CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW

According to the research questions, this chapter provides the description about bald on-record including the sub-strategies of bald-on-record. It also discusses difference theory, which examines the differences between men and women.

2.1 Language and Gender

Robin Lakoff is often cited as the pioneer of Language and Gender research. In her work, Language and Woman's Place, done in 1973, Robin Lakoff suggests that women support more the use of tag questions, unnecessary adjectives, and hedges. Her claims, then, points out to an impression that women are more polite than men. Indeed, her claims have been constantly criticized and considered anecdotal, but the claims really have a great contribution in analyzing the relation between language and gender. Deborah Tannen, one of the researchers who become more curious in digging more on language and gender field. In her book, You Just Don't Understand (1990), she explains how men and women interpret the same conversation differently. She sparks off a differentiation of man's and woman's language. It consists of six classification, which is formulated as below:

2.1.1 Status v.s. Support

According to Tannen (1990:9), men engage a conversation as “negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can, and protect themselves from others' attempts to put them down and push them around.” In men’s point of view, life, then, is a contest, a struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure. Thus, when someone kindly gives an advice or a comment, they take it as an effort to push them down. She (1990:28) also claims that seeking for a help makes men uncomfortable. That is why men resist asking for direction and other kinds of information.

On the other hand, in women’s eyes, conversation is a tool to exchange confirmation and express support for they see the world as a network of connection that they use language both to seek and express support. That is why, as Tannen states (1990:30), “Many women do not only feel comfortable seeking help, but also feel honor-bound to seek it, accept it, and display gratitude in exchange.”

2.1.2 Advice v.s. Understanding

Tannen (1990:22) illustrates another difference of men and women by giving an example of her fellow’s experience. Eve had a lump removed from her breast. She tells her sister how upsetting to have been cut into, her sister responds, “I know. When I had my operation I felt the same way.” However, when she tells her husband, Mark, she gets an upsetting respond, “You can have plastic surgery to cover up the scar and restore the shape of your breast.”

The illustration clearly shows that men tend to seek and give a solution to a problem for they put their focus on trying to solve problems or fix troubles. Unlike men who usually do everything logically, women live by feeling. Women seek sympathy when they tell their problems. They, nevertheless, will also give comfort and sympathy for other people's problems. For them, trouble talk is intended to send the meta-message "We're the same; you're not alone."

2.1.3 Information v.s. Feelings

In accord with Holmes (1992: 132), men refer more to referential or information-oriented talk. They talk when they aim to tell information, whereas women used to verbalize their feeling. Tannen quotes a proverb (1990:35), "A woman's tongue wags like a lamb's tail. Foxes are all tail and women are all tongue." It seems like women have an allocation of talking each day, this is why they are often cited talkative. Moreover, the result of surveys done by Mulac & Lundell in 1994 and 1986 (Newman, 2008: 213) shows that women come out as the wordier gender both in writing and speaking.

2.1.4 Orders v.s. Proposals

When speaking to other people, men usually use imperatives to express their need, such as "Close the door." and "Don't ever talk to me while I'm driving." On the contrary, women's need is formulated as proposals rather than commands. Thus, in most cases, women tend to begin their request with 'let's' as a suggestion or ask

politely “Would you mind turning on the lamp?” Moreover, Tannen(1990:19) illustrates,

> Boys’ game have winners and losers and elaborate systems of rules that are frequently the subjects of arguments. Finally, boys are frequently heard to boast of their skill and argue about who is best at what. Girls, on the other hand, play in small groups or in pairs; the center of a girl's social life is a best friend.

Since men engage the world as a contest, they think by giving orders can show that they are powerful. However, women are expected not to boast about their skill even if they are more skilled than the others. It is supported by Lakoff (Haas, 1979: 617) who argues that women are expected to be more polite. She notes that women’s speech is characterized by the use of compound request such as, “Won’t you please close the door?” The more it is compounded, the more it show women’s speech.

