FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE MAINTENANCE OF KONJO LANGUAGE IN HETEROGENEOUS AREA OF BULUKUMBA REGENCY (IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF ETHNOLINGUISTIC VITALITY)

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Abstract

The use of an ethnic language depends on the strength of the language and the efforts of the community to maintain its language. The study aims to describe the factors contributing to the survival of the language viewed from ethno-linguistic vitality and its vitality degree. The study was carried out in Ujung Bulu as the city of Bulukumba regency which is inhabited by various ethnic people (heterogeneous region). It is a descriptive quantitative-qualitative study applying observation, questionnaire distribution, and interview to collect data from a sample of 30 subjects selected based on age groups by means of multi-stage sampling technique. The study indicates that in the heterogeneous area proves that demography factors have insignificant contribution to the maintenance of Konjo language in the regency as indicated by regression value of demography factors p = 0.741. The statuses and institutional factors however have a significant contribution to the maintenance of the language with the values of p = 0.010 and p = 0.002 respectively. Based on the quantitative data analysis and interview as well as observation, the vitality of Konjo language in Bulukumba regency is high as indicated by the use of the language.

Keywords: language survival, objective ethno-linguistic vitality, demography, statuses, institutional support

Abstrak

Kebertahanan penggunaan sebuah bahasa etnik tergantung pada kelebihan yang dimiliki oleh bahasa tersebut dan bagaimana upaya-upaya masyarakatnya dalam mempertahankan bahasa etnik mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan faktor-faktor yang berkonstribusi pada pemertahanan bahasa konjo di kabupaten Bulukumba dari sudut pandang *Objective Ethnolinguistic Vitality* dan mendeskripiskan seberapa besar tingkat vitalitas Bahasa Konjo di kabupaten Bulukumba. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di Kecamatan Ujung Bulu dimana daerah ini bersifat heterogen yang dihuni oleh beberapa etnik yang berbeda. Jenis penelitian adalah deskriptif dengan pendekatan kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Metode yang digunakan dalam pengumpulan data adalah observasi, kuisioner, dan interview. Sampel sebanyak 30 orang diambil berdasarkan kelompok umur dengan menggunakan teknik *multi stage sampling*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dari ketiga variabel yang diteliti (demografi, institusional support, dan status), faktor demografi tidak signifikan dalam memberikan konstribusi pada pemertahanan bahasa Konjo di wilayah kota Kabupaten Bulukumba. Hal tersebut ditunjukkan pada nilai regresi yang rendah, yakni *p value* = 0,741. Akan tetapi,

faktor status dan institusional memberikan konstribusi pada pemertahanan bahasa Konjo. Ditemukan tingkat signifikansi dengan nilai regresi *p value* keduanya adalah berturut-turut 0,010 (status) dan 0,002 (institusional). Akhirnya, berdasarkan hasil pengujian data kuantitatif, hasil interview, serta pengamatan, maka ditemukan vitalitas bahasa Konjo menunjukkan nilai yang tinggi.

Kata kunci: pemertahanan bahasa, *objective ethnolinguistic*, demografi, status, dukungan institusional

Introduction

Bulukumba is regency which is located in the end of the southern part of South Sulawesi Province in Indonesia. It is adjacent to Bantaeng regency on the west, Sinjai regency on the north, Bone bay on the east, and Flores Sea on the south. Based on the data from central statistical agency of Bulukumba in 2011, it is inhabited about 398,531 people and distributed into 10 sub districts, 24 villages, and 126 country sides. Its main commodities are plantation, agriculture, and service. From view of ethnic language, Bulukumba people mainly speak Buginese and Konjo. The people who speak Buginese spread in the south area of Bulukumba and the Konjo speakers live in the east side. But, in the central town of Bulukumba, both of them live side by side together with some Javanese and Chinese.

As the consequence of globalization era and national policy about national formal language of Indonesia which regulate *Bahasa* (Indonesian Language) as the only one formal language use in the country, Konjo language is becoming more marginalized. In Indonesia, ethnic language is only consider as cultural wealth, rather than a formal communication tool in the country's holding (Ida, 2010). Moreover, there are some negative images regarding to the ethnic languages. Darwis (2007), said that there are four negative images of ethnic language in the modern era now. First, the ethnic language is considered as the part of ancient people. Second, the ethnic language is belongs to poor and uneducated people. Third, the ethnic language is not useful in the outside of the village. The last, the ethnic language can hinder the development of the community. This phenomenon is the picture about language endangerment. When one language has been infected by symptoms of an endangered language, the language in the future will become a language death and shift to another language as the consequence if the speakers are not able to maintain it.

