**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 The Background of the Study**

Batak ethnic consists of five parts namely; Batak Toba, Batak Simalungun, Batak Pak-Pak Dairi, Batak Angkola-Mandailing and Batak Karo. Batak Karo or the Karonese is an ethnic that inhabited the highlands of Karo, North Sumatra. The highlands of Karo consist of Karo Regency plus neighbouring areas in East Aceh Regency, Langkat Regency, Dairi Regency, Simalungun Regency and Deli Serdang Regency (Prinst, 2004:12).

The Karonese use Karo language in their daily life. In interacting with each other, they use polite language with soft intonation. Therefore, they are known as a polite ethnic. The Karonese call politeness with "*mehamat*". They have a philosophy of life, that is being polite or praise to *Kalimbubu* or in a Karo language is called with "*Mehamat man Kalimbubu*". *Kalimbubu* is a group of people which is very honored in the Karonese. In their daily life, they call *Kalimbubu* with *'dibata ni idah'* (God that can be seen). If they do not use these, they will be called *'si la meteh adat'* means someone who does not know the customs or an impolite person (Prinst, 2004: 51). But, nowadays this utterance has been changed, because religion has changed their culture. The Karonese do not use this utterance to praise their *Kalimbubu* as God, because they have believed that there is only one God who created them. So, it has broken the culture of the

Karonese which praise to *Kalimbubu* as God, but they still respect the *Kalimbubu* only as the honorable people.

The Karonese also has another philosophy of life to show their politeness in the society, that is *"Ula kataken si tuhuna, tapi kataken sitengteng na"*. It means do not say directly what is on your mind, but say a better word to save a person's face. For example, if someone uses a red dress and that dress do not match to her skirt, the speaker in this case do not want to say directly to that person or hearer that she wears a bad dress, or her dress and skirt do not match each other. The speaker will say, it is better for you to wear a green dress than red, because your skirt are green too. It is done to make the speaker and hearer feel comfortable, so that the communication can run well.

Besides, in the Karonese there is also a norm or 'taboo' to do and to say. It is known with *'rebu' (pantang)*. Prinst (2004:157) says in '*rebu'* a certain speaker cannot do oral communication with a certain hearer directly; because of the status of the speaker and hearer. For example, a daughter in law *(permain)* cannot speak directly to father in law *(bengkila)* and mother in law *(mami)* also cannot speak directly to son in law *(kela)*, if this is not obeyed they will get the punishment, and they will be categorized as an impolite person or *'si la meteh adat'*. If they want to communicate they have to conduct through intermediaries, and the intermediaries can be either human or object. The human can be a close relative like grandson, son, wife, or husband.

The Karonese have their own culture and it differs from other ethnics. They have their own rule and policy so if someone comes out from the rule s/he 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. For example, in the way to say something, the Javanese usually speak with a soft voice, so if they speak loudly, they will be categorized less or impolite. In contrast with the Bataknese, speaking in a loud voice is not related to the level of politeness. Another example is between two countries, Indonesia and United States of America, in Indonesia, it is not polite to call our parents by using their first names. However, in the United States, it is fine to call our parents by using their first names. All of this happen because every ethnics and countries have different culture even everyone also has different personal culture.

When people communicate, they do not only exchange information, but speaker and the listener consciously or unconsciously shape their interpersonal relationships at the same time. How the relationships develop, i.e.whether they are enhanced, maintained, deteriorated, or repaired, depends on many aspects. One factor that can influence the effect of a message brings out, and thereby contribute to determine the development of the relationships between the interlocutors, is the way people use a language. According to Coulmas (2005:84), "speakers make many choices when speaking, including the politeness level of their utterances". Thus, every verbal utterance, since it is a use of language, bears with a certain degree of politeness. The degree of politeness in speaking is not the same in every people. It is influenced by some factors like age, sex, state of health, personality,

size, and emotional state. Besides, the way people talk is influenced by the social context in which they are talking. Moreover, social factors influence the choice of appropriate ways of speaking in different social contexts. Furthermore, the way people communicate is different in each ethnic and country. It is based on their culture and habit. Culture is the significant factor in politeness. Each culture influences the way its people talking because language is part of culture and vice versa. That is why, politeness and culture have a close relationship.

Politeness is employed to show awareness of another person's face, because every person has a face which identifies whether a person is socially distant or close. Face is the public self-image of a person and it refers to the respect that an individual has for him or herself, and maintaining that "self-esteem" in public or in private situations. By studying the politeness, people can be wise to determine the choice of words and phrases or linguistic variant in expressing the ideas or meaning in a given context.

