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Examining language attitudes and use: A survey of Indonesian university students' loyalty to their ethnic languages

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ABSTRACT

Currently, a large number of ethnic languages worldwide are losing their vitality and popularity due to globalization and the influence of dominant languages such as English and Indonesian. Such a linguistic decline is both unsettling and disheartening because, in reality, this loss not only means a loss of communication tools but also a loss of identities and values. Against such a backdrop, this study aims to investigate Indonesian university students' attitudes to their ethnic languages and to explore the factors that influence students' fluency in their ethnic languages. To conduct this study, the qualitative method was used, and the data were obtained using questionnaires distributed to 78 university students from 10 universities across Indonesia through *Google Forms*. These participants were purposively selected from 18 different ethnic groups, including Ambonese, Balinese, and Sundanese. The findings indicate that there are various factors affecting the participants' fluency in their languages, namely domestic use of their ethnic languages and parental encouragement, which turned out to positively affect fluency and cross-ethnic marriages and relocation of environments, which negatively impacted the participants' fluency. Therefore, this study recommends two strategies to preserve ethnic languages: (1) teaching programs for ethnic languages: schools should administer classes to support students from ethnic-language-deprived backgrounds, and (2) local government policies: they are expected to issue and implement policies that encourage and protect the use of ethnic languages among younger generations.

Keywords: Attitude; cross-ethnic marriage; ethnic language; language loyalty; university students

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a linguistically diverse country with more or less 718 ethnic languages (Republika, 2019), spoken from Aceh to Papua. Indonesian is the national language of Indonesia, which has Malay roots but has thus far been broadly enriched by lexicon from English, Dutch, Arabic, Portuguese, and various ethnic languages, particularly Javanese and Sundanese (Zein, 2020). According to Budiwiyanto (2020), however, Indonesia's linguistic diversity is currently being threatened by influences from globalization and technological advancements in communication, such as the Internet. With more and more people going online, Indonesians are heavily exposed to various social media platforms that primarily use English and other international languages apart from Indonesian and ethnic languages.

Pertaining to this linguistic rivalry, both the instrumentalists and the primordialists have similar concerns about diminishing trends in the use of ethnic languages. In fact, they are merely different

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in terms of viewpoints: While the instrumentalist approach sees language as a tool to elevate ethnicity through constructed realities based on experiences, the primordialist view emphasizes language as an inherent identity marker tied to history and spirituality, both highlighting the ability to speak the ethnic language as a way to belong and identify with a specific ethnic community (Chee-Beng, 1997; Dorian, 2010).

Theoretically, Indonesian ethnic languages may also be referred to as traditional languages (Disbray & Wigglesworth, 2019). Thus, these ethnic languages are, to an extent, also traditional languages, and vice versa. This is the case because these languages, to a significant extent, define people's cultural identity. When a community speaks an ethnic language for a long time, it becomes both an ethnic marker and a tradition. Despite being an ethnic marker, it appears that the existence of ethnic languages is slowly being eroded by more dominant languages, such as Indonesian, which are used for broader social interaction (Disbray & Wigglesworth, 2019).

There seems to be a broad agreement that both ethnic languages and Indonesian have their own places and contexts of use. In reality, however, there are still concerns that Indonesian might replace ethnic languages, particularly due to the pressure of social media and pop culture. Apparently, in real-life communication, people tend to use their ethnic languages to communicate with one another in their daily interactions, and they speak Indonesian in more formal contexts. They also like to code-switch from Indonesian to an ethnic language and vice versa (Zein, 2019).

Another concern for diminishing ethnic languages, according to Alwi et al. (2000), is as time changes, so does people's ability to speak in their ethnic languages. As people live from generation to generation, ethnic languages are passed on, but apparently, later generations tend to lose some of their vocabulary due to various reasons, such as a lack of language loyalty and the influence of other languages. People's mobility also seems to have affected the language loyalty of speakers of ethnic languages.

One of the most significant factors that affects the overwhelming use of Indonesian is in the context of education. There is a general belief that education has the ability to change people's socio-economic statuses. Many young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds are attracted to bigger Indonesian cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, and Yogyakarta because these cities are well-known for their better education qualities compared to other places. Obviously, these people cannot use their ethnic languages to communicate with other fellow students in their new settings because their languages are not mutually intelligible. Indonesian appears to be the only option for this multilingual environment. This linguistic situation is exacerbated by the Indonesian educational settings that require the use of Indonesian in classrooms, which might further sideline ethnic languages (Wurm, 2002). This tendency appears to align with Ewing's (2014) argument that dominant languages tend to threaten weaker counterparts, which potentially silences ethnic voices and weakens people's cultural identities.

People's preferences and sentiments for languages actually constitute their linguistic attitudes, which are influenced by various factors. First, language loyalty, defined by Moeliono (1985) as the preference for one's native tongue above others and by Garcia et al. (2006) as a facet of nationalism, is one important sign. Second, language pride, or the emotional attachment to one's own tongue, and language awareness, or the reverence and observance of its customs and regulations, are frequently the sources of this allegiance. Pertaining to this issue, Pateda (1990) argues that language attitudes are a reflection of an individual's awareness of how to use language responsibly, which is similar to Fasold's (2001) perspective on respecting and possibly even designing and maintaining the language. Finally, Listyorini (2009) provides a summary of this by relating language attitudes to the decisions and preferences that individuals make regarding language use.

