

Personality of Langkat Malay Language among the Teenage Speakers: A Sociolinguistic Review

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Abstract. This research is inspired by the previous research result which shows that the interaction intensity in Malayan-speaking communities has been reduced with their natural environment (Malayan ecology) [1]. Moreover, the survival of the Langkat Malay language (BML) in Stabat can be seen from the regeneration process of its speakers. In the process of regenerating BML speakers, there are strong indications that a number of words are no longer used by the teenage speakers due to the loss of some socio-cultural and socio-ecological elements in the Malayan community in Stabat. Specifically, this research aims to explore the phenomenon of shifts in the local character of BML by teenage speakers in Stabat in code-switching and code-mixing events. This research uses the participant observation method. Observation data was obtained from several locations where the language is used such as homes, markets, public places, places of worship, and places where the traditional ceremonies take place. The data collection was performed by using disguise and inducement techniques. The direct involvement of the researchers in the community allows them to obtain complete, accurate and comprehensive qualitative data. The research results prove that the lingual forms appear in the interactions of teenagers' verbal communication with various interlocutors indicate that there are code switching and code mixing usages in different domains although they occur in familiarity such as family, neighbors, and familiarity. In code mixing events, mixed forms of BML and BI appear. These mixed forms imply a loss of identity in the teenagers' community because the shifting forms are typical BML forms which characterize the BML which is different from the BI (Indonesian language). In cultural lingual way, the forms which are the markers of identity for BML speakers have been shifted to lingual forms which are markers of identity for BI speakers. These imply that there has been shift in the local character of the teenagers' community cultural lingually..

Keywords: shift, Langkat Malay language, youth, sociolinguistics

1 Introduction

The survival of the Langkat Malayan language (BML) in Stabat can be seen from the regeneration process by its speakers. In the regeneration process, there are strong indications that the teenage speakers have no longer used a number of vocabularies due to the loss of some

socio-cultural and socio-ecological elements in the Malayan community in Stabat. The cultural changes (from traditional to modern) or regional changes (from rural to urban areas) impact the loss of several lexical icons. It is suspected that there are words for animals, plants, traditional tools, types of greetings, household items, traditional tools, and so on have been reduced or no longer used. The reduction or extinction of natural and cultural elements is assumed to have an impact on the loss of the speaker's conception of these entities. Apart from that, the multi-ethnic socio-cultural conditions in Stabat trigger the language choices during the communication interactions. The condition of macro-linguistic impact emerged the linguistic diversity and language shifts that develop in the usage of certain domains. In relation to this phenomenon, this research aims to explore the shifts phenomenon in the local character of BML by teenage speakers in Stabat in code-switching and code-mixing events in teenage conversations in Stabat.

A sociolinguistic theory is used in this research, especially the theories which discuss about language survival and bilingualism. The language survival is a theory that concerns the issue of whether a language still survives or not. This means that it is still used in daily communication interactions by the speakers. Language survival naturally occurs because it is related to the values contained in the language. In the natural language usage, two processes occur which are caused by the speakers' behavior, they are the language maintenance process and the language shift process. Language survival can be observed based on domains of language use. The more a language is used in the realm of language use, the stronger the language survives.

The meaning of bilingualism is very broad and relative to one particular view. The boundaries and understanding given to bilingualism are generally determined based on the speaker's mastery and language usage. [2] stated that bilingualism is the practice of using two languages interchangeably. This limitation is the same as that proposed by [3] in which there is a practice of using two or more languages alternately by the same speaker. Weinreich expands that the boundaries is the use of two dialects in one language constitutes bilingualism. In line with these limitations, [4] defines bilingualism as the ability to produce meaningful speech in another language. As an aspect of communication, bilingualism appears as an individual and collective phenomenon. This is in line with the opinion of [5] who say that bilingualism is not only the use of two languages by individuals, but also by the society.

