

THE MAINTAINENCE OF BAJO LANGUAGE AMONG SASAK MAJORITY IN TANJUNG LUAR

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is on language maintenance in Bajo language, a minority spoken in Tanjung luar, East Lombok district. The aim of this paper is to give an account of economic and social factors which contribute to language maintenance in Bajo speech community. The data were taken randomly from SMAN 1 Keruak students grade X and XI who live in Tanjung Luar. They were given a questioner to know their daily language interaction. The majority of Tanjung Luar people use their indigenous Bajo ethnic origin repertoire from generation to generation whether it is to family, friends and neighbor. The speakers carry a certain pride in using the language. The people have their own pride to be addressed as the native speakers of the native speakers of Bajo language. It pushes them to maintain the ethnic language in Lombok. It can strengthen them as well as increase their ability to use their language. The factors that enable them to maintain their mother tongue are their loyalty toward their mother tongue, self belonging, and language attitude that support their mother tongue to exist.

Key words: Language maintenance, language shift, language minority group.

INTRODUCTION

Language is one of unique phenomena that is interesting to be observed and investigated. It is valuable instrument of thought to interact in human communication dealing with verbal and non verbal communications patterns. When people interact with others in society at anytime and anywhere certainly they must use a language. Without language people will find a number of troubles when they do their activities and toward the others because the interaction or communication among individuals through language is the interaction where the ideas are shared from and to subject dialogically and each interaction actively takes role in it. There is no society without a language. It makes the role of a language among the people in this life is very crucial.

Communication can be created with any language, and language can also be created due to the support and the desire of every individual to communicate. Speaker of a language are able to produce and uderstand an unlimited number of utterances. They are able to use the language in all situations and are able to apply appropriate diction in certain circumstances.

The study of language planning focuses on the decision-making that goes into establishing appropriate language use in particular linguistic communities. It looks at how language can be organized successfully within a linguistic community. It is because language is the most important thing for people as a means of communication so it needs effective effort to the language problems. The more vital language helps people to show their perspective concerning something in a multitude situation. How somebody distinguish concept broadly concern to his or her language proficiency. What we say or we write is heavily influenced by what we hear and we listen. In addition, the existence of language cannot be separated from human life because it is as a self identity where the language obtained is. The language everlasting is concerned on the way of inhabitant maintaining their language. When there are no speakers in a community considering their particular language at all, in a short time the language will die totally. However, a language cannot be shifted by another language if the users constantly use it to carry out in their daily affairs. On the other hand the language is not able to maintain by the ethnic group especially in the multilingual societies if the speakers do not use it anymore. The situation easily observable to the people who reside at Tanjung Luar village, sub district of Keruak, East Lombok which uses Bajo Language as their daily interaction.

LINGUISTIC SITUATION IN TANJUNG LUAR

Indonesia has numerous different ethnic groups and indigenous languages. One of the languages is Sasak in which Bajo language becomes one of its important segments. Bajo language is originally one of Sulawesi dialect and spoken by the native north Sulawesi people. This language is used as a daily interaction among the numbers of Bajo people who reside at Tanjung Luar. Historically, the language comes to Lombok through migration when the Dutch monopolized Sulawesi Island, some of family members left Sulawesi Island and most of them did business which inevitably dragged them to a mutual interaction with the native of Sasak. Some of the prominent figures in Tanjung Luar added the Bajo language brought by a number of fishermen long time ago which come from Sulawesi.

After a long time they have been there they became a larger community. They lived separately, meaning they did not live in one area. In contact with the Tanjung Luar community they use Bajo language although they are in Sasak majority. It is able to survive in Lombok range for years. Nevertheless it is presently not threatened by language shift or language death. In daily interaction among the community, the Tanjung Luar people speak in Bajo language. They maintain the language based on their ethnic origins and socio economic connection. It is the main language which is used in their home because their parents and relatives member always know that their children are more comfortable using that language. There is also a strong connection between their culture maintenance and their effort to maintaining language. However, in their interaction with different group of people, they often faced problems of understanding or even maintain the language they brought in. When a group of people of one language has in contact with the other different ethnic group using different language, it may result in changes in one or both languages because keeping the languages requires that the members of the ethnic group understand the language of community. The minority of Tanjung Luar people are very familiar to Sasak people. In their daily interaction they often used Sasak language to speak to Sasak people. Language they used in social interaction such as in doing business and bargaining with others considered to be used both languages Sasak and Bajo language.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND PROBLEMS

Language maintenance deals with a situation when a speech community can maintain or continue using their language from generation to generation although there are conditions that could affect them to shift to another language. It is as the protection of the native language in a speech community, particularly the language minorities. Fishman (1989:177) *language maintenance is reflection of sufficient indigenous control over and delimitation of ongoing inter-group interaction processes so that they do not overpower the indigenous ethno cultural system*. In maintaining a language, a speech community refuses to use another language. The attitude is often termed as language loyalty while the situation is known as language maintenance. Meanwhile the attitude of majority towards the minority can play a decisive role. Where a mixed language community exists, the lost rate is highest. The implications can be seen at the level of family structure. In mixed marriages there is usually a shift to the language community. The incidence of language group exogamy has increased to the point where there are almost as many marriages where only one spouse speaks minority language as there are those where both speak majority (Romaine, 1988).

