



Karonese Language Shift of Young Generation

**Tita Nirmaliya
Siti Aisyah
Anna Tambunan**

**English Applied Linguistics Study Program
Postgraduate Program-Universitas Negeri Medan**

Diterima Desember; Disetujui February; Dipublikasikan April

ABSTRACT

This study deals with Karonese Language Shift of Young Generation. It employs qualitative research design with a case study. This study aims to describe: the reasons for Karonese shift into Indonesian language. The subjects were 20 young generations of Karonese, 10 young generations of intramarriage family and 10 young generations of intermarriage family. They were chosen from 10 young generations whose parents are Karonese father and mother and 10 young generations whose parents are Karonese father and Non Karonese mother. The ages range of the subjects were between 13-17 years old. The instruments used for this study were questionnaire and interview. The interview was used to obtain the reasons of language shift. The data were analyzed by Miles, Hubberman and Saldana's data analysis. There are two reasons of Karonese young generations use Indonesian language, the first is status of Indonesian language, there are (20%) of young generations from intramarriage family answer this reason and the rest of (80%) use Indonesian language because of social success. There are (50 %) of Karonese young generations from intermarriage family use Indonesian language because of the status of the language. The rest (50%) of the young generations use Indonesian language because of social success.

Keywords: *Language Shift, Young Generation, Karonese.*

How to Cite: *Nirmaliya, Tita. (2021). Karonese Language Shift Of Young Generation
Jurnal Linguistik Terapan Pascasarjana Unimed. 19 (1) (2022): 56 – 62.*

ISSN: 2407-7410

INTRODUCTION

Language shift is a kind of replacing process one language with another in a language community. Language shift that usually occurs as a change in usage habits from the use of one language to the use of another one. Language shifts usually appears in societies with

minority and majority communities, refugees or non-refugees, all of whom generally speak two or more languages in a situation they involved themselves. Language selection occurs when people choose the language they want to use in certain situations, whether formal or informal.

Language shift occurs in people with the use of two or more languages in everyday life. One of the two languages will be replaced or displaced because it is rarely used in society, in general most people will use the majority language that is understood by everyone to communicate, as Holmes (2013:58) state that the dominant language is used as a tool to communicate because it shows the degree of status, social success and self-esteem. A language was needed by people to communicate in a larger community. They choose the dominant language since it has an elevated position than their mother tongue and it can facilitate them to communicate easily. By speaking the majority language in the larger or complex situation, and master the dominant language they will be accepted in the society. When people use a language with the higher position level than other languages, the submissive or lower position level will disappear or die, it means that the language will be shifted by the dominant language. Weinreich (1968: 79) defines language shift as “a change in the habit of using one language to another. This shift, according to Crystal (1997: 215), can be a gradual or abruptly swift from one language to another. Holmes (2013:58) explains language shift as a shift or change from one minority language to a language that is more widely used by the community. Edwards (1985:71-72) mention that there are some indications on language shift. First, the language is losing ground as it has fewer users. It means that the language is no longer used in a small scope such as a family. Secondly, the higher level language becomes dominant over the lower level language and endangers the lower level language. Higher level language replaces the lower level language in every field. Lower level languages are no longer be spoken by the society and lead to the extinction of lower level languages. Thirdly, lower level languages are only used in remote areas where the area is the origin of the language and there are many speakers of the language in that area.

In addition Romaine (1994:53-54) states that in some cases the shift occurs because of pressure or willingness of refugees to use the language of the majority where their environment does not allow them to use their native language , e.g. Italian in the United States, the Gaels in Scotland and Ireland. The great loss or extinction of a language is called the death of a language. Many factors are responsible for the shift or extinction of a language, such as religious and educational background, sedentary patterns, mixed marriages, government regulations regarding the use of language in education. Language shift according

to Fasold, (1984: 213) refers to changes in the use of language within a community of speakers, such as when a community begins to use a language in various fields and functions in which its members previously used another language and variation in the number of speakers of a language. As Fishman (1991: 1) asserts that language shift often occurs in language communities whose mother tongues are threatened because their intergenerational continuity takes a negative turn, with fewer users or uses in every generation. It is clear that the language shift can be seen by fewer people using the native language and that it becomes less used in the next generation. Fewer users will quicken the loss of mother tongues and threaten existence of a language.

Language shifts can occur among refugees or immigrants in the same way that indigenous peoples do. Most children who follow their parents moving from their home areas to other areas are educated using a second language and their native language is rarely used because they begin to adapt to the surrounding environment and language to survive. It can be summarized that the process of language shift occurs when a particular language shifts the use of the original language, and usually occurs in the younger generation.

The existence of language is inseparable from human life. It can be said that everything related to human life in society involves language since it is the only way that interaction among tribes, ethnic groups, and religions take place. Language is the only way used to convey people's thought and aspiration. Indonesia as an archipelago country consists of various tribes, ethnicities and various religions. Every tribe and ethnic has their own local language. Local language in Indonesia is called as a mother tongue, since a mother giving birth to her babies, the first language taught by the mother to her children is her mother tongue. It can be said that the main language from their own mother that guide the children to use their mother tongue as they growing up. Usage phenomenon of vernacular are happened in human's life such as at home, at school, at bus, in the office, traditional market etc. Since previously explained Indonesia consists of many tribes where each tribe has their own regional language, so it is not surprising when we find people talking their vernacular like Javanese, Bataknese, Karonese, etc anywhere and in every activities aside of Bahasa Indonesia as the national language but unfortunately the using of the mother tongue are not too much, as we know that we are in a modern era, the use of the majority language is preferred in every area of life especially in supporting the understanding of technology and education development.

