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CONTENTS

Editors' Note	
PRESRIPTIVE VERSUS DESCRIPTIVE LINGUISTICS FOR LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE: WHICH INDONESIAN SHOULD NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS LEARN?	1 - 7
<i>Peter Suwarno</i>	
PEMBINAAN DAN PENGEMBANGAN BAHASA DAERAH?	8 - 11
<i>Agus Dharma</i>	
REDISCOVER AND REVITALIZE LANGUAGE DIVERSITY	12 - 21
<i>Stephanus Djawanai</i>	
IF JAVANESE IS ENDANGERED, HOW SHOULD WE MAINTAIN IT?	22 - 30
<i>Herudjati Purwoko</i>	
LANGUAGE VITALITY: A CASE ON SUNDANESE LANGUAGE AS A SURVIVING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE	31 - 35
<i>Lia Maulia Indrayani</i>	
MAINTAINING VERNACULARS TO PROMOTE PEACE AND TOLERANCE IN MULTILINGUAL COMMUNITY IN INDONESIA	36 - 40
<i>Katharina Rustipa</i>	
FAMILY VALUES ON THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL/HOME LANGUAGE	41 - 45
<i>Layli Hamida</i>	
LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND STABLE BILINGUALISM AMONG SASAK-SUMBAWAN ETHNIC GROUP IN LOMBOK	46 - 50
<i>Sudirman Wilian</i>	
NO WORRIES ABOUT JAVANESE: A STUDY OF PREVELANCE IN THE USE OF JAVANESE IN TRADITIONAL MARKETS	51 - 54
<i>Sugeng Purwanto</i>	
KEARIFAN LOKAL SEBAGAI BAHAN AJAR BAHASA INDONESIA BAGI PENUTUR ASING	55 - 59
<i>Susi Yuliawati dan Eva Tuckyta Sari Sujatna</i>	
MANDARIN AS OVERSEAS CHINESE'S INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE	60 - 64
<i>Swany Chiakrawati</i>	
BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PERSPEKTIF KEBUDAYAAN DAN SOSIOLINGUISTIK: PERAN DAN PENGARUHNYA DALAM PERGESERAN DAN PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA	65 - 69
<i>Aan Setyawan</i>	
MENILIK NASIB BAHASA MELAYU PONTIANAK	70 - 74
<i>Evi Novianti</i>	

PERGESERAN DAN PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA SERAWAI DI TENGAH HEGEMONI BAHASA MELAYU BENGKULU DI KOTA BENGKULU SERAWAI LANGUAGE SHIFT AND MAINTENANCE IN THE BENGKULU MALAY HEGEMONY IN THE CITY OF BENGKULU	75 - 80
<i>Irma Diani</i>	
KEPUNAHAN LEKSIKON PERTANIAN MASYARAKAT BIMA NTB DALAM PERSPEKTIF EKOLINGUISTIK KRITIS	81 - 85
<i>Mirsa Umiyati</i>	
PERAN MEDIA CETAK DAN ELEKTRONIK DALAM RANGKA MEREVITALISASI DAN MEMELIHARA EKISTENSI BAHASA INDONESIA DI NEGARA MULTIKULTURAL	86 - 90
<i>Muhammad Rohmadi</i>	
BAHASA IBU DI TENGAH ANCAMAN KEHIDUPAN MONDIAL YANG KAPITALISTIK	91 - 95
<i>Riko</i>	
TEKS LITURGI: MEDIA KONSERVASI BAHASA JAWA	96 - 101
<i>Sudartomo Macaryus</i>	
PEMILIHAN BAHASA PADA SEJUMLAH RANAH OLEH MASYARAKAT TUTUR JAWA DAN IMPLIKASINYA TERHADAP PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA JAWA	102 - 107
<i>Suharyo</i>	
BAHASA IMPRESI SEBAGAI BASIS PENGUATAN BUDAYA DALAM PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA	108 - 112
<i>Zurmailis</i>	
THE SHRINKAGE OF JAVANESE VOCABULARY	113 - 117
<i>Ari Nurweni</i>	
LANGUAGE CHANGE: UNDERSTANDING ITS NATURE AND MAINTENANCE EFFORTS	118 - 123
<i>Condro Nur Alim</i>	
A PORTRAIT OF LANGUAGE SHIFT IN A JAVANESE FAMILY	124 - 128
<i>Dian Rivia Himmawati</i>	
LANGUAGE SHIFT IN SURABAYA AND STRATEGIES FOR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE	129 - 133
<i>Erlita Rusnaningtias</i>	
LANGUAGE VARIETIES MAINTAINED IN SEVERAL SOCIAL CONTEXTS IN SEMARANG CITY	134 - 138
<i>Sri Mulatsih</i>	
FACTORS DETERMINING THE DOMINANT LANGUAGE OF JAVANESE- INDONESIAN CHILDREN IN THE VILLAGES OF BANCARKEMBAR (BANYUMAS REGENCY) AND SIDANEGARA (CILACAP REGENCY)	139 - 143
<i>Syaifur Rochman</i>	
PERSONAL NAMES AND LANGUAGE SHIFT IN EAST JAVA	144 - 146
<i>Widyastuti</i>	

