

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the background of the study and statement of problems. Objectives of the study, significance of the study as well as scope and limitation of the study are also comprised in this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

Sociopragmatic failure issue is one of linguistic phenomena which was popularized by Miller in 1971 as a part of pragmatic failure. It means that since this notion was popularized in 1971 by Miller, sociopragmatic failure has existed and still continues occurring today. The occurrences of sociopragmatic failure potentially increase as the rapid development of technology which increases the occurrences of cross-cultural communication among society nowadays. However, people often do not realize about the occurrences of sociopragmatic failure. Take for example, many non-Muslim people say “Assalamualaikum” in some occasions which involve Muslim community with intentions to respect Muslims and increase the level of belonging between them without knowing the rules in performing this kind of greeting. The performance of *salam* by non-Muslims frequently ends with face-threatening acts (FTAs) since many Muslims who know the rules of saying *salam* prefer to not answer it, and even some of them give unexpected answer.

Definitely, Paltridge (2006) has defined sociopragmatic failure as a situation where speakers of second language assess situational factors based on sociopragmatic norms of their first language and draw on these for the performance of a particular speech act. Paltridge (2006) then gives example of this phenomenon about a foreigner manager who criticized a Thai worker for being regularly late in public and direct way. In Thai culture, criticizing someone in such way is inappropriate since it can make the one who is being criticized lose his face.

Sociopragmatic failure is not something that can be handled only by understanding the language. Further, it demands understanding about the social aspects such as beliefs, norms, rules and values that work in the place where the language is used. Therefore, dealing with sociopragmatic failure is quite complicated because it deals with someone's beliefs and value (Thomas, 1983) and thus, many people are often trapped in this problem.

A movie entitled *English Vinglish* is however, one of movies that contains many sociopragmatic failure phenomena in its stories. *English Vinglish* is a Hindi movie which is directed by Gauri Shinde and released in 2012. The story of this movie mostly takes place in New York, United States. This movie tells about a Hindi woman namely Sashi who has to go to New York for the first time to attend her nephew's wedding. Her proficiency in English is very bad and she also does not know anything about American culture. With her inadequate English proficiency and cultural knowledge, Sashi goes to America alone and undergoes many problems with the natives America. She then decides to take English course

in New York and meets other students from many countries who also have bad proficiency in English.

Since this movie was released in 2012, this movie has attained many achievements. *English Vinglish* becomes one of *Best Bollywood Films of 2012* by Reuters, *Bollywood's Most Appreciated Films of 2012* by CNN, *Best Films of 2012* by Radiff and Forbes, and many more (Wikipedia, 2018). Regarding those facts, the writer finds that it is necessary to analyze this movie. However, the writer mainly focuses on investigating sociopragmatic failures that occur in this movie.

So far, study about sociopragmatic failure is still limited. The writer previously found several studies related to this issue. The first study was conducted by Al- Saidi and Rashid's (2015) under the title *Investigating Socio-Pragmatic Failure in Cross-Cultural Translation: A Theoretical Perspective* and the second study is Oliveira's (2017) *Sociopragmatics failure revisited: the case of intercultural communication between Brazilians and Americans*. Al-Saidi and Rashid focused on investigating sociopragmatic failure that occurred in translation process between Arabic and English, while Oliveira mainly investigated sociopragmatic failure in class setting among American teachers and Brazilian students. It can be concluded that Both Oliveira's study and Al-Saidi & Rashid's study are restricted in specific context and languages.

On the other hand, this study covers broader aspects of sociopragmatic failure. This study not only investigates sociopragmatic failure that occurs between American and Indian natives speaker but also investigates

sociopragmatic failure that occurs between Indian and Chinese natives speaker. In addition, this study also investigates sociopragmatic failures that occur between two different genders and identities. On the other words, this study comprises various aspects of sociopragmatic failure.

1.2 Statements of Problem

Based on the background of the study, this study seeks to address the following questions:

1. What are the types of sociopragmatic failures that occur in *English Vinglish* movie?
2. What are the factors that contribute to the occurrences of sociopragmatic failures in *English Vinglish* movie?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the research problems, the major objectives of this study are to explain:

1. The types of sociopragmatic failures that occur in *English Vinglish* movie
2. The factors that contribute to the occurrences of sociopragmatic failures in *English Vinglish* movie.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study theoretically should make an important contribution to the field of linguistics, particularly to pragmatics inquiry which is

related to sociopragmatic failure. Furthermore, this study offers some important insight into the study of sociopragmatic failure phenomena that occur in cross-cultural communication. In addition, this study hopefully can be a reference for the future researchers who want to conduct the same research related to sociopragmatic failure.

Practically, the writer hopes that this study can help the reader to be able to choose the most appropriate language strategies to avoid sociopragmatic failure when conducting cross-cultural communication. Finally, this study is expected to help the reader to accomplish successful communication.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

It is important that the reader should bear in mind that this study primarily focuses on investigating pragmatic issues, particularly sociopragmatics failure in *English Vinglish* movie. It is also important to note that this study also takes into account the sociological aspects of this movie since sociopragmatics itself is the interface of sociology and pragmatics. The focuses of this study are investigating some types of sociopragmatic failures in *English Vinglish*. In addition, it is also important to also analyze the possible factors that cause sociopragmatic failure among the characters of *English Vinglish* movie.