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The Language Family Relation of Local Languages in Gorontalo Province (A Lexicostatistic Study)

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the relation of language family and glottochronology of Gorontalo language and Atinggola language in Gorontalo Province. The research employed a comparative method, and the research instrument used a list of 200 basic Morris Swadesh vocabularies. The data source was from documents or gloss translation of 200 basic vocabularies and interview of two informants (speakers) of Gorontalo and Atinggola languages. Data analysis was done by using the lexicostatistic technique. The following indicators were used to determine the word family: (a) identical pairs, (b) the word pairs have phonemic correspondences, (c) phonetic similarities, and (d) a different phoneme. The results of data analysis reveal that there are 109 or 55.05% word pairs of the word family out of 200 basic vocabularies of Swadesh. The results of this study also show that the glottochronology of Gorontalo language and Atinggola language are (a) Gorontalo and Atinggola languages are one single language at 1.377 + 122 years ago, (b) Gorontalo and Atinggola languages are one single language at 1,449 - 1,255 years ago. This study concludes that (a) the relation of the kinship of these two languages is in the family group, (b) glottochronology (separation time between Gorontalo language and Atinggola language is between 1.4 to 1.2 thousand years ago or in the 12th – 14th century.Keywords: relation, kinship level, local language, Gorontalo Province, lexicostatistics study

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The Use of Language Variation in Narrating the Story of Lahilote by Students with Physical Disability at an Exceptional School in Gorontalo City

Ellyana Hinta[1]

ABSTRACT

Language is the most important communication tool that has various functions to be used in people's interaction. It is essentially utilized in every aspect of life in which there will be no good movement without a language. The same language used differently by some people is known as language variation that also takes place at an exceptional school (henceforth called as ES) in Gorontalo City, particularly the students with a physical disability. For that reason, this study aims to describe the use of language variation by the students with a physical disability at ES in Gorontalo City. Sociolinguistics theory about the use of language variation becomes the guideline of this study, and it refers to the speaker's language variation viewed by (1) lexical choice; (2) sentence; (3) intonation and (4) plot suitability. The result finally shows that the use of language variation by the students with a physical disability is based on the speaker's lexical choice, sentence arrangement, intonation, and plot suitability.

Keywords: ES-Gorontalo City, Folklore, Language Variation, Lahilote.
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1. Introduction

As the social creature, human's life is inseparable from a language due to the function of language in their activities. A language, as the communication tool, is having particular functions in interacting with other people in which they can deliver their ideas by using a language that is in line with Pateda (2009) who notes that language is one's systemic statement, thought, willingness, and feeling resulted from the organ of speech and used in the communication process. Accordingly, a language is the crucial communication tool that can connect people in their daily life and is essentially utilized in every aspect of life in which there will be no real movement without a language.

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Apart from functioning as the tool of communication, a language is also unifying all society's elements in every region as well as being a link in interaction process. The use of a language has something to do with people's activity, and therefore they are inseparable from each other.

A language user does not only concern with how good he uses the language is but also he will use a language variation in accordance with his ability, situation, condition and the environment where the communication takes place. Language speaker has different backgrounds such as region, culture, social status in the community, education level, job and its position, profession, and the role of the environment, so that it can lead to the variation of a language.

Linguistics and non-linguistics factors determine the use of language variation in communication process. Non-linguistics factors are related to social and society's cultural factor. Regarding this, Pateda (2008) states that language as a communication tool is complicated, and the use of it is influenced by the place, time, context and with whom we are communicating with.

People use language differently, which creates a language variation. A language used by students at ES is different from people's language use in general due to the students' condition that has a physical and mental deficiency.

Students' disability at ES are categorized based on the kinds of disability including hearing impairment, vision impairment, speech impairment, physical disability, social disability, intellectual disability, and autism. However, the focus of this study is the students with a physical disability of bones, muscles, joints and nerve system, so that they need a special service. Cerebral Palsy (CP), for example, is not a progressive disease and its condition is characterized by the poor muscle control, stiffness, paralysis and the other nerve dysfunction. The characteristics of physical disability are: (1) the limb becomes stiff/weak/paralyzed; (2) difficulty in moving around (imperfect, uncontrolled); (3) motion device disability; (4) difficulty in standing/walking/sitting and showing an abnormal body posture.

