Language choice among family in Narum speech community

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Abstract

Whenever speakers of two or more languages communicate, a decision has to be made about which of these languages is to be used. This study focuses on the language choice among family in Narum Community. This study is significant in that i) very little research of any kind has been done on the Narum community, ii) the community is in a late stage of language shift; iii) the contribution of the present study will be the documentation of the Narum language and community. The present study investigates the community's language choice among their family members. A set of questionnaires with 180 respondents was used to obtain the data. The respondents being randomly selected in the interests of assessing the importance and significance of Narum language choice. The data and follow-up analysis make use of Fishman's domain analysis. The study employs descriptive frequencies using SPSS. Often no satisfactory explanation can be given as to why speakers make the choices they do, but studies show that a speech community and its language choice is determined by the members of the community itself. It suggests a linear trend towards the Sarawak Malay language in line with the speakers' exposure thereto. Notable is the discrepancy in language choice of the Narum community, with a more pronounced gravitation towards the Sarawak Malay language during interaction with family members. The results of the language choice with a peer group show that both younger and older generations choose to use the Sarawak Malay language. The study concludes that the efforts to maintain this language in the future will depend on the Narums desire to retain to their native language.

Keywords: Domain, ethnic minority, language choice, Narum language, native language, speech community

Introduction

In many different settings, minority groups have been observed to shift from using their mother tongue to using the majority language (Ostler, 2011). In the case of the ethnic community of Narum in Sarawak, where they are a small part of a larger community, their language usage is changing over time due to changes in their cultural values in response to modernization and their assimilation into the surrounding society. The language and culture of the Narum is being influenced and slowly replaced by the languages and cultures of the major indigenous groups (Sa'adiah Ma'alip & Syaidul Azam Kamarudin, 2021). The replacement of the Narum language by other languages spoken outside the community is taking place especially among the younger generation of Narums.

The phenomenon is not unusual for an ethnic community living among other communities or belonging to a larger community.

In any society, social interaction is determined by members of the society in terms of language choice. Henceforth, Genemo (2022) mentioned that according to Gumperz (1971) and Duranti (1997) language choice is an important aspect to discuss in a study of minority language. Moreover, Romaine (2002) stated minority speakers continually make choices as to which etymological asset to convey in a given setting and with a given group of bystanders. Scholars have identified a number of factors which they believe influence language choice and language use in ethnic minority settings. Besides that, Dilah Tuah et al. (2021) also mentioned that scholars are interested in language choice issues because there are observations or reports that a language is being experience a threat and there is a language threat in a community. Domain is one of the factors, which refers to the idea that each language or variety of language is assigned to a specific purpose, space, or group of people in society, such as the family domain for example. Spolsky (2012) and Fishman (1972) argue that domain is a useful idea in investigating individual and community language use. Likewise, language speakers in ethnic minority communities tend to link certain languages with specific domains, according to the language domain (Fishman, 2000) For example, the language spoken at home or in one's neighborhood may differ from the language spoken at school or at work (Rasinger, 2010). However, the identity of domains varies from one community to another community. Downes (2003) noted that "There is no universal set applicable to all speech communities".

This study focuses on the language choice among family in Narum community. This study is significant in that i) very little research of any kind has been done on the Narum community, ii) the community is in a late stage of language shift; iii) the contribution of the present study will be the documentation of the Narum language and community. This study seeks to highlight a research conducted on language choice amongst family in Narum speech community in Sarawak in Borneo Island. These domains are defined as situations where communication using specific languages can be quantified. It is understood certain social conditions require the use of specific languages for positive and meaningful interaction. The 'home/family' domain is designed to reflect the particular language use and language choice of the Narum people when communicating with family and extended family members.

The respondents' pattern of language choice is studies on the basis of the aforementioned domains mentioned previously. Narum is most widely chosen and practiced by the older generation alone. Low proficiency in the Narum language among the younger generation can be traced to the language practices of the older generation. Indeed it could be said that proficiency in any language is plotted as a function of the language choice in the home.

