

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

The relationship between culture and politeness has been studied by the researcher. Culture is part of human being. It is considered to be group-specific behavior that is acquired, at least in part, from social influences. It is created and transmitted to others in a society. Cultures are not the product of lone individuals. They are the continuously evolving products of people interacting with each other. Cultural patterns such as language and politics make no sense except in terms of the interaction of people. Because culture is the result of the interaction among people (Kraft and Geluykens , 2007: 9).

Misunderstanding can occur from differing cultural views of politeness. Polite behavior and speech in one culture can be actually perceived as impolite in another culture. Every country has different culture, even everyone also has different personal culture. They have rule and policy when they speak something. If they come out from the rule, they will be judged as impolite person. Misunderstanding can be avoided in interaction inter-ethnic culture if we can express our politeness through our way and utterances. Knowing the culture of the hearer will help the language users to build comfortable interaction and build

our image or face in the hearer point of view. One can be impolite if he/she 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 *Batak Toba* tribe, the speakers tend to answer a question by using 'inna hamu'. This phrase makes the utterance more polite. While in other cultures do not have it or may use different way. That is why the way people communication is different. It depends on its culture. Each culture influences the way its people talking. Brown (1999:165) describes a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two 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. It is based on their culture and habit. Culture has significant actor in politeness.

Brown and Levinson (1987) stated that politeness is the term used to describe the extent to which actions, such the way we say something. When we are speaking, the utterances we produce are our action to show the politeness. The utterances should be able to save the hearer's and feeling enjoyable. The utterances through the language we use will be a judgement whether we are polite or not. Brown and Levinson formulated that there are four types of politeness strategies that can save the hearer's face. The strategies formulated by these two theorists were focus on saving the hearer's face by saying something as polite as possible. The four types of politeness strategies are bald on record strategy,

positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and off record strategy. Bald on record strategy is used to minimize the threat of the hearer's face. It seems that the speaker in this strategy makes the hearer feel uncomfortable when they are speaking. It shocks the hearer. In contrast, positive politeness strategy is used to minimize the threat to the hearer's positive face. It is a strategy of speaking which uses a metaphorical extension of intimacy to imply common ground or sharing of wants to be a limited extent. It is used to make the hearer feel good about himself, his interests or possessions. It is most usually used in situations where the audience knows each other very well. Positive politeness also includes the statements of friendship, solidarity, and compliments. It usually attempts to minimize the distance between the speaker and the hearer. The speaker respects the hearer's need to be liked and understood. While, negative politeness strategy is oriented towards the hearer's negative face and emphasize avoidance of imposition on the hearer. This strategy presumes that the speaker will be imposing on the listener. It has higher potential for awkwardness or embarrassment than in bald on record strategy and positive politeness strategies. The last but not the least is off record strategy which uses indirect language and removes the speaker from the potential to be imposing. It is also called as indirect way of saving something which may cause a face damaging interpretation. It is usually in the form of declarative sentence.

Politeness is not something we are born with, but something we have to learn and be socialized into (Watts, 2003, 9). Furthermore, Watts (2005) added

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.

Karonese is one of several numbers of ethnic groups in Indonesia which is known as ethnic group that uses politeness in communication. Karonese uses its language in daily life. In making communication to interact, Karonese is familiar to be polite or in Karonese language calls *mehamat*. To be polite is very important because politeness is the way to avoid conflict in communication.

To be polite in Karonese language are related to the action that is taboo to do and to say. It is called '*rebu*' (*pantang*). The way to talk to someone who is honored will be different when they speaking to others. For example, when speaking to *kalimbubu* (the group of people which is very honored in Karonese culture), *anak beru* is not free to talk.