REGISTER BAHASA LISAN PARA KOKI PADA ACARA MEMASAK DI STASIUN TV: SEBUAH STUDI MENGENAI PERGESERAN BAHASA	147 - 151
<i>Andi Indah Yulianti</i>	
PERUBAHAN BAHASA SUMBAWA DI PULAU LOMBOK: KAJIAN ASPEK LINGUISTIK DIAKRONIS (CHANGE OF SUMBAWA LANGUAGE IN LOMBOK ISLAND: STUDY OF THE ASPEK OF DIACRONIC LINGUISTICS)	152 - 156
<i>Burhanuddin dan Nur Ahmadi</i>	
PERGESERAN PENGGUNAAN BAHASA INDONESIA AKIBAT PENGARUH SHUJOSHJI (PARTIKEL DI AKHIR KALIMAT) DALAM BAHASA JEPANG, SEBUAH PENGAMATAN TERHADAP PENGGUNAAN BAHASA INDONESIA OLEH KARYAWAN LOKAL DAN KARYAWAN ASING(JEPANG) DI PT. KDS INDONESIA	157 - 162
<i>Elisa Carolina Marion</i>	
PENGGUNAAN BAHASA DALAM SITUASI KEANEKABAHASAAN	163 - 167
<i>Fatchul Mu'in</i>	
PENGEKALAN BAHASA DALAM KALANGAN PENUTUR DIALEK NEGEI SEMBILAN BERDASARKAN PENDEKATAN DIALEKTOLOGI SOSIAL BANDAR	168 - 172
<i>Mohammad Fadzeli Jaafar, Norsimah Mat Awal, dan Idris Aman</i>	
KONSEP DASAR STANDARISASI BAHASA SASAK: KE ARAH KEBIJAKAN PEMBELAJARAN DAN PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA SASAK DI LOMBOK	173 - 177
<i>Ahmad Sirulhaq</i>	
PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA INDONESIA TERPADU (KOHERENS)	178 - 182
<i>Marida Gahara Siregar</i>	
HARI BERBAHASA JAWA DI LINGKUNGAN PENDIDIKAN	183 - 185
<i>Yasmina Septiani</i>	
JAVANESE-INDONESIAN RIVALRY IN AKAD NIKAH AMONG YOGYAKARTA JAVANESE SPEECH COMMUNITY	186 - 191
<i>Aris Munandar</i>	
PENGAJIAN BAHASA MADURA DAHULU, KINI DAN DI MASA YANG AKAN DATANG	192 - 197
<i>Iqbal Nurul Azhar</i>	
BAHASA INDONESIA ATAU BAHASA JAWA PILIHAN ORANG TUA DALAM BERINTERAKSI DENGAN ANAK DI RUMAH	198 - 202
<i>Miftah Nugroho</i>	
PILIHAN BAHASA DALAM MASYARAKAT MULTIBAHASA DI KAMPUNG DURIAN KOTA PONTIANAK (PENDEKATAN SOSIOLINGUISTIK)	203 - 207
<i>Nindwihapsari</i>	
PEMAKAIAN BAHASA JAWA OLEH PENUTUR BAHASA JAWA DI KOTA BONTANG KALIMANTAN TIMUR	208 - 212
<i>Yulia Mutmainnah</i>	
INSERTING JAVANESE ACRONYMS FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR RULES: A THEORETICAL ASSUMPTION	213 - 217
<i>Herri Susanto</i>	

