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GENDER AND THE USE OF LOCAL LANGUAGE IN URBAN COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

In communicating, the use of local languages tends to be influenced by the gender of the speakers. This includes politeness, vocabulary selection, grammar, and context. The urban community is most potentially affected by modernization which also influences the use of local languages. This study looks at the differences in the use of local languages and the causes of these differences based on the gender of the speakers. This study used a qualitative descriptive method using data collection techniques consisting of observation, in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). This research was conducted with the subject of urban communities living in the city of Takengon. The results of this study show that urban women and men use local language differently, especially in terms of their preference in using local language. Urban women tend to be affected by the feeling of wanting to be associated with being modern, while urban men are more affected by the context in which they interact. These results are hoped to add to the literature on the use of local languages that can contribute to language maintenance efforts.

Keywords: Gender, Local Language, Urban Community, Gayonese Language

ABSTRAK

Dalam berkomunikasi, penggunaan bahasa daerah cenderung dipengaruhi oleh gender dari penuturnya. Perbedaan penggunaan bahasa pada gender yang berbeda ini termasuk perbedaan dalam aspek kesopanan, pemilihan kosa kata, tata bahasa, dan konteks. Masyarakat perkotaan paling berpotensi terkena dampak modernisasi yang juga mempengaruhi penggunaan bahasa daerah. Kajian ini melihat perbedaan penggunaan bahasa daerah dan penyebab perbedaan tersebut berdasarkan jenis kelamin penuturnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data yang terdiri dari observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan subjek masyarakat perkotaan yang tinggal di kota Takengon. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perempuan dan laki-laki perkotaan menggunakan bahasa daerah secara berbeda, terutama dalam hal preferensi mereka dalam menggunakan bahasa daerah. Perempuan urban cenderung dipengaruhi oleh perasaan ingin diasosiasikan dengan modern, sedangkan laki-laki urban lebih dipengaruhi oleh konteks di mana mereka berinteraksi. Hasil ini diharapkan dapat menambah literatur penggunaan bahasa daerah yang dapat berkontribusi dalam upaya pemertahanan bahasa.

Keywords: Gender, Bahasa Lokal, Masyarakat Kota, Bahasa Gayo

INTRODUCTION

Gender is one of an individual's social identities and is the result of social construction. Research on the effect of social construction, in this case, the concept of gender, on people's expectations, mindsets, and behavior has been widely carried out. One of them is research on gender and its relation to aspects of language use. Society's expectations of women and men in language are often found to be different in specific language communities. In some societies, there are differences in the use of language by men and women, both at the lexical, grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic levels. Some studies have found that in some language communities, there are differences in the use of language in terms of politeness for men and women. In more traditional and conservative Japanese, the forms of nouns considered appropriate for female speakers are nouns that have the prefix o-,. The prefix is a marker of language style considered formal and polite, which is suitable for female speakers. (Holmes, 2013:161). Furthermore, in Japanese society, there are more variations of the word "I" for male speakers according to the level of formality. Meanwhile, female speakers are expected to use a more limited variety of the word "I", which is only for formal variations.

In the Gayo communities, the use of the local language is also different between men and women. Based on preliminary observations, it was found that there are differences in preferences for the use of the local language and the national language (Indonesian) in the people of Takengon City. Men use the local language more often in communicating with colleagues than women. This shows differences in attitudes towards the local language between men and women. The attitude of speakers towards language is essential in the continuity and existence of a language. Holmes (2013: 63) states that a positive attitude from speakers towards their language, especially in the case of speakers of minority languages or local languages, can anticipate a community to change the language choice used to a language that is more dominant or more prestigious in daily communication, so that the local language is not quickly extinct. "Positive attitudes support efforts to use the minority language in a variety of domains, and this helps people resist the pressure from the majority group to switch to their language."

In the Gayo-speaking community in Takengon City, it was found that men tend to use the local language or regional language when interacting with colleagues in an informal context. Meanwhile, women more often use Indonesian in various formal and informal domains (initial observation, February 21, 2022). Most teenage boys in the city of Takengon use the local or

regional language when communicating with their male friends. This shows the form of regional identity expression that is attached to them. In interacting, these fellow teenage boys also use specific vocabulary, which is considered a feature of masculinity (Rizki et al., 2022).

