

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the qualitative approach used in carrying out this study as it is the most appropriate method in investigating the use of language in a natural setting. The interaction in the natural setting is more accurate as it is the actual utterance by the speakers in a naturally occurs situation.

This study employs Grice's pragmatics and semantics theories (1967), to explore the use of politeness language by sellers and customers of Pasar Payang when they interact in the selling-buying situation. The theoretical framework is based on an approach to what Grice termed as conversational implicature, that is how hearers manage to work out the complete message when speakers mean more than they say.

In addition to Grice's implicatures, the study also has taken into consideration the theory of indirectness in communication among Malays as identified by Asmah Hj Omar (1992), Nor Hashimah's selling-buying strategies (1994) and behavioral aspects in Malay community (Jamaliah, 2000) have also been taken as the work frame in order to identify strategies used by the seller and customer involved in this study.

3.1 Respondents

The respondents of this study consist of ten sellers who have 2 types of business; selling local food and selling clothing. The customers consist of 8 males and 6 females

whilst the sellers are 6 females and 4 males. All the customers and sellers are local Malays whereby all of them interact using their first language or mother tongue, the Terengganu Malay dialect. The age of the female sellers are between 25 to 60 years old and the male sellers are between 30 to 50 years old. The specific ages of the customers are not known as they are not interviewed, but their age is assumed to be between 30 to 45 years old.

The respondents were coded as below:

S : Seller

C : Customer

M : Male

F : Female

No.1 to 8 : Number of selling-buying case

3.2 Data Gathering Procedure

The emphasis on interactional and practical nature of discourse is usually associated with language used as spoken interaction. In this study, the work on discourse as action focuses on conversation and dialogue. The purpose of this study is to describe the way the sellers and the customers use language when they communicate and much of the everyday talk is spontaneous. In order to achieve this purpose, data was obtained through tape-recording, field notes and observation of eight selling-buying cases involving ten sellers and fourteen customers at Payang market in Terengganu.

3.2.1 Recording

Before the tape-recording sessions began, the sellers were provided with information on the purpose of the research and permission to record their interactions during selling-buying transaction was obtained. The tape-recorder was placed in the researcher's pouchbag with wireless microphones stuck on the seller's shirts. Once the customers entered the stall, the researcher with the seller approached the customers and the data gathering recording began. The recordings were stopped after the sellers and customers concluded their conversation. The 8 cases were recorded over a total period of 150 minutes. Each respondent involved in the selling-buying was taped for 10 to 20 minutes. All the 387 sentences were then transcribed using the transcription conventions adapted from Silverman (2004). In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the data will be analyzed according to the research questions stated in Chapter 1.

3.2.2 Non-participant Observation

Non-participant observations were also carried out as a way to supplement the tape-recorded data. During recordings, observations and field notes were taken as to the behavior and non-verbal communication between the customer and the seller. These field notes are also important for this study as it will be used to better understand the tape-recorded data during analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedure

After transcribing all the recordings, the data were coded and analyzed in order to find answers to the two research questions stated in Section 1.2. In order to answer research question 1, the data were analyzed based on Asmah's indirectness language

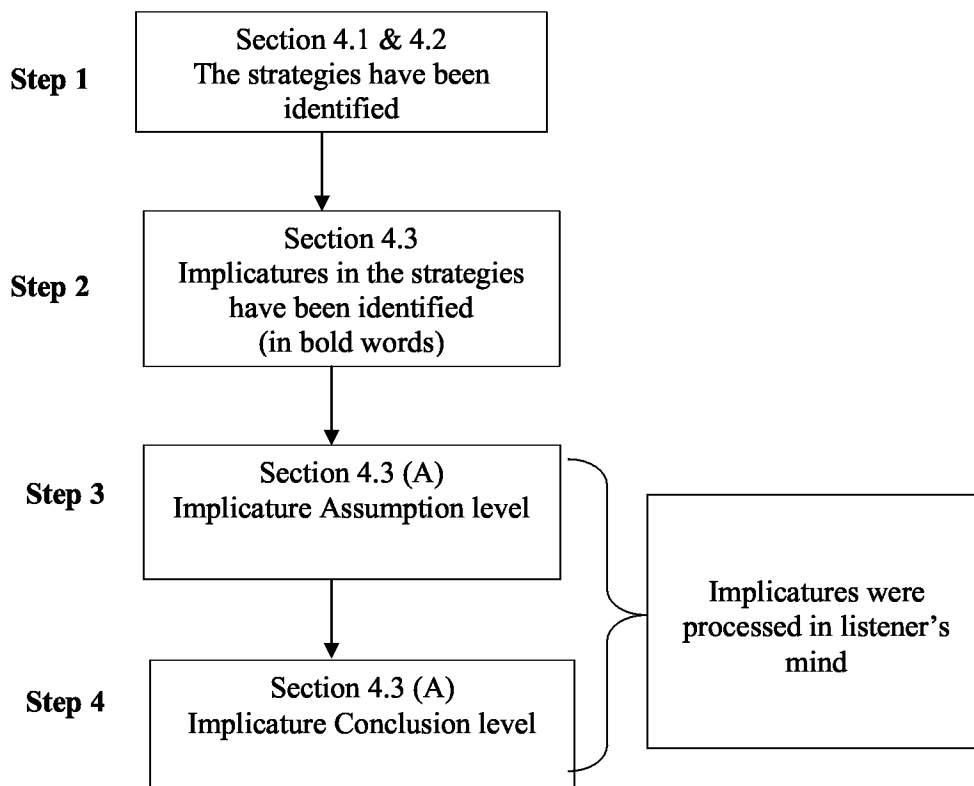
(1992), Nor Hashimah's selling-buying strategies (1994) and Jamaliah's behavioural aspects in the Malay community (2000). Then, the fifteen strategies could be identified. The identified strategies were clearly outlined in the Section 4.1 and 4.2 with the suitable examples. The strategies were categorized based on the words used by the speaker and the way how the utterances were expressed to the listener. Next, all the identified strategies in Section 4.1 and 4.2 were transferred to Section 4.3. In order to answer the research question 2, the 35 examples in Section 4.1 and 4.2 were analyzed based on the semantics and pragmatics features proposed by Grice's conversation implicature (1967).

