
Factors of Language Shift in Gayonese at Southeast Aceh Regency

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Abstract-Language is a powerful indicator of ethnic identity. "Language shift" refers to the phenomenon where a group of speakers either start speaking a more widely spoken language, like a national or majority language, less frequently or stop speaking their mother tongue or a minority language entirely. This study aims to determine the factors influencing the language transfer of children in the Jambur Damar hamlet in Southeast Aceh Regency. The native language of the Jambur Damar people of Aceh Regency's southeast is the Gayo dialect. This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design. The study's subjects were ten children from the Southeast Aceh Regency village of Jambur Damar. In addition, we gathered our data through observation, interviews, and documents. After gathering the data, the subsequent actions were performed: categorization, evaluation, and making choices.

Keywords: Language Shift Factors, Gayonese Language, Southeast Aceh

I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of language in people's lives cannot be overstated. The way someone speaks reveals a lot about their culture and how they live their life. Situations, events, and actions may be altered by language. Language and children are no different. There are a lot of challenges that children face when learning their first language. Some of these difficulties include understanding the different syntax and morphology of the over 7,000 languages spoken globally, distinguishing between loud speech flows and meaningful speech units, and applying labels to preferences that change over time.

On the other hand, young people nowadays tend to speak Indonesian more than other languages, particularly older ones like

Gayonese. Consequently, a language shift happens when a community stops using its native tongue or a minority language and starts using one from a larger culture, such as a national or majority language. This leads to the community relying less on a minority language and more on one language for all of its needs (May, 2012). The converse is true in bilingual or multilingual communities when one language is more prevalent than the mother tongue (Fishman, 2006).

However, according to Holmes (2001), language shift often refers to the process through which one language replaces another in a community's linguistic repertoire. A language shift occurs when a mother tongue of a minority language is replaced with a language that is more commonly spoken in society. Other situations in

which language shift occurs may change for various individuals and communities, but in general, it impacts the younger generations as the majority language progressively supplants the minority language.

Language shift that gradually occurs in the community causes language loss in every generation. According to Retnawati (2018), Indonesia's multilingual society promotes language shift, which in turn supports language loss. If language shifts regularly take place without consideration for the requirement to maintain good and accurate usage of the local language, the native language may suffer. Additionally, decisions made by individuals particularly those made in the domestic sphere and in accordance with their own motives, expectations, and aspirations that they might not share with others in their community can result in language shift (Coulmas, 2005).

In addition, Lucas (2001: 47) highlights the fact that minority groups may be affected by language shift, which happens when a community's members start speaking languages different than their mother tongue. The technique of "language shifting," which encourages individuals to seamlessly integrate numerous languages into their daily lives for optimal performance, enhances people's admiration for languages.

"Language shift" describes what happens when one language gives way to another. Language shifts can happen when people decide to utilize a language other than their mother tongue as their primary language, according to Rostyana (2017). Regional languages can be the starting point because they are frequently taught to children as a second language but are only utilized by a small group of adults. When a language's speaker population declines, this could put the language at danger. It results in identity loss.

According to Sumarsono (2004), a language's survival or endangerment is influenced by several factors that are frequently related and can sporadically occur across a lengthy history. These elements could originate from the neighborhood or the outside world. The use of a second language in schools, national language policies that tend to influence some speakers' decision to use national languages, parents trying to force their children to learn distinct languages under the false belief that children can only learn languages well, and

more are some of the factors that contribute to the language shift factor, as described by Grimes (2002).

Most sociolinguistic research on language shift has concentrated on identifying the elements that are most likely to initiate shift and to accelerate or decelerate the process in order to better understand the phenomena of shift. As a matter of fact, several hypotheses have been formulated in an attempt to identify a specific set of sociolinguistic and linguistic traits that could be employed to predict the likelihood of language shift. These models take into consideration factors including social language policy, community size, linguistic attitudes, age, gender, and the cultural gap between the majority and minority languages (Romaine, 1989). According to Holmes (2001) there are some factors of language shift described as follows:

1.1 Parents/Family Factors

Children learn language in their families as their first domain. According to Holmes (2001) the language of children is acquired by family consideration of the prestigious language. Therefore, this factor indicates that in households where parents believe that teaching their children significant languages is the only way they can acquire languages effectively. Since it keeps children present and enables them to think more advancedly than other children, parents start teaching Indonesian to their children at an early age.

