

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Research

Language always refers to tools of communication in human's life. Language is used as an implement of communication to attach one to one more in turn to split their emotion, longing, feeling, thoughts, etc. Sapir (1921:8) explained language as merely creature and non-instinctive way of communicating thoughts, emotions and wishes by way of a structure of voluntarily signs. From the declaration, it is obvious that human being will never be separately from language. Sapir further pointed out that language does not live separately from culture. Hymes (1964) stated that language and culture are supposed to be interconnected and fundamental in community life. This is in line to Saragih's declaration (2012) that language forms in the society and there is no language with no society and vice versa. The statement means that language and society have a very tight relation. The relation of both language and society can be seen in the subsequent figure 1.

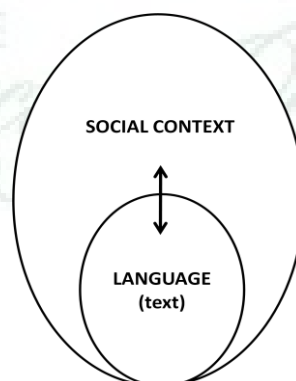


Figure 1.1 The Relation of Language and Society

From the figure 1.1 above, there are two implications explained, they are implication of society context determines language and implication of language determines social context. The first implication shows that people who use the language will be influenced by the society. The society usually influences the lexis and grammar of the language. Meanwhile the second implication shows that every language produced by people indicates different social contexts. For example, when someone is saying “don’t make a noise”, it means that a social context to use the imperative (prohibition) or if someone is saying “could you please tell me where Centre Point is?” means that a social context of expressing asking direction. Hence, in the perspective of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) the social context is constituted by three elements of ideology, culture and situation (Saragih, 2012:2-3). The relation of three elements and language is the elements are stratified above language. It is represented in figure 1.2 below.

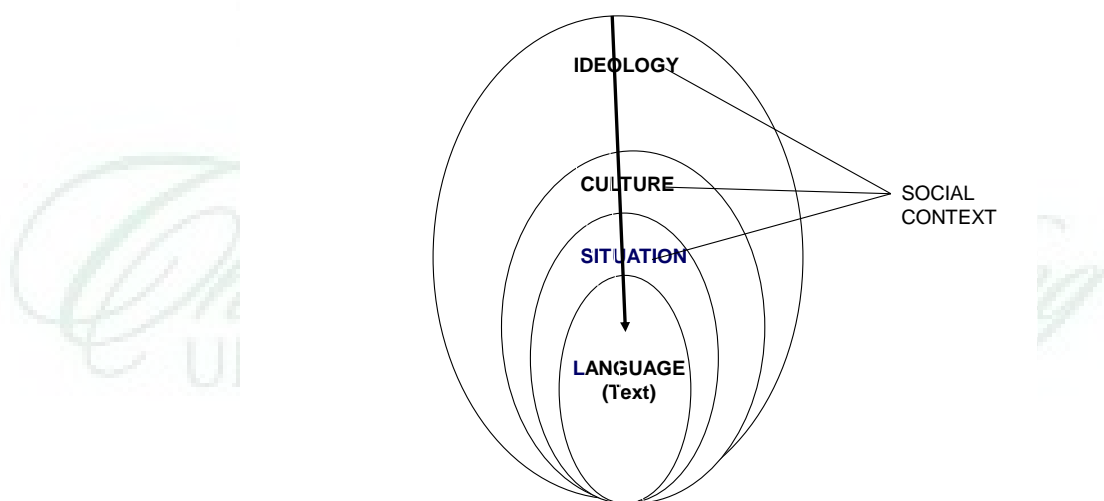


Figure 1.2 Elements of Social Context

Concerning the association among language and culture, Wardhaugh (2002) stated dissimilar views of scholars occupied in researching the issue. Among all of these, the main ones are: language determines thought and culture; language influences thought and culture; culture influences people's language; language and culture manipulate each other; and language and culture are not linked to each other. Hence, Sapir (1929:207) as cited in Wardhaugh (2006:222) recognized the close up association among language and culture. He stated:

“Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood..... The fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. . . . We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation”

The explanation above from Sapir is clear where it can be seen that language habits from one community influence the culture. It is an obligatory for every community to organize and conserve the culture in order to maintain the existence of it. From all explanation and definitions above, we can imply that the language cannot stand alone in human's life without the existence of the culture. There are so many cultures in the world such as Chinese, Malay, Greek, and many more. The cultures have been spreading out to many countries in the world including in Indonesia. Indonesia consists of variety cultures which come from various ethnic such as Chinese, Javanese, Batakese, etc. On this occasion, the researcher would like to discuss about Chinese culture. Chinese culture is stated as one of the oldest culture in the world. Chinese culture is frequently illustrated as the multifaceted invention of three systems of thought: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. The

Chinese culture covers so many terms such as society, language, communiqué, belief, cooking, and costume, hierarchy, relatives, sexual category, morals, schooling, literacy, socioeconomic position, conventional health mind thinking and performs, and health care-seeking manners. In Indonesia, there are so many cultures conducted by Chinese people in their daily life because culture is inherited from one generation to another generation, they are Chinese New Year, death ceremony, wedding ceremony, *cheng beng* ceremony, moon cake festival, *bak cang* festival, and many more.

