

Ethnic Language Maintenance Among The Maanyan Emigrants In Indonesia

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Abstract. *Some of the Maanyans or the Dayak Maanyan as one of the indigenous ethnic groups in Central Kalimantan Province have emigrated from their second original native land, East Barito Regency, Central Kalimantan. They emigrated to other parts of Central Kalimantan or any other parts of Indonesia. Their basic purposes for leaving their second original native land are to look for jobs as well as to study. At their new settlement, some of the Maanyan emigrants still strongly maintain their native language by inheriting the language to their children while some others think that it is not necessary. Among the factors influencing the ethnic language maintenance among the Maanyan emigrants are ethnic identity, the attitudes of the parents, intra-and inter-ethnic group communication, the need for telling or saying something secret, the establishment of Dasmala in a number of capital cities, and the Indonesian government policy on ethnic language maintenance.*

Keywords: *Maanyan, Maanyan emigrants, and language maintenance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Dayak are familiar to outsiders as the native ethnic group who occupy Borneo or Kalimantan island. Kalimantan itself is divided into three states, namely: Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. The largest part of Kalimantan island belongs to Indonesia. At present there are five provinces of Kalimantan that belongs to Indonesia, namely: (1) East Kalimantan Province, (2) West Kalimantan Province, (3) South Kalimantan Province, (4) Central Kalimantan Province, and (5) North Kalimantan. There are seven largest ethnic groups of Dayak who occupy Central Kalimantan: Ngaju Dayak, Ot Danum Dayak, Maanyan Dayak, Dusun Dayak, and Lawangan Dayak, Siang Dayak, and Tumon Dayak. The Dayak all over Kalimantan island are living in the remote areas, especially along the big river banks and in the middle of the jungle. This has become their characteristics because they have to clear the virgin forest for planting paddy and cassava as their traditional livelihood. The Maanyan Dayak, one of the largest native ethnic groups of Central Kalimantan originally occupy along the Barito river bank, the largest and the longest river in Central Kalimantan.

The Maanyan Dayak refers both to the ethnic group and the ethnic language in Central Kalimantan. The native people, based on the traditional story of Nansarunai, used to stay approximately in *Hulu Sungai Utara Regency*, South Kalimantan, but because of the coming of the Malays, at last they were pushed into the hinterland of East Barito Regency, Central Kalimantan, which has been considered as their second native land. In addition to the

East Barito Regency, as a language, the Maanyan is influential enough in the Region of South Barito Regency and in some parts of North Barito Regency, and even it can be regarded as *lingua franca* among the ethnic groups living there. Almost all smaller ethnic groups such as the Dusun and the Lawangan can speak the native language of Maanyan in their communication with the Maanyan.

The Maanyan was innately born as farmers, but the infertility of the soil makes them try to get other means of living. To get this, since about the 1940's some parents have sent their children to high school outside of their villages. Then, the children have been able to become teachers, army, police, or civil servants in general. The occupations such as these make it possible for the Maanyan to emigrate to other parts of Kalimantan, and even outside of Kalimantan, for instance Java island. So, Maanyan emigrants as the term used in this paper refers to those who have left their native land in East and South Barito, no matter whether they still stay in Central Kalimantan Province or in Java island such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, and Semarang.

2. METHOD

Some of the Maanyan emigrants are still loyal to maintain their native ethnic language, while some others are not. This paper attempts to describe some factors that make it possible for the Maanyan emigrants to maintain their native ethnic language, the Maanyan, such as attitudes, intra-and-inter ethnic group communication, secrecy, gender, marriage patterns, religious organisation, establishment of DUSMALA, and government policy. The data are obtained primarily from the writer's personal observation and interview when living together and interacting with them in various occasions and places, both in Kalimantan and in Java. The timeline for data collection is running for more than 10 years since 2015.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

As it has already mentioned earlier, some possible factors leading to the ethnic language maintenance are attitudes, intra-and-inter ethnic group communication, secrecy, gender, marriage patterns, religious organisation, establishment of DUSMALA, and the policy of Central Kalimantan government.