This difference in the use of language between men and women can be influenced by several aspects and can vary in different cultures and societies. This study aims to identify differences in the use of local languages among the people of Takengon City (speakers of the Gayo language) and the aspects that influence these differences.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. The Concept of Sex and Gender

Gender is different from sex, although etymologically, the meaning is the same, namely, gender. In general, sex is used to identify the differences between men and women in biological anatomy, while gender is more involved in social, cultural, and other non-biological aspects. Gender is not born with but something we do (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Sex refers to human biological attributes primarily related to physical and physiological features, including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Gender is usually categorized as female or male, but there is variation in the biological and character attributes that make up sex and how these attributes are expressed. Suppose a son proudly follows his father. As he indulges and sticks out his chest, he does everything he can to be like his father - be a man and show his masculinity. The boy creates a persona that embodies what he admires in his adult male role models. The same goes for a little girl when she wears her mother's high heels, or dresses up and puts on make-up. The attitude shown manifests the child's self-identity in the form of an adult.

Sex studies emphasize the development of biological aspects, chemical composition and hormones in the body, physical anatomy, reproduction, and other biological characteristics in the body of a man and a woman. In contrast, gender studies emphasize the development of socio-cultural aspects. Gender refers to socially constructed roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities. It affects how people perceive themselves and one another, how they act and interact, and the distribution of power and resources in society. There is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups perceive, experience, and express gender through the roles they take on, their expectations, their relationships with others, and the complex way gender is institutionalized in society. In the social sciences, gender is introduced to refer to the differences between women and men without connotations that are entirely biological but instead refer to differences due to

social formation. Therefore, gender relations are a set of rules, traditions, and reciprocal social relations in society and culture that determine the boundaries of the feminine and masculine (Macdonald, 1999).

2. Local Language

The local language or regional language is a valuable asset of a nation. However, the paradigm of 21st-century society views foreign languages have higher prestige than national and regional languages. In other words, regional languages are the third priority in their use after national and foreign languages. People prefer to use the national language and foreign languages in communicating. Foreign language speakers are also considered more educated and have higher social strata. Vice versa, speakers of regional languages are considered to have social strata under speakers of national and foreign languages. This has been expressed by Gumperz (1982:101).

In an area, it is possible to live with several variations of language side by side so that the form of interaction tends to be code-switching and code-mixing. This happens because the community speaks multilingually. Communication activities in a multilingual society are no longer only oriented to local culture. As a result, the role of language is not a top priority in daily communication. Local languages exist only in limited social communication, such as in families and ethnic communities. The language that is owned by a speech community in its language treasures always has variations. This is because the language that lives in society is always used in the social roles of its speakers. These social roles are related to various social psychological aspects, which are then detailed in the form of speech components (Poedjosoedarmo 1982:3). The phenomenon of the use of language variations in speech communities is controlled by social, cultural, and situational factors (Kartomihardjo 1981; Fasold 1984; Hudson 1996).

On the other hand, regional languages are the wealth of a society. Regional languages can be said to be the image of an independent society. Regional languages contain the wisdom of a community as well. There are cultural values contained in the local language. Therefore, the regional language can be said to reflect a community. The regional language is a noble heritage for the community. Indonesia, as a multicultural nation, is also known to have many regional languages. Indonesia has no less than 748 regional languages (Wikipedia.com 2016). However, the existence of local language speakers from time to time is decreasing. This condition is in line with the global era and modernization. International languages or foreign languages finally dominate communication globally. Based on data from the Language Development and Development Agency, 139 regional languages are threatened with extinction (Sunendar 2016).

The preservation of regional languages is one of the phenomena and steps that arise amid the polemic of shifting regional languages. Both defense and language shifts are two sides of the same coin. Both are present at the same time. That is, this linguistic phenomenon is the result of the collective result of language choice. Language choice is defined as the result of the process of choosing a language by the language community or multilingual speakers. That is, the speaker masters two or more languages so that he can choose the language used in the speech act through a single language variation, code-switching, and code-mixing (Widianto 2016). It is undeniable that modern life has eroded the existence of regional languages. However, preserving regional languages is also a strategic and practical step in stemming this worrisome condition.

3. Urban Community

The composition of society is generally divided into two, namely rural communities and urban communities. Cities generally have residential buildings, office buildings and trade. There are also houses of worship and gardens. The urban population growth either naturally or due to urbanization is faster than the growth of existing facilities and infrastructure in the city (Marbun, 1994).

