

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of The Study

Language shift is a kind of replacing process one language with another in a language community. Language shift that usually occurs as a change in usage habits from the use of one language to the use of another one. This shifting can be influenced by several factors, such as social factors (interaction between people), economic factors (getting a job), political factors (government policies regarding the use of language in education) and demographic factors (transmigration, urbanization), value factors (not giving any respect to the language that they have), and attitude factors (the attitude of the language user itself). The factors mentioned before may influence people to replace their initial language with another language that is more dominant than maintaining their language in order to survive in life in their community, especially if they are in a diverse society. Language shifts usually appears in societies with minority and majority communities, refugees or non-refugees, all of whom generally speak two or more languages in a situation they involved themselves. Language selection occurs when people choose the language they want to use in certain situations, whether formal or informal.

Language shift occurs in people with the use of two or more languages in everyday life. One of the two languages will be replaced or displaced because it is rarely used in society, in general most people will use the majority language that is understood by everyone to communicate, as Holmes (2013:58) state that the dominant language is used as a tool to communicate because it shows the degree of status, social success and self-esteem. A language was needed by people to communicate in a larger community. They choose the dominant language since it has an elevated

position than their mother tongue and it can facilitate them to communicate easily. By speaking the majority language in the larger or complex situation, and master the dominant language they will be accepted in the society. When people use a language with the higher position level than other languages, the submissive or lower position level will disappear or die, it means that the language will be shifted by the dominant language.

As Schiffinan (1995:12) affirms that if a language is not taking care of, there can be some possible threat might happen to the language. One of the threat is language death, speakers of a particular language become able to use two languages and speakers of younger languages become fluent in using the more dominant language especially in the dominant language that they usually used in daily conversation. On condition that the language is not used anywhere, it can put the language on risked and lost. The process of transferring or replacing language in a community from their vernacular to speaking another higher level position of language is called language shift. According to Hoffman (1991). When a community does not retain its language, but gradually adopts another language, this involves language shifting. Holmes (2013:58) explains language shift as a shift or change from one minority language to a language that is more widely used by the community. The writer thinks that it is important to maintain our vernacular, as the flow of globalization caused some effects that in one side gives advantages but on the other hand disadvantages occur as well. Families as the small domain of society are expected to help to prevent the loss of vernacular. Since language shift dominantly occur around our environment, family as the small domain of society are expected to maintain vernacular at least for the conversation in small group.

Edwards (1985:71-72) mention that there are some indications on language shift. First, the language is losing ground as it has fewer users. It means that the language is no longer used in a

small scope such as a family. Secondly, the higher level language becomes dominant over the lower level language and endangers the lower level language. Higher level language replaces the lower level language in every field. Lower level languages are no longer be spoken by the society and lead to the extinction of lower level languages. Thirdly, lower level languages are only used in remote areas where the area is the origin of the language and there are many speakers of the language in that area.

In addition Romaine (2000:53-54) states that in some cases the shift occurs because of pressure or willingness of refugees to use the language of the majority where their environment does not allow them to use their native language , e.g. Italian in the United States, the Gaels in Scotland and Ireland. The great loss or extinction of a language is called the death of a language. Many factors are responsible for the shift or extinction of a language, such as religious and educational background, sedentary patterns, mixed marriages, government regulations regarding the use of language in education.

Language shifts can occur among refugees or immigrants in the same way that indigenous peoples do. Most children who follow their parents moving from their home areas to other areas are educated using a second language and their native language is rarely used because they begin to adapt to the surrounding environment and language to survive. It can be summarized that the process of language shift occurs when a particular language shifts the use of the original language, and usually occurs in the younger generation.

The data of UNESCO in the year of 2001 mention that there are 6,900 languages in the world. 2,500 of the language are extinctions. UNESCO says that Indonesia, India, America,

Brazil, and Mexico are countries with a unique variety of languages, but also faces the threat of a language shift which is quite worrying.

Based on the data of UNESCO, almost 200 languages in the world do not exist any longer after the third generations, because the languages lost their speakers; for example Urbykh language in Turkey which extinct in 1992, Aaasax language in Tanzania in 1976, Eyak in Alaska, and so on. 900 languages in the world are in danger of extinction nowadays. There are other 178 languages in the world which are extinctions, because the user of the language is only 10 to 150 people. According to data from UNESCO, India is the first rank to experience a language shift. There are 196 languages shifting in India. The second position is occupied by America with 192 language shifts. Indonesia is in third place with 147 language shifts.

