

Language Shift of Mandailing Language on Mandailingnese Family in Bilah Hulu

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Abstract

The study focused on describing the language shift of Mandailing Language in Mandailingnese family in Desa Pondok Batu, Bilah Hulu. To reach the purpose, this study was conducted by descriptive qualitative. The sample of this study is the Mandailing people who lived in Desa Pondok Batu, Bilah Hulu. The language shift of Mandailing language is investigated through the language use of Mandailingnese families in Desa Pondok Batu, Bilah Hulu especially in Dusun Sukamulia. In collecting the data, the method used to analyze the data is a list of structured questions to obtain information from a number of respondents. The result of the study indicated that there is language shift in teenager and adult level. In teenagers level there were 32% sample who used Mandailing language in their family and in adults level there were 44 % who used Mandailing language in family. On the contrary, in parents level there were no language shift in family, the percentage of the calculation is more than 50% so, there is no language shift in parents level.

Keywords: Language Shift, Mandailingnese, Mandailing Language, Bilah Hulu

1. INTRODUCTION

Mandailing language is as vernacular of Mandailingnese tribe in Indonesia, especially in North Sumatera. Besides its function is as communication tool, it is also as symbol identity of Mandailingnese ethnics. Attachment to language is as strong as people regard themselves as social group, which is influenced largely by how the larger society regards them. 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.

Bilah Hulu, as the sub-district in Labuhanbatu regency, consist of multi-ethnic and multi-lingual city faces such language phenomenon. Especially in dusun Sukamulia desa Pondok Batul, it is located near traditional market of Aek Nabara which populated by Bataknes and Mandailingnese people. Vernaculars are rarely used by youth generation of Indonesian. For example, Mandailing language is only used in limited area such as rural area. Mandailing language is rarely used by the younger generation of Mandailingnese in Bilah Hulu. Nowadays, there is a Mandailingnese family which both parents are Mandailing people gathered in community which dominated by Mandailingnese. The children are unable to use their parent vernacular because their parents cannot speak Mandailing language. It is shown that Mandailing language has shifted to Indonesian language.



Image 1. Location of Dusun Sukamulia by Google Maps

As Sembiring (2008) in her study indicated that the difference of language choice between the role of parents and children. According to her, children prefer to use Indonesian language whereas parents use both Indonesian language and Karo language. It is also similarly to Mandailingnese children, they prefers to use Indonesian language than Mandailing language and their parents use both Indonesian language and Mandailing language. Sugihana (2004) stated that Indonesian language has been used dominantly in family domain, it means that when Mandailing language is not a dominant language in family domain, it will be endangered.

2. DISCUSSION

Holmes (2001:68) stated that the language shift generally refers to the process, by which one language displaces another in the linguistic repertoire of a community. A language shift means a shift or displace of one minority language mother tongue to a language of wider society. The other domains in which language shift occurs maybe differ for different individual and different group but gradually over time the language of wider displaces the minority language mother tongue. Language shift happen when many speech communities in a certain language have shifted or replaced the use of their mother tongue to use of dominant language and it usually happen to the younger generation.

Language shift usually occurs in bilingualism or multilingualism community because of many factors such as bilingualism, migration, economic and social factor, political factors, demographic factors, and also value and attitude of the language users. As Fishman (1991:1) states that language shift usually occurs in speech communities whose native languages are threatened because their intergenerational continuity is proceeding negatively with fewer users or uses every generation. It is clear that language shift can be seen by the less of native users of the native language and it becomes less using in the next generation.

2.1. Factors of Language Shift

Several factors associated to language shift. However, the most fundamental is bilingualism. Fasold, (1984: 213) states the bilingualism can ultimately lead to language shift in a society and is often marked by intergenerational switching of the languages. Besides bilingualism, many factors are also responsible for language shift. They are migration, social factors, and attitude and value factors. Those factors are describe in the following subtopics.

2.1.1. Bilingualism

Weinrich (1968) offers one of the shortest definition “the practice of alternatively using two languages will be called bilingualism”. In addition, Robert Lado (1977) says that bilingualism is the ability to speak two languages with equal or nearly as good. It can be concluded that those definitions that bilingualism is the use two languages equally in order communicate with the other people alternatively. Bilingualism is necessary precursor of language

shift. As Downes (2005:61) states that a number of factors are involved in whether or not bilingualism it leads to language shift.

