CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a key for everything in human’s life. Without language, people cannot do anything. Language is a means for human being to communicate to others. Man’s thought and feelings are formulated in language, language connects us to others. Using language as a means of communication should be careful; being polite is needed in communicating. The way of people in expressing their thoughts, opinions, ideas, and feelings to communicate to others can show their politeness. Politeness can be analyzed through language. The study of someone’s politeness in using language can be studied based on politeness principles. Politeness principles are forms of behavior which are aimed at the establishment and maintenance of comity (Leech, 1983; 175).

In this case, while communicating with others, people have to consider about their feeling, whether they are comfort or not with our language. Language Politeness is maintaining a proper manner and etiquette and also trying to speak without offending our addressee. People should not be rude or offensive in impression of their language. People must try to choose the proper words to convey to others, sometimes people need to be choosy about the word, phrase, or the sentences they are going to say to others, because once people ignore this thing, there may be a problem in relation with others either it is directly emerged or indirectly emerged. When someone is polite, he or she is minimizing the conflict that may be come in communicating, as contrary if people are impolite, there will be a probability of interpersonal conflict. That’s why
being polite is really important in communicating because everyday, people are communicating with other people. So, people should consider about politeness.

Politeness helps us to communicate well to others, in which a good communication gives a beneficial impact to us in interacting with others, it also eases us to cooperate with others since there is a proverb says that “being cooperative is being polite”. Acting politely could be done by paying attention to our addressee’s face. When people being polite to others, it can make them be popular and more loveable. Other people will be friendly towards us. Beside it, being polite can less the chance of coming enemies since the goal of politeness is to make all of the parties relaxed and comfortable with one another. By politeness, people can avoid the frictions with other people while communicating and interacting. But the problem is being polite is complicated in any language. It is difficult to recognize because it involves understanding not just the language use but also the social and cultural values of the society or community. People often tend to think of politeness simply as saying “please” and “thank you” in the right place and time. But in reality, it involves a great deal more than that and many people today cannot be polite to others so it causes conflicts in communicating. The writer considers that it is a need to study politeness and its principle in order to make a good communication where in this today’s modern world requires language skill that makes a good communication and interaction.

Good communication is necessary to easier us in communicating with others and it also shows our behavior and attitude. It is shown by the language. One way how to know the politeness of someone is when they are giving a speech. Through someone’s speech, people may know his or her politeness. It can be seen from the face, gestures, intonation, and the word choosing in speech. Obama, the forty fourth and current President of United States is known as one of the best orators and the most influencing speakers in the world. Many people from all
over the world are influenced by his speech. He raised the spirit of United States and even the world through language, especially through his speech (Holid, 2007; 103). Most of people in the world know his popular sentence: “Yes, We can”. Obama is known as a smart, simple, calm, and modest man, straight-forward man but he keeps politeness in his life, especially in his political speech.

Obama as president often gives speech and one of Obama’s speeches is when he won the general election, he applied politeness and careful on word choosing. It can be seen from statements in his speech: “I just received a very gracious call from Senator McCain. He fought long and hard in this campaign, and he has fought even longer and harder for the country he loves. He has endured sacrifices for America that most of us cannot begin to imagine, and we are better off for the service rendered by this brave and selfless leader. I congratulate him and Governor Palin for all they have achieved, and I look forward to working with them to renew this nation’s promise in the months ahead. I want to thank my partner in this journey, a man who campaigned from his heart and spoke for the men and women he grew up with on the streets of Scranton and rode with on that train home to Delaware, the Vice President-elect of the United States, Joe Biden. I would not be standing here tonight without the unyielding support of my best friend for the last sixteen years, the rock of our family and the love of my life, our nation’s next First Lady, Michelle Obama. Sasha and Malia, I love you both so much, and you have earned the new puppy that’s coming with us to the White House. And while she’s no longer with us, I know my grandmother is watching, along with the family that made me who I am. I miss them tonight, and know that my debt to them is beyond measure. To my campaign manager David Plouffe, my chief strategist David Axelrod, and the best campaign team ever assembled in the history of politics – you made this happen, and I am forever grateful for what you’ve sacrificed
“to get it done” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama). In this statement, it can be seen how Obama showed his politeness, even he had won the general election, he is still polite and humble by appreciating the other candidates. And it can avoid conflicts that may be emerge in that moment. Beside that, he did not forget all people who have supported him.

Speech is an activity in speaking to others without response as the listener usually did in common situation. Speech is one way communication, communication through talking or a talk given to the audience by describing one’s thought, feeling, and perceptions. Obama as the first African American president of United States often delivers so many wonderful speeches during his governance. He often gives speech to government parties, citizens, or to other people even to give information, to command or to talk something important, that’s why he needed to be polite in giving his speech.

Related to the explanation above, it is interesting to analyze politeness principles in Obama’s political speech because as a first African American president of United States, as politician, leader, he often gives speech in front of the people of United States, and even in the world. As president of a country, a leader, and as politician, he had to consider the importance of politeness in his language. Especially in his speech, he had to be careful on it because politeness could raise his popularity to the people of United States. Obama had to be careful and being polite in giving the speech because almost people of United States and the world heard it and it gave impact to all aspects. The writer took two speeches of Obama to be analyzed, namely Obama’s victory speech and another one is about his campaign speech, exactly The American promise acceptance speech at the Democratic Convention. The writer wants to analyze and compare how the realization of language politeness in Obama’s speech, before he was elected to be a president and after he was elected to be a president. That’s why it is really interested to
analyze his speech through politeness principle. Politeness principle is the series of maxims, namely: tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim (Rahardi, 2009; 25). It is also interested to find out which the dominant politeness principle that he used in speech. And by finding the dominant maxim, we can see how the realization of his speech to politeness principles.

1.2 Problem of the Study

In relation to the background, the problems of the study are formulated as the following:

1. What types of politeness principles are used by Obama?
2. What types of politeness principle is dominantly used by Obama?
3. How is politeness realization and comparison in political speech of Obama, before he was elected to be a president and after he has been elected to be a president?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are described as the following:

1. To describe type of politeness principles that is used by Obama in his political speech.
2. To show the dominant politeness principle that is used by Obama.
3. To show how the politeness realization and comparison in political speech of Obama, before he was elected to be a president and after he has been elected to be a president.

1.4 Scope of the Study
This study analyses about Politeness principles in speech of Obama, the forty fourth president of America. It takes two (2) speeches randomly. This study focuses on Leech’s theory which introduces six maxims. They are tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim.

1.5 Significances of the Study

In finding of this study are expected to provide some information about politeness principles, namely (1) tact maxim, (2) generosity maxim, (3) approbation maxim, (4) modesty maxim, (5) agreement maxim, and (6) sympathy maxim that will be useful as the following:

1. It’s expected that the finding will be useful for further researcher to make a more positive contribution to the theory information.

2. It also will be useful for English Department Student as a contribution to their understanding of politeness principles in social reality and its connection to language and interaction.

3. Hopefully, it is also useful for teachers and lectures of pragmatics to apply politeness principles especially in speech to the students.

4. By studying the politeness principles people more realize and pay their attention to apply politeness in their communication such as more careful in determining the choice of words, phrase, clause, and sentence in expression of ideas or meaning in a given context. Because being polite is an important thing in our life to interact to others.