

# THE FACTORS THAT CAUSE THE LOSE OF ABILITY IN USING SUNDANESE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITAS GUNADARMA

Pradheka Aria Rangga  
English Department, Faculty of Letters and Culture, Universitas Gunadarma  
Jl. Margonda Raya No. 100, Depok 16424, Jawa Barat  
Pradhekaaria@gmail.com

## Abstract

*In sociolinguistics, there is a phenomenon in which a community stops using their parent's heritage language by making the use of the language in which they are located or stay as a mean of communication, it is called as a language shift. In this research, it aims to find out the factors that affected the students whose parents originated from Sunda not interested to learn their parent's heritage language. Moreover, it aims to find out the most dominant factor that affected the students not interested to learn their parent's heritage language. This research used the qualitative method and the data source comes from the students of English literature in Universitas Gunadarma. The result of this research shows the factors that affected the students not interested to learn their parent's heritage language such as social, economic, and political factor, demographic factor, attitudes and values factors, education factor, migration factor, and bilingual or multilingual factors. Furthermore, education factor is assumed as the most dominant or influential factor to the students not interested to learn their parent's heritage language, because all of the students choose agree to the education factor.*

**Keywords:** *Factor, Heritage Language, Language Shift*

## INTRODUCTION

There are a lot of different languages that can be used by people to communicate to each other. Every province in the country certainly has a variety of languages, tribes, and different ethnics. It also happens to Jakarta as the capital city of Indonesia that has a lot of diversity of languages and cultures inside it. A lot of these languages are now extinct, some may be spoken by a very few elders and may be at risk of being lost, and it is being maintained within communities of speakers through strong educational efforts. For instance, Mostly *Sunda* and *Betawi* people living in Jakarta will definitely use their heritage language for everyday life.

Nowadays, many students rarely use their parent's heritage languages. They are not interested to learn the languages of their parents which in fact they do not completely forget about their parent's heritage language. The students can still understand about their parent's heritage languages even though it is just a little. Kelleher (2010) stated that Heritage language means the languages of the people native to its country. For instance, students whose parents originated from *Sunda* can understand the language in the sentence level such as *kumaha damang* which in Indonesian means *apa kabar*. Furthermore, according to Chaer (2010:226) states that *Bahasa Sunda* or *Sundanese* is a language

which is part of regional languages and is a native language belongs to some part of Indonesia. The use of *Sundanese* in everyday speech is estimated to be within 15 percent and also *Sundanese* is a regional language with most speaker just after *Bahasa Jawa* or *Javanese*.

The risk of a language shift or loss of heritage language is a result of the phenomenon of a language being a minority language in the midst of the existence of the majority language. It is similar like what Holmes (1992:68) stated that the language would not be shift in which the minority language is highly valued thus, when language is seen as an important symbol of ethnic identity, it is generally maintained longer. What is more important, without intensive maintenance, the minority language will be shifted and even died in several decades later. If language maintenance does not occur, there can be several results. One of them is language shift phenomenon. When speakers become bilingual, they will usually do the code switching or code mixing while they are talking.

Moreover, according to Rokhman (2013:51) revealed that language shift is a sociolinguistic phenomenon that occurs due to language contact. Language shift is concerned with the use of language by a group of speakers that can occur as a result of language displacement of one speech community to another speech community. Furthermore, there are six points of the

contributing factors of language shift, those are social, economic and political factor; demographic factor; attitude and values factor according to Holmes (2013; 60-64). Moreover, according to Rokhman (2013:52), he stated that education, migration, and bilingual/multilingual can be the factors that trigger the alteration language. In this chapter, those all would be explained, so that it is expected that the readers could have framework on the alteration language very well.

The point is, it will be interesting to find out the factors that affected them not interested to learn their parent's heritage language as well and to find out the dominant factor that influence the students whose parents originated from Sunda not interested to learn their parent's heritage language.

## **METHODS**

This research used a qualitative method to show the results of the research itself. The informants of qualitative research through interviewing were the four selected students whose parents originated from *Sunda* of the 8th semester English Literature Classes in Universitas Gunadarma. In general information of the interview informants consists of gender, the age, the birth place and the first language of informants as well. In collecting the data, the researcher asked for about 6 questions to find out the details of the selected students answer which answers will be analyzed by the researcher moreover to elaborate and explore their answer and to

know about the reason why they answer it. The instruments of the questions for interviewing that used for this research are related to sociolinguistic approach specifically to language shift. Moreover, the questions for the interview contained of 6 numbers which are for Contributing Factors for the students whose parents originated from Sunda tends not interested in learning their parent's heritage language. The steps that the researcher does for collecting the data, as follows Conclude and classify the result of the interview to be valid data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Social, Economic, and Political Factor

Questions:

*Do you agree to "Social, economic, and political" as an affecting factor that probably triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language?*

