Tradition and Modernity of Humanity
International Journal

Multilingualism as The Cause of Teochew Dialect Extinction in Medan

Sherly Novita

Universitas Sumatera Utara - Medan, Indonesia

Abstract. The title of this article is "The Role of Multilingualism in the Decline of the Teochew Dialect in Medan." The present study is grounded on the theoretical framework of Sociolinguistics, which encompasses the examination of language characteristics, variations, and functions, as well as the analysis of language usage within social interactions. The objective of this study is to provide an overview of the social context of the Teochew community in Medan, with a specific focus on the Teochew dialect. The employed research methodology is qualitative in nature. The terms "data collection method" and "technique used" pertain to the approach employed for gathering information, as well as the skillful manner in which it is recorded and documented. The Chinese population residing in Medan is recognised for their multilingual abilities, as they are proficient in speaking multiple languages. These languages include Bahasa Indonesia, which serves as the national language of Indonesia; Hokkien, a dialect commonly used for communication in Medan; their respective mother tongues, employed for intrafamilial and intraethnic interactions (Teochew, Hakka, Cantonese, Hailufeng, Hokchiu, Henghua, and Hainan); Mandarin, spoken by a subset of the Chinese community; and English, acquired as a global language of instruction. As a result of their multilingualism, individuals of Chinese descent, particularly those from the Teochew community, have a tendency to incorporate elements of their native language into their everyday speech. Consequently, a significant proportion of individuals progressively lose proficiency in and cease to utilise their native language over the 4.0 period, leading to the endangerment of the Teochew Chinese dialect in Medan.

1   Introduction

This research discusses Teochew dialect extinction in Medan due to multilingualism. The language raised in this research is Teochew in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Medan, as the capital of the province of North Sumatra Indonesia, particularly Medan is a multicultural city consisting of various kinds of ethnicities with various regional languages. The regional languages in Indonesia have similarities in the pronunciation of several vocabulary words. Similarities among regional languages can occur due to language and social interactions [1][2].

*Corresponding author at: Universitas Sumatera Utara - Medan, Indonesia

E-mail address: sherly.novita@students.ac.id

Teochew dialect is chosen to be analyzed as it is fundamentally based on awareness that dialects have essential function and position among Indonesians. The writer would also like to clarify that the Chinese living in Indonesia especially in the districts of Medan, Medan city, is not merely Hokkien as there are Teochew, Hakka, Cantonese, Hailufeng, Hokchiu, Henghua, and Hainan ethnic groups.

Bilingualism is a person who has the ability to speak two languages. Multilingualism is the ability of an individual in speaking more than two languages depending on the society where he is involved in [3][4]. It is more likely that the individuals who live in a multilingual community speak more than one language than for individuals who live in a monolingual society. Therefore, there are more multilinguals in areas where regional or minority languages are spoken. In Indonesia, bahasa Indonesia is used as the lingua franca among the multilingual locals. It is a standardized variety of Malay; a descendant of Proto-Austronesian language. Most Indonesians, aside from speaking the national language, are also fluent in their local languages, for example Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, Bataknese, Chinese and many others [5].

In the context of individual multilingualism, there exist discernible variations in the process of acquiring and utilising multiple languages. Simultaneous acquisition of several languages can occur when an individual is exposed to two or more languages either from birth or at various stages during their lives. The holistic perspective on multilingualism emphasises the distinct traits exhibited by individuals who are multilingual, as compared to those who are monolingual. Multilingual individuals leverage the languages they possess as a valuable tool for communication, so benefiting from a broader repertoire of linguistic resources compared to their monolingual counterparts. The consideration of multilingual speakers employing different languages, either in isolation or in combination, is of utmost importance, since it is dependent on their communicative requirements and the individuals they are interacting with. Monolingual individuals exclusively employ a single language in all circumstances, whereas multilingual individuals employ several languages and do not utilise each language for identical goals in all communicative situations, domains, or with the same individuals [6][7]. Individuals that possess the ability to speak many languages may choose to peruse a newspaper in one language, while opting to engage with a technical report in a different language. The individual who possesses multilingual abilities may engage in online conversations using two different languages, depending on the linguistic preferences of their conversation partners. However, when it comes to watching films, they tend to exclusively see films in only one of those languages. The

notion that bilingual individuals possess identical and flawless proficiency in two languages is a fallacy [8]. Indeed, this holds true to a much greater extent when three or more languages are implicated.