1.2 Education/School Factors

Education is connected to the formal education system, which affects how pupils use language. Holmes (2001) stated that school tends to teach their national language to the pupils. Beside that, educations/schools are frequently held responsible for students shifting mother tongues because they usually teach children in their native tongues. Furthermore, this frequently causes the order of regional languages to shift. For instance, parents in Indonesia are hesitant to teach their children regional languages because they worry that they will not be able to understand what their teachers are saying when they speak Indonesian. As a result, the child is either unable to speak the base language or can only understand it.

1.3 Inter-marriage Factors

In a community where interethnic marriage

is common, this frequently happens when a husband and wife are from different tribes. Due to the fact that they utilize Indonesian as a means of communication in their household and as a result, their children are unable to speak their mother tongue.

1.4 Economic/Social Factors

Economic development is one of the factors that leads to a language shift. Due to advancements in the economy, this particular language could occasionally attain the status of having a significant economic worth. The most important reason to learn a foreign language is to find work. This is the most significant shift-causing aspect at the moment, according to Holmes (2001). Language shift typically occurs in countries or regions with improved socioeconomic conditions. The majority of immigrants are of this group. In many countries, modernisation, industry, and urbanization have resulted in a widespread phenomenon known as bilingualism in regional languages. Learning the majority of the world's languages is crucial for resolving social and economic problems. An economic breakthrough may occasionally cause a particular language to gain enough popularity to surpass a certain threshold of economic value. Finding employment is the most direct economic rationale for studying a foreign language. Since they engage with individuals from comparable ethnic backgrounds, they are able to speak their mother tongue at work.

1.5 Demographic Factors

Along with the actual numbers or proficiency levels of speakers of the dominant language compared to speakers of the minority language, the order of speakers is quite important. Urban locations tend to require more frequent relocation than rural ones. Rural populations are more likely to be geographically distant from the center of political power and can fulfill the majority of their social needs in the ethnic or minority language. To put it another way, a group that lives outside of a town tends to preserve the language more so than groups who reside in a town. An immigrant group frequently marries within the group, which is known as intra-group marriage. In societies where languages shifts are more common in urban than rural areas, this situation consequently commonly occurs. Rural residents are more likely to be cut off from the center of

political power since they can communicate in their ethnic or minority languages about 90% of the time. To put it another way, ethnic groups that live outside of cities, in rural areas, tend to preserve their languages more than those that do not.

1.6 Bilingualism Factors

Bilingualism, which is not always accompanied by language proficiency, is always a crucial predictor of language shifting because of the varied strengths of interacting languages in culture. Both languages may be freely utilized. Their mode of communication will reveal whether they are bilingual or not. However, it will be a while before this issue is rectified. Bilingualism, according to Haugen (1961), is the ability to speak two or more languages.

1.7 Attitudes/Values Factors

Attitudes and values also have an impact on language shift. Language attitudes are also people's beliefs about their native tongue or other languages (Crystal, 1992). There are various factors that affect language shift, but neither the amount of it nor the abuse of language as a sign of ethnic identity should be excessive. Language is a crucial component of ethnic identity. It is possible to express one's ethnic identity through language. Positive outlooks make people more resilient to pressure from the dominant group to adopt their language, which supports initiatives to employ minority languages in a range of industries. Disposition that is happy and proud protecting people's ethnic and a language is crucial for society. Minor languages do not seem to have adapted to modern life very well since it seems that when they are used, the speakers of such languages disagree with the traditions and values of their society.

Changes tend to be more gradual and persistent when the minority language is highly esteemed. It appears that the likelihood of language retention increases when people perceive language as an integral component of ethnic identity. Having a positive attitude helps individuals avoid the urge to adopt the dominant group's language by promoting the usage of minority languages in various circumstances. Important characteristics should be encouraged by the community, such as a positive attitude and pride in one's language and ethnic heritage. People who speak a minority language may seem at odds with the community values and traditions

that are associated with their language since it has not evolved to accommodate modern life. Many people hold the view that languages are sovereign nations that need to be safeguarded from the encroachment of other languages through borrowing and other forms of linguistic mixing, which is perceived as a precursor to a linguistic upheaval.

The aforementioned experts' findings suggest that languages change when speakers of one group adopt a new language, and that most language changes are the consequence of considering all the elements that contribute to language change. When a language's native speakers opt to speak a new language, it's called a language shift. The choice to teach Indonesian as a first language is influenced by parents who themselves are multilingual, especially mothers who grow up in multilingual surroundings. Other variables also play a role. Based on the aforementioned fact, the researcher generated the title of the study as *Factors of Language Shift in Gayonese at Jambur Damar Southeast Aceh Regency*.

