



LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE OF BAHASA TANSI

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Abstract

This study aimed to find out whether Tansi speakers still maintain their language and the efforts made by Tansi speakers to maintain it. Using mixed methods, this research analyzed the similarities and differences between the Minangkabau and Tansi languages and identify factors that influence maintenance and intutional maintenance. Ten data sources in this research came from the Tansi community in Tangsi Baru (Lembah Segar District) and Sikalang Village (Talawi District). In conclusion, Tansi is still widely and consistently used in homes and among family speakers. In addition, speakers actively teach Tansi to their children, indicating an awareness of language maintenance. Although initiatives such as language contests and local government support for language maintenance are present, they are still not systematic enough. Thus, maintaining the continuity of the Tansi language outside the family environment must continue to be done in order to maintain the Tansi language for the next generation.

Key words: Langugae Maintenance, Sociolinguistics, Tansi Language

A. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and society by combining linguistics with the structure of society. Sociolinguistics considers language variation in a social context, where each faces the challenge of choosing a language when communicating. Sociolinguistic knowledge is considered necessary in studying language as a member of society (Hermaji, 2018). Sociolinguistic knowledge is essential in language study because it provides insight into how social factors impact language use in society. By examining social status, culture, and the communication environment, we can learn how language expresses identity, power, solidarity, and cultural values.

One of the sociolinguistic studies is language maintenance. The study of language maintenance has become a topic of increasing interest. This is due to language's dynamic character, which promotes linguistic change over time and

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produces variations in language, including dialect distinctions influenced by location, gender, age, and social status (Trick, 2015). Fishman (1964) started with the study of language maintenance using psychological, sociological, and cultural analysis in the context of language maintenance, which laid the foundation for applied linguistics, especially sociolinguistics.

This research focused on the Tansi language in Sawahlunto. Sawahlunto, a small town in West Sumatra, has long been an Indonesian coal mining centre. Along with the development of the mining sector, the people who inhabit this city come from various ethnicities, bringing various languages and traditions. The Tansi language is an essential means of communication between different ethnic communities in mining. Maintaining the Tansi language is essential for maintaining its history and understanding Sawahlunto.

There have been a lot of earlier studies on language maintenance. The first study was written by Zabrodskaia (2021). This study focused the ongoing usage of Russian as a heritage language among post-Soviet immigrants in Europe and other countries. The second study was written by Brehmer (2021). The study investigated maintaining Russian as a historical language in Germany, utilizing data collected between 2014 and 2018. Ma (2022) investigated people in China maintain heritage languages despite the development of Mandarin. Rahman (2021) investigated maintaining the Bugis language in Bastiong Talangame Village, Ternate City, and North Maluku. This study aims to show how the Bugis population keeps their language in Ternate City, especially in Bastiong Talangame Village, and what factors influence the village's linguistic continuity. Finally, Mbatha (2022) investigated how isiZulu speakers in Soshanguve defend their use of the ethnic language, revealing that they frequently use it in the region.

To answer the research question, this study investigated how interactions between different social groups affect the maintenance of the Tansi language. It also explored the efforts made to maintain this language to identify whether Tansi speakers maintain the continuity of their language and describe the efforts that impact its maintenance.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research study used a mixed methods approach to address these issues. Litosseliti (2010) argued that mixed techniques combine the advantages of both approaches, allowing simultaneous and stepwise collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. This method facilitated understanding linguistic events from several points of view, providing a more comprehensive and complete picture. Qualitative data analyzed interview results to identify the causes of language maintenance of Bahasa Tansi and everyday language use. On the other hand, the researcher used quantitative methods to collect and assess data from questionnaires and Swadesh lists, determining the level of language maintenance and frequency of use in specific contexts. This research combined primary and secondary data. Responders completed surveys and interviews and provided primary data. The research data was collected and then analyzed for

lexical differences, language maintenance analysis, and language maintenance scale analysis, and then all the data in the findings were combined.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Finding

Based on the data analysis of the Tansi language maintenance study. This were several findings to answer the research questions.

