

**THE MAINTENANCE OF MANDAILINGNESE
LANGUAGE IN TANJUNGBALAI**

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ABSTRACT

This study deals with the maintenance of Mandailingnese language in Tanjungbalai. It used qualitative research design. It was conducted descriptively. This study aims to find out the ways Mandailingnese people maintain the language in Tanjungbalai.. The subjects were 10 persons (males and females) of Mandailingnese. The use of instruments in this study were observation and interview. The theory of Fishman was used in this study. The data were analyzed by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014). There are two ways to maintain Mandailingnese language in Tanjungbalai namely; (1) acquisition of language by adults, (2) create community. Analysis of data clearly indicates that Mandailingnese language maintenance was done in Tanjungbalai.

Keywords: *Language Maintenance, Process of Maintaining a Language, Mandailingnese Language in Tanjungbalai*

INTRODUCTION

In social interaction, it is apparently that the immigrants live with two conflicting wants. They are they want to maintain their language as part of their heritage and identity, and they want to be involved within their host community. The first want may lead to language maintenance, whereas the second one may lead immigrants through generations to lose proficiency in their vernacular and finally shift to the dominant language. Discussing the minority language, Kaplan and Baldauf (1997: 62) said that:

If both languages can serve all of the same functions and domains, then minority speakers are often drawn to the majority language because it offers greater access to material rewards, employment and economic opportunities. It may also be that there is status to be gained by linguistic and cultural association with the majority group.

In addition, urbanization situations, where minority individuals are drawn into urban centers-essentially for the same reasons of employment and economic reward-minorities are required to learn and use the majority language. Over time, these conditions lead to an environment in which the young have no incentive, and perhaps little opportunity, to learn the minority language.

Based on these statements, indicate that a group of people or the immigrants who come or move in certain region which the multilingual situation and ethnic cities do not have a chance to use their heritage language because their language is minority. And the language can be divided into two categories are majority and minority language. In this case, in Tanjungbalai, one of the minority languages is mandailingnese language and the majority is Malay language. Mandailingnese language is as a tool of communication by Mandailingnese people in their daily activities such as at home, in weding party, religion, traditional event and etc.

In Tanjungbalai, there are some ethnic groups and vernaculars. Certainly the people who live in Tanjungbalai use Indonesia language as lingua franca. Indonesia language that influenced by Malay

language. Absolutely mandailingnese people who live in Tanjungbalai involved on this case. This condition certainly makes mandailingnese people do not have opportunity to use their language. But, language must be maintained, because language showed the identity of the language users. As Holmes (2001:63) stated that where language is considered as important symbol of a minority group's identity, the language is likely to be maintained longer. Moreover, Corson (2001:174) said that the maintenance of a heritage language is vital for the self-identity and esteem of its speakers. Therefore, language must be protected, preserved and maintained. So, if Mandailingnese language is not spoken anywhere, it will be lost. As Schiffman (1995:12) stated that if language is not maintained, there can be several results. One is language death, the speakers of certain language become bilingual and the younger speakers become dominant in other language.

Language maintenance is an effort in keeping the language alive by using that language continually in facing the competition among other languages in society (Fishman, 1991). It means that the existence of the language depends on the effort of the speakers in maintaining that language by using that language continually. Fasold (1984: 213), said that language shift and language maintenance are the result of language choice for a long time. Language shift shows that there are some languages which are really left by the community of language users. It means that when language shift occurs, the members of the language collectively refer to use the new language rather than the old language that they used before. In contrast, in maintaining the language, the language users collectively decide to continue to use their language or to use their vernacular. Language maintenance is preservation of the language which is the language used by a group's native language as a first or second language where pressures threaten or cause a decline in the status of the language. Status of language is intertwined with language prestige and language function. Language status is the position or standing of a language. The effect of language maintenance programs can be extremely positive for threatened cultural groups.

Language maintenance refers to continued use an indigenous language in a majority language context. To be considered language maintenance, it is not sufficient for a language to be present in a particular community and for it to be spoken, for example, by newly arrived immigrants. The process of language maintenance refers to the retention of language and its transmission over several generations. The scholarship on language maintenance (e.g. Fishman, 2000) has examined a variety of language contexts around the world in which speakers of indigenous language have straggled to preserve their languages. The task of maintaining or developing minority or heritage languages in the various settings described involves different challenges.