According to Rahim et al. (2021) A study should be done after realizing that there are still no scholars who do it thoroughly. Therefore, this study has significant effects from the Narum language's loss or death. To the country, the loss of Narum language means the loss of a unique culture in the community of Sarawak Malay. From the socio-linguist perspective, the loss of the Narum language means the loss of anthropological heritage for the language that has been used extensively in the Narum community in Sarawak from previous generations. Hence, the intention of this study is to document the recent language situation of the Narum community.

Language choice in minority communities

As a communication tool, language is able to overcome various limitations and obstacles. It is able to cross ethnic boundaries or barriers, geographic or political boundaries, social status and hierarchy, religion and ideology and other limitations, whether they are pre-existing or deliberately held for a specific purpose (Sa'adiah & Teo Kok Seong, 2016). Even so, it turns out that language users in the family are given attention so that communication between family members can run smoothly. Therefore the choice of language among families in a language community should not be ignored.

Researches that study languages, language choice and speech community are aplenty particularly on minority languages. For instance, Nandy et al. (2021) examines the issue of discrimination of African native community and Indonesian-Chinese community while Pue et al. (2019) discusses Kelantan Peranakan Chinese Language and Marker of Group Identity where the Chinese as the largest minority ethnic group in the Peninsular, are often stereotypically depicted as relatively less fluent or knowledgeable in Malay language. Noraisikin et al. (2015) discusses language shift of Cham language in Malaysia by analysing the impact of a dominant other language compared to a minority language while language choice is studied by Stępkowska (2021) in observing bilingual couples language choice as an act of identity.

Sarawak as a state in Malaysia comprising multi ethnics and minorities provides a vast spectrum of scenarios to study language of its communities. Similar to the study describes in this article on language choice, Dilah et al. (2019) examine lexical choice among minority ethnic of Kedayan in Bekenu, Sarawak in their study on treats of diminishing minority languages due to modernization.

The studies contribute towards research in strategies deployed by individuals and communities that can be related to common values/tendencies that are maintained and /or ignored by the groups and communities to which they belong, raising issues about structural influence on language choice. In line with Nguyen and Hamid (2017), the structural influence on language choice, enhancing the ethnolinguistic vitality of the home and the community in which senior members hold the key to language maintenance should be considered vital in reducing the new in-group distance created by young members. The common values/tendencies could be referred according to Yang et al. (2019) as the "old" generation is unaware of the need to distinguish itself from others through intragroup comparison due to its common strong ethnicity. In contrast, the "new" generation, due to increasing contacts with "external" cultures, is more aware of intergroup and intragroup differences, which demonstrates their degree of acculturation and leads to wide variation in the recognition of importance of ethnicity.

As reported by Clyne (1992), Gal (1979), Lieberson & Waters (1988) and Veltman (1979), in many different settings, minority groups have been observed to shift from using their mother tongue to using the majority language. However, there are also situations in global findings in which this shift is less abrupt, and a more stable bilingualism has been observed (Fishman, 1968; Fishman, Cooper & Ma, 1971; Rubin, 1968). Global finding can also refer to research into language shift has been conducted in a variety of scientific disciplines, from linguistics and sociolinguistics to economics and physics. According to Kandler and Steele (2017), language shift is modeled as a competition between linguistic communities for speakers, analogous to the competition dynamics between interacting species in ecology. When talking about the linguistic behavior of linguistic minority groups, then, we are looking at a continuum of language usage, from a stronger tendency to maintain the mother tongue in at least some areas of everyday life for

some groups to a weaker tendency to maintain the mother tongue, eventually leading to language shift, for others. Most commonly language shift has been found to happen within these groups.

