

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

MILIK PERPUSTAKAAN  
UNIMED

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Human beings are social creatures, one needs to interact with another. It seems that it impossible for us to live alone. They need each other. Therefore, they make communication contact in their lives. In the communication process a tool is needed, that is a language. By using a language, people can communicate and deliver their messages directly or send written messages.

However, since there are so many languages in the universe and the process of communication has been widespread around. The human beings are required to be able to speak at least one or more languages. Moreover, the people from one country have their own language. This is true to the Indonesia people who have a typical culture in their use of characterized language by the way they use the language for communication. In the Indonesian language for instance, it is recognized the term of social classes. When a younger speaker wants to speak to the older ones, then he/she should use polite words to appreciate the audience and this is the cultural realization in terms of communication and in terms of using the language.

Indonesian people give special appreciation on the way they speak and in what utterance they use. There is something that they cannot say

directly but rather use other expressions which show that they are very polite persons. For example, it is impolite to say **mati (die)** to human being but they should say **meninggal** or **wafat (pass away)** which implies the same meaning as the former one. The word **mati (die)** is appropriate for animal.

The use of utterance implies that in the Indonesian culture there are many things that should be expressed in certain ways. In other words, there are so many euphemistic expressions in the Indonesian language. Siregar (1995: 94) states that the Indonesian people tend to say indirectly to their main points of what they would like to say. They tend to go round which requires the ability to understand the context of the communication so that the audience will understand the meaning of the spoken words.

In speaking, the Indonesian people tend to select appropriate words, not only in terms of literal meaning but also in politeness. This indicates that the Indonesian people use figures of speech in their communication not only in oral communication but also in written one. For example: it is more polite to say **koruptor (corruptor)** rather than to say **pencuri uang negara (thief of government's money)**.

Figures of speech are words or groups of words used to give particular emphasis to an idea or sentiment. The writer uses language in a creative way (not in the literal sense) in order to give the reader a mental image. The figures of speech are forms of expression in which words are used differently from their normal meanings.

A figures of speech expresses an idea or experience vividly, forcefully, and briefly. It has the quality of freshness about it. Sometimes figures of speech may seem even more direct than literal language because it helps the reader grasp important ideas immediately. Croll ( 1986 : 65 ) state that figures of speech are forms of expression that depart from normal word or sentence order or from the common literal meanings for words, for the purpose of achieving a special effect.

Many traditional languages divided linguistic expressions into two classes: literal and figurative expression. The words in literal expressions denote what they mean according to common or dictionary usage, while words in figurative expressions denote something other than what they mean according to common or dictionary usage. Often, in this framework, a particular instance of figurative language can/must be reduced to literal language in order to find out what the expression might be intended to mean.

The literal meaning of a particular figure of speech is clearer. For example : **The ground is dry**. The literal meaning is clearer, because the fact that the ground cannot literally feel thirst is just common sense.

The literal meaning of a particular figure of speech is less clear. The figure, "**When I first saw her, my soul began to quiver**" might be intended mean, "**When I first saw her, I began to fall in love,**" or "**When I first saw her, I began to panic,**" or something else. The literal meaning is less clear, because of relevant facts that are less common sense. In other words, "literal

meaning" is not a special sort of meaning; it is only the meaning we are most likely to assign to a word or phrase if we know nothing about the context in which it is used. Expression said to be in figurative language are called figures of speech.

There are twelve types of figures of speech which are categorized based on the function of the figures of speech in communication to: (a.) emphasize comparison: Simile and Metaphor. (b.) involve association : Metonymy and Synecdoche. (c.) stress a personal dimension: Personification and Apostrophe. (d.) demand additions to complete the thought: Ellipsis. (e.) Understatement: Litotes or Meiosis and Euphemism (f.) an intensification or reversal of meaning: Hyperbole and Irony. (g.) involve fullness of thought: Climax.

Most important, they have an essential aesthetic purpose, widening and deepening the range of perception and response to the world of objects and ideas .The one type of figures of speech is euphemism. Euphemism is a word or phrase which substitute a taboo word or it is used to avoid something frightening and unpleasant (Fromkin and Rodman, 1997: 96). The use of euphemism depends on the cultural background of the persons. Therefore, different period will have different styles on the use of euphemism. For example: in the Contemporary Period, there is an abbreviation of **ABG (Anak Baru Gede—Teenagers)**. This word did not exist in the Balai Pustaka Period. Also, the word **bersahaja (to be simple)** is used in the Balai Pustaka Period

but it does not exist in the Contemporary Period. Period is the classification of time in which the Indonesian writers published their books. The classification is basically based on the main characteristics of certain time. There are five periods in the history of the Indonesian novels, namely : a. Balai Pustaka ( 1908 – 1929 ), b. Pujangga Baru ( 1930 – 1944 ), c. The period of 45 (1945 – 1966 ), d. The period of 66 (1966 – 1969), e. Contemporary ( 1970 – now ).

The present study focuses on the analysis of the use of euphemism in written language, especially in the Indonesian novels, five from Balai Pustaka Period and five from Contemporary Period. The reasons for choosing Balai Pustaka and Contemporary Period are due to the following:

1. Balai Pustaka Period is the first period which the Indonesian writers published their novels in one publisher company.
2. Balai Pustaka Period reflects the settings of the Indonesian language used in that period, it is necessary to use the novels and being compares them with the Contemporary novels in Contemporary Period.
3. The five novels from Balai Pustaka Period are very popular for Indonesian students, since the books are their reading in Indonesian schools.
4. Some of the Balai Pustaka Period have been made in films and most of the Indonesian children have already watch them.

5. The five contemporary novels are the famous novels in this period. Such: the novel **Hidup Perlu Akar**, **Kembang Padang Kelabu** and **Matahari di Batas Cakrawala** were the novels taken from **Femina** magazine. The novels are published in a continued-story version. So, there are many readers that have already read the novels.

6. **Cinta Seorang Play Boy** has already been published in the form of film and broadcasted in a national television channel ( TVRI ).

The focus of this study has never been conducted especially on a comparison between euphemism in the Balai Pustaka novels and Contemporary novels.

### 1.2 Research Problems

The present study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What types of euphemism are used in novels of Balai Pustaka and Contemporary Period?
2. What differences are there between the use of euphemism in the Balai Pustaka and Contemporary Period?
3. What similarities are there between the use of euphemism in the Balai Pustaka and Contemporary Period?

### 1.3 Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research are to describe the :

1. types of euphemism used in Balai Pustaka and Contemporary Period.
2. differences of euphemism used in Balai Pustaka and Contemporary Period.
3. similarities of euphemism used in Balai Pustaka and Contemporary Period.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this research will be useful for those who want :

1. conduct the use of euphemism in Indonesian language. These research findings will be their valuable literature resources in their study.
2. deepen understanding of the use of euphemism in Indonesian language and give contributions to the Indonesian language or especially to the Indonesian novel writers. They can use appropriate utterances.
3. better understand deeply on the characteristics of Indonesian novels.

### 1.5 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research is based on the theory of euphemism provided by Allan and Burdige (1991). According to Allan and

Burridge (1991: 3) Euphemism is characterized by avoidance language and evasive expression; that is, the speaker uses words as a protective shield against the anger or disapproval of natural or supernatural beings.

In addition, the theory of this research refers to the research that was conducted by Hanum (2002) on the use of euphemism in Malay culture.

