

The Mechanism of Language Death: A Reflection of Malay Language in Tanjung Balai

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Abstract. This study deals with the phenomenon while language can be lost slowly if it can't be defended. This happens along with the rapid development of the era towards modernization which is feared that in the future, the Tanjung Balai Malay language, which is owned and proudly has been threatened with extinction over time, but what needs to be realized is that it does not mean to displace the position of Indonesian which has been agreed as the national language. This research took place in Tanjung Balai when in Tanjung Balai Malay language is used as the habitual language. This study was conducted using descriptive with qualitative method purposed to find out the words as dysfunction verb in Tanjung Balai Language. Qualitative research was related to assisting in describing the common elements of the various forms of qualitative methods. Thirty dysfunctional Malay verbs were collected and analyzed as the data findings.

Keyword: Language death, Native language, Reflection, Malay language

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1 Introduction

There are roughly 6,000 languages in the world today. About 400 of those languages are found in Europe and the Middle East, 1000 indigenous languages are found in the Americas, there are some 2000 languages in Africa, and as many as 3,500 or half the world's languages are found in the Asia- Pacific region (Lewis, Simons and Fenning 2014). Of course, some languages are much "larger"; they have many more speakers than others. Around 350 languages (about 5% of the total) have more than a million speakers, and together these account for 90% of the world's population.

Indonesia is rich in language diversity. The country ranks second in the list of multilingual countries. It has approximately more than 700 languages. According to Ethnologue, Indonesia is a home of 719 languages. Of 719 languages, 707 are living, while 12 are extinct. Of these 707 living languages, 18 are institutional, 73 are developing, 188 are vigorous, 347 are in trouble, and 81 are. Regarding the extinct languages in Indonesia, data from Ethnology is different from

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that from recent news in www.republika.com (Republika, 2015) and www.liputan6.com [1]. The total number of extinct languages gathered from these two news is eighteen. They are Hoti, Hukumina, Hulung, Serua, Te'un, Palumata, Loun, Moksela, Naka'ela, Nila, Ternateno, Ibu, Saponi, Mapia, Kayeli, Piru, Tandia and Mawes. Since every language is a unique collection of knowledge of the world based on the perception of its speakers, it means that Indonesia has abundant wealth. The loss of a language means losing a heritage, an archive of human intelligence and history, and its unique speakers' world descriptions. In other words, every language extinction also kills its culture. Once it has been extinct, there is no way to turn it back to living status. Therefore, Indonesian people should be aware of their wealth and preserve their language. Indonesia has 347 languages that are in trouble, and 81 are dying, meaning that in the next generations, they might be on the list of extinct languages unless there is an effort to document and revitalize them. They covered the level of phonology, grammatical, lexicosemantic, and meaning that able to deliver the intended message [2].

Although there are hundreds of endangered languages in Indonesia, the country still has languages with large speaker populations. However, the language shifting from local to Indonesian and English is rising among the younger generation, as shown by some research [3] [4]. Code-switching and code-mixing seem to be common today. Based on this phenomenon, the mechanism of language death is discussed as a lesson for Tanjung Balai language that seems poorly transferred to the younger generation.

Tanjung Balai is one of the cities in Northern Sumatra that uses Malay as their language. But nowadays, the tendency to use modern language as a form of a new cultural lifestyle has permeated some speakers who have been using local languages as the language of instruction in the community in Tanjung Balai. An ethnic group has a unique identity as indigenous knowledge [5].

Pride in using local languages has begun to thin out and even considered not modern. This happens along with the rapid development of the era towards modernization which is feared that in the future, the Tanjung Balai Malay language, which is owned and proudly has been threatened with extinction over time, but what needs to be realized is that it does not mean to displace the position of Indonesian which has been agreed as the national language. At this time, so many Malay words of Tanjung Balai are no longer known. But there must be an effort to save, preserve, explore, and develop regional languages owned by inventorying and posting them.

Based on the phenomenon above, the problems of this study are (1) what the words as dysfunction verb in Tanjung Balai Language are? (2) Why the reasons the Tanjung Balai Language experience language extinction? (3) How does the Tanjung Balai Language experience language extinction?

2 Literature Review

2.1 Languages Evolution

Languages are dynamic. Like a living organism, they live, evolve, and die. The history of the first language of a human being is obscure, but language evolution has become an interesting subject for many linguists. Language evolution, as Mufwene explains, includes changes in structural and pragmatic aspects of languages and their vitality [6]. Through the study of language evolution, linguists trace back the origin of a language and study the reasons for language changes, as we can see in Collinge's thorough explanation about language evolution [7]. The evolution of languages can be one of the causes for the birth of new ones. Language birth refers to a protracted process, spanning several generations, in which a variety of language, structurally different from its ancestor, emerges. Language birth cannot be predicted, and the stage of the birth has no point in time.