The contact of two or more languages or traditions opens to a consequence of shift and choice on languages. In the case of Sarawak's Narum ethnic community, where they are a small part of a larger community, their language usage has changed over time due to changes in cultural values in response to modernization and adaptation to the surrounding society The replacement of the Narum language by other languages spoken outside the community is taking place especially among the younger generation of Narums. For example the Narum language is decreasing in use. Even the young generation looks like they are rejecting and avoiding the use of the Narum language in their everyday communication. The phenomenon is not unusual for an ethnic community living among other communities or belonging to a larger community. As in Sarawak, Sarawak Malay language is the predominant Malay language spoken in Sarawak; however, other ethnic languages have contributed to the increase in cultural and linguistic diversity. Language shift among ethnic minority children is common, for example as was documented by Li (1982) on Chinese language maintenance and language shift among Chinese American immigrants. Erna Andriyanti mentioned (2019), the loss of a mother tongue tends to occur in particular language community when another language is dominant.

Methodology

The Narum community is located in Marudi, Sarawak and belongs to a minority language community that is heading towards language extinction. In terms of language cognate, there are similarities between the language of the Narum community and the Kenyah community. However, the speakers of this language community are declining and the number who can master the Narum language well, especially the younger generation is very limited. This puts the language of this minority community in a threatened position. The subjects of this study are limited to the Narum community living in the district of Marudi.

In view of minority languages and their survival, a study was conducted to introduce this language community. Data collection was gathered to document the cultural situation practiced in this language community. On the other hand, people's cultures are as diverse as the world's languages. They can change over time. Languages are changing rapidly especially on the minority language such as the Narum language community. A quantitative method was used in this study.The questionnaires were distributed to obtain data directly from this language community. From the questionnaires, respondents were asked which language they use when speaking to their family members. Narum family culture expects to always be obedient and responsible to the older relatives. The power and status that older people hold in the family relationships can be seen in the respect they hold. Younger generation members are taught to respect their elders in all social and family matters.

The questionnaire constructed for the study consists of closed ended response statements with rating scale answers. This type of questionnaire was considered because it provides a range of responses to a given question or statement. These are useful devices for the researcher because they incorporate a degree of sensitivity and differentiation of response. The Likert scale is adopted in the questionnaire with 56 statements on patterns of language choice. The respondents were asked to tick on the choice given of the statements items. A five-point rating scale was used to measure the language attitudes towards Narum language, to identify problems experienced by the

Narum respondents as a result of being an ethnic minority and the importance of the Narum community regarding language choice among the family.

For the purposes of discussion, patterns of language choice spoken within the home/family represent most of the available alternatives. Respondents were initially asked to indicate all kinds of languages used (if the language in question was specified, she was given five choices, including an "other" choice). The discussion shows the percentage of respondents who indicate that they use different interlocutors and different languages in their family area.

The data from the questionnaire was analysed by using the SPSS (Statistic Packages for Social Sciences). Before the questionnaire is analysed, the data collected will be coded. The data will be valued from 1-5 according to the rank scales. The data will be presented in tables and variables of the 5 rank scales will be calculated directly from the SPSS.

Findings and discussion

The findings and discussion focus on language choice in the Narum community. This discussion is conducted through an examination of domains identified as a result of data analysis. Although there are recent studies, the domain analysis used still applies the domain approach by Fishman. Therefore, this discussion method was developed by Fishman (1964) and Fishman et al. (1971). In relation thus, a study by Noraisikin et al. (2019) also used domain analysis pioneered by Fishman (1971). The scholars argue that domains are institutionally relevant areas of social interaction such as family in which specific language patterns can be observed and analysed. Domain analysis is useful in that it specifies some of the social rules that govern language use and choice. For example, one region uses one language and another region uses another language. Situations may also arise where members of the Narum community interact with each other in a combination of languages. Information about this process of language selection in specific social contexts can help make levels of language preservation more predictable for communities.

Language choice with the respondents' mother

The types of language chosen by the people to converse with their mothers are discussed here. As mentioned before, more than hundred possible language choice combinations were available for each respondent.