THE JUNIOR SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SUNDANESE LANGUAGE LEARNING (A CASE STUDY AT 2 JUNIOR SCHOOLS AT BANDUNG, WEST JAVA, INDONESIA)	218 - 221
<i>Maria Yosephin Widarti Lestari</i>	
THE JUNIOR SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SUNDANESE LANGUAGE LEARNING (A CASE STUDY AT 2 JUNIOR SCHOOLS AT BANDUNG, WEST JAVA, INDONESIA)	222 - 225
<i>Tri Pramesti dan Susie C. Garnida</i>	
KEARIFAN LOKAL SEBAGAI BAHAN AJAR BAHASA INDONESIA BAGI PENUTUR ASING	226 - 230
<i>Hidayat Widiyanto</i>	
BAHASA, SASTRA, DAN PERANANNYA DALAM PEMBENTUKAN KECERDASAN EMOSI PADA ANAK (SEBUAH STUDI KASUS PELAKSANAAN PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA PADA KELAS SASTRA ANAK DAN SASTRA MADYA DI LEMBAGA PENDIDIKAN "BINTANG INDONESIA" KABUPATEN PACITAN)	231 - 236
<i>Sri Pamungkas</i>	
COMMUNICATION MODEL ON LEARNING INDONESIAN FOR FOREIGNER THROUGH LOCAL CULTURE	237 - 239
<i>Rendra Widyatama</i>	
VARIASI BAHASA RAGAM BAHASA HUMOR DENGAN MENGGUNAKAN UNSUR PERILAKU SEIKSIS DI DESA LETEH, REMBANG KAJIAN BAHASA DAN JENDER	240 - 245
<i>Evi Rusriana Herlianti</i>	
EKSPRESI KEBAHASAAN PEREMPUAN KLOPO DUWUR TERHADAP PERANNYA DALAM KELUARGA DAN MASYARAKAT (SEBUAH ANALISIS BAHASA DAN JENDER)	246 - 250
<i>Yesika Maya Oktarani</i>	
BELETER FOR TRANFERING MALAY LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL MORAL VALUES TO YOUNG MALAYS AT PONTIANAK, KALIMANTAN BARAT	251 - 255
<i>Syarifah Lubna</i>	
METAPHORS AS A DYNAMIC ARTEFACT OF SOCIAL VALUES EXPRESSED IN LETTERS TO EDITORS	256 - 260
<i>Deli Nirmala</i>	
THE EXPRESSION OF THE CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS "FRONT IS GOOD; BACK IS BAD" IN THE INDONESIAN LANGUAGE	261 - 266
<i>Nurhayati</i>	
PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA: PERSPEKTIF LINGUISTIK KOGNITIF	267 - 270
<i>Luita Aribowo</i>	
KAJIAN LEKSIKAL KHAS KOMUNITAS SAMIN SEBUAH TELISIK BUDAYA SAMIN DESA KLOPO DUWUR, BANJAREJO, BLORA, JAWA TENGAH	271 - 276
<i>Vanny Martianova Yudianingtias</i>	

