

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the writer describes some important points that are related to the area of the study. Those important points are background of the study, problems of the study, objectives of the study, and definition of key terms.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Human is a social creature. We build relations with others in order to have a social bonding. What we seek throughout our history is to identify others and ourselves in social contexts. The identification occurs through the act of naming which holds an immense social significance for us (Trenholm & Jensen, 1992). Therefore, we have our name that sets us apart from others, precisely; our individual names signify our individuality within society. The smallest society we belong to and share the same language is a family. In family, we learn how to address our kin with a specific term. Kinship terms, according to Leach E. R. (1958), are "category words by means of which an individual is taught to recognize the significant groupings in the social structure into which he is born" (p. 143). They are the lexically identical terms and exclusive terminological systems regarded with a distinctive social and cultural nature. According to Kreidler (2002), kinship is universal since humans are related to other humans through blood ties and through marriage, although kinship systems different from society to society. For example, between English and Chinese languages, only a few main relations such as "father," "mother," "son," and "daughter," carry the

same semantic meaning that can be articulated in similar kinship terms. However, when we step outside from this circle of basic family relations, the differences in the various terms become noticeable. In English, to be called as "uncle", does not signify to which uncle it addresses. "Uncle" can be used to address a male model either he is your father's older brother, younger brother, or someone who is not related to your family but friends with your father or your mother. On the other hand, in Chinese, it is rather different to address someone with just the term "uncle". Chinese people know how to address which uncle they wish to address, for example, from the father side, in Mandarin *Bóbo* is used to address father's older brother and *Shūshu* is used to address father's younger brother. From the mother side, *Jiùjiu* is used to address mother's brother (Wang Wu, 2005)

Holmes (2001,p.1) conveys, examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and the way people signals aspects of their social identity through their language. Kinship systems are universal feature of languages and it is important in social contact. Moreover, some systems might be richer than other system such as the kinship term of Chinese. Chinese language in particular is recognized for the complexity of the language. Its culture, history, environment, philosophical or religious assumptions, and some of other factors influence their identity. Holmes also states, since language is a prominent identity of a society group, the member of the society should keep maintain a language in order to make the language exist longer. If language users do not maintain their language, the language will die

gradually because of some factors and one of those factors is globalization. As globalization influences language development, nowadays, many people shift their vernacular language gradually into the language that can be understood by majority. One of the ethnics who undergo a various kind of events that influence their language is Chinese people in Indonesia. One of the several of memorable events that Chinese-Indonesians had to go through is the Chinese ban in the New Order Era under President Suharto government. For 32 years (from 1966-1998), the act of Chineseness such as Chinese expressions, Chinese schools, and Chinese language is prohibited. However, the situation changed radically after the downfall of the New Order in 1998 where as Indonesian governments eliminated almost all policy of assimilation act, leading to the 'revival' of Chinese identity (Setijadi, 2016). From then, the future of Chinese-Indonesians took an immense turn where as President B. J. Habibie (1998-1999) abolished the use of the terms 'pribumi' and 'non-pribumi' in an official government documents.

Later than, in 2000, President Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2001) revoked the bans against Chinese cultural expressions, languages, and religion allowing Chinese culture to be practiced and expressed in public again. Followed by President Megawati Sukarnoputri (2001-2004) who is also participate to restore the 'revival' of Chineseness, made Imlek (Chinese New Year) a national holiday in 2002 as an official gesture of recognition for both Chinese Indonesians and the Confucian (Konghucu) religion which now become one of Indonesia six official religions (Setijadi, 2016). Chinese Indonesians themselves were, and always had been, a diverse group consist of people that came from various regions in China,

spoke different languages (Hakka, Hokkien, Cantonese and Teochew), who held different political views, and experience varying gradation of belonging toward the Indonesian nation.

Skinner (1963) states:

As the first group of Chinese people to settle in large numbers, the Hokkien of southern Fujian became the dominant immigrant group until the middle of the 19th century. Their maritime-mercantile culture comes from their trade occupations whilst in Indonesia. Descendants of Hokkiens are the dominant group in eastern Indonesia, Central and East Java, and the western coast of Sumatra. Tiochius, southern neighbors of the Hokkien, are found throughout the eastern coast of Sumatra, in the Riau Archipelago, and in western Borneo. They were preferred as plantation laborers in Sumatra, but have become traders in regions where the Hokkien are not well represented.

Coppel (1983) stated the traditional groupings of Chinese Indonesians as either '*totok*' ('pure' Chinese with no mixed ancestry) or '*peranakan*' (acculturated Chinese, usually with mixed Chinese-native Indonesian ancestry). Setijadi (2016) said *Totok* Chinese maintained Chinese traditions, culture, and language in Indonesia unlike the *peranakan* Chinese who mostly identified with the cultures of their local regions, spoke local languages instead of Chinese, and develop their own unique hybrid culture from a mixture of Chinese and local cultural influences. Hoon in 2007 stated that scholars now generally regard the *totok-peranakan* distinction to be outdated, but Chinese-Indonesians when referring to the degrees to which their families adhere to Chinese cultural traditions still frequently use the terms.

