

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

For more than 100 years, engineers and scientists have developed a considerable measure of helpful machines, and television or usually called as TV is one of them. TV has turned into an imperative part of individuals' life as a source of information and a great tool for learning and communication. TV today has a ton of beneficial outcomes and impacts on our society. It is an incredible method for educating people with the vital issues that influence their daily lives. Whether it is social, political, economical, or medical, there is continually something new to be told, and TV is the fastest approach to get it out to people.

Alongside informational and educational purposes, though it is not expected to be one of its objectives, TV serves as an entertainer too. As time goes on, individuals start to sit and watch TV for that reason. TV has expanded its entertaining aspects into many forms, such as dramas, reality shows, and apparently comedy programs.

Considering the importance of the role of TV in the life of society, the function of TV as entertainment particularly comedy, nowadays, is growing very rapidly. However, in practice, this leads to the comedians' use of strategies that do not conform to the primary function of TV as a source of learning for the communities. One of them is the application of impoliteness forms in comedian's interaction.

Impoliteness form applied in these comedy programs is not ultimately seen as an actual 'negative' attitude toward specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts (Culpeper, 2011). It is rather a planned verbal attack that stays on the surface and is not intended to insult anyone (Culpeper, 1996:4).

This kind of impoliteness framework is called mock impoliteness, which is one of two categories that Culpeper (1996) suggested. The other category is called inherent impoliteness in which there are acts that innately threaten one's face regardless of the context of the act.

The impoliteness forms occurred therefore would be realized as not to be taken literally by the participants. Unlike inherent impoliteness which will cause social conflict and disharmony as studied by Nasution (2014) in a TV talk show Jakarta Lawyers Club, these forms are intended to only entertain the third party and even create bonding between these participants.

This concept of impoliteness fits the atmosphere of the comedy programs. It specifically utilizes the entertaining function of impoliteness. Culpeper (1996) claimed that in entertaining function, the use of impolite speech event is aimed to a third-party audience that finds it humorous. This function has been utilized creatively and easily found during comedy programs that though may not follow the society norms, has been used as an efficient formula to trigger laughter.

This impoliteness concept is adopted that the politeness strategies used to be fully maintained are disrupted by the impolite utterances and attitude that are not anymore considered rude, but provoking laughter, (Culpeper, 2005). The

performers, especially comedians, tend to mock their partners in order to entertain the audience as exemplified in the following conversation.

- DC : *Saya bertanya dulu ni, sebelum kita mulai ini ya. Meng, Anda sebetulnya ngerti ga sih dengan konsep bully ini!"*
(‘Let me ask you before we start. Meng, do you really understand with this ‘bullying’ concept!’)
- K : *Anda meremehkan saya!*
(‘You underestimate me!’)
- (Everybody in the studio laughs.)*

At the beginning, DC as the host mocks the other comedian by raising an unpalatable question of his role in the program. He performed an attitude in which he pretended to seriously question the capability of K. This impoliteness form occurs due to the behavior of K who often provides irrelevant explanation to the topics presented. K responded offensively by standing up and pointing DC and rather than triggering awkwardness among the audience, the conflict ends by laugh.

This impoliteness practice is considered successful in cheering up the audience since they may derive enjoyment of feeling safe from the face-attacks, (Lorenzo-Dus and Blitvich, 2013). It is not the case whether the target of the utterances is aware of the impoliteness. What matters is the audience who are entertained, are aware of who the target is; providing a safe zone to enjoy the pleasure of the target being ridiculed.

Furthermore, these impolite utterances along with the provocative attitude give self-reflexive pleasure for the audience in observing the target in a worse state than themselves and therefore becoming more entertained (Culpeper, 2005). Culpeper (2005) calls this phenomenon as ‘superiority’ that in this context, when

the comedian attacks the other comedian's face with impolite utterances, the audience would feel they are better than the target and find it amusing.