Concerning this problem, this study formulates a problem statement of "how is the use of language variation by the students with a physical disability at ES in retelling a folklore entitled *Lahilote*?" The purpose of this study is to describe the use of language variation by the students with a physical disability at ES in retelling a folklore entitled *Lahilote*.

As many as 21 physically disabled students at ES in Gorontalo City were involved in this study because they are using language differently from other disabled students, especially from the students without a disability. Thus, it is possible for them to communicate with their friends, teachers, and societies by using language variation. Internal and external factors commonly influence the use of language variation by physically disabled students. The internal factors are being; (1) embarrassed by their physical condition; (2) unconfident; (3) not expressive; (4) felt like lack of everything. External factors, in contrast, are including: (1) minimum family's economy; (2) the lack of family's support; (3) inadequate facility; (4) long distance between their house and school; (5) insufficient nutrient; (6) the lack of motivation from family, teachers and society.

These factors lead the physically disabled students to use different languages that there is a language mixing between one language and another such as Indonesian language, Gorontalo language and Malay language with Manado dialect. The inhomogeneous speaker does not cause language variation; it rather comes from various social interactions as well as the speaker's condition that is different from one another (Chaer & Agustina, 2010). The language variation used by the students with a physical disability at ES is found out when they are retelling a folklore entitled *Lahilote*.

Gorontalo folklore is considered easy to be retold or narrated by using their language style. This story was about a young hard-working and tough man named *Lahilote.* He was a farmer, and sometimes he tried to find woods in the forest. One day, when he went hunting in the woods, he saw seven angels bathing in the river. He wanted to take one of the angels' wings, hence, he sneaked a peek with an admiration of those beautiful ladies. Their faces were all the same, and then he took one of the angel's wings and hid it behind the bushes. Once the angels went by and disappeared, he came to an angel who was crying because she lost her wings. She was more depressed when her sisters left her alone in that place. At that time, *Lahilote* was pretending as a helping God that entertained her, made her able to marry him and lived together. In short, *Lahilote* was living together with her wife until she found her wings and flew back to meet her sisters in heaven. It was *Lahilote* who at last felt sad and depressed for losing his wife in order that he tried everything and struggled hard to meet his wife

again. For his patience, effort and hard work, he eventually had help from other creatures to see the angel, so that he made it ask her wife back on earth and lived happily ever after.

This story was audio-visually showed to make all of the disabled students watch it completely, except for the vision-impaired students who actively used their hearing sense. After being shown, each student or in the group was asked to come in front of the class to retell the story by using their own language style. All of them had the same opportunity to retell the story, and their language use was observed based on the kinds of disability. On that ground, there will be a comparison of language variation employed by the disabled students, although this study only concerns with the physically disabled ones.

2.   Theoretical framework

This study is the part of sociolinguistics; hence it is significantly required to explain about sociolinguistics that discusses language variation. As the branch of linguistics, sociolinguistics describes the characteristics of language variation and sets its correlation with the social features of the society. Kridalaksana in Chaer and Agustina (2010) claims that sociolinguistics is the study of the function and characteristics of language variation along with their relationship in language society. Sumarsono (2013) also argues that sociolinguistics covers not only the use of a language but also the language attitude and behavior towards the language and its use. One of the sociolinguistics functions is teaching us about how to use a language as Chaer and Agustina (2010) note that sociolinguistics explains how to use a language in the certain social aspect. This sociolinguistics knowledge can be helpful to communicate and interact with people since it provides a communication guideline that shows an appropriate language, language variation or language style used in communication itself.

