

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Technologies have now brought us into a more convenient and easy way of communication, including mobile phones. Through its facilities, mobile phone offers us many facilities, one of which is sending text messages. Today, text messages sent via mobile phone are also used for communication in academic setting. Text messages have brought lecturers and students to a closer contact, removing some of the traditional boundaries between them. In academic life, especially in a university, there is an interaction between students and lecturers. For some reasons, this interaction can be done via text message service. In doing so, both the lecturers and the students should be aware of 'rules' when sending text messages to each other. These, among others, are the consideration of role relationship, power, and distance referring to the existence of a gap in status and the nature of the relationship between students and lecturers.

The ease that the text messages (e.g. *WhatsApp*) brought, however, creates a dilemma. On the one hand, it is very useful for communication, but on the other hand, it has caused students writing to their lecturers using the language and style meant for their friends. Students feel free to construct sentences in text messages that they will not normally use inside the classroom. Lecturers, who welcome students' academic requests via *WhatsApp* found that some students

do not seem to be aware of the proper genre to use in sending text messages to them. This naturally affects the lecturers' feeling in an unfavourable way.

Similar phenomenon has been expressed by Najeeb, et al (2012, p. 40) who conducted a study on politeness in emails of Arab students in Malaysia. This study analyzes the politeness strategies found in Arab postgraduate students' emails to their supervisors during their period of study at Malaysian universities. The findings show that Arab students use various politeness strategies, including the use of positive and negative politeness. They tend to be more direct in their requests via email when communicating in English. No students use indirect strategies. This study provides an insight into the Arab students' politeness strategies that would help to avoid misunderstanding, and misinterpretation of their emails, as well as to improve student's pragmatic awareness in writing emails in English.

The previous description provides background for the proposed study on politeness strategies used by students in English Language Study Programme, FBS-UNJ in sending text messages to their lecturers. It is intended to investigate the politeness strategies used by the students when requesting for information and receiving information from their lecturers. The participants are the students who send messages to the lecturers during the period of data collection of the study, and the lecturers who receive text messages from the students. As the primary data in the intended research are the students' text messages, the study falls under the category of qualitative study design with content analysis.

1.2 Research Questions

To fulfil the needs of this research, the following research problems are formulated:

1. What are the politeness strategies of requesting and receiving information used by English Language and Education Study Programme students when sending their messages through WhatsApp to their lecturers?
2. How is politeness strategy of requesting and receiving information employed by English Language and Education Study Programme students when sending their messages through WhatsApp to the lecturers?
3. How do the lecturer's response toward the language used in terms of politeness strategies in requesting and receiving information via *WhatsApp* employed by English Language and Education Study Programme students when sending their messages through WhatsApp to their lecturers?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

The purposes of the study is;

1. to show the strategies used by English Language Education Study Programme students to communicate with their lecturers of requesting and receiving information
2. to investigate the employment of politeness strategies by English Language Education Study Programme students to communicate with their lecturers requesting and receiving information

3. to examine the lecturer's response toward the language used in terms of politeness strategies used by English Language Education Study Programme students in requesting and receiving information

1.4 Scope of the Study

In this study, the researcher focused on analyzing the politeness strategies used in text messaging by the students of English Language Education Study Programme, FBS-UNJ. As the primary data in the intended research are the students' text messages, the study falls under the category of qualitative study design with content analysis. The text messaging are used when the students are requesting and receiving for information in academic setting. The strategies will be analyzed by following the Brown and Levinson's Politeness theory categorization. The lexicogrammatical tri-functional construct also followed to looking for the employment of politeness strategies and the lecturer's response toward the language used by English Language Education Study Programme.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The aims of the study were to show the types of the politeness strategies used in text messaging, to investigate the employment of politeness strategies, to examine the the lecturer's response toward the language used by the students of English Language Education Study Programme. Concerning on the three purposes of the study, it was highly expected that the result of the study could be useful and brought some benefits to everybody, including the education community, public

and society. There were two main significances of the study which could be derived from its theoretical or practical views.

First, theoretically the result of the study could enhance and enrich the theories in pragmatics study concerning about politeness which was appropriate in social life. The study aimed to enhance the reader comprehension in pragmatics theories especially in the types and the realization of politeness strategy. In this case, enhancing politeness theories would help the users understand how to apply politeness strategies in text (e.g *WhatsApp*) as their everyday life.

The second one was practical significance. The research was hopefully expected to contribute in pragmatics study especially in the study of politeness strategy. Practically, the research would be beneficial and useful for students or lecturers in their communication of using text messaging (e.g. *WhatsApp*) as their everyday life, in which it could reach any cross-cultural understanding and an overview of politeness itself. For public and society, on the other hand, it could show the readers how to use language and communicate with the others in social relationship. It was also able to make the readers or other researchers to be more interested and more critical in analyzing materials especially in the politeness strategy. In addition, it could be used as a resource for the next content analysis study which was especially studying politeness strategy.