Based on the tripartite definition, language attitudes are comprised of interrelated cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. The cognitive facet encompasses beliefs about language, such as the notion that acquiring Welsh fluency enhances employment prospects in Wales. The affective dimension pertains to emotional responses towards language, for instance, feeling enthusiasm for poetry written in Welsh. Finally, the behavioral element reflects the behavioral tendencies associated with language attitudes. In this case, a positive attitude towards Welsh might translate into enrolling in Welsh language courses (Garrett et al., 2003).

Meanwhile, Marsudi et al. (2013) stress the need for language awareness for Indonesians in this global context and encourage language users to actively adhere to linguistic norms. Meanwhile, Marsudi and Zahrok (2015) relate this awareness with manifestations of linguistic loyalty, such as favorable views, conformity to formal norms, and enjoyment of the language. These opinions promote the significance of individual linguistic attitudes influenced by everyday activities, time, and surroundings.

Ethnic languages

In Indonesia**,** as stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (1945), ethnic languages are legally protected, as stated in Article 32, paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution, which states that "the state recognizes and preserves ethnic languages as national cultural resources." The status of ethnic

languages is defined in Chapter XV, item 36 of the 1945 Constitution, which states that "ethnic languages are part of contemporary Indonesian culture and one of the parts of national culture that are safeguarded by the state." Ethnic languages serve as communication instruments for persons who support the national language, notably Indonesian, in National Language Politics (Asrif, 2019).

Indonesian is used as a communication medium in the family, among friends in the neighborhood, neighbors, schools, and in the surrounding environment. The Youth Pledge of 28 October 1928 established Indonesian as the language of unification and the official language of the state. The language of the state is specified as Indonesian in Chapter XV, Article 36 of the 1945 Constitution. According to its history, the Indonesian language, which was derived from Malay, was used as a medium for communicative contact between ethnic groups and cultural liaisons (Badudu, 1985). Indonesian is strongly connected to ethnic languages as a national language.

The Language Development Body, better known as Badan Bahasa (2020), has mapped and verified 652 ethnic languages in Indonesia. The ethnic languages that have been identified and validated by the National Language Agency are 718-746 languages spread over 2,560 observation areas. Badan Bahasa has mapped out in detail, covering the Sumatra region with 26 languages, the Java and Bali region with 10 languages, the Kalimantan region with 58 languages, the Sulawesi region with 11 languages, the West Nusa Tenggara region with 11 languages, East Nusa Tenggara with 72 languages, the Moluccans region with 79 languages, and the Papuan region with 428 languages. Of these, the map explained, 74 languages have been assessed for their vitality, which consists of the categories as follows: safe (19 languages), stable but endangered (16 languages), experiencing decline (two languages), endangered (22 languages), critical (four languages), and extinct (11 languages).

There are 26 ethnic languages on the island of Sumatra, with Javanese being spoken in six provinces, Malay in six provinces, and Minangkabau in six provinces. The Batak language is spoken in four provinces, Bugisi in three provinces, and Banjar, Kayu Agung, and Sundanese in two provinces each. Aceh Darussalam (Aceh) has seven ethnic languages. There are five languages spoken in North Sumatra. Riau is home to five ethnic languages. The Riau Archipelago has one language, West Sumatra has three languages, Jambi has seven ethnic languages, Bengkulu has six, South Sumatra has seven, and Lampung has six.

There are 10 languages in Java and Bali, with the most widely spoken languages being Javanese in 6 provinces, Sundanese in 4 provinces, and Madurese and Malay in 2 provinces, respectively. Banten has three ethnic languages, namely Javanese, Lampung Cikoneng, and Sundanese. Jakarta has four ethnic languages, namely Bugis, Mandarin, Sundanese, and Malay. West Java has two ethnic languages, namely Sundanese and Javanese. Central Java has two ethnic languages, namely Javanese and Sundanese. Yogyakarta has one ethnic language, namely Javanese. East Java has three languages, namely Javanese, Bajo, and Madurese.

West Nusa Tenggara has 11 ethnic languages, whereas East Nusa Tenggara has 72 ethnic languages. West Kalimantan has 9 ethnic languages; East Kalimantan has 16 ethnic languages; Central Kalimantan has 23 ethnic languages; and South Kalimantan has 10 ethnic languages. North Sulawesi has ten ethnic languages; Gorontalo has three ethnic languages; Central Sulawesi has twenty-one ethnic languages; West Sulawesi has nine ethnic languages; Southeast Sulawesi has fourteen ethnic languages; Moluccans has 62 ethnic languages; and West Papuan has 102 ethnic languages.

Given the background information, a thorough investigation was necessary to determine the degree of linguistic fidelity among students on campus. Numerous scholars have studied linguistic allegiance in the past. In the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Karsana (2009) studied the speakers' fidelity to the Sundanese ethnic language. According to his investigation, the local Sundanese ethnic community was still committed to the Sundanese language. By using the Sundanese language in their dealings with other ethnic groups, they were able to successfully preserve it.

Studies exploring language attitudes and learning in higher education reflect a diverse picture. Mansyur (2018) links proper Indonesian usage to academic success, suggesting a positive connection between proficiency and loyalty. Sobarna and Andriyani (2013) examine gender differences, finding female students more cautious in their language choices. Nurani (2015) and Mulyanah (2017) address ethnic language loyalty, highlighting a decline in Javanese due to national language prioritization, while Sundanese attitudes vary across regions, with some showing higher foreign language appreciation. Kurniawati et al. (2018) focus on active Sundanese language maintenance efforts in Cianjur, identifying factors like cultural value loss, generational disinterest, curriculum marginalization, and globalization as challenges. These studies showcase the multifaceted nature of language attitudes, influenced by individual, social, and political contexts.

