

Loving You Grandparents!: Family Relationship in Shaping Language Policy

Indah Sari Lubis*

indahsari.lubis@fib.unmul.ac.id

¹Doctoral Program in Applied English Linguistics, Faculty of Education and Languages, Atma Jaya Catholic University, Jakarta 12930, INDONESIA

ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of family relationships on family language policies and the preservation of local languages within the multilingual context of Samarinda, Indonesia. Utilizing Bourdieu's concept of social capital, the research focuses on three families to understand how emotional bonds and intergenerational interactions impact children's language proficiency and aspirations. Through qualitative interviews with adults and children, the study reveals that strong familial ties, particularly with grandparents, foster positive attitudes and proficiency in local languages. In contrast, limited interactions and linguistic disconnects contribute to a preference for Indonesian over local dialects. The findings underscore the critical role of grandparents in maintaining linguistic diversity and highlight the need for supportive family environments to sustain bilingualism. By examining the perspectives of both adults and children, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play in family language policies. It emphasizes the importance of intergenerational relationships in preserving linguistic heritage and adds to the body of literature on the non-linguistic factors influencing language maintenance. This study also discusses the implications of these findings for language policy and planning, suggesting that efforts to preserve local languages must consider the familial and emotional contexts in which these languages are used. Overall, this research underscores the vital role of family dynamics in shaping language use and attitudes, advocating for policies that support intergenerational communication and language transmission.

Keywords: Family Language Policy, Social Capital, Intergenerational Relationships, Linguistic Diversity, Bilingualism

INTRODUCTION

Language policy studies focus on the interconnection between three key components: ideology, practice, and management, in relation to language. Language ideology refers to individuals' beliefs about how language should be used. Language practices involve the language choices made by speakers within a community. Language management refers to the efforts made by individuals or institutions, both within and outside the community, to influence and change the beliefs and practices of community members (Spolsky, 2012). Family language policy is a subset of this academic field. The concept of Family Language Policy (FLP), similar to other policies, focuses on a family's chosen values and represents society's perspectives and attitudes towards the appreciation and utilisation of specific language(s) (Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008).

The existing research on family language policy primarily focuses on the impact of macro factors, including socio-cultural, economic, geographical, political, and socio-linguistic

factors, as well as micro factors that are centred around parents, such as their expectations, education, language experience, and knowledge of bilingualism. This corpus of scholarship has significantly contributed to the comprehension of the various external and internal factors that impact family language policies. Nevertheless, additional research is required to investigate the significance of non-linguistic factors in family language policy. The present work emphasises the need for additional research on the influence of emotional elements, such as family ties, in family language policy. Notably, scholars such as Curdt-christiansen & Iwaniec (2023), Palviainen (2020), Smith-Christmas (2017) have highlighted this aspect.

Family language policy differs from broader language policy as it pertains to the unique and intimate realm of the family. It is intertwined with psycho-emotional aspects such as emotions, desires, aspirations for the future, and feelings of adoration, dislike, isolation, or closeness (Curdt-christiansen & Iwaniec, 2023). Moreover, since “family tie” refers to the connections and relationships among family members, the examination of family relationships is a key aspect in conversations about family language policy. This research examines the mutual connection between family ties and children's language proficiency by analysing interviews conducted with children and adults from three local households residing in Samarinda, Indonesia. Our objective is to investigate the impact of family ties on children's usage of their local language and their-related goals.

THE CONTEXTS

Samarinda, the capital city of East Borneo province in Indonesia, has attracted considerable attention in the current academic landscape due to the recent establishment of the State Capital (IKN) as mandated by Law Number 3 of 2022 on February 15th, 2022. The municipal territory houses a diverse population of migrants from several Indonesian islands, resulting in a cosmopolitan and bilingual metropolis. Research has revealed that a significant proportion of the population is proficient in multiple languages, while claiming to primarily speak Indonesian with a Banjarnese dialect (Rijal, 2023). The population comprises a substantial proportion of migrants from various regions, such as Javanese (36.7%), Banjarnese (24.14%), Bugis (14.43%), and Butonese (2.13%) (Rijal, 2023). Furthermore, there are additional migrant populations from various ethnic minorities, such as Torajanese, Minahasa, Batakese, Tionghoanese, Sundanese, Maduranese, Minangkabaunese, and others. The migrant families demonstrate proficiency in at least three languages, encompassing the local, national, and foreign languages, showcasing their multilingual abilities.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FAMILIAL TIES IN HOME LANGUAGE PRESERVATION

Children regularly engage with their immediate family members and enhance their social and linguistic abilities (Paat, 2013), which includes the development of their home language in the context of bilingual homes. An area of research focus in bilingual and/or multilingual households has been the examination of how family ties and the active involvement of family members contribute to the development of children's attachment to their native language.

Previous studies have examined how strong and supportive interactions between children and their parents affect the formation of positive attitudes about the language spoken

at home. Chen's (2023) research on young adults who speak dialects and live in New Zealand demonstrated the significance of the family environment in preserving dialects. The study also emphasised how parents' beliefs and behaviours towards their native languages impact the language development of their children. The speaker highlighted the mutual influence of what they referred to as a "two-way relationship," in which strong family bonds can enhance children's language preservation. Simultaneously, a child's commitment to maintaining their mother tongue can contribute to family unity and positive relationships.

