

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Language is a means of communication. One of the languages which are used widely in the world is English. Many people say that English is one of the international languages. In facing modern area and free trade, we are demanded to be able to speak and to communicate in English. It means that English plays an important role in international communication.

Communication is any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person information about that person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or affective states. Communication may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or nonlinguistic forms, and may occur through spoken or other modes, taken from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communication>. With communication we can interchange in different ways, feeling, persuading, advising, warning, teaching and so on. In communication there is an action to get someone else to do something. One of the ways to do an action to someone to do something is by using request.

From childhood males and females are different in many ways, both physiologically and psychologically. They are not only different in their physical appearance, but also in the way they use their language. Each person has different style communicating with other people. To say one intention, someone can say it in different ways. Holmes (1992:4) states that language provides a variety of ways of saying the same thing. It depends on a lot things: where people come from, educational background, age, and it also depends on gender.

Eckert and Ginet (2003:17) state that gender is a collaborative affair that one must learn to perform as a male or a female, and that performances require support from one's surroundings. Indeed people do not know how to interact with another human being, or how to judge them and talk about them, unless people can attribute a gender to them. Most people interactions are colored by performance of people own gender, and by attribution of gender to others. The different of performance and communication leads the gender differences.

There are two main bodies of research on gender differences in communication styles; academic research and popular literature. Academic research points out major differences in conversation characteristic and traits across gender, while popular research focuses on major stylistic differences in conversation style between men and women. Popular research also points out common pitfalls and areas of conflict due to gender differences in communication style of men and women (Mercant,2012)

Academic research on psychological gender differences has shown that while women use communication as a tool to enhance social connections and create relationships, men use language to exert dominance and achieve tangible outcomes (Leaper,1991). Women are, overall, more expressive, tentative, and polite in conversation, while men are assertive and power-hungry (Basow & Runbenfield, 2003).

The characteristic of women in communication are women give more priority to connection or a good relationship and intimacy, avoid superiority, more emotional, and reduce different opinions. In non-verbal communication, women are proved more to use eye contact (67,5%), body language (75,5%), and smile (83,7 %) while men communicate, they communicate to report facts and in short phases with little or almost negligible (Griffin,1999). To say about getting food they serve different ways. Question are more common in women's

contributions (e.g., “ Does anyone want to get some food?”) where as directives that tell the audience to do something (e.g “ lets go get some food”) are more likely to be found in men’s conversational contributions.

Tannen (1990) distinguishes men and women communication pattern. According to her, the men communication pattern is considered “report talk”, while women communication pattern is considered by “rapport talk”. Rapport talk and report talk them break down the differences between men and women communication so language users are able to understand those differences in our everyday lives and apply our communication adaptations. These terms differentiate the language characteristics between men and women. The characteristics include questions, apologies, compliments, longer talk, taking blame, giving advice, thanking and performing request.

In daily communication, people always ask others to do things. Speaker ask a person to give him something, or ask the person to do some actions. These are all request. Request refers inclusively to an utterance that is intended to indicate the speaker’s desire to regulate the behavior of the listener that is, to get the listener to do something (Becker, 1982) as cited in Achiba (2003).

Request is a speech act expressing the speaker’s desire for the hearer to do something with the added proviso that the hearer takes this expressed desire as the reason to act, Bach and Harnish (1984: 48). Based on Bach and Harnish’s definition, Kuang et al. (2006) redefined requests as verbal instructions performed by the speaker expressing a desire for the addressee to do a particular thing and usually aim for the addressee to intend to do it and actually to do it.

Requesting the utterances is a directive speech act whose illocutionary purpose is to get the hearer to do something in circumstances in which it is not obvious that he or she will perform the action in the normal course of events. Thus, by realizing a request, the speaker considers that the hearer is able to perform an action.

In social interaction, people sometimes perform request to do things they want. It happens not only in community surrounding but also at school. At school, people especially students perform request in some places; in the classroom, canteen, library or in laboratory. Performing request isn't part of inseparable of communications. Men and women are different in performing the request. Tannen (1990) states men tend to use direct request when speaking to others. For example: "Close the door!", "Switch on the light". Men speak most directly to the poin while women tend to use indirect request. For example: " Won't you close the door?".

Based on the researcher found in Smp Negeri 2 Batang Kuis at informal context, it is found male students performed request in the direct ways. As the examples when a male students knew that his friend wanted to go to c nteen, he asked him to buy mineral water. He said " buy me mineral water! Here is the money" this utterance shows that a male students perform request directly since his utterance is coded by imperative and right to the point. It means, the intention of the speaker is clear.

But, it is different in another male student. In this case, he performed request indirectly. In a case when he wanted to ask his friend, female student, to throw rubbish which is in front of them, he refers to say " this area is not clean, the rubbish every where". His interlocutor didn't understand his intention so she just said " I dont know who throw the rubbish here", so that he threw the rubbish in the recycle bin herself.

Therefore, the consistency of male and female language characteristic is still debate. It is because language characteristic of men and women are not regarded as an absolute condition caused by gender differences. Connel (2002: 51) assert that category gender differences in language are not fixed category. This is due to the specific situational differences that sometimes arise in communication between men and women. These differences could have been influenced by other factors beside gender like the atmosphere communication and the level of speaker social status. Hence, the study of language and gender has to examine the relationship of several types of factors that affect the level of communication.

As already described above, it is interesting to study the language characteristic of men and women in performing request. This study will explore the requesting language performed by male and female students. It will be conducted in Smp Negeri 2 Batang Kuis.

### **1.2 The Problem of the Study**

1. What kinds of request are performed by male and female students in doing interaction at informal context?
2. How are the requests linguistically performed by male and female students in doing interaction at informal context?
3. Why are the requests performed by male and female students in doing interaction at informal context as the way the are?

### **1.3 The Object of the Study**

The object of the study they are:

1. To investigate the kinds of request performed by male and female students in doing interaction at informal context
2. To investigate the request linguistically performed by male and female students in doing interaction at informal context
3. To investigate the request performed by male and female students in doing interaction at informal context as the way they are

#### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

This study is about language and gender. The researcher will elaborate the different ways of male and female students in performing request at SMP Negeri 2 Batang Kuis. The gender language of them in performing request will be observed through their utterances in informal context; canteen, area in front of the class, and parking lot.

#### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

Various factors are very important to the significance of this study. Theoretically, the result of this study is useful for the enrichment of linguistics knowledge in the field of sociolinguistics especially language and gender. Practically, the result are useful for both male and female students in performing request. They have to consider who are their interlocutors should use the appropriate request in order to create a good atmosphere of communication and interaction.