CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the general description of this research. It covers background to the study, research questions, objectives, significance to knowledge, and framework of the theories.

1.1 Background to The Study

Language is used as the vehicle of human's messages. There are many ways people do to deliver their message. Some may tell it politely, otherwise some do it impolitely. In language field, ways of people delivering their massage can be studied through pragmatic point of view. However, delivering a message and making the hearer understand what we try to express are not a simple and easy task. As an example, a girl spends a Saturday night at one of malls in Bandung with her boyfriend. When she is going to go home, she says, "Huh, going home alone must be boring!". By saying so, she hopes her boyfriend will understand that she wants him to take her home. On the other hand, her boyfriend may express his need directly such as "Bring me a glass of water." In most cases, men and women have different styles in expressing their feelings or needs. In addition, Deborah Tannen observes that women tend to ask indirectly whereas men will often tell directly.

Talking about gender, we often deal with physical things. However, gender talk is not that shallow, it also deal with language use. Nowadays,

analyzing the relationship between gender and language is not a suprising issue, especially for those having an interest in studying language and its relation with societal phenomena. There are plenty of researchers around the world putting gender differences as the main point of their researches. Through her famous controversial, and for some people, anecdotal work, "Language and Woman's Place", done in 1973, Robin Lakoff may be remembered as the pioneer of linguistic researches on language and gender field. She proposes that most women's speeches are characterized by the use of hedges, tag questions, and empty adjectives. Though her claims of women's speech has been constantly criticized, no one can say it has not caused an enormous effect, especially in language and social field. Lakoff provides the starting point in analyzing the relation of gender with the use of language. In 1990, Janet Holmes uses Lakoff's claims as the base of her research, "Hedges and Boosters in Women's and Men's Speech" in which she examines the use of hedges such as 'sort of', 'you know' and 'I think' and intensifiers such as 'of course' in women's and men's talk.

This research entitled "Gender Differences in The Use of Bald On-Record Found in Gossip Girl Season 1 Movies Script" is only one of flourishing language and gender researches. The problems rose from misunderstanding between men and women leads me to conduct this research. It is interesting yet useful to know how men and women see through their own point of view. Adopting politeness strategy introduced by Deborah Tannen's difference theory and Brown's and Levinson's politeness therory (1987), this research attemps to discover men's and women's preference of using bald-on-record politeness strategies and prove that

the use of bald-on-record is applied in Gossip Girl Season 1 movie script. The movie script is selected as the data source of this research because it is a very popular American television series and in its intriguing story, there are many uniques kinds of politeness startegies used in the utterances.

There are two previous researches related to this research. The first entitled "Politeness Strategies in English Adjacency Pairs" is a research in which Xia Yan (2010), a student of Kristianstad University, analyzes men's and women's choices of politeness strategies in face-to-face conversations, especially in adjacency pairs as found in greetings, compliments, and directives. The second has been conducted by Annessia Cassandra (2012), a student of English Department of UNIKOM It is entitled "Pragmatic Scale in Politeness Strategies Found in Beauty and the Beast Movie Script (A Pragmatic Study)". The case analyzed is the kinds of politeness strategies in the utterance with tact maxim and kinds of pragmatic scales found in the strategies. However, there are differences between this research and the previous ones. Unlike the first previous research which uses quantitative method, in this research, the qualitative method is used to do the analysis. Moreover, this research is going to improve the analysis in the first research since there is no explanation related to gender differences.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background to the study, this research is conducted as an attempt to examine men's and women's preference on using bald-on-record politeness strategies. The problems to solve in this research are:

1. What sub-strategies of bald-on-record are used by men and women to express their need and thought?
2. What is the intention of the use of the bald-on-record sub-strategies in men's and women's language?

1.3 Objectives

In accord with the problems above, the objectives of this research are formulated as follows:

1. To investigate the sub-strategies of bald-on-record used by men and women to express their need and thought,
2. To examine the intention of the use of bald-on-record sub-strategies in men's and women's language.

1.4 Significance to Knowledge

This research aims to give a clear description of diction and expressions used by women and men when facing the same condition. Therefore, this research is expected to be beneficial both theoretically and practically. The findings of this research are hoped to give the explanation of not only the differences between men's and women's language use and also the effect of it towards relationship. Additionally, readers will be able to implement the result of this research in conversation with people.

1.5 Framework of Theories

In this research, a theory analyzing gender differences is combined with politeness theory in order to find the differences of men's and women's way to express their need and thought by using bald-on record politeness strategy.

