

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of study

Politeness is a linguistics phenomenon involved in daily interaction that reveals how people use languages to manage interpersonal relationships. The reason it is important to understand the nature and significance of politeness is because as soon as the interaction starts, each of the participants requires the mutual understandings of the norms of communicating to maintain relationships and interpret each other's behavior. The process of communication makes living harmonious, through the shared interaction and information sharing between individuals which occur naturally. Linguistic politeness is not equal to the superficial politeness routines. It involves appropriate language choices in respect to social relationship, relative status, and formality, which would not be the same for all interlocutors and situations. Norms for polite behavior vary from one culture to another, and therefore, linguistic politeness is also culturally bounded.

According to Reiter (2000), "politeness is not something human beings are born with but something which is acquired through a process of socialization". The need of politeness research study then develop into the wider communities of practice, rather than individuals, arbitrate over whether speech acts are considered polite or impolite. A community of practice is an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in some common endeavor. Ways of doing, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations-in shorts, practices-emerge in the course of their joint activity around endeavor. (Eckert &

McConnell-Ginnet, 1998:490 cited in Mills, 2000) Thus, each community would develop a range of linguistics behaviors which function in slightly different ways to other communities of practice.

Banking is one of the most prominent sectors within the service industry where service counter communication and politeness is demanded. Politeness is thus equivalent to knowing the rules. That is, there are normative rules in each social culture that guide speakers to distinguish politeness from impoliteness. Shaw (2008:6) states banks must avoid being over-familiar or inappropriate. They believe in maintaining a proper distance between themselves and their customers, and respect for the serious nature of financial affairs. Matsumoto in Yen Wang (2008:2) states, people are expected to act properly according to their relative position or rank with regard to other members of the group, and it is that relative position that they want to maintain when they employ politeness strategies. In this sense, related to Yule (1996:60) politeness can be accomplished in situations of social distance or closeness. Showing awareness for another person's face when that other seems socially distant is often described in terms of respect or deference.

Yule (1996:60) states politeness, in interaction, can be defined as the means employed to show awareness of another person's face. As a technical term, face means the public self-image of person. It refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone recognize. In banking service, a series of interaction is most occurred between customer and service provider, called customer service officer. Bank customer service officers are employed by the company to serve as a direct point of contact for customers.

They are responsible for ensuring that their company's customers receive an adequate level of service or help with their questions and concerns. They require loads of the ability to think analytical quickly, smart problem solving skills, patience, politeness and much more. Related to the politeness, bank customer service officers should be more concern for customer's face than the other. Because customers are the heart of every successful business and therefore businesses need to more concentrate on customers more than ever.

As Gilmour (1999:3) states there are some service standards that customer service officers should be implemented. One of them is listening in order to identify the customer's needs. They are required to handle any customer dispute arising due to bank's fault. They need to resolve the customer's issue and ensure that such kind of problem does not arise in future.

But in service marketing, Penfold (2014: 18) states needs and wants are similar and sometimes interchangeable. A need can be explained as a basic essential which keeps one alive. A want is something that a person desires, either immediately or in the future. Basically, a want is for the product or service that would satisfy a need, as shaped by the culture, personality and experience of the customer. It is being conscious that even though the needs are met, customer service should know that customers expect more from them, that is satisfaction. Satisfaction is the customer's evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether that product or service has met their needs and expectations. (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). They expect that anyone dealing with the customers would listen to them, understand, care about them, and treat them as individuals and intelligently (Penfold, 2014:26).

