

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK IN ANALYSING GENDER DIFFERENCE IN COMPLIMENT RESPONSES**

#### **2.1. Sociolinguistics**

Sociolinguistics is a part of linguistics according to Hymes (1974). They learn about the usage of language through people conversation in daily activities. Language and society are the important elements in learning sociolinguistics because both of them have a connection. Dardjowidjojo stated that there are factors that can influence the way people speak, such as age, the background of family, the background of education, social group. Therefore, these factors have an essential value for people in choosing any kind of language and speech style they use. Another statement from Fishman (1970), the factors like the location, the condition, who either the speaker or the recipient are, the point of conversation, and the issue will be considered as the comprehension of a conversation (Dardjowidjojo, 1987, p. 227). Holmes (2001, p. 1) stated that sociolinguistics is the study of the cause of every single one in society, including cultural norms, social status, and context in the way language is used. In other word, it basically analyses both language and society because they are linked. By learning sociolinguistics, we will get more knowledge of the reason why people speak differently such as different social contexts, social functions, and social meaning.

## 2.2. Gender

There are many evidences that show men and women speak in different way. It can be seen from the topic they select in conversation, absolutely men and women focus on different concern. In conversation, women are more interested in something personal. Wareing stated that women tend to use their feeling, such as talking about family and talking about friendship. While, men like discussing about impersonal topics, based on general information or their hobbies, such as automotive, photography, soccer, etc. Wareing also claimed that men prefer to share the experiences and switch the information as the motive for the discussion. Meanwhile, women tend to build and keep up the good relationship by listening to the speaker carefully and giving back channel support. (Wareing, 2004, p. 89).

Some researcher such as Jenkins and Cheshire (1990) said that in conversation, men are less active than women do in supportive roles. In other word, women give more back channel support than men do in a chat. Back channel is the way that listeners provide to the speaker through feedback. There are two types of feedback women use; it could be verbal and non-verbal. So, women usually respond with *mmm*, *huh*, *yeah*, by nodding, smiling, frowning including gestures and body language (Wareing, 2004, p. 88).

There are statements come from some researcher such as Cameron, Coates, and Tanen who said that in discussion between men and women, so often women talk more and have many questions to answer by men, then men will frequently answer their question and takes time. While men explaining, women taking more 'backchannel noise' by saying *uh-huh*, *yeah*, *yess*, *hmmm* (Stockwell, 2007, p. 21).

These are assigns of women's words based on Lakoff's observation (Holmes, 2000: 286):

- a. Emphatic stress, e.g. that was brilliant night
- b. Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g. oh my god
- c. 'Superpolite' forms
- d. 'Hypercorrect' grammar
- e. Intensifiers such as *just* and *so*, e.g. i love just the way you are
- f. Precise colour terms, e.g. purple
- g. 'Empty' adjectives, e.g. my prince charming
- h. Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. did you really enjoy it?
- i. Tag questions, e.g. it isn't expensive, is it?
- j. Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. see, so, you know.

Tannen (1991) claimed that "men and women come from different cultures in the sense that they grow up to have completely different ideas, different expectations, their place in the world, and about what the conversation are for" (Goddard and Patterson, 2000, p. 101). In other words, what women and men produced are totally not the same. Because of different main set since they were born, it makes the way they think, their potential, their reason of the conversation are dissimilar.

Power and solidarity are the basic, which is an important part of relations that have to be noticed in the society. People do not use a different language to talk, but they have their own strategy to respond it. There are differences between male and females in their conversational style. Tannen said that there is a power of men, when they have a conversation. Meanwhile, women are observed having a sense of solidarity when they get the conversation (Goddard and Patterson, 2000, p. 101). Tannen (2001) also mentioned, "men talk to emphasize status, and freedom, while women talk to establish connection and intimacy." In other words, men need recognition on their position in society. They like controlling and need freedom in behave. She added that male tend to

be boastful by telling their experiences or skill, while women tend to downplay their ability to create an interaction by supporting each other in the hope that they can maintain their relations with others (Robbins, 2003, p. 299).