A. Attitudes of the Maanyan Emigrants Towards Their Ethnic Language

All Maanyan in their native land are multilingual. The Maanyanese is the mother tongue, the Banjarese (a type of Malay language) as the language of trade and everyday communication in East Barito is their second language mastered, while Indonesian, though it

is the national language, is only the third language they master. Due to this situation, everybody may choose any of the three languages in their communication, and this is also applicable to the Maanyan emigrants.

Formerly, the Maanyan emigrants (i. e. those who have stayed outside their native land for one reason or another) were very proud when their children spoke the language other than their parents'. The parents tended to teach their children Indonesian or Banjarese as their first language. Then the inability of the children to speak the parents' native ethnic language, i. e. the Maanyanese, had become the symbol of high status, especially when they went to their home village. But now there has been a change of attitude. The parents tend to maintain and use their native ethnic language within the family and in intra-ethnic group communication. They become distinct from outsiders and proud of being the Maanyanese. Ethnic identity has existed here and the attitude of the parents plays an important role in leading to children's acquisition of the Maanyanese as their first native language.

The above situation is confirmed by Brown (1987 : 126) when he says :

Attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition and affect in human being, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents and peers attitudes, contact with people who are "different" in any number of ways, and interacting affective factors in the human experience. Those attitudes form a part of one's perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living.

In line with Brown, Nababan (1979:10) also stated that "it is the person's attitude towards his native language and towards other language which influence him in choosing a certain language over the others".

Attitudes can be both positive and negative. It seems intuitively clear that language learners benefit from positive attitudes, and negative attitudes may lead to decrease motivation in learning a certain language. A positive attitude is a factor of learners' attitudes towards their own native culture, their degree of ethnocentrism, and the extent to which they prefer their own language. Then, it is a positive attitude of the Maanyan emigrants towards their own ethnic language and its speakers that may lead them to maintain the Maanyanese.

In addition to what has been mentioned above, the Maanyanese can be maintained through a positive attitude of an intermarriage family. This case is found in Surabaya. Some of the intermarriage families in which the husband or the wife is marriage to a Maanyanese, try hard to master the Maanyanese. This is due to his or her integrative motivation to get not only the wife or husband, but also the culture to which he or she belongs to a number of

Javanese, Ngaju, Bataks, and other ethnic groups in addition to those in Kalimantan are able to speak Maanyanese fluently. These interesting cases are found in Palangka Raya.

Further, some children of the emigrants who do not speak Maanyanese as their mother tongue in their childhood, but due to frequent interaction in communication with other Maanyanese in their adulthood, they integrate themselves within the culture of the Maanyanese and are able to use the native ethnic language. This situation is supported by Schumann(1978) who argued that age can have relevance to language maintenance in terms of both the ease with which a new language is acquired and the strength of ties to the community language and community language culture.

The following is another example of negative attitude towards the ethnic language of the Maanyanese. This happened in Jakarta in 1984. A Maanyan student never spoke the native language to the Maanyanese. Instead, he used the Ngaju ethnic language because he had lived in city where that language was widely used. He acknowledged that he was a Maanyanese, but unable to speak the Maanyan language. One day his secret was unexpectedly open. The wife in the family where he lodged happened to meet a letter from his younger brother written in the Maanyanese. He was very embarrassed that time, but since then we have spoken Maanyanese. Another case was a young Maanyanese girl of 15 years old and student of Junior High School who went to a provincial town of Banjarmasin (South Kalimantan) for her 15 days of holiday. There she lived with her uncle. When she went back home to the village, it was so surprised because she wore trousers, curly hair and did not speak the Maanyan language anymore. Instead she spoke the Banjarese language. She said: "Sorry, I did not speak the Maanyan language anymore, but I did understand the meaning."

B. Intra-and interethnic group communication

It has been mentioned in the introduction that the Maanyanese can be regarded as *lingua franca* between the Maanyanese and the other ethnic group in South Barito Regency resulting from a slightly dominance of the Maanyan ethnic language over the smaller ones. Similar situation occurs among the emigrants from South Barito Regency. When the person of smaller ethnic group speaks to the Maanyanese he/she uses the Maanyan language, and so is the reverse.

