2.1. Speech Acts

Speech or public speaking is situation of communication that involve the speaker, audiences and moment or occasion. In speech, the speaker attempt to express themselves, not only produce utterances containing grammatical structures and words, but also perform actions via those utterances. Thus, the actions that performed via utterances are generally called speech acts. According to Austin (1962: 94), speech act is doing a certain thing by saying a certain word or group of words.

Speech acts theory broadly explains that these utterances as having three parts or aspects: locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

- **Locutionary acts** are simply the speech acts that have taken place. The locutionary act is the basic act of utterance, or producing a meaningful linguistic expression.

  e.g. Parrot says, “Good morning.”

- **Illocutionary acts** are the real actions which are performed by the utterance, where saying equals doing, as in betting, welcoming and warning. The illocutionary act is performed via the communicative force of an utterance.

  e.g. It is hot................................................stating
Would you open the door? ..................requesting

Wait for me! .....................................ordering

Do you see my son? ..........................questioning

- *Perlocutionary acts* are the effects of the utterance on the listener.

The typical examples of perlocutionary act are:

- inspiring  
- persuading
- impresing  
- deceiving
- embarrasing  
- misleading
- intimidating  
- irritating

Austin pointed out that in analyzing a speech act, we need to make a distinction between the Locution and the Illocution. The locution is the actual form of words used by the speaker and their semantic meaning while the illocution (or Illocutionary Force) is what the speaker is doing by uttering those words: commanding, offering, promising, threatening, thanking, etc.

A speech act can be conducted successfully if the felicity condition is fulfilled. It is an external condition of the language i.e., aspects of the context of the situation in which language is used. According to Hymes (in Siahaan 2008:160) there are lots of aspects such as setting purpose goal, channel, etc, to provide the possibility for successful speech act.
2.2. Gender and Politeness

Gender is a range of characteristics used to distinguish between males and females, particularly in the cases of men and women and the masculine and feminine attributes assigned to them. In the past, women were invisible, yet today they believe that they possess a different voice, different psychology, different experience of love, etc. and also different culture from that of men (Coates 1993: 13).

When dealing with politeness phenomena, gender is a crucial factor to be taken into account. Janet Holmes (1994: 1) explained about how gender differences may influence and affect linguistic politeness. Holmes presented her idea that women and men have different ways of interacting because women are more polite than men in talking cooperatively and supportively. Holmes also analyzes the use that women and men make of some linguistic devices which serve to increase or reduce the force of an utterance. These are hedges, boosters tag questions, and pragmatics particle such as you know, I think, sort of, of course.

2.2.1. Gender

Gender is a term used as a categorical division of human into male and female (Siahaan, 2008: 160). West and Zimmerman (1987), stated (in Eckert 2003: 10) that gender is not something we are born with, and not something we have, but something we do. Gender as a term differs from ‘sex’ in being about socially expected characteristics rather than biology (Goddard and Patterson, 2000: 1). Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003: 12), stated that it is commonly argued that biological differences between males and females determined gender by causing enduring differences in capabilities and dispositions. However, Siahaan (2008: 160) also said
that this term has nothing to do with the division on the competence and performance quality on the language forms and uses between men and women. Because, either women or men enter the same process of some stages in acquiring a language. Even though, sometimes women and men use a different style of language while say about the same thing.

The different style of language between men and women is very interesting to study. As Rochefort issued (in Jespersen 1922: 237) that women had another language, which is different from the man language, and men have a great many expressions peculiar to them, which woman understand but never produce themselves. For example, according to Jespersen, swearing is among the things women object to in language; where a man will say “He told an infernal lie,” a woman will rather say, “He told a most dreadful fib.” This situation then creates a misconception that stipulating the opinions of lots of people to the analysis of the relation between language and gender.

Janet Holmes (1994: 1) says that women and men have different ways of talking and hence, of realizing and interpreting speech acts. She points out that women and men use language in a different way because they have different perceptions of what language is for. Whereas men use language as a tool to give and obtain information (referential function of language), women see language as a means of keeping in touch (affective or social function).
There are ten features that considered as Women’s Language listed by O’Barr and Atkins (in Coates 1993: 132) which are based on Robin Lakoff’s characteristics of female language usage, such as:

1. Use of hedges. *Hedges* are linguistic forms such as *I think, I’m sure, I guess, you know, kind of, sort of* and *perhaps* which express the speaker’s certainty or uncertainty about the proposition under discussion. Lakoff (in Coates 1993: 116) claimed that women’s speech contains more hedges and argued that this is because women ‘are socialised to believe that asserting themselves strongly isn’t nice or ladylike, or even feminine’.

2. Use (Super) polite forms e.g. *would you mind..., would you please..., I’d really appreciate it if..., ...if you don’t mind.*

3. The use of tag question – where a statement is turned into a question by putting a tag on the end, as in “*the meeting is at eight o’clock, isn’t it?*” According to Lakoff, tag questions decrease the strength of assertions. For example, compare the two sentence below:

   (a) The crisis in the Middle East is terrible, isn’t it?
   (b) The crisis in the Middle East is terrible.

