

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners, especially those who have a different language and are far from English psychologically, culturally, phonologically and syntactically, may struggle when trying to communicate in English. Non-proficient language learners are not only threatened by their imperfect knowledge of the language but also hindered by their inadequate cultural knowledge. To compensate for their lack of knowledge, EFL students can return to their own linguistic-cultural reservoir, translate speech from their native language and apply their own cultural rules when communicating in English (Al-Eryani, 2007). To be able to find other meanings in these sentences, it can be understood by using pragmatics.

Refusal theory is one of the subjects studied in Pragmatics. Refusing is a speech act that is often used in daily interactions. Refusal is a speech act that is often used and cannot be separated from the interactions of everyday life. It can be said that refusal speech acts are a way to convey feelings of disagreement with an expression.

Refusal is a speech-act performed that shows people in refusing some invitations, suggestions, offers, and requests of the other. Brown and Levinson in (Waluyani & Soepriyatna, 2016) state that refusal is naturally a face-threatening speech act. Moreover, Sahin says in (Waluyani & Soepriyatna, 2016) refusal is influenced by culture and context. Refusal includes a negative response from the

interlocutor. Direct and indirect refusals are a way of rejection. The direct refusal is used when a speaker says explicitly, he/she does not accept an order, the indirect refusals is used when a speaker does not want to or give responses since the expression has a possibility of offending the interlocutor.

When there is an invitation, request or request for help from other people, it is not always the invitation or request for help that can be fulfilled so it must convey rejection. Besides, rejection can also be said when there is something that is not approved.

Refusals can be expressed directly and indirectly. It is said to be a form of direct rejection if the meaning of the sentence conveyed can be understood as rejection. Like the word 'no', when uttered, the meaning of the sentence already describes a rejection. If a sentence has an ambiguous or unclear meaning, it is said to be an indirect form of rejection. Examples like the sentence 'Sorry, I'm busy judging from the meaning of the sentence alone, the sentence illustrates that the speaker is busy. It does not seem like it is a rejection or not.

In refusal strategy, there are also gender differences in male and female speakers in different ways within the community. In certain situations, some tenses are used only by women and others by men. Women are considered to have a secondary role in society and are expected to use more standard forms than men. Thus, the claim of the standard form is related to the values of women and femininity. Meanwhile, men prefer to use the vernacular form to standard language because men think that the macho and vernacular forms can indicate masculinity and violence in different situations.

Several previous (study have found that the refusal strategy of learning English shows that students apply indirect refusal strategies rather than direct refusal strategies to the interlocutors). This study focused on the refusal strategies used by Indonesian EFL learners of English in responding to an offer or invitation. Many previous studies have focused on developing a deeper understanding of the refusal strategies used by foreign students in miscommunication relationships across cultures where the researchers used observations and involved multinational participants. Unlike the preceding studies, this study is small scale, involves EFL university students with different cultures, and aims to find out the Indonesian EFL learners' understanding in refusing offers and invitations and whether gender matters in the use of refusal strategies based on Indonesian EFL learners' point of view.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background above, the writer identifies two problems, formulated in question below:

1. What are the refusal strategies used by the Indonesian EFL learners in responding to an offer or invitation?
2. Does gender matter in the use of refusal strategies?

1.3 The objective of the study

Related to some problems above, the objective of the study is as follows:

1. To find out refusal strategies used by Indonesian EFL learners in responding to an offer or invitation.

2. To find out whether gender matters in the use of refusal strategies performed by Indonesian EFL Learners in responding to an offer or invitation.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is expected to give theoretical, practical and pedagogical significance. Theoretically, this study aims to determine the study of rejection/refusal strategies used by foreign learners of English in responding to offers/invitations. The results of this study can provide a more comprehensive picture of the things that underlie the rejection strategy. Also, it contributes to deepening understanding and becomes an additional reference in the Pragmatic branch of speech refusal strategies in the learning process so that there are no misunderstandings on pragmatic competence.

Practically and pedagogically, this study aims to add new knowledge for readers to carry out refusal strategies so that readers can find out the right refusal strategies in various roles so that they can avoid misunderstandings about cross-cultural communication in rejection strategies. It is also hoped that it will be useful for future researchers who are interested in the same field in analyzing resistance strategies and this research is the general new research and has never been analyzed before in the English Department.