As part of Chinese-Indonesians community, the writer experienced the phenomenon of language shift where she is no longer use the correct kinship term

of Chinese when she address a specific family member. Language shift, as Ravindranath (2009) describes, is the process by which a speech community in a contact situation (i.e. consisting of bilingual speakers) gradually stops using one of its two languages in favor of the other. An example comes from the writer's own experience when the writer heard one of her friend from a Chinese background family addresses her two older sisters with *Cik-de* and *Cik-nga* unlike the writer who has an older sister and addresses her with *Cece*. Another of the writer's friend addresses her uncle with *Encik* and the other friend addresses his uncle with *Empek* unlike the writer addresses her uncle and aunt with a western term *Om* and *Tante*. The writer found different terms on addressing her family members compared to her Chinese friends. In this study, the writer would like to study about the kinship terms used by Chinese-Indonesians in their local language. As a Chinese-Indonesian, the writer would like to go back to her root and understand better about her culture, tradition, and history. The writer hopes that it can make people recognize the existence of Chinese-Indonesian language, especially which is spoken by Chinese-Indonesians in Mojokerto.

The writer chooses Mojokerto because the city has a wide range of community with 120.196 populations whereas the Chinese ethnic hold approximately 2% of the population (Sensus Penduduk 2010, <http://sp2010.bps.go.id>). In Mojokerto, most Chinese-Indonesians are still preserving the Chinese tradition and culture such as the Chinese New Year in which young people practice and perform *Barongsai* to celebrate the occasion. Mojokerto also has a private school named Taruna Nusa Harapan with half of the

student of the school are Chinese. The Chinese community in Mojokerto as the writer experienced is still continues to practice Chinese language, tradition, and culture in their daily life.

In this study, the writer would like to analyze the kinship terms used by two cohorts from a different generation of Chinese-Indonesians in Mojokerto whereas the writer using a social classification of generation proposed by Mark McCrindle in 2009 in order to categorize the subjects. The first cohort will be known as Generation X, defined as those born between 1965 and 1979. Gen X-ers in Indonesia cover those whom born in the Suharto "New Order" era and live for 32 years experiencing the New Order Regime whereas Chinese languages and cultural expressions were ban in Indonesia. The second cohort will be known as Generation Z, defined as those born between 1995 and 2009. Pew Research Center called this generation The Millennial generation. Gen Z-ers in Indonesia cover those who are born where the May 1998 riots happened, the resignation of President Suharto and the fall of New Order government. This generation also undergoes four times President Alteration and experience the uprising of Chinese culture in Indonesia. The writer chose this method of study based on sociological point of view about generational studies, where Elder, G. H. Jr. (1978) proposed the use of "generational cohorts" as a device for introducing better precision into generational studies. In this method, individuals of a certain limited birth cohort are taken as the focus, with these individuals passing through their various life stages in a similar historical environment. This allows us to look at the

relationship between parents and children that have both an identifiable historical locus and specifiable age characteristics.

With the aim of studying the kinship terms of Chinese-Indonesian in Mojokerto as one of the part of local culture in Indonesia, the writer believes that it is supposed to be maintain so that it can create an understanding of a unique cultural meanings of the Chinese-Indonesian kinship system that would not only help us better understand Chinese-Indonesians, but also help us improve intercultural communication. Then, this study might be a trigger for young generation of Chinese-Indonesians to keep their culture and tradition going, start with how they address some in their family using their own language as a tool for communication. They need to realize that language is valuable heritage that has to be preserve from generation to generation. Furthermore, the writer hopes this study can be a learning medium to learn about vernacular language that exists in Indonesia.

## **1.2 Problems of the Study**

The writer has two problems of the study that she attempts to answer, they are:

1. What are the kinship terms used by two-generation cohorts of Chinese-Indonesians in Mojokerto?
2. How does the system of the kinship terms between two-generation cohorts of Chinese-Indonesians differ?

### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

In order to answer the problems of the study, this research has two objective of the study as mentioned below:

1. To find out the kinship terms two-generation cohorts of Chinese-Indonesians use.
2. To find out the differences and changes in the system of the kinship terms between two-generation cohorts of Chinese-Indonesians.

### 1.4 Definition of Key Terms

- a. Kinship Terms:** A system of kin relationship rests on the established institutions and customs relating to membership in households, sexual rights, the definition of procreation, the legitimization of progeny as members of a jural community, and the like. (Goodenough, 2013)
- b. Chinese-Indonesians:** a heterogeneous group consisting of people that came from various regions in China, spoke different languages (Hakka, Hokkien, Cantonese and Teochew being the four major spoken languages). (Setijadi, 2016)
- c. Generational Cohort:** a method of study aims for a better precision about generational studies. (Elder, G. H. Jr.,1978)
- d. Generation X:** The Generation X are defined as those born between 1965 and 1979. (Mark McCrindle, 2009)
- e. Generation Z:** The Generation Z are defined as those born between 1995 and 2009. (Mark McCrindle, 2009)



- f. Mojokerto:** It is a city in East Java province located in 40 kilometers southwest of Surabaya, and constitutes one of the component units of the Surabaya metropolitan area (known as Gerbangkertosusila acronym for Gresik Bangkalan Mojokerto Surabaya Sidoarjo Lamongan). (Garuda Dikti, 2014)