MANIPULATING SUNDANESES" PERCEPTIONS AND THOUGHTS IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE THROUGH INDIGENIOUS LANGUAGE	277 - 280
<i>Retno Purwani Sari dan Nenden Rikma Dewi</i>	
THE POSITIONING OF BANYUMASAN AND ITS IDEOLOGY „CABLAKA“ AS REFLECTED IN LINGUISTIC FEATURES	281 - 284
<i>Chusni Hadiati</i>	
WHAT PEOPLE REVEALED THROUGH GREETINGS	285 - 289
<i>Dwi Wulandari</i>	
THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY IN MULTICULTURAL INTERACTIONS	290 - 292
<i>Eliana Candrawati</i>	
THE LOGICAL INTERPRETATION AND MORAL VALUES OF CULTURE-BOUND JAVANESE UTTERANCES USING THE WORD “OJO” SEEN FROM ANTHROPOLOGICAL LINGUISTIC POINT OF VIEW	293 - 297
<i>Muhamad Ahsanu</i>	
PENGUNGKAPAN IDEOLOGI PATRIARKI PADA TEKS TATA WICARA PERNIKAHAN DALAM BUDAYA JAWA	298 - 302
<i>Indah Arvianti</i>	
PEPINDHAN: BENTUK UNGKAPAN ETIKA MASYARAKAT JAWA	303 - 310
<i>Mas Sukardi</i>	
BAGAIMANA BAGIAN PENDAHULUAN ARTIKEL PENELITIAN DISUSUN?	311 - 316
<i>Jurianto</i>	
STYLISTIC IN JAVANESE URBAN LEGEND STORIES: A CASE STUDY IN RUBRIC ALAMING LELEMBUT IN PANJEBAR SEMANGAT MAGAZINE	317 - 320
<i>Valentina Widya Suryaningtyas</i>	
MAINTAINING SOURCE LANGUAGE IN TRANSLATING HOLY BOOK: A CASE OF TRANLSTAING AL-QUR“AN INTO INDONESIAN	321 - 325
<i>Baharuddin</i>	
TRANSLATING A MOTHER TONGUE	326 - 329
<i>Nurenzia Yannuar</i>	
TRANSLATION IGNORANCE: A CASE STUDY OF BILINGUAL SIGNS	330 - 334
<i>Retno Wulandari Setyaningsih</i>	
TERJEMAHAN UNGKAPAN IDIOMATIS DALAM PERGESERAN KOHESIF DAN KOHERENSI	335 - 338
<i>Frans I Made Brata</i>	
VARIASI FONOLOGIS DAN MORFOLOGIS BAHASA JAWA DI KABUPATEN PATI	339 - 342
<i>Ahdi Riyono</i>	
VARIASI FONOLOGIS DAN MORFOLOGIS BAHASA JAWA DI KABUPATEN PATI	343 - 347
<i>Ahdi Riyono</i>	

PROSES FONOLOGIS BAHASA KAUR YANG DIPICU FAKTOR EKSTERNAL LINGUISTIK	348 - 352
<i>Wisman Hadi</i>	
WORLD PLAY IN CALAOUNN OF CATATAN PLESETAN KELIK (CAPEK)	353 - 357
<i>Oktiva Herry Chandra</i>	
ANALYTIC CAUSATIVE IN JAVANESE : A LEXICAL-FUNCTIONAL APPROACH	358 - 362
<i>Agus Subiyanto</i>	
A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS ON JAVANESE POLITENESS: TAKING SPEECH LEVEL INTO MOOD STRUCTURE	363 - 367
<i>Hero Patrianto</i>	
PERGESERAN PENEMPATAN LEKSIKAL DASAR DALAM DERET SINTAGMATIK PADA TUTURAN JAWA PESISIR	368 - 372
<i>M. Suryadi</i>	
JAVANESE LANGUAGE MODALITY IN BLENCONG ARTICLES OF SUARA MERDEKA NEWSPAPER	373 - 377
<i>Nina Setyaningsih</i>	
POLISEMI DALAM TERMINOLOGI KOMPUTER (SEBUAH UPAYA APLIKASI PENGEMBANGAN DAN PEMELIHARAAN BAHASA)	378 - 384
<i>Juanda Nungki Heriyati</i>	
STRUKTUR FRASE NAMA-NAMA MENU MAKANAN BERBAHASA INGGRIS DI TABLOID CEMPAKA MINGGU INI (CMI)	385 - 389
<i>Wiwiek Sundari</i>	

A PORTRAIT OF LANGUAGE SHIFT IN A JAVANESE FAMILY

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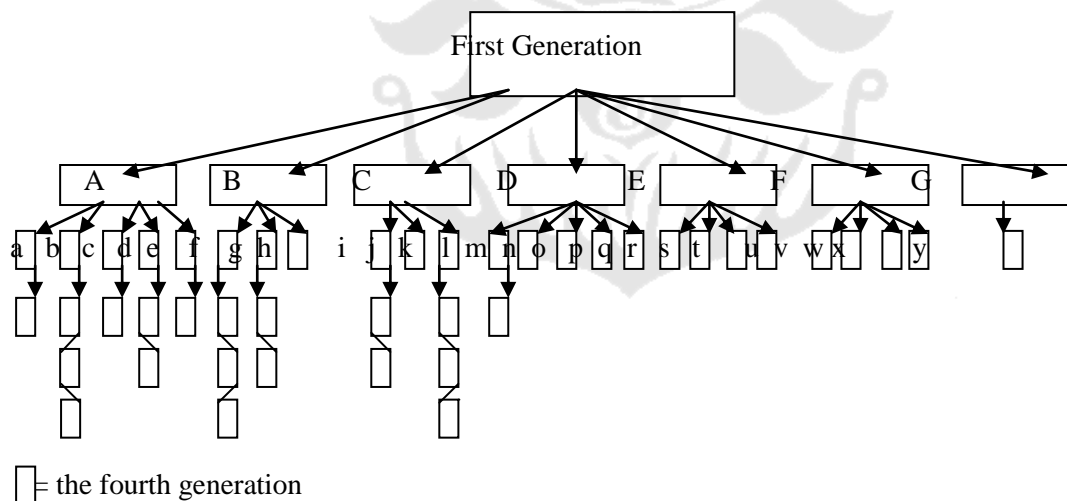
Abstract

