
The Language Attitudes of the Member of Aristocracy of Mambalan Village towards High Sasak Language

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Abstract

Noblemen, generally, appreciate their own language as social status in a community. However, Noblemen in Mambalan village have different attitude toward their language. This research aims at finding out the attitude of noblemen in Mambalan village towards their own language. It implements qualitative methods to explain the results of the research. Data are collected via questionnaire which are given to the selected informants; they are about 50 informants with age range between 21-50. The questionnaire is divided into two parts; the first questionnaire aims at confirming their social status and the second questionnaire relates to the language they use in daily communication. The results show that the noblemen of Mambalan village have negative attitude toward high Sasak language. This negative attitude induces a gradual decrease to the existing values which eventually influence the pride of the member of aristocracy of Mambalan village to use high Sasak language. A predominant example of this decreasing value is apparent in their preference of utilization of Bahasa Indonesia and low Sasak language rather than the use of high Sasak language. They regard Bahasa Indonesia and low Sasak language to be more prestigious than high Sasak language and consider it as the appropriate tool of communication in their daily interaction and social communication.

Keywords: Language attitudes, high Sasak language, member of aristocracy

1. INTRODUCTION

Local languages have played strategic roles in Indonesian especially in shaping the national cultural identity and in enriching the local wisdom of many tribes with their own different local languages. The diversity of local languages in Indonesia can determine the important basis for declaring Indonesia as the unique and the multiculturalism nation. Without any exception, the existence of a language whether the language belongs to a national language or as a vernacular language is mostly determined by the language attitude of the speakers of the language itself.

Language attitudes are opinions, ideas and prejudices that speakers have with respect to a language which can help in having positive attitude towards that language. Baker (1992), stated that language attitude refers to the feelings that people have for their languages or to other people languages. According to Suge, 1967, the behavior of language speakers and their customs towards the language presents the positive and negative attitudes of a language itself.

While Crystal (2000) stated that, different communities have different kinds of attitudes and aspirations in relation to their language. It explains that different peoples have different language attitude with others. These difference attitudes called as positive and negative attitude towards the language. When language speakers have positive attitude toward their language, the speakers will maintenance their language by many efforts such as using their language in daily interaction and use as the symbol of identity and the unity. Meanwhile when the speakers are reluctant to use their language, means that the speakers have negative attitude toward their language. This negative attitude can support the occurrence of language shift or language extinction (Garvin, P. L., & Mathiot, 1968).

The positive language attitudes can be seen when people: (1) feel proud to use the language that they have; (2) are loyal to use it in all domains; (3) have eagerness to maintain the language although there is the situation that forcing them to leave their language and still they are not influenced by anything. In conclusion, the positive language attitudes are really crucial in maintaining a certain language used by a certain community (J Holmes, 2001). While, according to Dweik, B. & Al-Obaidi (2014) , when language speakers have a positive attitude towards their language, they will feel that their language is an interesting language and they like to use the language to interact in daily life. Conversely, if language speakers have negative attitudes towards a language, they develop resistance in using that language. Further, Dweik, B. & Al-Obaidi (2014) state, when speakers of a language do not feel proud of the language that they have and prefer to use other languages, then a negative language attitude can appear intentionally or unintentionally.

Garrett, (2010) argues that defining the concept of attitude is not simple, given the breadth of the term and the importance of the different aspects of attitudes. Attitudes, however, have been defined as comprising three main constituents: cognitive, affective and behavioral (Garrett, 2010). The first refers to the influence of attitudes on an individual's views of the world and particular incidents; the second involves emotions in relation to the attitude item; and the third refers to the interference of attitudes in behavior (Garrett, 2010).

There are some factors that can influence of language attitude. These factors of language attitude can come from internal and external of language itself.

According to Jendra (2010), language attitudes refer to linguistic positions, perceptions, and actions of some people towards the languages and varieties, as well as towards the people using them. There are some factors that can influence of language attitude according to Jendra (2010), such as:

1. The Prestige and Power of the Language

Many countries around the world enthusiasm to learn English., but some of the people assume that, by learning foreign language will correlate to the declining the national loyalty of the learners. However, scholars have learned that the enthusiasm on learning a foreign language is not always correlated with a negative attitude towards the national and cultural feeling of the learners. A research on Japanese children studying English for example, proved that although the learners showed great attraction towards the Western culture as well as the language being studied, they kept holding a strong Japanese identity and a language loyalty.

