

A Case Study of Sustainability Problems of the Local Language and Culture Education in Lampung Province, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Based on the result of my field research, I will focus on the sustainability problems of a local language and culture of Lampung, Indonesia, which considered to be disappearing by both the local government and academics. For preservation, the language and culture started to be educated compulsory in both elementary and junior high schools of the province since mid 1980s. However, it is not a simple preservation program that is targeting on an ethnic group that speaks the Lampung language, the Lampung people.

There are some peculiar factors for the sustainability. First, though Lampung province is where domestic migrants dominates the population, the local language and culture should be taught to children of both migrant and Lampung ethnics, and many of teachers also different ethnic origins who are not familiar with the language and culture. Second, for historical reasons the ethnic Lampung itself is composed of various sub-ethnic groups whose customs and dialects are also varying, but the component of education is not well reflecting their diversity. Third, there is also reflects a national shift in the political identification of a culture from ethnic to regional, therefore Lampung language and culture are taught as a culture inherent to a region, not to an ethnic group. This is also a reason why every child should study unfamiliar language despite one's ethnic origin. Fourth, development, urbanization and inter-ethnic marriage, for example, decreases the chance of speaking the language even among family.

Keywords: domestic migration (transmigrasi), socio-cultural change, education, Indonesia

1 INTRODUCTION

Lampung province is locating at the southern extremity of the Sumatra island, Indonesia, and the indigenous ethnic groups of this area are comprehensively called as the Lampung people ("orang Lampung" in Indonesian, see Table 1). The Language and culture have been considered to be disappearing by both the government and academics, therefore for preservation, the language and culture started to be educated compulsory in both elementary and junior high schools in the province since mid 1980s.

Table 1 Customary Category and Ethnic Groups of the Lampung People

Customary Category	Ethnic Group
Adat Pepadun	Abung Siwo Mego
	Pubian Batin Telu Suku
	Mego Pak
	Way Kanan
	Sungkai
Adat Saibatin	Pesisir Belalau Krui
	Pesisir Pemanggiran
	Pesisir Semangka

1.1 Historical and Geographical Background

Historically, Lampung have been one of the most important pepper production areas, so maritime powers like Banten kingdom of west Java or Palembang kingdom of mid Sumatra had kept on influencing the Lampung people politically for securing the profitable pepper trade. Even now Lampung is a cash crop area, which focused on pepper, coffee, palm oil, cacao, sugar cane and so on.

Since 1905 under the ethical policy of Dutch colonial rule, many people have been migrated to Lampung, mainly from Java island, for to reduce the population pressure of Java (called kolonisasi / transmigrasi in Indonesian.) Even after the independence of 1945, same policies have been executed continually, especially under Suharto regime. In 1971, the population of Lampung province was 2.7 million people, but it was over 7.6 million people in 2010. The rapid population growth was accelerated because most migrates of the earlier years were young newlyweds aged from late 20s to early 30s, often with infants. Statistic data of 2000 shows that the nearly ninety present of the inhabitants are migrants. Not only in the urban area but even in the rural area, people live in the multi-ethnic situation. It was taken as a process of "javanization (jawanisasi)" both politically and culturally by the Lampung people.

1.2 The Influence of National Language

After the independence of Indonesia, based on the article 36 of the constitution 1945, bahasa Indonesia is the national language, which has been educated in every school of the state, also used in public. On the other hand, the legal base for local language is the explanatory note of the article: "In the area where the original languages have been well-protected and inherited (like the Java, the Sunda, the Madura and the other languages), the government will pay honor to the language and will preserve it." In 1988, the Guidelines for State Policy (GBHN: Garis Besar Haluan Negara), clearly declared that "the preservation and progress of national language should be continued with any possible efforts, and the good, correct and honorable usage should be spread into the society," while on local languages, "a local language, which proves the uniqueness of the Indonesian nation, should continuously be preserved for to fertilize the inheritance of national language and national culture.[3]" In short, clearly the local language is subordinated to the national language.