In their study, Humeau et al. (2023) examined 135 children from multilingual families in France. They found a correlation between the interactions between the children and their parents and the children's attitudes towards maintaining their home language. The study found that 10-year-old children who had close relationships with their parents were more likely to have a favourable attitude towards their native language. In Melo-Pfeifer (2015) research on a Portuguese community in Germany, children's drawings were used as a primary means of gathering data. The study found that the minority language, Portuguese, was linked to the important role of family members, particularly grandparents, in promoting the preservation of the local language and fostering a positive emotional connection to it. According to Romanowski (2022), focusing on the involvement of Polish-Australian fathers in their children's home language development, including their commitment to providing resources, time, and motivation, leads to successful bilingual childrearing. Wright (2020) demonstrated how the concept of family was formed in single-parent households through the daily interactions between parents and children, namely in the language spoken at home.

Although the aforementioned research have emphasised the positive emotional aspects of the native tongue, it is crucial to recognise that there are also negative aspects. Studies have documented a correlation between weak family ties and the inability to maintain one's native language at home (Little, 2023; Tannenbaum, 2012). For instance, the study conducted by Little (2023) examined the emotional experiences and emotionally sensitive approach to family language policy in a mother and her 2-year-old son. Reacquainting oneself with the ancestral tongue can present emotional difficulties. The study records the emotional strain and dissatisfaction felt by both the parent and kid when they first start reconnecting with the local language. The study presents evidence indicating that impaired development of local language may result in the permanent transition away from the local language.

De Houwer (2020) also addresses the ongoing topic over the difficult and conflicting family ties between children and parents caused by linguistic barriers. The study investigates the correlation between the language input patterns of parents and the multilingual usage of children in families where at least one parent speaks a language different from the dominant language. Research indicates that households in which both parents consistently or primarily utilise the minority language have a greater likelihood of successfully raising children who are fluent in the minority language. In families where both parents spoke the minority language and only one parent spoke the majority language, the probability of offspring speaking the minority language was the highest.

Additional scholars have documented instances where adults assert their power by reprimanding and imposing discipline onto their children using the language spoken at home (e.g. Luykx, 2003; Pavlenko, 2004; Smith-Christmas, 2014). These acts have sometimes prevented children from engaging in frequent conversations with their parents and from utilising their native language (e.g. Luykx, 2003; Smith-Christmas, 2014). Smith-Christmas (2014) conducted a study on a bilingual Gaelic-English household in Scotland, focusing on the

children's point of view. She discovered that the children's usage of their home language, Scottish Gaelic, decreased as a result of their father's disciplinary actions in that language.

In summary, the aforementioned research have examined various aspects of the relationship between family dynamics and the preservation of the home language, yielding both good and negative findings. Although they have offered essential scholarly insights on the correlation between parents' bond with their children and the results of maintaining the home language, their findings have primarily been based on parents' viewpoints. Our study tries to address this gap. This study examines the continuous linguistic development and preservation of home languages in local families residing in Samarinda, a multicultural city in Indonesia. It contributes to existing research on the influence of family relationships on family language policy by incorporating the viewpoints of grandparents and children. The study seeks to explore the intricate connection between family ties in family language policy and children's use and ambitions in their home language, using Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital as the theoretical framework. Furthermore, it expands upon Bourdieu's concept of social capital, which is commonly examined in relation to the broader society rather than the narrower sociolinguistic context of the family.

BOURDIEU'S CAPITAL TO EXPLORE FAMILIAL TIES

Bourdieu (1986) categorises capital into three primary forms: economic, cultural, and social. Economic capital is the tangible assets and resources that individuals own. Cultural capital refers to the cultural knowledge, skills, and qualifications that an individual can acquire. Social capital is linked to the values that individuals acquire via their ties and affiliations with other groups. According to him, it is observed that capital can be exchanged or converted from one form to another. The study focuses on the significance of social capital in understanding the influence of family ties on family language policy. This notion allows for an examination of social capital in relation to cultural capital, namely the linguistic competence of children seen as linguistic capital in this context. It is observed that links to a group are not inherently present and established permanently through an act of approval, such as the genealogical definition of familial relations within a family. Long-lasting and valuable connections are established and sustained via the tireless efforts and interactions of individuals. Consequently, this may result in individuals achieving additional economic, cultural, and social accomplishments. The concepts of capital proposed by Bourdieu (1986) will be utilised in the analysis of data to investigate the influence of family ties on children's usage of their home language and their aspirations.

METHOD

The study reported here is based on the analysis of interviews conducted with adults and children in three families as summarised in the table below.

TABLE 1. Participant's demographic information

Families	Adult's Age and Occupation	All children	Participating grandparents and grandchildren	Language Use in the Family
Family 1	Mrs. Tobing, 72, teacher-retiree	Kia, 10, girl, primary school	Mrs. Tobing Kia	Sibling talk: Indonesian language Grandma-children talk: Indonesian and Bataknese language Grandma-parents: Bataknese language Parent-children talk: Indonesian language
	Mr. Hasan, 36, businessman	Fiqa 4, girl, kindergarten		
	Mrs. Duma, 36, lecturer			
Family 2	Mr. Kai, 69, no work	Ahmad, 12, boy, 1 st grade senior school	Mr. Kai, 69 Ahmad, 12 Nur, 8	Sibling-talk: Indonesian language Grandpa-children talk: Banjarnese language Grandpa-parents: Banjarnese language Parent-children talk: Indonesian language
	Mr. Umar, 45, employee	Nur 8, girl, 4 th grade primary school		
	Mrs. Norma 40, housewife			
Family 3	Mr. Abram, 68, businessman	Azka 9, boy, 3 rd grade primary school	Mr. Abram, 68 Azka, 9 Azis, 7	Sibling-talk: Indonesian language Grandpa-children talk: Indonesian language Grandpa-parents: Indonesian and Bugisnese language Parent-children talk: Indonesian language
	Mr. Utomo 33, lecturer	Azis, 7, boy, 1 st grade primary school		
	Mrs. Mia 32, lecturer			

Pseudonyms were used for all research participants.