2 Historical Background of Nations

Some Middle East people may not want to study English because they learn from their history that western people were colonialist. The view is possibly strengthened with some complicated contemporary disputes between the Western and Arabic (Muslim) cultures. Being over showed with the misery caused by the atomic bombs dropped in their country in the past, some Japanese people today may not want to think of English as an important global vernacular that need to be learned.

Thus, both the Middle East people and the Japanese hold a negative attitude towards English as an international tongue because of some historical background. The same attitude might be found among some Indonesians when they think it wrong to learn Dutch or Japanese because the languages are associated with the colonialism upon their country in the past.

3. The Social and Traditional Factors

In the society where a diglossic situation is found the higher variety of the language is normally considered as a better form than the lower one. In the society with a traditional polyglossia, a negative

attitude may be demonstrated towards the use of language associated with a higher class, especially if it is perceived as instrumental for controlling or downgrading the other people. Some Balinese for example, may reject to use the higher variety of their tongue when talking to the people who are traditionally 'higher' especially when the people addressed in that variety respond in lower variety to them. However, if such a traditional diglossic or polyglossic situation is fading, positive reaction towards the system may come up. Thus, in order to maintain the tradition the society believe it to be necessary to learn and use the higher as well as the lower variety of the language.

4. The Language Internal System

People often show positive attitude towards learning a language because the grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary are relatively easy. As the gender-based nominal systems of the language is difficult to learn English, instead of French and German. A negative attitude might be also found towards learning Chinese with its complex total pronunciation and orthographic system. An internal diglossic or polyglossic situation may also matter. Thus although Javanese has more speakers, it was not chosen to be a national language of Indonesia, for it classifies higher (*kromo inggil*), middle (*kromo*), and lower variety (*ngoko*) that is not easy to learn to use by speakers of other languages in general.

As Holmes (2013) stated, the ethnolinguistic vitality of a language might be influenced by the status of the language that is indicated by the attitude of the people toward the language, the size of the group who uses the language and their distribution, and the institutional support.

The statement of Holmes above indicated that negative attitude towards a language can occur to the speakers with the minority communities. because their position as a minority in the society, of course have an impact on the weakening of their language that they used.

The case of minorities with a weakening language existence can be found in many places in Indonesia such as Mambalan village which located in Gunung Sari West Lombok West Nusa Tenggara. Mambalan village is not only a small village which surrounded by beautiful panorama, but also it is an interesting and unique village because populated by member of aristocracy and ordinary people and live together side by side in peace.

In daily interaction, Mambalan society use vernacular language called Sasak language which divided into two levels named high Sasak language (base Sasak alus) and low Sasak language (base Sasak jamak). Besides speaking vernacular language, Mambalan society also use bahasa Indonesia in formal situation and when communicate with the strangers.

Regarding on Mambalan society with their status and the language used by them above, from temporary observation, the writer found that most of the member of aristocracy of Mambalan village is more dominant to use low Sasak language and bahasa Indonesia than use high Sasak language in daily interaction and in actual practice. They do not pay much attention to their status and the language that they should use as the member of aristocracy in actual practice for variety of reasons. The condition is really contradictive compared to their status as the member of aristocracy who commonly use the high language when they communicate each other in society.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

To determine and analyze the language attitude of noblemen of Mambalan village towards high Sasak language, this research applied quantitative and qualitative methods. The basic assumption to use the both quantitative and qualitative methods is to provide a better understanding of the research problem and question than either method by itself. As Cresswell (2013) explains that, a mixed methods approach is one of methods which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds, such as consequence oriented, problem centered, and pluralistic.

For the quantitative method, the researchers used questionnaires to facilitate the collection of straightforward data on language used by the noblemen of Mambalan village. The questionnaire divided into two parts. The first part contained of questions which covered the respondent's identity and their status as the noblemen, and the second part contained questions related to the language that used by the respondents such as high Sasak language, low sasak language, Bahasa Indonesia and other languages. All the questions in the questionnaire based on some indicators such as, proud, awareness, and loyalty indicators. Each answer in the questionnaire was given a score with a range from strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree and disagree.

