

Abstract

Language Attitudes of Woirata An Endangered Language on Kisar Island, Southwest Maluku, Indonesia

There are 4 languages exist on Kisar Island. They are Meher (Austronesian), Woirata (Papuan, Timor-Alor-Pantar), Melayu Tenggara Jauh (MTJ-local variety of Malay), and Indonesian. De Jong (1937) states that there were only 1500 speakers of Woirata and SIL (1987) states that there are 1220 speakers left. Therefore, the fact that Woirata is not yet extinct is one thing that needs to investigate more. This paper aims to investigate the language attitude of Woirata speakers on Kisar Island to figure out how MTJ use. In this research, I will also show the code switching phenomena from Woirata to MTJ. The data was taken during the fieldwork in 2013 and 2014 based on questionnaire on language attitudes and observations during the fieldwork.

Figure 1 show that there is a diglossic situation in Woirata. Indonesian language use as national language and also nationally acknowledge as the language of education. However, instead of the formal Indonesian, Woirata speakers tend to use the MTJ more often than Indonesian. Even though on the questionnaire they mentioned that they used Indonesian every day on their daily activities, the fact that the type of “Indonesian” that they use rather seen more as typical dialect of local Malay, Melayu Tenggara Jauh. Speakers under 30 years old use MTJ when they meet with speakers from other languages and even sometimes they also use MTJ at home when they talking with their parents and other family members.

Adat discussion, village announcement, rituals, mythology, intraethnic interactions, local narrative, secret language	trading, dreaming, daily activities, Interethnic interactions, intrafamily education	Government, politics, administration, Formal education, language in government, church rituals, TV
Woirata	MTJ	Indonesian

Figure 1 Language Use in Woirata after Colonial Period

References

- De Josselin de Jong, J.P.B. 1937. *Studies in Indonesian Culture[.] Woirata. A Timorese Settlement on Kisar*. Amsterdam: Uitgave van de N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers-Maatschappij.
- Engelenhoven, Aone van. 2002. ‘Verb sequences in Melayu Tenggara Jauh: The interface of Malay and the indigenous languages of Southwest Maluku’, in: K.A. Adelaar & R.A. Blust (eds) *Between Worlds: linguistic papers in memory of David John Prentice*, 177-191, Canberra: Pacific Linguistics 529.
- Taber, Mark. 1993. “Toward a Better Understanding of the Indigenous Languages of Southwestern Maluku”. *Oceanic Linguistics*, Vol. 32 No. 2. Hawai : Univ. of Hawai Press.