In order to systematically investigate an ethnic minority language, Bourhis, Giles and Taylor (1977) quoted in Yagmur & Ehala (2011), proposed the model of Ethnolinguistic Vitality (EV) to develop a framework for investigating the role of socio-structural variables in intergroup relations, cross cultural communication, second language learning, mother tongue maintenance, and language shift and loss. The vitality of an ethnolinguistic group was defined as 'that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations. The EV model formed three structural variables which influence the vitality of ethnolinguistic group. They are status (economic status, social status, socio-historical status and language status), demographic (sheer numbers of group members and their distribution throughout territory), and institutional support variables (the extent to which a language group receives formal and informal representation in various activities such as mass media, education, government services, industry, religion and culture).

The study of language maintenance using the theory of Ethnolinguistic Vitality has been explored by many researchers around the world. According to Google Scholar cited in Yagmur and Ehala (2011), the annual number of new publications mentioning 'Ethnolinguistic Vitality' has been steadily growing during the last 15 years, from 20 in 1995 to 144 in 2009. Some of them are Finocchiaro (2004), who studied about language maintenance/shift of a three-generation Italian family in three migration countries (an international comparative study). This study is undertaken and described in the context of the different policies on migrant integration and minority languages in the three migration countries. Kasatkina (2011), studied the language shift and maintenance among Russian immigrants from the former Soviet Union. She attempted an examination of external factors that affecting the language-based choice made by families and individuals within the family of Russian immigrants. Wang & Chong (2011), studied the hierarchical order of social factors involved in language maintenance and language shift. This study presented the ongoing process of language shift among various dialect groups in the Malaysian-Chinese community. Hudyma (2012), studied about the language maintenance and shift a case study of Ukrainian in Saskatchewan. This study described some certain socio-cultural factors correlate with frequency of Ukrainian

language use and its proficiency, and some characteristic patterns in language use in the family of Ukrainian.

Until now, there is still very few studies on language maintenance and shift carried out on non-migrant communities. Besides, the study of ethnolinguistic vitality in Indonesia is not well developed yet as in other multicultural countries. Most of the studies on language maintenance and shift conducted within the framework of sociolinguistic through the identification of domains and situations in which the language is no longer used or is gradually replaced by another language. But this study aims to use the model of objective ethnolinguistic vitality to present the ongoing process of Language Maintenance of Konjo as non-migrant community and its vitality degree.

Material and Methods

Location and Research Design

The research was conducted in Bulukumba regency where the Konjo communities live in, the heterogenic area which is located in the town of Bulukumba regency that is sub district of Ujung Bulu. This research is categorized as a descriptive research which is completed by using qualitative and quantitative approach that describe some factors which influence language maintenance of Konjo in Bulukumba regency. It also examines the theory of ethno linguistic vitality (EV) in minority community of Konjo, which has been used by many previous researchers around the world as the tools for studying language maintenance and language shift. Language maintenance then "is the absence of language shift" (DeVries, 1990). This can occur both at the individual level and from one generation to the next. Fishman (1989), defined language maintenance as "the process and pursuit of inter-generational linguistic continuity."

Population and Sample

Population of the research was taken from Konjo communities in Bulukumba regency who leaves in the coastal areas especially in heterogeneous area (Ujung Bulu). The researcher chose this area because it consisted of various ethnic who live side by side for long time. The population of the research was approximately 27.742 speakers. The numbers of total samples taken from the population were 30 samples represented the heterogeneous group by using multi

stage sampling and the respondents were taken randomly based on categorization of 5 age groups, such as follows: $\geq$ 60 years old, 36 – 59 years old, 20 – 35 years old, 13 – 19 years old, $\leq$ 12 years old.

Data Collection

Before doing this research, the researcher had visited the location and observed the activities of Konjo community and the condition of the area and residents. By doing this, the researcher gathered some previous data and information related to this research. This data were used to enhance research design so that population and sample can be determined. Interview was applied in order to find the major factor influenced language maintenance. The respondents were interviewed separately and the answers were taken as natural as possible. Interview consisted of several important questions that less or more are similar to the questions in questionnaire. All the questions were arranged into the structured interview model. It helped the researcher to be more focus. Besides, it supported the information/data on the questionnaire form.