a. Analysis of lexical level differences between Tansi and Minangkabau languages

The researcher found lexical differences between Tansi and Minangkabau languages in this study. For example, the equivalent of the word “ke” means “you,” the word “kabeh” means “all,” and the word “gedek” means “big.” These words have similarities with Javanese and Malay. The word “kabeh” has the exact similarity in Javanese, which has the same meaning in Tansi, namely “kabeh”. In addition, there is a similarity between the word “gedek” in Tansi, which means “big,” and the word “gede” in Javanese, which also means big. Similarly, the word “nafas” shows similarities with the Malay word “bernafas”. These findings imply that Tansi has a language that mixes Malay, Javanese, and Minang. In addition, according to Rahayu (2024), the Minangkabau and Tansi languages have lexical differences of 23.78%. Meanwhile, according to the data analysis in this study, the Tansi language and the Minangkabau language lexical differences were only 22.30%. This illustrates that the Tansi language has some words from other languages that give it unique characteristics.

b. Analysis of the differences between phonetics and phonemics

This research used phonetic and phonemic levels to fully understand the differences between the Minang and Tansi languages. This analysis found significant differences in pronunciation and sound systems. For example, the word “you” in Minangkabau has the phonetic [ʌŋ] or [kaʊ] and has the phonologies /ʌŋ/ and /kaʊ/, while the word “you” in Tansi has the phonetic [kɛ] and has the phonology /kɛ/. This sound difference shows a significant difference in how the two languages convey the same concept on a phonetic and phonemic level. In addition, the word “all” in Tansi has the phonetic [kʌ'bɛh] and has the phonology /kʌbɛh/, but the word “all” in Minangkabau has the phonetic [sʌ'dɔ] and has the phonology /sʌdɔ/. These pronunciation differences show how different sound patterns are used in the two languages to convey the same message. These phonetic differences reflect the different variety of sounds that these two language groups use to organize and express meaning. These findings show that although Tansi and Minangkabau share some words in common, there are also significant phonological differences between the two languages, which can affect understanding and communication between speakers.

c. Analysis of language Maintenance

This study used interviews and questionnaires to look at language maintenance. This research analyzes two types of maintenance: Maintenance and intentional maintenance.

1. Maintenance of Tansi Language

The maintenance of the Tansi language is relatively high, with an average percentage of 84.99%. Then, 91.66% of respondents said they regularly use it within the family environment, and 90% reported using it outside the home with other family members. However, only 70% of households consistently use Tansi. Use in markets and crowded places was lower (78.33%). Despite this, 95% of people consider the Tansi language an important cultural heritage. The research indicates a slight decline in Tansi use in daily and public settings, although Tansi use in homes is still on the rise. Then, in the interview analysis, there were ten interview questions. Below are the samples of the interview data collected for the maintenance analysis:

Table 1 Result of the maintenance interviews

No.	Questions	Responses
	Do you always use <i>bahasa Tansi</i> at home and in a Tansi speaking family environment?	Informant 1: Yes, I do. Informant 2: Yes, I do.
	When communicating with fellow Tansi speakers, do you feel close and culturally happy with the person you are speaking to?	Informant 1: Yes. Informant 2: Yes, that is right.
	Do Tansi speakers of childhood and young generations still use Tansi in their daily activities in their environment?	Informant 1: I do not think so. Lately, there have been many changes. Sometimes, they use Indonesian. Informant 2: Yes, still.
	Are Tansi speakers aged 20-50 years still happy and proud of <i>bahasa Tansi</i> ?	Informant 1: Yes, they are. Informant 2: Yes.

Based on the data in the table, both informants stated that they always use the language at home and with family, which shows that language use in the family environment is ongoing. In addition, both respondents said that speaking with other Tansi speakers gives them a sense of happiness and cultural closeness. However, regarding the use of Tansi among children and the younger generation continuing to use Tansi, there is a difference of opinion. Informant 1 argued that Tansi was starting to be displaced by Indonesians, while Informant 2 stated that Tansi was still being used. However, both informants agreed that Tansi speakers in the 20-50 age group still feel happy and proud to speak the language.