2.1.5 Conflict v.s. Compromise

Both women and men have their own perspective in seeing conflict. As Tannen (1990:67) also observes that,

> To most women, conflict is a threat to connection, to be avoided at all costs. Disputes are preferably settled without direct confrontation. But to many men, conflict is the necessary means by which status is negotiated, so it is to be accepted and may even be sought, embraced, and enjoyed.

Men used to argue their opinion and thoughts which often lead to a conflict whilst women more likely refuse to oppose for they tend to prevent conflict.

2.1.6 Independence v.s Intimacy

Commonly, both men and women seek for independence and intimacy, but then, men tend to concern more on being independent whereas women focus to build intimacy. As Tannen(1990:10) states, "Though all humans need both intimacy and independence, women tend to focus on the first and men on the second." Since men see the world as a competitive place, they think by being independent they can achieve their status; they like to be seen strong and do not need any help. Thus, they usually feel henned in if they have to report everytime they are going to go or do something. They often feel annoyed by lengthy discussions about things they see as minor decisions, even they see the question "What do you think?" as a chance given for them to decide. In contrast, women see the world as a place to build connection and intimacy. They naturally prefer consulting with their partners at every turn. For them, discussion is the evidence of involvement and communication.

2.2 Politeness Strategy

Politeness strategy is introduced in Politeness-Some Universals in Language Use, a book written by Brown and Levinson (1978). According to them (1978:61), politeness serves as a tool to maintain someone's face. In politeness, face can be defined as the public self-image of a person. Yule (1996:60) states that face refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize. Actually, there are four strategies of bald-on-record; negative politeness, positive politeness, off-record, and bald-on-record. However, in this section, only bald-on-record is explained since it is the focus of the analysis here.

2.3 Bald-on-record

Bald on-record is the politeness strategy used on-recordly or straight to the point. According to Brown and Levinson (1987:68-69), an actor (S) goes on-record in doing an act A if it is clear to participants (H) what communicative intention led the actor to do A (i.e., there is just one ambiguously attributable intention with which witnesses would concur). In doing bald-on-record, the speaker may perform the face threat with no minimization or minimizing face threats by implication. According to the sentence form, imperatives represent bald-on-record best. Imperatives are, then, divided into two kinds: direct imperatives and softened imperatives. Thus, it can be concluded that there are 3 sub-strategies can be performed in going baldly on-record.

2.3.1 Implication

Implication is a strategy in which S' message is told on-record but contains an indirectness meaning. Brown and Levinson (1987: 95) state that implication is used when S aims to minimize face threat in doing Face Threatening Act (FTA) baldly on record. Thus, in doing implication, one may only tell what he/she wants or feels without demanding directly. For instance, as feeling terribly exhausted, a girl (S) says to a boy (H), "I really need you to help me cleaning the classroom. There are a lot of cockroaches straying on the corner of the room." In the utterance, the girl only tells that she needs the boy's help and she sees a lot of cockroaches in the classroom. Then, it can be concluded that the girl wants the boy to take charge of the cockroaches.

2.3.2 Direct Imperative

According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 95), direct imperatives stand out as clear examples of bald-on-record usage. Basically, direct imperative is a type of sentence by which the speaker expresses his/her request or instruction directly. For instance, a boss (S) says to his secretary (H), "Make me a glass of tea and bring me the files I need for presentation. Make no delay." The utterance shows that the boss tells directly what he wants his secretary to do for him.

2.3.3 Softened Imperative

In Brown's and Levinson's (1987: 95) opinion, imperatives may appear in a softened form. Thus, softened imperative can be defined as a type of sentence in which the message is told directly but in a soft form. Unlike the direct ones, softened imperatives require the use of negative-politeness respect terms such as "Could you …?" or mitigating device such as "please". In accord with Yule (1996:63), mitigating devices are the expressions serving to soften the demand.

A softened imperative may be used when a sister says to her brother, "Could you please be quiet? I can't do my homework if you keep making noise." By saying so, she wants her brother to be quiet. Her need is delivered directly, but softened since there are mitigating device "Could you ...?" and "please" used in the utterance.