Most studies on language attitude or language loyalty typically focus only on one specific ethnic language or the loyalties of one ethnic group to their language or their attitude to other languages other than their own, as mentioned previously such as Karsana (2009), Nurani (2015), and Mulyanah

(2017). It turns out that one of the latest studies from Kartini and Sahidin (2021) is no different in terms of the research participants. All of them were Sundanese people. There were 50 boarding school students of Sundanese origin, and like most Indonesians, they were bilingual.

This current study differs from earlier studies. First, instead of focusing on only one ethnic language under investigation, our study examined the language loyalty of 18 ethnic language speakers from all around Indonesia. Our data were more extensive than all the previous studies on the issue of language loyalty. Thus, the results of the study would be more wide-ranging and trustworthy.

Second, the respondents of this study came from various universities, with a total of 10 universities scattered across the archipelago, which makes it more broad-ranging in terms of the spread of the subjects. This context of the study further strengthens the comprehensiveness of our empirical data so that although this study is qualitative in nature, the findings can, to a certain extent, represent a general sociolinguistic reality that is currently taking shape in most places in Indonesia.

Therefore, this current study aims to explore the complex relationships between Indonesian university students and their ethnic languages. Moving beyond a simple measurement of loyalty, the research seeks to examine two key issues.

Firstly, the study investigates the attitudes that Indonesian university students hold towards their ethnic languages. This facet examines the students' emotional connection to their heritage tongue: do they view it with pride and a sense of belonging? Or are there feelings of indifference or even negativity associated with the language? Understanding these underlying attitudes is crucial, as they can significantly influence a student's motivation to learn and use the language.

Secondly, the study examines the factors that shape university students' ethnic language fluency and their overall attitudes toward it. This exploration goes beyond simply identifying a decline or increase in usage. It seeks to understand the social, cultural, and educational forces that influence a student's language journey. Factors such as family language use, government policies surrounding ethnic languages, and the perceived societal value of the language can all play a significant role. By untangling these complex threads, the study aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by ethnic languages in Indonesia.

Through this comprehensive approach, the study is expected to not only describe the current loyalty landscape but also shed light on potential pathways for promoting the continued use and appreciation of ethnic languages among Indonesian university students.

METHOD

Relying on a descriptive qualitative approach (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Cresswell, 2013), this study gathered data from observed respondents through structured questionnaires and interviews to reveal their attitudes to their ethnic languages and a variety of factors affecting those attitudes and to assess their fluency in their ethnic languages. Closed and open questionnaires were used via *Google Forms* to collect quantitative and qualitative data, while in-depth interviews with one male and one female respondent explored their language practices further. This approach was intended to provide a detailed description of the language attitudes observed.

We decided to examine the language loyalty of 18 ethnic language speakers from all around Indonesia, namely Ambonese, Balinese, Batak, Betawi, Dani, Dayak, Javanese, Lani, Lembak, Moluccans, Malay, Minang, Muna, Padang, Palembang, Papuan, Sundanese, and Wamena because according to our evaluation, these languages still exhibit relatively strong vitality in terms of speakers. Thus, there are still hopes of maintaining the languages in the future.

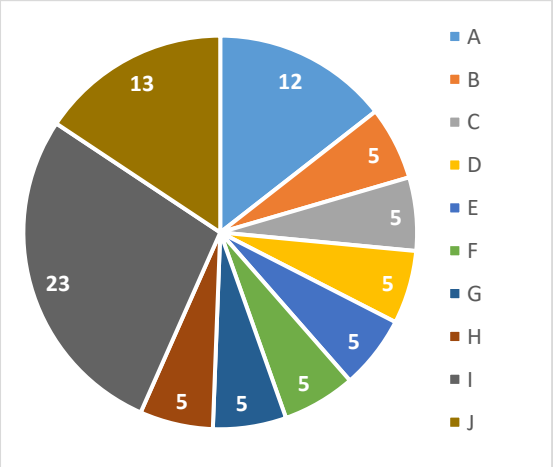
The data obtained were statements about loyalty to the ethnic languages. The respondents were students from several universities from various regions. The instrument used as a data collection tool was in the form of statements about the attitudes of the respondents' ethnic languages. The instrument was self-constructed to discover the students' language attitudes, namely: (1) information about the ethnicity of students' parents; (2) responses to the slogan of the Language Body (Badan Bahasa), i.e. Preservation of Ethnic Languages, Prioritizing Indonesian, Mastering Foreign Languages; (3) use of language when interacting with classmates; (4) use of language when interacting socially with patients or customers and the general public on social media; (5) and literacy in ethnic languages. This study's phase began with identifying and articulating issues and objectives, followed by choosing the method for collecting data, evaluating data, and preparing the report.

Figure 1 indicates the research phase adhered to in this study, starting with formulating the research background as to why this study needed to be conducted and what references were needed to conduct the study. The second phase was the formulation of research objectives, and then data were collected from participants using questionnaires and interviews. The fourth phase was data identification and processing to analyze and classify the data collected. Then, the findings were discussed against the previous studies, and finally, we wrote up the research report.

