

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language change may happen to any language where the influencing language is considered more prestigious and valuable. This study looks at the phenomena of ethnic language change among Karonese people in linguistic area of phonology, lexicon and semantic. The culture of Karonese people in the highlands of Karo, North Sumatera, which is located approximately 78 km from Medan, the capital of North Sumatera province, cannot separated from the language that is used every day in daily life called *Cakap Karo* or Karo language, because basically language is part of culture. With a number of speakers are above five hundred thousand people in 1991 and domiciled in the adjacent area around the 4 largest area of Tanah Karo in city districts – Kabanjahe, Simpang Empat sub-district, city tourism of Berastagi dan Tigapanah sub-district and 10 other districts make *Cakap Karo* as ethnic languages are still quite often used.

Indonesia has a language which is known as Bahasa Indonesia. Besides, Indonesia has many local languages such as Javanese, Sundanese, Bataknese, Karonese, etc. The Karonese is local language which is used by the Karo people to communicate among them. It has some varieties, one of them is dialect. Jufrizal (1999:101) defines dialect as regional variety of language that may different from other varieties of the language in features of it is vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. In addition, Wardaugh (2007:40) explains that dialect sometime is

only if there is a strong tradition of writing in local variety. It means that dialect is the language that is used by people who still have strict tradition strictly in a regional.

Karo language as one of hundreds of Indonesian vernacular is an Austronesia language spoken on Karo Land which is related to Simalungun language, Alas language and Gayo language. Karonese people speak Karo language, which is also known as *Cakap Karo*. Karo language is spoken in five different dialects, namely dialects of Julu, Teruh Deleng, Singalur Lau, Jahe and Liang Melas. Julu dialect is used in Kabanjahe sub-district, Simpang Empat, Tiga Panah, Berastagi, and surrounding. Teruh Delung Dialect used in Kuta Buluh sub-district and partially in Payung sub-district (Prinst, 2002). In his book, he added that Singalur Lau dialect is used in Juhar, Tiga Binanga, Singgamanik and Perbesi. Jahe dialect (Hilir) is used in Karo Jahe (Deliserdang-Medan) and partially in Langkat (Hulu). Liang Melas dialect used in Lau Melas sub-district. Those differences can be seen from the sound of word or from the intonation of words. But most of Karonese people in North Sumatera use their own dialect when they communicate with people from different dialect and they still understand each other. Chaer (1995:81) says that variation is variation of language occur because of social variation and regional variation. Variation of language also occurs because of differences social status.

The Karo Language is used by Karonese people. But there are variations of the language that are caused by regional and social variation. Differences of social status, age, religion and culture also caused the language variation. Because

of those variations the result it makes language change. In changing of one language, there are semantic changing, phonology, morphological, lexical, and syntax changing. Language change can because of many factors like time, age, regional, and social status. Thus, the dialect that is used by people in regional can change, because of some factors like time, age, change of regional, social status and the lost of native speakers.

Any language in the world tends to change which might be in the forms of lexical, morphological, syntactical, semantic and pragmatic changes (Dhaki, 2011: 1). Specifically, lexical change is manifested in every single of lexical classes of a language, such as noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, preposition, conjunction and interjection. A case of lexical change in Karo language is the word *abal-abal*, a tubes of bamboo used as a place to store salt for durability. It is regarded one of lexical loss of Karo language because it is not practiced anymore. Another empirical example is *aron* (clearing forests for agriculture and farms manually using human hands, performed together as a wholesale activities of fellow members of the community where everyone involved working as a form of mutual aid) which is categorized as a verb becomes a noun which means “laborers who do the grunt work for someone else”. This phenomenon, which is caused by the metaphorical application, is called as semantic change due to its lexical class movement from verb to noun. Empirically, the older speakers of Karo language experience that the youngsters are reluctant to use their mother tongue so that they sometimes mix between Karo Language and Indonesian Language. These evidences serve as the beginning of language change itself. Having the previous

examples, it is feasible to assert that the lexical change contains types, patterns, and reasons. Lexical change type is defined as the sort of change realized in the lexicons, which might be loss of lexicon or change of meaning like the example above.

