

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language as a unifying tool in culture. Language is the most important aspect of human life. Through language, people can interact. Humans can convey the contents of their hearts and minds to others through language. The language is needed between people in daily life. In human's interaction, everyone tries to understand the intended meaning of the word said by a partner of speech and relates it with context situation. Then, it might lessen the risk of misunderstanding that happens among the participants of speech. Brown (2005:17) describes language operates in speech community or culture. It means 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 level of politeness in speaking is different for everyone. It is based on their culture and habits. Culture has a much actor's uniqueness/impoliteness.

Culture part of human being. It is considered to be a group-specific behavior that is acquired, at least in part, from social influence. 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. Every country has a difference cultures, even everyone also has different personal

culture. They have a rules and policy when they speak something. If they come out from the rule, they will be judged as an impolite person. Cultural patterns such as language and politics make no sense except in the interaction of people.

Cultures can be practiced in rituals in carried out by humans. One of the rituals was carried out in custom *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*. In this ritual, human interacts through language, language conducted by interested parties, such as *Kalimbubu*, *Senina*, *Anak beru*. In the language of the custom, there is a politeness value. Karo language is thick with politeness, because karo society highly upholds the value of politeness in language. In the culture of the karo people, they do not speak arbitrarily against *Kalimbubu*, *Senina*, and *Anak beru*. In the conversation, they must uphold the value of politeness. Karo society is used “*Mehamat*” which means “*Respect*”.

Karonese is one of the several numbers of ethnic groups in Indonesia known as ethnic groups that uses politeness in communication. They have their own culture, and it differs from other ethnics. It has own rule and policy so if someone comes out from the rule she will be judged as an impolite person.

Sometimes, what is considered polite in one culture can be quite rude or simply eccentric in another cultural context. Karonese uses its language in daily life. To be polite is important because politeness is as to avoid conflict in communication.

Ginting (2005) stated that being polite in Karo language can be expressed by pronouns, greetings, and indirect speech. The use of these elements in words shows the relationship between the speaker and the listener. So as to be polite to speak, they use the strategy. For example, when speaking to someone who is

honored, Karonese tends to use indirect speech. Karonese never speaks directly because it is not a polite strategy. Karo society has different speech acts in the *rakut sitelu*.

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.

Polite language is an important in communication with other people, because it shows our own personality and also be dependent on a variety of factors, including age, social distance between the speaker and the hearer, how well they know each other and context of situation. When we using language in conversation, they can used strategy which is called politeness. Politeness is not as simple as saying “please” or “excuse me” in the right place. According to Hill, Ide, Ikuta (1986) as cited in Konrad, Sachiko, and Watts (2005), politeness a matter the constraints on human interaction, politeness to consider others’ feeling, to establish levels of mutual comfort, and to promote rapport.” Politeness as a paying attention to people feelings. To make a good relationship with other people is the most important thing in communication, people have to choose certain behavior and attitude so that communication can work better and do not hurt other’s feeling. Brown & Levinson (1987 cited in Zhang, 2009) is quoted by Manik & Hutagaol (2015) states that politeness strategies are more likely to be

used when a speaker of relatively higher power makes a smaller request in a closer relationship.

This research uses Politeness Strategies theory by Brown & Levinson (1987). In the theory of Brown & Levinson (1987) states that there are four types of politeness strategies. The four types of politeness strategies are bald on record strategy, positive politeness strategy, negative politeness strategy, and off record strategy. The researcher uses this theory because this theory ease to understand and have more complete types of politeness. This theory is a basic of politeness theory and mostly use by researcher.

Based on explanation above about politeness strategies, so this study focuses on investigating politeness strategies in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*. This study aims to describe politeness strategies of *Mengket Rumah Mbaru* in Karonese. The researcher's background raises *Mengket Rumah Mbaru* into her thesis object because the researcher is a language student, so that the researcher analyzed the politeness strategies in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*. Besides that, the researcher knows about politeness strategies and knows about karonese's culture.

This study has the relevant study, from the relevant study there is the similar and the different between this studies. From the previous study, this study also use the Brown and Levinson (1987) theory but the object and the scope of the study is different with before. This study analyze the positive and negative politeness theory only in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*. The researcher chooses this object for her thesis because this ceremony of *Mengket Rumah Mbaru* is not usual, in North Sumatera there are 8 ethnic but only Karonese has the culture. In this ceremony

there are so many politeness values related to the culture, so it's interesting to analyze. This culture existed in ancient times, and has become a tradition of the *karo* people.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the problems of the study were formulated as follows:

1. What types of positive and negative politeness strategies are used by Karonese in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*?
2. Why positive and negative used in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*?

C. The Objectives of the Study

In accordance with the problem of the study, the objectives of the study were:

1. to elaborate the types of positive and negative politeness strategies used Karonese in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*.
2. to identify why positive and negative politeness strategies occurred in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*.

D. The Scope of the Study

There are some kinds of politeness namely politeness principle, face threatening acts politeness, and politeness strategies. The researcher focused of politeness strategies in Brown and Levinson (1987) theory about the types of positive and negative politeness strategies in utterance *Kalimbubu*, *Senina* and *Anak baru* in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*.

E. The Significance of the study

The findings of the research is expected to give contributions theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, the findings of the study expected to add theories of politeness strategies and culture. The findings also can be some references for further research, who is interested in the study of politeness strategies. This study contributed to make the further researcher know about politeness in *Mengket Rumah Mbaru* culture.

Practically, the findings of the study can be useful for the young generation in developing their culture. It can be useful for the speaker and listener to apply the role of politeness strategies in conversation. This research can be useful for the readers to gain their knowledge about politeness strategies and Karonese culture especially about *Mengket Rumah Mbaru*.