Past time ago as there is something taboo to do and to say '*rebu*' Karonese has the phrase to call *kalimbubu*. The politeness is expressed by the utterance "*Mehamat man Kalimbubu*" means being polite to *Kalimbubu* and "*Kalimbubu dibata si idah*" *Kalimbubu* is god that can be seen. If they do not use these, they

will be called as '*si la meteh adat*' means someone who does not know the custom or impolite person (Prints, Darwin 2004)

Nowdays, practically this phrase has been changed. It can be seen that religion has changed this culture. The strategy to use the phrase such "*Dibata si idah*" which is faced to *kalimbubu* is not maintained. It is caused by people have believed that there is only one God who created us. They do not use the phrase to praise their *Kalimbubu*. Culturally, it has broken the culture of Karonese which maintain the politeness but it is not being problem and everyone has done the change. The strategy to use the phrase of being polite has not being used not only in daily life but also in some cultural parties. The strategy has been changed into the use of indirect speech and the use of phrase '*uga ninta*' means what we say rather than to use the phrase or utterance to praise someone who is very honored. It shows that in Karonese culture, the indicator of being polite has been changed.

Furthermore, *Ginting* (2005) stated that being polite in Karo language can be expressed through the use of pronouns, greetings, and indirect speech. The use of these elements in communication show the relationship between the speaker and the listener. In order to be polite to speak, they use the strategy. For example, when speaking to someone who is very honored, Karonese tends to use indirect speech. Karonese never speak directly because it is not polite strategy. Then by using pronouns such as "we" is very polite to use. The use of these elements in communication express how close the relationship they have.

In addition, *Ginting* explain that politeness in Karo language is determined by their relationship. For example, *Kalimbubu* is a group of people which is very honored. Thus, *Anak beru* can not talk freely to their *Kalimbubu* and *Anak beru* always keep politeness in communication.

Related to *Cabur Bulung* party as a kind of wedding ceremony, the relatives or group of people from the woman or bride are called *Kalimbubu* to the relatives of the man or bridegroom called *anak beru*. Therefore, *anak beru* tries to be polite as good as possible in wedding ceremony where the oral communication happens during this party. For this reason, it is better to know the politeness expressed in pre marital party or *Cabur Bulung* party .

1.2 The Focus of the Study

Based on explanation above, this study focused on politeness strategies and the sub focuses are the four types of politeness strategies and the realization of types of politeness strategies in *Cabur Bulung* party.

1.3 The Problems of the Study

The problems of the study are formulated as the following.

1. How are the politeness strategies expressed by Karonese in *Cabur Bulung* party?
2. What types of politeness strategies are used by Karonese in *Cabur Bulung* party?

3. What type of politeness strategy is dominantly used by Karonese in *Cabur Bulung* party?
4. Why is the type dominantly used by Karonese in that party?

1.4 The Objectives of the Study

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

- 1) to describe the politeness strategies expressed by Karonese in *Cabur Bulung* party,
- 2) to elaborate the types of politeness strategies applied by Karonese in *Cabur Bulung* party
- 3) to elaborate the dominant type of politeness strategy used by Karonese in *Cabur Bulung* party and,
- 4) to explain the reason for using the dominant type of politeness strategy in that party.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

The main aspect of this study is to see the politeness strategies used by Karonese people in “*Cabur Bulung*” party. The location of people who use the politeness strategies is the Karonese people who live in Tiga Juhar district, Deli Serdang regency.

1.6 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 is spoken medium by certain community, mainly the Karonese society. This study considered being useful initially to provide the information of what politeness strategies used by Karonese native speakers when they express their oral communication in cultural party context of situation. Consequently, 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.

Practically, since the research focuses on Karonese native speakers in *Cabur Bulung* party, hopefully it is useful for teachers and lecturers of sociolinguistics to apply the politeness strategies specifically to sociolinguistics students either University or high school which occur in daily conversation. This will accelerate to speak Karonese, thus they will not be clumsy to speak directly to the Karonese native speaker. Politeness in language is used to maintain the language, practically when the native speaker of Karo language uses the politeness strategies in communication, the language is still maintained.