Language survival concerns the issue of whether a language still survives or not. This means it is still used in daily communication interactions by its speakers. Language survival occurs naturally because it is related to the values contained in the language. In the language usage naturally occur two processes which are caused by the speakers' behavior, they are the language maintenance process and the language shift process. According to [6], this process occurs because of the language function as a means of self unifying or separating from other groups, or [7] mentioned it is as contrastive self-identification.

Language shift is a change in the form and meaning of a language until the collective phenomena appear that is when a speech community leaves its language and switches to another language. This collective phenomenon is caused by the dynamics of a multilingual society with various social aspects within it [8]. In multilingual societies, language contact is unavoidable. The role, position and function of one language cause language choice. If the role, position and function of language begin weak, language shift or language extinction will occur, and the speech community will use another language in various domains of language use and leave the language.

There have been several researches on language shift and the survival, especially the problem of the powerlessness of the minority languages against the dominance of majority languages. The instability of bilingual or multilingual speech communities can threaten the survival of minority languages. The result can be a shift, or even extinction of the language. The previous researches on language shift and survival were conducted by [9], [10], [11], and [12]. Meanwhile, several recent researches in Indonesia on language survival were conducted by [13] studied Language and Culture Maintenance in Society in the Digital Literacy Era, [14] studied Shifts and Maintenance Language in Timor-Leste, [15] examines the maintenance of the Lampung language in the realm of education, and Andestend, [16] examined the learning and maintenance of the serawai language (a case study of parents and children).

2 Method

In this research, a participant observation method was used to directly obtain factual and authentic data about several real language behaviors of the Malay teenager's community. The observation data were obtained from several locations where the language is used such as homes, markets, public places, places of worship, and places where the traditional ceremonies take place. The data collection was carried out using disguise and inducement technique. By using this technique, the researcher collaborates with the subjects who are being observed, but they systematically do not know that they are being researched (observer paradox) so that the data obtained is natural data, not made-up data. The direct involvement of the researchers in the community allows them to obtain complete, accurate and comprehensive qualitative data. The collected data are then identified and selected to obtain a data corpus. Only the data corpus is used as material for analysis and discussion

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Result

a. The shift of the Local Character

There are several forms of lingual BML that experience the shifts. These shapes are typical BML shapes. These changes occur at the lexical and grammatical levels.

Sound Changes and Shifts

In teenagers' utterances, the two vowel sounds that characterize BML have experienced a shift. The sound shifts to follow BI's speech behavior. Because in BI the two vowels are /u/ and /i/, in the speech behavior of BML speakers they are also /u/ and /i/. The sounds [Y] and [I] as shown above have changed and shifted to become as follows.

[bu- {Yk}]	————→	bad
[l↔m-bYt]	————→	soft
[sa-kIt]	————→	sick
[p↔-dIh]	————→	pain

BML also has a distinctive consonant sound that makes the BML speakers easy to recognize. The typical consonant sound is a vibrating consonant sound /ʃ/.

[ʃ↔/ah]	muddy
[suʃut]	recede
[k↔lambEʃ]	coconut

The /ʃ/ consonant has shifted along with the shift in BML in the teenage community. For some teenage speakers, especially those whose L1 are not BML, the /ʃ/ consonant is often pronounced with /r/. Many of them are unable to pronounce this consonant. The phenomenon has become symptomatic and is commonplace among the Mel community in Stabat. Thus, even though the language they use is BML, they pronounce /ʃ/ with /r/.

Besides marking the phenomenon of language shift, the change in language sounds also marks the difference in speech style between the old and young speakers. The speech style of young people is easy to recognize because the typical BML sounds that are still used by older speakers have changed when they are used by younger speakers. There are not only typical sounds, but also several verbs that have sound changes in the consonants at the edge of the syllable (koda). The consonant that has shifted is /t/. The articulator of consonant /t/ is alveolar and appears after the vowel /i/ shifts to the glottal articulator [ʔ]. Thus, the /t/ consonant at the edge of the syllable shifts to the sound [ʔ] in BML. The change can be seen, for example, in the following lexical items.

