesi infotainment's presenters.

In this case, the writer uses qualitative as the proper method for this study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) stated that qualitative research refers to research about persons' live, stories, behavior, organization al functioning, social movements, and interactional relationship. There are several reasons why the writer thinks that qualitative is the best method in doing this study. First, qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. Qualitative methods are effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent. Second, the data is taken from field notes, audio (and sometimes video) recordings, and transcripts.

The writer also uses Conversation Analysis (CA) as the instrument in transcribing the data which is known as an approach to the analysis of spoken interactions developed from work carried out by Harvey Sacks, Gail Jefferson and Emanuel Schegloff in the early 1960s (Paltridge, 2000). According to Palltridge, in CA particular attention is given to everyda y spoken interactions such as casual conversations, chat and ordinary narratives. Ordinary conversation is the most basic form of talk and the main way in which people come together, exchange information, and maintain social relations (2000). CA is proper instrument to analyze the structure of gossip as a form of talk in communication. It is used to analyze the phenomena of

turn taking in the conversations because CA puts its interests in aspect of conversational interaction; one of them is turn taking (Paltridge, 2000).

### **1.2. Statement of the Problems**

It is argued that females use collaboration style and several conversational features when they are gossiping. Based on this argument, the writer attempts to formulate the problems of this study as follow:

1. What are the conversational features used by the presenters of Obsesi infotainment television program during the show?
2. What are the functions of the conversational features used by presenters of Obsesi infotainment television program during the show?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Providing the answers of the questions above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- a. To find out the conversational features used by the presenters of Obsesi infotainment television program during the show.
- b. To reveal the functions of the conversational features used by presenters of Insert Siang infotainment television program during the show.

#### 1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is aimed to find out the conversational features of gossip talk between presenters of *Obsesi* infotainment television program and also to reveal the functions of these features used by presenters when they are gossiping. Therefore the significance of this study is for students who are interest in studying about conversation features and its functions in developing collaborativeness and researcher of linguistics, especially CA practitioners. This study is significantly useful to give students knowledge how the presenters of gossip infotainment establish their language during the program and deliver messages to the viewers. The writer hopes from the suggestions she had provided, these students can do further analysis connected with this study. This study also expected to give students useful information and knowledge about how the organization of conversational features in informal situation for CA practitioners.

#### 1.5. Definition of Key Terms

##### a. Gossip Talk

Holmes described gossip as the kind of relaxed in-group talk that goes on between people in informal contexts. In Western society, gossip is defined as ‘idle talk’ and considered particularly characteristic of women’s interaction: function for women is to affirm solidarity and maintain the social relationship between the women involved (1992).

## **b. Collaboration Style**

Trudgill divined that collaboration style is a way of talking which the participants have the sense of giving support to each other to emphasize solidarity between them (in Coates,1996).

## **c. Women Conversational Features**

According to Coates (2004) women have different strategies in conversational interaction. Several aspects to understand women collaboration style include topic and topic development, minimal responses, questions, hedging, and turn taking patterns.