Table 1 shows that the language choice with the highest percentage for communication between the person and their mothers is Narum (40.6%). The second highest percentage is Sarawak Malay language (39.4%), which is only a few percent less than the Narum language. The choice to use either Malay language or a combination of the Narum language and the Sarawak Malay language amounts to 4% of all respondents. Other respondents used a combination of languages with their mothers. The choice of language was largely determined by the respondent's fluency in the languages with which his/her mother was familiar. The mother may either be more fluent, as fluent, or less fluent in the language chosen by the respondent during communication.

Apart from the respodent's language choice in conversations with the mother, Table 2 shows a mother's chosen language when communicating with the person. Compared with the person's language when speaking to their mothers, a respondent's mother used more Narum language with the respondents. This occurred in 45.6% of cases.

Table 1. Language respondents spoke with their mother

Language combination	Number	Percent
Narum language(NL)	73	40.6
Malay language(ML)	8	4.4
Sarawak Malay language(SML)	71	39.4
Narum language+SML	8	4.4
Other languages included the mixed languages (OLIML)	4	2.2
NL, SML	3	1.7
ML,SML	1	.6
NL, NL+SML	1	.6
SML, NL+SML	1	.6
SML, OLIML	5	2.8
NL,SML,OLIML	3	1.7
ML,SML,OLIML	1	.6
NL, ML,NL+SML,OLIML	1	.6
Total	**180**	**100.0**

Table 2. Language choice of the respondents' mother

Language combination	Number	Percent
Narum language(NL)	82	45.6
Malay language(ML)	6	3.3
Sarawak Malay language(SML)	67	37.2
Narum language+SML	11	6.1
Other languages included the mixed languages (OLIML)	4	2.2
NL, SML	3	1.7
ML,SML	1	.6
NL, ML, SML,NL+SML	5	2.8
NL,SML,NL+SML	1	.6
Total	**180**	**100.0**

This result found that the person's mothers speak more Narum language (45.6%) and less Sarawak Malay (37.2%) compared to her children's conversation, which is 40.6% and 39.4% respectively. Narum mothers use either Narum language or Sarawak Malay language (NL, SML) in independent conversation as often (1.7%) as her children spoke to her (1.7%) in which the percentage is quite low. The findings indicate that Narum mothers prefer Narum language when she talks to her children. She can also speak Sarawak Malay language fluently and choose to converse in this language with her children. Narum mothers do not use mixed language when conversing with their children.

This finding indicates that Narum's women play an important role in maintaining the Narum language in her family. It is expected from the Narum community that elders should guide their young and in this case, a mother is expected to preserve their language to their children. The language a person chooses when communicating with his/her mother can be explained as obedience towards a parent; the children will try to use the language the mother always uses. However in this case, the older generation (aged 36 and above) might use the Narum language with their mother, but not the younger generation (aged 18 and below) since most of these do not speak Narum fluently. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the younger generation cannot understand the Narum language.

The reason why a high percentage of the young people speak Narum to their mother is that most of the women speak Narum quite well. In addition, the domestic role where a mother usually passes on the culture to the next generation makes it easier for the younger respondents to converse in Narum. Once the culture is ingrained, the use of the Narum language is no longer such a necessity.

The tendency to use Narum whenever a respondent's mother converses with the respondent is also strong. This is due to the fact that a mother demands that her children speak in the ethnic community language, regardless whether they may or may not want to converse in Narum with their mother. This situation applies also to the other languages spoken in the Narum community.

Language choice with respondents' father

The language in which ther person prefer to converse with their fathers is discussed below. They show similar language choice percentage levels as those in Table 3. Approximately 41.1% of the respondents speak Narum language with their father. Whereas 38.9% use the Sarawak Malay language with their father while 6.1% choose to use a combination of the Narum language and the Sarawak Malay language. The remaining language types used by the respondents when conversing with their father is distributed among other language combinations.