Statements:

Informants 1: *Strongly agree, a language that is often used, it can affect the use of language in everyday life. If it is rarely used, later it can be awkward and it can be slowly forgotten.*

Informants 2: *I think I agree. It is perceived to be able to influence the shifting of heritage languages. The majority language that exists in a social environment can influence someone who uses the heritage language to adapt to*

*the environment. Economic factor also affects the education and impact the acquisition of a language.*

Informants 3: *I think I will agree. I strongly agree. Because social, economic and political factors are the basic things we do in our daily activities. It becomes a factor that has a very important role in the alteration language.*

Informants 4: *I disagree, as a human, we all want to grow and surely, we have a benchmark to be like someone who are more socially, economically successful and all those factors that become benchmarks*

From the statement above, as it looks that we know the responses of the informant regarding the question *Do you agree to "Social, economic, and political" as an affecting factor that triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language.* From the data that the researcher got, actually for this statement, the informant 1, 2 and 3 are agree with this statement, meanwhile the informant 4 are disagree to this statement. It could be seen that 3 informants are agree and only 1 informant choose disagree.

### Demographic Factor

Questions:

*Do you agree to "Demographic Factor" as*

*an affecting factor that probably triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language?*

Statements:

Informants 1: *Disagree, because the local language has its own history that requires its citizens to follow the rules and usually the people of that area still believe in the tradition of their ancestors or believe in old traditions. While the urban people's way of thinking is more dominant to the logic and they see the fact logically.*

Informants 2: *Agree. Residential areas can affect the shift of language because it is supported by the people inside it. Rural with urban are clearly different, the way people use language and other factors that exist in the area.*

Informants 3: *I strongly agree with that statement, because the more often a society socializes with different ethnicities, the more arise the possibility for the inclusion of a new habit or culture, including in communications, it will be different rights with rural communities who always communicate with the same ethnic or tribe.*

Informants 4: *Strongly agree, in my opinion I think the villagers sometimes have irrational rules than the rules that have been made and agreed by urban people. Urban people tend to renew existing regulations.*

From the statement above, as it looks that we know the responses of the informant regarding the statement *Do you agree to "demographic" as an affecting factor that triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language?* Furthermore, from the data that the researcher got, actually for this statement, the informant 1 is disagree to this statement. But the informant number 2,3, and 4 are agree to this statement respectively. So, it could be seen that for this statement, it gets three points of the agreement from the informants. And only one of the informants choose disagree.

### **Attitudes and Values Factor**

Questions:

*Do you agree to "Attitudes and values" as an affecting factor that probably triggers you not interested to learn your own heritage language?*

Statements:

Informants 1: *Agree, because we do not use it so often, over time the language can be lost. As long as there is a positive way to make the culture and language can always exist and sustainable, so we have to use it so often.*

Informants 2: *I agree, I think the attitude and values of an individual is the basis for determining the alteration of language. If we can locate or adjust ourselves well, where we are and with whom we are, we will not lose our heritage language identity even though we are considered as a minority. Open positive attitude and mutual respect for language among individuals will resist the alteration language but not also make ourselves isolated.*

Informants 3: *I think I agree. Agree because attitude and values are needed, if we do not do habits of values and behavior in communicating with heritage language then the language cannot be maintained its existence. The alteration of language occurs because of human habits in communicating.*

Informants 4: *Disagree, although basically my heritage language will be lost because young people alteration language in my area start rarely use Sundanese language. Most of them speak Indonesian in the neighborhood. But this is not a problem if you can still communicate between communities.*

From the statement above, as it looks

that we know the responses of the informant regarding the statement *Do you agree to “attitude and values” as an affecting factor that triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language?* From the data that the researcher got, actually the three informants are agree to this statement. Only the informant number 4 is disagree to this statement. So, it could be seen that this statement is not the most affected factor according to the informants to influence them not to learn their parent’s heritage language.

### **Education Factor**

Questions:

*Do you agree to “Education” as an affecting factor that probably triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language?*

Statements:

Informants 1: *Agree, we have to realize that if we are in the dominant region that requires us to adapt using other languages in order to interact with new people and if not, then we will be alienated by people around us because we do not understand what is being discussed.*

Informants 2: *Agree. This is the same as social, economic and political factors. Education becomes one of the things that affect the shift of language. As we know, the teachers teach us at school the*

*national language as an important subject while regional languages themselves are used less frequently. In the educational environment we also meet with many people from different backgrounds, this is where the alteration language occurs.*

Informants 3: *Yes, I agree. Education becomes one of the supporting factors in the alteration language of the traditional language because it is more dominant used in daily communicating. It will take a long time to become a habit. It is the habit that makes the regional language is being forgotten.*

Informants 4: *Agree, although education will be one of the factors that triggers the alteration language, but through Indonesian language, we can all communicate well among fellow ethnic groups. Because I was school in Tangerang, and a lot of my friends came from Medan, Batak, Lampung, Java. Then we have to learn Indonesian to be able to blend into one.*

From the statement above, as it looks that we know the responses of the informant regarding the statement *Do you agree to "Education" as an affecting factor that triggers you not interested in learning your*

*own heritage language?* From the data that the researcher got, all of the informants are agree to this statement. It could be seen that perhaps this statement could be the most affected factor that triggers the students not to learn their parent's heritage language, because all of the informants are agree to this statement.