Urban people are those who live in urban areas. According to Jamaluddin (2017: 25), the characteristic of urban society is that its members are separated, not know each other. He further described the characteristics of urban communities as follows. 1) Social heterogeneity, which is due to the dense population of the city, there are several competitions in life; 2) Secondary relations, where social relations are very limited to certain areas of life, so many sociologists say that urban communities have secondary relationships. 3) Social tolerance: Due to the city's geographical location, the city community does not care about their behavior as long as it is not detrimental to the public interest. 4) Control (secondary supervision), this is where urban communities are physically close but not socially; 5) Social mobility, to raise their social status, everything is professionalized for the sake of increasing status; 6) Voluntary association, in this case, the city community voluntarily joins the organization they like, 7) Individualistic, which may be due to a competitive environment and has a high degree of heterogeneity in various aspects. 8) Regression or spatial (spatial segretion) caused by competition in the city.

People who live in modern cities generally work anywhere, which is not limited by space and time, and carry out activities modernly, such as shopping online, likewise, in other fields such as socio-culture such as in the fields of education, health, diplomacy, recreation and others. This very complex social relationship is what distinguishes urban or urban communities from rural communities (Asy'ari, 1993:66).

4. Gender and Language Theory (Difference Theory)

Difference theory was coined by Tannen (1990). The basic assumption of this theory is that men and women use language differently. Men and women are categorized in different subcultures so that they have differences in using language or in speaking. Tennen proposed six main differences between men and women in terms of language use as can be seen in the following table:

	Men	Women
1) Status Vs. Support	A man's speech style is very competitive, seeking to achieve the "upper hand" in a converstaion, trying to prevent other participants in a conversation from dominating them. They see language as a way to gain and maintain status and use it as such.	Women often play a more supportive role and speak for confirmation, especially when in a conversation with men.
2) Independence Vs. Intimacy	Men, due to their concern with status, focus on being independent. For example, Tannen gave the example of how a husband would not ask his wife if he can bring over a friend to maintain his independence.	Women consider language as a way to perpetuate intimacy as well as preserve it. For example, Tannen said a woman would ask her husband before inviting a friend over, unlike the husband.
3) Advice Vs. Understanding	Men always seek a solution	Women always give sympathy and show understanding
4) Information Vs. Feelings	A man will speak to inform and do so in a very bried manner	The language of women is more emotive and subsequently more verbose
5) Orders Vs. Proposals	This is the idea that men prefer to use direct imperatives to command and order	Women prefer to suggests and propose something, often compared to using an Off-Record Indirect Approach.
6) Conflict Vs. Compromise	Men will often resist and oppose openly, perhaps tied to their want to preserve status. This was considered a factor when the issue on pay gap was first ignited: that men were more willing to openly refuse a lower pay than a woman would be.	Women will chose not to resist or oppose openly, but would happily do it later in private or with other women.

Figure 1. Difference Model (Tannen: 1990)

METODE PENELITIAN

1. Location

This research was conducted in Lhokseumawe and Takengon, Central Aceh. Lhokseumawe City is located in the northern part of Aceh Province. At the same time, Takengon is the capital of Central Aceh district which is geographically located in the Gayo Highlands in Aceh Province. The researcher focused on the use of local/regional languages in urban communities in terms of the gender of the speakers.

The researcher chose this location because two regional languages are used in the two cities. Urban society is a society that is identical to the values of modernity. Therefore, the preference for using Indonesian as a national and modern language tends to be higher in urban communities. In selecting urban communities, the researcher aims to identify differences in the use of local or regional languages among speakers of different genders.

2. Data Collection and Data Analysis

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach that aims to describe, and summarize various conditions, various situations, or various phenomena of social reality that exist in the community that is the object of research and seeks to draw that reality to the surface as a feature, character, trait, model, sign:, or a description of a particular condition, situation, or phenomenon. The qualitative descriptive format in this study uses the form of a case study, which focuses on a particular unit of various phenomena (Bungin, 2010).

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The data collection in this research was conducted through observation (observation) and in-depth interviews (In-Depth Interview). The observation or observation method is a data collection method used to collect research data through observation or sensing (Bungin, 2010). In this study, the research used in-depth interview method. In-depth interview is the process of obtaining information for research purposes by means of question and answer while face to face between the interviewer and the informant or the person being interviewed, with or without using an interview guide, in which the interviewer and informant are involved in a relatively social life. long. Thus, the specificity of in-depth interviews is their involvement in the lives of informants (Bungin, 2010).