Table 3. Language used by respondents with their father

Language combination	Number	Percent
Narum language (NL)	74	41.1
Malay language (ML)	7	3.9
Sarawak Malay language (SML)	70	38.9
Narum language+SML	11	6.1
Other languages included the mixed languages (OLIML)	3	1.7
NL, SML	3	1.7
NL, ML, SML,NL+SML	9	5.0
NL, SML, NL+SML	3	1.7
Total	**180**	**100.0**

The language spoken by the respondents' fathers when addressing the respondents shows patterns similar to those of the mothers' preferred language. The Narum language is used more than the Sarawak Malay language. The combination of the Narum language and the Sarawak Malay language remains the third language choice.

Table 4 shows that 43.9% of fathers used the Narum language when addressing the respondents. This is followed by Sarawak Malay language at 37.2%. 7.2% of the respondents claimed that their fathers used a combination of the Narum language and the Sarawak Malay language in conversations with them.

In the Narum culture, the mother is recognized as the main domestic figure in the household. The father is recognized as the main authority figure. Traditionally, the father is seen as the one who is responsible for maintaining links with the world outside the home. Therefore, the father usually spends more time outside the home and usually has more socio-environmental knowledge to pass on to the children.

Table 4. Language preferred by the respondents' father when addressing them

Language combination	Number	Percent
Narum language(NL)	79	43.9
Malay language(ML)	6	3.3
Sarawak Malay language(SML)	67	37.2
Narum language+SML	13	7.2
Other languages included the mixed languages (OLIML)	3	1.7
NL, SML	3	1.7
NL, ML, SML,NL+SML	8	4.4
NL, SML, NL+SML	1	.6
Total	**180**	**100.0**

Language choice when addressing the respondents' siblings

The relationship among siblings is more informal. Generally they are not under great pressure to choose any particular language during mutual interaction. This contrasts with social situations where parents, grandparents or people from the older generation are present. When among them, siblings tend to use whichever language they feel comfortable with. Most of the middle and younger (13-18 years old) generation of Narum are more exposed to the socio-environmental knowledge. Their choices of language or the language they feel comfortable with are therefore, influenced by the socio-environmental exposure outside their home.

Table 5 shows the language choice on the sibling level. This analysis relates to a respondent's immediate family. From the table 5 it can be seen that the Sarawak Malay language is the most common language used among siblings. Approximately 45.6% of the people reported that they chose to use the Sarawak Malay language with their brothers and sisters.

Table 5. Language spoken by respondents with their siblings

Language combination	Number	Percent
Narum language (NL)	62	34.4
Malay language (ML)	6	3.3
Sarawak Malay language (SML)	82	45.6
Narum language + SML	15	8.3
Other languages included the mixed languages (OLIML)	2	1.1
NL, SML	3	1.7
SML, NL+SML	1	.6
NL, ML, SML NL+SML	5	2.8
NL, ML, SML,	1	.6
NL, SML, NL+SML	3	1.7
Total	**180**	**100.0**

The Narum language is the second highest to be chosen by the Narum people when interacting with their siblings. 34.4% of the respondents stated that they use the Narum language with their siblings and 8.3% of them use the combination of Narum language and Sarawak Malay language. Other language combinations were also used to a lesser extent (see Table 6).

Table 6 shows the language preferred by the respondents' siblings during interactions with the participants. The table further shows that the pattern of language choice between siblings and

respondents do not greatly differ from the language choice between respondents and their siblings. The use of Sarawak Malay language is higher (45.6%) than that of the Narum language (33.9%). Use is also made to a certain extent of the Narum-Sarawak Malay language combination (8.9%).

Table 6. Language spoken by respondents' siblings

Language combination	Number	Percent
Narum language (NL)	61	33.9
Malay language (ML)	6	3.3
Sarawak Malay language (SML)	82	45.6
Narum language + SML	16	8.9
Other languages included the mixed languages (OLIML)	2	1.1
NL, SML	3	1.7
SML, NL+SML	1	.6
NL, ML, SML NL+SML	5	2.8
NL, ML, SML,	1	.6
NL, SML, NL+SML	3	1.7
Total	**180**	**100.0**

Those respondents of this category capable of speaking the Sarawak Malay language fall mainly into the middle and younger age ranges. The middle and younger age groups appear to be more comfortable using the Sarawak Malay language, and have a better command of this language than the older age groups. The age group of 13 to 18 years has the highest proficiency in the Sarawak Malay language and uses this language more frequently than other age groups.

