

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In social life, human cannot be separated from language. The function of a language is to form and develop a relationship with other people through communication. To form a good communication each person needs to apply cooperative language. According to Grice (1975) the aspects of a good communication are by telling the truth, being informative, being relevant, and being unambiguous. Besides, communication also has potential risk for every threatening act. Therefore, it needs a particular strategy namely politeness strategies in order to decrease the risk of threatening act.

The presence of politeness strategies can be a facilitator in an interaction. It is in line with Lakoff (1990) statement who defines politeness as a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchanges. In other words, politeness is a set of human " s relationship in which the purpose is to form a good relationship between the speaker and the hearer. Meanwhile, Yule (1996) defines politeness as an effort to show awareness of another person" s face. It could be treated in either person positive face or negative face. In this case, face means the public self-image of a person that could be increased or decreased.

Moreover, politeness strategies are always associated with a shared cognition. It is useful for each society" s member to understand group cognition.

Park (2008) stated that shared cognition is related to thoughts, attitudes, knowledge, beliefs and expectations common to all members of society. One of its purposes is to comprehend on how a member of society achieves shared understanding and member" s similarity. Further, in society; a communicative aspect of member" s interaction represents a type of cognition that can give an advantage in the team process, when each member performs the shared cognition. Since in the office meeting, communication successfully affects on how members perform their tasks. When two or more people work together, a mutual knowledge and the shared rule become essential in synchronizing the conversational topic and flow.

One of workplace environments that still apply politeness strategies is *Depo*. The term *Depo* means a place for saving stuff (<http://www.bahasaindonesia.net/depo>). In Indonesian railway, *Depo* means a particular building, which its role as a railroad depot for parking and checking train either for locomotive or wagon, as well as doing maintenance. *Depo's location* is spread at all operation area of *PT. Kereta Api Indonesia (persero)* either in Java or Sumatra. *Depo* is categorized into three types, namely: *Depo Lokomotif*, *Depo Kereta* and *Depo Gerbong*. *Depo Lokomotif* is a train workshop, which has function to sustain locomotive maintenance. Meanwhile, *Depo Kereta* serves to control passenger" s wagon maintenance. The last one is *Depo Gerbong* which has function to control container" s and tank" s maintenances.

The relevant phenomenon that relates to politeness strategies exist in *Depo Kereta Pasar Turi* was mainly seen in the talk of technical maintenance

matter. In *Depo Kereta Pasar Turi*, politeness strategies particularly prevailed in an intensive discussion namely Quality Meeting. It is an annual meeting, which is held to improve the work performance and to check the technical constraint. Certainly, to sustain that purpose, it needs communicative strategies among the participants. As asserted by Culpeper (2009) that the purpose of applying politeness is to form communicative strategies and to uphold social harmony.

The structure organization of *Depo* consists of Junior Manager Inspector, the Head of Technical Unit and Supervisor. In addition, *Depo Kereta Pasar Turi* consists of five divisions that each division is supervised by one supervisor. Those are *Electricity Division, Organization Planning Division, Engineering Division, Outer Division* and *Administrative Division*.

. In Quality Meeting, each participant whether the Junior Manager Inspector, the Head of Technical Unit or the Supervisors, has the opportunity to deliver complaint, request, suggestion and unwillingness about the technical maintenance matter.

Practically, politeness strategies are performed by the Supervisors to convey complaint and to avoid disagreement on the evaluation that is presented by the Junior Manager Inspector. Meanwhile, the Head of Technical Unit performs politeness strategies in presenting evaluation as a means to express a request and advice in reporting hindrance that must tackled by the Supervisors in terms of technical maintenance. Sometimes, he also performs politeness strategies to argue on the ideas that are presented by the Junior Manager Inspector.

Moreover, the Junior Manager Inspector usually undertakes politeness strategies to express a request and criticism that is conveyed to the Head of Technical Unit and the Supervisors concerning on the quality improvement of technical maintenance. In addition, he also performs politeness strategies to connect ideas or suggestion that is proposed by the Supervisors and the Head of Technical Unit in order to formulate concerted troubleshooting. Regarding to those phenomena, there is a relevant reason for the Junior Manager Inspector, the Head of Technical Unit and the Supervisors to apply politeness strategies in order to keeps each other faces.

Those phenomena motivated the writer to conduct study on politeness strategies that prevailed in Quality Meeting. In analyzing the data, the writer applied Brown and Levinson" s (1987) theory to unveil the kinds of politeness strategies, which are applied by the participants.

The writer took three previous studies with similar topics on politeness strategies. One of the previous studies is Nadzifah" s study entitled "Politeness Strategies in The Interaction between Santriwati and Ustadz or Ustadzah in Pesantren Zainul Hasan" in 2012. Although, it has similar setting, but the object of the study is different from Nadzifah" s study. She took on an educational institution while this study is focused on a workplace.

The second study by Mardhatilla and Handayani in 2013, which entitled "Analysis of Reprimanding Strategies by *Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Indonesia* Students." Although, this study used similar politeness strategies theory from Brown and Levinson (1987) but she only focused on reprimanding utterance.

The third study is by Fatmawati in 2015, entitled “Politeness Strategies Used In *Hitam Putih* Talk Show: Najwa Shihab Episode.” She focused her study on television talk show program only, which is different from the author’s focus of the study, in a work place.

The purposes of this study are to find out how politeness strategies used by the Junior Manager Inspector, the Head of Technical Unit and the Supervisors in Quality Meeting as well as to show their determination factors in applying politeness strategies.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Based on the background described above, the writer formulated research question to figure out the phenomenon of politeness strategies among the Junior Manager Inspector, the Head of Technical Unit, and the Supervisors concerning train maintenance issue in Quality Meeting. The research question is what kinds of politeness strategies are used by the Junior Manager Inspector, the Head of Technical Unit and the Supervisors?

1.3 Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to find out what kinds of politeness strategies used by the Junior Manager Inspector, the Head of Technical Unit and the Supervisors in applying politeness strategies.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is conducted to present a new knowledge particularly in *workplace environment*, especially at office meeting through linguistic" s point of view. It is conducted to know the advantage of applying politeness strategies both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study is conducted to analyze politeness phenomenon, which occurs at *Depo Kereta Pasar Turi* by using politeness strategy theory from Brown and Levinson (1987). Particularly, this study investigates the chosen participants who attempt to carry out Face Threatening Act (FTA) along with their way to not harm the interlocutor" s face by applying politeness strategies. This study also can be a reference for other students who are interested to conduct future study relate to politeness strategies, primarily in *workplace environment*.

Practically, this study is useful for any Supervisors, especially who work at *Depo Kereta Pasar Turi*, to apply certain politeness strategy, which can uphold their respect to both the Head of Technical Unit and Junior Manager Inspector in a discussion concerning technical maintenance matters. It may also be useful for the Head of Technical Unit to apply the proper politeness strategy to not impose Junior Manager Inspector face. In addition, it may also be useful for Junior Manager Inspector to apply the appropriate politeness strategy to not cause potential threat from the Head of Technical Unit and /or Supervisors.

1.5 Definition of key term

Depo : a place for saving stuff

(<http://kbbi.web.id/depot>)

- Depo Kereta : railway depot for managing passenger wagon.
- FTA : some utterances that represent a threat to another individual's expectation regarding face (Yule, 1996).
- Politeness : an act to show awareness of another person's face in an interaction (Yule, 1996)
- Politeness strategies : the strategies that are developed in order to save the hearer's face (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

