

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Bloch and Trager (in Lubis, 1993: 8), states that language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols. Language is a system consists of well-arranged element from phonemes, morpheme and other elements of language. Phoneme should correctly be articulated to pronounce, and morpheme should be morphologically built. Thus, meaning can be obtained. Language as a symbol is something representing meaning. The word *car*, for example, represents a vehicle with four wheels. As a vocal, language is a symbol representing meaning through vocal. As an arbiter, language symbolizes meaning arbitrarily.

Bloch and Trager (in Lubis, 1993: 8), in this regard seem to judge that language can only be obtained from verbal channel. Meanwhile, in certain occasions verbal expression itself cannot stand alone to express certain meanings. Pointing out at a direction while saying “That way!” gives clear information about which direction to take. This bodily activity helps a speaker to send his message. Or it can replace the utterance instead, as it has already been able to stand alone in sending the message. Non-verbal language, in that case, plays a significant role in people’s interaction. This is in a line with Barnlund’s statement (in Samovar and Potter, 1997: 180):

“Many, and sometimes most, of the critical meanings generated in human encounters are elicited by touch, glance, vocal nuance, gestures, or facial

expression with or without the aid of words. From the moment of recognition until the moment of separation, people observe each other with all their senses, hearing pause and intonation, attending to dress and carriage, observing glance and facial tension, as well as noting word choice and syntax. Every harmony or disharmony of signals guides the interpretation of passing mood or enduring attribute. Out of the evaluation of kinetic, vocal and verbal cues, decisions are made to argue or agree, to laugh or blush, to relax or to resist, to continue or cut off conversation. Therefore, non-verbal language deserves a special attention in the study of language.”

Non-verbal communication is a multi channel process that is usually performed spontaneously; it typically involves a subtle set of non-linguistics behaviors that are often enacted subconsciously (Samovar, 2000: 176). It might involve several bodily activities, which are sometimes done without consciousness. One, for example, will spontaneously shake his head to reinforce his negative statement. Therefore, Andersen (in Lustig, 2003: 259) defines non-verbal communication as a subtle, non-linguistics, multi media and spontaneous process. From the definition, it can be concluded that non-verbal language is any bodily activity that can be used to communicate one’s thought, ideas or feelings.

Non-verbal and verbal language all together have a share function in people’s communication and they correlate each other. According to Samovar (2000: 178), there are various relations that can be drawn between verbal and non-verbal language. Non-verbal language can be used to accent the verbal messages by giving an emphasis referring to stress in particular words or phrases. One might put a stress on the word *do* in the sentence “I do love you”, to convey truthfulness in loving the speakee. It may also be functioned to give compliment on the verbal message. “Many Americans shake their heads up and

down while saying “yes” to reinforce the verbal affirmation” (Samovar, 2000: 178). It is also often used to contradict the verbal message. People might do this for purposes or on the other hand, they don’t realize of doing this. This is like when someone is saying “O, great!” with hateful facial expression. Non-verbal language is also used to regulate an interaction. This refers to the way how people treat the turn taking of talking. It is also used to substitute verbal channel. People can wave their hands instead of saying “good bye”, for example.

A study on non-verbal language somehow reveals a stereotypical judgements, if it is not based on culture, for it is culturally rooted for sure. Americans, for example, regard that not looking at the eyes of a person they are talking to as an impolite behavior. Javanese, for a comparison might regard this as a polite behavior instead. To view such a behavior on the Javanese culture from the perspective of American culture is to miss the message of the non-verbal language. Thus, the writer here conducts her study from the approach of culture.

Considering the importance of studying the non-verbal language, as an aid for the verbal language to convey people’s thought, the writer focuses her study on American non-verbal language. Studying the American non-verbal language is very helpful to learn more about the American English itself. This will enrich the literature for English students.

Realizing the importance of studying non-verbal language as explained above, the writer would like to conduct a study on that. The title of the study is

## A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF AMERICAN NON-VERBAL EXPRESSIONS.

### **B. Limitation of the Study**

In order that this study would not be over framed, the writer would like to put some limits on her study. First of all, she focuses her study on kinesics behavior only. This is because, in the writer's perspective, kinesics behaviors take much more percentage of roles in affecting people's communication instead of other kinds of non-verbal expressions. Secondly, she focuses her study on American non-verbal expressions. At last, the data of this study are from Jim Carrey's movies entitled *DUMB AND DUMBER* and *ME, MYSELF AND IRENE*. This is because those are movies which exploit the use of non-verbal expressions by the characters in delivering lines, that they have already represented many kinds of non-verbal expressions the writer needs to study.

### **C. Review of Previous Research**

Some people concern about the use of non-verbal language in people's interaction within the approach of cultures. Two of them are Larry A Samovar and Richard E Porter in his book entitled *INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: A READER* (2000). They concern about the definition of non-verbal communication, its relation to verbal message and the kinds of non-verbal language. They also discuss how non-verbal language differs each other.

Meanwhile, the writer here focuses on one typical American non-verbal expression only: kinesics behavior. And the approach she uses is culture.

#### **D. Problem Statements**

The major issue of discussing non-verbal expression is what is actually meant by the movement made by people. Thus, the writer decides to determine this problem of this study:

1. "What are the form of non-verbal expressions?"
2. "What message are conveyed through the use of American non-verbal expressions in Jim Carrey's movies?"

#### **E. The Objective of Study**

The objective of the study is to analyze the message conveyed through the use of American non-verbal expressions in Jim Carrey's movies.

#### **F. Benefit of the Study**

Practically, the writer hopes that her study will help the readers understand more about American non-verbal expressions.

Theoretically, the writer wants her study to add the literature of American non-verbal language, especially on kinesics in American society.

#### **G. Research Paper Organization**

The writer arranges this research paper into five chapters. They are introduction, underlying theories, research method, research result and conclusion and suggestion.

Chapter I is introduction. It consists of background of the study, limitation of the study, previous study, problem statement, purpose of the study, benefit of the study and research paper organization

Chapter II is underlying theories which consists of culture and non-verbal expressions. The second item of the second chapter consists of the relation between verbal and non-verbal expression and the kinds of non-verbal expressions.

Chapter III is research method. It consists of type of research, object of the study, data, source of the data, method of data collection, and technique of data analysis.

Chapter IV is research result which consists of analysis of the data and discussion of the finding.

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion.