# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Research

Language is a tool in communication that has an important role. Language cannot be separated from social life because it makes everyone able to do whatever they want to say. It shows that language can give the effect on social relationships. It can be seen that the role of language itself is very important.

Presently, communication is one way to build relationships with each other. One of the important parts of communication is speech acts. In linguistics, speech acts is speech defined based on the intention of the speaker and its effect on the listener. Compliments and compliment responses are two aspects of speech acts. Compliments and compliment responses cannot only be done and found by face to face, but now this can be done and found on virtual communication both oral and written in social media such as Facebook, twitter, Youtube, and Instagram.

Pragmatics phenomena often appear in everyday life. The phenomena of pragmatics now appear on social media because nowadays, social media is very popular communication device and like a bowl of comments (Ambalegin & Arianto, 2020). At this time, social status of the society is communicated through social media so that the phenomena of language itself appear on social media. One of the language phenomena appeared on Joe Biden's Instagram. Joe Biden, a presidential candidate,

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posted a photo together with his vice president on his Instagram while walking and explaining what their future project would be after being a president and vice president. The account name did not express the compliment on her comment by saying "I believe in Trump! **I don't think Joe will be a better president"** (@gracebell1970, 2020). The utterance attacked Joe Biden's face. The bold utterance disparaged self-image of Joe Biden as the presidential candidate in the public.

Issue of pragmatics was found of no compliment in the Jakarta Post newspaper on March 6th, 2021. There was a face-threatening act in newspaper headlight "Moeldoko splits Democratic Party, **poses threat to SBY's ascendancy**" (Sutrisno and Gunawan, 2021). Moeldoko attacked SBY's face by his utterance. The utterance showed a face threatening act to SBY because it could undermine SBY's existence as a chairman of a democratic party. It could also make their relationship disharmony.

Contrarily, the phenomenon of compliments also can be found in media information. The phenomenon was seen in The Jakarta Post on January 29, 2021. There was a compliment that showed face-saving act in the headlight **"Indonesia drops in graft index for first time in Jokowi presidency"** (Aqil, 2021). The utterance showed that the self-public image of Jokowi as a president was good because he made a change in the Jokowi presidency in graft index.

These phenomena were found on talk shows in television. It was found in the interaction between the host and guest stars. The conversation and commentary from the audience can bring up the phenomena of compliment and compliment responses.

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One of the shows that gave rise was a talk show called Jimmy Kimmel Live that held a few months ago.

Jimmy Kimmel explained his next guest star to the audience. Jimmy Kimmel said his guest star won a nomination for film. Then he performed the part of the film called "Minari" which featured the actor's acting on the screen. After showing part of the film, he greeted Alan Kim.

Jimmy Kimmel:    **Uh, you know I thought you were just great at this movie, youdid such a great job**

Alan Kim:    **Thank you**

Jimmy (speaker) gave compliment to Alan's ability (hearer) to act in the film "Minari". Through that film, the hearer won a nomination, so the speaker gave compliment to him by saying **"Uh, you know I thought you were just great at this movie, you did such a great job"**. According to Holmes (1988), the compliment given by speaker is one topic of compliments on **ability or performance** because it's related to someone's skill/talent.

Alan (hearer) responded the compliment by saying **"Thank you".** The response given by hearer showed that the compliment was received. According to Herbert (1990), this type of compliment response is **appreciation token**.

The phenomena of compliments and compliment responses was not only found on the Jimmy Kimmel Live but also in another talk show, namely the Ellen DeGeneres Show. The Ellen DeGeneres Show is an American daytime television

variety comedy talk show hosted by Ellen. One of the reasons why this popular is because Ellen's natural humour and ideas inspire the viewers.

The phenomenon of compliment occurred when Ellen welcomed Taylor Swift and Zac Efron to join the Ellen DeGeneres Show on season 9 episode 105. Taylor Swift held Zac Efron's hand when they entered the talk show room. Zac wore a leather jacket and Taylor wore a short dress. They looked very elegant and the way they entered the talk show room made the audience scream because of their stunning appearance. Ellen (speaker) gave compliment to Taylor (hearer 1) and Zac (hearer 2) by saying **"You both are so adorable and you are adorable together"**. According to Holmes (1988), the compliment given by Ellen (speaker) is topic of compliment on **appearance** because it's related to hearers' appearance (clothes/make up).