[l↔mbit]	————→	[l↔mbiʔ]	soft
[campit]	————→	[campiʔ]	throw away
[l↔ntit]	————→	[l↔ntiʔ]	overacted

The tendency to adapt the sounds in BML to BI sounds is also reflected in the shift from the [u] vowel at the beginning of the word to the [o] vowel. This shift occurs if the meaning of the BML word is the same as BI one. This sound shift can be seen, for example, in the words [ubat] and [utaʔ]. These two words are pronounced [(bat)] and [(taʔ)] as pronounced in BI. If there is a word pronounced in BML is the same as the pronunciation in BI, then in that word there is no sound shift. This can be seen for example in the word [ubah]. Since the meaning and pronunciation are in accordance with BI, the word is still pronounced [ubah], it does not change to [(bah)].

b. Lexicon Changes and Shifts

The strong relationship of BML to BI in the language kinship system causes a lot of vocabularyies are the same in both languages. However, not all the same words in BML have the same meaning as BI as in the following examples:

Table 1. The word BML has a different meaning than BI

Lexical	Meaning in BML	Meaning in BI
<i>pusing</i>	<i>Putar (turn around)</i>	<i>(headache)</i>
<i>sambang</i>	<i>Sarang tawon/lebah (bees nest)</i>	<i>(visit an empty house)</i>
<i>pangsa</i>	<i>ruang-ruang tempat isi (spaces for storing)</i>	<i>(something in the durian fruit)</i>
<i>nalar</i>	<i>Sering (often)</i>	<i>(The power of thinking)</i>

Based on the lexical examples above, several things can be described about the lexical characteristics of BML related to BI lexical. First, there are the same lexical items with the same meaning in BML and BI. Second, there are different lexical items with different meanings in BML and BI. Third, there is the same lexical code but the meaning is different in BI. Fourth, there is a shift in the meaning after the BML lexical is used in BI.

Language is a form of expression for individuals and the community who uses it. Thus, BML is an expression of individual and community Mel speakers. The form of expression with BML shows Mel's identity as the speaker. However, for teenage speakers, their Malayan identity is starting to diminish because many of them no longer use BML. Even if they use BML, they no longer understand a lot of BML vocabulary, let alone the vocabulary with traditional situation. It is feared that the vocabulary like this will disappear from the BML repertoire because it is not functional for its speakers. These vocabulary words are explained below.

<i>kebang</i>	(lost or gone somewhere)
<i>pegana</i>	(used carelessly)
<i>ayam gogok</i>	(cock or rooster)
<i>ceroh</i>	(washing rice)
<i>tingkip</i>	(completely finished)
<i>seraya</i>	(polite usage for the word order)

In the language usage by the youth community, it was found that a number of words have been shifted in the meanings. In the initial explanation above, an example of a shift in the meaning of a word in BML has been given which has also shifted to a word in BI. In BML, the symptoms of speakers' misperception of words were found. If this misperception is collective, there will be a shift in the meaning of the words. The examples of misperceptions are as in *lasa* ('weak'), *penger* ('deaf'), *sakit* ('type of disease'), and *pusing* ('turn').

For *lasa*, many teenage speakers misinterpret it. For the speakers, *lasa* is defined as a physical form that is sick or old. This mistake arose because the respondent made a wrong analogy about the object or entity referred to *lasa*. So, it is not weakness that is referred to, but the subject who experiences the weakness, or the circumstances that cause a person's weakness. Likewise *penger*. It is a condition of not being able to hear other sounds because of one or several loud and dominant sounds, or deafness because of loud sounds. So *penger* is related to the ear, not the sound. Most speakers actually interpret *penger* as a sound. Most of them chose the meaning of *penger* as noisy, not deaf.