This situation is an apparent evident that impolite utterances occur in communication and its entertaining function has been exploitative to a degree. It becomes an effective formula for comedians to create humor and entertain the audience. This led more comedians to become reluctant to find qualified jokes and more inclined to seek out areas of the targets to be mocked for instance the physical appearance.

This phenomenon of using impoliteness to entertain the viewers on national TV shows ironically causes the moral deterioration of the society. TV which has become an integral part of human life that its shows should reflect the role models and contribute to the decent advancement of the moral of the society, somehow uses this concept as main entertainment for its audience. TV shows which have been the primary source of entertainment of Indonesian citizens have changed their basic course and become a place for inappropriate program containing impolite linguistic behavior and less moral values.

The fact that this phenomenon is appeared on national TV and watched by the communities provoked other problematic issues especially for children. Recent study by Yusuf and Fahrudin (2013) claimed that nowadays children in school-age show behaviors such as name calling and verbal abuse which is certainly caused by what they imitate from TV shows. Murni (2012) points out that recent discussion on negative effects of TV on children, for example, raises the issue of children's impoliteness as one of the bad effect of TV programs. Not

to mention that in order to provoke laughter, these comedians would even criticize his own face, as for instance a comedian says, "*Saya dikatakan ganteng. Saya marahlah Pak! Karena gak sesuai dengan muka saya Pak!*" ('I was told that I was handsome. I got angry because I wasn't'). By the utterance, it can be seen the comedian tries to admit that he has ugly face so that the audience would find it humorous and then laugh.

This phenomenon actually can slowly damage the morale of the audience and make the audience accustomed to using impolite forms of speech in communication. It is expected that these ways are not used and the comedian should be able to use smart ways of joking and creating humor, which is educational and doesn't not use any forms of ridicule. However in fact, because it is easier, much preferable by the audience and has become a trend, the national TVs still follow the pattern of this impoliteness function and more programs like these are produced.

Indonesia Lawak Klub broadcasted by Trans7 is one of comedy programs that utilize this function of impoliteness to entertain the viewers. The format of the program is to position the comedians in Indonesia in the debate forum and each comedian represents a certain fake organization showing their statuses as the expert of the issue. The comedians collaborate in discussing a problem and attempting to provide solutions in an entertaining and humorous way. In the duration of 60 minutes, the host will invite 7-8 well-known comedian or entertainer in Indonesia to become a panelist. In addition to listening to comments from the guests, community members are invited to get involved by submitting

their opinions aired through videos, and at the end of the show, the summary of the minutes of the discussion was delivered.

Despite the well-managed concept of the show, during the process of discussion, the comedians would utter statements that are considered impolite and mock the face of the other comedians in the aim of entertaining the audience. It is mainly because of the format of the program which places several comedians as the experts of the issues are set up to give wrong or even non relevant information and therefore causing a pique and provoking impoliteness. These non-relevant information, then, are further continued by the responses of all panelists mocking each other assuming that particular comedians have no capacity to discuss about the issue.

Furthermore, in the show, impoliteness is without exception used by almost all comedians regardless their gender. As previously exemplified, a male comedian easily mocks a female comedian which is responded by laughing. The same thing also occurs when a female comedian without any hesitation insults a male comedian's physical appearance, for instance, "*Bapak. Intrupsi! Bisa saya gak duduk dekat kakek – kakek ini!*" ('Sir, interruption! Can I please not sit near this old man!'). She vents her negative feelings that she isn't comfortable sitting near the male comedian. She stands up and gets angry to the host for the seating arrangement. This utterance is even not responded and simply ignored by the male comedian. It is then, terminated by a stand-off of a topic change.

Lakoff (1975), who made one of the early studies on gender differences in language, argued that women regard themselves as individuals "in a network of

connections” which they will produce less impolite speech events. Most past feminist researches supported this theory by claiming that women use “powerless” speech, for example, using tentative language features such as tag questions, deference, modality, hesitation and so on. It is assumed that women are necessarily ‘nicer’ than men that women choose to be more cooperative.

