

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

Communication is a process in which a message is sent from senders to receivers. People usually use language to communicate their ideas, feeling, and experience in various ways. In communicating their ideas, people have to know how to use the language itself. Therefore, when they communicate their ideas, they can express them effectively. In this case, communicative competence is very important to be achieved. Communicative competence is “the underlying systems of knowledge and skill required for communication” (Canale, 1983, 5). So, the students should take every chance to communicate. Moreover, O’Malley and Pierce (1996) said that speaking seems to be an important skill that a learner should acquire. This means that the ability to communicate is very important in order to enable students to communicate effectively through oral language. The disability of the students to speak can make them unable to express their ideas even in a simple form of conversation.

As an international language, English is mostly used by the people around the world. In some countries students can learn English at school. Nowadays, mastering English is one of skills that should be achieved. If the students cannot speak English well, they might lose opportunity to work in multinational companies. They might also lose opportunity to interact and communicate with other people from different countries. Besides, they might lose opportunity to get a better job. Therefore, many

students are expected to be able to communicate in English, especially the students which is set up to work in hospitality area like hotel.

Nowadays, communicating effectively in English becomes important phenomena. In Indonesia, especially in Surabaya, there are a lot of hotels. The visitors of the hotels are not only domestic tourists but they are also foreign tourists. In hotels, the workers who interact with customers must have good skill to communicate. By having the skill of communication, the workers can provide excellent service to customers. They can write and read customer's orders and understand the written instructions. Therefore, the hotels need a lot of workers who have good ability to communicate in English. If the workers do not have ability to communicate in English, it is impossible to give good service to foreigners who stay in those hotels.

Surabaya Hotel School is one of hotel schools in Surabaya which offers many jobs' opportunities to the students. The students of Surabaya Hotel School do not only work in some cities in Indonesia, but they also work in the hotels and restaurants in other countries, such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Saudi Arabia. Surabaya Hotel School has many classes, like food and beverage service, food and beverage product, hotel management, pastry and bakery, and room division. In each class there is an English program, so the students do not only learn about everything related to hotel's services but they also learn English which focuses on conversation. English is important for the students of Surabaya Hotel School because it can support their career. Based on the information from Mr. Bagus, the Executive Director of Surabaya

Hotel School, one of the goals of Surabaya Hotel School is to encourage the students to participate more in speaking English. He realizes that the weakness of most students of Surabaya Hotel School is that they lack of speaking in English. That is why, he instructs the teachers to give the students more English conversation than written English. According to him after graduating from this school at least the students should be able to speak English simply. By having a lot of practices, the students are expected to be able to communicate in English fluently, because most of them will work in hotels and restaurants.

In Surabaya Hotel School, the students study in class for 6 months and after that, they will do training. Some students will do training in hotels in Indonesia, while some others will follow training in hotels abroad. In this case, the students who work in international hotels should be able to communicate with guests everytime. They should communicate in English with them because most of them usually do not understand Indonesian language. In order to increase the service of the hotels to the guests, the employees should be able to speak English fluently. By mastering English language, the hotel's employees can communicate with all guests from different countries as good as possible. Consequently, they can serve everything required by their guests and make them feel convenient when they stay in those hotels. If the guests feel convenient with the service of the employees in hotels, they will go back to the same hotels in their next visit in the future. It means that the hotel will get a lot of profits and of course the employees will get their salary increased.

Improving students' speaking abilities is not easy. Students usually find difficulties to convey their ideas, especially when they communicate in English. The students are usually lacking of vocabulary, knowledge of grammar, and sometimes they do not know how to pronounce the words correctly. To solve the problems in communication, people usually use their hands, imitate the sound or movement of things, mix language, create new words, describe or circumlocute something they do not know the word for. In short, people use communication strategies to communicate (Dornyei, 1995, p.56). Moreover, Ellis (1997) said that communication strategies refer to the ways that people with limited knowledge of L2 try to communicate with others. It means that when the learners attempt to communicate in English, they usually try to face various problems to communicate by using spoken device or non linguistic means such as miming, gesture, facial expression, or sound imitation.

In this research, the writer uses theory of Brown (2007) which is adopted from Dornyei (1995) as the main theory in her research. According to Brown (2007), communication strategies are grouped into two categories: Avoidance Strategies, and Compensatory Strategies. First, Avoidance Strategies, which consists of message abandonment and topic avoidance. Second, Compensatory Strategies, which consists of circumlocution, approximation, use of all-purpose words, word-coinage, use of nonlinguistic means, literal translation, foreignizing, code-switching, prefabricated patterns, appeal for help and Stalling or time-gaining strategies.

Different students may use different strategies to solve their communication problems. In class, the students usually communicate with others by using their

second or foreign language (English) that are not mastered yet. In this case, students usually do not realize that they apply certain strategy when they communicate. For example: if the student does not know the word corkscrew, he/ she will replace it by saying 'the thing that uses to open the bottle'. It means the students use circumlocution in which they describe or paraphrase the target object or action. Besides, the students come from various backgrounds. In this case, some students are good in speaking while some others are not. Therefore the writer expected that communication strategy were used during their conversations with others or with their teacher.

For that reasons, the writer will analyze communication strategies used by students of Surabaya Hotel School in class. The writer chooses to investigate communication strategies in her research because she is interested to observe the way the students communicate using English. In this research, the writer wants to find out strategies that are mostly used by students and why they use them.

## 1.2. Statements of the Problems

Based on the background of the study above the writer formulates the problems as follows:

1. What types of communication strategies are used by the students of English class in Surabaya Hotel School?
2. Why do the students mostly use certain strategies when they communicate?

### 1.3. Objective of the study

1. The writer wants to know the types of communication strategies used by the students of English class in Surabaya Hotel School.
2. The writer wants to know the factors which influence the students to use certain strategies when they communicate.

### 1.4. Significance of the study

By doing this research, the writer hopes that the result of this study will give contribution to ELT (English Language Teaching). The writer also hopes that the teacher will place communication strategies as the important things to communicate with other people not only in institutional setting but also in everyday conversation. Moreover, the writer hopes that this research will increase our knowledge about the types of communication strategies that can be used by students to overcome communication problems. Hopefully from this research, the students can apply communication strategies to keep conversation going on and can improve their ability to speak in foreign language.

### 1.5. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid the misunderstanding on some terms, the writer gives some definitions of the key terms. There are some key terms which are used by the writer:

1. Avoidance strategies : This is the strategies in which learners manage to devise ingenious methods of topic avoidance such as changing the

subject, pretending not to understand (a classical means for avoiding answering a question), simply not responding at all or noticeably abandoning a message when a thought become too difficult to express. (Brown, 2007, p. 139)

2. Communication strategies : a systematic technique employed by speaker to express his or her meaning when faced with some difficulty (Dornyei, 1995, p.56)
3. Compensatory strategies : common set of communication devices involves compensation for missing knowledge. (Brown, 2007, p. 139)