CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Conversation is a crucial part of people's social interaction. Through conversation, people exchange information, ideas, and also feelings. Without conversation, people will find it hard to transmit what they have in mind towards each other. However, people sometimes think that certain conversations are only wasting their time. Thus, they want to end the conversation more quickly by doing an FTA (Face Threatening Act). For example, they will say "Get to the point!" in order to end the conversation sooner. Deborah Tannen (1992) states in her book that "this attitude toward talk ignores the fact that people are emotionally involved with each other and that talking is the major way we establish, maintain, monitor, and adjust our relationships" (p. 24).

There are politeness strategies to help people avoid FTA, but first, people need to understand the concept of 'face.' According to Brown and Levinson (1987), "face is something that is emotionally invested, and that

can be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction" (p. 61). In this context 'face' is the public self-image that every person wants to claim for himself. People treat the aspect of face as basic wants; everyone knows that the face wants to be desired and to be satisfied. Therefore, failing to fulfill someone else's face wants means that you are threatening their face and doing the FTA.

In every conversation or social interaction, FTA always potentially occurs. Therefore, people often apply the politeness strategies in order to minimize the FTA during conversation. However, whether intentionally or not, conflicts usually occur when people miscalculate the politeness strategies that they are using in their attempt to minimize the FTA. An example of miscalculation of the politeness strategies resulting in a conflict is as follows: A wants to get closer to B to minimize the FTA and to boost the social interaction between them. In doing so, A uses the **positive politeness** strategy **exaggerate**. A says (with an exaggerated way to a regular pair of socks) "Your socks are remarkable!" B responds "They're just a normal pair of socks. Stop exaggerating!" B, as can be seen in the example, is annoyed because A exaggerates his reaction of B's socks. As a result, a conflict occurs between them even though it is not a huge one.

There are also social variables which can influence the speaker to miscalculate the politeness strategies. These variables are known as R, D, P (**Ranking of Imposition**, **Distance**, and **Power**). Politeness strategies are also applicable in any type of conversations whether it is real life conversations or made up ones, such as in movies and television series.

This miscalculation of the politeness strategies is also found in the TV series *Game of Thrones*, which is highly popular and considered to be the most successful TV series in the 21st century according to IMDb (Yeazy, 2013). The show's main plot revolves around a battle to claim the highest seat in the Kingdom. The show itself is set in the late medieval period, and there are a lot of kingdoms, wars, and politics as the ingredients of the show. As a result, most of the conversations between the characters can have a big impact to the story. The miscalculations of the politeness strategies occur in the show so frequently and they lead not only to a simple conflict between the speaker and the hearer, such as a soldier getting annoyed because his commander called him a boy, but also to much more complicated conflicts, such as murders and even wars.

People apply the politeness strategies in their utterances when they are interacting with each other in order to maintain, defend, or threaten their own 'face' or someone else's. However, people sometimes do not realize that they are miscalculating the use of the politeness strategies in a conversation. A miscalculation of the politeness strategies can lead to not only FTA but also the occurrence of conflict between the speaker and the hearer. When people are aware that a miscalculation of the politeness strategies can lead to a conflict, people will use the politeness strategies more carefully during conversations. Thus, conflicts will be less likely to occur.

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1.2 Statement of the Problem

In my research, these are the issues I want to focus on:

1. Which utterance shows miscalculation of the politeness strategies ending up in

a conflict?

2. How does miscalculation of the politeness strategies lead to a conflict?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems above, I hope to:

1. identify the miscalculation of the politeness strategies by the *Game of Thrones*

characters;

2. explain how the miscalculation of the politeness strategies can lead to a

conflict.

1.4 Method of Research

First of all, I decide to choose Pragmatics as the linguistic area to do my research on, and then I choose the miscalculation of the politeness strategies ending up in the occurrence of conflicts as the topic that I want to analyze. Next, I choose the TV series *Game of Thrones*, specifically season 1 and 2, to be the source of my data. After sorting out the data from the source, I analyze the data based on the statement of the problems. In analyzing the data, I use the theory from the book entitled *Politeness*: *Some Universals in Language Usage* by Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson. Lastly, I write the research report.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

       This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter One is Introduction, which contains Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is Theoretical Framework, which discusses the related theories that I use to support my study. Chapter Three is the analysis of the data which are taken from several scenes in the first and second seasons of the TV series *Game of Thrones*. Chapter Four is Conclusion. The last parts of this thesis are Bibliography and Appendices.