The existence of language is inseparable from human life. Holmes (1992) stated that every language represents the soul of its speaker. It can be said that everything related to human life in society involves language since it is the only way that interaction among tribes, ethnic groups, and religions take place. Language is the only way used to convey people's thought and aspiration. Indonesia as an archipelago country consists of various tribes, ethnicities and various religions. Every tribe and ethnic has their own local language. Local language in Indonesia is called as a mother tongue, since a mother giving birth to her babies, the first language taught by the mother to her children is her mother tongue. It can be said that the main language from their own mother that guide the children to use their mother tongue as they growing up. Usage phenomenon of vernacular are happened in human's life such as at home, at school, at bus, in the office, traditional market etc. Since previously explained Indonesia consists of many tribes where each tribe has their own regional language, so it is not surprising when we find people talking their vernacular like Javanese, Bataknese, Karonese, etc anywhere and in every activities aside of

Bahasa Indonesia as the national language but unfortunately the using of the mother tongue are not too much, as we know that we are in a modern era, the use of the majority language is preferred in every area of life especially in supporting the understanding of technology and education development.

Language shift, can be categorized as language replacement is a fast process where the community begins to shift its language and use another language that is more dominant. Once a linguistic community abandoned their mother tongue, it will be hard to prevent the language from loss. Language shift has been a topic of research by linguists for many years but a clear and universal definition still hard to figure out. However, there are three issues that often arise in discussions about language shift (Mackey 1980: 35; Giacalone Ramat 1983: 495; Sasse 1992: 13; cf. also Clyne 2003: 20–21); these can help as a working definition for the purpose of this research. The first of the issues is ‘changing patterns of language use’. This issue is formed on the idea that there is a figure of which language usually people used in some circumstances in their life when making communication and build an interaction (‘domains’, cf. Fishman 1972b: 247–248).

In conventional report of language shift by e.g. Joshua Fishman (1972a: 79–88), it is seen as a very neat domain-by-domain shift, so that the rejected language is moderately restored by the higher level language that people used to communicate. In the reality of life, there are some issues like code-switching and code-mixing that signify the shift is not well ordered like explained by Fishman, but it is still possible to use a catch-all phrase like ‘changing patterns of language use’. The next issue that discussed is the idea of language shift occurs in the community of language speakers. In sociolinguistic area it will be more interesting when it happen in community wide since it can shows the rapid movement of shifting the language, cf.

the distinction between speaker innovation and language change by Labov (1972: 277). The third issue is language shift occurs in language contact situations. If some people is about to change the language, they need to have other language available to be used to; in other words, there needs to be language contact. They need to make an interaction with other by using a language that can be understood by both speaker and listener clearly.

From the theory above, expectation, reality and gap can be taken as a discussion. The expectation from the theory above that in conveying the ideas, a person can deliver it by using a dominant language, while keep the mother tongue maintained though in a small domain. For example parents use the mother tongue as the way to communicate with their children and encourage their children to use it when talking with family and relatives. So the conclusion is the children will fluently speaking their mother tongue in family domain, while they can shift their language when talking with their friends or other society environment. The reality, the theory above that emphasizes on the shifting language can't be apply in every aspect of human life. For example, when visiting relatives and making a conversation with the older family members.

A conversation between the researcher and the subject

Interviewer: *Permisi dik, kamu orang Karo kan?*

(Excuse me sis, are you a Karonese?)

Interviewee: *Iya kak, ada apa ya?*

(Yes, I am. Can I help you?)

Interviewer: *Kakak mau tanya, kalau boleh tau di rumah kamu pakai bahasa apa?*

(If you don't mind. May I know what kind of language that you use at home?)

Interviewee: *Aku pakai bahasa Indonesia kak.*

(I use Indonesian language Sis).

Interviewer: *Kalau ngomong sama nenek?*

(What about talking with your grandmother?)

Interviewee: *Kalau ngomong sama iting, aku pakai bahasa Indonesia juga. Aku gak*

Ngerti bahasa Karo

(When I'm talking with my grandmother, I use Indonesian language as well. I don't really understand Karo language.)

From the short conversation above, the interviewee said that she does not really understand Karonese, since her grandmother understands Indonesian language well and she replied her in Indonesian language if she speaks in Karonese. The interviewee's father rarely uses Karonese. Indonesian language has been the dominant language used in their daily conversation in family domain to communicate easily and avoid misunderstanding each other. This short conversation shows that the pattern of language shift is implied by the interviewee as the third generation that only monolingual in the host language.

Nowadays, vernacular in Indonesia as a mother tongue face challenges because they have to compete with Indonesian and foreign languages that exist in Indonesia. Many vernaculars in Indonesia are displaced and even threatened with extinction. Language shift has great potential to happen toward the vernacular in Indonesia, as Indonesia is a multilingual country. Siregar (1998) found that language shift happen in the youth generation who speaks two languages or more in Medan. Adisaputera (2009) also found that Malay language is shifted to Indonesian language

among the level of teenagers' users. This language shift can be seen from the high intensity of the use of Indonesian language between the dominant Malay community, the small number of younger generation are able to comprehend and speak Malay, increasing numbers of Langkat Malay users speak Malay not as the first language. Saragih (2010) also affirms that Batak language in North Sumatera is on the third phase of extinction, which is endangered phase. The number of people who use Batak language is decrease since they leave their hometown and having mix marriage, Batak people who usually use Batakese in the family environment, now substitute it with Indonesian language. Karo language is one of the vernaculars in Indonesia that is used mainly in Medan –a multiethnic and multilingual city faces such language phenomena. As Siregar (1998) states that Medan is a multiethnics city. It competes among other vernaculars, Indonesian language and English as the effect of globalization. Many tribes aside of Karonese are living in Medan.