As Fishman (2000) has argued, language maintenance efforts in those cases may need to begin with the reconstruction of the language from elderly and remaining users. Those committed to reversing language shift must understand the functional disruption of their particular language in social space and must focus and prioritize their efforts in clear stages in order to be successful. They may need to move from reconstructing the language, to use the language in community transmit it within the family, and schools for literacy acquisition for both young and old. In some communities, the advantage may be that all its members as well as outside majority language members can be made conscious of the costs involved in the total shift by the community to the majority language, language endangerment and eventually language death.

All languages are hopefully to be maintained. In this case the writer turns to vernacular language it is the maintenance of Mandailing language. As another language, Mandailingnese language is used as a

means of communication of local language especially in South Tapanuli. To maintain Mandailingnese language in order to be existence in the society, there are many process which are needed in maintaining that language. There are two factors are able to influence language maintenance. They are external and internal factor. External factor is the outer of the language such as environment, etc. while internal factor is the inner of the language user, attitude, etc. In this case, writer would like to elaborate the aspects dealing with language maintenance. In this Mandailingnese language, to maintain that language, it can be done through the following steps.

Fishman's model for keeping the threatened languages exist, or for making them suitable, consists of an eight-stage process. Efforts should be concentrated on the earlier stages of restoration until they have been consolidated before proceeding to the later stages. The eight stages are as follows; (1) Acquisition of the language by adults, who in effect act as language apprentices (recommended where most of the remaining speakers of the language are elderly and socially isolated from other speakers of the language), (2) Create a socially integrated population of active speakers (or users) of the language (at this stages it is usually best to concentrate mainly on the spoken language rather than the written language), (3) In localities where there are a reasonable number of people habitually using the languages, encourage the informal use of the language among people of all age groups and within families and bolster its daily use through the establishment of local neighborhood institutions in which the language is encouraged, protected and (in certain context at least) used exclusively, (4) In areas where oral competence in the language has been achieved in all age groups encourage literacy in the language but in a way that does not depend upon assistance from (or good will of) the state education system, (5) Where the state permits it, and where numbers warrant, encourage the use of the language in compulsory state education, (6) Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in the workplace (lower work sphere), (7) Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in the local government services and mass media, (8) Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in higher education, government etc.

While for endangered language, Crystal (1997), there are some factors which help an endangered language to progress. He postulates that an endangered language will progress if its speaker; (1) Increase their prestige within the dominant community, (2) Increase their wealth, (3) Increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community, (4) Have a strong presence in the education system, (5) Can write down the language, (6) Can make the use of electronic technology.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was a qualitative research. Patton (2002) defines qualitative research as an attempt to understand the unique interactions in a particular situation. The aim of qualitative research is to truthfully present findings to others who were interested in what people were doing. In this research, the researcher herself is as the key instrument. As the Bogdan and Biklen (1992:31) points out that qualitative researcher has the natural setting as the direct source of the data and the researcher is the key instrument.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In maintaining Mandailingnese language, there are some strategies that can be conducted by minority. According to Fishman (1991), there are eight stages that can be done by the indigenous speakers in order to maintain a language. They are 1) Acquisition of the language by adults, 2) Create a socially

integrated population of active speakers (or users) of the language, 3) Number of people habitually using the language, 4) All age groups encourage in the language, 5) Encourage the use of the language in compulsory state education, 6) Encourage the use of the language in workplace, 7) Encourage the use of the language in local government services and mass media, 8) Encourage the use of language in higher education and government.

In this study, there were two strategies that conducted by Mandailingnese people in Tanjungbalai to maintain Mandailingnese language. They are (1) acquisition of language by adults, (2) create community. The findings of this research were not wholly line with Fishman (1991) strategies. He stated, there are eight strategies that conduct to maintain the vernacular language but in this research only found two strategies that conducted by Mandailingnese people in Tanjungbalai to maintain Mandailingnese language because this study conducted in different language and place.

CONCLUSIONS

The process of language maintenance that conducted by Mandailingnese people in Tanjungbalai were not all of processes from the theory occurred in the field, there are eight ways in maintaining the language in the theory, but in this study, there are two ways found to maintain the language. They are (1) acquisition of language by adults, (2) create community.

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