Family 1

The family is bilingual, with Mr. Hasan being Javanese and his wife, Ms. Duma, being Bataknese. Ms. Duma arrived in Samarinda in 2012 when she was 25 years old. At the age of 23 in 2010, Mr. Hasan went to Samarinda with his family. The couple has two offspring, Kia and Fiqa, both of whom were born in Samarinda. Ms. Duma is employed as a lecturer at a private institution, while Mr. Hasan operates a farming enterprise. Ms Duma and Mr Hasan depend on Mrs Tobing to care for their children outside of school hours. Mrs. Tobing resided with the family during the infancy of the children, and they maintain regular interaction with her due to her near proximity. Ms. Riris, the sister of Ms. Duma, resided with the family for a duration of 5 years.

Family 2

The second family exclusively speaks Banjarnese. Ms Norma and Mr Umar arrived in Samarinda in 2001 and 2002, respectively. Their two children, Ahmad and Nur, were born in Samarinda. Mr. Kai is the father of Ms. Norma. He resides with his daughter's family as a result of his wife's demise. His linguistic abilities are limited to the Banjarnese language. The family frequently engages in social activities with their numerous Banjarnese relatives and friends in Samarinda.

Family 3

Both Mr. Utomo and Ms. Mia hold positions as teachers at a public university. Mr. Abram operates his business from his residence, hence he remains at home throughout the entire day alongside his two grandchildren, Azka and Azis. Mr. Utomo arrived in Samarinda in 2015, and Ms. Mia was born there. Mr. Abram accompanies his daughter's family in order to be with his grandsons. In addition, they are accompanied by Buginese relatives.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data for this research is derived from the interviews conducted with both adults and children, as previously mentioned. Family 1 consisted of Mrs. Tobing, the grandmother, Ms. Duma, the mother, and one child named Kia, who all participated in the interview. Furthermore, the interview data from the grandfather (Mr. Kai) and his two children (Ahmad and Nur) in family 2 were examined. Similarly, Family 3 had Mr. Abram, the grandfather, along with his two grandsons, Azka and Azis, who also took part.

The participants were encouraged to suggest their preferred language for the interview; all the interviews were audio-taped. Two interviews were conducted with each participant. The study made use of about two hours of interview material. Every adult interview took thirty minutes to one hour, and with the youngsters it ran from fifteen to thirty minutes. The data was transcribed in Indonesian language then English was used for translation. To preserve the conversational character and flow of the encounters, verbatim transcription was used to document what was said and recorded both the questions and answers of the interviewees. Participants were contacted during the transcription process for explanation as needed. Research subjects received the finished transcripts as well to go over the material.

DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

The interview data was analysed using the six-step theme analysis technique outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The author selected and analysed excerpts of interview data from three families to examine the role of family relationships in family language policy. These excerpts focused on the perspectives of both children and adults regarding language use, as well as their perceptions of the values associated with Indonesian and local languages in different settings. During the analysis, several themes-related to family ties are emerged. The concept of capital, as defined by Bourdieu (1986) in the theoretical framework, was subsequently utilised to

examine the interdependent connection between family connections and the preservation of the local language.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In exploring the reciprocal association between the relationships within the family and home language maintenance, the interview excerpts were examined. The interviews were conducted with Kia, Mrs. Tobing, and Ms Duma in Family 1; Mr Kai, Ahmad and Nur in Family 2 as well as Mr Abram, Azka, and Azis in Family 3. The central theme that emerged from our analysis of the three families was the role of family connectedness in the children's attitudes towards speaking certain language(s) in this case local language and/or Indonesian language as well as their aspirations for future language use. As will be seen in the discussion of the samples, while the child in the first family (Kia) reported the importance of both Indonesian and local language in their present life, the children in the second family (Ahmad and Nur) reported the preference of Indonesian language and third family (Azka and Azis) reported greater attachment to Indonesian due to future life. Analysis and discussion begin by examining the interviews of Family 1.

KIA : A TIGHTLY-KNIT FAMILY

In the interview excerpts provided, Kia acknowledges the significance of being fluent in the majority language, Indonesian, for everyday communication. However, she also expresses her aspiration to maintain her ability to speak Bataknese in the future. This is important to her as it allows her to communicate with her extended family in her grandmother's hometown.

Excerpt 1 (Interview with Kia, aged 10, discussing aspirations for language learning)

- 1 Interviewer : Apakah kamu bisa berbicara beberapa bahasa?
(Are you able to speak several languages?)
- 2 Kia : Ya, tentu saja. Saya bisa berbicara tiga bahasa yakni bahasa
3 Indonesia, bahasa Batak dan beberapa kosatakata bahasa Inggris
(Yes of course. I am able to speak three languages, Indonesia,
Bataknese, and some English words
- 4 Interviewer : Apakah kamu mau menunjukkan padaku cara berbicara
5 dalam bahasa daerahmu?
Would you like to show me speaking your local language?
- 6 Kia : Mm... it's like ketabo mangan, ise na goarmu, na loja tu au dah
(Mm.. Seperti ayoklah makan, siapa namamu, capek sekali aku)
- 7 Interviewer : Saat kamu besar nanti, bagaimana kamu menggunakan ketiga
8 bahasa tersebut?
(When you grow up, how do you think you will use those languages?)
- 9 Kia : Ya, saya pakai bahasa Batak untuk berbicara dengan saudara-saudara di Medan.
10 Kalau bahasa Indonesia saya lebih sering menggunakannya disini, karena di

Samarinda kami perlu berbahasa Indonesia
 (Yes, I use Bataknese to speak with my relatives in Medan. For
 Indonesian I have to use it often here, because this is Samarinda, we need
 to speak Indonesian

In the excerpt above, the preservation of the connection among the family members was stated as a goal for maintaining Bataknese by the girl (to speak to my relatives in Medan) (line 9). For this girl, Bataknese is constructed as linguistic capital that carries important values for her future lives in preserving family social capital.