Distinct from Risnawati's (2019) work, nevertheless, is this investigation. It looked at how the Alas language is changing among the Alas children in Aceh's southeast region. It detailed the ways in which children utilize language change and the elements that impact it. Children in Jambur Damar village, Tanoh Alas District, Southeast Aceh Regency, Indonesia, have been shifting from speaking Gayo to Indonesian, and this research sought to understand why and how this change occurred.

II. METHODS

The Southeast Aceh Regency in Aceh province is home to the settlement of Jambur Damar, where the research was carried out. The research strategy employed in this study was a descriptive qualitative one. When describing and analyzing items in descriptive research, the environment is considered. Ten youngsters from the Jambur Damar community, all of whom had undergone a linguistic change, were specifically selected to take part in the study. Their ages ranged from nine to twelve. The methods were backed up by the following tools: an audio recorder, interview protocols, and note-taking. Research methods included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and meticulous record-keeping. Observations were done in the village of Jambur Damar to have a

better understanding of the factors that impact language shifts. The talk was recorded and notes were taken in order to acquire the details. Data analysis consists of four stages: collecting, categorizing, analyzing, and decision-making. Reports and discussions based on the data were subsequently provided. In Jambur Damar village, Southeast Aceh Regency, the study found that a number of factors impact language transition.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

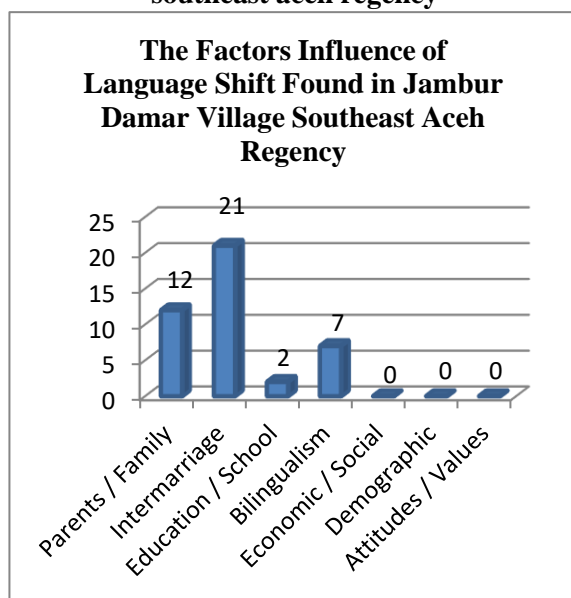
To further investigate the factors influencing the language shift of Gayonese children, specifically in Jambur Damar village, Southeast Aceh Regency, this study used Holmes's (2001) subjective criteria for the factors influencing language shift, which includes parents/family, education/school, intermarriage, economics/society, demographics, bilingualism, and attitudes/values.

The study in Jambur Damar village, Southeast Aceh Regency, found that children's language shift is influenced by both internal and environmental factors. Here, parent/family variables and intermarried factors are two types of internal factors that the researcher found to have led to the Gayo language's decline and the eventual adoption of Indonesian. The study also found two types of external variables education/school factors and bilingualism factors that led to the Gayo language's decline and the Indonesian language's rise to prominence.

When a husband and wife are from different tribes in a society where interethnic marriage occurs often within families, there are intermarriage factors that can cause language shift in children. Based on the many criteria, intertribal marriage, which usually happens when a husband and wife are from different tribes in a society where there is interethnic marriage, is the factor with the most data in this study. Due to the fact that they utilize Indonesian as a means of communication in their household and because of this, their children speak Indonesian as their mother tongue, there are 21 data found in this study. Parents/family factors that affected the children of Jambur Damar village because they demanded that their children study important languages because they thought that was the only way for them to learn languages successfully, and the data found in this study are 12 of data. Even though the teacher and the student come from the same speech community the Gayo tribes

educational factors have an impact on language shift in children because they are more at ease using Indonesian than the Gayo language when interacting with the teacher at school or outside of it. The study's data found included 2 sets of data. The data found in this study 7 of data show that bilingualism factors affected language shift in children since bilingualism is defined as speaking two or more languages, which is what happens to children in Jambur Damar village nowadays. However, some of the seven factors, including the economic/social, demographic, and attitudes/values factors, are not discovered in this study.

Figure 01. The factors influence of language shift found in jambur damar village southeast aceh regency



DISCUSSION

3.2 Internal Factors

3.2.1 Parents/Family Factors

Children learn language in their families as their first domain. According to Holmes (2001) the language of children is acquired by family consideration of the prestigious language. Therefore, this factor indicates that it is necessary in families where parents believe that teaching their children significant languages is the only way they can acquire languages effectively. Since it keeps children present and enables them to think more advancedly than other children, parents start teaching Indonesian to their children at an early age. As a result of the family's frequent use of national languages to facilitate the transition

into the world of education, many children in Jambur Damar village no longer speak their native tongue, especially the Gayo language, as fluently as they once did. Because of this, the following some of data about parents/families can be described as follow.

