

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

The existence of language cannot be separated from human life. According to Holmes (1992), every language represents the temple in which the speaker's soul is his/her devotee. It seems that everything related to human life in the society involves language because it is through the language that interaction among tribes, ethnic groups, and religions can happen. However, language is not always able to maintain by the ethnic group especially in the multilingual societies. People used language as a means of thinking and feeling, as well as a means of expressing thought and feeling in a society. There are thousands of languages used in the world. It is because language is a product of culture, which means that different cultures many have different cultures may have different languages or different dialects. It is also functioned to show their existence, identity and culture in the society. On the other words, a community's way of using language is a part of the community's culture, is a way of displaying group identity. Ways of speaking function not only to facilitate communication, but also to identity the social position of the speaker, as Crystal (1997) stated that people keep maintaining their language in order to create cultural diversity, keep ethnic identity, enable social adaptability, increasing security for the children psychological, and increase the linguistic sensitively.

Naturally, both human beings and their languages are as one unit that cannot be separated. A language is so important that it is supposed to be a mean of communication in a society. The nature may give opportunity for both of them to

increase or to decrease in their important performance in the society. The language may use a concept system which donates the community to interpret reality. The complexity of the language may bring in different views. The views may be different so the different views on the reality can bring in different perceptions from many aspects of the lives in the society.

When someone goes to another place, it is very important to keep his/her own native language. Even s/he could be influenced with language shift in the new place, but the native one still used in order to maintain it continuously. There are some reasons for a person or group to go somewhere such as education, live place, refuges, and so forth. Almost all minority groups who live in such multilingual circumstance lack political and economic power; minority groups often become bilingual in the dominant language for both instrumental and psychological reasons. Even the speakers who are in the process of shifting do not show the same degree of shift all at once in all of the purposes or situation for which they use any language. Further, from the stand of dominant group the presence of minority groups can be an obstacle to communication and, more importantly, to national integration, it may sound cynical but history supports the comment of Laponce (1987: 198) that dominant groups tolerate minorities “only on condition that they accept at least partial linguistic assimilation (learn the dominant language) and keep their member small.”

There is no guarantee that all languages in the world can survive along with their speakers. The expanding era of this globalization, with a small group of nations dominating the scene, has got an adverse effect on the language itself of a community. The positive side of the effect, such as: good employment, standard

of living, for example, B.J. Habibie (an Indonesian), who study in German. He got achievement there and be offered to work there because of his ability in his field. While negative one of the effect, such as: war, politics, catastrophe, human interference in some case have given conspiracy in making some groups socio-economically dominant, and also as a consequence promoted the cultures and language of these groups over those of other non dominant groups, Hudson (1985: 81) defines that culture as the kind of the knowledge which we learn from other people, either by direct instruction or by watching their behavior.

As Jamil (2008) described in his dissertation which is titled Language use and maintenance among the Moroccan minority in Britain, Moroccan immigrant to Britain then there were studies conducted in the seventies and early eighties in this area by scholars. Not surprisingly, Moroccan language behaviour has changed in the last decades as a comparison of the findings of the above mentioned scholars and the data collected in Morocco indicates. The question which arises is to what extent the British-Moroccans are trapped in a “time warp” and to what extent the comparative study is helpful in determining the linguistic changes and the behaviour of the British-Moroccans given the fact that they still have frequent contact with Morocco.

To avoid language shift or even language endangerment it is essential that language maintenance or language revitalization be applied soon. Language must be retained and maintained because language is as a mean of language users' identity. As it is stated by Holmes (2001:63) where language is considered as important symbol of a minority group's identity, the language is likely to be maintained longer.

The efforts in retaining a language in order not to shift which may possibly cause language endangerment are not easy to do these days. It is due to the language contact because the high of the mobilization of the people. That's why it is needed such good of strategy to solve it. The strategy is the policy which will be given to the conceptual decision or political decision, to solve the language problem at the national level so that it into daily use and special use language. Daily use language is the language for communication among them for their daily needs while special use language is the one for special needs other than daily need such as talking on a certain event.