The role of Mrs Tobing as an extended family living together with her granddaughters was construed as having a particularly significant influence on the children's home language use. It was found to contribute to the shaping of Kia's appreciation towards the home language, and by extension, ultimately to their competence in the home language. The interviews with Ms Duma and Mrs Tobing highlight the extended family as an important social domain that Kia has engaged in since their early childhood.

Excerpt 2 (Interview with Mrs Tobing, the grandmother, discussing reasons for Kia's Bataknese competence)

- 1 Interviewer : Nyonya Tobing, saya dengar Anda memiliki tujuh orang cucu. Diantara mereka,
 2 siapa yang paling pandai berbahasa batak?
 (Mrs Tobing, I heard that you have seven grandchildren. Among them, who is able to
 speak Bataknese the best?)
- 3 Mrs Tobing : Saya rasa Kia
 (I think Kia is the best)
- 4 Interviewer : Menurut Anda, mengapa bahasa bataknya begitu bagus?
 (Why do you think her Bataknese is so good?)
- 5 Mrs Tobing : Ya, mungkin karena dia adalah cucu saya yang tertua dan saya pikir karena
 6 dia dikelilingi oleh kami yang banyak berbahasa batak disini. Kami sering
 7 berbicara bahasa batak satu sama lain, saya dengan ibunya (Nona Duma), dan ketika
 8 tantenya (Nona Riris) tinggal disini bersama kami. Sekarang Riris pindah
 9 ke Jambi, jadi Kia punya sedikit kesempatan berbahasa batak
 (Well, possibly, she is the eldest grandchild and I think it is because she is
 surrounded by us who speak Bataknese here. We often speak Bataknese
 each other. I am with her mom (Ms Duma), and when he aunt (Ms Riris)
 lived here. Now, Riris lived in Jambi, so Kia has few opportunities to practice her Bataknese

Kia was raised in a linguistically diverse home milieu where all the elders spoke Bataknese (lines 6-8) except her father. The strong familial ties have bolstered their use of the Bataknese language within the household, hence enhancing their linguistic proficiency. Additionally, it enhances their understanding and value of their native language. Specifically, Kia has had abundant chances to practise and enhance their Bataknese language skills due to their close relationship with Mrs Tobing, their grandmother, who has resided with them since birth and remains in close proximity. These possibilities were not available to their cousins. Here we observe the potential of family social capital to be passed on to children's language capital. In order to establish enduring and significant ties, it is crucial to consistently uphold the contacts

among family members (Bourdieu, 1986). Mrs. Tobing's perspective interprets the function of the family as a supportive setting that encourages children to use and preserve their home language. Ms. Duma's interview excerpt further confirms her involvement in helping the maintenance of local language.

Excerpt 3 (Interview with Ms Duma, discussing parental roles in home language maintenance)

- 1 Interviewer : Apa pendapat Anda tentang peran orangtua dalam mempertahankan
2 bahasa lokal bagi anak-anak?
(What do you think the role of parents in maintaining home language
for the children?)
- 3 Ms Duma : Oh, orangtua memainkan peran yang sangat penting dalam memperta-
4 hankan bahasa daerah anak-anak mereka karena orangtua adalah yang
5 paling dekat dengan anak-anak mereka. Namun, disini kami masih mem-
6 pertahankan tradisi Batak, yaitu nenek yang tinggal bersama cucunya
7 terutama ketika pasangannya telah meninggal dunia. Pada keluarga yang
8 tinggal bersama kakek-nenek seperti kami, anak-anak dapat berbicara
9 lebih banyak bahasa Batak di rumah sejak usia dini
(Oh, parents play a very important role in maintaining their children's local
language because parents are the closest person to their children. But
here, we still maintain the Batak tradition in which grandmothers living
with their grandchildren particularly when spouses had passed away. For
the families living with grandmothers like ours, children can speak more
Bataknese at home from the early age

Ms. Duma recognises her personal responsibility in preserving her children's native language, since parents hold a crucial position in retaining their children's linguistic local due to their close proximity to their offspring (lines 3-4). Simultaneously, she underscores the crucial function of grandparents in facilitating the acquisition of Bataknese language skills among children within the family. Specifically, in households where grandparents are present, children are more likely to develop proficiency in Bataknese from a tender age. It is evident that the strong links and exchanges between the children and their grandma from an early age have resulted in Kia having more opportunities to speak Bataknese, thereby ensuring the language's continued life. Significantly, although the interview question specifically addressed Mrs. Duma's role in preserving her children's native language, she expands on her answer to highlight her mother's relocation following her father's demise. Speaking the ancestral language helps to enhance communication between grandparents and grandchildren. This is consistent with Mrs Tobing's description (excerpt 2) and emphasises the importance of the women's argument regarding the increased chances for Kia to exercise and utilise their own language on a daily basis. These possibilities may not be as readily available in a traditional family structure.

In Kia's family, the close relationship between family members, especially with her grandmother (Mrs Tobing), helped Kia to maintain and develop her Batak language skills. The presence of a grandmother who speaks Batak creates an environment that supports the use of the language. Bourdieu's social capital theory refers to the resources available to individuals

through a network of family relationships. In this context, the close relationship between Kia and her grandmother provides social capital that supports the development of Kia's linguistic capital (Batak language skills). This process shows how social capital can be transformed into linguistic capital through intensive and sustained interactions within the family.