It is since late 1970 that academics and the government started to worry about the extinction of "the original languages which have been well-protected and inherited" in the near future. In 1976 when the research project for "national language, national literary, local languages, and local literary" was started, and conducted in ten provinces. Further researches were conducted in 1981 for five more provinces, and five more provinces in 1983, including Lampung. The other areas were also conducted the same research after that. Behind Java and Bali, the Lampung language and culture were recognized as disappearing by both the local government and academics [1,2,4].

2 LAMPUNG LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EDUCATION (MUATAN LOCAL)

2.1 Establishment of the Education System

The Lampung language and culture education program were implemented based on the researches above. The members of curriculum committee were from the provincial assembly, from the department of Education and Culture, also from other organizations. The committee members have also discussed necessity of the Lampung language education itself, and there was also an opposing opinion even from a member of the provincial assembly of the Lampung origin. The decision was led by the government and only after the decision, the committee asked for opinions and information to the customary high-ranked people.

The test curriculum was started since the late 1980s as a supplementary class, and in 1990 it has become taught regularly but still in option, and finally in 1994 it became a compulsory one. The goal of the curriculum is to "acquire the daily conversation level" and for to achieve this goal, a committee for preparation was organized. The chair and the vice chair were Javanese teachers who were transferred to this province, and one of the members is a Balinese woman, who has ever committed herself to Balinese language curriculum committee also an academic of Lampung University. No Lampung language specialists of her colleagues could be a member of the committee. We can now see the main focus of the education system was to teach non-Lampung people the language and culture.

Currently no full-time teacher for the language exists although in mid 1990s a three year diploma course for the language was opened at Lampung University but it was closed years later because any of the graduates was not accepted as the specialist by the province against their expectation. Therefore, teachers for other subjects still teach the language, and teachers of other ethnic origins often teach the language to the Lampung students. In rural areas where teachers are limited in number, sometimes newly transferred teacher from Java to the rural area teaches the language to the Lampung pupils while he is also studying the same textbook, for example.

2.2 Studying the Language and Culture

Table 2 Ethnicity of the Parents of Students

School	Parents are the Lampung	A Parent is the Lampung	Other
A elementary school	1	4	18
B elementary school	0	7	22
C junior high school	3	7	31
D junior high school	8	12	28
E junior high school	1	18	32
Total	13	48	131

Table 3 Choice of the Language

Situation	Indonesian	Lampung	Other
Usual Conversation	154	7	12
With Father	154	7	11
With Mother	152	7	13
With Friends	167	1	3

Regardless of one's ethnic origin, one should learn the Lampung language if one is an elementary school pupil or junior high school student in the province. As the Lampung is now become a minority group in this province, basically the curriculum is executed for the class where the Lampung are the minority.

Many students learn passively, because it will never contribute for their entrance examination to higher education, and also they don't have enough chances to use the language in their daily life (see Table 2 and 3.) Teachers of a junior high school agreed that the language level of students was far from capable of using it for daily conversation. Teachers said that students should speak in fluent as they studied the language from elementary school but not in practice. Most of students passively study it as a duty.

If we see the junior high school textbook, it is impartially composed of stories about historical figures, ancient kingdoms, rituals, customs, and local tools from every part of the region.

There is usually no opinion of the local language education from students' families; none even expressed the pros and cons on the local language education. On the contrary, sometimes parents gained the information from their children like "Lampung language has two dialects."

3 CONCLUSION

There are some peculiar factors for the sustainability. First, though Lampung province is a place where domestic migrants dominates the population, the local language and culture should be taught to children of both migrant and Lampung ethnics, and many of teachers also different ethnic origins who are not familiar with the language and culture. Second, for historical reasons the ethnic Lampung itself is composed of various sub-ethnic groups whose customs and dialects are also varying, but the component of education is not well reflecting their diversity. Third, there is also reflects a national shift in the political identification of a culture from ethnic to regional, therefore Lampung language and culture are taught as a culture inherent to a region, not to an ethnic group. This is also a reason why every child should study unfamiliar language regardless of one's ethnic origin. Fourth, development, urbanization and inter-ethnic marriage, for example, decreases the chance of speaking the language even among family. Therefore even though the government has been making lots of pupils and students to engage in studying for over 20 years, it looks not contribute to the increase of its speakers.

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