2.1.2. Migration

The potential factors of language shift to occur among vernaculars in Bilah Hulu related to rural-urban migration that encourages the use of language of the wider society and the consequent loss in proficiency in the original mother tongue. Bilah Hulu has traditional market consist of multiethnic migrants that move from many regions. As Holmes (2001:52) states that migrant are virtually monolingual in their mother tongue, their children become bilingual, but the grandchildren turn monolingual in the language of host country.

2.1.3. Economic and Social Factors

The social and economic goals of individuals in a community are very important in accounting for speed shift. As Holmes (2001:58) states that obtaining work is the most obvious economic reason for learning another language. People need a language to communicate with other people. They choose the dominant language, by speaking the language they can build a successful communication.

2.1.4. Political Factors

According to Romaine (2000:54) many factors are responsible for language shift for example government policies and education. Mandailingnese sends their children to school with the medium of instruction by using Indonesian language. There is a pressure from the teachers and schoolmates to speak Indonesian language in school. They are more fluency in Indonesian language rather than Mandailingnese language.

2.1.5. Demographic Factors

According to Holmes (2001:59-60), there are three factors which are relevant in accelerating of language shift firstly; urbanization, urbanization tends to make language shift faster. Secondly is the size of community of speakers, the language shift tends to occur faster in a group with small numbers of speakers than in a group with a large number of speakers. Thirdly is intercultural marriage or different ethnic marriage.

2.1.6. Attitudes and Value

People are not highly valued their vernacular and they have no effort to maintain the vernacular at least by keep on their ability of speaking the vernacular.

2.2. Effect of Language Shift

When all people speak a language die, the language, speaker, culture, art and history also die. The language shift leads to death of another language in it's totally no speakers of the language or death of a language in a specific community only. Holmes (2001:56) argues that who speak language die, the language die with them. Many minority language shift totally to the language of the majority in two to three generation, but that does not constitute the death of their ethnic language because it continues to be spoken by the majority in their old country of origin.

In the case of Indonesian's vernaculars, the language shift result some vernacular being endangered or the lost of mother tongue, because language shift cause reduction of numbers of speakers. At a colloquium in Germany in February 2000, linguist distinguished the following stages of language endangerment.

- a) Critically endangered very few of speakers all 70 years old and older, great grandparent age.
- b) Severely endangered. Speakers are only 40 years old and older grandparent age.
- c) Endangered speakers are only 20 years old and older, parent age.
- d) Eroding. Speakers are some children and older people. Other people cannot speak it.
- e) Stable but threatened. All children and older people are speakers, but few in numbers.
- f) Safe, not endangered language expected to be learned by all children and all others in the ethnic group.

Mandailing tribe which is in the next called Mandailing people are the people who come from Mandailing homeland or hereditarily come from Mandailing region, either the people who stay in Mandailing region or in other regions. The Mandailing language is still used by Mandailing people until now either in Mandailing region or in other regions wherever they live in application of communication among ethnic humanities Mandailing.

The Mandailing language has patois and accent which is very gentle and brought by smooth voice, as according to the usage of Mandailing language consist five levels, that is:

- a) Language of custom (*Bahasa adat*), the language which is used when custom ceremonies.
- b) Language of *Andung*, the language which is used in sorrowed time.
- c) Language of *Parkapur*, the language which is used when in forest.
- d) Language of *Na Biaso*, the language which is used in daily live.

e) Language of *Bura*, the language which is used in worth time.

According Pandapotan Nasution (2005:14), he said that the Mandailing language is divided into five kinds which is used by Mandailing people in daily conversation.

- a) *Hata andoeng di hatiha siloeloeton*. The language which is used by Mandailing people when mourned the mortal in death ceremony, and also used by the girl when she mourned in front of her parents when she will leave them to go to her prospective husband's house.
- b) *Hata teas dohot djampolak di hatiha parbadaan*. The language is used especially on the happening of bad things (fight or quarrel).
- c) *Hata si baso hatiha ni hadatoean*. The language is used by figure *Si Baso* (shaman) when he is in trance situation when treat his patient.
- d) *Hata parkapoer hatiha di harangan*. The language is used when a person in the forest. In the past, it is used by the Mandailing people who go to forest to search champor. That's why this language is named *Hata Parkapur*.