For *sakit*, the speakers misunderstand it because *sakit* and *pedeh* have one meaning. Although they have one component of meaning, the words *sakit* and *pedeh* are not synonymous so they cannot be interchanged. In BML, *sakit* is differentiated from *pedeh*. *Sakit* is used for any type of disease meanwhile *pedeh* is for pain. In BI, for the pain meaning, it is used *sakit* and for the type of disease it is used *sakit* as well. Since in BI this is applied, the tendency that occurs for BML speakers is that language patterns refer to BI language patterns. The same thing happens with the word *pusing*. The speaker assumes that *pusing* is a disease, even though *pusing* is the sufferer's feeling in which his head is spinning.

In BI, the meaning of "very" occurs through the lexical addition *sangat* and *sekali*, for examples *sangat cantik* or *cantik sekali*. In BML, besides using the word *betol* ('very') such as *lagak betol* (very beautiful), this is also found which already contains the meaning "very". Some examples of words that contain the meaning 'very' are below.

<i>luai</i>	very wide
<i>lali</i>	very mature
<i>hayak</i>	having so much
<i>galib</i>	very surprised
<i>letem</i>	very sweet

The forms with the addition of the lexical *betol* are used more often by the Mel community than those with a separate lexical. For example, *lenten* = *lagak betol* (acting confident). The Mel's community understands *lagak betol* more than *lenten*. Over a long period of time and several generations, these forms with the lexical bases and single morphemes became unknown and no longer used.

c. Grammatical Changes and Shifts

The BML grammatical structure is considered more stable than the sound and lexical structures. There are not many examples of the grammatical structure of BML changing or shifting. The lingual forms in code switching and code mixing, several examples of lingual forms that changed or shifted have been presented. This shift tends to be influenced by BI's structure. Therefore, there have been appeared some BML utterances as follows.

Table 2. Shifting Meanings in BML and BI

Mixed forms	in BML	in BI
<i>engko ni</i>	<i>engko ne</i>	(Ah you)
<i>sama engko</i>	<i>tang dikau</i>	(with you/to you)
<i>sama ia</i>	<i>tang dia</i>	(with him/her to him/her)
<i>kukata</i>	<i>nyiku</i>	(I say)

The examples of phrases above are commonly used by the teenager speakers in Stabat. These forms have even become the speech style in the youth community. This happens due to the closeness of form and structure between BML and the high intensity of BI usage in verbal communication activities between them.

Other mixed forms are also found at the morphological level. They can be seen in the words discussed and introduced. In BML, the two derivative words are *dibicarakan* (talk about) and *ngenalkan* (introduce). The words become *dibicaraka* and *ngenalka*. In these two words the sound [n] appears at the end of the word so that it resembles the BI structure. This form is a mixture of affixes in BML and BI. This means that one part of the structure is BML and the other part BI.

In mixed structure between BML and BI, there also found in the morphosyntactic structure. For examples, *dipulangkannya*, *mulangkannya*, and *ngelehnya* (sending home). The confusion in the form of *dipulangkannya* occurs because the speakers use in BML, meanwhile they use BI affix. For *mulangkannya*, the speakers use BML words and affixes but the structure refers to the BI one. The speakers do not know that as an active speaker, after the *mulangkannya* it should be followed by *-nya* so that the form becomes *mulangkadia*. The same thing happens to the word *ngelehnya*. The BML form should be *ngelehdia*.

3.2 Discussion

A distinctive characteristic of BML compared to BI is the vowel sounds /u/ dan /i/ which often appears in closed tribes. Phonemically, these sounds are actually /u/ and /i/. Since there have been shifting and changing, the sound changed into an open vowel. Because there has been a decrease and change, the sound becomes an open high vowel [Y] dan [I].

This linguistic originality relationship between BML and BI causes BML speakers easily switch lexically. Apart from the factor of language originality, social, cultural and ecological changes, Mel also has an impact on lexical shifts and even some BML lexical items have disappeared in the speakers' minds, especially in the young generation. The BML lexical shifts and changes are described below.