In relation to those arguments, the theory of language variation is applied in this study. Chaer and Agustina (2010) explain two points of view of language variation; *Firstly,* it is an effect of the language speaker's social variation and its function. *Secondly,* it has fulfilled its function as the tool of communication in various people's activity. The first language variation based on the speaker is called idiolect or individual language variation, meanwhile the second language variation is named as dialect that comes from a group of speakers in one place where they live. This dialect is generally acknowledged as the real dialect, regional dialect or geographical dialect.

Unlike that theory, Pateda (2005) reveals that language variation can be observed through several aspects, including; (a) the aspect of location consists of dialect, local language, colloquial, jargon and vernacular; (b) the aspect of time is the temporal dialect such as Ancient and Modern Malay language; (c) the aspect of the language user includes glossia, idiolect, gender-based language, monolingual, bilingual, multilingual, sociolect, and age-based language; (d) the aspect of the language use consists of diglossia, Creole, oral language, pidgin, list, reputation, standard language, written language, spoken language, jargon, and *plesetan* language (a language play commonly used as an acronym to add a new meaning); (e) the aspect of situation is divided into the formal and informal situation of language variation; (f) the aspect of status is including mother language/mother tongue, national language, country's language, lingua franca, introductory language and formal language.

Aslinda and Syafyahya (2007) also confirm that language variation consists of four aspects, which are: (1) the aspect of the speaker is an individual and group language variation living in a particular area; (2) the aspect of the language as Nababan in Aslinda and Syafyahya (2007) argues is related to the function, variation or register that concerns with the field of language use; (3) the aspect of formality is divided into five parts as mentioned by Joos in (Chaer & Agustina, 1995) including: frozen, formal, consultative, intimate and casual; (4) the aspect of the used media consist of oral and written language variation. Oral language variation is orally delivered and supported by suprasegmental elements; nonetheless those elements do not exist in written language variation.

Besides the kinds of language variation, there are also the causal factors of language variation taking place including the speaker and his social interaction (Chaer & Agustina, 2004). The major factors are; (1) speaker. As the language user, the speaker plays an important role to create a language variation. If different people produce a language, language variation will definitely occur, and this will get broader when many speakers take part; (2) social interaction. Human, as the social creature, is obviously communicating with each other. A language is the only communication tool used in the social interaction; consequently, this social interaction leads to language variation.

According to Aslinda and Syafyahya (2007), individual language variation is *idiolect*, and group language variation is a *dialect.* Each individual has his own idiolect, or in other words, each of them is having typical traits different from others. Physical and psychological factors cause the difference between one's traits. Physical difference, for instance, relies on the organ of speech and disability, whereas psychological factor is caused by mental, character and intellectual differences.

As a result, varied language production from each individual is an interactive communication that has a particular principle in its relation to the aspect of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantic and intonation. Language variation refers to all elements of language including linguistic and semantic level.

3. Method of study

This study applied the descriptive method in which Suryabrata (2012) states that descriptive study is aimed at describing a situation or occurrence. Sukmadinata (2009) also notes that descriptive study is the basic study intended to describe the existing phenomena. The descriptive method does not merely explain something, but it also provides an understanding and adequate information. Regarding this, the descriptive method used in this study is aimed at describing the use of language variation by physically disabled students at ES in retelling a folklore entitled *Lahilote* through the audio-visual display.

The data were collected from the students at ES in Gorontalo City, specifically from the ones with a physical disability. The data collection procedures had been coordinated with the school's headmaster and teachers, and the accurate data collection was done in these steps: (1) gathering all students with hearing impairment, vision impairment, speech impairment, physical disability, social disability, intellectual disability and autism in a spacious room; (2) arranging their seats based on the kinds of disability; (3) asking the teachers to accompany the students based on their disability; (4) giving the students the clear direction time after time; (5) asking the students to pay attention to the direction of how to watch the video; (6) playing the 10-15 minutes video of *Lahilote* folklore (be repeated if needed); (7) the students were watching, listening and paying attention to the video; (8) the students then were asked to retell the story based on their own language style; (9) the students had to take turn and been guided by the researcher's team; (10) recording the students' photos, voices and languages adjusted with the criteria; (11) the students who could not finish their story were given an opportunity to tell it again as they wanted to.

