

# The Existence And Changes In The Use Of Local Language In The Family In The Middle Of The Current Modernity (An Analysis Study In Maluku Community)

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to analyze the existence and factors that influence the use of local languages in Maluku society. The approach taken to this research was descriptive qualitative. Data collection was done through observation, interview, and documentation techniques. Interviews were conducted to 20 informants chosen deliberately. The results showed that there have been differences in patterns of language use or language choice by local language speakers of different generations and it can be interpreted as having or are being shifted. Several factors that cause the fading of the existence of local language in the Maluku community were the weakening of local language communication in the family and the lack of awareness of the young generation using for the local languages. Similarly, in the family environment, the parents no longer teach the local language to their children. As a result, no longer family members actively use local languages at home for daily communication. The choice of language of a person, family, and the whole community was one of the causes of language shifts. Another factor is the younger generation tends to use national and international language rather than local language or mother-tongue.

**Index Terms:** Existence, Local Language, Family

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In Ethnologue: Language of the World (2005) it is stated that Indonesia has 742 languages, of which 737 languages are languages that are still alive or are still used. Meanwhile, there are two languages that act as second languages without mother-tongue speakers, while the other three languages have become extinct. Some of the languages that are still alive are thought to be on the verge of extinction. Some are caused by a reduction in the number of speakers because of the original speakers only a few people. However, there are also languages that are pressured by the influence of other regional languages that are more dominant. According to SIL (2001) there are several regional languages with an estimated number of speakers even more than one million, namely Javanese (75,200,000 speakers), Sundanese (27,000,000 speakers), Malay (20,000,000 speakers), Madurese (13,694,000 speakers), Minangkabau language (6,500,000 speakers), Batak language (5,150,000 speakers), Bugis language (4,000,000 speakers), Balinese (3,800,000 speakers), Acehnese language (3,000,000 speakers), Sasak language (2,100,000 speakers), Makassar language (1,600,000 speakers), Lampung language (1,500,000 speakers) and Rejang language (1,000,000 speakers). The language was born from the community and always used by the community. In terms of quantity, the number of speakers of regional languages in Indonesia is quite different.

There are local languages that still survive with only a small number of speakers, which can be said to be a minority language. However, even though in quantity the number of speakers of a language is small, it is not always an indicator of its minorities because there are also languages that although the number of speakers is small their loyalty to the language is strong enough to avoid the threat of extinction (Coulmas 2005). Language forms the self-image, character, and personality of the people. In people's daily lives, language is used as a communication tool for thinking, conveying desires, understanding, and knowledge. Language and identity are a matter of cultural construction because they are formed in an endless process (Sumarsono, 2004). When traditional identity and language glorify the subject's autonomy, contemporary ideas make it no longer certain because it sees it more as a discursive practice in repeating various norms and conventions. The swift currents of globalization and modernity have an impact on language development. Modernity laden with advances in technology and science has changed the way of life of many people and the way they communicate. Regional languages are increasingly left behind in communication because they tend to be considered old-fashioned, and backward. So it happens to the local language in Maluku. Until now no less than 117 local languages found throughout Maluku experienced extinction. Most languages that experience extinction are local languages that are used by Christian villages both on Ambon Island and on a small part of Ceram Island (Maluku Provincial Language Institute, 2017). It is estimated that various socio-cultural influences have contributed to changing patterns of language use in the community. The increasing exposure of Indonesian in the mass media, together with the variety of Jakarta Malay and slang, and the increasing use of foreign languages, such as English, are a number of possible external factors. Internal factors such as people's attitudes towards their mother tongue and local culture and changes in people's way of life and thinking are thought to contribute to this language behavior. These assumptions require a study to obtain empirical evidence. For this reason, this study aimed to analyze the change and

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existence of local languages in the midst of social union and modernity.