Figure 1
Research Phase

There were 78 participants selected through purposive sampling were involved in this study and provided data from 10 campuses (see Figure 2). They fulfilled our criteria used in this study; namely, they were university students from freshmen to sophomores, they were language majors, they had an ethnic identity, they spoke at least one ethnic language, and they were willing to participate in the study.

Figure 2
Respondent's College Origins



Their data are as follows: 1) campus A = 12 responses, 2) campus B = 5 responses, 3) campus C = 5 responses, 4) campus D = 5 responses, 5) campus E = 5 responses, 6) campus F = 5 responses, 7) campus G = 5 responses, 8) campus H = 5 responses, 9) campus I = 23 responses, and 10) campus J = 13 responses. Because not every respondent filled out their questionnaire, the number of respondents from each university differed.

Informed consent
For ethical reasons, a consent form was incorporated into the questionnaire to ensure that each participant's identity, such as name and status, was kept confidential and that their participation in the study was voluntary. All the responses were kept anonymous.

FINDINGS

The research findings include 1) ethnic origin of respondents' parents, 2) the language(s) used by the respondents' parents at home, 3) mastery of the respondents' ethnic language(s), 4) the language used by both respondents' parents at home, 5) the language used by the respondents' parents at home, 6) the number of ethnic languages learned by the respondents, 7) parents' remarks when the respondents speak ethnic languages, and 8) respondents' linguistic attitudes toward ethnic languages, Indonesian, and international languages. Each of the following paragraphs describes the data gathered in this investigation.

Ethnic origins of respondents' parents
The data on the ethnic background of the respondent's parents obtained in this study were collected through the following instruction: Write down the ethnic names of your parents (father and mother). Of the 58 pairs of parents of respondents who were screened based on these questions, 18 ethnic groups were found, namely Ambonese, Balinese, Batak, Betawi, Dani, Dayak, Javanese, Lani, Lembak, Moluccans, Malay, Minang, Muna, Padang, Palembang, Papuan, Sundanese, and Wamena.

Based on the responses, it was determined that each respondent had a pair of parents of the same ethnicity as well as separate ethnic groupings. According to the table below, respondents with the same ethnicity have 44 (75.86%), whereas the respondents with different ethnicities have 14 (24.14%).

Respondents' parents of similar ethnicity
This information was gathered using the same instructions as in part one, namely, writing down the ethnic names of both parents (father and mother). Based on the questions, as shown in Figure 3, 44 respondents whose parents were from the same ethnic group, both father and mother, were identified. They were Balinese, Batak, Betawi, Dani, Dayak, Javanese, Lembak, Moluccans, Malay, Minang, Muna, Palembang, Papuann, and Sundanese. The number of pairs of the same ethnicity is shown in Table 1.

Figure 3
Ethnic Origins of Respondents' Parents

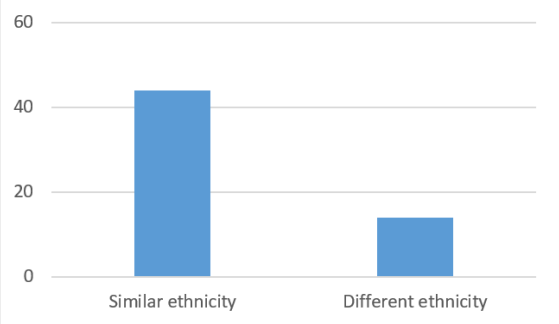


Table 1
Respondents' Parents of Same Ethnicity

No.	Ethnicity	Total
1.	Balinese	2
2.	Batak	9
3.	Betawi	1
4.	Dani	1
5.	Dayak	3
6.	Javanese	8
7.	Lembak	2
8.	Moluccan	1
9.	Malay	1
10.	Minang	2
11.	Muna	1
12.	Palembang	2
13.	Papuan	2
14.	Sundanese	9
	Total	**44**

Table 1 shows the data about the respondents' parents of the same ethnic group, such as a Balinese mother and a Balinese father or a Batak mother and a Batak father. It turns out that there are 14 groups of parents coming from the same ethnic group. As indicated in the table, it is clear that Batak and Sundanese parents are the highest in number (9), which might further suggest that there are fewer possibilities of mixed marriages among these two ethnic groups, followed by Javanese parents (8).

Respondents' parents of different ethnicity

Data on the characteristics of respondents with parents from various ethnic groups were collected using identical questions as in sections one and two previously. According to the questions, there are 14 respondents who have parents from various ethnic groups. Batak-Javanese, Batak-Sundanese, Betawi-Javanese, Javanese-Indonesian, Javanese-Sundanese, Padang-Sunda, Palembang-Sundanese, Papuan-Sundanese, Sundanese-Ambonese, Sundanese-Javanese, and Sundanese-Indonesian are among them. The number of each parent from each ethnic group is then shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Respondents' Parents of Different Ethnic Groups

No.	Ethnicity		Total
	Father	Mother	
1.	Batak	Javanese	1
2.	Batak	Sundanese	1
3.	Betawi	Javanese	1
4.	Javanese	Indonesian	2
5.	Javanese	Sundanese	1
6.	Padang	Sundanese	1
7.	Palembang	Sundanese	1
8.	Papuan	Sundanese	1
9.	Sundanese	Ambonese	1
10.	Sundanese	Javanese	1
11.	Sundanese	Indonesia	2
12.	Wamena	Lani	1
	Total		**14**

