

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of Study

Market is a place where buyers and sellers meet to do selling and buying activities. During the selling and buying activities, sellers and buyers usually engage in price making activity in which they usually communicate to each other in order to get the lower price, for the buyers, and to get the highest profit, for the sellers. In doing the price marking activity, which is also known as bargaining activity, there are some requests that are made either by the sellers or the buyers. Interestingly, the buyers and sellers need to consider several things before making the request because they have to keep the face of both parties and in order to avoid the misunderstanding between them. Therefore, they apply some strategies in making their request. Because of that reason, the study of bargaining process is really interested to be analyzed and it has been attracted researchers to conduct research on this particular topic.

There are hundreds of markets, both traditional and modern markets, in Surabaya. But, one of the most famous ones is *Pasar Pabean*. *Pasar Pabean* is considered as one of the biggest traditional markets in Surabaya (Pasar Surya, 2013). This market was built on 1899 and is located in between Kembang Jepun, the China Town of Surabaya, and Ampel, the Arabic Village of Surabaya. Almost all sellers in this market do not set a fix price, thus the buyers can bargain the price of the things that they are going to buy. In addition, due to the location of

this market, the sellers and the buyers of this market consist of people from various ethnicities, such as Chinese, Javanese, Madurese. Because of the existence of various ethnicities there, the use of language as a mean of communication is also varied. People of the same cultural background tend to share the same language while people of different ethnicities prefer to use a language that can be understood by both speakers and hearers. However, there is also a tendency of using the language of an ethnicity that makes up the majority of buyers in *Pasar Pabean*.

In Indonesia, when people talk about market, especially traditional market, it is closely related to bargaining activity. Bargaining is an important aspect of selling and buying activities in which the sellers and the prospective buyers engage in price-making activity and utilize their social and linguistic knowledge to build and negotiate their identity and relationship (Khurn, 1968). Therefore, bargaining can be considered as part of requests since in every bargaining activity there must be actions of making requests between the sellers and the buyers. This activity is influenced by the norms that exist in particular communities. Thus, different cultural systems in different language communities may result in different bargaining expressions (Mudhafar and Hussein, 2013). Sellers and buyers tend to behave in a way that can support them to achieve their goals which are to obtain the goods at the lower cost for the buyers and to maximize the profit for the sellers. Therefore, it can be inferred that sellers and buyers are connected in a network in which they make request to one another in order to achieve best agreement.

Becker (1982) explained that request is an expression that is used by speakers in order to make the listeners do what the speakers ask. Looking at that definition, it can be seen that request is actually part of speech acts. Yule (1997) stated that speech act is action that is performed through an utterance. The speech act of request, according to the theory of politeness, is defined as face-threatening act (FTA) that requires the ability of the speakers to apply the use of language in context (Brown and Levinson, 1987). People do not easily make a request without considering the impact of the request that they make. In making request people need to be careful in order to avoid misunderstanding and to keep a good relation between the speakers and the hearers. Thus, speakers should apply the appropriate strategy to communicate what they want to make a request to the hearers.

There are three levels of directness of requests, namely direct requests, conventionally indirect requests, and non-conventionally indirect requests (Blum-Kulka, et.al, 1989). Direct requests are indicated by the use of grammatical, lexical, and semantic means in its illocutionary forces. In conventionally indirect requests the illocutionary forces are uttered through fixed linguistics convention that is used in particular speech community. In non-conventionally indirect request, the speakers do not explicitly express the illocutionary force; hence the hearers are required to figure out the meaning of the illocution in context. Furthermore, there are nine sub-levels of the three level of directness that have been explained in the previous sentences. These sub-levels, which are known as strategy types, are mood derivable, explicit performative, hedged performative, obligation statement, want statement, suggestory formula, query preparatory,

strong hint, and mild hit. Further information about these strategy types will be explained in the next chapter.

