

CHAPTER I

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I.1 Background of the Study

When a group of people want to live in a city or a country where the language is different from the language they speak, they have to learn the new language. This group of people is considered to be minority group. At the time they communicate with the majority people, as a process of adaptation, they automatically change from speaking mother tongue to the language of the country they now belong to.

Indonesian Chinese people as minority group in Indonesia, especially in Surabaya - with Javanese as the majority group - usually speak Chinese when they come to the conversation with their acquaintances in every informal places. But in places where there are political, cultural, social and governmental business activities which cover schools, official institutions, public places, entertainment, mass-media and also

working world, it is a must to speak Indonesian in formal discourse. As stated by Susan Gal (1997: 3) that the immigration of formerly isolated groups to cities or countries where a different language is spoken and the emergence of new standard language in former colonies have also been occasions for shift toward the majority, or national, language. Another reason is that they have to adapt with the majority people and the circumstances around them. The changes of language in the community will affect language shift. As Surabaya consists of its pure citizen and urban people from various regions; the language spoken in the society is not merely Indonesian, but people generally converse with their local dialects. To anticipate this condition, speaking in Indonesian, especially in Javanese dialect become a pattern of habit and dominantly spoken by Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya.

This shifting of language has occurred for several decades since the first generation migrated to Indonesia. Chinese people speak Indonesian when they

are in major society, although they sometimes still speak Chinese language with other Chinese. Now, Indonesian is used more frequently by Chinese people, not only when they communicate with the Javanese but also between Chinese people in Surabaya. The frequency of speaking Chinese itself is different between young and old people. In fact, Chinese is less and less spoken by Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya. Young generation tend to choose Indonesian as their lingua franca. There are fewer and fewer contexts in which they can appropriately hear and speak Chinese in daily lives.

Indonesian Chinese people, as other minorities in the world, try to show solidarity and ethnic identity, just like those who still use Chinese in daily conversation and maintain this language in their life. They still try to use Mandarin among Indonesian Chinese although their vocabulary are quite simple.

As a Chinese descendant, the writer feels that Chinese in the Indonesian Chinese families in Surabaya is not frequently used. As Holmes explains that it may

take three or four generations, but sometimes language shift can be completed in just two generations. This study will be interesting because the situation mentioned above is nearly the same with the Indonesian Chinese families in Surabaya. Will Chinese be a loss language in Surabaya especially? Or will it still be maintained by Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya? The writer thinks it will be interesting and important to conduct this study and find out the answers to the problems related to the maintenance of spoken Chinese by Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya nowadays.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

This thesis is carried out to answer the following questions:

- a. Do the young generation of Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya maintain Chinese?
- b. What factors influence young generation of Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya to maintain Chinese?
- c. In what ways do young generation of Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya maintain Chinese?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- a. To find out whether young generation of Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya maintain Chinese.
- b. To explain the factors which influence young generation of Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya to maintain Chinese.
- c. To find out the ways young generation of Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya maintain Chinese.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study about language maintenance is found likely to enlarge the studies of Sociolinguistics which are still being done. This study will be a good material, especially for the students of English Department in exploring further research about language. It will be an important input for Indonesian government toward language policy and support the retention of Chinese from being language loss. It can be a prediction concerning the attitude of next generations of Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya toward Mandarin later.

It can also provide some insight for further research concerning Chinese in Surabaya and other places in Indonesia.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

Considering that Indonesian Chinese families live widespread in Surabaya, the writer tried to make a limitation in her study. She interviewed and gave questionnaires to the subjects, both male and female. The subjects chosen were categorized in young generation only. They consisted of 10 persons who were born from Indonesian Chinese parents, not from intermarriage parents. She analyzed the maintenance of spoken Chinese, not written.

1.6 Assumptions

This research was carried out under the assumption that the subjects were able to speak Chinese, either fluently or not. If the children of the third generation arrive, they tend to maintain or retain their ethnic language because they are more influenced

majority language used in the speech community. Chinese, in the Chinese-speaking community in Surabaya, seems to be less and less spoken, either in the non-formal situation such as at home, or among family members and friends. If A speaks to B in Chinese, and B gives response in Indonesian or other languages, there is a possibility whether B has a low proficiency of Chinese or does not understand it. This situation happens because B has no affection of using Chinese or B was born from intermarriage parents. Moreover, the children of second generation sometimes have a low proficiency of Chinese, but they still maintain it in the broad speech community in Surabaya. Based on this assumption, it is a correct time for the writer to find out the ways and the factors why Chinese is being maintained in the situation in which the language of majority group, that is Indonesian, has a power in displacing Chinese which is spoken by Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The theory which is mostly used in this study is the theory of Language Maintenance.

Elaine Chaika (1996:58) says that foreign languages survive best where there are large enough population so that daily social activities can be carried on in that language. The corollary to that is that the languages survive where their speakers live together in the same neighborhood or communities. A further corollary is that the languages survive where people are somewhat isolated physically or psychologically from the mainstream.

Janet Holmes (1992:57) stated that sometimes language shift can be completed in just two generations. Typically, migrants are virtually monolingual in their mother tongue, their children are bilingual, and their grandchildren are often monolingual in the language of the 'host' country. Where a migrant minority group moves to a predominantly monolingual society dominated by one majority group language in all the major constitutional domains—

school, television, radio, newspapers, government administration, courts, work-language shift will be unavoidable unless the community takes active steps to prevent it. If families from a minority group live near each other and see each other frequently, this also helps them maintain their language. For example, Chinese people who live in the Chinatown areas of big cities are much more likely to maintain a Chinese dialect as their mother tongue through to the third generation than those who move outside the Chinatown area.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid ambiguity, some terms are defined:

- (a) Chinese is the language spoken by Indonesian Chinese in Surabaya.
- (b) Language maintenance refers to a situation where members of a community try to keep the language(s) they have always used (Hoffman, 1991:185).
- (c) Indonesian Chinese in this study refer to those who were born from pure Chinese-blooded parents, not

from intermarriage parents or another, as Surabaya citizen.

- (d) First generation refers to those who came to Indonesia as the first immigrant people. They are full blooded Chinese and passively use Indonesian in formal or informal situation. They do not get formal education in Indonesian schools. They are considered more than 60 years old.
- (e) Second generation are the children of the first generation who were born in Indonesia. They have ever entered Chinese school for several years. They have also got education in Indonesian schools. They master both oral and written competence in Chinese. They are considered between 30 up to 50 years old.
- (f) Young generation in this study refer to Indonesian Chinese whose age are 16 up to 25 years old. They get education only in Indonesian schools. They are able to use Chinese orally and still use it among family members and friends. Some of them have low tendency to learn it. They speak in Indonesian-Javanese more frequently.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter covers background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, assumptions, theoretical framework, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. The second chapter reviews some literature related to the study. It discussed the theories used in the study and related studies. The third chapter is about the research methodology. It discusses the nature of the study, the subject, the research instruments, procedures of collecting the data, and procedures of analyzing the data. The fourth chapter is about the findings and discussion. The final chapter of this study presents the conclusion and some suggestions concerning the topic of further study.