Some researcher assumed that the way women and men show their emotion, the intensity they express their feeling are different. Hall (1984) said that women have more ability to know and understand others' feeling (Robbins, 2003, p. 110). Deaux (1998) stated that women are easier and better than men do in showing emotional expression, even if they are negative or positive thing (Robbins, 2003, p. 109). Brody and Hall claimed that women often show any feeling that they feel, but not for anger. By expressing their feeling, it makes them feel calm. These are not the same with men do. Men cannot easily read and get the signal of others' emotions in direct or indirect way. Men also cannot simply express their emotion or feeling to others. They have to be smart to control their emotions in the right situation (Robbins, 2003, p. 109).

Related to the compliment, Herbert (1990) claims that among men and women, the gender who is frequently giving the praise are women. They so often take and give the compliment to somebody else, especially to other women (Kuntjara, 2003, p. 62). On the other hand, Wolfson (1989) states that men are habitually giving the compliment to other women. It can happen because men have a higher status than women (Kuntjara, 2003, p. 62).

According to Holmes stated that women usually use *I love NP*, "*what a ADJ NP*", example: *I love your hair, what a lovely day*. They are more interested in others' appearance that is intended to tighten solidarity. Contrary to men, they often use a short

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formation to compliment something like *good eyes!* Men mostly comment to others' ability (Kuntjara, 2003, p. 62).

### 2.3. Compliment

A compliment is an expression that spoken by speaker to someone else about existence that is considered good, and is expected can bring a positive effect between the speaker and the recipient, said Holmes (1986) in *Sociolinguistics* (2003, p. 178).

Wierzbicka (1987) said that a person who gives a compliment to somebody else, it can transfer a pleasant energy to the recipient (Paulston and Tucker, 2003, p. 178 ). Characteristics of compliment are concerning feelings and friendliness. Wolfson (1986) declared that in most case, they are defined well as if they were a bridge that builds the relationship between the speaker and the recipient (Paulston and Tucker, 2003, p. 178 ). In other words, the speaker would get somebody happy and finally can keep a great relationship each other by giving compliment.

There is another statement about compliment that came from Tannen (1990) in book *Gender, Bahasa dan Kekuasaan* (2003, p. 61). She said that a compliment is not always good to tell. Sometimes it can be bad too. For example, a boss who gives the compliment to his member, it could be seen as an expression to show authority. Instead, a member who states the compliment to his boss, it could be he is looking for a reputation.

In giving compliments, a speaker must explore and decide which praise would be suitable and proper for the recipient. It is obviously important to avoid misunderstanding or negative thinking that might come up in the process of complimenting. A compliment

can be assumed as a face-threatening act if the content of praise is too different from reality. Based on Levinson and Brown (1987) of book *Sociolinguistics* (2003, p. 179) also suggested that a compliment could be changed into face-threatening act that implies a hidden meaning. For example, a speaker who gives the compliment to a woman for her shirt, the woman could think that the speaker wants the same stuff with the recipient. Based on Pomerantz (1978) of book *Sociolinguistic and Language Acquisition* (2009, p. 178) points out that respond a compliment can cause crisis for the recipient in deciding the answer whether he accepts or rejects, agrees or disagrees.

Compliments look like a large topic but according to Manen and Holmes (1986), compliment is divided into appearance, ability or performance, possessions, and some aspect of friendliness (Paulston and Tucker, 2003, p. 187).

Herbert (1990) has divided compliment responses into 12 forms. These are compliment responses based on Herbert (Rosemarie, 1997, p. 8)

1. *Appreciation token*

The expression of feeling respect for the compliment given by saying *Thank you* (terima kasih).

2. *Acceptance*

A recipient accepts a compliment given.