In summary, the selected excerpts regarding Kia's language experiences in the family have called attention to the participants' accounts of the critical role of positive family relationships in fostering the children's desire for and proficiency in the home language. The paper also emphasises the manner in which the family, as a micro sociolinguistic domain, intersects with the broader sociolinguistic domain of society. Participants' perceptions of the past, present, and future are indicative of the intersection. The subsequent section illustrates an alternative scenario within Ahmad and Nur's household.

AHMAD AND NUR FAMILY : GRANDFATHER'S DISTANCE FROM DESCENDANTS

In Ahmad and Nur's family, the participants reported spending less time in interacting with their children. As a consequence, there were fewer opportunities for the home language to be practised and used. The following excerpts have been chosen to illustrate this point.

Excerpt 4 (Interview with Nur, aged 8, expressing language practices and communication preferences at home)

- 1 Interviewer : Nur, bahasa apa yang kamu gunakan saat berbicara dengan orangtuamu?
(Nur, in what language do you speak to your parents?)
- 2 Nur : Bahasa Indonesia
(Indonesian language)
- 3 Interviewer : Bagaimana saat berbicara dengan kakek kamu?
(What about to your grandpa?)
- 4 Nur : (:)) Saya biasanya tidak banyak berbicara dengan kakek
(smile) I don't usually speak to him a lot
- 5 Interviewer : Anda tidak banyak berbicara dengannya. Mengapa?
(You don't speak to him a lot. Why?)
- 6 Nur : Saya tidak begitu yakin apa yang sebenarnya terjadi padanya, tetapi saat
7 saya berbicara, dia hanya diam saja dan tampak bingung
(I'm not really sure what happens to him but when I speak he just keeps
silent and seems to be confused)
- 8 Interviewer : Seberapa dekat kamu dengannya?
(How close are you to him?)
- 9 Nur : Saya tidak dekat tapi bukan berarti saya tidak sayang padanya
(I'm not close but it does not mean I don't love him)

Excerpt 5: (Interview with Ahmad, aged 12, expressing language practices at home)

- 1 Interviewer : Ketika kamu bermain dengan saudara lelakimu, bahasa apa yang kamu gunakan?
(When you play with your brother, what language do you use?)

- 2 Ahmad : Bahasa Indonesia sepanjang waktu
(Indonesian all the time)
Bagaimana saat kamu berbicara dengan orangtuamu, bahahasa Indonesia atau gabungan
- 3 Interviewer : ...?
(So when you speak to your parents, Indonesian only or mixing...?)
- 4 Ahmad : Indonesia juga
(Indonesian also)
- 5 Interviewer : Apakah ibumu memintamu untuk berbicara dalam dua bahasa , yaotu bahasa Bugis dan
6 bahasa Indonesia kepada kakek kamu?
(Does your mum ask you to speak mixed-languages Bajarnese and Indonesian to your grandpa?)
- 7 Ahmad : Ya, dia sering memintanya
(Yeah, she often asks me so)
- 8 Interviewer : Lalu kamu bilang apa?
(What did you say after that?)
- 9 Ahmad : Sulit sekali karena saya tidak mengerti apa yang harus saya katakan padanya (kakek)
(It is so hard because I don't understand what to say to him)
- 10 Interviewer : Bagaimana dengan kakek kamu? Apakah dia berbicara bahasa Indonesia atau bahasa
11 Banjar kepadamu?
(What about your grandfather? Does he speak Indonesian or Banjarnese to you?)
- 12 Ahmad : Emm..but I don't speak to my grandpa much
(Emm..tetapi saya tidak banyak berbicara dengannya)
- 13 Interviewer : Bolehkah saya tau mengapa?
(May I ask why?)
- 14 Ahmad : Saya pikir dia hanya berbicara menggunakan bahasanya dan saya tidak bisa menjawab apa
15 yang dia (kakek) tanyakan
(I think he only speaks his language and I can't answer what he asks)
- 16 Interviewer : Apakah kamu peduli dengannya (kakek)?
(Do you care to him?)
- 17 Ahmad : Ya, aku peduli tapi tak bisa berbicara dengannya. Itu saja!
(Yes, I do but can't speak to him. That's all!)

As observed in excerpts 4 and 5, Nur reported that he did not speak very much to his grandfather, illustrated in the statement:... *when I speak he just keeps silent and seems to be confused* (lines 6 and 7) (Nur, excerpt 5). Ahmad also confirmed the infrequent grandfather-grandson exchanges in another interview excerpt and offered an explanation: *I think he only speaks his language and I can't answer what he asks* (line 14-15) (Ahmad, excerpt 5).

The grandpa is the primary or dominant speaker of the Banjarnese language within the family. Ahmad and Nur faced communication difficulties with him due to his incapacity to speak languages other than his local tongue (Banjarnese), which caused negative circumstances in the family. The Banjarnese language may not hold significant symbolic value for the two grandchildren, Nur and Ahmad, due to its association with a family member's language limitation. This creates a gap between family members, leading to disharmony in their

relationships. As a consequence, Ahmad and Nur have become uninterested in engaging in communication with their grandfather.

In Ahmad and Nur's family, a less close relationship with their grandfather means that there are fewer opportunities to use the Banjar language. The grandfather who only speaks Banjar and rarely interacts with his grandchildren causes the children to prefer Indonesian. Bourdieu's concept of social capital can explain this finding. Ahmad and Nur's families lack strong social capital with their grandfather, which limits the opportunities to utilise linguistic capital (Banjar language). This suggests that without close and supportive family relationships, it is difficult for children to develop and maintain their local language. Contrary with Family 2, 3rd family had a strong bond between grandparents and grandchildren and shared a mutual interest.