The separateness is recognized by a cumulative accretion of different features from its ancestor language. Likewise, language death refers to the prolonged change of state, in which there is community-level loss of competence in a language. Process of language death is not sudden, meaning that it does not affect all speakers simultaneously nor to the same extent. A language is declared as a dead language when there are no native speakers left, or when there is only one speaker left, with no member of the younger generation speak it, though the language may still live in a record, such as in writing, sound, or video archive [8][6].

2.2 Language Death

However, languages can also die. A few extinct languages are Bithynian, Cilician, Pisidian, Phrygian, Paphlagonian, Etruscan, Sumerian, Elamite, and Hittite. These are dead languages that the records can be found in various forms, such as in inscriptions, clay tablets, or documents. The exact number of ancient dead languages with no records is obscure [8]. Although the list may not be complete, we can easily find the list of new dead languages worldwide from websites such as Wikipedia and linguistic. The most recent dead languages recorded are Mandan, Wichita, GuguThaypan, and Nuchatlaht dialect of Nuuchah-nulth, which died in 2016 and the last speakers' death. Dead languages In Indonesia are Hoti, Hukumina, Hulung, Serua, Te'un, Palumata, Loun, Moksela, Naka'ela, Nila, Ternateno, Ibu, Saponi and Mapia [9]. In addition, Kayeli, Piru, Tandia, and Mawes are also on the list of extinct languages in this country [1].

Some factors are responsible for language extinction, and they are interrelated to such an extent. See the cause of language death, we have to know factors that put people in danger [8]. A language lives as long as the speakers live. Therefore, any direct threats to the safety of the life of a community can cause a language to be endangered or extinct. The threats can be natural

disasters, famine, diseases, and wars. For example, in 1918, the speakers of the Paulohi language – a language spoken in Central Maluku, Indonesia - experienced an earthquake and tsunami that killed many of its speakers [10].

According to Ethnologue, the population of its speakers in 1984 was 50 speakers. Today, in 2018, the status of the language is nearly extinct. An example of language death due to natural disasters was a 7.1 Richter earthquake off the E. Saundun Province, Papua New Guinea, in July 1998. The earthquake destroyed four villages: Sissano, Warupu, Arop, and Malol that killed over 2.200 people and displaced over 10.000 people. 30% of the Arop and Warupu villagers were killed, while the survivors moved to another place. The problem is, each village has distinct linguistic characteristics. According to Ethnologue, in 1996, before the earthquake, the population of these four villages was already small: Sissano had only 4,776 based on the 1990 census; Malol had 3.330; Arop had 1.700 based on the census in 1981, and Warupu had 1.602 in 1983. Because of the earthquake, their languages were threatened by a sharp decline of their speakers [8]. Although I had not found these languages' current status in 2018, we can predict that they will be endangered if they are not extinct yet.

Second, the cause of language death comes from the change in people's culture as the product of cultural assimilation through colonization - such as in America, Australia, and New Zealand-, globalization, urbanization, and intermarriage. These factors have nothing to do with the safety of the life of the people. They live well and still inhabit their traditional territory, but their language declines from generation to generation and eventually disappears, replaced by other languages [8][6][11][10]. Cultural assimilation is responsible for many language disappearances. It is often followed by a heavy language contact that triggers deep borrowing, language shift, and language. In cultural assimilation, a dominant culture often brings a dominant language that finally outlasts and kills the indigenous language, but we cannot blame a single factor. Speakers' negative attitude toward their language and language policy made by the government also contributes to its endangerment leading to its death [12].

When most people use a language other than their daily communication, the mother tongue will gradually lose its speaker and finally comes to its death unless there is an effort to revitalize it. Like a living organism, the situation makes it difficult to reproduce. This first reason is connected with the second main reason: a more powerful language that plays a vital role in many aspects of life, such as social, economic, political, and education. For a multilingual nation like Indonesia, the need for a lingua franca is undeniable. However, it may endanger the life of many local languages like it, to some extent, is narrowing down the domain of local language use. Today, local languages are mainly used in an informal situations.

2.3 Language Extinction

Of course, languages do die (or become extinct), and the phenomenon is widely reported and discussed. Linguistics is a plastic discipline. Language is everywhere, so that linguistics can go everywhere. Where it goes is dictated by what other disciplines are currently fashionable, which is dictated by whatever issues are currently at the top of the agenda in general. It is no surprise. Therefore that linguistics is currently colored by ecological debates.