In addition to observation and in-depth interviews, to collect additional data, a Focus Group Discussion was held. Focus Group Discussion is one of the data collection approaches commonly used in qualitative research

This study used an interactive model data analysis technique developed by Miles and Huberman. There are three stages of data analysis (a) data reduction, (b) data presentation, and (c) conclusion/verification.

a. Data Reduction

Reducing data means summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the important things, looking for themes and patterns. Data reduction is a sensitive thinking process that requires intelligence and a high breadth and depth of insight. In reducing data, each researcher will be guided by the objectives to be achieved (Sugiyono, 2007).

b. Data Presentation

Miles and Huberman (in Siyoto and Sodik, 2015) state that data presentation is a structured collection of information that allows concluding. Qualitative research can present data in brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, and the like. Presenting the data will make it easier to understand what happened and plan further work based on what has been understood (Sugiyono, 2007).

c. Conclusion/Verification

After the data was presented, which is also in a series of data analyses, the following process was drawing conclusions or verifying data. In the data analysis stage, a researcher looked for the meaning of things noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal pathways, and propositions. The conclusions in the first stage were loose, remained open and unclear, and then increased to become more detailed and firmly rooted. Conclusions may not appear until the end of data collection, depending on the size of the field notes collection, coding, storage and retrieval methods used, and the ability of the researcher to draw conclusions.

3. Informants

According to Emy (in Suyanto et al, 2005). Research informants are people who will provide information during the research process. In this study, the people who became research informants were:

a. Key Informants

Key informants are those who know and have the basic information needed in research (Suyanto and Sutinah (ed.), 2005: 172). In this study, the key informants were the people of Lhokseumawe and Takengon, Central Aceh.

b. Additional Informants

Additional informants are those who can provide information even though they are not directly involved in social interactions. In this study, additional informants were those who work or were visitors to the owner's public space.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Use of Local Language in Male Speakers in Takengon City

The people of Tanoh Gayo Highlands use the Gayo language as their everyday language. However, they use the Gayo language only in some things or activities because it is not only Gayonese who inhabit this area.

Gayo highland also made very rapid progress, especially in the use of everyday language. This means that the Gayo language can change in terms of words, pronunciation, and others. Many Gayo people whose language we hear daily have used Indonesian, especially among Gayo youth.

Regarding the use of the Indonesian lingua franca, it is very massively used by the Gayo generation born in the 1970s (until the present). More specifically, in Aceh Tengah District, the people are more heterogeneous (multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-cultural) than in other Gayo areas.

The phenomenon of bi/multilingualism is expected in this place. The generation born in the 1970s (until present)—is considered "the modern Gayo generation/parents." Most of them teach their children Indonesian at home—moreover, the cross-marriage where the husband is not Gayo. The use of the Indonesian language is getting more significant because the direct linguistic "silsilah" is no longer Gayo.

From the results of observations and interviews with several sources in the city of Takengon, Gayo speakers by teenage boys are more dominant in using the Gayo language when they communicate with other teenage boys, but it is different when they talk to girls; boys are more likely to use language. Indonesian compared to Gayo, even though the female interlocutor understands and can speak Gayo. This is influenced by the habits, situations, and circumstances in which they communicate.

In the context of formal situations, young boys use Indonesian even though all audiences or participants can speak Gayo. In general, teenage boys use Gayo language more in their daily lives under any circumstances, they are more indifferent and don't care about people's stigma about bullying, dis-modernization or other stigmas from people. The boys are more aware and concerned about preserving the Gayo language from extinction (disappearing).

2. The Use of Local Language in Female Speakers in Takengon City

Generally, the awareness of using, saving, and inheriting the Gayo language from the Gayo community is relatively low. Meanwhile, the quality of knowledge of language and Gayo, in general, is decreasing. This is because the generation born in the 1930s to those born in the 1960s began to decrease one by one (died).

On the other hand, her linguistic blood "lineage" follows her husband. Automatically, Gayo language is no longer spoken. More broadly, Indonesian is used in a wider neighborhood and society. Including, by grandparents (awan anan) to their great-grandchildren (kumpu-piut) who were born in the 1990s (until present) who force them to speak Indonesian. Because, their grandchildren do not fully understand the Gayo language during the conversation. Moreover, when the Gayo language in the past, which had a metaphor and contained a high Gayo literary value, was used. The generation of this period—those born in the 1990s to the present time—is increasingly clueless.