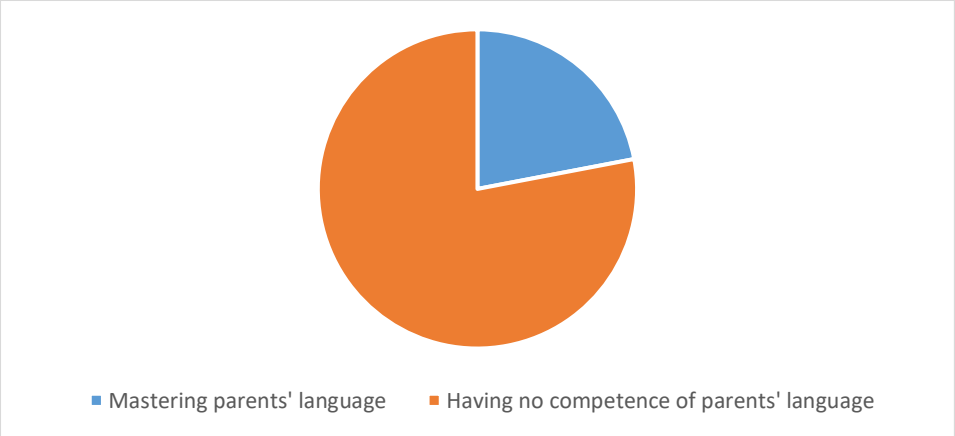
Table 2 indicates that there were 12 groups of parents who came from different ethnic groups. According to the table, four respondents said that either their father or mother was Indonesian but did not state whether they were from the Javanese or Sundanese ethnic group. In this regard, the respondent did not provide a specific explanation. As a result, the findings indicate that the parents identified as Indonesian by the respondents were born from parents of diverse ethnic groups, implying that their parents' status is Indonesian.

Respondent's ethnic languages

To determine the respondents' ethnic languages, they were examined with statement number 2: *I am fluent in my parents' ethnic languages*. According to this statement, 47 (78%) of respondents indicated that they master both of their parents' ethnic languages, whereas 11 (22%) of the other respondents did not.

Figure 4

Respondents' Ethnic Language



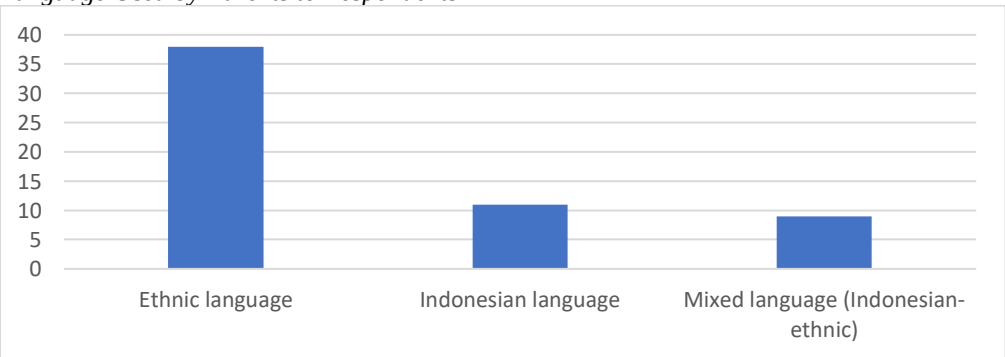
According to Figure 4, several respondents admitted that they do not understand their parents' ethnic language. They point to the fact that their regular communication in the home context is conducted in Indonesian. Other respondents said that they know the ethnic language spoken by both parents but are not fluent in it. Some respondents reported that they only know one ethnic language, such as Sundanese. One of these respondents was from Bandung and is the son of a Papuan father and a Sundanese mother. In this example, it becomes apparent that the respondent's language habits are influenced by the language of the community in which they live and interact.

Language(s) used by parents to respondents

Statement number 3 was used to determine the language used by parents to respondents at home, "When my parents communicate to me at home, they always use the ethnic language." Based on this statement, 38 (65.5%) of 58 respondents said they spoke ethnic languages, 11 (19%) said they spoke Indonesian, and 9 (15.5%) said they spoke mixed languages, as indicated in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Language Used by Parents to Respondents



According to Figure 5., 38 (65.5%) of the respondents agreed to use their ethnic language to communicate with their parents at home on a regular basis. It was discovered that 11 (19%) respondents disagreed, implying that the respondents do not communicate with their parents at home in the ethnic language. They did not imply what language he used at home to communicate with his parents. The study concluded that they use Indonesian based on these findings. It was also discovered that 9

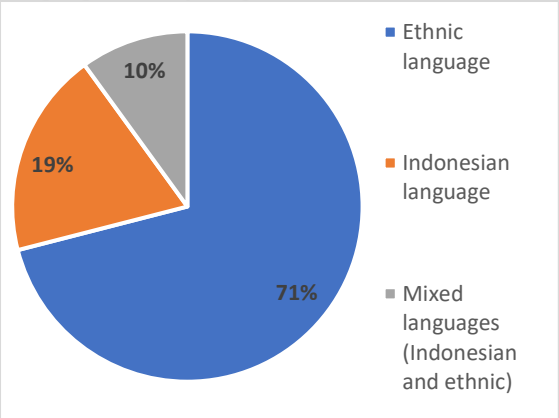
(15.5%) of the respondents remarked as follows in response to these questions: 1) occasionally in ethnic languages, 2) depending on the situation, sometimes in Indonesian combined with ethnic languages, and 3) exclusively in particular conditions.

