

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of Research**

Communication is an information delivery process from one person to another that involved two people or more. Communication plays an important role in human life because we do any activity by communicating. In communicating, the speakers and the hearers should use the same language to understand the meaning that we want to convey. A language is a tool that people use in communication. Language can help speakers and hearers to communicate well. Moreover, usually, the speakers will do an action when they say something. The action taken by the speakers is called speech acts.

Speech act is a study that learned about an action performed by the speakers when they say something to the interlocutors. In the speech, there are some labels of speech when the speakers say something. According to Yule (1983, p. 47), there are more specific labels that are given through the speech in English such as a compliment, promise, apology, invitation, complaint, and request. Thus, every speech uttered by the speakers has its label depending on the speakers' speech.

In the speech, usually, the speakers have a particular meaning to their speech. Unconsciously, the speakers will do an action when saying something. This is what the speakers do to make the hearers understand what the speaker saying. Furthermore, the speakers can also ask the hearers to do something according to the speakers' requests. The speakers have their meaning depending on the purpose of the utterance and the situation that happened when the speaker utters the utterance.

Request be the important things that the speakers need to know. According to Nabila and Miftakh (2020, p. 139), a request is a polite way of asking for something. Thus, request is a part of speech act that is important for speakers to know and do because through requests, speakers can ask for something politely. The speakers also have to know who is their interlocutors. In the request, the speaker will use direct and indirect speech according to politeness. Moreover, the speakers should know the structural form of their speech and the strategy of request that they use. If the speakers know the strategy of request, the speakers can utter the utterance politely.

In this modern era, technology is growing. Many things that people can do with using technology, and one of them is to communicate. Many ways that people can do to make it easier to communicate. People can use smartphones to communicate. Previously, people can send a message through SMS (Short Message Service). SMS is a short message service feature found on a smartphone. People used this feature to send remote messages. However, over time, that thing began to change when the appearance of social media. Social media is online media that can connect fellow users and make it easier for users to communicate. According to Yohanna (2020, p. 34), social media has become one of the parts of human life as the relationship in conversation or education scope. Thus, social media not only make it easier for users to communicate but is also in use in the scope of education.

There are many social media that people use such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Line, and WhatsApp. One of the social media that many people use to communicate, send, and receive messages is WhatsApp. According to Rahartri (2019, p. 147), WhatsApp is an internet application that people use as communication media.

Many people use WhatsApp to communicate the family, friends, and others. WhatsApp can also use in the scope of education such as communicating between students and lecturers.

In this current pandemic situation, many people use social media to communicate. Since people are not allowed to communicate directly another way that people can use to communicate is through social media. People can communicate with social media in any way, including in the terms of work and education. Thus, the students and the lecturers also use social media to communicate. The social media that is usually used by the students and the lecturers to communicate is WhatsApp. WhatsApp makes it easy for the students and the lecturers to communicate without thinking about distance and time. However, by communicating using social media, the students must also pay attention to politeness. Usually, the students contact the lecturers to make a request because in terms of education, the students need the lecturers more so the student often make a request. The students sometimes think that they have made a polite request to the lecturer, but in reality, they are not. It is because they have made a request to the lecturers but they have not understood the request strategies and structural form of request. For example:

- (1) Student: Assalamualaikum ma'am. Iam sorry if I bother your time. **I would like to ask your commentary about my proposal ma'am.** Here is the file, ma'am. Thank you in advance, ma'am.

In the conversation above, the student opens the conversation by greeting and apologizing if she disturbs the lecturer's time. Then the student conveys her purpose in contacting the lecturer is asking lecturer's comments about her proposal. In the

student's utterance **"I would like to ask your commentary about my proposal ma'am."** student uses the structural form, namely imperative form. Based on the context, the student directly instructs the lecturer to comment on her proposal. The student may think that she has sent a polite request because the student does not know and understand the structural forms. In fact, the message conveyed by the student has not been polite because the student uses a structural form, namely imperative form. Imperative form is a form of request that contains command which is usually carried out by someone who has higher position. However, in the conversation above it is conveyed by the student to the lecturer that the student's position is lower than the lecturer. In addition, the student uses unhedged performative strategy. Unhedged performative is a request strategy used by speakers using direct performative verbs and this strategy is usually used by boss to subordinates. Based on this, the student also used the wrong request strategy where the student should have used hedged performative strategy. Hedged performative is in which speakers use indirect performative verbs to refine the request and usually this strategy is conveyed by subordinate to boss.

Therefore, the students should know the structural forms and the request strategies so that they know how to make a polite request to the lecturers. This research focuses on how the students make a request to the lecturers at WhatsApp, especially in the structural form of request/ and the request strategies that students use.