

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Tulgar (2016) suggested that being skilled in a language does not guarantee effective communication when information is being shared. Misunderstandings are likely to occur, especially when the speaker struggles to convey their message clearly. Therefore, it becomes essential to understand contextualized statements and extract the concealed or implied meaning within communication. This type of knowledge is referred to as pragmatic competence. It encompasses the understanding of pragmatic aspects and the ability to apply them effectively during communication.

Nguyen and Taguchi (2011) declared that the term "pragmatic competence" refers to a speaker's capability to effectively convey and interpret meanings and intentions within a given social and cultural communication context. It is a crucial component of broader communicative competence, which is usually acknowledged as the primary goal of most language acquisition programs (Bachman & Palmer, 2010) along with the extensive recommendations for emphasizing pragmatics in the classroom made by English language teaching researchers (Taguchi et al., 2015).

Regardless of the widespread awareness of the importance of pragmatic competence, pragmatic knowledge appears to be overlooked in English teaching and learning, particularly in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) circumstances. According to further discussion by Taguchi (2015), the two most indisputable reasons of why it happens are because of the evaluation system's heavy emphasis on other linguistic skills (predominantly vocabulary and grammar) and the teachers' own ignorance of the complexities of how language is used to convey meaning in everyday situations. Due to this lack of emphasis, communication skills gaps among students continue to exist, particularly in the area of understanding of contextual appropriateness.

The frequent lack of pragmatic content in ESL/EFL textbooks is one example of how pragmatic knowledge is neglected in EFL situations. The textbooks for this study were designed with the intention of fostering students' communication proficiency. Since pragmatic content is an important component of theoretical models of second language (L2) communicative ability, this study started with the premise that pragmatic content in EFL textbooks should not be ignored.

The 10th grade of upper-secondary school is a critical stage in language learning, where students are expected to achieve a higher level of linguistic proficiency and mastery of communication skills. English, being a widely spoken global language, requires learners to not only comprehend its structural aspects but also to be proficient in using it in real-life situations. The selection of appropriate speech acts and politeness strategies is essential for successful communication in English, as cultural and contextual variations play a significant role in determining the effectiveness of communication.

For EFL students who primarily learn the target language through textbooks in a classroom setting, this might have caused another problem. When learning English pragmatics, Indonesian EFL students must overcome additional challenges. This is due to the fact that, in addition to the similar limits of EFL situations, there are also notable differences between the social and cultural communication aspects of the English and Indonesian languages.

The results of Ren and Han's (2016) and Vellenga's (2004) investigations demonstrate that ESL/EFL textbooks can be frequently utilized but still contain significant errors or, occasionally, false information that may prevent students from acquiring communicative competence. Thus, it is important to analyze ESL/EFL textbooks generally and Indonesian EFL textbooks specifically in terms of pragmatic content in order to spot any potential gaps between what the textbook offers and what students require for proper language use in everyday communication.

1.2 Scope and Limitation

The researcher focused on the analysis of speech act and the politeness strategy presented in the textbook. The research is also limited to the EFL textbook entitled *Active English: English for Senior High School Students Grade X* published by PT Penerbit Intan Pariwara (Intan Pariwara Publisher), which targeted on the series of dialogues in each chapter.

1.3 Formulation of The Problem

- 1) Which speech acts are specifically used in “Active English” textbook for Grade 10?
- 2) How is the politeness strategy implemented in the “Active English” textbook for Grade 10?

1.4 Aims of The Study

This research aims to determine the types of speech act and the implementation of politeness in an Indonesian’s EFL textbook for 10th grade, precisely “*Buku Interaktif ‘Active English’ English for Senior High School Students Grade X*”.

1.5 Significance of The Study

This research is intended to be beneficial from a theoretical, practical, and pedagogical standpoint. Theoretically, this research has the potential to advance our understanding of pragmatics, which is a subfield of linguistics itself. It can also include details regarding the theory of speech act developed by John R. Searle, along with Brown and Levinson’s politeness strategy in reference to the series of dialogue in the textbook.

Practically, readers might learn from this research that communication often involves context, which can signify something different from what is really being said. From there, it is intended that readers will be able to practice appropriate communication techniques in real-world situations.

Pedagogically, this research is intended to assist the students of English education department who are interested in pragmatics and wish to understand more about speech act and politeness strategy.