

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Indonesian country consists of many societies and there are multi-ethnic of ethnics across many islands in Indonesia, for instances: Javanese, Toba Batakese, Acehese, Padangnese, Sundanese, Balinese, Malaynese, etc. Besides having many ethnics, Indonesia has 746 native languages (Pusat Bahasa, 2008). Every ethnic has its own original place and they usually use their own native language also, but because of the movement of one ethnic to the other ethnic's place, it causes there are more than one ethnic live in one place, as what happen in Stabat.

According to the result of population census in 2013, held by the Statistics Bureau of Langkat shows that the number of Stabat district residents reached 83.273 people in 2013, with the density of population 765 people per km<sup>2</sup> (Seksi Neraca Wilayah dan Analisis Statistik, 2014). By this large population, Stabat as the capital of Langkat regency inhabited by several ethnics who live together, one of the ethnics is the Toba Batakese people who come from their original place, ie the Toba district area a long time ago. Although almost every ethnic has its own native language, however, in reality not all of the Toba Batakese people and the other ethnics in Stabat are able to speak their native languages fluently.

Juliansyah (2013, p. 319) states "in almost all occasions children in Stabat have spoken Bahasa Indonesia". For instance is Malay language, as the original ethnic in Stabat. In addition, the study by Adisaputera (2009) showed that

Malaynese people in Stabat lead to a shift from Malay language to Bahasa Indonesia. According to him the language shift happened as a result of: (1) the pressure of the dominant language (Bahasa Indonesia), and (2) the loss of Malay language speakers.

The same thing happens to the Toba Batakese children in Stabat, most of them tend to use Bahasa Indonesia to communicate with their friends and relatives, even some of them hard to understand the language, or they might understand but they cannot pronounce it fluently. Base on the reality happens in Stabat, the researcher assumes that Toba Batak language should be lost (dead) in Stabat because the Toba Batakese children as the youth generation do not use the language anymore to communicate, but it is not. What has happened to the Toba Batakese children in Stabat is totally different to the parents because most of parents are able to speak Toba Batak language fluently and they speak the language whenever they meet the Toba Batakese people.

Interestingly, for some of the Toba Batakese parents who speak Toba Batak language did not use it in their childhood, but when they become a parent they speak the language fluently. This phenomenon proves the statement “different communities have different kinds of attitudes and aspirations in relation to their language” (Crystal, 2000, p. 93) and also interesting to observe, because what has happened to the Toba Batakese parents’ attitude is contrast to the children’s attitudes towards Toba Batak language.

Attitudes are mental phenomenon which cannot be examined and cannot be observed directly, but they are manifested in people’s action or reaction

(Baker, 1992). People's attitude towards language can be seen from how they think about the language, how they use the language, with whom, where and how often they use it. Language attitude studies will determine that people's attitude towards language might be positive or negative (Chalak & Kassaian, 2010)

Related to the positive or negative attitudes, Garvin & Mathiot (1968) states that the language attitude contains at least three characteristics, namely: (1) language loyalty, which motivates a society of language speakers maintain their language, and if it is needed, they will protect their language from other languages, influences; (2) language pride, which motivates people to make their language as their identity and the unity of society; and (3) awareness of the norms, which motivates the speakers to use the language carefully and politely and this is the biggest factor which contributes to the activity of using the language (cited in Masruddin, 2014). Speakers with these three characteristics towards language are categorized as people who have positive attitudes, but if they do not have or less of these characteristics are categorized as people who have negative attitudes.

In a study by Fakhurrazi (2013) about the attitude of indigenous Acehese people towards their vernacular maintenance in Langsa. He analyzed 20 of Acehese children by using language characteristics by Garvin & Mathiot (1968). He found that 55% of the subjects have positive attitudes toward Acehese vernacular, while 45% of the subjects have negative attitudes. In his result, he stated that children who have positive attitudes use Acehese vernacular in their daily interaction because their parents teach them and use the language at home, while children who have negative attitudes do not use the language in their daily interaction because they are not able to speak using the language.