The language shift or language death sometimes referred to as language replacement is the progressive process whereby a speech community of a language shifts to speaking another language. The rate of language shifts is the percentage of individuals with a given mother tongue who speak another language more often in the home. The factors which contribute to language shift also can be the factors contributing to language maintenance. The most dominant factors for language shift and maintenance is economy and social factors, meanwhile the least factor is attitude and value. According to Holmes (1992), the following are some factors which could contribute to language shift and language maintenance. There are economic, political and social factors, demographic factors and attitude and values. The factors are very important in accounting for the speed of shift. When the native language is not maintained, the important connection to family and other community members may be lost. By encouraging native language use, parents can prepare the child to interact with the native language community. If they maintain their native language, they can help to develop their community. Unfortunately the community becomes smaller because it loses the educated portion of its population. Ethnic minority are usually in poverty and slowness. When individuals got advance status they left their native community. Few of them feel ashamed of their community, culture and language they want to change their identities.

The language is not always able to maintain by the ethnic group especially in the multilingual societies. Sumarsono (1993) in Amrullah states that language shift and language maintenance is like two sides of a coin. One side of the coin is a language that cannot be shifted by another language because its users

constantly use it to carry out their daily affairs. On the other side of the coin is a language that can be shifted by another language because the speakers are not likely to use it anymore. Hoffman (1991) in Amrullah states a community that does not maintain its language by adopting another language gradually is referred to as language shift. He also observed that under certain cultural, social and political conditions, a community might opt to change one set of linguistic tools for another. While Fishman cited in Romaine (1972) *language maintenance occurs when a language continues to be used across all generations despite the presence of other languages also being used by a community*. The great potential of minority communities will be locked under a relevant language majority at regional levels. The language of minority communities no longer speaks the language of their parents, but speaks a dominant majority language instead. The language of the parents is therefore not passed on to the next generation. So, the more the number of the speakers mean more power to language maintenance. This in turn can avoid a language from its death.

The number of speaker of minority tells us little of ability of a group to maintain their language. Who speak a language is more important than how many speak it. The relationship between dialect and standard among certain minority groups may be an important factor in language shift. Nerveless a large minority group is often in a better position. Many kinds of pressures come together to put on smaller languages, such as economic pressures and actively. Moreover, when the number of speakers may drop under a few hundreds and living separately, the pressure to shift from their native mother tongue to a more dominant language is greater enormous. If the minority language speakers can no longer speak to or understand their grandparents and great-grandparents so the shift from one language to a larger, dominant language can happen quite rapidly. Li cited in Sallaban (1982) for example found that third generation Chinese Americans residing in China-towns shifted less towards English than their age mates who reside outside China-town. However, Haugen (1988) observes that the Norwegian language and strong degree of religious cohesion were instruments of union and a barrier against rival English-speaking Protestant sects. It means that migration to urban has also led to the decline of many languages in current place.

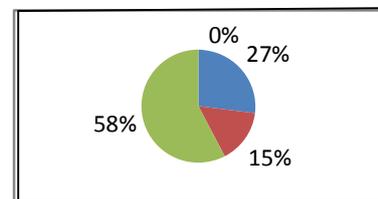
DISCUSSION

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In social interaction the minority of Tanjung Luar people are very familiar to Sasak people. The Tanjung luar people sometimes used Sasak language to the Sasak people and not rare to use Bajo language as well. As a result of the daily interaction, Tanjung Luar people understand the Sasak language. To know how large the Tanjung luar people use Bajo language and the rate of Tanjung luar people loyalty toward the social domain will be described in two tables below.

Table one is language use within social interaction.

Language use	Number of respondents
1. Indonesian language	5
2. Sasak language	2
3. Bajo language	18
4. Other languages	-
Total	25



From the table shows us that Bajo language has a large percentage 58% of the respondents and 27% use Indonesian languages while Sasak language only 15%.

Table two is language loyalty.