A response from hearer is one way to appreciate speaker. Taylor (hearer) responded the compliment that was given to her by saying **"That is so nice of you"**. This type of response is **return** because the hearer responded the compliment by giving the compliment back to Ellen (speaker) (Herbert, 1990).

There were some researches that had been made regarding to compliments and compliment responses. "Compliments and Compliment Responses used by English Teacher Association" by Purnomo (2015) was conducted to find out the way respondents employ compliment and its response strategies for topics of appearance, possession and skill or ability in difference status. This study used theory from Trosborg and Herbert. The result showed that females used more variation in giving

compliment strategies than males. The males and females also mostly applied appreciation token for their compliment response strategies.

Next it was "Compliments and Its Responses Used by the Users of Instagram" by Jannah (2018). This research aimed to identify topics in a sentence of compliment, describe the function of each sentence of compliment, and classify the types of compliment responses used by Instagram users. This research applied by Wu (2008) and Herbert's (1990) theory. The results of the study showed that there were 7 topics of compliment used by the users of instagram (appearance, possession, performance/ability/skill, personality trait and 3 other topics such as food/drink, place, and picture). There were 4 functions of compliment, such as to express admiration, replace gratitude/congratulation, open conversation, and reinforce desired 2 behavior. There were 8 types of compliment response used by the users of instagram (appreciation token, comment acceptance, comment history, return, praise upgrade, scale down, questioning, and no acknowledgement).

The previous research used Herbert's theory to analyse the compliment responses but used Trosborg and Wu's theories to analyse the compliment. The previous studies and present study applied the theory or theories in different data sources. This present research used Ellen DeGeneres Show as the data source.

Based on the compliment phenomena or issues explained in the background of the research, the researcher was interested in investigating the topic of compliments and the types of compliment responses in which the pragmatics was the approach in analysing on the Ellen DeGeneres and the guests' utterances by using the

theories of Holmes (1988) and Herbert (1990). Thus, it was designed the title for this thesis as follows "An Analysis of Compliments and Compliment Responses on the Ellen DeGeneres Show: Pragmatic Approach".

## 1.2 Identification of the Problem

Following the issues from the background of the research, the problems were identified as follows.

1.  Comments on social media attacking self-public face on Instagram

2.  The existence of face-threatening act (FTA) showing disharmony

3.  The face-saving act (FSA) existing in media information to avoid the self-public image (face) attacked

4.  The implementation of compliments and compliments responses on particular television programs

5.  The topic of compliments to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show

6.  The types of compliment responses to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show

## 1.3 Limitation of the Problem

According to the identification of the above problems, the problems solved were limited as follows.

1. The topics of compliment to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show

2. The types of compliment responses to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show

## 1.4 Formulation of the Problem

Thus the research questions was designed as follows.

1. What are the topics of compliment to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show?

2. What are the types of compliment responses to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show?

## 1.5 Objective of the Problem

The objectives of the problems were designed taken from the research questions as follows.

1. To identify the topics of compliment to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show

2. To identify the types of compliment responses to the host and guests' utterances on the Ellen DeGeneres Show

## 1.6 Significance of the Research

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this research aims to be a reference for readers. It is also hoped that these research findings can add and enrich the knowledge of the learners and educators in teaching learning process.

2. Practical Significance

This study aims to provide knowledge about topics of compliment and types of compliment responses. It is hoped after reading this thesis, the readers can apply the compliments and compliment responses in their everyday conversation to create FSA (face-saving act) and avoid FTA (face-threatening act).

**1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

**Pragmatics**            : The study of language use in context (Birner, 2012)

**Compliment**            : A compliment is a speech act which explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, characteristic, skill, etc.) which is positively valued by the speaker and the hearer (Holmes, 1988 p.446)

**Compliment response:** Re-establishing balance between speakers following a compliment (Herbert, 1990)

**Utterance**            : A sentence that's produced in some actual context (whether oral, written, or signed, as in American Sign Language) (Birner, 2012)