On this occasion, *Cheng Beng* ceremony is to be researched as the writer's research. *Cheng Beng* (known as *Qing Ming* or Tomb-Sweeping Day) is the one of the mainly vital Chinese customary culture for Chinese to be conducted because *Cheng Beng* festival is for honouring their ancestor and it also can be said as pilgrimage for the young generation every year. Although *Cheng Beng* ceremony is conducted every year, but as the matter of fact there are lots of people do not understand how to conduct the ceremony, what the meaning of the structure in conducting it and also what are the things (artifacts) needed in it, especially for the younger generation. The researcher himself also has the same experience where the ceremony can be conducted just because of parents or the elder ask the younger generation to do and conduct without knowing what it means and the process. The researcher also ever asked to some other friends (peer group) whether they could know and understand how to conduct the ceremony but they also had the same experience like the researcher did, meanwhile *Cheng Beng* ceremony as one of culture that must be maintained. As Wardhaugh (2006:221)

stated that culture, thus, is the 'know-how' that a someone necessity hold to wear out the duty of everyday livelihood; merely for a few does it need a information of several, or greatly, melody, writing, and the sculptures. The phrase 'know-how' is the key point that every person must possess and conserve the culture based on their ethnic in order to get throughout the duty of their everyday livelihood, not just to do the culture because of the parents' order but in order to conserve and keep the culture existence to be inherited for the next generation in the future. This statement is clear that people must know or understand and how to possess the culture as the task of their life. Talking about the *Cheng Beng*, explanation about *Cheng Beng* is needed including the origin itself.

Cheng Beng is a traditional Chinese festival fifth solar word of the customary Chinese lunisolar schedule (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qingming_Festival, 26th December 2016; 02.56 P.M.). It means that *Cheng Beng* falls on April 5th every year except on leap years when it falls on April 4th. *Cheng Beng* also means 'clean and bright' and that's why when people are about to make a pilgrimage, the temperatures begin to rise and always bright. The tradition of *Cheng Beng* is usually for those who are living outside their hometown, they will try to return to their homecoming when the *Cheng Beng* festival is about to be celebrated in order to honouring their ancestors. The celebration of *Cheng Beng* festival is about two months after the Chinese New Year and because of its importance, some of Chinese people prefer to have homecoming not to the Chinese New Year, but for the *Cheng Beng* festival. Because of the limitation of time to have a holiday and gathering in their

hometown, they prefer to choose for the *Cheng Beng* festival as the right and best time for them.

Even though *Cheng Beng* is celebrated every year by Chinese people, but only some of them know about the history or origin of *Cheng Beng*. There are a lot of versions of *Cheng Beng* origin. As the researcher read from <http://www.tionghoa.info/hari-ceng-beng-festival-ching-ming/>, 27th December 2015; 09.50 A.M., the origin of *Cheng Beng* was started in the empire era of Zhu Yuan Zhang, the founding father of Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 M). Zhu Yuanzhang was from a very poor family. Because of that, his parents asked for a help from a temple in order to educate and raise him. When he grew up, Zhu Yuanzhang decided to join in a rebellion, anti Yuan Dynasty from Mongolia. In short, he gained an important position in the group of rebel and then conquered Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368 M). Finally he became an emperor. After becoming an emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang returned to his village to meet his parents, but his parents had died out and their tombs were unknown whereabouts. In order to find out his parents' tombs, Zhu Yuanzhang gave commandment to all people to have a pilgrimage and a tomb sweeping at the day that had been pointed. Then they had to put a yellow sign on the top of each tomb as a sign that the tombs had been swept. After all the people had done the pilgrimage, the emperor checked the tombs in the village and found that some tombs were not swept. Then the emperor made a pilgrimage to the tombs because he thought that those were the tombs of his parents, relatives, and ancestors. Then this event became a tradition and

culture of Chinese people to make pilgrimage every year and until now known as *Cheng Beng* or *Qing Ming* or Tomb-Sweeping Day.

