CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The main aim of this study is to describe the politeness strategies employed in prostitution discourse that involves making offers of sale. For the purposes of meeting this aim, specific objectives have been set and research questions formulated. Theories on social interactions as well as research methods and findings from similar studies have also been reviewed and used to guide the construction of the research framework. While the main portion of the data was gathered in a format that would enable qualitative analysis procedures to be applied, other parts of the data were analyzed using basic quantitative descriptive procedures. The following sections describe the methodology and the rationale for its use in detail.

3.1 Theoretical Framework

This study employs the Brown and Levinson (1987) Politeness Theory as its theoretical framework and for the analysis of the data obtained. The investigation focused on politeness strategies employed in prostitution discourse involving making offers of sale, these two theories were found to be very helpful in the construction of the theoretical framework for this study. As already discussed in Chapter Two, at the core of most theories on politeness is the concept of 'face'. It is has also been established that interlocutors construct verbal acts of politeness during interaction

mainly for the purpose of avoiding gaps and conflicts that could contaminate meaning and mar the process of communication.

Thus, employing appropriate strategies in preserving 'face' is important during interaction. Verbal acts of politeness are especially important in discourses involving as the aim of the offer of sale, as the aim of the offer is to be accepted so that a deal can be sealed in a win-win situation, with little or no loss of face for both the parties involved. Often, during communication, threatening another person's face cannot be avoided. In such cases, interlocutors naturally commit what Brown and Levinson (1987) refer to as face threatening acts (FTA). In studies involving FTA, it not so much the FTA that is the focus but more importantly how the FTA is delivered, what forms of politeness are used and whether the strategy used has been successful in mitigating potential problems and meeting positive or negative face needs. Brown and Levinson (1987) have identified five politeness strategies for doing and not doing FTAs: Bald on record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Off record, and Not deliver the FTA at all. However, as already mentioned in Chapter One, the scope of this study limits its analysis to only two of the five strategies: the positive and negative politeness strategies. This has been decided on because one of the aims of this study is to also highlight the deliverance of politeness (as opposed to non-deliverance of politeness) within discourse involving subjects who are assumed by many as more likely to communicate in non-polite ways.

Based on the fact that language is always emotionally, words used to express something can never be taken to be neutral. In that sense the attitudes, judgments and feelings are invariably embedded in the lexical choice made to express intentions.

Therefore, the components of the Speech Act Theory are also deemed as important aspects to look at in analyzing the data for this study as they provide explanation as to how words are chosen to accomplish particular things during interaction. Although intentions can often be expressed explicitly and directly, the fact that words can never neutral renders some expressions of intention indirect and open to misinterpretation. Searle (1969) in explaining the Speech Act Theory states that a speaker's main concern is that the listener understands the intention expressed (an illocutionary act) and once understood, the listener is obliged to act on the intention (a perlocutionary act). It is therefore relevant for this study to include analysis of the execution of illocutionary acts in this data because a speech act is considered unsuccessful and the intention misunderstood when interactants fail to observe the basic rules of the language (for example lexical choice) necessary for proper implementation of the illocutionary force. In summation, this study used the Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory as its theoretical framework in describing the lexical choices as well as the negative and positive politeness strategies used and qualitative and quantitative approaches in analyzing the data obtained.

3.2 The Subjects

The subjects of this study consist of 25 prostitutes working at a brothel in Surabaya. They are categorized as lower class prostitutes who offer their service for the price ranging from Rp.50,000,00 to 70.000,00 for one session and between Rp. 200,000,00 and 250,000,00 for a full session (which means serving the client the whole day or the whole night). According to Koentjoro (2004:65) the rates of the sex services are based on four criteria: length of service, age and physical features (for example skin

colour and body shape) of the prostitutes as well as the skills they possess. All this information was obtained as and when required and with prior permission from the caretaker and the head of village security.

The lower class prostitutes were selected to participate in this study because firstly, the lower class prostitutes are easier to locate as they do their business in public places, for instance, in cafés, pedestrian walkways, the cemetery and cheap brothels. They were less discreet in their solicitation, and therefore more cooperative. Secondly, the lower class prostitutes offered their services through direct negotiation making them more approachable; whereas the higher level prostitutes employed agents at hotels. Thirdly, the lower class prostitutes were more willing to accept a small honorarium of RM5.00 each in exchange for information. To maintain their anonymity and confidentiality, the 25 subjects were not referred to by their real names in this report. They are instead referred to by numbers [Subject 1(S1) to Subject 25 (S25)] and their potential clients were labeled as C1, C2 and so forth.

The subjects were between 20 to 45 years old all of whom were Javanese. Non-Javanese were not selected as this study would be looking at politeness as practiced by native users of the Javanese language. Table 3.1 summarizes the subjects' profile. The real names of the brothels where the subjects worked have also been withdrawn to retain anonymity. They have instead been labeled as WA, WB, WC and so forth.