As mentioned previously, locals in Indonesia will use bahasa Indonesia; however, differ from other cities, Medan Chinese use Hokkien as the lingua franca among the Chinese in Medan. When there are Chinese in city A, for instance, they speak bahasa Indonesia or local languages in city A to communicate with each other unless they are from the same ethnics, they will use their own mother tongue. In Medan, among the Chinese speakers, they use Hokkien dialect as the lingua franca. Once they know that their interlocutors are from the same ethnics, they will turn their Hokkien dialect to their own mother tongue to show their familiarity. In other condition, some Chinese are also trained in speaking Mandarin as their Chinese identity and English as the must-learnt international language for Chinese. Especially during this 4.0 era, when everything is digitized with English and a lot of international schools are surrounding Indonesia, people in Indonesia are also getting fluent in speaking English. It means, Chinese in Medan are capable of speaking bahasa Indonesia, Mandarin, Hokkien, their own mother tongue, and English.

The objective of this study is to examine the phenomenon of multilingualism among Chinese speakers, specifically focusing on the Teochew dialect, and its potential impact on the decline of dialect usage. This research adopts a sociolinguistic approach, which is an interdisciplinary field that explores the connection between language and society. The aim is to enhance our comprehension of language structure and its role in communication. A language can be defined as a code or system employed by individuals to engage in communication with one another [9]. When individuals desire to engage in communication, they opt on a specific code through which they can effectively convey their emotions and thoughts. In the field of sociolinguistics, language diversity is commonly seen through two distinct phenomena known as code flipping and code mixing. Individuals often exhibit a tendency to blend or alternate between languages during their interactions with others, a phenomenon commonly observed in bilingual or multilingual contexts.

Code mixing is a linguistic phenomenon wherein a speaker transitions from using one language to another within a single instance of speech. The phenomenon being referred to is the utilisation of a particular language or linguistic variant within a context characterised by a relaxed atmosphere, typically occurring amongst individuals who

have a close and intimate bond [10]. Code mixing refers to the act of blending two distinct codes or languages, typically without a shift in subject matter. When a speaker engages in code mixing, an additional language is included into the linguistic repertoire of the speaker, while the primary language continues to undergo further development [11]. Code mixing frequently manifests in a single sentence, wherein one constituent is expressed in language A while the remaining constituents are articulated in language B. In formal contexts, speakers often resort to code-switching due to the absence of a precise idiom within the language being used. Consequently, it becomes necessary to incorporate words or idioms from other languages [12].

2. Method

To gather the necessary data for this study, method known as the proficiency, recording, and note-taking approach [13][14]. This method facilitated the conduction of sociolinguistic interviews with the participants, allowing for a comprehensive data collection process. The sociolinguistic interview serves as the primary approach for gathering data in sociolinguistic research, enabling researchers to amass substantial quantities of speech from individuals who are knowledgeable about the language or dialect under investigation. The interview is characterised by an extended, informally-structured dialogue between the author and the interviewee, like typical everyday conversations [15].

3. Result and Discussion

1. a. Where are you going, Jasmine?

    [lə4 ai1 kʰə1 ti3 kɔ3, Jasmine?]

    b. I am going to teach my private student who studies at Prime One School.

    [wa4 ai1 kʰə1 ka1 wa1 kai3 private hak3 seŋ1 jaɲ3 tʰak3 na3 Prime One School kai1.]

2. I really love eating dumplings with soy sauce.

    [wa4 ceŋ1 sek1 suka ciak3 pangsit pʰoi1 kecap.]

3. I will be late for 15 minutes. Please wait for me at the hotel receptionist for the check-in.

    [wa4 bakalan telat cap3 ŋɔ2 hun3 ceŋ1. Tolong tan1 wa1 na3 hotel receptionist kɔ3 check-in.]

4. <u>Although</u> it is not a <u>farewell party</u>, everyone treats her <u>like</u> she is going to leave tomorrow.

    [sui1 zaŋ4 əm3 si3 <u>farewell party</u>, <u>tapi</u> noŋ2 coŋ3 kai3 naŋ4 tui1 tai3 ji1 <u>kayak</u> ji1 ma1 zek1 ai1 li3 kʰui1 liau4.]

5. I got stuck in the <u>traffic jam</u>.

    [wa4 tu4 tiok3 <u>macet</u>.]

6. The students are having <u>flag ceremony</u> in the <u>field</u> <u>now</u>.

    [hak3 seŋ1 <u>lagi</u> wu3 <u>upacara bendera</u> kʰə1 <u>lapangan</u>.]

7. It seems that he <u>likes</u> to drink <u>milk tea</u> with <u>boba</u> and eat <u>peanuts</u>.

    [kʰua3 tiok4 ji1 <u>suka</u> lim1 <u>milk tea</u> kak3 <u>boba</u> cʰam3 ciak3 <u>kacang</u>.]

8. I am asking Ricky to <u>print</u> the files for me.

    [wa4 kio3 Ricky kak3 wa1 <u>print</u> mik3 kia2.]

9. My <u>phone</u> is in <u>low battery</u>.

    [wa4 kai3 <u>handphone</u> ai1 <u>low bat</u> liau4.]