## 2. METHODS

This research was conducted in Salahutu District, Central Maluku Regency, using descriptive qualitative. Descriptive qualitative research attempted to look at what was happening in the world and attach to the findings obtained from it. Therefore, what was done by researchers while in the field was intended in a position based on a case or ideographic that directs attention to the specifics of cases (Bungin, 2007). The types of data in this study, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was the data directly obtained from informants. Data obtained from key informants were selected purposive sampling as 20 people from various elements. Secondary data was a data source that supports explaining and interpreting primary data sources used by the author were materials derived from various literature; magazines, journals, newspapers, open the internet related to the topic of discussion. Data analysis performed in this type of research was a qualitative descriptive analysis technique. The data analysis stage started from the collection of data that was relevant to the research theme which the selection and simplification of the data were carried out to focus on the research problem (data reduction), then the data was presented in the form of narrative text (data display), then withdrawal conclusion.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Socio-cultural characteristics of the Salahutu District community

Salahutu District has several administrative regions such as the land of Hawaii and the Land of Tial. Negeri Waai and Negeri Tial are located on Ambon Island and are administratively included in the Salahutu District Area, Central Maluku Regency. The location of the Waai State is closer to the Capital of the Province (Ambon) compared to the Capital City of the central Regency. The distance between Waai State and the Provincial Capital (Ambon) is only 41 km and can be reached by land transportation in 1-1.5 hours. While the capital of the Masohi Regency is 251 km, this distance can be reached by sea transportation through the port of Tulehu State, which is 8 Km from Waai State. The loss of local languages in several villages in Central Maluku and in Ambon, especially in Christian villages, is inseparable from centuries of Dutch colonialism in Maluku. The different treatment received between Muslims and Christians in the Dutch era affected the loss of local languages. The use of local languages in Christian villages is not as intense as in Muslim villages (Latupapua, 2012). Speakers of local languages in the Christian community are only old people and only a few of the young people who still communicate using local languages, the rest of the local languages of the Christian community have become extinct. Ihemere (2006) states that language attitudes are one of the causes of language shifts. Communities in several countries of the former European colony are of the view that mastery of the language of the former colonizers will increase their opportunities for social promotion and economic progress.

### 3.2 Languages From a Socio-Cultural Perspective

Culture is essentially very complex, so experts always provide the understanding and varying limits on it. In anthropological or cultural literature, there are various definitions of different cultures. There are several theories regarding the relationship between language and culture. Broadly speaking, these theories can be grouped into two categories, namely expressing subordinative relationships, where language is under the sphere of culture, and relations that are coordinative, ie equal relations with the same high position. Most experts say that culture becomes the main system, whereas language is only a subsystem (as has been discussed about the nature of culture above), no or no one has said otherwise. The relationship between language and culture is related to language change that is caused by cultural change. This is more prominent in morphological aspects than other aspects of linguistics. Morphological changes in language can be seen from several aspects, namely removal, addition, expansion, refinement, and exchange (Robert, S 1992). Society continues to change, even with language, so language and social reality cannot be separated. Language change occurs because of social changes both intentional and unintentional. Conversely, social change has implications for language change, hence, language is not only shaped and determined but also shapes and determines social reality. Language is not just a tool to express thoughts, but a vehicle for human communication. Language is learned as a social process that shapes culture, therefore language cannot be studied independently of socio-cultural factors. In this dimension, we certainly will lose our social and cultural identity when communication occurs apart from the language event. Every situation that occurs in the community is almost always reflected in language practice. Because, one of the roles of language is to build and maintain social relations, for the expression of social roles, including the role of communication created by language itself (Pattinama 2012). Changes to living languages are a necessity. There are two directions of change, namely that the language experiences a strengthening which means it is increasingly developing into many dialects. The other direction is that the language has weakened, which means that the number of speakers is decreasing until finally extinct.

### 3.3 Phenomenon Between Local Language and Culture

Communities in Tial village interpret "local languages" as a culture of activity. Even in religious activities, recitation of prayers using the local language. According to the people reading prayers with the local language feels more touching, charismatic and closer to the creator, ancestors and nature rather than using the other Malay languages. Even as prayer leaders at the mosque use "local language". This tradition is something that is considered sacred and becomes a closer and intimate relationship with the creator. "Local language" in prayer is meant to bring blessings to the village and the natural environment and everything to the blessings of children and grandchildren. Language in the community in the Tial village is the result of culture or culture containing the values of the speakers' community. Sumarjan & Partana (2002) revealed that language is often regarded as a social product or cultural product, even an inseparable part of culture. In the expression "local language" it has cultural characteristics in the area of the speaker and the context of community life to establish themselves, relate to others, the creator and the environment or place of life. But now the use