Difference theory, widely introduced by Deborah Tannen (1990) in her book You Just Don't Understand, is a theory examining the effect that gender has on language use. Adopted as the grand theory, the difference theory is hoped to help me analyze the differences between men's and women's language. The six classifications of gender-differentiated styles on language use are suggested, as follows:

1. Status vs. support
2. Advice vs. understanding
3. Information vs. feelings
4. Orders vs. proposals
5. Conflict vs. compromise
6. Independence vs. intimacy

As the supporting theory, Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson also share their ideas regarding politeness. In a book they write entitled based on the same name of the theory Politeness-Some Universals in Language Use (1978:95), they propose that bald-on-record generally falls into two sub-strategies; implication in which the speaker minimizes face threats and imperatives. Imperatives are then, divided into direct imperative and softened imperative.

In order to make it more understandable, the theories are illustrated in the scheme below:

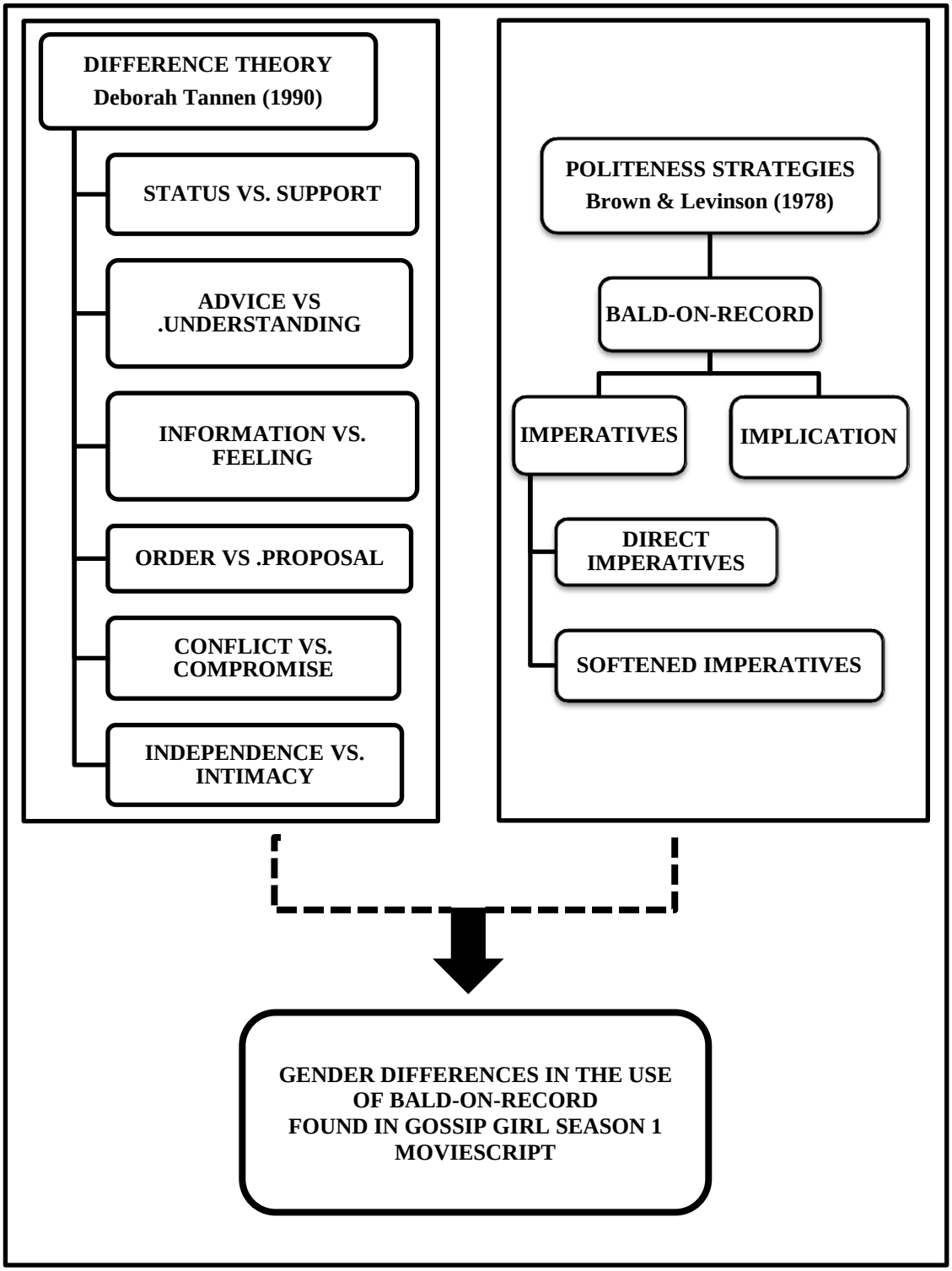


Figure 1.1. Framework of Theories