Language used by respondents' parents

This question was posed to the respondent in order to elicit an example of parents speaking in the respondent's ethnic language to the respondent as their children. In this regard, question number four was used, i.e., what ethnic language do your parents speak at home (mother to father or vice versa). According to the data below, 41 (71%) of the 58 respondents converse in ethnic languages, 11 (19 %) in Indonesian, and 6 (10%) in a combination of Indonesian and ethnic languages.

Figure 6

Language Used by Respondents' Parents



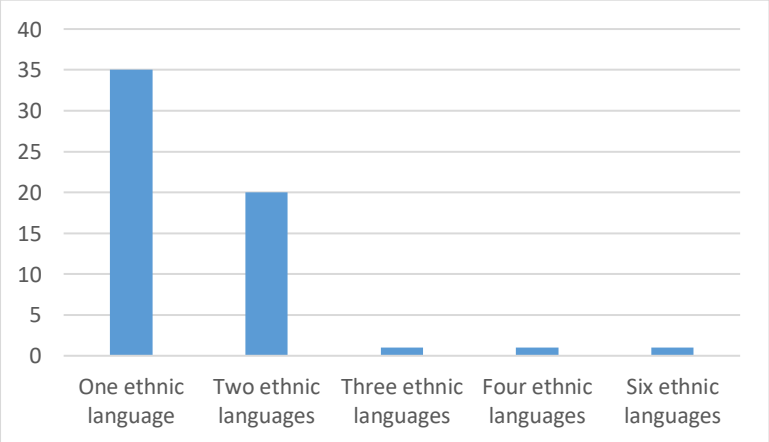
According to Figure 6, the parents of respondents who interact daily in their ethnic language are those whose father and mother are of the same ethnicity. It was revealed that 9 respondents spoke Sundanese, 4 spoke Batak, 8 spoke Javanese, 2 spoke Dayak, one spoke Indramayu, 2 spoke Minang, 2 spoke Malay, 2 spoke Papuan, 2 spoke Balinese, 2 spoke Muna, 2 spoke North Maluku, 2 spoke Lembak, 2 spoke Palembang, and one spoke Palembang. It was discovered that 11 (18.96%) of respondents' parents spoke Indonesian as their primary language at home. Another small percentage of respondents' parents, namely 6 (10.34%), converse in a combination of two ethnic languages and Indonesian. It was discovered that his parents belonged to distinct ethnic groups. In addition to Indonesian, both respondents' parents speak the following ethnic languages: 1) Batak and Sundanese because the mother is Batak and the father is Sundanese, 2) Dayak and Javanese because the mother is Dayak and the father is Sundanese, 3) Batak language Karo and Kulawi because the mother is from Batak and the father is Donggala Sulawesi, 4) Padang and Sundanese because the mother is Padang and the father is Sundanese, 5) Palembang and Sundanese because the mother is from Palembang and the father is Sundanese, and 6) Betawi and Javanese because the mother is Betawi and the father is Javanese.

Number of ethnic languages mastered by respondents

Question number 5 was posed to obtain data on the respondents' knowledge of ethnic languages, namely, how many ethnic languages do you speak, and which ones? According to the data obtained from these questions, 35 (60.35%) of the 58 respondents mastered one ethnic language, 20 (25.60%) mastered two ethnic languages, one respondent (1.30%) mastered three ethnic languages, one respondent (1.30%) mastered four ethnic languages, and another respondent (1.30%) mastered up to six ethnic languages, as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Number of Ethnic Languages Mastered by Respondents



It is depicted in Figure 7 that 8 Sundanese-speaking respondents, 7 Javanese-speaking respondents, 3 Betawi-speaking respondents, 2 Balinese-speaking respondents, 2 Batak-speaking respondents, 2 Padang-speaking respondents, one Moluccas-speaking respondent, a Malay respondent, a Muna respondent, a Palembang respondent, a Lembak respondent, an Ambonese respondent, a Dayak respondent, and a Dani respondent. Respondents who mastered two ethnic languages, namely six respondents who mastered Batak and Sundanese, four respondents who mastered Javanese and Sundanese, three respondents who mastered Padang and Sundanese, one respondent who mastered Palembang Malay and Sundanese, one respondent who mastered Wamena and Lani, one respondent who speaks Ma'anyan and Ngaju, and a respondent who speaks Javanese.

In addition to Indonesian, the respondent's language includes up to six ethnic languages, namely Javanese Ngapak language, Jogja Javanese language, Linggau language, Palembang language, Padang language, and Dusun language. In addition to Indonesian, the respondent's language may include up to four ethnic languages, namely Punan Dayak, Kantuk, East Kalimantan Dayak, and Malay. Meanwhile, in addition to Indonesian as the national language, the respondent's language may include up to three ethnic languages, including Karo Batak, Kulawi, and Sundanese.

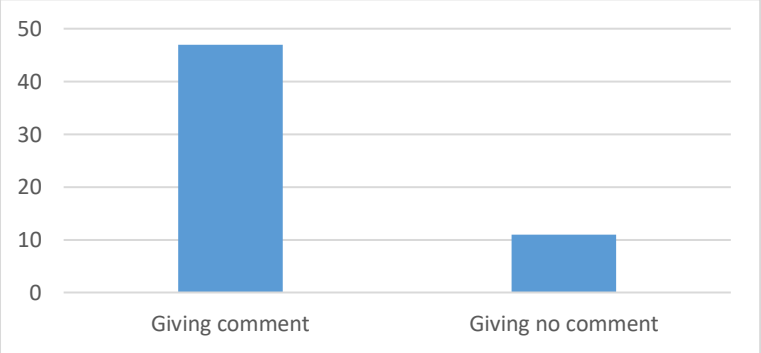
Respondents who were contacted for this study tended to be fluent in their ethnic language. Some of them are fluent in more than one ethnic language. Mastery of the respondent's ethnic language demonstrates his devotion to the language. The results of this study's questionnaire data show that cross-breeding of two ethnic groups does not exclude the usage of ethnic languages. On the contrary, cross-breeding can help expand children's linguistic knowledge. Some respondents know the ethnic language of the environment in which they reside in addition to knowing their father's and mother's ethnic languages.

