

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the middle of 2021, there are much misleading information about Covid-19 and Sinovac vaccine. Several media such as Antara News, Selopos, and VoaIndonesia published that the Sinovac vaccine was not strong enough to fight against Delta variation. Furthermore, Viva.co.id stated that Sinovac vaccine passport was not accepted in a foreign country. There was also a rumor in Detiknews about the government civil servants claiming people get infected by Covid-19 during quarantine. In those circumstances, clarification from the government is required to make people believe in the Sinovac vaccine and to raise people awareness about Covid-19 pandemic.

One of communication channels nowadays is a video podcast. According to Noxinfluencer (2021), the top ten of Indonesia's most popular video podcast channels is Deddy Corbuzier which is called Close the Door (Podcast Deddy Corbuzier). The podcast often talks about controversial issues, including Covid-19 and the Sinovac vaccine. For this specific issue, Corbuzier invited Retno Marsudi, known as Minister of Foreign Affairs, who represents the government team in the video podcast entitled *"Bu MENLU Sampai Nangis Bicara Ini!! Fakta Covid di Lapangan"*.

The significant issues in the video podcast are government civil servants claiming people get infected by Covid-19 during quarantine that is approved by the Minister of Foreign affairs, the Sinovac vaccine is ineffective against Covid-19 Delta variants, and the Sinovac vaccine passport is not accepted in a foreign country. Deddy Corbuzier, a society representative, is the hearer of hosting the video podcast. He conveys what society wants to ask a concerned person regarding the issues. Thus, Retno Marsudi, the speaker in this episode, attempts to clarify the misleading information about the issues.

In order to build successful communication, which does not offend the hearer in any given situation, especially clarification, the speaker is responsible to use the linguistic principle (Kingwell 1993). The branch of the linguistic study of how a speaker conveys her thoughts in accordance with whom she wants to talk to, where, when, and what situation is pragmatics (Yule 1996, 3). Language users have to use appropriate pairs of sentences in the context (Levinson 1997). Often times, the hearer can obstruct communication since they receive misunderstood information because the messages are not delivered correctly. Thus, observing and analyzing the speaker politeness to avoid misunderstanding while delivering messages is part of pragmatics study.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness strategies are used to fix rude utterances and make sure the utterances are acceptable for the hearer. Furthermore, in communication, politeness is affected by social harmony contributing to avoid social conflict (Holmes 2013, 256). Moreover, the speaker's politeness strategies will give impact the success of the clarification between individuals and produce more minor

misunderstandings. An example of politeness strategies used in clearing issues is found in Burhanuddin and Sumarlam's research (2016). In the research, they elaborated the types and domains of President Joko Widodo's speaking politeness strategies in the nation's socio-political issues. They further mentioned that language users applied politeness strategies to avoid conflict and increase acceptance and sympathy of the hearer. On the other hand, this research is intended to reveal the politeness strategies applied by Marsudi, one of Indonesian ministers, while discussing about Covid-19 and Sinovac vaccine in a video podcast.

A video podcast is the evolution and upgrading of an audio podcast that helps to convey messages easier since it is accompanied by body gestures and facial expressions instead of sounds only (Brown et al. 2007). Video podcast is widely launched on YouTube. In fact, video podcasting can influence viewers opinion quicker and wider compared to mainstream news channel. Video podcast is often in a form of Talk Show and politeness strategies are often indicated due to controversial issue discussed. Politeness strategies are considered effective for creating mutual understanding, clearness and respect to each other (Syamsir et al. 2015). Considering that the government's target of vaccination number, 208,265,720 has still not been reached (Covid-19 2022), it is important to observe the politeness strategies used by Retno Marsudi, as a government agent, to clarify the problems related to Covid-19 and Sinovac vaccine.

The writer observed that Marsudi mostly said, "*Mas Deddy*" instead of directly calling Corbuzier's name to address Deddy Corbuzier as the host of video podcasting.