Another way to know about people's attitude towards language is through the choice they made towards a variety language in communication. Fishman (1964) introduced one way of knowing the language choice by proposing the concepts of domains. He classifies domains of language use into five domains, they are: family, friendship, religion, education, and employment domains.

Siahaan (2002), who studied language attitude of the Toba Batakese people in Medan by using domains of language use by Fishman (1972). In his study he specified two domains (family and friendship domains) by reasons that these domains provide opportunities toward the intra-group activities of the Toba Batakese people. He analyzed 20 of the Toba Batakese parents and children and he found that the highest use of Bahasa Indonesia in the family domain is used by children (47%), the mixing of Bahasa Indonesia and Toba Batak language (28.80%) is used by parents, and the use of Toba Batak language (18.2%) is used by parents, while in the friendship domain the highest use of Bahasa Indonesia is used by children (47%), the mixing of Bahasa Indonesia and Toba Batak language (25.60%) is used by parents, and the use of Toba Batak language (21.40%) is used by parents. From the result showed that children more often to use Bahasa Indonesia, while parents more often to use the mixing of Bahasa Indonesia and Toba Batak language in all domains. It means that children tend to have negative attitudes than parents towards Toba Batak language.

Therefore, as the researcher described previously that most of the Toba Batakese parents in Stabat are able to speak Toba Batak language although some of them did not use it in their childhood. For parents who did not use Toba Batak language in their childhood, the researcher assumes that when they are child their

parents did not teach them and did not speak Toba Batak language with them at home, so they did not familiar with the language. However, even they did not use it in their childhood, but now after they become a parent they speak Toba Batak language. Base on this reality, the researcher assumes that there must be something influences the attitude of the Toba Bataknese parents towards Toba Batak language.

In line with all descriptions above, i.e. the bilingualism happens in Stabat, the different attitude of the Toba Bataknese parents and children towards Batak language, and the unusual phenomenon of some of the Toba Bataknese parents in Stabat, where they speak Toba Batak language although they did not use it in their childhood, the researcher would like to know how the attitudes of these Toba Bataknese parents toward Toba Batak language.

## **1.2 Problems of the Study**

Based on the background of the study above, the problems are formulated as the following.

1. What are the attitudes of the Toba Bataknese parents towards Toba Batak language?
2. How are the attitudes of the Toba Bataknese parents towards Toba Batak language realized?
3. Why do the Toba Bataknese parents hold their attitudes like the way they do?

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

In relation to the problems of the study, the objectives of this research are formulated as the following.

1. To describe the attitudes of the Toba Batakese parents towards Toba Batak language.
2. To analyze the attitudes of the Toba Batakese parents towards Toba Batak language realized.
3. To elaborate the reasons for the attitudes of the Toba Batakese parents towards Toba Batak language.

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

This study focused on the attitudes of the Toba Batakese parents in Stabat who speak Toba Batak language although they did not use it in their childhood. The analysis of the Toba Batakese parents' attitudes based on Garvin & Mathiot's theory about language characteristics, and the attitudes of the Toba Batakese parents realized based on Fishman's theory about domains of language use. The investigation focused on the Toba Batakese parents' opinions towards Toba Batak language.

### **1.5 Significances of the Study**

The findings of the study offer theoretical and practical significances. Theoretically, it is expected that the findings of the study can give much contribution and insight to applied linguistics particularly in the language attitude which can be used as a reference for the similar studies with different focus or

object in the future. Specifically, the findings can add up more horizons to linguistics theories.

Practically, it is expected that the findings will give information about the language attitude of the Toba Batakese parents in Stabat towards Toba Batak language and it is also expected to make the Toba Batakese people who live in multi-ethnic societies will aware towards Toba Batak language as their identity. In addition, the findings might help to encourage and improve the attitudes of the Toba Batakese people.