2. Intentional Maintenance of Tansi Language

The maintenance of the Tansi language among speakers is very high, with an average percentage of 87.91%. 81.66% of respondents agreed that Tansi speakers actively teach the language to their children, which shows an effort to maintain the continuity of the language among the younger generation. In addition, 90% of respondents strongly agreed that Tansi speakers choose to use the language at every opportunity, both in daily communication and social contexts. This figure reflects a solid dedication to maintaining the Tansi language and ensuring its use in various situations. Overall, the data shows a significant commitment from the Tansi community to maintain and promote their language. Below are the samples of the interview data collected for the maintenance analysis, and the complete data can be seen in Appendix 4.4

Table 2 Result of the intentional maintenance interviews

No.	Questions	Responses
	Do you always use <i>bahasa</i> Tansi when giving family advice at home and in the Tansi-speaking family environment?	Informant 1: Yes, I do. Informant 2: Yes, I do.
	Do teachers at the elementary school level in the early grades use Tansi as the language of instruction?	Informant 1: I do not know. However, I know that most of them use Indonesian. Informant 2: Yes, teachers at the elementary school level use the Tansi language.
	Do the local government of Sawahlunto City and other	Informant 1: There is something like a

	community leader care about the survival of <i>bahasa Tansi</i> ?	Tansi language competition. Informant 2: Yes, through competitions. We used to hold a Tansi language competition between cities.
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Based on the interviews, both informants stated they always use Tansi when advising family members at home and in Tansi-speaking neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, there are different opinions regarding using the Tansi language in the primary school environment. Informant 1 mentioned that most teachers in the primary school environment speak Indonesian, although he needed clarification. However, Informant 2 said that Tansi is used by teachers in primary schools. Furthermore, according to informants 1 and 2, there is support from the Government and community groups through inter-city Tansi language competitions to maintain the language. Overall, Tansi is still widely used in family settings.

2. Discussion

Based on the research analysis of the differences between the Tansi and Minangkabau languages, significant phonological and lexical differences have provided essential insights into maintaining language diversity. The results show that the lexical difference between the two languages is 22.30%. On the other hand, Sabila (2024) showed differences between Tansi and Minangkabau regarding lexical differences of 23.78% and phonetic and phonemic levels of 73.78. Pambudi (2019) also found separate variations of Tansi and Minangkabau, with the two languages differing by over 71%. Hanie (2024) discovered that Tansi and Minangkabau differ by 71.3% in phonetic and phonological differences and by 21.8% in lexical differences.

According to Guiter (as cited in Mahsun 2007), lexical and phonological standards are as follows:

1. Differences in lexical level
 - 81% and above: language differences
 - 51% - 80%: dialect differences
 - 31% - 50%: subdialect differences
 - 21% - 30%: speech differences
 - Below 20%: no difference
2. Differences in phonological level
 - 17% and above: language differences
 - 12% - 16%: dialect differences

8% - 11%: subdialect differences

4% - 7%: speech differences

0% - 3%: no difference

Based on Guiter (1973) categorizes these differences as "speech differences" based on predefined criteria. This shows that although Tansi and Minangkabau have different vocabularies, they must be more different to be classified as distinct languages. Tansi and Minangkabau differ phonologically by about 72.81%. The criteria used to categorize this modification as a "language difference" implies that the sound systems of the two languages differ significantly.

However, Tansi must be distinct from other languages to be considered distinct. Tansi's background as a pidgin provides a complex explanation. Based on Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) language contact theory, pidgins develop when people from different language backgrounds must engage in demanding social or economic situations. As Syafril (2019) explains, the Tansi language is derived from a pidgin language that emerged from daily conversations among local miners, giving rise to the need for interlanguage communication. According to Bickerton (1981), Pidgin languages can eventually become Creole if used as a mother tongue by the next generation.

Tansi Language most likely underwent a creolization process that made it more phonologically and grammatically complex, stabilizing and organizing it more than its pidgin form. The history of Tansi as a pidgin and influences from surrounding languages explain the lexical and basic structural similarities of these two languages despite Tansi and Minangkabau having considerable phonological differences. According to Holm (2000) theoretical framework, creole languages often combine elements from many parent languages to create independent structures. Tansi can be classified as a Creole language with a pidgin root by this criterion.

Fishman (1991) defines maintenance as the ability of a language group to maintain their mother tongue in the face of competition with other widely spoken languages. It happens naturally when a person uses their language in daily conversation without consciously trying to maintain it. Intentional maintenance, conversely, refers to a deliberate and concerted effort to maintain or revive a language, especially when facing extinction. According to Grenoble and Whaley (2006), promoting community language use includes language documentation, education, and awareness campaigns.