In contrast to teenage boys, teenage girls prefer to use Indonesian in greeting and communicate with fellow teenage girls and boys even though there are certain things and conditions that young girls use Gayo language even though it is very minimally used in daily life, even in some cases. In the case of teenage girls who can no longer speak Gayo, this is because their daily interactions at school and in the campus environment are more dominant in Indonesian, made worse at home, their daily language, Indonesian has become their mother tongue, especially for people in urban areas. Adolescent girls more quickly adapt to the current environment so that it affects the habit of speaking Indonesian in daily life compared to using the local language (Gayo Language).

The speech of Gayo language in Gayo society itself has begun to decrease at this time, especially for young girls, which internally due to the attitude of speaking Gayo language speakers. Some Gayo speakers are more likely to use or replace the Gayo speech form with other words from other languages, especially Indonesian. For example, the use of the words ama and ine is replaced by the words ayah and mamak by Gayo speakers. The replacement is because the replacement words are considered more prestigious. Even the use of this speech is not infrequently used in the wrong form. In addition, externally, the decline in Gayo language speech is due to the influence of technological and information developments in the current era of globalization. So that there are changes and shifts in values in Gayo society including the use of Gayo language speech (Al Gayoni, 2009: 56).

3. Aspects Influencing The Use of Local Language in Male and Female Speakers in Takengon City

Based on the results of the study, the cause of differences in the use of local languages among men and women in Takengon City lies in the attitude towards the local language and differences in the age of the users. Based on the results of observations and interviews as well as the results of FGDs, there are different views on the use of local languages between male and female speakers. Male speakers tend to prefer to use the local language in their daily interactions. There is a view from male speakers that the local language is a cultural treasure that must be preserved.

> *"Saya selalu berusaha memakai bahasa lokal dengan teman-teman saya di sini karena itu merupakan salah satu upaya untuk melestarikan bahasa Gayo sebagai bahasa daerah. Kalau bukan kita yang melestarikan bahasa sendiri, siapa lagi yang akan bisa menjamin bahasa lokal ini akan terus ada hingga ke generasi penerus selanjutnya."* (Alwin, FGD,2022).

Meanwhile, for female speakers, there is a tendency to use Indonesian in the context of daily interactions. Several female respondents said that they were more comfortable using Indonesian than using the local language. Female speakers tend to feel left behind when speaking in the local language and there are concerns about being perceived as 'village' and 'out of date' when using the local language, especially when they are hanging out with friends in public places such as coffee shops or cafes that are 'contemporary'. This is not seen in male speakers who feel that using Indonesian is odd, except in formal contexts. In non-formal conversation situations such as in public space, if someone uses the local language, it will feel strange and there will be ridicule from other friends and assume that people who use Indonesian are 'pretentious'.

However, on formal occasions where officials usually attend, such as the Chancellor, at campus events, both men and women will use Indonesian. However, in a formal variety like this, sometimes the regional language is still inserted on several occasions, such as in the delivery of welcome words where some of the words in the speech are heard using the regional language.

> *"Untuk acara formal, tetap digunakan bahasa Indonesia. kadang-kadang juga walaupun dominannya menggunakan menggunakan bahasa Indonesia, namun tetap ada selingan menggunakan bahasa lokal. Jadi walaupun acaranya formal tetap ada atmosfir penggunaan bahasa lokalnya untuk membuat suasana tidak terlalu tegang."* (Elvi, FGD 2022).

In addition, differences in the use of local languages are also caused by age. From the observations and results of FGDs and interviews, it was found that those aged 40 years and over, whether male or female, used the local language more dominantly than those aged 40 years and under. This is because the younger generation, especially teenagers, have been exposed to the use of Indonesian and even other foreign languages, and also in the family environment they tend to use Indonesian as their daily language. Takengon City is also an area with a heterogeneous population who come from various ethnic groups such as Acehnese, Alas, Chinese and other tribes who come to Takengon to trade, have families, or work in coffee plantations.

CONCLUSION

Research on gender and language has identified that gender is one-factor influencing variations in language use. As male or female, human behavior in society is also influenced by the use of language in society. There are differences in preferences and use of local languages between men and women in the use of local languages. For Gayo language speakers, the study results show differences in preferences and use of the regional language or gayo language in Takengon City. This study shows that men in Takengon use the local language more often to talk to other gayo speakers, while women use Indonesian more frequently. However, Indonesian is more often used in the context of formal variety. However, sometimes local language is inserted, for example, in the introductory part of an opening remarks.

There is an awareness to maintain the existence of the local language, but the heterogeneity of the population sometimes makes the local language unusable all the time.

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