AZKA AND AZIS: HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON

In the 3rd family, all participants claim that they speak Indonesian. Mr Abram reported spending much time in playing and interacting with his grandchildren. As a result, there were more opportunities for Indonesian language to be practised and used. The following excerpts have been chosen to illustrate this point.

Excerpt 6 (Interview with Mr. Abram, expressing language practices and language learning aspiration)

- 1 Interviewer : Apakah Anda dekat dengan cucu-cucu Anda?
(Are close with your grandsons?)
- 2 Mr. Abram : Tentu saja
(Certainly yes)
- 3 Interviewer : Bagaimana Anda menghabiskan waktu dengan mereka?
(How do you spend your time with them?)
- 4 Mr. Abram : Saya selalu menghabiskan waktu sore hari dengan bermain dan mengobrol dengan mereka.
5 Saya bertanya kepada mereka tentang kegiatan mereka di sekolah
(I always spend my afternoon by playing and talking to them. I ask them about their school-hours activity)
- 6 Interviewer : Bagaimana Anda berbicara dengan mereka? Apakah Anda menggunakan bahasa Indonesia
7 atau bahasa Bugis?
- 8 Mr. Abram : Tentu saja kami menggunakan basa Indonesia, bahasa kami
(Of course I use Indonesian, our language)
- 9 Interviewer : Tolong beritahu saya mengapa demikian, Pak Abram?
(Please tell me why is it so, Mr Abram?)
- 10 Mr. Abram : Saya rasa berbicara dengan siapapun saat ini harus menggunakan bahasa Indonesia karena
11 perannya sebagai lingua franca. Bahkan, anak-anak juga diajarkan bahasa Indonesia di-
12 sekolah. Selain itu, di Samarinda jarang sekali kita mendengar orang berbicara bahasa daerah
13 mereka. Hampir semua orang berbahasa Indonesia
(I think speaking to anyone today must be Indonesian due to its role as lingua franca. Indeed, the children are also taught Indonesian at school. Moreover, in Samarinda we are rare to hear

that people speaking their local language. Most people speaking Indonesian.

14 Interviewer : O, begitu. Apa yang Anda harapkan dari hal tersebut? Maksud saya harapan Anda menggunakan
15 bahasa Indonesia kepada cucu-cucu Anda?

O, I see. What do you expect from it? I mean your expectation speaking Indonesian to your grandsons?

16 Mr. Abram : Saya berharap keturunan saya atau setidaknya cucu-cucu saya mengikuti perkembangan
17 zaman dan informasi terbaru
(I hope my descendants or at least my grandchildren keep up with the latest times and information)

From Mr Abram explanation, there are two main points discussed. First, it is clear that he orients to the educational and societal demand. By getting the kids used to speaking Indonesian, Mr Abram improves his grandsons' language acquisition. Moreover, he reacts to the situation occurred in Samarinda in which less people use their local language while interacting one to another. Most people prefer to speak Indonesian due to the diversity of cultural background. Second, Mr Abram also insists on the future of Indonesian language use. He dreams his offsprings being update. He sees Indonesian language is more prestige than local language (in case Bugisnese language). Local language is viewed old-fashioned way of speaking. therefore, Mr Abram has negative attitude towards local language. To confirm what has been said by Mr Abram, the following excerpt illustrates Azka and Azis' views on Indonesian language.

Excerpt 7 (Interview with Azka and Azis, expressing reasons for speaking Indonesian)

1 Interviewer : Bagaimana kamu menghabiskan waktu di rumah?
(How do you spend your time at home?)

2 Azka : Kami selalu bermain *Maggasing* dan ngobrol tentang aktifitas sekolah kami kepada kakek
(We always play *Maggasing* and talking about our school activity to our grandpa)

3 Interviewer : Siapa kami? Hanya kamu dan kakekmu saja?
(Who are we? You and your grandpa only?)

4 Azka : Tidak. Maksudnya Azis dan saya. Kita bermain bersama kakek
(No. I mean Azis, grandpa, and I. We play it altogether)

5 Interviewer : Ya... Bahasa apa yang kalian gunakan saat berbicara dan bermain bersama kakek?
(Yeah. What language do you use when speaking and playing with your grandpa?)

6 Azka : Kami gunakan bahasa indonesia. Kami tidak pernah menggunakan bahasa lain selain bahasa
7 Indonesia di rumah. Kakek kami pernah berkata kalau bahasa Indonesia lebih penting daripada
8 bahasa daerah

(We use Indonesian language. We never use other languages instead of Indonesian at home. Our grandpa has ever said that speaking Indonesia is more important than local language)

9 Interviewer : Apa kamu sependapat dengannya?
(Do you agree with his opinion?)

10 Azka : Tentu saja. Kami tidak pernah belajar bahasa Bugis atau bahasa daerah lain disini. Bahasa
11 Indonesia adalah bahasa pengantar dan alat komunikasi di sekolah. Saya tidak pernah men-
12 dengar teman-teman saya disekolah menggunakan bahasa daerah mereka.