2.4 Malay Language in Tanjung Balai

Malay language in Tanjung Balai is a language that has approximately 154.445 speakers, according to the census in 2019 as cited by Ethnologue. Malay in Tanjung Balai belongs to the group of major Austronesian languages that are spoken as everyday speech in the western third of the island of Sumatra, and it is the identity of the Malay tribe in Tanjung Balai. In terms of numbers, according to the data cited in Dictionary of Languages [13], it is Indonesia's third language, spoken by nearly one-sixth of the national population.

Malay in Tanjung Balai has three different scripts, as it was affected by three different cultures. Aksara is a Sanskrit-affected script that is no longer used, though it is still learned at schools. Arabic transcript came along with the widespread of Islamic teaching. It is still used mainly in traditional Islamic boarding schools. The most generally used transcript is Latin, introduced by the Dutch during colonialism.

According to Ethnologue, Malay is in developing status, meaning that it is in vigorous use, and it has literature in a standardized form. However, the literature is not widespread or sustainable. In other words, the language is still in a healthy status. However, it seems that many parents today prefer using Bahasa Indonesia to Malay to communicate with their children. Codeswitching and code-mixing are common. Many children also actively communicate in Bahasa Indonesia and acquire it as their first language. There is also a tendency among children toward lexical alleviation. For example, in the naming of colors, I encounter many children who are more familiar with the name of colors in Indonesian than in Malay, such as colors in the following table. Many children seem to feel strange hearing the name of the color in Malay. Note that Malay has many terms to describe colors. Each color gradation has a different name. The choice of source domain related to the language concept that covered the pattern and meaning [14].

2.5 Relevant Studies

Relevant studies are used as references to conduct the research. There are six relevant studies used as references in this research.

First, a study conducted by Tatsuya Amano, Brody Sandel, Heidi Eager Edouard Bulteau, Jens-Christian Svenning, Bo Dalsgaard, Carsten Rahbek, Richard G. Davies, and William J. Sutherland. They said that continued speaker declines seriously threaten small-population languages remaining in economically developed regions. However, risks of future language losses are especially high in the tropics and the Himalayas, as these regions harbor many small-population languages and are undergoing rapid economic growth.

Second, a study conducted by Andrew R. Linn. He said that Language extinction is one of the most pressing issues in linguistics today, and the literature is full of discussion about how to combat it.

Third, a study was conducted by Sandy K. Magee And Janet Ellis. They said that Language Extinction was associated with increased yelling, inappropriate language and gestures, and destruction.

Fourth, a study was conducted by NengSyifaMasnoneh. She said that Bahasa Indonesia is designed as a lingua franca for more than 700 local languages in Indonesia to unite people from different social and cultural backgrounds.

Fifth, a study conducted by Michael C. Ewing. He said that the most important symptoms of language shift and the vitality of a language are the number and quality of the domains in which it is used and transmitted in Indonesia.

Sixth, a study conducted by St. Sahriati said that globalization is a certainty, so it makes its impact on life, including language. The Indonesian language is one of the languages in the world which had also been affected by globalization.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study was conducted using descriptive with the qualitative method, which purposed to find out the most dominant type of text used by the book. Qualitative research was related to assisting in describing the common elements of the various forms of qualitative methods. Nazir (2014:43) said that descriptive qualitative describes a situation, event, or accumulates the basic data. It meant this research did not intend to find a new theory but to find new evidence through the truth of the certain theory. In this study, the object is the native language that will cause

death. The researchers decide to choose the Tanjung Balai language because that language is the researcher's native language. The data is about the dysfunction verb in the Tanjung Balai language. The references of library research supported the analysis of this study. This method was carried out by selecting the mechanism of language death.

3.2 Data and Data Source

The sources of data are subject to where the data is from. The data source of this research was taken from observation [15]. The data were collected from the observation by the researcher. The researchers were chosen the Tanjung Balai language because that is their native language. The data was about the extinct dysfunction verb, and it was analyzed based on the theory proposed by Mufwene.

3.3 Variable

The research used only one variable that was the mechanism of language extinction by the researcher. While the indicator of this research was a reflection of native language (Tanjung Balai language), the researcher used only one variable that was the mechanism of language extinction. While the indicator of this research was a reflection of to native language (Tanjung Balai language).

4 Results and Discussion

When In this chapter, the researchers have presented the result of the data analysis. The data was collected from the observation. The result of data analysis has answered the problem in chapter one. The analysis of this data happened because it has some factors of language extinction. The data was about the extinct dysfunction verb, and it was analyzed based on the theory proposed by Mufwene.

