

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

Language affects many facets of human life such as religion, politics, society, and economy. Many situations of which are described as provocative. The banning of certain languages or mandating the use of one over another have produced tension and anxiety, charges of isolationism, and even allegations of racism and discrimination.

Language is foremost a means of communication, and communication almost always takes place within some sort of social context. Good in Thompson (2003: 1) emphasizes that the use of language lies at the very heart social lives. This is why effective communication requires an understanding and recognition of the connections between a language and the people who use it. These conditions are complex. For example, there are situations where one is required to use slang with a friend or formal language with a boss and to judge a candidate's campaign speeches. All of these acts require knowledge of the language, as well as the cultural and social forces acting on that language.

Social context is a major factor that drives one's language choices. For example, the language used in an interview situation is much concerned with how one spoke as with what one actually said. One may have even practiced sounding confident, for instance, or intelligent, so that one would make a good impression during the interview. One makes decisions every day, or has decisions made about

her/himself by other people, based on the language use. Someone frequently evaluates a person's education, socioeconomic level, background, honesty, friendliness, and numerous other qualities by which a person speaks. When the speaker wants to make a particular impression on someone else, s/he consciously chooses her/his language, just as s/he chooses hair styles or clothing.

Language is not something somehow separated from the ideas it contains, but the way language is used indicates a great deal about how the ideas have been shaped. A speaker may say words clearly and use long complex sentences with correct grammar, but s/he still has a communication problem if s/he has not mastered the rules for social language known as pragmatics. In this line, the speakers should understand appropriately the concept of the language which is included in the area of functional grammar. This study will be focused on speech functions in the Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony that concerns on the addressers' language whether they use statement, question, offer, command based on the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).

SFL is an approach to linguistics proposed by Halliday which sees the language used in social context. This approach is based on the theory of grammar which considers language as a resource used for communication not as a set of rules. It is explored how is the use of language in different context, and how language is structured for use as a semiotic system. Martin (1992: 3) noted that the model of language in a systemic functional can be characterized in terms of language as a resource. It means that language is a network of relationship. On the other hand means that SFL is especially concern with system, relationship

between linguistic unit of various kinds and concerns with speakers might and tend to do.

According to Halliday (1994: 8) functional grammar is one that construes all the units of language – its clauses, phrases and so on – as organic configurations of function. On the other words, each part is interpreted as functional with respect to the whole. Montgomery in Thompson (2003: 38) said that language informs the way one thinks, the way one experiences, and the way one interacts one each other. Language not only provides the basic community, but also the ground of division. Systematic knowledge about language and practical awareness of how it works is fundamental to the process of building mature communities.

There are two terms mostly involved while interacting or communicating, they are speaker and listener or audience. In the act of speaking, the speaker adopts for her/himself a particular speech role, and so in doing assigns to the listener a complementary role which s/he wishes to adopt in her/his turn. For example, in asking a question, a speaker is taking on the role of seeker of information and requiring the listener to take on the role of supplier of the information demanded. The most fundamental types of speech role are just two (1) giving and (2) demanding. Besides that, there is another distinction, equally fundamental, that relates to the nature of the commodity namely goods and services or information. These two variables define the four primary speech functions of statement, question, offer and command. These in turns are matched

by a set of desired responses: acknowledging a statement, answering a question, accepting an offer, and carrying out a command.

This study refers to the use of speech functions in the Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony. Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony is the ceremony in which the bones of one's ancestors are reinterred several years after her/his death. In ceremony lasting for several days, the bones of a particularly honored ancestor and those of his descendants are exhumed, cleaned, mourned and finally laid to rest again in a bone house known as a *tugu* or *tambak*.

The Toba Bataks highly values their ancestors and their land, so they do such kind of this ceremony. One motive for the *mangongkal holi* ceremony appears to be raising the status of the Holy Spirit or *begu* of the deceased. Traditional Batak beliefs hold that the dead occupy a hierarchical status similar to the social position they held in life. This means that a rich and powerful individual remains influential after death and this status can be elevated if the family holds *mangongkal holi* ceremony.

It is not going to be concerned a lot with the ceremony practice, what is going to be concerned in this study is the language use in the *mangongkal holi* ceremony. It means that this research focus on the speech functions use in the *mangongkal holi* ceremony by the three pillars of the Toba Batak – *Somba marhula-hula*, *elek marboru*, *manat mardongan tubu* in order to make an offer, a command, a statement, and a question among them in the *mangongkal holi* ceremony. In the practice of culture, language is badly needed unless the communication or interaction will never happen. There are some reasons for

choosing the speech functions in Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony, the speech functions as the object of the study. First, this speech community is known for indirection in their linguistics behavior, especially when it comes to communicating about unfamiliar things. Second, the Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony is activity that has been a culture in Toba Batak community in Indonesia, which has great aspect of language. Because the language use in Toba Batak language in the process of doing the *mangongkal holi* ceremony is different among of the participants depending on her/his position in the three hearthstones “Dalihan Natolu” and the third is; studies which focuses on the speech functions in Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony by Toba Batak ethnic is rarely found. This kind of study is rarely conducted due to the limitation of data sources. These facts serve to be a motivation to conduct the present study dealing with speech functions which are conveyed by Toba Batak ethnic in order to find out what types of speech functions which are used in the *mangongkal holi* ceremony.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

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

- 1 What types of speech functions are used in the Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony?
- 2 How are the speech functions realized by the three pillars of the Toba Batak life philosophy (*Tulang/Hula-hula, Dongan Tubu, Boru*)?
- 3 Why are the speech functions coded by the three pillars in the ways they are?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

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

- 1) to describe what types of speech functions are used in the Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony,
- 2) to analyze how the speech functions are realized by the three pillars of the Toba Batak life philosophy (*Tulang/Hula-hula, Dongan Tubu, Boru*), and
- 3) to explain or reason why the speech functions are coded by the three pillars in the ways they are.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study attempts to investigate the speech functions used in the Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony. The main aspect to be observed is the speech functions such as making an offer, a command, a statement, and a question among the three pillars of Toba Batak. The focus is on the meaning or speech functions as they are realized in the Toba Batak language.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

Findings of the study are expected to be significantly relevant theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research findings are expected to enrich the theories of speech functions, specifically the spoken language of certain community, mainly Toba Batak community. This study considers being useful initially to provide the information of speech functions used by the three pillars of Toba Batak in *mangongkal holi* ceremony when they express the speech functions

in the situation. Consequently, it will give better understanding and new insight on how speech functions is related to the aspect of functional grammar study. This contribution will in turn give tentative framework for a comprehensive analysis speech functions.

Practically, since this research focuses on speech functions used in Toba Batak *mangongkal holi* ceremony in expressing an offer, a command, a statement, and a question, hopefully the findings are useful for teachers and lectures of functional grammar to apply the speech functions specifically in functional grammar to the students either in University or High School which occur in daily conversation, then the students knowledge about the speech function can be enlarged and brighten and also for the the general people, they would have a clear understanding about the utterances used by Toba Batak in a certain ceremony, and specially for Batak Toba, they can practice the patterns of speech functions which are used in a certain ceremony, this will accelerate them to speak Indonesian, thus they will not find it clumsy to speak directly to the Toba Batak.