(Absolutely yes. We never learn Bugisnese or local language subjects here. Indonesian is the medium of instruction as well as communication means at school. I have never heard my friends at school use their local languages)

- 13 Interviewer : Bagaimana denganmu Azis?
(What about you Azis?)
- 14 Azis : Ya, kakek juga pernah bilang begitu. Ayah dan ibu juga meminta saya untuk menggunakan
15 bahasa Indonesia. Mereka bilang akan berguna untuk belajar bahasa Inggris saat masuk SMA
(Yes, grandpa ever says so. Mum and dad also ask me to use Indonesian language. They said it
will be useful to learn English later we enter the high school)
- 16 Interviewer : O, begitu. Jadi semua anggota keluarga kamu menggunakan bahasa Indonesia
(O, I see, so all members of your family just speak Indonesian)
- 17 Azis : Begitulah
(Yes, indeed)

From the excerpt above, all family members agree that Indonesian language is more significant than local language. Therefore, they have something in common in which “standing on using Indonesian at home”. The family decide to focus more on Indonesian is based on future aspirations and the importance of Indonesian as a lingua franca in Samarinda. Bourdieu states that cultural capital includes knowledge, skills and education acquired by individuals. In this context, the use of Indonesian is considered an important cultural capital for future educational and social success. Azka and Azis’ family views Indonesian as an important capital to achieve their goals in the future, so they choose to focus more on this language rather than the local language.

Our study has shown a significant conclusion about the pivotal significance of family connectedness in the successful preservation of the native language. Our study has highlighted the pro-monolingual practices in Ahmad and Nur's family and the pro-bilingual practices in Kia's family. We have emphasised the significance of family social capital in developing successful family language policy, emphasising the role of family ties in this process.

The strong familial social capital within Kia's family, represented by the relationships between the children and grandparents, significantly influenced and fostered the children's comprehension of the importance and drive to communicate in their native language. On the other hand, Ahmad and Nur's family has limited social connections and a lack of linguistic knowledge about their local. This is evident in their distant relationship with their grandfather, who only speaks Banjarnese. The grandfather himself has mentioned the rare occasions of interaction between him and his grandchildren. As a result, there are fewer interactions among them. Therefore, this may have additionally influenced their preference for using Indonesian and undervaluing the significance of the local language, specifically Banjarnese. Contrary to both households, Azka and Azis' family likewise adopts a monolingual approach to raising their children. Every member of the family has unanimously agreed to exclusively use Indonesian as their primary language at home. This optimal selection has proven to be a correct choice for parents who have high hopes for their children's future..

The results draw on the role of older family members (grandmothers and grandfathers) as important agent in shaping the family language policy. Strong relationships between older and younger generations contribute to the transfer of social and linguistic capital. Bourdieu points out that capital can be transferred between generations through ongoing interactions and relationships. In this study, grandmothers and grandfathers act as custodians of the local language and provide a supportive environment for the development of the language in the

younger generation. This transfer of capital demonstrates the importance of intergenerational relationships in maintaining local languages and family language policies.

These findings corroborate prior research on the importance of family bonds in family language policy, and the relationship between a supportive atmosphere and favourable language usage at home (e.g. Said & Zhu, 2019; Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002; Wright, 2020). Tannenbaum & Howie (2002) observed a reciprocal connection between close family relationships and the preservation of the home tongue. According to their assertion, a robust familial bond can contribute to the preservation of language skills in children. Conversely, the advanced linguistic proficiency of children in their native language can foster harmonious family ties. These results regarding the family dynamics and language usage of family members in this current study are consistent with and address the requirement for empirical research on the balanced development of children's languages in bilingual families (De Houwer, 2020). The study has found evidence supporting the idea that a language gap between parents and children can lead to emotional distance. This finding aligns with previous research by Bui et al. (2024) and Fillmore (2000) that the perspectives of both grandparents and grandchildren are reported as conflictive bilingualism and the negative experiences associated with it in the family.

In addition, by examining the language beliefs held by the children and adults in an extended family, this study also concurs with prior research that has highlighted the significant role of grandparents in helping to maintain the children's home language (e.g. Clyne, 1982; Smith-Christmas, 2014; Wenhan et al., 2022). Wenhan et al. (2022) has drawn attention to the extended family as a particularly important context for home language development and maintenance. As Clyne (1982) contends that the extended family structure may be more conducive to language ecology than the nuclear family. Kia' continuing strong relationships with their grandmother beyond early childhood provided the motivation to speak Batakese, pointing to the central role that rich, regular communication over time plays. The regularity of communication, according to Lightbown & Spada (2013), is one of the most influential incentives for home language learning. In extending prior research, this study has added the importance of the long-lasting experiences in the development of such motivations by enabling participant accounts of how past early childhood experiences are connected to continuing present language use and to aspirational use in the future.

In sum, we hope to have made a contribution to the existing research on family language policy in the following ways. First, the exploration of the children's perspectives on their languages and the affective dimension of language use alongside those of the parents, has permitted moving away from a reliance on the adults' voice in family language policy and added to the small body of work (e.g. (Bui et al., 2022, 2024; Palviainen, 2020; Smith-Christmas, 2017)) on children's voice. Second, we hope to have shown how Bourdieu (1986) concept of capital can add a nuanced lens to the interpretation of family language policy in exploring the subtle transferability between family relationships and children's home language use and aspirations. In taking such an approach, our study has shown the importance of the relationships developed in strengthening children's positive affect in the home language. As exemplified in Family 1, the nurturing of family relationships from a young age was shown to have a long-lasting impact on the children's present and future language use and investment in their bilingualism. In turn, our study extends the evidence on the importance of social capital – formed within the sociolinguistic domain of the family – on children's harmonious bilingual development.