Parents' comments when respondents speak an ethnic language

This question was posed to determine the respondent's parents' awareness of the ethnic language. To reveal the information, question number 6 was asked, namely, have your parents ever commented on the ethnic language you use while communicating with them? If so, what did they say? 47 (80.7%) of the 58 respondents claimed that their parents remarked on the ethnic language they use, whereas 11 (19.3%) stated that their parents did not comment. In addition, as illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Parents' Comment



In Figure 8, the parents' comments on the respondent differed. The contents of the comments include (1) selecting the right vocabulary when speaking, (2) speaking fluently, (3) being satisfied with the ethnic language you have, (4) learning to use the ethnic language correctly, (5) using the ethnic language politely, (6) prohibits speaking the ethnic language with harsh words, (7) should learn many ethnic languages, (8) use ethnic languages according to the situation and conditions, (9) When speaking to elderly people, use polite ethnic languages; (10) enunciate correctly and use terms appropriate to the situation; and (11) do not be impolite when speaking in the ethnic language. According to the numerous remarks above, the general message of the parents' comments to the respondents is that they often advocate learning the ethnic language so that they may master and use it well.

Respondents' loyalty to ethnic languages

Statement number 7 was used to compute the degree of the respondent's loyalty to their ethnic languages, quoted as saying, "As an Indonesian, I believe it is important to preserve the indigenous language." In response to the statement, data from 58 respondents revealed that all 58 (100%) agreed. This suggests that respondents believed they were responsible for preserving the ethnic language. As a result, the study might conclude that respondents support the preservation of ethnic languages.

Respondents' loyalty to ethnic languages

In this study, it is critical to collect data on respondents' opinions regarding ethnic, Indonesian, and international languages. This information may be used to represent respondents' thinking abilities and intellect when selecting the appropriate language to communicate with the other person. Questions 9, 10, and 11 were used to obtain data on linguistic attitudes regarding the three languages.

Data on the respondents' language attitudes towards the ethnic language are captured by statement number 9; namely, efforts to maintain ethnic languages are used as a means of daily communication in formal and non-formal situations. According to this statement, 44 (75.86%) and 14 (24.14%) respondents disagreed. Respondents who disagreed with the statement stated that (1) for formal events, it is better to use a language that can be understood by everyone, namely Indonesian; (2) it is better to adapt to the situation if in a formal situation and the majority of Javanese people, of course use the polite Javanese language; (3) the ethnic language is not used every day, but there needs to be a special day to use their ethnic language, (4) because everyone has a diverse language and cultural background, in formal situations it is necessary to use a unified language, namely Indonesian; (5) ethnic languages should be used in non-formal activities, but for activities that take place in formal situations, Indonesian language should be used.

Data on the respondent's language attitude towards Indonesian was captured by statement number 10, "As an Indonesian, I prioritize speaking Indonesian in my daily communication" (P9). To this statement, 65 (83%) respondents agreed, while 13 (17%) other respondents disagreed. The reasons they disagreed were: (1) not putting too much emphasis on the ethnic language so that it would not be destroyed or forgotten; (2) when I communicate in daily life, I always codemix in using the ethnic language, depending on the interlocutor; (3) depending on who you are talking to; (4) according to the circumstances and the interlocutor; (5) depending on needs and conditions; (6) depending on the situation.

Data on the respondents' language attitudes towards foreign languages are captured by statement number 11, "As an Indonesian, I think it is important to master a foreign language" (P10). Against this statement, it is established that 68 (87%) respondents agreed, and a small proportion of 10 (13%) respondents disagreed. The reasons they state it is important to master a foreign language include (1) that foreign languages are important for us to communicate with other people abroad; (2) foreign languages can be used by us to acquire knowledge; (3) we use a foreign language for communication between nations; (4) it is important to master a foreign language so that we can know the other outside world; (5) in order not to be outdated, we must master foreign languages; (6) in this global century, we must master foreign languages; (7) with a foreign language, we can reveal information that comes from abroad; (8) to discover the culture of other nations, we need to master a foreign language. Looking at the data shown above, it is possible to conclude that only a small fraction of respondents are aware of the need to select and sort out the appropriate language while talking with an interlocutor in official and casual settings.

DISCUSSION

In general, this study reveals that parental encouragement and inter-ethnic marriages were found to positively influence students' ethnic language abilities in this study. This aligns with Dardjowidjojo's (2014) view that both parents play a crucial role in language transmission through their daily communication.

Contrary to Glock and Bohmer (2018), who said that participants with more unfavorable implicit views judged ethnic minority pupils less favorably, the findings are examined in terms of how they may affect ethnic minority pupils and classroom relationships, as well as teacher education programs. According to our findings, respondents had a positive attitude toward their ethnic language. They declared that as Indonesians, they promised to keep the Indonesian language. This statement supports the government's attempts to preserve ethnic languages that are on the verge of extinction, as stated by Zuraya (2016), who cites Badan Bahasa's data indicating that 139 ethnic languages are on the verge of extinction.