Furthermore, for the qualitative method, the researchers conducted interview which supplemented with observation. Before conducting the interview, the researchers explained to the respondents about the purpose, scope, and nature of the interview in order to assure the interviewee were no worry to what would happen during and after the interview processes.

The samples of the data taken from the 50 noblemen who really native and domiciled in Mambalan village with the age ranged from 25 to 50 years old. Those ages taken based on the consideration that in such ages the respondents are mature and experienced to the language that they used.

In collecting the data, the researchers use some tools such as questionnaires, interview, recording and note taking. The questionnaires was designed to help the researchers to obtain the data related to the status of them as the noblemen in the society, the cultural background, language used, and language choice in particular domains. In order to get relevant information about the related reasons for them to use such language, the researchers interviewed the respondents in their convenient. The data analyzed by gathering and understanding data which obtained from the questionnaires and the result of the interview in order to be able to display in the result and discussion.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the questionnaires which distributed to the respondents that contained of questions related to the language attitude based on some indicators such as, proud, awareness, and loyalty indicators, the researchers found that the noblemen of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language. This negative attitude reflected from the tables below:

3.1 Distribution of Respondent Based on Pride Indicator

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents Based on Good Feeling in Speaking High Sasak Language

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	8	16
Agree	7	14
Neutral	2	4
Disagree	20	40
Strongly Disagree	13	26
Total	50	100

Table 1 showed that, most of the noblemen of Mambalan village had no good feeling in speaking high Sasak language. From 50 respondents, 33 respondents or 66% of total respondents disagree to the statement of good feeling in speaking high Sasak language. The table above indicated that the noblemen of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language.

Table 2 Distribution of respondents based on Good Feeling in Listening High Sasak Language

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	14
Agree	7	14
Neutral	5	10
Disagree	23	46
Strongly Disagree	8	16
Total	50	100

Table 2 showed that, most of the member of aristocracy disagreed to the statement of good feeling in listening high Sasak language. From 50 respondents, 31 respondents or 62% of total respondents disagree to the statement of good feeling in listening high Sasak language while 38% of the respondents neutral and agree to the statement. The table above indicated that the noblemen of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language.

3.2 Distribution of Respondent Based on Awareness Indicator

Table 3. Distribution of Respondent Based on the Statement of High Sasak Language is the Valuable Asset for the Member of Aristocracy and Indonesian People

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	20
Agree	9	18
Neutral	2	4
Disagree	17	34
Strongly Disagree	12	24
Total	50	100

Table 3 showed that, most of the member of aristocracy disagreed to the statement of high Sasak Language is the valuable asset for the noblemen and Indonesian . From 50 respondents, 29 respondents or 58% of total respondents disagreed to the statement of Sasak Language is the valuable asset for the noblemen and Indonesian people and 21 respondents or while the rest or 42% from total respondents agree and neutral to statement above. The tables above indicated that the noblemen of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language.

Table 4. Distribution of Respondents Based on the Statement of “Noblemen Should Maintain High Sasak Language by Using it in Daily Life”

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	20
Agree	8	16
Neutral	4	8
Disagree	15	30
Strongly Disagree	13	26
Total	50	100

Table 4 showed that, most of respondents disagreed to the statement of the member of aristocracy should maintain high Sasak language by using it in daily life. From 50 respondents, 28 respondents or 56% of total respondents disagreed, and 22 respondents or 44% of total respondents agreed and neutral to that

statement of the member of aristocracy should maintain Sasak language by using it in daily life. The table above also showed that, the member of aristocracy of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language.

3.3 Distribution of Respondents Based on Loyalty Indicator

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents based on the Statement “It is very interesting to meet the Member of Aristocracy outside of Mambalan Village area and converse in High Sasak Language with Them”

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	3	6
Agree	2	4
Neutral	8	16
Disagree	27	54
Strongly Disagree	10	20
Total	50	100

Table 5 showed that, most of the member of aristocracy disagreed to statement “It is very interesting to meet the noblemen outside of Mambalan Village area and converse in high Sasak Language with them”. From 50 respondents, 37 respondents or 74% of total respondents disagreed, and 13 respondents or 26% of total respondents agreed and neutral to that statement. The table above also indicated that the noblemen of Mambalan village had less loyalty or had negative attitude towards high Sasak language.