As long as a society still uses their languages as their prestige and heritage from one generation to another so the language also still survives in their lives. Consequently, a language will be in danger when the community does not use their own language. It is due to the factors that occur in a certain community. It possibly happens to bring some issues on the language endangerment to sonic communities and to their languages, even local languages in Indonesia. Darhemi (2002) adds that the issue is devoted to problems of endangered languages, particularly endangered languages spoken by minorities, focusing on the sociolinguistic study of the causes, circumstance and result of the endangerment, and other structural and social process related to endangered languages and to their survival. Also Koenig (2002) states that it attempts to analyse the, causes, circumstances and results of language endangerment as well as the social conditions and effects of political intervention in favour of survival of endangered minority languages.

In Sumatera, especially in Aceh and Medan, there are a number of Malaysian students who are registered as college students. In Aceh for example, they chose to study at IAIN Ar-Raniry because they want to study theologies field. Not only in Aceh, in Medan (especially in UIN), they are also registered as students in some fields that has relationship with theology. The interesting one is they went to study there in a group. They live in the same dorm and the location not quite far from the campus. Sumarsono (1990) found that the residential areas are one of factors of language maintainability. Even the users are minority, but if they live in the same residential areas, they are able to maintain their physic, economic and culture.

In addition, from one of the lecturer there, the writer got information that sometimes, they still use their native language in classroom when they answer the question. For example when they answer the question, they use their native language that there are some differences in pronunciation and also meaning. For example "*kami dari kumpulan enam akan membentangkan presentase kami....*". In Indonesia, in formal situation such as in school or university, the students should speak Bahasa Indonesia. Even though some words have the same meaning (arbitrer) but there are some words that has the same pronunciation but different meaning such as "senang" (in Bahasa) means difficult in Malay.

In daily conversation, they still use their own language each other. As Thomas (2004:158) stated that how you talk, along with other kinds of social codes such as how you dress or how you behave, is an important way of displaying who you are; in other words, of indicating your social identity. When a group of people do not maintainability their language anymore, all their kinds of

social codes are missing. Identity of a certain culture is showed through among others by language use includes the language use in the society.

Progress in understanding of many aspects of the lives especially the language use may result in the complexity of reality because the developing linguistic diversity which has given the characterization of the human beings. Languages are supposed to be the important part of lives in the society which transmits the values. Every language which is used in the society shows the important thing which makes the people understand the values. UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Language (2003:3) defines diversity language is essential to the human heritage. Each and every language embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people. The loss of any language is thus a loss for all humanity. So, language maintainability is necessary to do in order to avoid losing of any languages and also humanity. Moreover, Goa (2006:58) states that successful intercultural communication is a matter of highest importance if human kind and society are to survive. In addition, Jandt (2003:40) states that language is a way of marking cultural identity. Language differs, on the other hand, from other phenomena in that it is used to refer to other phenomena and has usually to be used to refer beyond itself.

Based on the phenomenon above, the writer would like to study about language maintenance in Malaysian students who live in Medan especially who study at UIN.

1.2 The Focus of the Study

The study focuses on language maintenance and language attitude toward the realization of language maintenance of Malaysian students at UIN-SU.

1.3 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems to be investigated are formulated as follows:

- (1) What factors induce maintainability of the Malaysia language by Malaysian students in Medan?
- (2) How is maintainability of the Malaysia language realized by Malaysian students in Medan?
- (3) Why does the maintainability of Malaysia language remain in the way it does?

