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**MANTAINING BAHASA ANGKOLA BY ITS SPEAKERS AT LANGGAR  
COMMUNITY IN KOTA MEDAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

The aims of this study was to investigate the strategies of Angkolanese maintain Bahasa Angkola at Langgar Community in Kota Medan. The research was conducted by using qualitative design. The data of this study were the utterances of Angkolanese speakers. There were 20 participants of this research. The data were collected through observation, questionnaire and interview. The result of this study revealed that: There were three factors that affecting language maintenance proposed by Fishman (1991) in this study namely family language policy, Using Angkola language in their daily communication frequently, and using Angkola language in cultural activity like in wedding ceremony. The using of these strategies can be applied to the first and second generation. Meanwhile the third generation found the difficulties when facing the strategies. They tend to use bahasa Indonesia in their daily life because most of their time are spending at school and they are not aware of the cultural activity around them.

*Key words:* Strategies of Language Maintenance, Bahasa Angkola, Langgar Community.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Language is a cultural identity. Language and identity are inextricably linked each other and in order to save identity, language users must attempt to save their language. Similarly, the use of language is one way that is used to establish our identity and shaping of other people's views of who we are (Thomas, 2004). Thus, language plays an important role in defining who we are, and makes us instantly recognizable to other members of our particular speech community.

In Indonesia, there are hundreds of ethnic languages that consist of five big islands and hundreds of small islands. Each island has some ethnic groups which are create of many languages. Each of these languages is unique. Based on the data of UNESCO in the year of 2001, there are 6.900 languages in the world, and 2.500 of them are extinction. UNESCO said that Indonesia is facing a very big danger of language shift. Based on the data of UNESCO, almost 200 languages do not exist any longer after three generations, because they lost their native speakers. Similarly, as it was informed by Multamia (2008) about 736 of 746 vernaculars in Indonesia are endangered. She also explained that generally the numbers of the vernacular languages' speakers tend to be less caused of there is no writing form of the language. Thus, the oral tradition that developed in minority languages if not immediately documented it will be difficult to maintain their existence.

This study was analyzed the factors of maintaining Bahasa Angkola at Langgar Community in Kota Medan. The finding of this research deals with the vernacular language eventhough they do not live in a dominant area of their tribe. This study shows how the vernacular language are maintained by the speakers in a dominant area of the other language.

## **II. THEORITICAL BASIS**

### ***A. Language Maintenance***

In describing the term maintenance, De Vries (1992) notes that language maintenance is not merely the absence of language shift. The term is used to refer to the situation where a speech community continues to use its traditional language in the face

of a host of conditions that might foster a shift to another language. Fishman (2000) also states that language maintenance is an effort in keeping the language alive by using the language continually in facing the competition among other languages in society. It means that the existence of the language depend on the effort of the speakers in maintaining that language by using that language continually. Moreover, language maintenance describes use and indigenous language continuously in all language contexts. The process of language maintenance refers to the retention of language and its transmission over several generations.

Fase (1992) make the distinction that language maintenance relates to the continuing use and proficiency in a language concerning both groups and individuals, in the face of competition from another language. Language maintenance is the protection and promotion of the first or native language in an individual or within a speech community, particularly among language minorities. Yet languages have no existence without people, the process of language maintenance involves different levels, individuals, community, nation, and linguists (Baker, 2011). It means that language maintenance is an effort to protect the first language in speech community by the speakers of its language.

Furthermore, Language maintenance refers to if the minority language is retained by its traditional speech community without the intervention of language planning activities (Hyltenstam, 1996). It describes the situation where speech community retains the use of their languages without intervention of language planning despite competition from the locally and globally dominant languages. Language maintenance described as three generation process. The first generations still use vernacular language at home though they know another language (Indonesian language), the second generation use vernacular language at home but shift towards Indonesian language at school and in the work place and the third generation, the vernacular language disappears totally.

It can be concluded that language maintenance is an effort which done by minority group to keep the existences of the vernacular in a multicultural society that have different culture diversity and ethnic identity. Beside that, language maintenance also refers to the minority group which successful in keeping their original language in

spite of the pressure exerted on it by a dominant linguistic group. Thus, the successful in keeping the existence of Angkola language is interested to conduct.

### ***B. Strategies of Language Maintenance***

Language is an identity, because of that all languages are hopefully to be maintained. This study about vernacular, it is Angkola language maintenance. As another language, Angkola language is used as a means of communication of local language especially at Langgar community in Kota Medan.

Therefore, Fishman (1991) states briefly that there are some strategies that can maintain a language, they are: 1) family language policy is a strategy to maintain the heritage language. Family language policy is a highly important factor in transmitting Angkola language, hence maintaining it, as it keeps it functional. That is, it continues to be used in daily life. Thus, the children's use of Angkola language at home helps them to maintain it as a medium for communication in the family, 2) using language in daily communication frequently, and 3) using language in cultural activity.

