

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Dawson, Zollinger, and Elwell believe that all people in this world need to communicate with other people and language is one of the instruments that can be used as the means to communicate (23). Nowadays, “over two hundred million people use English as their first language, and millions more read and understand it as their second language” (14): In other words, English language is the universal language that is used by many people.

However, English used by different countries may have differences in accents, and it might affect the gained meaning when a message is transferred. Moreover, it is stated that:

each language has its own sound, scheme, or, better yet, phonetic structure, which means not only sounds that have different points of articulation from the ones we are used to, but sets of oppositions between sounds that become significant to the meaning and understanding. (Pei 146)

In other words, one's first language accent might influence his speech in the second language or foreign language. Therefore, if one pronounces a word differently and is not the same with the standard pronunciation, it may cause a misunderstanding between the people who communicate. In business, this can create misunderstandings when the people have a business agreement that might lead to business failure.

I am interested in discussing this problem based on the experience I found while doing my apprenticeship in Svenson Hair Centre. As a trichologist consultant or a person who works as hair and scalp specialist, I handled clients from Indonesia who wanted a scalp and hair treatment in Taiwan or Singapore. Sometimes there was a misunderstanding between the office staff from Taiwan and Singapore and me, and this problem was also experienced by other consultants in Svenson Hair Centre.

#### B. Identification of the Problem

1. What are the causes and effects of not being familiar with Taiwanese and Singaporean English accents in business communication?
2. What are the ways to prevent misunderstandings caused by different English accents of Taiwanese and Singaporean in business communication?

### C. Objective and Benefits of the Study

The objective of the study is to know what the causes and effects of misunderstandings caused by different accent especially Singaporean and Taiwanese accents in business communication and the ways to prevent misunderstandings caused by the different accents in business communication.

The benefit of the study:

#### 1. For the company

This study can help the company prevent misunderstandings in handling Singaporean and Taiwanese office staff, so that they can satisfy their clients' needs and maintain good image.

#### 2. For the readers

This term paper can be used to increase readers' knowledge about how important the accuracy of business communication across culture is.

#### 3. For the present writer

Increase my knowledge about how to understand the office staff from Singapore and Taiwan, so that I can give better service for Svenson Hair Center client in the future.

### D. Description of the Institution

At first, Svenson Hair Centre was established in London, in 1956. It is a company which runs a beauty centre, especially in scalp and hair health. By using modern technology system, Svenson Hair Centre has

been giving solutions to scalp and hair problems to many people for over 50 years. With new trichological science and knowledge which is science and knowledge about hair and scalp, plus a great number of trichologist from the whole world, Svenson Hair Centre makes a scalp and hair treatment program which is suitable for the scalp and hair needs of every person.

#### E. Method of the Study

This study will be done by using cause and effect approach to know which solution is the best for answering the identification of the problem. Data gathering will be done by using library research and internet research.

#### F. Limitation of the Study

The problem that I discuss in this paper happened during my apprenticeship in Svenson Hair Centre from 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2008- 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2008. This study is limited to discuss the problems in sending and receiving information to Singaporean and Taiwanese office staff in Svenson Hair Centre. The study is also limited only to finding solutions which are possible to be adapted in Svenson Hair Centre in the near future, and the result of the study is a solution which is supported by quotations from library research and internet research.

## G. Organization of the Term Paper

This term paper starts with the Abstract, a summary of the entire paper in Indonesian. This Abstract is followed by the Acknowledgements, in which I thank the work contribution of other parties. After that is The Table of Contents, followed by these four Chapters:

Chapter I is the Introduction of the analysis

Chapter II is the Problem Analysis

Chapter III is the Potential Solution

Chapter IV is the Conclusion

In the final part, I present the Bibliography in alphabetical order.