In situation such as this, since the interlocutors have known to each other, an intimate role-relationship is maintained. Here, then, the Maanyanese not only used in an intra-ethnic group communication (i.e. among the Maanyanese only), but also in an inter-ethnic group communication. This can be encountered such as in Banjarmasin and Palangka Raya in which the Maanyanese is more dominant from speakers of other minor ethnic languages.

C. Secrecy

Another factor which helps people maintain the ethnic language among the Maanyan emigrants is secrecy. Something secret may be expressed in a language which is unknown to speakers of other languages. This is, of course, of something positive and the speakers should keep aside from something negative to the outsiders.

Another point of advantage when using the language unknown to outsiders is to say something bad to members of the family such as to say harsh words to the husband or wife and to the children when angry or when in quarrel. The neighbours will know what is happening within the family if the common or known language is used.

D. Gender.

Five cases in Palangka Raya, the women(say the mothers) who are really responsible for their child-rearings. They said that since the small baby they tried to speak the Maanyan language with their baby and hope when the baby have grown up, they speak the Maanyan language. This situation is accordance with De Vries, (1993) who said that in many cultures women are considered not only responsible for child-rearing but also for passing on traditions and cultural values to the next generation. The mother's role as child-bearers and child-rearers often implies limited opportunities or less need to work outside the home. The home environment is a largely L-1 speaking environment.

E. Marriage Patterns

Based on the data obtained in Jakarta and in Surabaya, the Maanyan emigrants who marry their linguistic community(the same ethnic group) and those who marry out may show different pattens of home language use, which may eventually lead to different levels of language maintenance. The data shown that the high level of language maintenance is occured in the Maanyan emigrants who marry with their linguistic community. This evidence is proved by their use of L-1 in their everyday communication.

F. Religious Organisation

At a group level, activities and programs in the first language(L-1) are of great importance. These serve to provide a focus and venue of the L-1 as well as passing on cultural information to the Maanyan Emigrants. The Maanyan emigrants in Palangka Raya, Surabaya, and Jakarta are all Christians. In their religious gathering, the Maanyan language(L-1) is generally spoken or use. Choirs, dancing groups, social gathering, and Christmas all fit into this category. Kipp(1995) argued that Religious organisation with a

strong community base can also be powerful promoters of language maintenance, and need to develop and maintain resources in the L1

G. Establishment of DUSMALA in a number of Capital Cities

To keep the Maanyan emigrants and the smaller ethnic groups related closely to them united and easily communicated, in some capital cities of regencies and provinces a non-profit organisation called DUSMALA (the short for Dusun, Maanyan, and Lawangan as the indigenous inhabitants (ethnic group) of South Barito and East Barito together with their surroundings) has been established. The main objective of this organisation, in addition to the uniting purpose, is to bear on together the burden when a family has a wedding party or when a member of a certain family passes away.

In a wedding party, especially when the bride is a Maanyanese, the Maanyanese is always used in the afternoon or at night prior to the blessing day in church (in this case, almost all Maanyan emigrants are Christian). This special occasion is termed as traditional wedding consisting of two stages: *patatiba* ‘dialogues between the two parties (the bride’s and the bridegroom’s parties)’ and *turus tajak* ‘contribution of money to the new couple’, in addition to the ordinary Maanyan language (the language understood by most Maanyan), a special refined poetic language “*pangunraun*” is used. The use of this specific high level of the Maanyan language by certain persons seems to be inevitable in situation such as these. *Patatiba* is one of traditional wedding ceremony that has been regulated by adat. As it has been mentioned earlier *Patatiba* is an informal dialogue (question and answer) between the two parties: the bride’s guardianship and the groom’s guardianship. What are the things they are discussed? This is the situation where the bride’s guardianship ask the groom’s guardianship’s purposes coming to the house of the bride. Then the bridegroom’s guardianship explains the purposes of their coming. This is the example of the dialogue: *Laku ampun laku maaf kami teka pihak wali asbah penganten wawei hamen karasa tujuan pihawian kawan ulun rama teka tumpuk lawit* (We are so sorry, We are guardianship of the bride would like to know the purposes of your coming to our house today). Then the guardianship of the groom answers: *Kami wali asbah penganten upu pada laku maaf daya hawi nyalenga ma uneng naun hang tumpuk ulun tatau. Kami na ngaheng naua sumur amah Jarang , kami ngaheng manrus palus nyauk ranu, amun kami naijin daya naun* (We are the guardianship of the groom suddenly come to your rich town. We would like to see the well of Jarang’s father. We would like to take a bath and take the water home if we are permitted). This example dialogue will be continued with a long discussion that take at least 30 minutes.

