CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, the research problems, the objectives of the study, significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

In communication, speakers choose the strategies to have polite conversation. People use politeness strategies in order to get their conversation run well and go smoothly. Brown and Levinson (1987) state that recognizes what people are doing in verbal exchange (e.g. requesting, offering, criticizing, complaining, etc) not so much by what they overtly claim to be doing as in the fine linguistics details of utterances. It means that not only speaking in fine linguistics but also considering other’s feeling are important. In other words, speaking politeness involves taking account of the other’s feeling and being polite person means that he should make others feel comfortable.

Politeness strategies are used by people to ensure a smooth communication and harmonious interpersonal relationship in non-hostile social communication. Those strategies are used for calling forms of oral and written communication. One of the forms of communication is debate. Debate is a method of interactive and representational argument. Debate is a broader form of argument than deductive reasoning, which only examines whether a conclusion is a consequence of premises,
and factual argument, which only examines what is or isn't the case, or rhetoric, which is a technique of persuasion (Goody, 1996).

Moreover, during presidential elections in the United States, it has become customary for the main candidates (almost always the candidates of the two largest parties, currently the Democratic Party and the Republican Party) to engage in a debate. The topics discussed in the debate are often the most controversial issues of the time, and arguably elections have been nearly decided by these debates (e.g., Nixon vs. Kennedy). While debates aren't constitutionally mandated, it is often considered a *de facto* election process. The debates are targeted mainly at undecided voters; those who tend not to be partial to any political ideology or party.

There are mainly two reasons in case of selecting third presidential debate between Barack Obama vs. Mitt Romney as the object being analyzed. First, the debate seems to be considered as an interesting current issue in the same manner as qualitative research. Another one, as the primary reason, is that, in linguistic phenomena, Barrack Obama has special characteristics rather than others in terms of being a speaker. The characteristics are not only from his utterances or the way performing his arguments during the debate which are able to influence all the audiences, but also the way Obama's usage of politeness strategies in arguing and attacking the statements come from Romney which become interesting part of the debate.

Furthermore, this study has relation to the previous researches on the same field. Aini (2003) had examined how the nurses in the hospital used the politeness strategies in therapeutic communication. She found out that there were two kinds of
them which were used by the nurses, positive and negative politeness. Another previous research conducted by Yuliana (2003) mentions that the people of Probolinggo, East Java which become the object of her study performed politeness strategies in both Madurese and Javanese. Another thesis research by Fatkhurozi (2007) who took the dialogue between Mia and Her Grandma in “Princess Diaries” Film. The approach for analyzing the phenomena is based on the Scollon and Scollon’s Theory of Politeness. He found out that both Mia and her grandma used two kinds of strategies based on Scollon and Scollon’s Concept of Politeness, they are involvement and independent strategies.

Moreover, from the previous studies above, it hasn’t been found a researcher who is interested in observing the politeness in a debate. One interesting aspect in debate situation is that, during the debates, participants try to display and enact their intellectual identities. In attending intellectual meetings, one prominent concern of the participants is to put an impression of being intellectually competent without being apparent as making efforts to be called bright. Because of this reason, this study is conducted to uncover the pattern of politeness in a debate especially in third presidential debate on foreign policy between Barack Obama vs. Mitt Romney.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, the writer would like to investigate the following problems:

1. What kind of politeness strategies used by Obama and Romney in third presidential debate on foreign policy?
2. What is the most dominant of politeness strategies used by Obama and Romney in third presidential debate on foreign policy?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the use of politeness strategies used by President Obama and Mitt Romney focused on foreign policy in their third and final presidential debate, held Monday, 22 October 2012, at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Fla. Specifically, this study is designed to find out the kinds of politeness strategies used by President Obama and Mitt Romney in the debate and also to find out the reasons and functions why these politeness strategies are used.

1.4. Significance of the Study

There are two kinds of significance in this study, those are theoretical and practical. Theoretically, the research is significant to provide some information about politeness strategies for those who are interested in the study of politeness strategies.

Practically, the result of the research will be beneficial for those who want to deal with understanding language communication, especially in debate. This study is expected to give valuable information to further researchers, students, and readers. For further researchers, this study is expected to provide the base in analyzing the politeness strategies more deeply. For the students, this study is expected to give useful information in understanding politeness strategies. Then, this study will help the readers who want to know the concept of politeness strategies.
1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is focused on analyzing politeness strategies in third presidential debate on foreign policy between Barack Obama vs. Mitt Romney. The scope of this study is the utterances which contain politeness strategies used by President Obama and Mitt Romney focused on foreign policy in their third and final presidential debate, held Monday, 22 October 2012, at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Fla.

This study limits its discussion on Brown and Levinson’s theory of politeness which classifies the strategies of politeness into four categories, those are: bald on record, positive politeness strategies, negative politeness strategies, and off record to become the knife of analysis to process the data found.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

The key terms are used to avoid misinterpretation between the researcher and the readers. Therefore, both of them will be in the same area as follows:

1. *Pragmatics* is the study of speaker meaning and the study of contextual meaning (Yule, 1996).

2. *Politeness Strategies* is the strategies used to minimize or avoid the Face Threatening Acts (FTA) that a speaker makes (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

3. *Face* is in this study refers to the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

4. *Face Threatening Acts (FTA)* is refers to acts that threaten others face (Brown and Levinson, 1987).
5. *Debate* is a broader form of argument than deductive reasoning, which only examines whether a conclusion is a consequence of premises, and factual argument, which only examines what is or isn't the case, or rhetoric, which is a technique of persuasion (Goody, 1996).

6. *United States presidential election debates* is the customary debate for the main candidates (almost always the candidates of the two largest parties, currently the Democratic Party and the Republican Party) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election_debates).