10. My <u>computer</u> is broken.

    [wa1 kai3 <u>computer</u> pʰai4 liau4.]

11. The students need to <u>record</u> their <u>testimony</u> and <u>upload</u> it on the <u>Instagram</u> by <u>tagging</u> our <u>ID</u>.

    [hak3 seŋ1 ai1 <u>record</u> ji1 naŋ3 kai3 <u>testimony</u> liau4 <u>upload</u> kʰə1 <u>Instagram</u> liau4 <u>tag</u> wa4 naŋ3 kai3 <u>ID</u>.]

12. The students need to do the <u>writing</u> in a <u>free</u> <u>topic</u>.

    [hak3 seŋ1 ai1 co3 cə3 ju4 kai3 <u>free</u> <u>topic</u> kai3 <u>writing</u>.]

13. The <u>wi-fi</u> is very <u>slow</u>.

    [<u>wai2 fai2</u> a1 ne1 <u>lek1</u>.]

14. I have not planned anything for my <u>presentation</u> next week.

    [au3 lui1 pai3 kai3 <u>presentation</u> wa4 a1 boi3 cun3 pi2 kɔk3.]

15. I haven't got the <u>report</u> of the school fee payment.

    [wa4 a1 boi3 wu3 tʰak3 cʰek3 lui1 kai3 e <u>report</u>.]

16. Do you <u>still</u> keep <u>Mr</u>. Gunawan's contact number?

[lə4 <u>masi</u> wu3 siu1 <u>Mister</u> Gunawan kai3 tiaŋ3 ɔi3 bɔ4?]

17. If she does not deduct my <u>bonus</u>, it is <u>still</u> acceptable for me.

[na3 si1 ji1 bo3 khau3 wa1 kai3 <u>bonus</u> wa4 <u>masi</u> wu3 piaŋ1 cik3 siu2.]

18. Do you <u>still</u> have the <u>grading guide</u> file for <u>exposition writing</u>?

[lə4 <u>masi</u> wu3 <u>exposition writing</u> kai3 <u>grading guide</u> bɔ4?]

19. I am going to have a <u>meeting</u> with <u>board of the staff</u> tomorrow.

[ma1 zek1 wa4 ai1 kak3 wa1 kai3 <u>staff</u> <u>meeting</u>.]

20. Susan does not <u>like</u> to apply <u>brown</u> <u>eyeshadow</u> on her <u>eyelids</u>.

[Susan bo3 <u>suka</u> jɔŋ4 <u>coklat</u> <u>eyeshadow</u> kʰə1 ji1 kai3 <u>mak3 ciu1</u>.]

21. I have not <u>downloaded</u> the <u>files</u> from the <u>email</u>.

[wa4 a1 boi3 <u>download</u> <u>email</u> kai3 <u>file</u>.]

22. She decided to quit from the school <u>due to</u> financial problem.

[ji1 kuak1 tia3 cʰut3 wan1 ɔk3 təŋ2 <u>jiŋ1 wei3</u> lui1 kai3 mɔŋ3 tɔiŋ1.]

23. She <u>postponed</u> <u>the forum</u> to the following week <u>because</u> there were not many participants this morning.

[ji1 <u>undur</u> <u>forum</u> kʰə1 au3 lui1 pai3 <u>jiŋ1 wei3</u> ca2 kʰi3 bɔ3 a1 ne1 cɔi3 naŋ4 tɔi3.]

24. I don't <u>get used to</u> put on high heels. I <u>prefer</u> flat shoes.

[wa4 bo3 <u>sit3 kuan3</u> cʰeŋ3 kui3 ɔi1. Wa4 kʰak1 <u>suka</u> pau1 ɔi1.]

25. I do not have any <u>kebaya</u>. May I put on <u>dress</u> instead?

[wa4 bo3 <u>kebaya</u>. Wa4 oi3 sai4 cʰeŋ3 <u>dress</u> bɔi2?

26. My name is Stella. I am 29 years old. I will be 30 years old in two months' time. I am working as a private teacher <u>now</u>. I teach Mandarin and English. I am a Christian. I go to <u>Mawar Sharon</u> Church. Currently, I <u>also</u> participate in <u>interpreter</u> ministry. I am in Mandarin team. I supposed to get married last May. <u>But</u> <u>because of</u> <u>corona</u>, my wedding got <u>postponed</u> <u>so</u> I am going to get married next year. <u>But</u> I <u>still</u> thank God <u>because</u> through <u>this</u> <u>pandemic</u>, I got a lot of blessings <u>from</u> God.