The *Cheng Beng* festival usually consists of tomb sweeping, paying respect to the ancestors, giving food offering, burning ghost money (known as *ginpo*) and other items that should be placed near the tombs. For those who are not Buddhist, like Christian or other religion, they usually put and arrange flowers to pay respect to their ancestors. Knowing that *Cheng Beng* is very important as one of culture in Indonesia, as a younger generation, it should be preserved. Koentjaraningrat (1990:15) states culture of one nation exists in 3 elements namely: 1) the complexity of idea, value, name and rules 2) the complexity of human patterned-behavioral activity in the society and, 3) objects as products. The three elements are occurred in the *Cheng Beng* festival as a culture. *Cheng Beng* has value, name and also the rules. The language used in *Cheng Beng* is in the form of interaction between family and relatives, and also it can be in the form of praying to the ancestors with various activities when doing pilgrimage which is combined with various symbols and objects of offerings such as clothes, foods, ghost money (*ginpo*), candles, incense, etc. Every symbol and object has its own meaning which can be seen through colour, size, form, position, etc. The language and object are the verbal and visual mode in the traditions. O'Halloran (2006) stated that people exist in a multimodal civilization which makes sense throughout the co-deployment of a mixture of semiotic sources which covers visual images, gestures and sounds (p. 220). Then, Kress & van Leeuwen (in Norris, 2004) say that language can no longer be thought as the primary mode of communication

and that other semiotics have to be taken into description whilst examining communication. In analyzing the language, text of language should be combined with semiotic resources (covers images, gestures, sounds, etc) in multimodal texts. As Halliday (1978) stated about there are numerous extra forms of connotation, in some customs which are out of the territory of speech (p.4). This means that *Cheng Beng* ceremony does have its meaning. Based on the explanations and theories from experts (O'Halloran, Halliday and Kress and van Leeuwen) above, it is obvious that verbal and visual modes have a very important part in multimodal analysis. The multimodal analysis will be conducted to the tradition of *Cheng Beng* festival as one of the important culture of Chinese in Indonesia. The *Cheng Beng* ceremony will be focused in Pematangsiantar city because Chinese who lived in Pematangsiantar still do the *Cheng Beng* ceremony and there are some public cemeteries where the people conduct the ceremony every year. On this occasion, the researcher would like to analyze the meaning of visual components used in the *Cheng Beng* ceremony and also the structure or process of the ceremony since there are many younger generations have less information about how to conduct a good structure of *Cheng Beng* ceremony because of only elder people, like parents and grandparents, are busy making preparation to the equipments for *Cheng Beng* ceremony and meanwhile the younger people are only doing the structures of ceremony from their parents' instructions. Previous research done by Sembiring (2014) in his research entitled *Structure and Meaning of Cheng Beng Celebration for Chinese in Berastagi*, discussed about to find out the structure and meaning in the *Cheng Beng* celebration. This research done by

Sembiring (2014) was only scoped in the every phase of conducting *Cheng Beng* ceremony and also analyzed the meaning of every phase in doing the ceremony. The researcher used descriptive qualitative method in conducting the research. This method covered describing, writing, analyzing, interpreting every event happened in the *Cheng Beng* celebration in order to obtain information about the celebration. The subjects were primary and secondary where the primary was the people as the participants and books, journals, article or others that related to the research were as the secondary subject. Method in collecting the data were observing, arranging, interviewing, collecting and classifying the data. After analyzing the data, this research had some finding such as: 1) preliminary phase covered all preparations needed in conducting the celebration such as cleaning the grave, arranging the position of incense (*hio*), candles and food/drinks as the offerings; 2) prayer phase covered the praying for welfare, good fortune, and long life conducted by the family members started from the eldest to the youngest one; 3) burning of libation phase covered all the goods prepared as offering such as clothes made by paper, foods, ghost money (*ginpo*), candles, incense (*hio*), etc were burnt to the ancestors where Chinese believed that the ancestors could use them in their world; 4) leave-taking to the ancestors that they have fulfilled their obligation to do *Cheng Beng* and promised them to come again next year as the closing phase. Hence, the meaning of every phase found in the research were: 1) preliminary phase meant preparing all needs to be used to conduct the *Cheng Beng* ceremony; 2) prayer phase meant to show gratitude to the ancestors because they had looked after, blessing and given them welfare and good fortune in their

family lives; 3) burning libation phase meant the reply or evidence and gratitude to the ancestor for blessing them; 4) closing phase meant leave-taking to the ancestors that they had done their obligation to conduct *Cheng Beng* ceremony as their culture. In short, this research by Sembiring was only focused to the semiotics meaning of the artifacts being used to conduct the ceremony. The meaning was analyzed through the phases of conducting the *Cheng Beng* ceremony. The research done by Sembiring was not complex since the research was only oriented to the view of semiotics itself.