Table 6. Distribution of respondents based on the Statements of “I always Speak High Sasak Language when I call the Member of Aristocracy by Phone”

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	4	8
Agree	4	8
Neutral	5	10
Disagree	19	38
Strongly Disagree	18	36
Total	50	100

Table 7. Distribution of respondents based on the “I am Happy to Greet Family Members, Friends, and Neighbours in High Sasak Language”.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	14
Agree	8	16
Neutral	5	10
Disagree	16	32
Strongly Disagree	14	28
Total	50	100

Table 7 showed that, most of the member of aristocracy were disagreed to the statement of “I am Happy to Greet Family, Friends, and Neighbors in High Sasak Language”. From 50 respondents, 30 respondents or 60% of total respondents disagreed to the statement “I am Happy to Greet Family, Friends, and Neighbors in High Sasak Language”. and 20 respondents or 40% of total respondents agreed and neutral to that statement. The table above indicated that the member of aristocracy of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language.

Based on the result of the questionnaire above can be concluded that the noblemen of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language. The result of the questionnaires above strongly supported by the result of the interview which showed the factors that influence the negative attitude of the noblemen of Mambalan village towards high Sasak language.

Based on the result of the interview, the researchers found that there are some factors that influence the negative attitude of the noblemen of Mambalan village towards high Sasak language, such as below;

Bilingualism situation is one of the factors which contributed to the negative attitude of the noblemen of Mambalan village. The situation of this bilingualism caused by the condition of Mambalan village which surrounded by housing which inhabited by new comers that domiciled in Mambalan village. The interaction among the noblemen and the heterogeneous society impacted to the language used by the noblemen of Mambalan village in their daily interaction.

Besides bilingualism above, education also is one of the factors which influence of the noblemen of Mambalan village to have negative towards high Sasak language. the results of interview, most of the respondents who has profession as teachers and students said that, they prefer speaking low Sasak language and bahasa Indonesia to high Sasak language when interacted to each other in school environment.

Besides school, parents has important role in educating the children especially in using the language. Based on the result of the interview showed that most of the parents of the noblemen of Mambalan village use bahasa Indonesia and low Sasak language when interacted to their children at home. They never try to educate their children by introducing and practicing high Sasak language at home by reason that they felt worry if they practice high Sasak language with their children at home the children cannot speak bahasa Indonesia at school when interacted with their friends and their teachers.

Another factor that influences the negative attitude of the noblemen of Mambalan village towards high Sasak language is the reluctance of the noblemen of Mambalan village to use high Sasak language in daily interaction. This condition made the level of high Sasak language is almost the same with other

languages in this case low Sasak language and bahasa Indonesia. Based on the result of the interview, most the noblemen of Mambalan village are not only shy to use high Sasak language but also are shy to be admitted as the noblemen by the people outside of Mambalan village. Besides that, they do not feel high Sasak language as the social identity so they do not have strong motivations to use it.

The habitual of use bahasa Indonesia and low Sasak language in variety situations support the member of aristocracy of Mambalan village tend to use bahasa Indonesia. The habitual use of bahasa Indonesia and low Sasak language in almost all domains by the member of aristocracy of Mambalan village highly affected to the negative attitude of Mambalan aristocracy members towards high Sasak language.

4. CONCLUSION

The result and discussion showed that, the noblemen of Mambalan village preferred use low Sasak language and bahasa Indonesia rather than high Sasak language. They do not only consider high Sasak language to be less prestigious than low Sasak language and bahasa Indonesia but also, they consider that low Sasak language and bahasa Indonesia as an appropriate tool of communication in their daily interaction and social communication. This condition eventually influence to the loyalty and the pride of the noblemen of Mambalan village in using high Sasak language in their daily interaction. Over all, It is apparent that the noblemen of Mambalan village had negative attitude towards high Sasak language. This negative attitude affected by some factor such as bilingualism, education, social identity and habitual of using bahasa Indonesia and low Sasak language. The negative attitude of the noblemen of Mambalan village gradually can decrease the values of high Sasak language especially in Mambalan village.

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