[wa4 kai3 mia4 mia3 Stella. Wa4 keŋ1 ni4 ziap3 kau2 hoi3. Ke2 nɔ3 kai3 guek4 wa4 ai1 sa3 cap3 hoi3 liau4. Wa4 tɔŋ3 kim2 <u>lagi</u> ka2 naŋ3 po2 sip1. Wa4 ka3 kai3

si3 hua3 gək4 kak3 im3 bun2. Wa4 si3 cə3 kai3 sin1 ja3 sɔl kai3 naŋ3. Wa4 kʰə1 <u>Mawar Sharon</u> kai3 ka1 təŋ1. Wa4 <u>juga</u> wu3 cʰam1 kia1 <u>interpret</u> na3 ci1 kai3 ka1 təŋ1. Wa4 cʰam1 kia1 hua3 gək4 e3 fan4 ji4 tʰuan2 kai3 <u>interpret</u>. keŋ1 ni4 e3 ŋɔ2 guek4 wa4 jiŋ1 kai1 kek1 hun1 liau4. <u>Tapi jiŋ1 wei3</u> <u>corona</u>, wa4 <u>undur</u> wa4 e3 kek1 hun1 <u>jadi</u> me1 ni4 cia3 kek1 hun1. <u>Tapi</u> wa4 <u>tetap</u> ai1 kam1 sia3 cu4 <u>karena</u> sui1 zaŋ4 wu3 <u>ini</u> <u>pandemi</u>, <u>tapi</u> wa4 <u>tetap</u> tʰan3 a1 ne1 ce3 kai3 cɔk1 hot1 <u>dari</u> cu4.].

4. Conclusion

There are many words in Teochew which tend to be replaced with Bahasa and English as the informants do not know their Teochew version. In their daily conversation, they usually code-mix some words or phrases with adopted languages that describe the exact words rather than explaining the forgotten or unknown words with figures by using Teochew. This phenomenon happens due to the globalization era when speaking English is the trend and speaking Bahasa is a compulsory. It is truly suggested that dialects can still be preserved among the youngsters with the support of social media like YouTube.

REFERENCES

[1]   Ramlan and T. Lubis, "Coffee Shops Naming in Aceh: An Anthropolinguistic Approach," *J. Anthr.*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 40–46, 2022.

[2]   S. Hasrul, T. Lubis, and A. F. Abus, "Translation of Political Advertisements from Alas Language into Indonesian," *Lexeme J. Linguist. Appl. Linguist.*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 43–51, 2022.

[3]   H. Sulistyowati, A. K. Mahatmaharti, and T. Lubis, "Noun Composition in Narrative Passage," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 1–7, May 2022, doi: 10.32734/tmh.v2i2.10129.

[4]   L. D. Sinaga and T. Lubis, "Toponomy of Village Names at Namo Rambe Sub-district: An Anthropolinguistic Study," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 12–20, 2023.

[5]   K. E. Tarigan and T. Lubis, "Indexicality of Minyak Karo in North Sumatra : An Anthropolinguistic Perspective," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 8–25, 2022.

[6]   Akmal and T. Lubis, "The Oral Tradition of Hoyak Tabuik in Pariaman, West Sumatera: An Anthropolinguistic Approach," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 16–24, Sep. 2022, doi: 10.32734/tmh.v2i3.10146.

[7]   N. Saputra, T. Lubis, and F. Setiawan, "Politeness Strategies for the Speech Acts of Indonesian Language Education Students in Pidie Regency," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 33–40, 2021, doi: 10.32734/tmh.v1i1.7185.

[8]   F. Grosjean, *Bilingual: Life and Reality.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

[9]   J. J. Gumperz and J. C. Gumperz, *Studying Language, Culture, and Society: Sociolinguistics or Linguistic Anthropology?* Berkeley: University of California, 2008.

[10]   R. Narhan, P. Solehatun, and T. Lubis, "Districts Naming in Medan: An Anthropolinguistics Study," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 33–41, 2023.

[11]   R. S. Tausya and T. Lubis, "Performance Participation of Peucicap in West Aceh," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 11–19, 2023.

[12]   N. Sitorus and T. Lubis, "The Lexicon on Natural Knowledge of Umpasa in Batak Toba," *Tradit. Mod. Humanit.*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 28–34, 2023.

[13]   Sudaryanto, *Metode dan Teknik Analisis Bahasa*. Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana University, 2015.

[14]   S. Shaumiwaty *et al.*, "Teacher performance toward students' mathematical literacy in teaching linear program mathematical models," *J. Phys. Conf. Ser.*, vol. 1663, p. 012066, Oct. 2020, doi: 10.1088/1742-6596/1663/1/012066.

[15]   T. Lubis and N. Williams, "Preliminary Documentation of Leukon Language," London, 2019. [Online]. Available: http://hdl.handle.net/2196/00-0000-0000-0014-134E-C