Another case is when a Maanyan emigrant dies, the ethnic language is never used formally. In occasion such as this, it does not only involve the DUSMALA, the non Dusmala are also present. The Maanyan is only used in chattering or in intra group communication when the people share their condolence. A part from what has been discussed above, the Maanyanese is often used in conducting an intra group prayer-fellowship. Here the prayer, the sacred songs, and the sermon are expressed in the common Maanyanese.

H. Government Policy towards Regional/Local Languages

Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa 'Centre for Language Development' in Indonesia is not only responsible for the development of Indonesian as the national and state language, but also for that of foreign and regional languages. Since the first year of the Second Long Term Development of Indonesia (1994-2019), the Indonesian government has paid a special attention to the regional language policy in which the regional language may be included as a subject taught in a Local Content Curriculum (based on the 1994 Curriculum).

Based on the policy of the Provincial Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Central Kalimantan, Ngaju is the first language to include in the curriculum, while the Maanyanese is the second. The Maanyanese will be taught in elementary school located in the regions of East and South Barito. To be included in Local Content Curriculum means that the written instructional materials must be available. Because of this, the Maanyan emigrants who are unable to use the Maanyanese may benefit from it. This is another way to help them learn and master the ethnic language which is supposed to have been their mother tongue.

4. PROBLEMS FACED BY THE MAANYAN EMIGRANTS

Though some factors leading to the maintenance of the Maanyan ethnic language among the Maanyan emigrants have been discussed above, some clear problems are to be faced. The ordinary or common Maanyan language is sure to be maintained by the emigrants, but the *pangunraun* as the refined poetic language may perish slowly. To master this specific language style, one must have an inborn-capacity. Not all older generation is able to speak it, let alone the younger generation. The language is very complicated, since it mostly consists of a structurally-semantic parallelism. Then, without knowing the context, one will never understand it. It requires a special course, while most young people are not motivated to learn it.

The second problem is the written instructional materials for the Local Content Curriculum have not been available. What is practised now is that the language is taught by native speakers of the Maanyanese. Actually, there is no guarantee that one who masters a

language orally is able to teach a formal written language. Thus, the development of the instructional materials for the Maanyanese is indispensable in the very near future.

In relation to this problem, a good news came from the Head of the Centre of Language Development in Indonesia in launching the Hall of the Central Kalimantan Office of Language on June 9, 2008. He said that one policy of the Centre through its representative in Central Kalimantan was the efforts to prevent the local languages from perishing. It means that efforts for maintaining and preserving the perishing languages will be done.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Although some of the Maanyan have emigrated from their native land, their ethnic language is still possible to be maintained. The reasons for its possibilities of maintenance are:

- 1) the language has become their ethnic identity;
- 2) the use of the language reflects an intimate role-relationship in intra-and interethnic group communication;
- 3) it becomes a secret language in the sense that it is unknown to the neighbours when a quarrel takes place;
- 4) the establishment of DUSMALA, a social and non profit organisation of the Maanyanese, in some capital cities of Indonesia; and
- 5) the inclusion of that language in the Local Language Content Curriculum in Central Kalimantan as part of language policy in Indonesia.
- 6) Religious organisation can be powerful promoters of language maintenance.
- 7) Maanyan Language Dictionary has been compiled.

The problems faced are the ones related to the maintenance of the refined poetic language 'Pangunraun' and the unavailability of the written instructional materials for the Local Language Content Curriculum. These problems are becoming the responsibility of both the Maanyan linguists and the governments in their efforts to develop and maintain the ethnic language.

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