Data 1

S1: *Jaga dulu adikmu ini Karmila.*

(Take care of your younger sibling, Karmila.)

S2: *Mau pergi aku main mak.*

(I want to play mom)

S1: *Yah, Nanti aja mainnya, ngga ada yang jaga adikmu ini, bentar aja mamak mau ke kede dulu.*

(Wel... After all, you can play later, your sister doesn't have anyone to look after)

S2: *Iya tee.*

(Alright)

The conversation above describes the discussion between a mother and her daughter; they speak to one another in fluent Indonesian. Because of this, children in Jambur Damar village experience a language shift because, despite the fact that their parents are of the same Gayonese ethnic group and interact with each other frequently, they are taught to use Indonesian. In addition, the parents thought that using Indonesian instead of the Gayo language made speaking to new people from distant villages simpler for their children.

Data 2

S1: *Bang Aldi pinjam dulu HP tu bang.*

(Can I borrow that cell phone, bro?)

S2: *Yoh, abang belum siap ini main game.*

(Hmm... I not ready to play this game yet. Later, okay?)

S1: *Iya, tapi download kan nanti permainan Ludo ya bang? Nanti aku mau main Ludo sama Kail.*

(Yes, but download the Ludo game later, right? Later I want to play Ludo with uncle)

S2: *Iya, nanti abang download.*

(Yes, I'll download it later)

The conversation between the two children in the aforementioned dialogue demonstrated that when they speak in borrowing something, they speak in full Indonesian rather than Gayo. Children experience language shift because, despite the fact that their parents are from the same Gayonese ethnic group and frequently communicate with one another, they see their parents using Indonesian. As a result, when the children speak to other people, particularly the

Gayonese group, they may understand the language but can not pronounce it.

3.2.2 Intermarriage Factors

In a community where there is interethnic marriage, this frequently happens when a husband and wife are from different tribes. Due to the fact that their parents utilize Indonesian as a means of communication in their household and because of this, their children cannot speak their mother tongue. As we can see, some data about intermarriage can be described as in the below.

Data 3

S1: *Bang, suruh mamak makan.*

(Mom told you to eat, bro)

S2: *Iya bentar lagi, habis lu film ni.*

(Yes, in a moment, after finish this film)

S1: *Yoh cepatlah bang marah mamak nanti.*

(Yeah hurry up bro, you'll be angry later)

S2: *Iya, dikit lagi nya ini.*

(Yes, just a little more)

The dialogue described above is an interaction between two siblings, who converse in Indonesian rather than Gayo. Due to intermarriage between their father's and mother's respective tribes the father is from the Gayonese speech community and the mother is from the Alasnese speech community both of their children's languages have shifted. In daily life, their parents have taught them to speak Indonesian in their households and environments.

Data 4

S1: *Al, belajar apa tadi disekolah?*

(What did you learn at school, Al?)

S2: *Banyak mak, ada PR Matematika ku mak.*

(Many mom, I have math homework mom)

S1: *Hmm, kerjakanlah sekarang biar mamak lihat.*

(Hmm, do it now let I see.)

S2: *Nanti malam aja mak.*

(Just tonight mom)

S1: *Sekarang aja.*

(Just now)

S2: *Mau main aku mak, nanti aja ya?*

(I want to play mom, later okay?)

S1: *Nanti malam ngantuk ngerjainnya.*

(Tonight you will be sleepy doing it)

S2: *Ngga mak, nanti malam aja.*

(No mom, just tonight)

S1: *Yaudah, terserah mu.*

(Well, it's up to you)

The conversation between the mother and her son is depicted in the dialogue above. Despite the fact that the mother is from the Gayonese speech community, it is clear that she speaks Indonesian to her son when asking questions and giving instructions, and she does not speak Gayo when interacting with him. Intermarriage between the father's and mother's tribes, where the father is from the Javanese speech community and the mother is from the Gayonese speech community, is thought to be the reason for the family's language shift. It appears that the children used Indonesian in their daily lives.

3.3 External Factors

3.3.1 Education/School Factors

Education is connected to the formal education system, which affects how pupils use language. Holmes (2001) stated that school tends to teach their national language to the pupils. Beside that, schools/education in general are sometimes held responsible for children's mother tongues shifting because they typically teach children in their original tongues. Regional language placement frequently shifts as a result of this as well. For instance, parents in Indonesia hesitate to teach their children regional languages because of concern that they will not be able to understand what their teachers are saying when they speak Indonesian. The child is consequently unable to speak the base language or, at the very least, is limited to understanding it. Therefore, some data about education/school factor can be described as follow.

