1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is divided into three; spoken language, written language and gesture or silent language. Language is an instrument for conveying meaning and communicating some ideas. People use language to interact to each other. They use it to express their feeling, message, knowledge and desire toward anyone. Sapir (1921:8) says that language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desire by means of a system voluntary produced symbol. It means that language is used when we interact with other people socially or emotionally, to indicate corporation, friendliness, pain, or to express idea, desire, hope, and thought. In the other word, language is a medium of communication which plays a vital role in human communication.

Minangkabau as a group of people in Indonesia, especially from West Sumatra has some people that have migrated from the basic region. They are spread in some provinces and cities in this country. Minang or Minangkabau ethnic has special term to say migration. They called ‘merantau’ for their people who moved from their region or West Sumatra to another place or city outside of the province. The people who ‘merantau’ is called ‘perantau’. ‘merantau’ isn’t called for the people who moved from another place in the same province. It is just called only for moving outside of the province of West Sumatera.

In Indonesia, there are so many cultures with each language itself. For example: Batakness with Batak Language, Sundaness with Sunda Language, Acehness with Aceh Language. Each of the ethnic uses language as the mean of
communication to communicate each other. By language, they convey meaning, ideas and feelings to another people.

There are so many ethnic in Indonesia, such as Minangkabau, Batak, Sunda, Melayu, etc. Minang or Minangkabau ethnic is a group of ethnic and is the upholding traditional Minangkabau language. Areas include West Sumatra adherent culture, half of mainland Riau, Bengkulu, western of Jambi, southern North Sumatra, and Aceh Barat Daya. Minang people are often confused as the people of Padang, the provincial capital refers to the name of the city of Padang, West Sumatra.

It is important to understand the concept of migration “merantau’ for Minangkabau ethnic. So, in this study I try to analyze the meaning of migration ‘merantau’ for Minang or Minangkabau ethnic, because I think it is important to know and understand the social life of native people of West Sumatra Province.

1.2 Scope of The Study

There are so many ethnic in Indonesia. One of them is Minangkabau. In the process of analyzing the problems in this study, I limit the study on the meaning of “Merantau”.

1.3 Purpose of The Study

The purpose of the study maybe described as follows:

1) To find out the meaning of “merantau” for Minangkabau society.

2) To find out the effects and prospects of “merantau”.

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1.4 **Significance of The Study**

The significance of the study may be described as follows:

1) The readers will get explanation about “merantau” of Minangkabau ethnic.

2) To become additional references for future study.

1.5 **The Method of Research**

One of the essential of scientific studies in analyzing the problem is having a method of research. In this study, I apply the library research to get supporting information related to the topic of the study. This study will be done by using descriptive qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is defined as a description of observation which is not ordinarily expressed in quantitative terms. It is not suggested that numerical measures are never used, but the other means of description are emphasize. Nazir (1998: 64) says that descriptive method is a method of research that makes the description of the situation of events or occurrence. Therefore, descriptive design is a research design which is intended only to describe the variable.