The previous research above was taken as a reference to the researcher to conduct further research about *Cheng Beng* ceremony, but the scope is more complex, in the study of multimodal covers semiotic sources for instance includes images, gestures, sounds, and so on) in multimodal texts. Through on the clarification on top of, the researcher will compose a study of dissertation entitled *A visual Multimodal metafunction of Cheng Beng Ceremony in Pematangsiantar: Reality and Prospect.*

1.2 The Problems of the Research

Based on the background, there are several problems created as the following:

1. What structures of visual multimodal metafunctions are used in *Cheng Beng* Ceremony in Pematangsiantar?
2. How do the structures of visual multimodal create their metafunctional meanings in *Cheng Beng* ceremony in Pematangsiantar?

3. Why does *Cheng Beng* ceremony construct the text like in the way they do?

1.3 The Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research are to respond the problems as what have been stated in the earlier point. They are:

1. To describe the structures of visual multimodal metafunctions are used in *Cheng Beng* Ceremony in Pematangsiantar
2. To describe the metafunctional meaning analysis of the visual multimodal structures in the *Cheng Beng* ceremony in Pematangsiantar
3. To explain the reason of *Cheng Beng* ceremony construct the text like in the way they do

1.4 The Scope of the Research

Multimodal analysis is an advance to analyze image with oral resources of communiqué (Young & Fitzgerald, 2006:212). According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006:2), meaning belongs to traditions more willingly than to particular forms. It means that every meaning existed in our society refers to culture. Since our country has various and different kinds of cultures, it means that there are lots of meaning created from the various cultures. Referred to the statement, the researcher would like to make a research to *Cheng Beng* ceremony by using the multimodal analysis in this research. But on this occasion, the researcher would like to limit the research so that it will not astray. This research is only aimed to

analyze visual components because *Cheng Beng* ceremony is dominated by visual components such as structures, equipments and objects of offerings. The language (verbal component) used is only for praying to the ancestor in order to pay respect. Since there are four phases of *Cheng Beng* ceremony process, they are preliminary phase, prayer phase, burning of libation phase and closing phase (Sembiring, 2014:35-37), the researcher will conduct the visual components in multimodal analysis. For instance in prayer phase, some equipments, for instance incense (*hio*), candle (*lak cek*), means is used as a media to connect between this world and heaven in order to call the ancestral spirits. The visual components meaning of *Cheng Beng* ceremony will be referred to the theory of Multimodal analysis offered by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) stated with the aim of role at the same time as a complete structure of communiqué, the image, such as every semiotic forms, must provide some representational and communicational necessities. Then they apply the semiotic modes into three metafunctions, as of the effort of Michael Halliday, into the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. The three metafunctions are implemented into representational meaning, interactional meaning and compositional meaning (p.41-43). These three meanings will be conducted in the research to analyze the *Cheng Beng* ceremony in Pematangsiantar. The location in Pematangsiantar city is chosen as the place to be gained the data because Chinese who live in Pematangsiantar still do the pilgrimage and there are some public cemeteries (such as in Rambung Merah, Sinaksak, Ade Irma, etc) where the people can conduct the ceremony every year. Hence, usually when it is the day of

Cheng Beng, there are lots of people come back to Pematangsiantar and it is proven that there are some events, like gathering Chinese people, where the relatives and family can eat, talk, share and of course to tighten their relations.

By analyzing the visual components used in the *Cheng Beng* ceremony, it is expected that this research can give more information and understanding to the readers, society, and other researchers what are the meaning of the visual components of multimodal applied in the *Cheng Beng* ceremony.

1.5 The Significance of the Research

The results of this research are expected to have two types of significance, they are theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research provides a good input and motivation for other researcher and linguistics experts in conducting multimodal analysis to other phenomena appear between language and object in the form of visual components. Multimodal analysis theory is dominantly referred to the analysis of the advertisement like have been depicted in the previous studies in the next chapter. Through this research, the researcher conducts a research with a different mode in the field of culture, *Cheng Beng* ceremony. The researcher hopes that through this research, there will be a new horizon given to the multimodal theory. Practically, the findings this research can give more references to the learners or researchers how to analyze the visual components in other fields related to the field of linguistics.

1.6 The Key Terms of the Research

There are some key terms used in this research namely:

1. Multimodal analysis refers to the combining analysis of data from the different modes viewpoint in meaning creation of communication.
2. The image constructions inform on exacting understandings of knowledge and shapes of societal relations such as the linguistic constructions. (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:2)
3. *Cheng Beng* ceremony is a traditional Chinese festival which is conducted with the intention of giving admiration to their antecedents.
4. The representational refers to the way images represent or make statements about reality (Joice and Gaudin, 2007:13/2007:23)
5. Interactional meaning means the way pictures symbolize the next of kin amid the citizens, spaces, and stuff they portray, and the multifarious rest of associations that can be presented linking descriptions and their audience (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:175).
6. Compositional meaning discusses the method wherein the representational and interactive elements are constructed to narrate to every other, the method they are included into a consequential entire. (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006:176-177).