In the case study of a Javanese family from Semarang, the second generation speaks Javanese in the particular domains, based on status scale and social distance of the speakers. The members of second generation marry the men or women from similar race (Javanese). The third generation still speaks Javanese, even though they begin to speak Javanese Krama Inggil infrequently. They speak Ngoko Alus to the second generation. They prefer speaking Indonesian language (Bahasa) rather than Krama Inggil to acquaintances in order not to be entrapped to send messages impolitely. Intermarriage also makes it worse. They begin not to speak Javanese to their children. And this attitude is followed by similar attitude of those who marry Javanese men or women because of a few reasons. Attitude of the family offers disadvantages. Javanese is not seen as an important symbol of ethnic identity. The fourth generation of the family practically does not speak Javanese any longer. The second generation has to speak Indonesian language (Bahasa) to the fourth generation even though they are close family. In that case, positive attitude does not support efforts to use the ethnic language in a variety of domains.

Key Words: language shift, domains, attitude.

1. Background

In a case study of a middle class Javanese family from Semarang, called Tjitro Family, the third generation prefers speaking Indonesian language to Javanese. The third generation does not teach their children Javanese or speak Javanese to them. As a result, the fourth generation could not speak Javanese or some of them become passive speaker. It means they understand several Javanese expressions, but they could respond to and use spoken Javanese. The number of the fourth generation is 17 children. The seventeen children are descended from 9 persons of the third generation. In this case, the first generation has seven children. His seven children have 22 children. For a clear explanation, the family tree can be described as follows:



The second generation still speaks Javanese (*Ngoko Alus* and *Krama Inggil/Madya*). They never use *Ngoko Biasa*. They consider that *Ngoko Biasa* is a rude tool of communication. in the particular domains, even though some of them do not always live in the Javanese areas. But E, F, and G do not speak Javanese to their children. Thus, their children prefer speaking Bahasa (Indonesian). They use it in daily conversation and all domains. Another third generation still speaks Javanese, even though they begin to speak Javanese *Krama Inggil* infrequently. They spoke *Krama Inggil* to the first generation and speak *Ngoko Alus* to the second generation. They prefer to use Indonesian language (Bahasa) rather than *Krama Inggil* to acquaintances in order not to entrap to send messages impolitely. Intermarriage also makes matters worse. They begin not to speak Javanese to their children. And this attitude is followed by similar attitude of those who marry men or women from Javanese. They do not use and teach Javanese to

their children. The most interesting thing, the second generation (A,B,C,D) does not speak Javanese to their grandsons and granddaughters (the fourth generation). They always switch code in the family gathering. They speak Javanese to their children and also some cousins (third generation), and then switch code when they have to speak to the fourth generation and some of the third generation. Some of the fourth generation can speak English, but they seldom use it when they speak to the other members of family.

2. Language Shift

According to Hoffman (1991:186), when a community does not maintain its language, but gradually adopts another one, it is about language shift. Similarly, Fasold (1984:213) says that 'Language Shift' refers to changes in language use among a community of speakers such as when a community starts to use one language in domains and functions in which its members had previously used another language. Crystal (1997:215) says that this could either be a "gradual or sudden move from one language to another" Furthermore, this shift is unavoidable when two languages compete for use in the same domains (Romaine, 2000:49).

Bilingualism is usually a necessary precursor of language shift. However, it is difficult to approach the overall concerns of language shift by using just one theoretical viewpoint. If monolingualism is considered as the base for full language maintenance, any use of L2 constitutes a kind of shift even if only temporarily. Individuals who are able to use more than one language with varying degrees of skills, they have choice to maintain their L1 or shift from L1 to L2. When the cycle of language shift is completed, speakers will be monolingual (Hoffmann, 1991:186). Hence, being monolingual in a language or a variety is an indication of complete language shift.

