

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Certain local language surviving potential depends on the speakers' language attitude. Further, certain languages will be lost if there is no awareness of the speakers to maintain and protect the language. Thus, all local languages have a risk to be extinct according to Grenoble and Whaley. To maintain the language of Simalungun the speakers should love the Simalungun culture, such as expressed by JR Saragih the head of the Simalungun regency addressing the Malam Pesona Kesenian Budaya Simalungun in PRSU Medan ([Analisa: 2012]). He said the Simalungun culture is a legacy and asset, which is precious heritage.

Saragih (2012: 5) Bahasa Simalungun (BS) is at risk now with different levels of language extinction based on different area. Simalungun area divides into two, they are upper Simalungun and down Simalungun. Upper Simalungun consist of Raya, Seribu Dolok, Panei Tongah. In these areas the BS is still maintained. However in the down Simalungun area, Karang Sari, Gunung Maligas, Bajalingge and Melangir the speakers of BS have shifted into dominant languages, such as bahasa Indonesia (BI), Javanese, Malay, etc, because in those areas Simalungunese lived in multicultural and multilingual communities.

Damanik (2009:5) stated that there are two factors that affected the BS, first, external factor which is related to globalization and second, internal factor

which is affected by the language speakers, now majority of the Simalungunese shift from BS into BI as Janse (2003:1) said that a language is potentially endangered if the generation start preferring a dominant language and learn the obsolescing language imperfectly.

According Wurm in Janse (2003:1), there are five levels of language endangerment, *first* a language is potentially endanger: if the children start to use the dominant language than the indigenous language. *Second*, endangered: if the youngest speakers are young adults and there are no or very view child speakers. *Third*, seriously in endangered : if the youngest speakers are middle-aged or past middle-aged. *Fourth* : it is terminal endangered or moribund if there are only a few elderly speakers left. And *fifth* : a language is dead when there are no speakers left at all. According to UNESCO discernment, there are six categories of language endangerment, safe, at risk, disappearing, moribound, nearly extinction and extinction (2003: 9). Based on the six categories BS is categorized as the risk language up to extinct depend on area BS used.

Bahasa Indonesia (BI) is used as the dominant language in many Simalungun families. It means, when BS is not in common use in those families, it will be in dangerous stage. The use of BI in all activities makes unbalanced of BS, and also from the disable to protect their language from language globalization that is English besides BI and also human error. The inter-marriage family find it difficult to apply their local language because they have different language. One of the effective ways to cover children's indigenous language is through family and parent habitual action because, parent have a dominant role to

form the children language used in their environment. The use of vernaculars at home is a good way for nucleus and extended family to keep using the vernacular language to help the maintenance of language.

Damanik (2009:20) says that Simalungun district is dominantly inhabited by Simalungun, the transitional symptoms began to appear as the social gap. There is social gap. The communication between parents and children in the home are no longer in their local language. BI is mostly used than the BS, this is clearly seen in the intermarriage family.

BS is one of cultural identities of Indonesia and important part of Simalungunese. BS is one of Batak languages in North Sumatera which is used as a symbol of the language users. Beside BS there are some others Batak languages they are, Toba, Karo, Mandailing, Angkola, Dairi, Melayu, etc, spread out of North Sumatera. Indonesian local languages where spread out from Sabang to Marauke at least 746 local languages in Indonesia (Pusat Bahasa : 2009). Despite of numerously different local languages Indonesian speak only BI as the official language, which is used for Indonesian people in communicating each others. Batak language (BS) included into larger eight regional languages in Indonesia, the rest is Sundanese, Madurese language, the language of Minangkabau, Bugis language, Banjar language, and the language of Bali.

BS is used in Gunung Maligsa area, it is a district in North Sumatera. BS is used for limitation aspects of life in this area, and it is not truly helpful to

maintain the language itself, even though it is learned as one of subject in the school.

When two or more languages are in contact, three alternatives will occur (Fishman 1989) *Firstly* the language maybe maintained without any change , *secondly*, there may be shift of some words in the language, and *thirdly*, one of the languages may be leading than the others language that is called as language loss or death. Since 1928, Indonesian language was used as National Language of Indonesia Which pledged by the youth of Indonesia. Than in 1948 it was used as national language of Indonesia and Official language. The situation effects the young Indonesian to be multilingual. They use Indonesia as unity language than local Language used in limited situation and place. This condition is realizing certain language regeneration stop in the future instead of BS, which is seldom practiced by the generation. Base on Oriyama (2010:95) said that multilingual and multicultural caused the language potentially endanger than the dominant language and culture will be applied in the community they live.