### ***C. Bahasa Angkola***

Geographically, North Sumatra is divided into four regions, such as Nias, Southeast Sumatra, Tapanuli, and East Sumatra Regions. Mostly the region in North Sumatra is inhabited by Bataknese people. Bataknese is divided into five main ethnics, they are Batak Toba, Batak Karo, Batak Simalungun, Batak Pakpak-Dairi, and Batak Angkola-Mandailing (Siahaan, 2006). Every ethnic has their own language, those are: Toba language, Koro language, Simalungun language, Pakpak/Dairi language, and Angkola and Mandailing language.

Batak Angkola is one of the Toba tribe who moved to Sipirok (one of the region in South Tapanuli, the place where Angkola was developed). It is caused by the rapid growing of Batak Toba population that they moved to find out the new place to make their life better. Basically, the spread of Batak Angkola ethnic is wide, but nowadays most of the people know that Angkola is in Padangsidempuan, Batangtoru, Padanglawas, North Padang Lawas, and South Tapanuli. Angkola and Mandailing language is very similar.

Here are some of the Angkola Language words which are used by Angkolanese people in daily life:

Table 1 Angkola Language

| <b>Angkola Language</b>     | <b>Indonesian Language</b>     | <b>English</b>             |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Au</i>                   | <i>Saya</i>                    | I                          |
| <i>Ho</i>                   | <i>Kamu</i>                    | You                        |
| <i>Ayah</i>                 | <i>Ayah</i>                    | Father                     |
| <i>Umak</i>                 | <i>Ibu</i>                     | Mother                     |
| <i>Donok</i>                | <i>Dekat</i>                   | Near                       |
| <i>Juguk</i>                | <i>Duduk</i>                   | Sit                        |
| <i>Modom</i>                | <i>tidur</i>                   | Sleep                      |
| <i>Bagas</i>                | <i>Rumah</i>                   | House                      |
| <i>Ulu</i>                  | <i>Kepala</i>                  | Head                       |
| <i>Ligin</i>                | <i>Lihat</i>                   | look!                      |
| <i>aha?</i>                 | <i>apa?</i>                    | what?                      |
| <i>sadia?</i>               | <i>berapa?</i>                 | how much?                  |
| <i>Menek</i>                | <i>Kecil</i>                   | Small                      |
| <i>Borat</i>                | <i>Berat</i>                   | Heavy                      |
| <i>Godang</i>               | <i>Besar</i>                   | Big                        |
| <i>ise goarmu?</i>          | <i>siapa namamu?</i>           | what is your name?         |
| <i>madung mangan?</i>       | <i>sudah makan?</i>            | have you eaten?            |
| <i>idia ho sikola?</i>      | <i>dimana kamu sekolah?</i>    | where is your school?      |
| <i>nono matak</i>           | <i>aku ngantuk</i>             | I'm sleepy                 |
| <i>got kehe au tu kobun</i> | <i>saya mau pergi ke kebun</i> | I want to go to the garden |

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative design. Sugyono (2006) description in qualitative design is a description of the characteristics the data accurately in accordance with the nature of the data itself. The data of this study were the utterances of Bahasa Angkola of the Angkolanese speakers at the Langgar Community. The participants were interviewed and the result of the interviews were the words, phrase, and sentences relating to the questions identified as the data of this research. The participants of the study were taken by purposive random sampling. Purposive sampling is the technique to determine the sample by certain consideration and it is appropriate to qualitative research (Bogdan, 2012).

The data were collected by observation, questionnaires, and interview which relate to the factors and strategy which affecting the maintenance of Angkola language. Firstly, The

observation were applied to ensure that the participants maintain their language by using the language in their daily life. the researcher went to the site and observe the participants in their daily activity whether they still use Angkola language or not.

#### IV.ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analyzed to find the answer of research question about the strategies of the Angkolanese speakers maintain the language at Langgar. After collecting the data, the writer found that there are seven factors that affect the Angkola people in maintaining Angkola language at Langgar Community (see appendix6), they are family language policy, using language in daily communication frequently, and using language in cultural activity. The questionnaire was given to the participants in Langgar Community. Based on the questionnaire that was distributed to 20 participants in Langgar Community (see appendix 1), the interviews supports the questionnaire which had been done by the researcher. Based on the questionnaire that were distributed to the participants wich related to the strategies of the language maintenance at Langgar Community.