Data 5

Kalau ngomong sama guru disekolah aku pakek bahasa Indonesia, diluar sekolah pun kalau aku jumpa guruku aku pakek bahasa Indonesia juga. (YG)

(When I talk with teachers at school I use Indonesian, even outside of school when I meet my teacher I use Indonesian also)

In spite of the fact that the teacher and the student both originate from the same speech community the Gayo tribes it is clear from the interview results above that the children preferred using Indonesian to the Gayo language while speaking with the teacher at school or outside of it. Language shift occurs in education because of this, but the students also thought it was more courteous to address the teacher in Indonesian rather than the Gayo language itself.

Data 6

Sama kawan aku pakek bahasa Indonesia kalau disekolah, soalnya kawan-kawan ku pun pakek bahasa Indonesia disekolah walaupun diluar jam pelajaran padahal orang tu pun orang Gayo, aku pakek bahasa Gayo dirumah, kalau disekolah akupun pakek bahasa Indonesia. (DM)

(My friends and I use Indonesian at school, because my friends also use Indonesian at school even outside of class hours even though those people are from Gayonese tribe, I use Gayo at home, when I go to school I also use Indonesian)

According to the interview results above, it is clear that the children can speak Gayo, but due to their school companions, they are shifting to Indonesian in this situation. On the other side, this is why language shift happens to the children because when they engage with their friends, they all react in Indonesian and speak it exclusively in class.

3.3.2 Bilingualism Factors

Due to the different strengths of interfering languages in culture, bilingualism which is not always accompanied by language proficiency is always an essential determinant of language shifting. It is acceptable to speak both languages. Language preference is not restricted for bilinguals. However, there is no quick solution to this problem. Bilingual, in the words of Haugen (1961), is someone who speaks two or more languages. For clearly, some data of bilingualism can be described as in the follow.

Data 7

S1: *Yoga, ari hi kam ne?*

(Yoga, where were you from?)

S2: *Dari lapangan bola kami tadi.*

(From the football field)

S1: *Rame nggak disana?*

(Is it crowded there?)

S2: *Rame, lagi lomba orang itu.*

(Lot's of people, it's a competition again)

The dialogue above is an illustration of a conversation between two children from the Jambur Damar village who speak in two different languages. The first speaker asked a question in the Gayo language, "ari hi kam ne?" (which translates to "where were you from? "), and the second speaker responded in Indonesian. Even if a person is fluent in both Indonesian and the Gayo language, they are

more likely to utilize Indonesian because they perceive it to be more prestigious in modern culture. This is an illustration of how language use in the village of Jambur Damar is influenced by bilingualism. As a result, one of the factors contributing to children in Jambur Damar village's language shift is the usage of two languages.

Data 8

S1: *Nabila, nth maen msncis.*

(Nabila, let's play hide and seek)

S2: *Yok kak*

(Come on, sis)

S1: *Siapa lagi yang mau ikut kira-kira?*

(Who else wants to come along?)

S2: *Sadila mau dia itu kak.*

(Sadila, wants to join sis)

S1: *Boh mi, yoklah kita ajak.*

(Alright, let's take her)

The discussion described above is an interaction between two children who were playing hide and seek in their neighborhood and were speaking in two different languages. As can be seen from the conversation, the first speaker introduced the second speaker by saying "nth maen mancis" in the Gayo language. The first speaker also responded to the question by saying "boh mi" in the Gayo language in line 5. However, the second speaker responded by using Indonesian when interacting with the first speaker. As a result, one of the factors contributing to the language shift for children in Jambur Damar village is the usage of two languages. When a person can speak both Indonesian and the Gayo language, they usually choose Indonesian because they think it is more respected in modern culture than the Gayo language. This is a prime example of how bilingualism affects language use in the community of Jambur Damar.

IV. CONCLUSION

Children in Jambur Damar village, Southeast Aceh Regency, have been discovered that both internal and external factors that affect the children to shift from the Gayo language to Indonesian. Internal influences like parents/families, and intermarriage could cause the Gayo language to shift to Indonesian. Education and bilingualism are indications of external factors. Some of these causes led to the shift from the Gayo language to Indonesian, as parents encouraged their children to speak Indonesian from an early age in order to keep up

with other children' more developed and sophisticated thinking. Additionally, education is another aspect that contributes to the Gayo language shifting to Indonesian, as all schools use it for teacher and student communication. The official language of Indonesia is Indonesian. Must make sure that Indonesians are taught their own topics.

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