The method in this research is descriptive qualitative method where the data collected and analyze through survey. In collecting the data, the method used to analyze the data was a list of structured questions to obtain information from a number of respondents. The technique used was the technique of using a questionnaire survey, a semi-open question (there is still a possibility of an additional answer) the question list was then distributed to the participants, the completed questionnaires into data ready to be processed.

The scale of measurement to analyze the data in this research was used nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio scale (Nasution: 2007). In this case, the nominal scale is merely a label given to the categories of gender, age, family status, occupation, education, place of birth, the identity of the respondent, length of stay, tribal status, while the ordinal scale in this study implies a level, which is related to the age group of respondents.

- If the percentage of Mandailingnese people who uses Mandailing language 51% - 100%, it is considered that there is no language shift.
- If the percentage of Mandailingnese people who uses Mandailing language 0%-50%, it is considered that there is language shift.

For more details, in calculating whether the Mandailing language shift or not we can calculate by using the mean or median, which is calculated from half the number of respondents. The highest value is calculated from the midpoint to the top, the lowest value is calculated from the midpoint to the bottom. For example, the number of respondents 15 (100.00%), then the formula used is $15 (100.00) : 2 = 7,5 (50.00\%)$, the number of respondents 0-7,5 or <50.00%, it means that there is language shift, while the number of respondents 7,5-15 or > 50.00% it means that there is no language shift.

The approach used is sociolinguistic terms. In this case, the sociological approach regarding linguistic research in the social context is the study group's behavior not individuals' behavior (Surdyanto: 1993). There are 19 questions that are given to the samples. Those question are explained into describing table as follows.

Table 1. Gender of Sample

No	Gender	Percentage
1	Female	6 (40%)
2	Male	9 (60%)
Total		15 (100%)

Table 2. Age of Sample

No	Age	Percentage
1	<20	5 (33.33%)
2	21-40	5 (33.33%)
3	>40	5 (33.34%)
Total		15 (100%)

From the table above, the samples is divided into three groups, teenager group at the age of 17-20 years old consist of 5 participants (33.33%), adult group at the age of 21-40 consists of 5 participants (33.33%) and parents group at the age of up to 40 consists of 5 participants.

Table 3. Occupation of Sample

No	Occupation	F	Percentage (%)
1	Officer	4	26.67 %
2	Seller	4	26.67%
3	Others	7	46.66 %
Total		15	100%

Then, for the sample's occupation, there are 4 (26.66%) person as an officer, 4 persons (26.66%) as a seller, and 7 (46,67%) persons as a student.

Table 4. Educational Background of Sample

No	Education	F	Percentage (%)
1	Senior High School	8	53.33 %
2	University	7	46.67 %
Total		15	100%

The table above refers to the sample's education, there are 8 (53.33%) persons who are graduated from senior high school, and 7 (46,67%) who are graduated from university.

Table 5. Birth Place of Sample

No	Place of Birth	F	Percentage (%)
1	Out of Mandailing area	8	53.33 %
2	Mandailing area	7	46.67 %
Total		15	100%

The table above indicates the sample's place of born, there are 8 (53.33%) persons whose born in out of mandailing area, and 7 (46.67%) whose born in mandailing area.

Table 6. Duration of Stay in Bilah Hulu

No	Stayed in Bilah Hulu	Percentage
1	<5 years	3 (20%)
2	5-10 years	2 (13.33%)
3	>10 years	10 (46.67%)
Total		15 (100%)

Based on the question, "how long have you been stayed in Aek Nabara?" There are 3 (20%) live less than 5 years, 2 persons (13.33%) who stayed between 5-10 years, and 10 persons (66.67%) who answered more than 10 years,

Table 7. Marital Status of Sample

No	Marital Status	F	Percentage (%)
1	Haven't married	8	53.33 %
2	Married	7	46.67 %
Total		15	100%

Based on the table above, it indicates there are 7 persons (46.67 %) who have married, and 8 persons (53.33 %), who haven't married yet.

Table 8. Native Speaker of Mandailing

No	Mandailing Native Speaker	F	Percentage (%)
1	No	10	46.67 %
2	Yes	5	33.33 %
Total		15	100%

Based on the question, are you native speaker of Mandailing language? There are 10 persons (46,67%) who answered no, and 5 persons (33.33%) who answered yes.

Table 9. Ability of Speaking Mandailing

No	Ability to Speak Mandailing Language	F	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	7	46.67%
2	Little	2	13.33%
3	No	6	40 %
Total		15	100%

The table above answered the question about the ability to speak Mandailing language. There are 7 persons (46.67 %) who answered can, 2 persons (13.33%) who answered little and 6 persons (40%) who answered no.