Example: *Yeps, this is my favourite colour. I love it too* (iya, ini emang warna kesukaan saya. Saya jg suka sih)



### 3. *Praise upgrade*

A recipient accepts the compliment and maximizes the compliment itself

Example: *Actually, I can do it more than this* (saya bisa melakukan lebih ini)

### 4. *Comment history*

A recipient gives more information and explanations about a compliment given.

Example: *Well, this is a shirt that I bought in Paris a couple days ago* (ini baju yang saya beli di Paris dua hari yang lalu)

### 5. *Reassignment*

A recipient accepts the compliment but transfer it to someone else or something else.

Example: *My father gave it to me as a present.* (ayah saya yang kasih ini buat hadiah)

### 6. *Return*

Almost similar with number 5 but transfer the compliment back to the speaker.

Example: *So do you* (kamu juga)

### 7. *Scale down*

A recipient refuses the compliment by minimizing the compliment itself.

Example: *I do not think so. Honestly, this stuff is very old.* (gak juga, barang ini udah lama)

### 8. *Question*

A Recipient makes sure the compliment is true by returning a question to the speaker.

Example: *are you sure, huh?* (hah, kamu yakin?)

### 9. *Disagreement*

Tell the speaker inversely about compliment given.

Example: *not really, I do not like it instead* (gak juga, saya malah gak suka)

### 10. *Qualifications*

Accept the compliment given but telling speaker that another one is better.

Example: *I agree with you, but I think Tita's is better* (setuju tapi kayaknya punya si Tita lebih bagus)

### 11. *No acknowledgement*

The recipient does not respond at all to the compliment given. Sometimes, they try to change another topic or only smile.

### 12. *Request interpretation*

The recipients make their own assumption such as by trying to offer something.

Example: *do you want to try?* (kamu mau coba?)

Based on Wolfson (1983) of book "Tesol Quarterly" (1987, p. 532) claimed, "the overwhelming majority of all compliments are given to people of the same age and status as the speaker." In other words, so often people give compliments to those who

have the same position. Speaker frequently uses a compliment for appearance when they meet friends in the first occasion as a greeting interchange, for example: *wah, kamu tambah cakep* (wow, you look more beautiful).

#### 2.4. Related to Indonesian culture

Indonesia has so many cultures inside. Every culture has different view and habit in compliment responses.

There is a quotation in Java society called *andhap-asor*. It means a positive modest manner which is showing humble and respect. Java society has a habit that is humble in responding compliments. For example, "*kamu cantik pake baju itu!*" (you look so beautiful wearing this clothes), usually they would like to give responses like "*masa iya? biasa aja ah*" (really?). By responding like this, speaker will assume that recipient is a humble person. This could occur because Indonesian culture consider that humble and honor are positive values. If we only say *thank you* without further words, it is sometimes considered as not a good way to respond to compliment because people will think the speaker does not have any respect. Indonesian people usually respond the compliments by not only saying *thank you* but also giving further information about the compliment itself (Kuntjara, 2003, p. 66)

Indonesian is rarely giving compliments directly because people usually think that the recipient will be arrogant, so they prefer to tell compliment through third person (Esther Kuntjara, 2003, p. 63). Wolfson (1981) reported that Indonesian does not give the compliment as much as American does. Only Indonesian people who have been affected

by western habit may give compliments to the other educated communities (book *Tesol Quarterly*, 1987, p. 532).

## **2.5. Previous research**

To be frank, the writer finds that there is a topic's research that has been done by English department students of Kristen Petra University, Surabaya (Rosemarie, 1997). This research analyzed about compliment responses based on gender using Indonesian, and she only used 24 students as her participants. This research inspired the writer to do a research about compliment responses deeper by using more participants. Therefore, the writer uses 80 participants consisting 40 males and 40 females in this research. The participants are university students in Jakarta at the age of 19 – 21 year old. All participants have to complete the qualification the writer made.