This research analyzes the Tansi language maintenance of language maintenance factors and efforts to ensure the continuity of the language.

The research found that speaking Tansi in daily conversations, especially with family members, naturally contributes to maintaining the language. The fact that most speakers still use the language for conversations at home is evidence of their efforts to keep it alive. In addition, intentional maintenance is a method of maintenance that requires a more methodical and organized approach. One way to demonstrate intentional maintenance is by encouraging the younger generation to learn Tansi through activities such as language competitions.

This research shows that Tansi speakers still use this language at home and in daily contact. One factor that supports the maintenance of the Tansi language is the importance of the family's role in using the language at home. Tansi speakers use the language actively with their children, showing maintenance through daily interactions at home. Another critical factor is the dedication of speakers to use Tansi in various situations, both inside and outside the family. This aligns with research conducted in 2021 by Brehmer, who emphasized the importance of family language use in maintaining Russian in Germany. In addition, Zabrodska's research (2021) emphasizes how crucial strict family language laws are for maintaining Russian in diaspora countries. Like Tansi, family ties and positive attitudes towards language contribute to the survival of Russians in the post-Soviet diaspora. All three studies show the importance of language use within the family environment.

The organization of cultural events, Tansi language competitions, and community and local government support effectively encourage using this language. Cultural events and Tansi language competitions engage the community and provide a forum for the younger generation to use Tansi actively. Although the maintenance of this study is similar to that of Brehmer (2021) and Zabrodska (2021), the intentional maintenance of each study is different. In Brehmer's (2021) study, formal education, such as teaching Russian in schools, is one of the intentional measures to maintain Russian in Germany. Zabrodska's (2021) research also notes the importance of community schools and weekend activities in maintaining the vitality of the Russian language in the diaspora. It identifies additional measures of intentional maintenance, such as family language policies and community support.

Overall, the maintenance and intentional maintenance have maintained the Tansi language. Its use in familial contexts is the leading maintenance factor supporting the language's survival. At the same time, there are efforts from intentional maintenance to help through cultural activities provided by the community and local Government. Thus, the Tansi language can continue if these two factors, maintenance use within families and intentional maintenance efforts through community support, are maintained and encouraged.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This research was conducted to find out whether Tansi speakers still maintain their language and the efforts made by Tansi speakers to maintain it. Based on the study's results, it can be confirmed that there is still a significant incumbency of Tansi, especially among speakers who use it at home. Tansi is still widely and consistently used in homes and among family speakers. In addition, speakers actively teach Tansi to their children, indicating an awareness of language maintenance. Tansi speakers aged 20-50 show a sense of pride and pleasure in using Tansi, indicating that the language is still essential to their cultural identity.

In addition, regarding education regarding the use of the Tansi language in the elementary school environment, according to informants, most primary school teachers teach in Indonesian. Although initiatives such as language contests and local government support for language preservation are present, they are still not systematic enough. Thus, maintaining the continuity of the Tansi language outside the family environment must continue to be done in order to preserve the Tansi language for the next generation.

Based on the findings, this study suggests that language maintenance in formal education needs to be supported. In addition, educational institutions should implement policies that encourage the routine use of the Tansi language in kindergarten classes. Government and community involvement and support are also significant, as well as organizing community-focused cultural events so that Tansi language use can be actively encouraged. Promoting intergenerational language learning through settings where older speakers can mentor and interact with younger speakers would be highly beneficial. Government policies and institutions should support promoting and maintaining the Tansi language and allocate funds for language maintenance programs. Linkages between educational institutions, community organizations, and government agencies should be established to build a unified plan for language maintenance. Utilizing media and technology can also be a helpful tool. If content in Tansi is produced for digital platforms and social media, the younger generation will quickly get information due to more attractive and approachable access.

Then, further research is needed to monitor the effectiveness of language maintenance strategies over time and examine other aspects of the Tansi language, such as sociolinguistic dynamics and its role in shaping community identity. By implementing these suggestions, the Tansi language can be maintained and protected, ensuring its use and significance in the years to come.

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