Most respondents were found to possess a degree of fluency in an ethnic language, but some lacked it due to mixed-ethnic parents. These individuals often identified as Indonesian and tended to mix languages in daily speech. This finding aligns with Fuad's (2015) research on linguistic interference in inter-ethnic families but suggests a more nuanced picture compared to Holmes et al. (2013) assertion of potential language loss through intermarriage. This complexity highlights the interplay between intermarriage and language use, requiring further investigation.

Similar to Leimgruber et al. (2018) work, this current study found variations in multilingualism and language attitudes linked to socio-economic and ethnic factors. Interestingly, some children from inter-ethnic marriages even demonstrated fluency in multiple ethnic languages, suggesting a more complex picture than simple language loss concerns.

Contrary to findings by Lim-Ramos et al. (2020) and Fuad (2015), this study found no significant difference in language attitudes based on parental ethnicity or educational attainment. Interestingly, some respondents from inter-ethnic

families reported diverse vocabulary from both parents' languages, challenging arguments about language loss in such contexts. However, relying solely on self-reported data limits the study's conclusions.

In terms of intermarriage families, Seli (2020) identified diverse factors influencing language choice, echoing Sugianto's (2018) observation of bilingualism and potential cultural enrichment. Interestingly, our findings align with Henderson et al. (2020) in showing positive language attitudes among higher-level students and females. Additionally, Martono et al. (2021) highlight students' commitment to fostering Indonesian in border regions, reflecting their national identity awareness. These studies by Seli (2020), Sugianto (2018), Henderson et al. (2020), and Martono et al. (2021) offer valuable insights into the complexities of language use, attitudes, and identity in various contexts. Based on the facts above, it is possible to conclude that there are two possible outcomes in children's language competence when a cross-marriage occurs. First, there is a degree of loss of the ethnic language(s) in the household since the husband and the wife speak in colloquial Indonesian (*bahasa gaul*). Second, the family might generate children who are fluent in more than one ethnic language, as well as colloquial Indonesian and possibly also foreign languages.

Meanwhile, the respondents stated that it is important to master a foreign language, not for daily communication tools, but for communication with other people when abroad, tools for acquiring knowledge, relations between nations, knowing the other outside world, not being outdated, facing an increasingly advanced global century, knowing information coming from abroad; knowing the culture of other nations. The assertion is consistent with Sinaga's (2010) belief that learning a foreign language promotes academic performance and helps to advance one's career in the workplace.

It turns out that the respondents recognized the importance of learning a foreign language. They are, nonetheless, able to preserve the ethnic language while using Indonesian as the national language and communication. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Getie's (2020) research, which found that people who acquire foreign languages do not always lose attachment to their own language and culture. According to the findings of studies on Japanese children who study English and Western culture, it does not impede them from being loyal and proud of their language and culture. Similarly, Widianto and Zulaeha (2016) assert that speakers who are fluent in two or more languages have the capacity to pick a language (language choice) in formal and informal circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, it is possible to conclude that respondents had positive attitudes toward regional languages in general. This is due in part to their parents' behavior at home, who use the ethnic language as a form of communication every day. In this survey, respondents were divided into two groups: those with parents of the same ethnicity and those with parents of different ethnicities. Respondents with the same ethnicity were 44 (75.86 percent), while those with different ethnicities were 14 (24.14 percent). They were Balinese, Batak, Betawi, Dani, Dayak, Javanese, Lembak, Maluku, Malay, Minang, Muna, Palembang, Papuan, and Sundanese.

In general, the respondents are fluent in both of their parents' ethnic languages. There are only a few of them who do not speak their parents' ethnic language. The majority of respondents' parents communicate in the ethnic languages at home on a regular basis, both to these respondents and between the respondents' parents (father and mother). Only a small percentage of the population speaks Indonesian on a daily basis. Respondents tended to be fluent in one regional language. Only a small percentage do not speak an ethnic language. Even among the respondents, there are people who are fluent in more than one regional language in addition to Indonesian.

Our contribution to the field of language maintenance is clear, namely, raising an awareness of the current context of ethnic languages in Indonesia. We have conducted research that far outweighs most previous studies that typically only focus on one ethnic language. With more data involving 10 ethnic languages in Indonesia, we have been able to display a bigger picture of what is actually happening among speakers of ethnic languages. We have also been able to provide recommendations for education institutions, families, and the government to act more strategically to promote the use of ethnic languages among the speakers so that they can survive and flourish into the future.

Given such a decline in terms of ethnic language fluency among Indonesian students from cross-ethnic marriages, we would like to recommend two initiatives to curb this sociolinguistic shrink. The study identified two crucial approaches to bolster ethnic language preservation. Firstly, it emphasizes the need for targeted educational programs. Schools should establish initiatives specifically geared towards students from families where the ethnic language is not spoken at home. These programs can function as a bridge, offering essential resources and opportunities for these students to develop and retain fluency in their heritage tongue.

Secondly, the study highlights the importance of local government involvement. By enacting

policies that promote and safeguard ethnic languages amongst younger generations, local authorities can significantly contribute to language preservation efforts. This could involve initiatives such as incorporating ethnic languages into school curriculums, supporting community language programs, or even broadcasting media content in these languages. By working together, educational institutions and local governments can create a more supportive environment where ethnic languages can flourish.

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