The influence of modern things nowadays is regarded as factor for Karo language existence and maintenance. The fashionable and innovative devices and needs bridge the Karo language users' attention to lexical modernization; a process by which a language standardizing, enhancing, and expanding its domains of activity (Kaplan and Baldauf, 1997: 69). On the other hand, the popularity of Karo Land as one of the most beautiful tourism areas governs the existence and maintenance of Karo language. This is because the great possibility of code-switching between Karo language and tourist's language, which serve as a major factor of a language change (Lindstrom, 2007: 232), take place.

There will be also a tendency to the change of Karo language when its speakers are more educated. This has been proved by the fact the role of Karo language use in educational setting is not the same at home. This is definitely rooted from the empirical evidence that the medium of teaching and learning in Karonese schools is Indonesian. Consequently, the students' attitudes towards Karo language eventually decreases which automatically makes Indonesian dominantly used in their day life. This condition, which serves as determining factor of lexical loss, makes the Karo lexical replaceable by Indonesian lexical increasingly.

Religion is a particular system of faith and worship based on the belief of language speakers serves as another influence of Karo Language existence and maintenance (Dhaki, 2011: 4). This condition can be seen in the words *rumah begu* (house of ghost), *naleng tendi* (summon spirits), *ercibal* (presenting something as an offering), *erpangir* (washing hair with lemon juice, coconut oil, ash kitchen, etc which is used to counteract the impending doom or as treatment) which has been loss because there is nobody of young people thinks of those words. It can be said fades away. The terms above loss with the arrival of religion that has been legalized by country, which are Christian and Islamic to Karo Land (*Tanah Karo*).

A language is fundamentally viewed as much more than a system of communication. It is symbolic marker that distinguishes who belongs to a group and who is outside (Dhaki, 2011: 4). In this case language in general and Karo Language in particular is considered as a central feature of Karonese ethnics the reflection of Karonese people identity. Theoretically, according Moyna (2009: 131-132) language changes resulted from the social and individual factors. Social factors are the contact between speakers of different varieties due to conquest, migration, culture, education, economic and religion. The social or external factors of language change are not only including the type of input in the environment but also the mechanisms and rates of input processing. The mechanisms are concerned with the techniques and methods of input provided to the language speakers, whereas rates deal with the amount of input itself. On the other hand, the individual or internal factors deal with the language change which

resulted from an entire generation of child acquisition. This theory has been proved on the changes of Karo Language lexicons above.

Many young people tend to use different words than the old generation (Lishandi, 2013: 134). There are many forms of lexical loss in this language that can threaten the maintenance of this language. When young people see their words and then use them in their daily communication, they will consider the word as their native language. So, as a result it can make the native words lost. That's why the writer is interesting in observing the lexical change particularly lexical loss of Karo Language in agriculture. The writer just focus on agriculture sector because the lexical loss in general is too wide to observed and the research about lexical loss of Karo Language in agriculture has not observed yet before. Moreover, the influence of technology and modernization is more noticeably in agriculture because almost of all people in Karo Land working in the field as a farmer. The writer would like to know the processes of lexical loss and the reasons of lexical loss occur in Karo Language.

Looking from Kamus Karo Indonesia (2002) point of view, so many names of plants in Karo Language are not recognized anymore by Karo people nowadays. For examples:

- *Katola* (the clamber plant with long fruit and the seed looks like cucumber, the outside of the skin is smooth but the inside is fibred).
- *Katamba* (a kind of plant with red flower),
- *Kasemba* (a kind of plant like shrubs, wide leave looks like fingers and the ripe fruit was red blood colored, it usually used as coloring),

- *Kempidi* (a kind of wild *areca-palm/pinang* and the fruit smaller than *areca-palm/pinang*),
- *Kempawa* (a kind of palm usually live in the forest), etc.

It is one of the reasons why the writer interested in observing lexical loss of Karo Language in agriculture sector. There are so many plants that has not been planted anymore by the Karo people and made in the names loss in the course of the world. It automatically influenced the lexicon in Karo Language and resulted in lexical loss in Karo language in agriculture. For that reasons, the writer interested in observing in agriculture especially on agricultural's plants, because so much plants loss in the world and made those lexicons are lost automatically and not recognized anymore by Karo people.