##### 1) Family Language Policy

Family language policy is strategy in maintaining the heritage language. Family language policy is highly important factor in transmitting Angkola language, hence maintaining it, as it keep it functional. Thus, this strategy has a big role in maintaining the Angkola language in Langgar Community. It can be seen from the table4.2 below;

**Table 4.4 Family Language Policy**

| No                | Particip<br>ants | FLP | No<br>FLP | Percentage<br>(%) |
|-------------------|------------------|-----|-----------|-------------------|
| 1                 | 16               | √   |           | 80                |
| 2                 | 4                |     | √         | 20                |
| <b>To<br/>tal</b> | <b>20</b>        |     |           | <b>100</b>        |

Table 4.4 shows that there are 80% participants by making language policy at home. The parents accustom their children to use Angkola language when they

communicate with the member of family at home. As the participant statements (see appendix 6) below:

**DD:** *Sebenarna nadong da strategi na khusus dison aena naleng bertahan bahasa dison, tai tong hami sebagai orang tua mangajorkan daganok name anso malo marbahasa Angkola, jadi anggo di bagas sasamo keluarga hami gunaon bahasa Angkola, jadi halai terbiasa manggunaonna, bope di sikola marbahasa Indonesia tai waktu mulak tu bagas halai manggunaon bahasa Angkola buse.*

(Actually, there is no certain strategy that we used in maintaining the language, but as a parent we teach our children to use Angkola language, so in the family we used Angkola language with each other, so they accustomed to speak it, even though in the school they used Indonesian language, but when they were at home they used Angkola language)(*App. 6 Table8 U6*).

Based on the analysis, we can see that the Angkolanese maintain their language by making family language policy; even though they are not unconscious do this strategy, but by accustoming their children to use Angkola language at home support them to maintain Angkola language in Langgar Community.

## 2) Using Language in Daily Communication Frequently

After the family language policy, it is continue to be used Angkola language in daily communication. This strategy also supported the Angkolanese in maintaining their language. It can be seen from the table below;

**Table 4.5 Using Angkola Language in Daily Communication**

| No           | Participants | Using AL in daily communication | Not Using AL in daily communication | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1            | 15           | √                               |                                     | 75             |
| 2            | 5            |                                 | √                                   | 25             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>20</b>    |                                 |                                     | <b>100</b>     |

Table 4.5 shows that there are 75% who use Angkola language in daily communication. As participants (see appendix 6) commented below;

**SS:** *Manggunaon Bahasa Angkola sajo do hami I satiop ari sesame hami dison, sonon etekkan marjagal dison satiop halak na manabusi pe manggunaon bahasa*

*Angkola do i jadi etek pe marbahasa Angkola, soni sajo ma tiop ari on. Jadi madung biasa mai mulai menek iba sampe sannari, makana rakku leng bias hami dison manggunaon Bahasa Angkola sampe sannari.*

We always use Angkola language every day in here, like in selling and buying activities we always use Angkola language every day. So the habits make us still use Angkola language until now. (*App. 6 Table 9 U 7*)

Based on the analysis above, it can be conclude that the using Angkola language in daily communication is supporting the Angkola language maintenance in Langgar Community. The habit in using the Angkola language in their daily activity is one of the strategies has done by the Angkolanese.

#### **4) Using Language in Cultural Activity**

Based The use of Angkola language in cultural activity is also strategy in maintaining the Angkola language in Langgar Community. It can be seen from the table 4.6 below;

**Table 4.6 Using Angkola Language In Cultural Activity**

| No           | Participants | Using AL in daily communication | Not Using AL in daily communication | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1            | 18           | √                               |                                     | 90             |
| 2            | 2            |                                 | √                                   | 10             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>20</b>    |                                 |                                     | <b>100</b>     |

Based on Table 4.6, it shows that there are 90% Angkolanese argued that the using of Angkola language in cultural activity such as in wedding ceremony is one of strategy in maintaining the Angkola language at Langgar Community. Even though, the Angkola tribe have the same culture with the Indonesian but they have different language when they do this activity. As a participants statements (see appendix 6) below;

*DD: Manggunaon Bahasa Angkola di acara adat sonon makhobar i boru, I ma salah satu cara name anso leng totop manggunaon bahasa Angkola dison.*

(The using of Angkola language in cultural activities like *makhobaris* our way to use Angkola language at Langgar Community.)(*App. 6 Table 10 U 6*)



Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that this strategy has done by the Angkolanese in maintaining their language at Langgar Community.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

The strategies that can be found in maintaining Angkola language at Langgar community are in line with the Fishman (1991) theory, they are: family language policy, Using Angkola language in their daily communication frequently, and using Angkola language in cultural activity like in wedding ceremony. The using of these strategies can be applied to the first and second generation. Meanwhile the third generation found the difficulties when facing the strategies. They tend to use *bahasa* Indonesia in their daily life because most of their time are spending at school and they are not aware of the cultural activity around them. Fortunately, family language policy were applied by the second and first generation in order to introduce the Angkola language to the third generation. So, based on the condition that the researcher found that Angkolanese speakers at Langgar community can maintain their language because of these strategies. The researcher also found that the new phenomenon that happened in that community that is because of their interaction with each other. They have a strong relationship among each other and mostly the people live there are Angkolanese and Mandailingnese. So, it even makes the non Angkola people understand and be able to speak Angkola language and it allows the expansion of Angkola Language to the majority domain.

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