The first step that the researchers conducted was collecting the data. There were thirty words of the native language. The researchers collected the data by finding the dysfunction verb, which is going to be analyzed. After collecting the data, the next step that the researchers conducted was finding the mechanism of the death language in Tanjung Balai. The theory states that some factors are responsible for language extinction and are interrelated to such an extent. The cause of language death, we have to know factors that put people in danger. A language lives as long as the speakers live. Therefore, any direct threats to the safety of the life of a community can cause a language to be endangered or extinct [8].

For the findings, the researchers mentioned the results of data analysis. There are thirty dysfunction verbs were analyzed. The analysis of a dysfunction verb was used by Mufwene theory. The data analysis and dysfunction verb are presented below:

Table 1. The data analysis and dysfunction verb

NO	LOCAL	INDONESIA	ENGLISH
1	Lotup	Meninju	Punch
2	Longsut	Dipukul	Hit
3	Dopak	Menampar	Slap
4	Kilik	Dipermainkan	Played with
5	Mencarut	Memaki	Cussing
6	Mangepek	Memerli	Buy
7	mengumpat	Menyumpah	Swear
8	Menyingkap	Membuka	Open
9	Mancokik	Memakan	Eat
10	maninjo	Melihat	Look
11	Bapokat	Bermusyawarah	Deliberate
12	Batakal	Berkelahi	Fight
13	Mangayap	Menantang	Challenging
14	Bakombugh	Bercerita	Telling stories
15	Manyonduk	Menyontek	Cheat
16	Mambongak	Berbohong	Lie
17	Manyontung	Menyindir	Quip
18	Badoghak	Berbunyi	Rings
19	Manjampuk	Mencampuri	Interferre
20	Menyontap	Menarik	Drug
21	Tacolup	Tersiram	Flushed
22	Mamuncung	Merengut	Frowning
23	Maninjo	menjenguk	Visit
24	Mambubul	Menjahit jaring	Sew a net
25	Batandang	Menggosip	Whisper
26	Dopak	Menampar	Slap
27	Lingam	Melempar	Throw
28	Lenggek	Melanggar	Break
29	Mengkoncek	Membukai	Open
30	Kombugh malotup	Berbohong	Lie

The data above happened because many aspects of this area need investigation, including parents' and children's language preference from generation to generation and how big a language shift is happening in that area. Language extinction happened because language transfer because the compilation of the language made a new language appear in that area, so the native language was lost by the people. It has a relationship between language and ethnicity. If one of the communities has an ethnic group that supports it, the language can change itself.

Language pressure also comes from the native language. However, it does not influence too much on people who live in Tanjung Balai. It is affected by an environment where they speak the native language and Bahasa Indonesia. The proportion of native language is bigger than Indonesian. So the researchers assumed that the native language is their first language. Interestingly, the native language is not global or universal, so it is brought to Indonesia through formal and informal language.

From the explanation about the mechanism of language death, The researchers could see that language death is a gradual process, starting mostly from language shift because of intertwined factors. As the native language, especially in Tanjung Balai, apparently undergoes shifting, the people should be aware that this language conflict may lead to language extinction unless there is an effort to make sure that the language is transferred to the young generation. Then, some

reasons underlie the argument that preserving local language is important without setting aside the need to master the language. At this time, the native language could be extinct, especially for the young generation. Some several reasons or events contribute to the deaths of languages around the world. First of all, languages are likely to die quickly when all or most of their speakers pass away because of wars, genocides, or reprisals.

According to Edward, language extinction can occur on the speaker of the language dominated. It happened based on some factors such as:

1. The native speaker can be counted, and it means that the people could not communicate with each other by using the native language itself (Lauder 2006:5),
2. The environment which the people stay in that area is not a native speaker but a newcomer, so they would not use a native language,
3. The people could not apply their language to communicate with each other,
4. The condition of society used a language in bilingualism or multilingualism.

The lack of using a native language can be affected to young generation could not apply the language as their native language.

5 Conclusion

After analyzing the data, the researchers concluded that There were thirty words of dysfunction verb which had been extinct in that area. All of the list words in finding would not interact, and some factors cause it.

Based on the analysis on the table, it could be seen that the words are extinct in that area. Language extinction happened because language transfer with the compilation of the language made a new language appear in that area, so the people lost the native language. It has a relationship between language and ethnicity. Suppose one of the communities has an ethnic group that supports it. So the language can change itself.

It caused by the language has been extinct. The language is not being transferred for the young generation, so the young generation cannot use the language to communicate with each other, but in some areas, some of the people use the language because they are native speakers from that area so that they can use the language, in another most of the area makes the language has been extinct.

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