Domain	Quantity of using Bajo language	Number of respondents
Family	Always	20
	Often	5
	Sometimes	-
	Seldom	-
	Never	-
Friend	Always	10
	Often	5
	Sometimes	5
	Seldom	3
	Never	2
Market	Always	12
	Often	6
	Sometimes	5
	Seldom	2
	Never	-
School	Always	8
	Often	6
	Sometimes	6
	Seldom	3
	Never	2
Neighbor	Always	18
	Often	6
	Sometimes	1
	Seldom	-
	Never	-
Total respondent		25

From the two tables above show that the majority of Tanjung luar speakers are used bajo to communicate in their daily interaction. It also gives great contribution to the existence of the language. The use of Bajo language is not limited to the age, sex, and education of the interlocutors. In other words, the continuous usage of Bajo languages helps the speakers maintain their language in a majority community. This study also found that, most of the speakers of Bajo language use their mother tongue to communicate to the other people who are from out of Tanjung Luar village but he or she originally came from Tanjung Luar and he or she is able to speak and understand Bajo language. The Tanjung Luar people use their mother tongue to family, friends and neighbor to preserve it. It could strengthen as well as increase their ability to use their language. The Tanjung Luar people have their own pride to be addressed as the native speakers of the native speakers of Bajo language. On the other hand they do not want to be addressed as the native of Sasak people although they were born in Lombok. This attitude is as the result of their loyalty toward their mother tongue.

The Tanjung Luar people are able to create a system of integration with majority community without shifting their language. Moreover a number of Sasak people live near by the Tanjung Luar community are able to speak Bajo language in their communication. It is caused by the majority of Tanjung Luar people earn their live as fisherman consequently forced the Sasak people to comprehend the Tanjung Luar language in interaction with them for economic purpose in trading fish. It means that the language of host community can be the language of interaction. It is an essential that minority language attempt to keep their culture intact. The ethnic group tries to establish communication in its language. They believe that their language is the most essential than another language in majority thus makes them keep on using the Bajo language.

The language shift also tends to be slower among communities where a language is highly valued, especially if the language is seen as an important symbol of identity. The Tanjung Luar people argued that the language is highly valuable in their daily interaction. That Positives attitude supports efforts to use minority language in a variety of domains, and this helps people resist the pressure from the majority group to switch to their language. Where it has a status in a community, it will help to maintain the language since the language will be regarded more with pride. The traditional pattern of social network also which supported the maintenance of the indigenous language in Tanjung Luar. In the Tanjung Luar community some of parents will add 'daeng' for the initial name of their children. That is indicated that the children belong to Bajo and have higher position in the community. Consequently they have to have good attitude, preserve their cultural

ethnic and of course maintain the Bajo language. The social culture in Tanjung Luar community contributes to maintain their language. It means that the social resources by ethnic community have significant factor for maintaining ethnic language.

Imperfect learning of the variety by younger generation can lead to substantial differences in the minority language over time. If the parents had no created so many opportunities for their children to develop personal relationship with their relatives would the feeling of important of maintaining those relationships be weaker. While in the minority language spoken in Tanjung Luar has a better chance of survival. The people put their higher prestigious in their language. They proud to their language therefore not try to switch to speak Sasak language in their community. It shows the degree of prestige between the minority and majority language may hinder shift. The immigrant group of Bajo shows that they can not lose their language due to majority social dependency. It means that the majority not able to decrease the minority.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the discussion above can be concluded that every human language, be it a major language or minor, influential or lesser known, is unique. While major and economically advantageous languages do not face the problems of losing out or becoming irrelevant, the minority ones certainly face a rising task to remain as a truly living language. Nevertheless, if we consciously choose to ignore the survival of these minority languages, we become responsible for their linguistic genocide. However small the number of speakers may be, they need to make it a point to use their language as the primary language for many purposes, social and religious, at home, and in their villages. From the data analysis we can see that the minority of Tanjung luar people maintained their mother tongue by using them continuously in every occasion, interact in social domain. Then the factors that enable them to maintain their mother tongue are their loyalty toward their mother tongue, self belonging, and language attitude that support their mother tongue to exist. The Tanjung luar people are able to maintain the Bajo speech community based on a strong sense of their prestige to the language. The characteristic of Tanjung Luar ethnicity defending from outside ethnic make the community strengthen. Speakers of Bajo languages in Tajung Luar feel strongly about the preservation of their languages. They preserve, protect and promote the language in the community.

We can at least make serious efforts to maintain the minority languages in the country. Minority language must be maintained from the death because that is the cultural heritage. We ought to consider each language as a resource importance preserving or supporting. There is really no need to shift from their heritage language. The key to the survival of the minority language is to preserve it. The approach of minority language speakers towards their own languages is critical for the languages survival. It must be borne in mind that linguistically all languages are equal. There is no question of superiority or inferiority. A language is associated with the identity, legacy, history and culture of a people.

From the Islamic perspective, there is a verse in the Holy Qur'an : "*O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nation and tribes that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other).*" (Surah Al-Hujarat, 49:13).

This Quranic verse may be interpreted as calling for recognition and tolerance of each others language. All languages in Indonesia can exist alongside each other. There is no need for linguistic assimilation and isolation.

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