Synonymous Words

In a language there are many synonymous words as in BML. In BML, one of the synonymous words has developed and is used more widely. Some of the words that are widely used by Mel speakers are words that are also used in BI. For teenage speakers, words that are widely used are what they are familiar with, meanwhile other synonymous words are no longer known. The tendency of the speakers to always use these words is also caused by the desire to actualize them by using BI. Some examples of words that are no longer familiar to teenage speakers are given below.

<i>tandik</i>	(sting)
<i>kenas</i>	(pineapple)
<i>jering</i>	(jengkol, a smelly fruit)
<i>belinjam</i>	(tomato)
<i>balang</i>	(jar)
<i>beledi</i>	(bowl)
<i>uan</i>	(wait)

The italics words in the example above are words in BML, while the words marked in single quotation marks ('...') are synonymous words in BML which are also words in BI. The quotation marks words are prefunctional and productive words used by the Mel youth community in Stabat. The teenage speakers' conceptual incomprehension of the italicized words has been proven through lexical competency tests.

Words with Special Meaning or Hyponymy

The loss of speaker's conceptual in native language words can be caused by the semantic specificity of the word. In the meaning components, many specific meanings are found. An object, thing, or event will be interpreted differently by the speakers because of the differences in the form, function, condition, size, process, result, and so on for examples, BML speakers specifically distinguish between *sengam* and *harum* (fragrant). *Sengam* is a fragrant odor produced by fruit while *harum* is a fragrant odor produced by perfume. Apart from that, BML also has a lexical term for unpleasant odors called *manggum* and strong odors called *mersing*. Semantically, *sengam*, *manggum*, and *mersing* are components of the meaning of odors which are hyponymous. The same example can be seen in the meaning components *laboh 'jatoh'* (fall) and *tetak 'potong'* (cut). Many of the adolescent generation do not understand the hyponymous words or words of a special nature conceptually. They understand better words that are hypernyms or words that have a general meaning. The BML speakers' conceptual loss of words

with special meaning has an impact on BML lexical decrease. In fact, the more lexical items that can specifically express worldly entities, the richer the language is.

Words that Undergo Referential Changes

The speakers' conceptual ideas are formed through their sensory experiences of nature. These conceptual ideas are represented through lexicogrammatical languages that are mutually understood when they interact. In communication interactions through language, speakers use lexical items recorded in their minds. A number of lexical items recorded in the speaker's mind are prefunctional lexical items, not as a words list as arranged in a dictionary. Changes in nature and in society have brought changes in the speaker's conception of new worldly treasures. Many entities have decreases in quantity or disappeared altogether. This decrease or extinction is caused by natural and social events. As a result, for the new generation, the loss of their entity and non-involvement in various socio-cultural activities in their native environment causes a decline in their mastery of BML vocabulary. This is what happened to BML speakers in Stabat. Several examples of lexical items that are reduced or lost in the conceptualization of BML speakers are presented below.

<i>tebin</i>	(towards the river)
<i>genohor</i>	(a kitchen where sugar is cooked)
<i>seloko</i>	(a lamp with a cover)
<i>lenggayan</i>	(something used to hold fast flow of water)
<i>lolo</i>	(instruments made from rice stalks)

4 Conclusion

The language choices of the teenagers' community in various domains show a leakage of diglossia in BI's usage by BML. The language choices of the teenagers' community expressed quantitatively through self-recognition are identical to the qualitative language choices during the communication interactions. The lingual forms appear in teenagers' verbal communication interactions with various interlocutors indicate the existence of mixed language forms (dual type of bilingualism). These mixed forms are caused by similarities in phonological and morphological structure with BI. Internally, the lingual forms of BML have experienced a shift due to the BI's influence, either at the sound level, lexical level or grammatical level. The shifting forms are the forms that become the local characteristics and character of the Mel community. These shifting local characteristics happen at the levels of sound, lexical, and grammatical.

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