CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background

People express their ideas, wants, thoughts, knowledge and feelings through a means of communication called language. A major function of language is the expression of personal identity (Crystal, 2003). When people communicate using language they unconsciously express their religion, social religion, personality, occupation, gender, age and level of education.

One significant phenomenon in language is gender difference between male and female, which differentiates their social role and functions in society. Lakeoff (in Holmes 1999: 313) suggests that female’s subordinate social status in society is reflected in the language that the female uses. Male’s language is usually identified as more powerful than female style, because female tends to use powerless style (in Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003: 530). In other words, female is judged to be less powerful than male and it can be seen from the language they use.

Since language use describes social status and power, it tends to see male and female in a hierarchy. It creates stereotype of superior positions and subordinate positions between male and female. As Tannen (2001: 30) stated, if a female makes someone do something using direct language, she will be called “bossy”. Hence, because of this stereotype female must pay attention of the language she uses if she does not want to get called “bossy”.

As it is explained above, the stereotype has correlation with the relative power or status and the social distance which affects language use among male and female which is clearly seen in form of directive language (Holmes 1992: 294). According to Searle
(1979: 20-27), a directive is an expression which makes someone do something. Directives have several forms, such as command, request, order, suggestion and others.

A number of investigations into directive speech acts have been conducted; they are studies on command (e.g., Yuniarti, 2012; Saputra 2013; Wikandhita 2013) and request (e.g., Blum-Kulka, House & Kasper, 1989). Nevertheless, suggestion has less attention compared to another directive speech acts in research. Different from request and command, suggestion is regarded as a benefit to the hearer from the speaker’s point of view (Searle, 1969). Thus it would not be a matter for the speaker if the hearer does not follow the suggestion (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988). From this point of view, it seems that the speaker does not need to care too much about the politeness when he/she makes suggestion.

Yet when someone makes a suggestion, he or she has a purpose to get the hearer commit him/herself to do a future action. This speech act, according to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, is regarded as a face threatening act (FTA) since the speaker in some way intrudes the hearer’s world by performing an act that concerns what should do later. In other words, suggestion is regarded as an imposition upon the hearer by affronting his/her negative face (Banerjee and Carrell 1988). As these authors claim, if a speaker decides to make a suggestion, several factors should be considered, such as the urgency of the suggestion, the degree of embarrassment in the situation, and the social distance and power between the speaker and the hearer (Brown and Levinson 1987). In order not to threaten the hearer’s negative face, the speaker might try to soften or mitigate this speech act through the use of specific politeness strategies in order to minimize the possibility of the hearer's being offended.
Beside politeness, most researchers have also examined politeness strategy in movies, commercials and TV shows. (Kitamura, 2000; Bayles, 2009; Anjarsari, 2011; Behnam & Niroomand, 2011; Hermosilla, 2012; Sung, 2012). Those researches are able to explain politeness strategy in criticizing, politeness in advertisement and proving ideas of Lakoff’s theory about Women’s Language. Research about speech acts in novel related to gender difference, or chicklit (chick- literature) is very far less conducted.

In summary, it can be said that the analysis of politeness strategy has been studied particularly in mostly spoken data. Moreover, in those research studies above, there are no studies relating between directive speech acts (particularly suggesting), politeness and gender differences in written data.

Due to the research gap from the studies above, I was interested to analyze how politeness strategy and suggestions are realized linguistically to differentiate between male and female through their speech. Furthermore, related theory that elaborates the analysis and relates to language (particularly politeness) and gender will be enhanced in this explanation. In this research, I used the chicklit entitled Can You Keep a Secret written by a famous author, Sophie Kinsella in 2007. This chicklit was chosen as the source of data because it contains many suggestions in dialogues between men and women, particularly in politeness. It also uses modern and sophisticated youngsters’ language which is a nowadays phenomenon.

The research objective of this thesis is to analyze and verify how suggestions are realized differently uttered by male and female using politeness strategies.

In this research, dialogues in the chicklit entitled Can You Keep a Secret would be analyzed by politeness strategy according to by Brown and Levinson (1987) including bald-on record, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, off –record
strategy and the factors that influence choice of strategy. Finally, there is a conclusion for the difference in suggestions uttered by male and female characters in the novel.

B. Research Questions

Several problems discussed in the research are as follows:

1. What types of suggestion are used by male and female characters in chicklit *Can You Keep a Secret*?

2. How are the politeness strategies delivered in giving suggestion by the characters, both male and female in chicklit *Can You Keep a Secret*?

3. Why do male and female characters in chicklit *Can You Keep a Secret* suggest differently using such particular strategies?

C. Research Objectives

The research is expected to answer the questions above:

1. To know the type of suggestion used by male and female speakers towards their interlocutor in the same or different gender.

2. To find out different politeness strategies employed in delivering suggestion between male and female characters in chicklit *Can You Keep a Secret*.

3. To find out the factors influencing male and female characters in chicklit *Can You Keep a Secret* deliver suggesting expressions differently using such particular strategies.
D. Research Benefits

The research has several benefits, they are expected:

1. English Department students
   To develop the understanding related to gender differences in terms of language, particularly in delivering suggestion using politeness strategy based on certain novel.

2. Other researcher
   To contribute to the source of reference and to add the information about the study of gender difference in terms of language, particularly in the study of suggestion.

E. Research Limitation

This research deals with speech acts analysis. The data are taken from the dialogues in the chicklit entitled *Can You Keep a Secret*. There are some types of speech acts uttered by the characters in this novel, but I only take the data containing suggestion expression employed by the characters in the novel as the focus of the analysis. This research only focuses on the type of suggestion proposed by Martinez-Flor (2005) and also on the use of politeness strategy in delivering suggestion. This thesis also covers the gender difference between male and female’s strategy to deliver the suggestion.
F. Thesis Organization

This thesis consists of five chapters and each chapter consists of further division. The outline of the research is arranged in some parts. Chapter I is Introduction that consists of Research Background; Research Questions; Research Objectives; Problem Limitation; Research Benefits; and Thesis Organization. Chapter II is Literature Review consisting of Pragmatics, Context, Speech Acts, Politeness Strategy, Gender and Language Theories and last but not least is The Review of Related Studies. While, Chapter III is Research Methodology that consists of Research Method, Research Location, Source of Data and Data, Sampling Technique, The Technique of Data Collection, The Technique of Analyzing Data, Data Coding and Validity. Chapter IV is Data Analysis and Discussion, consisting of Introduction; Data Analysis; and Discussion. Chapter V consists of Conclusions and Suggestions. The last, there are Bibliography and Appendices.