Language shift, can be categorized as language replacement it is a fast process where the community begins to shift its language and use another language that is more dominant.

Once a linguistic community abandoned their mother tongue, it will be hard to prevent the language from loss. Language shift has been a topic of research by linguists for many years but a clear and universal definition still hard to figure out. There are several possible reasons explaining the decline of languages in a multilingual setting. First, their decline could be caused primarily by internal factors. For instance, the lack of literacy in the minority language is one of the factors that can hasten language shift. Second, language loss could be caused primarily by external factors putting pressure on these different communities. For instance, language policies have been shown to have links with language shift.

This study conducts to observe such reason of shifting the language in the third generation of Karonese young people.

METHODOLOGY

This research will be conducted by using qualitative descriptive design in order to describe Karo language shift phenomena. Qualitative research describes and interprets what it is concerning with condition or relationship that exist, opinion that are held, processes that are going on, effect that are evident, or trends that are developing. Qualitative design attempts to describe what is going on and what data shows. Nazir (2003:55) states that a descriptive design is conducted to describe situation, events, or occurrences of the basic data. Therefore, in order to understand the phenomenon, the researcher elaborates the study, make a list and present it descriptively. Qualitative research includes two; case studies and multicase studies. This study was conducted as a case study. According to Meriam in Bogdan and Biklen (1992), the case study is the detailed examination of a particular context or topic, of a set of documents or of a particular event. This design was chosen because this study was conducted for a language case in one region. The research is conducted in Jalan bahagia, Padang Bulan Medan North Sumatera.

The source data of this study is subject from which the data can be obtained (Arikunto, 2010: 129). In this study, Karonese ethnics who lived in Jalan Bahagia, Padang Bulan. Karonese young generation were chosen as the subject of the study. Karonese young generation were selected as the source of data in this study. The average age of the subjects used was approximately 13-17 years. They were divided into two groups. They were Karonese young generation from intramarriage and intermarriage family. There were 10 subjects whose children were Karonese fathers and mothers and 10 subjects whose father was Karonese and whose mother was not Karonese.

Bogdan and Biklen (1992: 31) in qualitative research, the researcher is the key tool.

The qualitative researcher has the natural context as the direct source of the data and the researcher as the main instrument. This means that everything was controlled by the researcher. Data collection tools are used to obtain information depending on the objective of the study. The data collection tools are interviews, and cell phones.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data in this study were got from the interviews and transcribe of the interview from the young generations of Karonese. The interview sheets were used to found out the reasons of shifted Karo language into Indonesian language. Then, the researcher simplified the data. After describing the data in the tabulation then the data were organized in data display. The organization was explored and described in detail description in order to make it easier to draw the conclusion. The final step in the data analysis is to draw conclusions that can be seen in the research findings on the reasons why the younger Karonese generation shifted to Indonesian language.

The Reasons of Language Shift

Data on the reasons for the language shift occurring among the younger generations in Karonese were obtained from the interview with the subject of the younger generations in Karonese from intra and inter marriage families. The reason for the change of language that occurs among the younger generations of Karonese are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Reason For Language Shift

Language Users	Reason for Language Shift	Percentages (%)
Young Generations of Karonese from Intramarriage Family	- Status of Indonesian Language	20
	- Social Success	80
Young Generations of Karonese from Inter-marriage Family	- Status of Indonesian Language	50
	- Social Success	50

From the table 1 above, there are 20% of young generations from intramarriage family subjects answered that they shift Karo language into Indonesian language because of the status of Indonesian language.

“Karena bahasa Indonesia sudah dipergunakan sehari – hari di lingkungan sekolah, dan diwajibkan berbahasa Indonesia”

Another 80% of them answered that they shift Karo language into Indonesian language because of the social success. They wanted to make a good and easy to understand communication one each other, so they choose Indonesian language, because all of the people around them use Indonesian language.

“Karena teman-teman di sekolah beda suku, jadi supaya gampang harus pakai bahasa Indonesia.”

50% of the younger generation of intermarriage families responded that they had moved from Karo to Indonesian language due to the status of Indonesian language.

“Karena di sekolah, kami wajib pakai bahasa Indonesia”

The rest 50% of Karonese young generations from intermarriage family have the same reason with Karonese young generations from intramarriage family that is because of the social success.

“Karena tidak semua teman yang berbeda suku mengerti bahasa Karo”

In conclusion, there are two reasons Karonese choose Indonesian language as a language of communication. The first is the status of Indonesian language as the national language. The second is social success that by using Indonesian language makes them easily to communicate among other ethnics so they can achieve a successful communication. The young generations of Karonese shift Karo language into Indonesian language because of the status of Indonesian language and social success. The most dominant reason why the younger generation changed the Karo language to Indonesian is social success. By using the dominant language, in this case Indonesian language, the young generation of Karonese feel more comfortable and confident in talking with others and build closer relation with another different people from other tribes. The young generation of Karonese convinced themselves that by using the dominant language they can avoid misunderstanding when talking with other people.

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