Politeness is not something we are born with, but something we have to learn and be socialized into (Watts, 2003:9). He adds that human societies use communication strategies to avoid or minimize conflict and increase comfortable situation. In addition, Brown (1987) says being polite is a complicated business in any language. It is difficult to learn because it involves understanding, not only the language, but also the social and cultural values of the community. In addition, Brown and Levinson (1987) say that in order to enter into social relationships, all people must acknowledge the face of another people, because the utterances

through the language that they use will be a judgement whether they are polite or not. So, The utterances should be able to save the hearer's face.

Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1987) state that there are four types of politeness strategies, and the strategies are focus on saving the hearer's face. They are; (1) Bald on-record strategy, (2) Positive politeness strategy, (3) Negative politeness strategy, and (4) Off-record indirect srategy. *Bald on record strategy* is a strategy where the speakers do the act of saying directly. For example: "give me that book", means the speaker say the intention directly that s/he wants that book. *Positive politeness strategy* is a strategy where the speakers give any reasons or explanation in their speech and attempt to do something. For example: "Is it ok, if I use that book?". In this situation, the speaker recognizes that the hearer has a desire to be respected. *Negative politeness strategy* is a strategy which is almost similar to positive politeness, in that the speaker recognizes that the hearer wants to be respected. For example: "I'm sorry to bother you, but I just wanted to ask you if I could use that book?". *Off-record indirect strategy* is a strategy where the speakers do not say directly what they want to say but with doing the obscure act. For example: "I forgot my book", the speaker does not say directly what s/he wants but s/he actually has the same intention as bald on record strategy, that is s/he needs that book and want to use it.

In Indonesia, where the society is bound to traditional values, politeness is regarded as a set of rules of proper conduct or manners that are determined and agreed by a group of society called as "*tata krama*" Muslich (2006:1). It is a conventional agreement that should be fulfilled by any members of society.

Politeness is not only reflect a person's manner or behavior as an individual, but it reflects also to the family honor. Politeness brings a huge impact on the honor of Indonesian family. For example, when a child is considered not to be polite to others, it is not the child his/herself as an individual that will be judged by other people but the parents will. People would not say for example *"you're such an impolite child"* to a child for being impolite but very often people will say *"who is your dad/parents?"* or extremely by asking *"what is your marga?"* towards Bataknese child. In this case, politeness has a function of maintaining honor or *"good name"* of family. Consequently, the politeness phenomena become not only the responsibilities of a child as a member of society but also the responsibilities of the parents. Politenss is closely regarded as a means to maintain family's honor.

In line with this, Byron (1990) in her paper *"Language of Politeness"* outlines the importance of politeness in the development of children's language. According to this author, the importance of politeness is that it forms a vital part of the socialization process during which the skills of adulthood are acquired. A child spends many years developing just this social competence or awareness, aided by parents who say 'what's the magic word?' when 'please' or 'thank you' is required, or 'say bye-bye to auntie' when one of mummy's friends is leaving. It is in this way that the child is socialized in the types of behavior and language use sanctioned by and typifying his social group. Thus, politeness can be understood as a basic to the production of social order and a precondition of children interaction.

The reasons above make the writer chooses the family as the object of the study. Besides, the family is the core of any community. It provides the first models for social interaction, social security and assistance throughout a person's life. This fact has motivated the writer to conduct a study dealing with politeness strategies particularly in the Karonese families in their informal interaction in order to find out the politeness strategies which are used by native speakers of the Karonese families in Deli Tua.

**1.2 The Problems of the Study**

In relation to the background, the problems are formulated as the following:

1. What types of politeness strategies used by the Karonese families in Deli Tua at home?

2. How do the Karonese families in Deli Tua express politeness strategies at home?

3. Why do the Karonese families use those types of politeness strategies as the way they are?

**1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

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

1.  to describe the types of politeness strategies used by the Karonese families in Deli Tua at home.
2.  to describe the process of expressing politeness strategies by the Karonese families in Deli Tua at home.
3.  to explain the factors that cause the Karonese families use those types of politeness strategies as the way they are.

**1.4 The Scope of the Study**

The main aspect of this study is to describe politeness strategies used by the Karonese families when they express their utterances in  everyday context of situation or in informal interaction at home. In this study, there are two ways relationship that were researched, first interaction parent to parent, and second interaction parent to child. The resarcher also scope the location of the research is in Deli Tua, Deli Serdang Regency.

## 1.5 The Significance of the Study

This study is expected to have both theoretical and practical significance for the readers. Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to enrich the theories of politeness strategies especially in the Karonese. They are also expected to give the contribution as guiding information for sociolinguistics students who are interested in the study of politeness strategies.

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to be useful for teachers lecturers, and parents. firstly, for teachers and lectures, they can use the politeness strategies either in University or high school. Secondly, for the parents, the findings of this study can be made as the model in order to guide their children in using politeness strategies