The meanings of the implicatures (in bold words) which is a characteristic of the semantics and pragmatics in the selling-buying strategies in Section 4.1 and Section 4.2 were analyzed. This is done by using Grice's semantic and pragmatic framework. As such the data will be described in two levels: implicature exactness and semantic and pragmatic analysis. The first stage was to give implicature exactness. At this level, a description of what might be the listener's intention was gathered on the semantics level. They were then processed together with the listener's assumption based on the context to generate the effect of future context that needed to be explored. On this level, the listener had used his/her mind in processing the utterances. This level also revealed that listener's background was used in achieving the implication conclusion level. As the listener gained the contextual effect of a speech, he/she will be able to form an implicature assumption and implicature conclusion. In order to form the implication assumption and implication conclusion, the researcher did not ask the listener what he/she has interpreted about the speaker's utterances. The researcher himself has assumed the listener's intention based on the listener's replies and his/her actions after

he/she listens to the speaker's utterances. The researcher also expected that his assumption is consider to be the same with the listener's assumption, as they share the same language, background and culture, religious beliefs and language proficiency.

When the implicature exactness has been formed, the analysis on the pragmatic level was explicated. Following that, the non-linguistics information was used to help in interpreting the meaning of speech at this level. In order to discuss Section 4.3 clearly, Implicature Assumption was coded as 'IA' and Implicature Conclusion was coded as 'IC'. In order to reveal how the seller and customer expressing their politeness during selling-buying process, the implicature conclusion in stage (A) then will be discussed closely in stage (B). After the discussion in stage (B), the research question 2 automatically answered.

The data analysis procedure can be understood by referring to the Diagram 3.1 below.



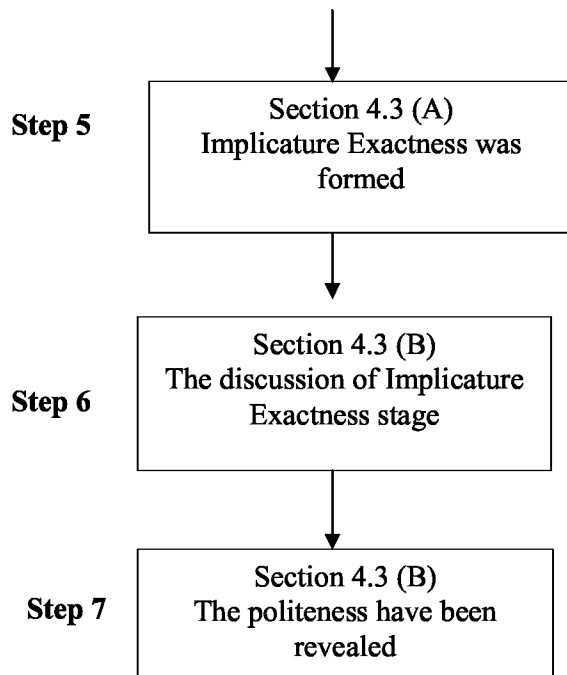


Diagram 3.1: The Data Analysis Procedure

(Adapted from Nor Hashimah: 1994)

3.4 Summary

In this Chapter, the research methodology was detailed out with the aim of obtaining the data and information required in order to answer the two research questions formulated. Data was obtained through tape recording and field notes from observation. The procedure for data analysis was also discussed. The Diagram 3.1 has clearly outlined seven steps in the procedure of analyzing the data. In the next chapter, the analysis of the data and discussion of the analysis will be presented to reveal how the sellers and customer apply the implicature in expressing their politeness during selling-buying interaction at Pasar Kedai Payang.