Table 3.1: Profile of the subjects (N = 25)

Subject	Age	Brothel (workplace)	Charges (in Thousand Rupiahs)	
			Short session	Full session
S1	26	WA	70	200
S2	36	WB	40	150
S3	24	WC	60	200
S4	40	WD	40	150
S5	25	WE	50	150
S6	40	WA	60	200
S7	37	WB	60	150
S8	30	WC	60	150
S9	29	WD	50	150
S10	28	WE	50	150
S11	23	WA	70	250
S12	22	WB	70	250
S13	25	WC	50	200
S14	27	WD	70	250
S15	30	WE	40	150
S16	39	WA	50	150
S17	20	WB	80	250
S18	29	WC	50	150
S19	23	WD	70	200
S20	34	WE	70	250
S21	21	WA	80	250
S22	28	W B	60	200
S23	20	W C	80	250
S24	21	W D	70	250
S25	24	W E	70	250

3.3   The Research Tools

The research tools consisted of three parts:

a)   Recording of naturally occurring conversation

b)   Informal interview

c)   Non-participant observation

As the recordings were of naturally occurring conversations, the subjects were not trained or guided in any sense. They were asked to conceal on their body the voice activated tape recorder which had already been turned on and to carry on as they

usually did with their potential clients. At the end of an hour, the tapes were collected

and replaced for use with the next subject.

The informal interview followed a semi-structured set of questions. These informal

interviews were conducted in Javanese and the Indonesian language. The interview

schedule consisted of three parts: Part I concerned questions relating to the subjects'

background (age, ethnicity, marital status and educational background; Part II was

about questions relating to work hours, types of client, service offered and regulations

at the workplace; and Part III related to specific questions pertaining to their use of

politeness in their offer, reasons for language choice or lexical choices, in relation to

Javanese speech levels. This can be seen in Appendices 2A-2C.

3.4   The Data Collection Procedures

The main part of the data was in the form of transcribed natural conversations

between the subjects and their potential clients. The conversations were audio

recorded with permission from the subjects as well as their caretakers.   Audio

recording was chosen as it was difficult to obtain permission to carry out video

recordings and because the subjects did not want their faces recorded.   Recordings

were only made of the initial stage of the conversations, starting from the time the

subjects greeted the potential client and stopping when the client accepted or rejected

the offer and moved on. The second part of the data was in the form of field notes

made through observation of the talk-in-action. The data collection procedures are presented in detail in the following section.

3.4.1 Recordings

Due to the sensitive nature of the conversations and the risqué setting, a total of 40 days (29 April to 10 June 2008) were spent on recording the data. The first ten days were used to establish relationship and goodwill with the caretakers, the prostitutes and some of the regular clients. In addition, time was also spent to familiarize the researcher with the Surabayan Javanese dialect which is slightly different from standard Javanese or the Mataram dialect (Yogjo/Solo dialect).

Once the community members were convinced that their identities were not going to be made public, official permission was obtained from the village head and the head of village security to carry out the data collection. They were informed of the purpose and procedure of the study as their assistance was needed to convey this information to the local people including the caretakers, prostitutes, and religious heads. The head of security had provided some rules to be observed while collecting data. Throughout the procedures, a local person who was well-versed with the area and the ways of the community members was recruited as the guide and informant. One whole day was used to survey the area for the most suitable brothels, and finally five brothels were selected out of the total 71 within the complex. In addition to that, assistance was obtained from one senior prostitute who provided important information on how to establish a good relationship with the prostitutes in the brothel complex. This helped to facilitate the data collecting procedures and to obtain agreement from the

prostitutes to become willing subjects for this study. Once the subjects had been identified, they were asked to sign a written agreement to participate.

Having obtained the necessary permission and agreements, the next step was to join the subjects at the *warung remang-remang,* a café within the community where the potential clients come to obtain services from the prostitutes. It was also necessary to establish rapport with the café owner and the regulars at the café. All this took about two weeks to accomplish. From the third week onwards, recordings were then carried out involving the 25 subjects servicing the 5 brothels on a random rotational schedule. This is done so as to avoid the subjects from talking to each other or comparing notes and jeopardizing the natural flow of the conversation. The recording instrument in the form of a compact battery operated tape recorder was placed under the table at the *warung remang-remang* or on a concealed part of the subjects' body. As the subjects had been told that their conversations will be tape recorded, the first ten days were used to conduct 'dry-runs' to ensure that the subjects were comfortable and that their conversations were not influenced by the recording instrument. Data collected during this period will not be used in the study. Once the subjects were observed to be at ease with the use of the tape recorder, recordings commenced.

3.4.2 Interviews

Interviews were carried out with all 25 subjects to obtain further information on their background and experience. In addition to that, the interviews were used to clarify certain actions the subjects had performed during the conversation (such as the reason for using Standard Indonesian, choice of words or for deciding to be less polite to a

particular client). The interviews were carried out using *boso alus* (refined language) but in non- Standard Javanese to make it easier to communicate with the older subjects. In Javanese culture it is more appropriate and expected to use *boso alus* when interacting with older people and strangers as a show of respect. When the subjects felt respected, they would be more willing to participate and provide the information needed. In contrast, non-standard Indonesian language was used when talking with the younger subjects because they would be more familiar and comfortable with the language. And since there was no level of speech in Indonesian language, it would make it easier to narrow the gap and this would help in obtaining more information from the subjects.