For Holmes (2013), using "Dear" indicates being friendly with someone, whereas "Sir" delivers respect to whom they intend to talk, which is called building self-image. It indicates Marsudi delivers respect to Corbuzier. Furthermore, it was shown by Marsudi statement with *“Not necessary dicovidkan begitu, aku mending ngomongnya penyimpangan-penyimpang”*. Using *“penyimpangan-penyimpangan”* instead of *“dicovidkan”* indicates that Retno used safe terms to minimize conflict while clarifying the Covid-19 situation.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), there are four politeness strategies: bald-on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. They added that Payoffs and circumstances are the factors influencing the use of politeness strategies. Those theories are applied to analyze Retno Marsudi utterances in Corbuzier video podcast. Moreover, the research uses Whitton's theory (2001) to demonstrate that the types of politeness strategies used by Retno Marsudi correspond with the code of ethics of the civil service. The code of ethics is seven principles for the professional role of the civil service, which are used for implementation in the society.

In fact, there are researchers interested in politeness strategies. There are research focused on government representative's politeness strategies. Kusuma (2014) conducted a study on politeness strategies used by Barrack Obama in Democratic National Convention 2012. Amalia et al (2017) analyzed politeness strategies in the issue of the live banned export of live cattle by the Australian Government to Indonesia. Nevertheless, none of them analyzed the factor that influence the types of politeness

strategies applied. In addition, the present study analyzes an interview rather than a speech.

Another study focused on politeness strategies in Talk Show was Marpudianto (2020) who analyzed positive politeness strategies and possible factors influencing the types of positive politeness strategy used by David Muir and Donald Trump on ABC News and in Charlie Rose Show. However, none of them talked about controversial issues such as Covid-19 and Sinovac vaccine. Therefore, this research is expected to add more information regarding the uses of politeness strategies and factors influencing the appearance of the strategies from a government agent in clarifying controversial issues, especially about Covid-19 and Sinovac vaccine.

1.2. Statement of the problems

1. What are politeness strategies and most used one applied by Retno Marsudi in the video podcast entitled; “Bu MENLU Sampai Nangis Bicara Ini!! Fakta Covid di Lapangan?”
2. What are the factors influencing the politeness strategies used by Retno Marsudi based on Brown and Levinson’s theory (1987)?

1.3 Objectives of the study

1. To list types of politeness strategies and identify most frequently used politeness strategies in Retno Marsudi in video podcast Entitled; “*Bu MENLU Sampai Nangis Bicara Ini!! Fakta Covid di Lapangan*” based on Brown and Levinson (1987).

2. To elaborate factors influencing the choices of politeness strategies are used by Retno Marsudi based on Brown and Levinson's theory (1987).

1.4 Significance of the study

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute in providing further insight of pragmatics on the notion of politeness strategies applied in clarifying sensitive issues. Furthermore, since many people nowadays access more video podcasting, the findings of this study may intrigue other researchers, especially linguistic students, to do similar study on the use of politeness strategies in a video podcast. Practically, this study may become a reference for similar study in politeness strategies and government agents.

1.5 Scope and limitation

The scope of the research is the utterances of Marsudi found in the video podcast entitled; *"Bu MENLU Sampai Nangis Bicara Ini!! Fakta Covid di Lapangan"*. However, the research is limited on the utterances related to Covid-19 and Sinovac vaccine issues. The theory of politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson (1987) is applied to identify the types and factors of politeness strategies and factors influencing the application of politeness strategies by Marsudi in the video podcast entitled; *"Bu MENLU Sampai Nangis Bicara Ini!! Fakta Covid di Lapangan"*.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Politeness Strategies : The ways of action that used by people to minimize rude utterances and make sure the utterances are acceptable for

the hearer in clarification issues. (Brown and Levinson 1987).

Close The Door : The video podcast that was launched by Deddy Corbuzier in his YouTube channel.

Video Podcast : Video files placed on the web for individuals to subscribe and listen and watch using a computer or a portable digital media player. (Brown et al. 2007)

Covid-19 : The highly transmittable disease that caused by respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) began in Wuhan, China and spread globally. (Shereen et al. 2020)

Sinovac vaccine : The antibody from aluminum hydroxide is launched by Sinovac Biotech in China to inactivate the SARS-CoV-2. (Prüß 2021).