Moreover, according to Janse (2003:2) socioeconomic and socio politic factors also affected language use, socioeconomic factors include rapid economic transformation, industrialization, migration and so on and sociopolitical factors include official language policies, discrimination, war etc. BS speakers in Gunung Maligas growth in multicultural and technology, they lived with others language speakers such as Javanese, Mandailingnese, Malay and so on. Among them affect each other and the dominant language will be often used. Saragih (2012:8) the language users of BS reduce in number as they leave their hometown and due to

intercultural marriage because all languages in the world are potentially extinct, as a result of language characteristic that is always dynamic.

Besides language dominant and globalization, parent also have affected to maintain the language, as Nazaruddin (2011: 60) said that parent role influence children language, the existences of the language is in endangered level since there is no effort of transmitting the language to children.

Furthermore, the loss of BS implies the loss of its culture, knowledge system, including philosophical systems, oral literacy and arts. In wide scale it means that loss of Indonesian and human assets.

Language attitude of BS speakers is mainly supportive to the maintenance of BS. Members of a speech community are not usually neutral towards their own language. They may see it as essential to their community and identity and they may use it without promoting it; they may be ashamed of it and, therefore, not promote it; or they may see it as a nuisance and actively avoid using it. When attitudes towards their language are very positive, the language may be seen as a key symbol of group identity. Just as people value family traditions, festivals and community events, members of the community may see their language as a cultural core value, vital to their community and ethnic identity. If members view their language as hindrance to economic mobility and integration into mainstream society, they may develop negative attitudes toward their language (UNESCO, 2003:14)

Therefore, the maintenance of BS is crucially done, as the affect of internal and external factors that's why language must be protected, preserved, and maintained. The maintenance of a heritage language is vital for the self identity and symbols of its speakers. There are several factors that support language maintenance, one of them is social factor means that all people who lives around us giving effect to our daily language, dominant language will be successfully use in the community and it is BI. It shows the facts that social factors effects language use in our environment. This problem is really happen in Simalungun families who live in Gunung Maligas. They use BI and sometimes Java very often because their social community is Javanese.

This condition shows maintaining BS is a must to protect one of many vernaculars language in Indonesia from extinction. There are three reasons to protect and maintain BS, first stated in Indonesian Constitutively that is UUD 1945 the government must be responsible to maintain vernaculars as the national culture. Secondly, vernacular is national wealth, because the death of vernaculars have on the death of a culture. And thirdly, vernacular contributes to enrich the Vocabularies of BI.

Furthermore it is important to conduct a study on BS maintenance, in order to maintain BS from being endangered. In maintaining BS there are many ways potentially done as a solution, some of them by opening short course for people who wants to know about BS, than To build up self confidence to speak BS by unionizing a BS community. And one of common intra marriage in

Simalungun culture is with the closer family. Intra marriage has big effect in maintaining BS, because the children can learn BS directly from their parents.

### **1.2 Problems of the Study**

This study is focused on the language maintenance of BS, and the sub focus is on the language endangerment of BS and its language use domain. Specifically, the problems are formulated as the following.

- (1) What is the level of endangerment of the BS in Kecamatan Gunung Maligas?
- (2) What domains need to be proportionally managed to maintain the BS in Kecamatan Gunung Maligas?
- (3) How is the ways to maintain BS in Kecamatan Gunung Maligas?

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

With reference to the research problems, the objectives are

- (1) to identify the level of endangerment of the BS
- (2) to ascertain the domains which are proportionally needed to be managed by the speakers to maintain BS and
- (3) to ascertain the ways done to maintain BS.

#### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

This study is limited to identify the level of language endangerment of BS in Gunung Maligas where there are two generations of the BS speakers' studied namely, parents as second generation and children as the third generation. In addition the study is related to the proportional activities potentially done to maintain BS specifically the study ascertains which domain are done by the speakers to maintain BS in Gunung Maligas especially Simalungun Families where here will be classified into five domains they are: family, friendship, religion, education, employment domain.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Findings of the research are expected to have both theoretical and practical significance for the readers, teachers and also for the governments. Theoretically, the findings of the study add up more horizons to the theories of language planning. In addition, the findings can be references to further studies of the BS.

Practically, the findings can be useful guides and references for speakers of BS or the decisions makers to preserve and maintain the BS. In additions, the findings are relevant and useful for government officials in designing the BS language learning programs. Further findings of the study can be references for mapping maintainability of the BS speakers.