In this study, the interviews were quite difficult to carry out because many of the subjects were afraid that they would be required to expose too much of their personal their life stories. However, when they realized that the questions asked were mainly about language use and politeness strategies, they spoke more freely. These interviews were carried out informally at their homes and during their rest time. The interviews were recorded by hand and not tape recorded upon the subjects' requests.

3.4.3   Observation Notes

For the purposes of recording the field notes, the non-participant observation approach was employed. Notes pertaining to the non-verbal features such as body language, facial expressions, gestures and intonations used during the conversations were taken down discreetly. This step was carried out to supplement the audio recordings so as to obtain a clearer description of the conversations in action. In order

to make more naturalistic observations developing trust and establishing relationships were crucial and the researcher might blend into the situation in order to be unobtrusive. Information obtained was used to aid the analysis of the transcribed data.

3.5   Data Analysis Procedures

The data obtained were in the form of recordings of the conversations between the subjects and their potential clients, supplementary background information including language use from the interviews and non-verbal gestures used during the interactions from the observations. Data from the interviews were used to aid in the analysis of the audio recorded data.

The recordings were listened to several times to determine their quality and suitability based on several criteria:

a) Recordings which were not clear due to background noise and other technical glitches were discarded.

b) Recordings in which there is very little talk (usually those where the potential clients just asked for the price but did not go on to negotiate were discarded.

c) Because the recording instrument was left on throughout each session, conversations beyond the first stage of negotiation ended up recorded as well. These parts were later identified and discarded.

d) At the end of each recording session, the caretakers had informed the other interlocutors (the potential clients and other people present) that their conversations had been recorded for the purposes of this study. Recordings of

those who felt offended and did not want to be included in the study were then immediately erased in front of them.

The recorded data selected was then transcribed orthographically in order to get a written semblance of the language used. The audio recordings were transcribed at the end of each recording day and the politeness strategies were identified and categorized according to the list of negative and positive politeness strategies listed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Interviews were carried out with the respective subjects to clarify parts in the conversations which were found interesting or unclear. Transcribing the recordings immediately ensured that important features of the conversations were not loss and can be complimented with additional information obtained from the interviews and observations.

The transcription conventions employed in transcribing the recordings were adapted and simplified from those developed by Schenkein (1978: xi-xvi) and employed by Levinson (1983:369-370) and Lim Beng Soon (2000:29). In addition, this study also adapted Gumperz (1967, in Noor Ashikin Ghazali, 2006:54) and the transcription system developed at the English Language Institute, University of Michigan for their MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academia Spoken English) project.

Table 3.2: Transcription conventions

Symbol	Signification
/	*Short pause (less than 0.2 seconds)*
//	*Longer pause(Longer than 0.2 seconds)*
. . . .	*Extended speech (longer than 0.2 seconds)*
CAPS	*High amplitude (loud)*
?	*Rising intonation*
.	*Falling intonation*
( )	*Speech not decipherable (unclear speech)*
(Numbers)	*Numbers of conversation*
(words)	*Spoken speech but unclear*
Bold	*Emphasized words*
Italics	*Actual transcription*
[ ]	non-verbal utterances (cough, smile, laugh, sigh)
{ }	*Sentence completion by the researcher*

(Adapted from Levinson, 1983:269-270)

Once sufficient suitable data has been obtained and transcribed, the transcriptions were scrutinized for lexical choices and politeness strategies based on Brown and Levinson's (1987) Politeness Theory. The analysis of this study focused only on lexical choice, the positive and negative politeness strategies as they are used in Javanese language.

3.5 Ethical Considerations.

Since this is a sensitive area of research, careful considerations for ethical behaviour were observed throughout pre-, during, and post-data collection periods. These considerations were:

a) Rapport was first built with all key people who participated in the study as well as those who helped in the data gathering. They were openly informed at the onset of the aims of the study and the purpose of collecting the data (see Appendices 1C-1D: Information Package). All questions pertaining to the study were answered without reservations until they are satisfied.

b) Official permissions were obtained from the relevant authorities (see Appendices 1A-1D: Permission letters).

c) It was made clear that no one will be forced to participate and they can withdraw from participating at anytime despite having signed a written agreement to willingly participate (see Appendices 1D-1F: Agreement to participate).

d) Anonymity of participants and locations were ensured.

e) No video or still cameras were used.

f) Data obtained was to be used only for research purposes.

g) Data was not to be manipulated and the findings would be reported as is.

3.7 Summary

The methodology used in this study covering the data collection techniques and the data analysis procedures had been decided upon based on the aims and objectives of this study as stated in Chapter One. Review of similar studies has helped in determining the theoretical framework and the appropriate procedures to follow in order to obtain the most appropriate data the analysis of which would answer the research questions set. Special attention was also given to ethical considerations. The following chapter will present the analysis of the data obtained and the findings derived from this analysis.