

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language is a sign, a code, and especially a communication sound system that has been agreed upon by a specific group of society to deliver a message or meaning of things, either individually or collectively. Language is an important part of culture. However, language and culture are two distinct entities that are inextricably linked and cannot be separated. Language is influenced by culture, so everything that happens in a culture will be reflected in a language (Wardhaugh, 2002 p. 2) said that language rather than just knowledge of specific sounds, words, and sentences, knowledge of rules and principles, as well as ways of saying and doing things with sounds, words, and sentences.

The relationship between language and culture is complicated, in part because it is difficult to understand people's cognitive processes when they communicate. (Wardhaugh, 2002) and (Thanasoulas, 2001) define language in slightly different ways below, with the former focusing on what it does and the latter on how it relates to culture. Culture, on the other hand, has many symbols that can be found all around us. As a result, semiotics, a branch of linguistics that studies signs in particular, needs to be explored and analyzed.

Linguistics encompasses non-formal approaches to studying other aspects of human language, such as social, cultural, historical, and political factors. Linguistics is also related to semiotics, as (Porcar, 2011:22) defines semiotics as

"the study of signs." Semiotics appears to be a paradoxical discipline; in that it can be found everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Semiotics is important in our daily lives because our lives are full of semiotic systems that we have unconsciously learned and understood. It is a societal behavior to assign a value to something, and while semiotics may create some different perspectives, the goal is to explore the meaning for something better in the future. Semiotics is closely related to linguistics, which studies the structure and meaning of language in greater depth. The semiotics tradition investigates the study of signs and symbols as an important aspect of communication.

The study of culture and its relationship to symbolism is narrowed down to a more specific subject matter. One of the Toba Batak community's customs that is very concerned with speaking is the wedding. The importance of language in supporting the wedding cannot be overstated, (Gurning, 2004). Weddings are one of the most important religious and social cultural practices in almost every country on the planet. It is a ceremony in which two people (male and female) are legally united through the institution of marriage.

In this case, the researcher wishes to introduce one of Indonesia's traditional, the Batak Toba. One of the Batak Toba traditions is *Dekke Simudur-udur*, which is usually given during a wedding ceremony. In Medan, *Batak Toba* people still practice traditional marriage, such as giving "*Dekke Simudur-udur*" which aims to give good words of blessing or advice for the bride's life in the future through *hula-hula*.

Umpasa will be told during the wedding ceremony when giving *Dekke Simudur-udur* to the bride as a petition and expectation. *Dekke* given by bride's parents or *hula-hula* side (bride giver). *Goldfish* or *Dekke*, which are commonly used in ceremonies such as *Mangalua*, *Manuruk*, *Tardidi*, *Mangupa*, *Mangolihon*, and *Manuruk jabu*.

When delivering the *Goldfish*, it should be followed by *umpasa* (Poem of Batak Toba), which will be told to the bride when delivering *Dekke Simudur-udur*, because *umpasa* has a deep meaning in delivering advice, blessings, hope, health, and children to the bride. *Dekke* given by bride's parents or *hula-hula* side (bride giver). It all has to be done in a sacred procession because there is a custom message that needs to be delivered. The number of *Goldfish* given must be odd; one, three, five, or seven, with each having a meaning based on custom requirements.

This paper will provide readers with some basic information about *Goldfish* as a symbol of life's blessings. The writer, in particular, would give a review of *Goldfish* in the wedding ceremony. *Goldfish* or *Dekke* were used as a symbolic from *hula-hula* and bride's parents that delivered to a bride as an expectation, a blessings prayer, and a petition during a wedding ceremony.

Therefore, the researcher wants to do a study dealing with “**A Symbolic Meaning on Dekke Simudur-udur in Batak Toba Ceremony**”. The researcher as a Batak Toba person wants to introduce Batak Toba culture especially *Dekke Simudur-udur* to people. Furthermore, as young generation, we need to know and protect our culture especially explore and keep preserving it in this modern era. In

this case, *Dekke Simudur-udur* itself is actually only conducted on wedding ceremony.

For the writer, describing *Dengke or Dekke* as a special food in every ceremonial has become something interesting to know and learn because public society, particularly the young generation Batak Toba, is unaware that *Dekke*, which is commonly used in some ceremonies, has many norms and rules to organize their culture. As a result, everyone who reads this paper will understand and be more aware of the beliefs and traditions of the Batak ethnic group in our country.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on those considerations, the researcher formulates statement of the problems as follows:

1. What symbols of meanings are used in *Dekke Simudur-udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony?
2. How are the symbols realized in *Dekke Simudur-udur* of Batak Toba wedding ceremony?
3. Why is *Dekke Simudur-udur* used in Batak Toba wedding ceremony?

C. The Objectives of the Study

In relation to the problems above, the objectives of this study are to find out:

- 1) To find out the meanings of the symbols that used in *Dekke simudur- udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony.
- 2) To describe the implementation of the symbol that used in *Dekke simudur- udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony.

- 3) To explain how important the *Dekke simudur-udur* is used in Batak Toba wedding ceremony.

D. The Scope of the Study

To avoid an overlapping and misleading discussion, the study focusses on symbols that used in *Dekke Simudur-udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony. The researcher uses the *Pierce* perspective as the theory to analyze the object. The data will be gained from 2 *Batak Toba* wedding ceremonies in Medan city. The first wedding ceremony is Dio Pangabea & Gita Sihotang be held June, 15 2021, and the second wedding ceremonies are Amra Sihaloho & Febri Hutasoit in June, 22 2021.

E. The Significances of the Study

The results of this study are expected to offer some benefits:

- (1) Theoretically; linguists or cultural observer to enrich their knowledge about the theory of semiotic, especially symbol in *Dekke Simudur-udur* in Batak Toba wedding ceremony. And other researcher to get the information about Batak Toba cultural.
- (2) Practically; the researcher in improving their knowledge about semiotic and for the English Department of State University of Medan who want to do a similar study about semiotic, this study is expected as one of the references to do the analysis.