However, this concept may not be applicable in terms of entertainment shows, especially comedy program. It has slightly changed that in terms of entertaining audience that female comedians also apply the impoliteness forms as an effective tool to create humor. ILK, for instance, has shown the equal chance for male and female comedian to use the impoliteness to entertain the viewers.

This phenomenon is fascinating to be further examined due to its existence as one of the examples that impoliteness is fun and tolerable to do. It is not in line with the expectation that TV shows should provide a good model of communicative strategies. It is also necessary to discuss the applications of impolite language specifically related to gender as a significant factor which may explain the increase of impoliteness forms use in the society. Moreover, given that the research in this study since linguistic impoliteness has not gained nearly as much as attention as linguistic politeness, the study of gender and impoliteness is an area ripe for future development building. Not to mention that the results of the study may contribute something new to the development of impoliteness theories due its different research settings with the previous studies.

This present study aims at exploring the model of impoliteness as stated by Culpeper (1996-2011) and Bousfield (2006), Mill’s (2006) theory the interrelation

concept of gender and impoliteness and Beebe's (1995) and Culpeper's framework of the reasons of utilizing impoliteness in communication. In line with the theories, the researcher is very much interested in conducting a study on the forms of impoliteness, the responses used by the male and female comedians in Indonesia Lawak Klub, how and why they occur. This present study, however, would not aim to clarify the frequency of male or female in using the impoliteness forms or to prove which is more impolite, male or female, but rather to expose the gender difference in using and responding to impoliteness utterances.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

In relation to the background of study presented above, the problems of the study are formulated as in the following.

1. What are the forms of impoliteness and the responses used by the male and female comedians in Indonesia Lawak Klub?
2. How are the processes of language impoliteness conducted by the male and female comedians in Indonesia Lawak Klub?
3. Why are the language impoliteness conducted by the male and female comedians in Indonesia Lawak Klub realized the way they are?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

In line with the problems of the study, the objectives are to:

1. find out the forms of impoliteness and responses used by the male and female comedians in Indonesia Lawak Klub;

2. describe the process of language impoliteness conducted by the male and female comedians in Indonesia Lawak Klub;
3. explain the reasons why the language impoliteness conducted by male and female comedians in Indonesia Lawak Klub are realized the way they are.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

Linguistic impoliteness can be used as one of the strategies to create humor and this phenomenon has benefited the comedians appearing on TV. Rather than seeking for qualified materials to create laughter, the comedians tend to use the impolite utterances which are somehow simpler to enact and more efficient to reach the goal. It has become a trend that either male or female comedian in almost every show on TV, without any hesitation tend to use the shortcut (as to mock the other comedians) to provoke an effective laughter. Due to its influence on various TV programs, this study is limited to the discussion of impoliteness appeared in Indonesia Lawak Klub comedy program. The main aspects to be observed are the impoliteness forms (insults, pointed criticisms, challenging or unpalatable questions, condescensions, message enforcers, dismissals, silencers, threats, negative expressives, form-driven, context-driven, and convention driven) appeared when comedians contribute an opinion in the forum and the comedians' responses (no response, accept the impoliteness, offensive and defensive responses) toward the impoliteness forms.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be useful theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research findings are useful for: a) linguists to enrich their knowledge of the application of the impoliteness theory as specifically about how impoliteness can be used to face-attack hearers as well as entertaining the audiences, the dynamics of impolite utterances in the conversation, and the expansion of impoliteness in its relation to gender as a significant factor; b) other researchers to get information of what forms of impoliteness and responses occur in a comedy program, and for those who would conduct a further study about linguistics impoliteness in relation to gender which remains tantalizing and fruitful line of academic inquiry in other discourses such as novels, plays and so on.

Practically, the findings of this research are expected to be useful as a reference for lecturers, teachers and students which helps to lead toward how to deal with impoliteness, how impoliteness should be seen as a controlled and managed phenomenon, and why impoliteness occurs in entertainment, especially comedy.