Questionnaire was used in order to get information/data related to the topic of the research. It may also support the data from interview which related to objective ethnolinguistic vitality. So, list of questions that related to objective ethnolinguistic vitality had been arranged so that all needed data could fulfill the research aims. Numbers of previous study had proved that questionnaire is a useful instrument in the studies of language maintenance. When the researcher doing the observation, note taking will be helpful to obtain data that could not be gathered from questionnaire or interview. So, notes were be used as the research instrument. Moreover, recording tape was used when the researcher interviewing the respondents and watching the important activities that relate to the topic of research. A video recording and camera were also used as other tools of investigation.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data systematically, the researcher had done the steps as follows: First, data from questionnaires were analyzed by using regression to know to what extent contribution of the independent variables toward the dependent variable. Second, data gathered from interview and observation was used to strengthen data from questionnaire. The analysis was done quantitatively first by

converting all the raw data into SPSS 17.0 and after that they were analyzed qualitatively through interpretation of the whole data.

According to Mahsun (2005) quoted in Djamereng (2012), "In Sociolinguistic studies, data were analyzed by using content analysis, domain analysis, discovering cultural analysis, and constant comparative analysis. All kinds of analysis used are simply to fulfill the need of sociolinguistics study, especially with regard to data analysis that intends to compare data to others through data collection. Based on this, the data on this research were be analyzed by using constant comparative analysis as this research takes two groups of Konjo community (homogeny and heterogenic) to be compared."

Results

Correlation Analysis

The result of bivariate analysis in this research can be explained as follows: In the demography variable with the significance level of 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$), we can get the significance value of this variable (P value) is $0.741 > 0.05$. The value defines that H0 of this research is accepted and describes that demography variable has insignificant influence to the language maintenance variable in heterogenic area. In the status factors variable with the significance level of 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$), we can get the significance value of this variable (P value) is $0.010 < 0.05$. The value defines that H0 is refused and Ha is accepted. It describes that status factors variable has significant influence to the language maintenance in heterogenic area. In the institutional support variable with the significance level of 95% ($\alpha = 0.05$), we can get that the significance value of this variable (P value) is $0.002 < 0.05$. The value defines that H0 is refused and Ha is accepted. It describes that institutional support variable has significant influence to the language maintenance in heterogenic area.

Discussion

Having analyzed the data derived from questionnaire, interview and observation, they indicated that Konjo language has a strong position as the language of communication in several domains in Konjo community in Bulukumba. Although they also speak other language such as Buginese and Indonesian

language, but they still more frequently use Konjo language in their daily communication in their home and in the street as well.

The need of using the Konjo language generally as a result of their appreciation to their heritage language and their symbol of identity as Konjo community even they live in heterogenic area. They are proud of being recognized as Konjo community by other people who are not belonging to their ethnic group. It could be seen from the observation that although they are educated people, but they keep use their language when communicate with their fellows. This is in line with the interview result from key informant as follows:

> "saya lebih suka dan nyaman mengunakan bahasa Konjo bila bertemu dengan orang Konjo baik di daerah tutur maupun di luar daerah tutur bahasa Konjo."
>
> *I am more convenient and enjoyable to use Konjo language if I meet Konjo People in or out of Konjo area."*

This statement indicates that the use of Konjo language will identify someone using this language as Konjo people. There is good condition in which the most of Konjo people enjoy to use Konjo language and have positive attitude toward Konjo language. The research results also show that the majority of respondents are proud and want to use Konjo language in and out of their residence.

Konjo communities who live in heterogenic area also speak their language to prove that they are belonging to Konjo community. It is similar to what the Polish people experienced in many countries they have migrated to. They speak Polish to preserve their identity and the language has consequently maintained for three to four generations. The same is true for Greek migrants in places like Australia, New Zealand, and America. It may be concluded, where language is considered an important symbol of minority groups' identity, the language is likely to be maintained longer (Holmes, 1992).

The demographic factors in this study include the size and distribution of Konjo community. It is divided into two larger subcategories; group distribution and group numbers. Group distribution entails three subcomponents: national territory, group concentration and group proportion. And group number factors include five subcomponents: absolute numbers, birth rate, mixed marriages, immigration and emigration.

In Bulukumba, Konjo people are assumed as one big community. They are mainly concentrated in 4 sub districts (Kajang, Herlang, Bonto Tiro, and Bonto Bahari) and well distributed to other sub districts. We can see from the data, Konjo people have a big population. Mostly in one family have more than 3 children and they tend to marry with people from their own ethnic. They also like to visit other areas but they tend to speak Konjo language with Konjo people when they meet in other areas.