The drawbacks of the current study noted are the study's small sample and geographic focus. Only three households were interviewed for the study. This small sample size may not represent

the population and limit generalizability. To further understand family language policies, future study should include more diverse households within diverse socio-cultural dynamics

CONCLUSION

Drawing on both adults' and children's voices, the analysis has highlighted the reciprocal nature of relationships and language use found in the family. The study has illustrated how children's exposure to a linguistically-rich and closely-connected environment at home in a supportive family environment, contributed significantly to shaping their appreciation of the importance of communicating in the home language. Relatedly, it has shown how a family environment, in which the reported bonds between particular family members are not strong, can have a negative impact on children's uptake of the home language and their desire to speak it. We have also provided further evidence to support Bourdieu's (1986) claims on the nature of capital by attending to the family as a context. We have uncovered how children's sound linguistic capital turns into rich family social capital, and on the reverse side, how limited family social capital turns into limited linguistic capital. Despite the small scale nature of this study, it is hoped that the findings have provided some insights on the importance of strong family relationships to children's ongoing home language use beyond early childhood. Further studies are needed to explore how significant others beyond the family unit can also support children's motivations and desire to speak the home language.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research received the support from the Centre for Education Financial Services (Puslapdik) and the Indonesia Endowment Funds for Education (LPDP) through the Indonesia Education Scholarship (BPI) by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemendikbudristek)

REFERENCE:

- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.
- Bui, T. M. T., Filipi, A., & Turner, M. (2024). 'I need to learn Vietnamese to speak to my grandma': the place of family relationships in family language policy. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, May, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2024.2340748>
- Bui, T. M. T., Turner, M., & Filipi, A. (2022). Including children's voice in family language policy: an exploration of the tensions between mothers' and children's language beliefs. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, May, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2077353>
- Chen, L. (2023). *Language Policy and Mandarin Investment of Tertiary Chinese Heritage Language Learners from Dialect Backgrounds in New Zealand*. Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Auckland, New Zealand.
- Clyne, M. G. (1982). *Multilingual Australia: Resources, needs, policies*. River Seine

Publications.

- Curdt-christiansen, X. L., & Iwaniec, J. (2023). ‘妈妈, I miss you’: Emotional multilingual practices in transnational families. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069221125342>
- De Houwer, A. (2020). Harmonious Bilingualism: Well-being for families in bilingual settings. In A. Schalley & S. Eisenclas (Ed.), *Handbook of Home Language Maintenance and Development: Social and Affective Factors* (pp. 63–83). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501510175-004>
- Fillmore, L. W. (2000). Loss of family languages: Should educators be concerned? *Theory into Practice*, 39(4), 203–210. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3904_3
- Humeau, C., Guimard, P., Nocus, I., & Galharret, J. (2023). *Parental language practices and children’s use of the minority language: The mediating role of children’s language attitudes*. 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069231207326>
- Liddicoat, A. J., & Baldauf, R. B. (2008). Language planning in local contexts: Agents, contexts and interactions. *Language Planning and Policy: Language Planning in Local Contexts, December 2008*, 3–17. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847690647-002>
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How Languages are Learned* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Little, S. (2023). ‘Half of who you are’: Parent and child reflections on the emotional experiences of reversing familial language shift. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069221125705>
- Luykx, A. (2003). Weaving languages together: Family language policy and gender socialization in bilingual Aymara households. In & S. R. S. R. Bayley (Ed.), *Language socialization in bilin- gual and multilingual societies* (pp. 25–43). Multilingual matters.
- Melo-Pfeifer, S. (2015). The role of the family in heritage language use and learning: impact on heritage language policies. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 18(1), 26–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2013.868400>
- Paat, Y. F. (2013). Working with Immigrant Children and Their Families: An Application of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 23(8), 954–966. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2013.800007>
- Palviainen, Å. (2020). Future prospects and visions for family language policy research. *Handbook of Home Language Maintenance and Development: Social and Affective Factors*, 315478, 236–253. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501510175-012>
- Pavlenko, A. (2004). “Stop doing that, ia komu skazala!”: Language choice and emotions in parent-child communication. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 25(2–3), 179–203. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630408666528>
- Rijal, S. (2023). BAHASA PERADABAN Persebaran Bahasa Daerah Nusantara di Kota Samarinda. In A. S. Idris (Ed.), *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* (Vol. 7, Issue 2). Lembaga Ladang Kata.
- Romanowski, P. (2022). Paternal agency in heritage language maintenance in Australia: Polish fathers in action. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 25(9), 3320–3332. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2022.2050994>
- Said, F., & Zhu, H. (2019). “No, no Maama! Say ‘Shaahir ya Ouledee Shaahir!’” Children’s agency in language use and socialisation. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 23(3), 771–785. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006916684919>

- Smith-Christmas, C. (2014). Being socialised into language shift: the impact of extended family members on family language policy. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 35(5), 511–526. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2014.882930>
- Smith-Christmas, C. (2017). *FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY Maintaining an Endangered Language in the Home* (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137521811.0001>
- Spolsky, B. (2012). Family language policy - the critical domain. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 33(1), 3–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2011.638072>
- Tannenbaum, M. (2012). Family language policy as a form of coping or defence mechanism. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 33(1), 57–66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2011.638074>
- Tannenbaum, M., & Howie, P. (2002). The association between language maintenance and family relations: Chinese immigrant children in Australia. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 23(5), 408–424. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630208666477>
- Wenhan, X., Bee Chin, N., & Cavallaro, F. (2022). Living in harmony: The negotiation of intergenerational family language policy in Singapore. *Language and Communication*, 82, 8–27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2021.11.004>
- Wright, L. (2020). *Critical perspectives on language and kinship in multilingual families* (1st ed.). Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350088313>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Indah Sari Lubis studies in Doctoral program in Applied English Linguistics, Atma Jaya Catholic University, Jakarta – Indonesia. She also has been working in Mulawarman University, East Kalimantan from 2015 to present. Her research interests cover the issues of language policy and planning as well as linguistic variants particularly in multilingual family spheres.