Data in Table 6 shows the increased of using mixture of Narum and Sarawak Malay language among siblings compared to their conversation with their parents. This result indicates that people feel more comfortable in using mixed language when communicating between those of the same age level/same generation level/sibling level compared to them communicating with the older generation.

Respondents in these age groups (13-18 years old) mostly go to secondary schools, hence the exposure to the socio-environment outside their home. They mixed with other indigeneous community (school mates or teachers) in school whom do not know how to speak Narum or even understand them. Since the Sarawak Malay language is the majority language that is understood by Narum and non-Narum alike, it is preferable by the respondents in this group because everybody can understand the conversation. Therefore, this group prefers to use Sarawak Malay language among themselves including their siblings.

Because of these similar reasons, this group use mixed language (NL and SML) more often with their siblings (8.3%), (see Table 5) compared to their fathers (6.1%), (see Table 3) and mothers (4.4%), (see Table 1). At the same time, their siblings also use mixed language more often (8.9%), (see Table 6) with the respondents compared to their fathers (7.2%), (see Table 4) and none of the respondents' mother converse with them (see Table 2). The mixed language is also an indicator for the lack of proficiency of Narum language among the younger groups. This happen when they have a tendency to use mixed language and if they do not have a strong grasp in a certain language. In this study, the respondents often mixed the Narum language and Sarawak Malay when conversing with their siblings. They are in the same age groups, more or less exposed to the similar socio-environment at home or outside. So, it is mutual that this group uses more mixed language among themselves.

Language choice with the respondents' grandparents

The domestic language choice analysis also takes into consideration the types of language used by the participants among extended family members. In this section, therefore, the findings on the language preferred by respondents when conversing with their grandparents are analysed. This study is based on the data contained in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that those using the Narum language with their grandfathers and grandmothers have the highest percentage rating (43.6% and 46.2% respectively). There may be two reasons for this phenomenon: the obedience and respect accorded to the older generation and, as mentioned by Giles and Coupland (1991), language control and 'accommodation'.

Most members of the older age group have a better command of the Narum language. Although most of the younger generation has a limited command of Narum language, they endeavor to speak the Narum language with their grandparents. Other languages were used when words could not be expressed adequately by the respondents. This was because either the words had no equivalent in Narum or the respondents were not sufficiently fluent enough in the language. Table 7 shows the respondents' language choice percentages during conversations with their grandfather and grandmother. There is not much difference in the percentages between grandfathers and grandmothers: 43.6% of the respondents use the Narum language with their grandfather compared with 46.2% with their grandmother.

Table 7. Comparison of the languages spoken by respondents with their grandparents

Language choice	Number	Percent	Grandfather (valid %)	Number	Percent	Grandmother (Valid %)
Narum language (NL)	72	40.0	43.6	76	42.2	46.1
Malay language (ML)	7	3.9	4.2	6	3.3	3.6
Sarawak Malay language (SML)	61	33.9	37.0	56	31.1	33.9
NL and SML	14	7.8	8.5	16	8.9	9.7
Other languages including mixed languages (OL)	4	2.2	2.4	2	1.1	1.2
NL, SML, ML, NL and SML	5	2.8	3.0	6	3.3	3.6
NL, SML, NL and SML	2	1.1	1.2	1	.6	.6
NL, SML	-	-	-	1	.6	.6
SML, NL and SML	-	-	-	1	.6	.6
Total	165	91.7	100.0	165	91.7	100.0
(Missing)	15	8.3		15	8.3	
Total	180	100.0		180	100.0	

There is one important reason why the percentage using the Narum language with grandmothers is higher than that of using Narum with grandfathers. The role of grandmothers as surrogate mothers (who themselves use the native language more often than the fathers or the grandfathers qua surrogate fathers), indirectly makes the respondents use Narum as the standard means of communication.