Nevertheless, the result of observation showed that 4 sub districts (Kajang, Herlang Bonto Tiro and Bonto Bahari) are still dominated by Konjo people, this condition strengthens Konjo sustainability in the 4 subs districts (Kajang, herlang Bonto Tiro, Bonto Bahari). This is in a line with Fishman's statement in Djamereng (2012), stating that language sustainability is related to language change and language use on the one side and related to psychological, social and cultural processes on the other side in multi-languages community. One of interesting issues in language shift and sustainability studies is helplessness of immigrant minority sustaining their language in the competition of dominant majority language. Fishman's statement strengthens the result of current research in where the majority people dominate as well as their language. It proved that Konjo people are still as majority community in their residence. As a result of this phenomenon is that Konjo language tend to be sustained well by their speakers (Konjo people). Statistical analysis also strengthened the result in which demography factors correlates positively to the sustainability of Konjo language in four sub districts (Kajang, Herlang, Bonto Tiro and Bonto Bahari) as research places of the current investigation.

Descriptive analysis showed that most of respondents had married with same tribe (Konjo people). This condition caused the daily conversation among them always used Konjo. Such marriage also effected to the sustainability of Konjo language. Because of such marriage had given minimal 3 children at least for a family. Beside marriage between the same tribes (Konjo people), most of Konjo people visited rarely other places but when they moved to other places always met with the Konjo speakers. This movement of Konjo people that is relatively rare

made their language tends to be used and also existed in Konjo community (homogeny) and heterogenic areas.

Economy status factor contributes positively to the sustainability of Konjo language. The research results showed that respondents that have low until high incomes are still convenient to speak Konjo with Konjo people in or out of their residence. Community labeled with any social statuses also often used Konjo in daily communication. This condition influenced significantly toward sustainability of Konjo language in the research places (homogeny and heterogenic areas). Similiar result also was obtained from the interview as follows:

> "Untuk kalangan dengan penghasilan rendah dan menengah malah cenderung selalu menggunakan bahasa Konjo, karena mereka masih kuat sistem gotong royongnya, sehingga dalam berinteraksi selalu menggunakan bahasa Konjo".

> *"for low and midle incomes communities tend to use Konjo language, because of they still held strongly "gotong royong" principle, so when they interact to other Konjo people always use Konjo language".*

Socio-historical status also influenced the sustainability of Konjo language. Many Konjo people still use Konjo language although their social status moves to the better status, for example from low income status into middle or high income status. Moreover, there was interesting phenomena in the level of students in which they often mixed Indonesia language with Konjo when they communicate with each other.

Majority of respondent's perception and attitude toward Konjo language showed that Konjo people use Konjo language conveniently if it is used in mass media. In educational institutions Konjo language is also used very often by teachers and students especially out of class. Konjo language also still sustain in governmental environment. Konjo language is still used by most of people in religious ceremonies. In cultural activities most of Konjo people also still use Konjo language.

Hypothesis testing of institutional support factors using regression analysis showed that p-value is 0.000. It means that p-value less than α value = 0.05. Based on the data it can be stated that institutional support influences the sustainability of Konjo in heterogenic areas. The five institutional support factors showed that Konjo language is still used dominantly, it means that Konjo language can sustain in facing the attacking other languages competing in this modern era.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Finally the researcher can draw the conclusions from the recent investigation showing the result of the research in the heterogeneous area indicates that demography factors have insignificant contribution to the maintenance of Konjo language in Bulukumba. This is proven by the result of data testing the language maintenance variable with 95% (α = 0.05) significance level which indicates a low regression value of demography factors that is $0.741 > 0.05$. But, the status and institutional factors have high significance contribution to the maintenance of Konjo language in Bulukumba regency. This is proven by the result of data testing which indicates the regression p value of status factors is $0.010 < 0.05$ and p value of institutional factors is $0.002 < 0.05$. So, based on the testing of data and the result of interview and observation, it can be assumed that the vitality of Konjo language in Bulukumba regency is categorized as high vitality. It is also proven by the use of Konjo language by the Konjo people is still high. They still often use it in many situations and domains (for example: in religious ceremonies, educational institution, cultural events) in their daily life communication. Based on the result and discussion, the researcher can give some suggestions to Local Government (Bulukumba Regency) to promote Konjo language more intensively through educational institution to teach Konjo language to students. The researcher also suggest that it is important to promote Konjo language in oral and written activities so that the printed writing can be studied by many people for further study related to Konjo language.

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