The writer is interested to conduct a research on this particular topic because the writer is curious to find out what strategy is used by the buyers in making request during bargaining activity especially if the buyers and the sellers are of different ethnicities. As previously mentioned, different cultural background that the people have may result in different strategy used in making request. Hence, the writer decided to choose *Pasar Pabean* as the place to collect the data because this market provides an ideal setting for this research since the sellers and the buyers of this market come from various ethnicities. *Pasar Pabean* is not only a place where sellers and buyers do a transaction, but also a place where people from different cultural backgrounds as well as different ethnicities meet together and interact to each other (Pasar Surya, 2013). People of Javanese, Chinese, Madurese, and some other ethnicities can be found in this place. This multicultural background is also reflected in the use of language of the sellers and buyers. Thus, it is not only Indonesian language that is used in their communication, but also some local dialects or local languages, such as Javanese language and Madurese language. The multiculturalism of the people and the variety of language used in *Pasar Pabean* make the writer interested in analyzing the request strategies used by the buyers to the sellers of different ethnicity.

In brief, this present study is intended to analyze the request strategy that is used by the buyers in bargaining activity at *Pasar Pabean*. The analysis is conducted using pragmatic approach. As for the theory, the main theory that is

used in this present study is the theory of request strategies proposed by Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper (1989), known as Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (henceforth, CCSARP). CCSARP is well-known as an empirical study of cross-cultural pragmatics and has been used to analyze request strategies in many languages, such as Chinese (Gao, 1999), Bahasa Indonesia (Hassall, 1999), Korean (Rue, Zhang, and Shin, 2007), and Burmese (Rattanapitak, 2013).

Previous study about request strategy has been done by Rue, Zhang, and Shin (2007) in which they described about the request strategies in Korean. There are some theories from that study that are used in this present study, such as the theory of request strategies. However, the study conducted by Rue, Zhang, and Shin focuses more on the language used by Korean speakers, while in this present study the writer analyses the language of Indonesian buyers in bargaining activity.. In addition, study of this topic has also been conducted by Andansari (2012) from Airlangga University in which she focuses on the strategy used by the sellers and the buyers in semi-modern market, i.e. *Pusat Grosir Surabaya*, while this present study focuses more on the use of request strategies in traditional market, i.e. *Pasar Pabean Surabaya*, where the buyers and sellers come from various ethnicities.

## **1.2.Statement of the Problems**

Based on the background that has been elaborated above, the problems of this study are:

- What are strategies of request produced by buyers at *Pasar Pabean* Surabaya during the bargaining activity?
- What are the frequencies of request strategies used by the buyers in bargaining activity at *Pasar Pabean* Surabaya?

### **1.3.Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are:

- To identify and classify the strategies of request used by the buyers at *Pasar Pabean* Surabaya during the bargaining activity.
- To discover the frequencies of request strategies used by the buyers in bargaining activity at *Pasar Pabean* Surabaya.

### **1.4.Significance of the Study**

This study, hopefully, can give theoretical and practical contribution to the society. Theoretically, it is hoped that this study can provide theoretical contribution to the study of pragmatics which concerns about the use of language in context. Thus, this study can be used as a reference for further studies in this topic area. Besides, since the aim of this study is to find the request strategies used in bargaining activity between sellers and buyers, the practical contribution of this study is to provide the information on how to use the appropriate strategy in making a request in multicultural context. Hence, it can reduce the risk of misunderstanding that can threaten the face of both parties. Further, by knowing

the appropriate strategy, it can support the trading activities between sellers and buyers that can bring benefit for both parties.

### 1.5. Definition of Key Terms

**Request** : An expression that is used by the speakers in order to make the listeners do what the speakers ask (Becker, 1982).

**Request strategies** : Strategies that are used in order to make an appropriate request (Yule, 1997)

**Pasar Pabean** : One of the biggest and oldest traditional markets in Surabaya (Pasar Surya, 2013)

**Bargaining** : A condition in which sellers and the prospective buyers engage in price-making activity and utilize their social and linguistics knowledge to build and negotiate their identity and relationship (Khurn, 1968)