The analysis shows that the respondents use Narum more often with their grandparents than with their parents or siblings. The percentage of respondents using Narum with mothers was 40.6% (Table 1) and with fathers was 41.1% (Table 3). The use of Narum was even less between respondents and their siblings. Table 8 shows the language choice of grandparents when they speak to the participants. The purpose was to investigate whether there was a difference in language

usage between grandparents and respondents and language usage between respondents and grandparents. If there was a difference, this would have several implications. First, it would support the finding that the older generation had better proficiency in Narum, but a poorer grasp of other languages than the younger generation. Second, it would indicate that the older Narums were more multilingual than the younger Narums.

From the data, 48.5% of the respondents' grandfathers use the Narum language when addressing the former. Approximately 55.2% of the respondents' grandmothers speak the Narum language with their grandchildren. This was followed by 28.5% grandfathers who use Sarawak Malay language to respondents. By contrast, 27.3% grandmothers use the same language to their grandchildren. The percentages show that grandfathers used the Sarawak Malay language with their grandchildren more often than grandmothers.

Table 8. Language choice of grandparents when addressing respondents

Language choice	Number	Percent	Grandfather (valid %)	Number	Percent	Grandmother (Valid %)
Narum language (NL)	80	44.4	48.5	91	50.6	55.2
Malay language (ML)	6	3.3	3.6	2	1.1	1.2
Sarawak Malay language (SML)	47	26.1	28.5	45	25.0	27.3
NL and SML	19	10.6	11.5	16	8.9	9.7
Other languages including mixed languages (OL)	4	2.2	2.4	2	1.1	1.2
NL, SML, ML, NL and SML	1	.6	.6	-	-	-
NL, SML, NL and SML	4	2.2	2.4	4	2.2	2.4
NL, SML	4	2.2	2.4	4	2.2	2.4
SML, NL and SML	-	-	-	1	.6	.6
Total	165	91.7		165	91.7	100.0
(Missing)	15	8.3		15	8.3	
Total	180	100.0	100.0	180	100.0	

In addition to the Narum and the Sarawak Malay languages, grandparents also use a combination of Narum and Sarawak Malay. Table 8 shows that 11.5% of the respondents' grandfathers used Sarawak Malay and Narum language with them and 9.7% of the grandmothers used the same language when conversing with their grandchildren.

The Narum language is used by grandparents in the belief that its use will encourage their grandchildren and younger generation to follow suit. Sarawak Malay is thereby relegated to the position of second language choice for communication with grandparents and grandchildren. Some grandparents and grandchildren do however use other languages apart from Narum and Sarawak Malay.

It is noted that the mixed language (NL and SML) is more often used by grandfathers (11.5%) and grandmothers (9.7%) to the respondents compared to those responses from their siblings (8.9%), mothers (0%) and fathers (7.2%). It is also noted that the respondent's grandfathers use mixed language more often than their grandchildren spoke to them (8.5%). The Narum people spoke mixed language as often as their grandmothers (9.7%).

This study indicates that older generation of the Narum community still strongly uses Narum language when communicating with their grandchildren. At the same time, they speak fluent Sarawak Malay language and use them freely with their grandchildren after the Narum language. Both grandfathers and grandmothers also use mixed NL and SML more often with their

grandchildren compared to the response that the respondents got from their fathers, mothers and siblings.

Discussion

Language choice is one of the factors that affect the pattern of language maintenance and language shift. In this community, the results show that whether at home or in any other domain, the Narum language is still being used and preferred in conversation. Being a minority, however, the Narum community feels indirectly obliged to acquire more than one language. Sarawak Malay being the lingua franca of the Sarawak people, this language is favoured by the Narum. In terms of interaction, therefore, most of the Narum speech community members use Sarawak Malay language as their first choice in several domains.