One of the important factors that impact on shift and maintenance of language is attitude (Gardner, 1985, and Holmes, 1992). Language shift tend to be slower among communities where the minority language is highly valued. When the language is seen as an important symbol of ethnic identity, it is generally maintained longer. Positive attitudes support efforts to use the minority language in a variety of domains. It will help people resist the pressure from the majority group to switch to their language. The status of a language internationally can contribute to these positive attitudes. Attitude represents internal thoughts, feelings and tendencies in behavior across a variety of contexts. It is also supported by Khoiri (2005), attitude is not always significant with somebody's acts. Pride in their ethnic identity and their language can be important factor which contributes to language maintenance. It means that a strong community to support and encourage this attitude is necessary. In that case, the individual's environment has a contribution to change the main language. The attitude of the parents, spouse, and children to main language and individual's preferences regarding language defines the code they use. When someone choose one language rather than any other languages in certain situations, it shows that he has mastered the knowledge of using the language appropriately (Suharsono, 1995:13).

3. Objective of the Study

Many studies have established that change in language attitude is one of the major factors influencing language shift. For instance, Simmons (2003) has tried to illustrate the concept of shift, what kinds of behaviors constitute shift and indications of shift in Barcelona. Kuncha and Bathula (2004) have done work on language shift and language maintenance in a new immigrant community in India. Similarly, Pillai (2009) has done work on Language Shift Among Singaporean Malayalee Families. Setiawan (2001) also has done his work on language shift in a Bilingual Community in East Java. On the other hand, Holmes and Harlow (1991) have tried to illustrate some of the common characteristics of the communities in New Zealand, which have resisted language shift and have managed to maintain their ethnic language attitude. This paper tries to examine the attitudes towards Javanese language of a Javanese family as a potential issue in language shift. It may reflect the real condition of the smallest community in Javanese community.

4. Collecting the Data

The data was collected using personal interviews guided by a questionnaire. Interviews were done by three ways: 1) face to face, 2) through yahoo messenger, 3) by phone. They were done individually to minimize any external influence and cover a) language proficiency, b) attitude towards Javanese, c) attitude towards Indonesian language. The respondents fall into five categories: i) the second generation who speak Javanese to the children (3 respondents of 4-one respondent passed away), ii) the second generation who speak Indonesian to the children (3 respondents), iii) the third generation who

marries the Javanese man/woman (4), iv) the third generation who marries non-Javanese man/woman (5 respondents), v) the fourth generation. Their language proficiency was also observed through family gathering.

5. Finding and Discussion

a. Language Proficiency

1. The second generation

The respondents were asked about the use of Javanese and Indonesian language. All of the second generation can use Javanese (*Krama Inggil* and *Ngoko*) in spoken and written form. They able to use Javanese phrases and sentences completely in a context. They could speak Indonesian language fluently and use Indonesian language in written form as well. All of them have got respected positions at work. Some of them also could speak English. But they seldom use it. The second generation members are actually the fluent users of Javanese language. Even though they always contact and communicate with non-Javanese speakers, they usually use Javanese when their interlocutors are Javanese or whoever speaking Javanese.

2. The third generation

The third generation members are distinguishably different from the second generation. The respondents descended from E are the passive users of Javanese. They could not speak Javanese because their L1 is Indonesian language. They understand when somebody speaks *Ngoko*, but they prefer respond to her/him in Indonesian language. It shows that they do not master Javanese completely. The respondents descended from F and G were born and grown up outside Javanese speaking areas. F's children always moved from one city to another city. F's wife is Javanese, too. F and his wife use Indonesian language to communicate with their children. So their children never understand Javanese. This situation is similar to G's child. G marries a non-Javanese man and lives outside Javanese speaking areas. Her child never understands Javanese.

The other third generation members who always live and were raised in Javanese speaking areas can speak Javanese. They use *Ngoko alus* to their parents and *Krama* to older people. They understand that Javanese has *undha-usuk*. Unfortunately, their performance in using *Krama* is not as good as the second generation's. Some of them sometimes mix codes (Krama-Ngoko-Indonesian language) when they have difficulty finding the appropriate words/phrases in *Krama Inggil*. For example: "Liburan mangke dhateng mrika, Yangti. Diantar kaliyan ayah-ipun". There is also a slightly decrease in their fluency level of written Javanese. They seldom practice the written Javanese.