The data were collected from some techniques as described by Maksum (2013), including: (1) observation was to find out the condition of the school, students, teachers, learning system, curriculum, and other things related to this study; (2) involved conversation observation technique in which the researcher participated and listened to the conversation that involved the language speakers as the focus of this study; (3) noting technique was to write relevant information regarding the research target; (4) recording technique was to complete and strengthen the process of this study that could not be fulfilled by other techniques such as the picture, performance, movement, voice, expression, and language used by the students; (5) unstructured interview is referred to free interview and does not apply the systematic interview guideline (Sugiyono, 2013). This technique was used to interview the students, particularly the teachers in order to have the secondary data to support the primary ones.

The data were then analyzed by (1) transcribing the data from documentation, photo, and recording to written form to be classified; (2) classifying the data about the language use of the disabled students based on the kinds of disability; (3) sorting out the data from the students with a physical disability as the focus of this study; (4) classifying the data about the lexical choice, sentence arrangement, intonation and plot suitability; (5) analyzing the data based on the obtained language aspects; (6) discussing the result of the analysis; (7) concluding the results of the analysis.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 The use of language variation by the students with physical disabilities at ES Gorontalo City

The findings described in this part is the language variation focused on the aspect of the speaker that can be viewed from the sociolect aspect or social dialect in which language variation regarding the speaker's status, class, and social status. This variation as noted by Chaer and Agustina (2010) is the most frequently discussed and time-consuming due to the speaker's personal problem such as age, education, job, level of nobility, the condition of the social economy and physical and psychological factors. Therefore, the language variation does not only refer to the plot suitability, but also to the difference of the lexical choice, sentence arrangement, and intonation aspects.

There are only four out of 21 physically disabled students at ES Gorontalo City marked by P1, P2, P3, and P4 who have retold the story of *Lahilote*. The performance of the disabled students cannot be forced due to their unusual condition, therefore the data analysis is adjusted with the number of students performed in front of the class.

Based on the findings, there are three language variations from the aspect of the speaker, including (1) lexical choice aspect. In retelling the *Lahilote* story, the students with a physical disability are guided by giving them a question in terms of lexical choice aspect. For example "what is the title of the story?", P1 then answers "*Lahilote.*" The next step, P1 tells that *Lahilote mencuri baju parampuan yang ada baranang* (*Lahilote* stole the woman's cloth when she was swimming). This sentence uses the lexical choice often applied in the daily conversation, and it indicates that the physically disabled students are still having a problem in the aspect of lexical choice. It is proven by the use of stole which should be moved or hid because the video obviously showed how *Lahilote* took and moved the angel's shawl to the hidden place so that she could not see it. Somehow, P1 uses the word stole that is not suitable for children's character building. The correct word therefore is moved which is similar to hide as well as the word cloth that should be shawl used as the angel's wings. The speaker tends to interpret that the things taken off when bathing is a cloth, yet it is actually a shawl. The word woman is exactly appropriate to the context, however this story tells about the angel in the river. In addition to it, there is a term *baranang* (was swimming) as Malay-Manado language used in daily conversation that it should be *berenang* (Standard Indonesian language) in the formal expression.