   Lakoff claims that women use sentence like (a), which contains the tag question *isn’t it*, more often than men, who are suppose to favour (b).

4. Speaking in italics, e.g. emphatic *so, quite* and *very*, intonational emphasis equivalent to underlining words in written language.

5. ‘Empty’ adjectives, e.g. *divine, charming, cute, sweet, adorable.*

6. Use hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation.
7. Lack of a sense of humour, e.g. poor at telling jokes and often don’t understand the punch line of jokes.

8. Use direct quotations.

9. Special vocabulary, e.g. a greater range of terms for colours than men use (examples: aquamarine, fuchsia, lavender, etc., instead of more basic terms such as blue or red).

10. Use question intonation in declarative contexts: women make declarative statements into question by raising the pitch of their voice at the end of a statement, expressing uncertainty. For example, “What school do you attend? Eton college?”

As for the characteristics of men or male language, Frank and Anshen (1984) note that boys, “are permitted, even encouraged, to talk rough and cultivate a deep ‘masculine’ voice”. It is socially acceptable for a man to be forward and direct his assertiveness to control the actions of others.

2.2.2. Politeness

Etymologically, the term ‘polite’ is derived from the word ‘politus’ which is a past participle of the Latin verb ‘polire’. ‘Politus’ means ‘polished or ‘smoothed’ (Barnhart, 1988: 581). Consequently, the term ‘politeness’ came to refer to correct social behavior, courtly manners, the right etiquettes and consideration for others during the social interaction. In pragmatics ‘politeness’ refers to “linguistic expression of courtesy and social position.” The definition of politeness given by Jack Richards’ Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics is ‘the study of how languages express the social distance between speakers and their different role
relationship and how facework – the attempt to establish, maintain, and save face during conversation – is carried out in a speech community'.

2.2.2.1. Politeness Strategies

Politeness strategies have been formulated by pragmatists in order to help us save the hearer’s face when face-threatening acts are inevitable. A number of such strategies exist.

“Face” (as in “lose face”) refers to a speaker's sense of linguistic and social identity. Any speech act may impose on this sense, and is therefore face threatening. And speakers have strategies for lessening the threat. Positive politeness means being complimentary and gracious to the addressee, but if this is overdone then the speaker may alienate the other party (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 62). Negative politeness is found in ways of mitigating the imposition:

Perhaps the most thorough treatment of the concept of politeness is that of Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, which was first published in 1978 and then reissued, with a long introduction, in 1987. In their model, politeness is defined as redressive action taken to counter-balance the disruptive effect of face-threatening acts (FTAs).

In their theory, Brown and Levinson stated that communication is seen as potentially dangerous and antagonistic. A strength of their approach over that of Geoffrey Leech is that they explain politeness by deriving it from more fundamental notions of what it is to be a human being. The basic notion of their model is “face”. “Face” is defined as “the public self-image that every member (of society) wants to claim for himself”. In their framework, “face” consists of two related aspects.
• Positive face, the positive consistent self-image that people have and their desire to be appreciated and approved of by at least some other people.

• Negative face, or the rights to territories, freedom of action and freedom from imposition - wanting your actions not to be constrained or inhibited by others (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61).

The rational actions people take to preserve both kinds of face, for themselves and the people they interact with, add up to politeness. Brown and Levinson also argue that in human communication, either spoken or written, people tend to maintain one another's face continuously.

Face-threatening acts (FTAs) are acts that infringe on the hearers' need to maintain his/her self-esteem, and be respected. Politeness strategies are developed for the main purpose of dealing with these FTAs.

Brown and Levinson (1987: 18) sum up human politeness behaviour in four strategies, which correspond to these examples: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record-indirect strategy.

1. The bald on-record strategy does nothing to minimize threats to the hearer's “face”. Bald on-record strategies usually do not attempt to minimize the threat to the hearer’s face, although there are ways that bald on-record politeness can be used in trying to minimize FTAs implicitly. Often using such a strategy will shock or embarrass the addressee, and so this strategy is most often utilized in situations where the speaker has a close relationship with the audience, such as family or close friends. Brown and Levinson
outline various cases in which one might use the bald on-record strategy, including:

- Instances in which threat minimizing does not occur

  - Great urgency or desperation: Help!, Watch out!
  - Task oriented: Give me those!, Pass me the hammer!
  - Request: Put your jacket away.
  - Alerting: Turn your lights on! (while driving)
  - Little or no desire to maintain someone's face: Don't forget to clean the blinds!
  - Doing the FTA is in the interest of the hearer: Your headlights are on!

- Instances in which the threat is minimized implicitly

  - Welcomes: Come in.
  - Offers: Leave it, I'll clean up later.