The results from question show that there are patterns of language choice among the respondents in the particular domains, and that there are different patterns of language choice among the older and the younger generation. The respondents adjusted their language choice depending on whether they were interacting with someone of a higher, lower or equal status or age in the home. This indirectly illustrates that the choice of language made indicates a language shift. According to Noraisikin et al. (2020) language shift refers to the situation when a language community does not practicing the mother tongue, which shows the mother tongue language failed to be preserved and was replaced by other more dominant languages.

The respondents in the community reported that they had knowledge of a wide range of languages, such as the Narum language, the Sarawak Malay language, the Malay language and a few other ethnicity languages. However, this study has revealed that only Narum, Sarawak Malay, Malay and a mixture of Narum and Sarawak Malay constitute the main verbal repertoire of the community.

The Narum language was found chosen mainly by the much older family members; the Sarawak Malay language by the younger generation. Generally, in comparison to Narum language, Sarawak Malay language is more widely spoken by the Narum community. The Sarawak Malay language is the most popular language used by the younger generations including siblings and spouses. It is also most commonly used by the extended family such as their fathers' relatives and when the respondents are conversing with their mothers' relatives.

This study found that the Narum language is mainly used by the much older family members namely the mother, father, grandfather and grandmother. This conclusion is drawn by the highest frequency of Narum language used by the respondents to converse with these groups of people and vice versa. Narum language is also the most frequently used by the mothers' relatives when they converse with the respondents. This finding indicates that language maintenance prevails among the older members of the Narum community because of their sense of responsibility to pass the tradition and culture (including the Narum language) to the younger generations.

This study also found that the Narum language is the second most popular language after Sarawak Malay language in the Narum community. This pattern is shown by the younger community (siblings and spouses and conversation among extended family (relatives). This pattern is also shown when the mothers' relatives were conversing to the respondents.

The mix of Narum and Sarawak Malay language is the language most often used in the family domain. The Narum community adjusted their language choice according to the person they were interacting with. The age of people involved is also varied (young and old alike). The

language choices reported by the respondents would indeed appear to be the languages they actually use. This is supported both by my own observations and by the fact that, despite very positive attitudes of the community towards the Narum language, the overall reported degree of Narum in use is not as widely used as expected.

Conclusion

In this conclusion the study presented a discussion of language choice in the Narum community. Specifically, it studies self-reported of the language choice. The study also explores contemporary language choices and seeks to determine their relative influence on language maintenance and language shift. This study involved a representative sample of 180 respondents from the Narum community. The study used SPSS for frequency analysis. The data has been presented in the form of tables and graphs for easy understanding.

The data collected in this study demonstrate that the language shift to Sarawak Malay is taking place in the Narum community. Data analysis and follow-up were adapted for domain analysis as suggested by Fishmen (1964) and Fishman et al. (1971). In a nutshell, domains are "institutionally relevant fields of social interaction" (Fishman et al., 1971), such as families, where certain language patterns are observed. Domain analysis is useful in that it clarifies some social rules about language choice. Information about the language selection process and social situation helps assess the extent to which language is maintained or shifted.

In this study, familial domains were observed. The region of origin specifically reflects the linguistic situation of the Narum-speaking communities (people who speak different languages with their extended family and relatives). Therefore, the results of the domain analysis are used as a guide to verify the language maintenance and language shift of this community. Based on the data obtained, frequency statistics were calculated for the range of the Narum's choices in the family domain. The results show that the Narum people in the family area continue to speak the Narum language. The results show that the Narum language continues to be spoken by the Narum people in the family domain. To maintain the Narum language, it is very important to use it consistently at home. A common and very important way that parents use to maintain their language is to regularly speak Narum with their children at home and try to be a good language role model for their children. From the study, it is clear that some parents are very fluent in Sarawak Malay but intentionally try to speak Narum consistently at home so that their children have a supportive language environment to maintain the language.

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