

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Politeness is applied by someone because he wants to respect the hearer. Politeness is not something we are born with, but something we have to learn and be socialized into (Watts, 2003:9). Furthermore, Watts (2005) adds that human societies use communication strategies to avoid or minimize conflict, and increase comfortable and understood. Speaking politely with other speakers is conducted to maintain the harmony of relationship and to avoid conflict. The harmony in an interaction between the speaker and the hearer is kept in order to share information, willingness and build interaction also avoid misunderstanding among them. Politeness can be applied by the utterances with consider the hearer's culture.

Knowing the culture of the hearer will help us to build comfortable interaction and to build our image or face in the hearer point of view. One can be impolite if s/he cannot identify the hearer's culture and the contexts of the situation. Different tribes have different way to say something. It is based on the hearer's culture and context. For example, in Toba Batak tribe, the speakers have to reply a question by using "*ninna hamu*". This phrase makes the utterance more polite. While other cultures do

not have it or may use different way. That is why, the way people do communication is different from another. It depends on its culture. Each culture influences the way its people talking as language is a part of culture, vise versa; the two are intricately interwoven and cannot be separated without losing the significance of either language or culture. In a word, culture and language are inseparable. That is why, the degree of politeness in speaking is not the same in every person. Polite behaviour and speech in one culture can actually perceived as impolite in another culture. It is based on their culture and habit. Culture has significant factor in politeness. Culture controls the ways of speaking and life of the Toba Batak society.

The Toba Batak society is a group of community who uphold politeness linguistic values in their interactions. Politeness linguistic is called '*pantùn*' [*pattun*] in Toba Batak language. It is used to appreciate someone who can applies social behavior and style shifting based on context. *Pantùn* is the basic ideal value which grows and develops in Toba Batak society and it is used in daily communication. One who obeys the rules of speaking politely will be called '*halak napantùn*' (polite people).

Historically, the Toba Batak ancients have rules of speaking. They spoke polite and carefully. They kept politeness as their rules in speaking. They called themselves as '*raja dohot boruni raja*' (king and princess). However, they had to speak as king and princess. They tried themselves to be humble, saved their hearer's

face, and portrayed themselves as honorable men. The rules of speaking become heritage for the next generations to keep politeness.

Erico (2009) finds that the using pronouns 'ho' and 'hamu' (you) as the rule of speaking politely. Pronoun 'hamu' more polite than pronoun 'ho'. He also found that the kinship citation in the politeness linguistic interactions. It is more polite to call the family name than the hearer's name (except for children).

Sitohang (2010) states that in Batak Toba language, politeness linguistic by using of address. Therefore, Batak Toba societies have politeness in addressing, such as *Amang/Bapa* is address for father, *Ompung* is address for grandparents, etc.

Basaria and Harahap (2009) explain that there are some concepts of life in speaking politely. The are metaphorical expressions. One of them is "*Pantun hangoluan, tois hamagoan!*". It means "polite and respectful result life and goodness, whereas careless or impolite will be die". *Unang raus manghatai!*. It means "Do not talk carelessly". That is why, the Toba Batak people speak politely and carefully. The expressions become principal of Toba Batak tribe in their interactions.

Nowadays, the Toba Batak people have forgotten that the important thing is not the messages but how to say it and also they have forgotten the heritage of speaking politely. Harahap (2009) states that the heritage remains in ceremony conversation, they are humble, saving their hearer's face, and portray themselves as

honorable men. However, in everyday conversations, the Toba Batak societies began to obey the rules of the politeness itself. It is supported by the assumption of Ekawati and Nashori (2005) that the Toba Batak people speak directly and they do not like to use the beautiful sentences. Furthermore, Harahap (2009) states that it is also commonly assumed that they are vulgar, arrogant, and rough. He also adds that the Toba Batak people should be learned more about the ways of speaking politely because their weakness is the ways of communication. This is occurred in Toba Batak societies, mainly teenagers.

The Toba Batak teenagers have different ways of speaking. They grow physically and intellectually. Menyuk and Brisk (2005) state that the teenagers are usually aged 12 or 13 years old to 17 or 18 years. They have been developing normally over all the periods of development, but because of variations in their experience have yet to acquire certain aspects of language. The Toba Batak teenagers have different ways of speaking. They think that they are intelligent and able to wade through this life. However, the bad behavior does not something we are born with. It is same with politeness itself.

Nowadays, there is an aspect which influences the politeness in the Toba Batak teenagers speaking, such as the influence of globalization. The globalization influences the life style and language of Toba Batak teenagers. In the past time, in Toba Batak region there was a punishment for who conducted speaking violations,

such as ‘*pababa-babahon*’ (cursing), ‘*manghatai pasalpuhu*’ (speak vulgar or arogan). The violator will be fined with ‘*Mangindahani*’ as ‘*gatip (gansip) bibir*’ (lips pinching). They applied that punishment to warn the violator be chary. By the influence of globalizations, this punishment does not do anymore in Toba Batak society. It causes them disregard for that politeness strategies.

The reasons mentioned above are considered to be the reasons why this research should be done urgently that is in order to describe the the types of politeness strategies of the Toba Batak teenagers which then brings the writer to the research entitled “*Politeness Strategies Used by Batak Toba Teenagers*”

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

Related to the background of the study, the problems of the study are formulated as the following.

1. How are the politeness strategies expressed by Toba Batak teenagers?
2. What are the types of politeness strategies applied by Toba Batak teenagers?
3. What is the dominant types of politeness strategies applied by Toba Batak teenagers?
4. Why are those types of politeness strategies realized in that way?

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

In relation to the problems, the objectives of the study are

- 1) to describe the politeness strategies expressed by Toba Batak teenagers.
- 2) to elaborate the types of politeness strategies applied by Toba Batak teenagers.
- 3) to elaborate the dominant types o politeness strategies applied by Toba Batak teenagers.
- 4) to explain the reason for the realization of politeness strategies in that way.

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

This study attempts to describe and to explain the realization realization of politeness strategies used by the Toba Batak teenagers in everyday context of situation. The main aspect of this study is to see the politeness strategies of the Toba Batak teenagers use in their speech. Beside that, the researcher also scope the location of the research, namely Kecamatan Lintongnihuta, Kabupaten Humbang Hasundutan.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

Findings of this study are expected to be useful and relevant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research findings are expected to enrich the theories of

linguistic politeness strategies, specifically the spoken language is spoken medium by certain community, mainly the Batak Toba teenagers. Finding of this study are considere being useful initially to provide the information of what politeness strategies used by Batak Toba teenagers native speakers when they express the speech acts in everyday context of situation. Practically, it will give better understanding and new insight of how politeness strategies are related to the aspect of pragmatic study. This contribution will in turn give tentative framework for a comprehensive analysis of politeness.