Often, customers either aren't clear about what they need, or they don't really know what they want. Effective customer service officer need to be trained to ask the right questions, listen, and tailor suggestions in order to assist customers satisfactorily. Correctly identifying customers' needs is essential for ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. If the officer fails to properly identify customers' needs, or if the officers are indifferent to customer needs, they will take their business elsewhere. Identifying customers' needs creates satisfied customers, and satisfied customers are less likely to have reason to enter into disputes with the institution or contemplate legal action. When the officers are able to accurately identify and adequately meet customers' expectations, customer service reputation will automatically be enhanced. Some of the benefits of meeting customers' expectations include, customers that transform from first-time visitors to loyal clients, increased sales as customers feel more comfortable doing business with the bank, more referrals from satisfied customers who bring in additional business by word of mouth. However, when expectations are not met by the performance of customer service officer, customer dissatisfaction is the result. The quality of customer service officer is almost wholly determined by the ability to meet the customer expectations. Bank can have the greatest service team, but if the customers perceive their needs are not being met, bank service reputation suffers.

As the means employed to show awareness of another person's face, expressing politeness in identifying customers' needs by the officers could be different in every unit. It refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone recognize. The competence to perform the

service, politeness and respect for the customer, effective communication with the customer, and the general attitude that the server has the customer's best interests at heart. As Javadi (2012:69) states in banking industry, banking systems provide the same types of services, but they do not provide the same quality of services. It can be seen there are many customers complain to the customer service officer when they interact or communicate with them regarding to the politeness. They tend to argue that they served impolite by the customer service officer. Sudiono (2012) states as the Bank Mandiri customer she disappointed to the service of one bank officer who speak rudely when she wants to open deposit account. At that time she takes ID card, saving book and cash money on her to open deposit account, but the officer states "*Maaf ibu Lita, silakan pulang untuk mengambil kartu ATM.*" Therefore, she decided to move out and open account in another bank. Same as the others, Khotimah (2012) states as the bank BRI customer she is underestimated by the customer service officer when she wants to check her point by saying "*Cuma*" to her saving money and because of this she decide to close the account. She argues that don't ever make any differentiate in serve the customer even they are poor or rich one. Those complain are contrary to the requirement that customer service officer should have, that is showing awareness of customer's face in order to satisfy the customers. Therefore, the researcher wants to make a deep research in finding politeness strategy of bank customer service officer in identifying customer need.

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

The problems of the study are formulated as in the following.

- 1) What are the types of politeness strategies that expressed by Bank customer service officers in identifying the customer need?
- 2) How are the politeness strategies used by customer service officers in identifying customer need?
- 3) Why do those politeness strategies used by customer service officers in the process of identifying customer need?

## **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are:

- 1) to describe the types of politeness strategies that expressed by the Bank customer service officers in identifying the customer need.
- 2) to explain the pattern of politeness strategies used by customer service officers in identifying the customer need.
- 3) to elaborate the reason of those politeness strategies used by customer service officers in the process of identifying customer need.

## **1.4 The Scopes of the Study**

In this study, the discussion focuses on politeness strategies of Bank customer service officers especially in identifying the customer need. Expressing politeness to the customer in main office could be different to the customer in unit. Therefore, this study would be limited on politeness strategies of bank customer service officer placed in three branches under PT. Bank Rakyat Indonesia (Persero), Tbk cabang Kisaran, namely Bank BRI Kantor Cabang Pembantu Indrapura, Bank BRI Unit Indrapura and Bank BRI unit Kebunkopi.

### 1.3 The Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be significantly relevant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research findings are expected to enrich the theories of linguistic politeness strategies, specifically the spoken language in service counter community, mainly in bank customer service. This study considered being useful initially to provide the information of what politeness strategies used by Bank customer service officer when they express their oral communication in customer interaction. Consequently, it would give better understanding and new insight of how politeness strategies are related to the aspect of pragmatic study. This contribution would in turn give tentative framework for a comprehensive analysis of politeness.

Since the research focuses on the communication between bank customer service and the customer, the politeness strategies specifically to service counter communication which occurs in daily conversation. Practically, it should be maintained in order to increase the service quality level and performance of bank, also to maintain the customer loyalty. In another aspect, hopefully it is useful for readers and writers to realize and to learn how to react most effectively when there are confrontation with another person.