2. The positive politeness strategy shows you recognize that your hearer has a desire to be respected. It also confirms that the relationship is friendly and expresses group reciprocity. Positive politeness strategies seek to minimize the threat to the hearer’s positive face. Positive politeness used to make the hearer feel good about himself, his interests or possessions, and are most usually used in situations where the audience knows each other fairly well. In addition to hedge and attempts to avoid conflict, some strategies of positive politeness include statements of friendship, solidarity, compliments, and the following examples from Brown and Levinson:
• Attend to H’s interests, needs, wants: *You look sad. Can I do anything?*

• Include both speaker (S) and hearer (H) in activity: *If we help each other, I guess, we’ll both sink or swim in this course.*

• Use solidarity in-group identity markers: *Heh, mate, can you lend me a dollar?*

• Assume agreement: *So when are you coming to see us?*

• Hedge opinion: *You really should sort of try harder.*

• Be optimistic: *I’ll just come along, if you don’t mind.*

• Offer or promise: *If you wash the dishes, I’ll vacuum the floor.*

• Exaggerate interest in H and his interests: *That’s a nice haircut you got; where did you get it?*

• Avoid Disagreement: *Yes, it’s rather long; not short certainly.*

• Joke: *Wow, that’s a whopper!*

3. **The negative politeness strategy** also recognizes the hearer’s face. But it also recognizes that you are in some way imposing on them. Negative politeness strategies are oriented towards the hearer’s negative face and emphasize avoidance of imposition on the hearer. These strategies presume that the speaker will be imposing on the listener and there is a higher potential for awkwardness or embarrassment than in bald on record strategies and positive politeness strategies. Negative face is the desire to remain autonomous so the
speaker is more apt to include an out for the listener, through distancing styles like apologies. Examples from Brown and Levinson include:

- Be indirect: *Would you know where Oxford Street is?*

- Use hedges or questions:

  - *Perhaps, he might have taken it, maybe.*

  - *Could you please pass the rice?*

- Be pessimistic: *You couldn’t find your way to lending me a thousand dollars, could you?*

- Indicating deference: *Excuse me, sir, would you mind if I asked you to close the window?*

- Minimize the imposition: *It’s not too much out of your way, just a couple of blocks.*

- Use obviating structures, like nominalizations, passives, or statements of general rules:

  - *I hope offense will not be taken.*

  - *Visitors sign the ledger.*

  - *The management requires all windows to be closed.*

  - *Spitting will not be tolerated.*
• Apologize: I’m sorry; it’s a lot to ask, but can you lend me a thousand dollars?

• Use plural pronouns: We regret to inform you.

4. Off-record indirect strategy takes some of the pressure off of you. This strategy uses indirect language and removes the speaker from the potential to be imposing.

• Give hints: It's a bit cold in here.

• Be vague: Perhaps someone should have been more responsible.

• Be sarcastic, or joking: Yeah, he's a real Einstein (rocket scientist, Stephen Hawking, genius and so on)!

2.3. Relevant Studies

This thesis is not the first reference for students of Department of English of University of Sumatera Utara that analyzing gender or the politeness phenomena, but this is the first thesis analyzing both gender and politeness in one thesis. These are some theses in University of Sumatera Utara that also study about gender and politeness phenomena.

2.3.1. Politeness In Kyoko Mori’s Polite Lies by Erlin Sitinjak in 2008.

Politeness In Kyoko Mori’s Polite Lies is written by Erlin Sitinjak in 2008 and focused on the politeness dealing with language usage in Japan as reflected in Kyoko Mori’s Polite Lies. She studied how the linguistic utterances of participants in the conversations (or piece of conversation) in this novel can be interpreted as polite
and then that utterances can be considered as negative by the main character in
Kyoko Mori’s novel.

Erлин Sitinjak in her thesis used Richard Watts’ theory from his book entitled, *Politeness*. According to Watts’ theory, a linguistic utterance is open to interpretation as polite if that utterance uses EPMs (expressions of procedural meaning) or brings positive face, either for the speaker or for the listener. Different with Sitinjak’s thesis, the writer uses Brown and Levinson’s theory. According to Brown and Levinson politeness is defined as redressive action taken to counter-balance the disruptive effect of *face-threatening acts (FTAs)* and politeness strategies are developed for the main purpose of dealing with these FTAs.

Unlike my thesis, Sitinjak’s thesis only focused on linguistic utterances that can be interpreted as polite without considered gender differences of the characters in the novel. Watts’ theory in Sitinjak’s thesis also make some polite utterances can be considered as negative if that utterances used in inappropriate places, has ambiguous meaning, or contradicts with reality. While according to Brown and Levinson’s theory, contradiction and ambiguous/vague sentences can be interpreted as polite by using bald on-record and off-record indirect strategy.


This thesis is written with the purpose to find feminism in English from English magazine *Cosmopolitan*. Damanik used MAK Halliday’s theory that found in his book *Exploration in The Function of Language*. In this thesis, Damanik concluded
that women have high orientation in appearance aspect. Based on findings from that magazine, Damanik stated that generally women are consumers for beauty stuffs such as cosmetics and clothes. Besides, she also said that women have big consideration in heterosexual relationship.

Different with my thesis which is not only studying about gender but also its relationship with politeness seen from speech texts, Damanik’s thesis focused on women’s social life portrayed in articles from *Cosmopolitan* magazine without considered men’s role in this social life. Her thesis studied about feminism from words in those articles, not politeness that can be portrayed in those articles.