Indonesian language becomes an option to talk with acquaintances or strangers. Phonological and lexical interferences from Javanese color their Indonesian utterances, for instance: "Ndak boleh begitu, ya", "Aku orang uda ke sana"/ "Wong aku uda kesana.

3. The fourth generation

Two members (a's child and c's child) of the fourth generation have lived abroad since childhood. It means they could not speak Javanese. They speak Both English and Indonesian language. The other members of the fourth generation hardly speak Javanese. They speak Indonesian all the time. Their parents (the third generation) speak Indonesian language to them. Actually, they have got a Javanese lesson at school, but they never practice spoken/written Javanese outside the class. Like their parents, their utterances pertain to the phonological and lexical interferences from Javanese. Sometimes, their utterances are influenced by the language forms of their friends at school of their environment, for example: "Aku sudah makan ndek sana".

b. Attitude towards the Javanese and Indonesian language

As regards to attitude towards the Javanese language, a set of the questions was asked about what the respondents feel on the use and their attitude towards Javanese language in this family.

1. The second generation (B,C,D)

The second generation members are mainly eager to use Javanese in daily communication to be a symbol of identity. They are proud of using Javanese. Unfortunately they realize that they do not have to compel their grandchildren to use Javanese. In that case, they agree that their daughters and sons (third generation) have reasons for using Indonesian language in daily communication to their grandchildren. They do not want to intervene to their sons/daughters, but they always try to suggest their sons/daughter to teach Javanese language to their grandchildren. They have to speak Indonesian language to their

grandchildren in order that they can be closer to their grandchildren. From this situation, those members of this generation actually have a positive attitude toward the Javanese. But the internal environment does not support to do so. Therefore, the positive attitude of them is not correlated with their undesired act.

2. The second generation (E,F,G)

They are proud of being Javanese, and they are still using Javanese in interrelationship domain. E's wife is Javanese. Even though she is Javanese, she often speaks Indonesian language since childhood. Regarding this point, she moved from one city to another city to follow her parents. Code switching and mixing (Javanese-Indonesian) are sometimes inserted in her utterances. It is similar situation to F and G. Demography/mobility and Intermarriage force them to speak Indonesian language more often than Javanese. They think it is useful to speak Indonesian rather than Javanese in their environment (outside Javanese speaking area). This attitude indicates an ongoing conflict between their linguistics identity and utility of the language. They will compete to force the users to choose one of them.

3. The third generation

The respondents were also asked a set of questions relating to the use of Javanese and their attitude towards Javanese. The respondents who marry non-Javanese men/women stated that using Indonesian was easier and useful. To make communication easier, they have to choose a language as a bridging tool of communication. They speak Indonesian to their children. Teaching Javanese to their children is not easy because their environment does not support it. Actually they are proud of being Javanese and still speaking Javanese (*Ngoko*) to their parents and nieces/nephews. This attitude reflects the desire to show their identity.

The third generation members who marry Javanese men were also asked the same questions. They speak Javanese language (*Ngoko*) and Indonesian language to their spouses. They speak Indonesian with their children. They think Javanese rule is so complicated that they do not want their children to make mistakes in usage. For example: the same words in *Ngoko* sometimes cannot be used in the different addresses. As result, the children can be labeled as an impolite kid. The other respondent said that Indonesian is more powerful because her environment including her family uses it. This attitude offers disadvantage. The generation members who marry the Javanese men are actually supposed to support their ethnic language, because they have much more chance than others. Unfortunately, they do not do it.

4. The fourth generation

The fourth generation members are from 1 month-17 years old. The respondents were selected based on whoever going to school, at least elementary school. They all said the Javanese lesson was more difficult than Bahasa Indonesia, and then English was more interesting and useful than Javanese. It indicates a negative attitude because Javanese is considered as an unimportant thing.

Concluding Sentences

The finding reveals that there is an indication of language shift in this family (close relationship). The fourth generation members do not speak Javanese because their parents and their environment never teach them. Their attitude of this family offers disadvantage. In that case, the three generation members begin to use Indonesian more often than Javanese. The positive attitude shown by the second generation is unworthy because there is no support from the other generations. The necessity (intermarriage and demography/mobility) and ease have been the two influencing factors of the negative attitudes. Being proud of being Javanese is not a guarantee for their using Javanese. Javanese language is not considered as the symbol of ethnic identity.

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