1.4 The Objectives of the Study

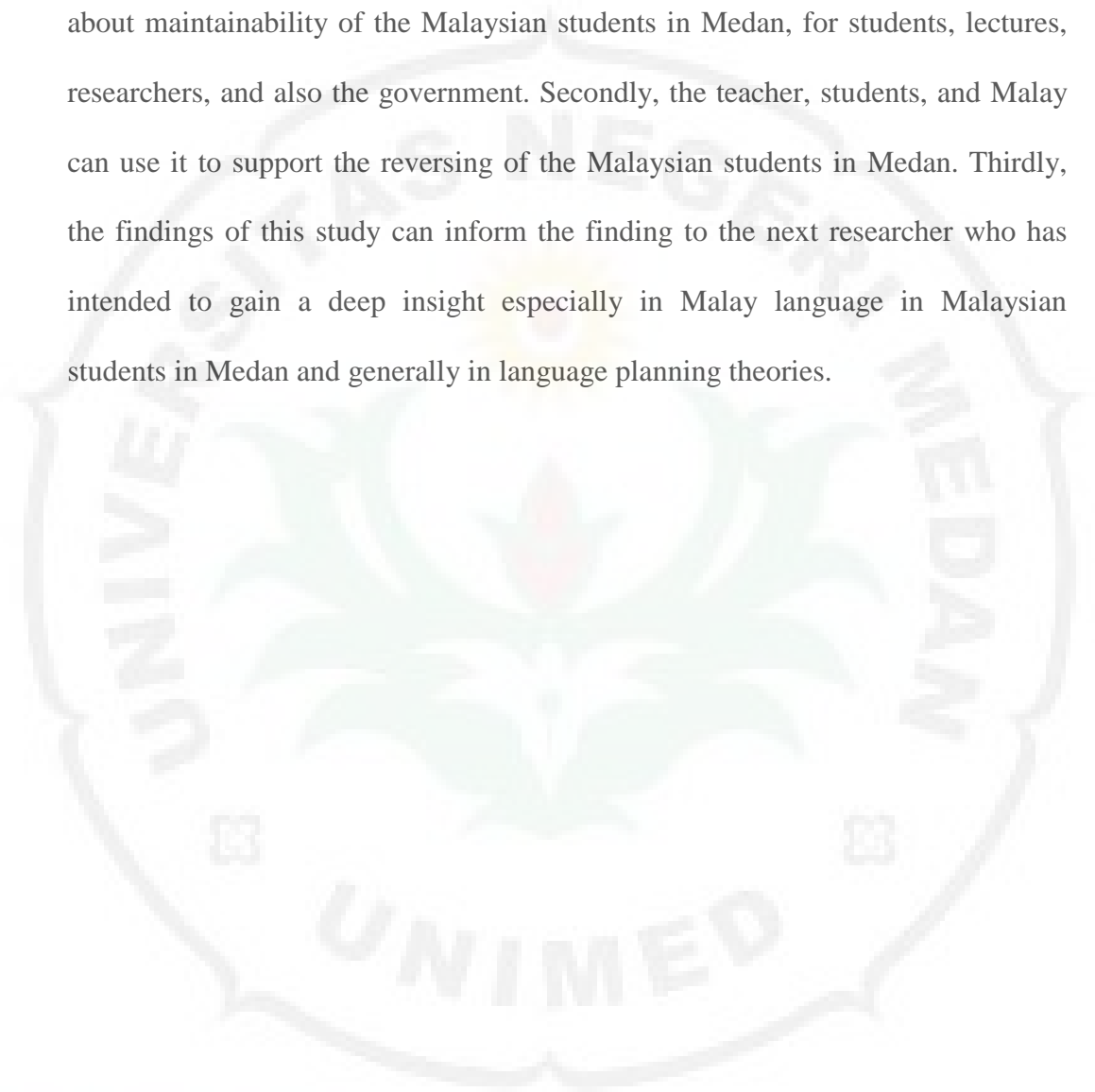
In relationship to the problem, the objectives of the study are:

- (1) to describe the factors of Malaysia language maintainability of Malaysian students in Medan.
- (2) to investigate the realizations of Malaysia language maintainability of the Malaysian students in Medan.
- (3) to reason of maintainability remains among Malaysian students in Medan.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to offer theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, the findings potentially enrich theories of language maintenance especially about Malay language of the Malaysian students in Medan, the factors influence maintainability of the Malaysian students in Medan, the pattern of maintainability of the Malaysian students into Bahasa and the reason of maintainability of the Malaysian students shift into Bahasa. In addition, the findings potentially justify theories of language maintainability.

Practically, the findings of the study is potentially contributes information about maintainability of the Malaysian students in Medan, for students, lectures, researchers, and also the government. Secondly, the teacher, students, and Malay can use it to support the reversing of the Malaysian students in Medan. Thirdly, the findings of this study can inform the finding to the next researcher who has intended to gain a deep insight especially in Malay language in Malaysian students in Medan and generally in language planning theories.



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