The phenomenon of lexical loss happens in Karo Language. One of the cases of lexical loss in Karo Language happened in agriculture sector. For example:

- *Cuan* (similar to hoe used for tossing and turning the soil)
- *Ambung* (a basket used as place of *gambir*)
- *Mesie* (the first rice after harvest)
- *Permakan* (shepherd of buffalo/cow)
- *Barajenggi* (celery)

Lexical loss is due to internal and external factors (Varshney, 1995: 283).

He added that homonymic clash, phonetic attrition and the need to shorten common words are common internal causes. Homonyms are words which have the same phonemic structure but different meaning, for instance in Karo language

is *abang*. The first meaning is kapok tree that the flowers bloom simultaneously and when the wind floating, the flower flying to everywhere. The second meaning is brother. The existences of homonyms need to lead the word loss. It only does so if the homonyms crop up in the same context and cause confusion. As there were numerous contexts when the two could become confused, the first meaning of *abang* dropped out of existence. That is one of the reasons why lexical loss occurs in Karo language.

External causes of lexical loss are, broadly speaking, historical or social (Varshney, 1995: 283). Words such as *biwa*, *bedi-bedi*, *beras-beras*, are not more current, because these objects are no longer part of everyday life. They have thus dropped out for historical reasons. Social reasons are more diverse. Sometimes alternative lexical items are in use depending on religion or social class, as with pairs such as **table**, **napkin**, and **serviette**, **radio** and **wireless**. If one of the pairs becomes more socially acceptable, the other is likely to drop out of use. In Karo Language, for example, the word *tongat* is more in use than *pongat* (common designation for boys). An interesting type of social cause is lexical loss through taboo. For example, *palu* is favored more than *entek* (beat). Karonese people attempts to avoid the word *entek* because of taboo to spoken by people in there. That word sometimes substituted by word *palu*, *tukul* or *pekpek*. From the phenomenon arise some problems that make this research is interest to be observed.

From the data above, the common lexical loss problems occurring in Karo language because of: internal factors and external factors. Then it is considered to

analyze the lexical loss in Karo language especially in agriculture sector. Finally, this study is entitled “**Loss of Agricultural Lexis in *Cakap Karo***”. This study is to find out the lexical loss which has occurred in Karo Language followed by how and why the lexicons have been lost.

1.1 The Problems of the Study

The problems of the study is presented in the question of “How is the agricultural lexicon loss of *Cakap Karo*?” this question then is elaborated into more particular questions, such as the following.

- 1) What are the levels of agricultural lexical loss in *Cakap Karo*?
- 2) How do the patterns of agricultural lexicons of *Cakap Karo*?
- 3) Why do the agricultural lexicons of *Cakap Karo* lose the way they do?

1.2 The Objectives of the Study

The research is aiming at studying the new phenomenon on lexical loss of *Cakap Karo*. It specifically attempted to objectively describe the lexical loss as well as the ways and reasons of lexical loss of *Cakap Karo*. Thus, the objectives of this study were elaborated as following:

- 1) To investigate the level of agricultural lexical loss in *Cakap Karo*
- 2) To describe the patterns of agricultural lexical loss of *Cakap Karo*
- 3) To explain the reasons of agricultural lexical loss of *Cakap Karo*

1.3 The Scope of the Study

The various language change domains and the numerous lexical loss of Karo language are results in the researcher’s scope of the study to the lexical

change, particularly to lexical loss of *Cakap Karo* of agriculture's plants. More specific it is in an attempt to provide an objective and explanative description of the loss of agricultural lexis in *Cakap Karo*.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

Findings of the research are expected to be useful for the readers both theoretically and practically in some respects:

- 1) Theoretically, the findings can be useful for enriching the theories on lexical loss particularly for understanding the patterns and the reasons of lexical loss in *Cakap Karo*.
- 2) Practically, the findings can be useful for those who have focus on linguistic study especially the lexical loss in *Cakap Karo*. Moreover, the ideas and the point of views of the findings can significantly be useful to be used as:
 - a. Review of literature for the coming researchers.
 - b. Material reference for language learning particularly related to lexical loss.
 - c. Material for helping people particularly Karo people in comprehending and understanding *Cakap Karo*.