of regional languages in the Tanah Tial began to erode. The acculturation of this regional language causes the local culture in the Tial Land to erode more. Therefore, language is not used anymore and they prioritize the culture of other regions rather than the culture of their own region. This causes the culture of the community to be increasingly isolated or increasingly no longer used such as the use of local regional languages even though regional languages are identities. Acculturation occurs because there is no more solidarity in society where changes occur that further strengthens these changes as the existence of migration and cultural exchange. The entry of multilingual languages (slang), multi-ethnic conditions of the community and follow by inter-ethnic contact including the language box can cause various phenomena such as bilingualism (or even multilingualism) that often occur in minority language groups. The use of Indonesian is more dominant than regional languages in daily life. In this case the migrant regional languages and local languages influence each other. The direction of language shift can be divided into two: namely a shift toward the majority or prestigious language (Apple and Muysken, 1987) or towards the language of the dominant strong group (Holmes 1992). According to Holmes, the dominant language is a language that is usually associated with status, prestige, and social success and is used by the wider community for official talks and ceremonies. The dominant language is also the language of young people, especially popular stars, movie stars and models. Coulmas (2005) explains that the choice of language of a person, family, and the whole community is one of the causes of language shifts. Like humans, language is life and can be passed on from one generation to the next. However, each generation will make innovations on the language inherited from the previous generation. The education factor influences the majority of languages there the regional languages are used. A regional language that cannot compete with other languages in the same region may experience a shift from a language that is in the high domain (the realm of religion, education, work) to a language that is in the lower realm (the realm of family and friendship). If the language continues to be pressured, then this could have made it a dying language and eventually became extinct (Gunarwan, 2006).

### 3.4. Local Language Phenomenon in Communicating in the Family

The view that language shows social identity is widespread among young people who live in cities. Educated young families have a tendency to use Indonesian at home with their children. This view is also found in lower class young families who often condition their children to speak Indonesian in public places. Children have the most different language views. Although the majority of them have a positive view of the existence of local languages, a small number of them view localized language users as village people. Children have a more positive attitude toward national languages and their speakers compared to adolescents and previous generations. They associate language with the speaker's social background. The current generation of young Moluccas cares about the local language, due to the notion that local language is considered not modern and tacky. The extinction of languages, especially local languages, is a serious problem that also needs the attention of the government and the people of Maluku. Therefore, the process of language extinction will be followed by cultural extinction. The people of

Waai said that they had not used local languages for decades during the Dutch occupation. In everyday speech the Waai people used Ambon Malay, while the local languages are used in certain cultural events or ceremonies such as when the inauguration of the custom of the State of the Kings, and ritual ceremonies other customs such as traditional marriage. For the younger generation in Waai State, they are more proud to speak Indonesian with a mixture of foreign languages on a daily basis and even tend to prefer the use of Ambon Malay with modern terms. However, it is different in the land of tial. In Negeri Tial, parents play a role as a children's guide in using local languages. Parents make local languages their daily language in interacting with the community. Indonesian is only used as an official language. In the development of local languages they are also taught in schools as local content of the educational curriculum. According to the younger generation in the Land of Tial, that even though they are in overseas land, even up to the plains of Europe the local language is always used in interpersonal conversations between fellow communities. In Negeri Tial, the family gives a lot of cultural influence to the child, also acts as a child's guide in using language ranging from how to get words to dialects. The family factor, the main reason for the extinction of languages is that parents no longer teach their mother tongue to children and no longer actively use it at home in various domains of communication. The extinction of a language is not because the speakers stop speaking, but rather the result of the choice of language use of most of the speech community. It often happens discriminatory, that people who speak local languages are homeless people. Therefore, people prefer not to use local languages. This is related to the attitude and language retention of the community he said. If parents do not choose to use regional languages in addition to Indonesian to their offspring, the movement of language towards extinction will be faster. So in the community, especially in the family, parents at home teach more and emphasize their children to speak using local languages

## 4. CONCLUSION

The local language of the speakers has decreased users because it tends to be abandoned and replaced with a foreign language. The extinction of languages, especially local languages, is a serious problem that also needs the attention of many parties especially the government and the people of Maluku. Therefore, the process of language extinction will be followed by cultural extinction. Several factors that cause the fading of the existence of local language in the Maluku community are the weakening of local language communication in the family and the lack of awareness of the young generation caring for the local language. Educated families have a tendency to use Indonesian at home with their children. Acculturation of regional languages causes local culture in Tial village to erode more, languages are not used anymore so they prioritize other regional cultures over their own regional culture.

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