Another important issue in the study of language shift is the low power of minority people which tries to maintain its local language while they also need to build a good communication with the majority group whose their language is the higher level position, and also their language used in all sectors, especially economic and political sector. As the effect, the low level position language will experience a shift to higher level position language or it will disappear if they cannot maintain it in their own domain. That process, according to Sumarsono (1993) in Amrullah, three generations are involve since every generations have their own characteristic. The first generation or the elder will preserve their ethnical language as well as possible. In this case, the speaker use their own language wherever they go. Later, the second generation becomes master in using more than one language and masters the using of their second language better than their mother tongue. Finally, the third generation refers to the ones

who are unable to master their ethnical language anymore and lack of knowledge about their ethnical language. This is resulted in bilingualism in Karonese that Karonese uses Indonesian language to communicate with different vernaculars. The uses of Indonesian language become increasing. The bilingualism of the Karonese shows some language phenomenon in the language users. Sukapiring's research (2007) found that there are interferences of syntax in Indonesian language by the karo language users. Moreover Sembiring (2008) indicates the difference of language choice between the role of parents and children. The children, according to her, prefer using Indonesian language. Between parents, use both Indonesian language and Karo language. There are language differences based on the age. She also mentions that Karo language users of 8-20 years mostly use Indonesian language while those of 21-50 years old mostly use both of Karo language and Indonesian language.

The writer of this study faces the similar experiences. Many of her brothers, cousins, and members of her family got influences of the language shift that cause the use of Karo language in family shifted by Bahasa Indonesia. They seldom use Karo language and Indonesian language becomes dominant in family domain. When the parents speak Karo language, the children will answer by using Indonesian language. The writer of this research discover the importance of conducting a study on Karo language shift. It is very crucial to analyze the language shift in Karo language, to make a well-planned for reversing a language shift. The vernacular is the key element of the national culture for a nation. The loss of a certain ethnic language in a country can cause the death of a tribe or culture. As we know that, the various ethnics make the unique of Indonesia culture. Vernacular is also give a contribution to the vocabulary of Indonesian language.

This study conducts to observe such language shift in Karo language in Medan, some factors that influence language shift in Karo language that showing the indication of language shift, the pattern of language shift in Karo language especially in the second and third generation and the reason of the shift.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

The problem of this research concerns about “How is Karonese language shift of young generation in Medan”. The following problems are formulated operationally to answer the focus.

1. What factors influence Karonese language shift among young generation?
2. How is the Karonese language shift patterned among the young generation?
3. What are the reasons for Karonese shift into Indonesian language?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this analysis are

1. To determine the factors influence Karonese language shift in young generation
2. To express the pattern of language shift in Karonese language of young generation
3. To analyze the reason of Karonese language shift into the dominant language in this case Indonesian language.

1.4 The Significances of the Study

Theoretically, the study is considered to enhance the theories of language planning especially about Karo language shift in daily conversation of Karonese, the factors influence Karo language

shift in daily conversation of Karonese in Medan, the pattern of Karo language shift in daily conversation of Karonese in Medan, and the reason of Karonese shift into Indonesian language.

Practically, the results of the study are considered to give any needed information about language shift in Karonese for students, lecturers, researchers, and government. Firstly, for the students so they can adding up their knowledge about the language shift. Secondly, the teachers, students and Karonese, can use it to help the reversing of the Karo language shift as the prevention way to help the language from loss or death. Thirdly, the result of the study can be a previous knowledge for the next research who wants to gain more about Karo language shift and generally in language planning theories.

The Last for the government, in this case Language Centre, hopefully the result of this study help them to make a well-planned of language planning especially to keep maintaining the Karo language so the language is not loss.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

This study only focuses on Karo language though there are many vernaculars in Medan. Karo language shift is investigated through the language use of young generation or the third generation of Karonese family in Jalan Bahagia, Padang Bulan Medan Baru District. In this study the young generation was found in Junior high school and Senior high school. Young generation as adolescence can be defined as a period of growth from childhood to adulthood Debrun (in Rice 1990), adolescence can divided into early adolescence (13- 16 years) and late adolescence (up 16-17 years old). In this study the researcher use the average age of the subject young generations are about 13-17 years old.