### **Migration Factor**

Questions:

*Do you agree to "Migration" as an affecting factor that probably triggers you not interested to learn your own heritage language?*

Statements:

Informants 1: *Agree, being in the new place it means that we have to adapt to accept the new things. Because, migration itself means that we are regarded as a guest of the need to obey the rules of the host. One way to be accepted in a new place is to follow the language used there.*

Informants 2: *I totally agree, migration is also very influential. Because the proof of many people who migrate and stay long in an area so they are accustomed for using the local language. Even the longer there is the invisible where they come from. But most of them remain unconcerned from where they*

*come from like an accent or the way of speaking*

Informants 3: *Agreed. in my opinion of course migration plays an important role in the process of occurrence of language shift. But to maintain the heritage language, we can use it at home with mothers, sisters, brothers or anyone else in the neighborhood using different heritage languages.*

Informants 4: *Disagree, for example like my brother, when he comes to Jakarta or to other cities, his Sundanese accent never goes away.*

From the statement above, as it looks that we know the responses of the informant regarding the statement *You agree to "Migration" as an effecting factor that triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language?* From the data that the researcher got, actually the informant number 1,2, and 3 are agree to this statement, meanwhile the informant 4 are disagree to this statement. So, it could be seen that, it is not the most affected factors because there is still the answer of disagree from the informant to this statement.

### **Bilingual/ Multilingual Factor**

Questions:

*Do you agree to "Bilingual or Multilingual" as an affecting factor that probably triggers*

*you not interested in learning your own heritage language?*

Statements:

Informants 1: *Neither or disagree, as long as they can keep each other languages, then how many languages that they are mastered, the traditional language will not disappear. All depends on the environment. It is preserved, then the traditional language will not be lost. But if it is ignored then the traditional language will disappear and i am sure if in the hearts of those people, they are proud of the traditional language they have.*

Informants 2: *I totally agree with that. It seems that the ability to speak more than one language will give an individual the freedom to choose what language to use. If he /she is able to use the language that dominates his/her environment, there will likely be a shifted of a language shift. The heritage language can fade. because it tends to use another language that is considered more prestigious and useful to learn more deeply. Something like that.*

Informants 3: *I do not agree, in my opinion bilingualism / multilingualism would be one of a good factor in maintaining the existence of a language. Because they still use their own heritage language even it is just a little.*

Informants 4: *I strongly agree, for example I do not only learn Indonesian but I also learn Sundanese and English as my third language.*

From the statement above, as it looks that we know the responses of the informant regarding the statement *You agree to "Bilingual/Multilingual" as an affecting factor that triggers you not interested in learning your own heritage language?* From the data that the researcher got, the informants 1 and 3 are disagree to this statement, meanwhile the informant 2 and 4 are agree to this statement respectively. So it could be seen that, this is not the most affected factor that perhaps trigger the students not to learn the heritage language either. Because the two informants are still disagreed.

Based on the interview that has done by the researcher, actually all of the informants seemed agree to the education factor as the most influential factor for the students that are not interested in learning their own heritage language. The more the informants choose agree, it means that factor is assumed as the most dominant factor for the students not interested in learning their own heritage language.

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data, the researcher can conclude this research as the following; Firstly, the factors that affected the students not interested to learn their parents heritage language are: Social, economic, and political factor and the second one is demographic factor, attitude and values as the third factor, education, and migration factor, furthermore the last factor is bilingual/multilingual factor. The education factor as the most dominant or influential the factor to the students why they are not interested to learn their own heritage language, because all of the informants give the agreement to that factor, it is assumed that the more the informants choose agree to one factor, it means that factor is assumed as the most influential factor that triggers they are not interested in learning their parents heritage language in them.

## REFERENCES

- Chaer, A. (2010). *Sociolinguistik: Perkenalan Awal*. Jakarta : Rineka Cipta
- Holmes, J. (1992). *An introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Longman
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Great Britain: Pearson Longman
- Kelleher, A. (2010). "What is a heritage language?" (PDF). *CAL: Center for Applied Linguistics. Center for Applied Linguistics*. Retrieved 2016-02-23.



Rokhman, F. (2013). *Sosiolinguistik: Suatu Pendekatan Pembelajaran dalam Masyarakat Multikultural*. Yogyakarta: GRAHA ILMU