As a result, the correct sentence from the previous excerpt is *Lahilote* moved or hid the angel's shawl when she was swimming, although it refers to bathing; (2) sentence arrangement aspect. The sentence arrangement by the students with a physical disability at ES in Gorontalo city is in compliance with the aspect of lexical choice since a sentence is formed by the lexical choices. The description of the lexical choice as previously explained reveals that the syntactical choice is similar to the use of that lexeme or term. For instance, P2's sentence of the conversation between *Lahilote* and *Boilode Hulawa* who lost her shawl, *Lahilote* asked "*Wey* cewek cantik, kenapa kau *manangis*? (*Hey* beautiful girl, why were you *crying*?)". *Boilode Hulawa* then said, "sayapku *ilang* kakak-kakakku *so pigi kase* tinggal aku, aku sedih cuma *sandiri* disini (my wings *dissapeared*, and my sisters *had left* me *alone* here. I was so sad)". This sentence is mostly used in daily conversation same as the lexical choice. This is a language variation from Malay-Manado language such as in these words *wey* cewek cantik "wahai gadis cantik" (hey beautiful girl), kenapa kau *manangis*? "mengapa engkau menangis?" (why were you crying?), *ilang* "hilang" (disappeared), *so pigi kase* tinggal "sudah pergi meninggalkan" (had left), *sandiri* "sendiri" (alone). The term *wey* "wahai" (hey), in contrast, comes from Malay-Gorontalo language. Hence, the students' language variation can be viewed by the sentencing aspect that shows the influence of local languages including Manado and Gorontalo language; (3) Intonation.

All of the disabled students tend to produce the same intonation in retelling the story. They produce flat intonation because they do not pay attention to the punctuation such as comma, full stop, and question mark. The students with a physical disability are not an exception since they are not that different from others. The intonation is similarly produced so that they still need guidance in expressing the language itself. In making a sentence, some students need to be guided by using a tool and movement. "Ibu menyisir rambut (mom is combing her hair)," for example, the teacher should hold a comb and demonstrate it by combing someone's hair. Nevertheless, when the students are asked to repeat it, they only use basic words of "Ibu sisir rambut (mom comb hair)." That is how the students at ES use the language, and the teachers claim that students frequently produce a language with its basic words, although there is an affixion used in those words. This causes an incoherent expression in retelling the story, even if there is a suitability with the title of the story. Likewise, the students still

experience difficulty in retelling *Lahilote* story. The teacher's role, for that reason, is very crucial to help the language fluency of the students with a physical and psychological disability.

This research result finally confirms that the students with a physical disability use relatively varied language style in retelling *Lahilote* story. The causal factors that affect the language variation at ES in Gorontalo city, especially used by the physically disabled students are; (1) physical factor that influences one's language development. If he has a normal physical condition, there will be no language development interference, although it is too relative. It is because some normal people still have a problem in language development, particularly in oral language production compared to people with disability who tend to have a good language development; (2) intellectual factor in which an excellent language development is usually from the ones who have normal or above average intellectual capacity; (3) economic factor, several studies on the relationship between language development and social economy status of a family indicate that children from a poor family are commonly experiencing difficulty in producing a language compared to those who come from a family with better economic status. This case is caused by the dissimilarity of intelligence or learning opportunity in which poor family is assumed to have less attention to their children's language development; (4) Family factor as a means of the process of interacting and communicating with family, especially with parents who always educate, train and give the example of language production to the children. A good relationship between parents and their children will facilitate language production and vice versa. In consequence, children are facing problem in language production such as a problem in speaking, less concentrate, giving unclear expression and sometimes producing an impolite statement.

These factors affect the use of language variation by the students with a physical disability in retelling the folklore. This is in accordance with Suwito (1983) who argues that the influential factors of language use are social status, economic level, family, physical and psychological factors, gender and others.

Based on this explanation, it is concluded that the students with a physical disability are influenced by the mentioned factors in retelling *Lahilote* story. The language used by the physically disabled students is quite different from the other students, and the teachers are also required to graduate from the field of disability sciences.

5.   Conclusion

The conclusions are drawn according to the previous description, including (1) the students with physical disability at ES in Gorontalo City are using language variation of standard Indonesian language, Indonesian colloquial language, Malay-Manado language and Malay-Gorontalo language; (2) the language variation used by the students with a physical disability is based on the aspect of speaker that refers to lexical choice, sentence arrangement, intonation and plot suitability; (3) the language variation used in retelling *Lahilote* story is caused by physical factor, intellectual factor, economic factor and family factor.

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