2.3. Teenagers Level (17-20 Years Old)

Table 10. Language Use to Grandfather

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	1	20%
2	Indonesian language	4	80%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

The table above shows the language use of teenager level (17-20 years old). From the question, what language do you speak to your grandfather, there 4 persons (80%) who answered using Indonesian language, and 1 (20%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 11. Language Used to Grandmother

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	1	20%
2	Indonesian language	4	80%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question addressed to teenager level, what language do you speak to your grandmother, there 4 persons (80%) who answered using Indonesian language, and 1 (20%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 12. Language Used to Father

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	2	60%
2	Indonesian language	3	40%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

The table above answers the question about the language use to their father. From the five teenagers, there 3 persons (60%) who answered using Indonesian language, and 2 (40%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 13. Language Used to Mother

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	2	60%
2	Indonesian language	3	40%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

Based on the table above, there 3 teenagers (60%) speaks Indonesian language to their mother, and 2 (40%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 14. Language Used to Sibling

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	-	-
2	Indonesian language	5	100%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question, what language do you speak to your brother or sister, all of samples answered using Indonesian language.

So, it can be conclude that in teenager level (17-20 years old) the use of Mandailing language in their family in total; $20\% + 20\% + 60\% + 60\% = 160\% / 5 = 32\%$. Then, if the percentage of Mandailingnese people who use Mandailing language is 0% - 50%, it is considered that there is language shift in teenager level.

2.4. Adult Level (21-40 Years Old)

Table 15. Language Use to Grandfather

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	1	20%
2	Indonesian language	4	80%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

The table above show that in adult level, there 4 persons (80%) speak Indonesian language to their grandfather. Then, it is only 1 (20%) who speak Mandailing language to their grandfather.

Table 16. Language Used to Grandmother

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	1	20%
2	Indonesian language	4	80%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question, what language do you speak to your grandmother, there 4 persons (80%) who answered using Indonesian language, and 1 (20%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 17. Language Used to Father

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	3	60%
2	Indonesian language	2	40%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question, what language do you speak to your father, there 2 persons (40%) who answered using Indonesian language, and 3 (60%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 18. Language Used to Mother

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	3	60%
2	Indonesian language	2	40%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question, what language do you speak to your mother, there 2 persons (40%) who answered using Indonesian language, and 3 (60%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 19. Language Used to Sibling

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	3	60%
2	Indonesian language	2	40%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question, what language do you speak to your brother or sister, 2 persons (40%) answered using Indonesian language and 3 persons (60%) answered using mandailing language.

It can be conclude that in adult level, the use of Mandailing language in family; $20\% + 20\% + 60\% + 60\% + 60\% = 220\% / 5 = 44\%$. If the percentage of Mandailingnese people who use Mandailing language is 0%-50%, then it is considered that there is language shift in adult level.

2.5. Parents Level (40 Years Old and above)

Table 20. Language Used to Father

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	5	100%
2	Indonesian language	-	-
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question what language do you speak to your father, there is only 1 person (20%) who answered using Indonesian language, and 4 (80%) who answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 21. Language Used to Mother

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	4	80%
2	Indonesian language	1	20%
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

The table above shows the answer of the question about language used by the sample to their mothers, all of the samples 5 (100%) answered speak Mandailing language.

Table 22. Language Used to Sibling

No	Language Use	F	Percentage (%)
1	Mandailing language	5	100%
2	Indonesian language	-	-
3	Other regional language	-	-
4	Foreign language	-	-
Total		5	100%

From the question of language used to their sibling, all of the samples 5 (100%) answered speak Mandailing language to their brother or sister.

Finally, it can be conclude that in the use of Mandailing language in parent level can be seen from the total tables; $100\% + 80\% + 100\% = 280\% / 3 = 93,3\%$. The percentage of Mandailingnese people who uses Mandailing language is 51% -100%, then it is considered that there is no language shift in parent level.

3. CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data, it was found that there is language shift in teenager and adult level, it can be seen from the calculation of the percentage, in teenager level there was 32% sample who uses Mandailing language in family, in adult level there was 44 % who uses Mandailing language in family, while in parents level there was no language shift in family, because the percentage of the calculation is 93,3%. In other word, there is no language shift in parents level.

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