

Balinese Convergence and Divergence in Sasak Community

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to find out what factors which make Balinese do convergence and divergence in Sasak community. Convergence and divergence are parts of Accommodation Theory. Accommodation Theory was developed by Giles and his colleagues. Accommodation Theory is also known as Communicative Accommodation Theory (CAT). CAT deals with linguistic variation, more specifically, with the results of adjustments and accommodations made by the speakers during the communication process. The study is a descriptive study. The researcher conducted the research in West Lombok Regency. There are several places that are visited by the researcher in conducting this research, such as Traditional Market, Senior High School, and Noble Sasak Environment. The data of this research were obtained from those places. After obtaining the data from the conversations among Balinese and Sasak in those places, the researcher then classified the speech obtained into convergence conversation and divergence conversation. Finally, the result of this study shows that Balinese do convergence in order to intimate their relationship, to maintain equality in terms of profession, to win social approval, and to avoid conflict. Meanwhile, the result of this study also shows that Balinese do divergence in order to maintain a positive social identity, to keep intimacy among Balinese and Balinese, to show superiority.

Key words: *divergence, convergence, Sasak Language, Balinese Language.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Lombok is one multicultural island in Indonesia. Lombok is one of the islands in Indonesian archipelago, located in the east of Bali. It is about 4, 682. 35 square kilometers. Administratively, it consists of East, Central, and West Lombok, Mataram Municipality. Mataram is the capital city of the province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB). According to the 2000 census, the population of the province is 3, 805, 537 people, 2, 684, 466 of whom reside on the island of Lombok, while the other 1, 121, 071 live on Sumbawa island (Sumbawa, Dompu, Bima).

Indigenous people in Lombok are called Sasak people and their native language is called Sasak language. Sasak language is spoken primarily by about two million *dengan* sasak ‘Sasak Speakers’. Traditionally, Sasak language has five dialects, namely *ngeno-ngene* (central west coast and central east to north east coast), *meno-mene* (around Praya, central Lombok), *ngeto-ngete* (around Suralaga and Sembalun), *kuto-kute* (around Bayan, the north part of the island), *meriaq meriku* (south central area Bonjeruk, Sengkol and Pujut).

In Lombok we can find more than two tribes. Those tribes are Balinese, Javanese, Bimanese, and Samawa. Based on statistical data, Balinese occupy second position in Lombok so that when we visit Lombok, we will find Balinese culture, Balinese temple, Balinese village, and Balinese heritages easily especially in west Lombok regency. One of the many Balinese heritages that can be found in Lombok is Ex-Karang Asem Palace.

The invasion of Karang Asem Kingdom to Lombok in 1740 gave many influences on Sasak culture and Sasak language so that acculturation between Balinese and Sasak occur. In Karang Asem era, Balinese had great power and prestige in Lombok. They were superior than Sasak, so that Sasak as the subordinate must follow and adjust their language and culture to the Balinese. The acculturation between Balinese language and Sasak language mainly occur in Sasak noble language. The language of noble Sasak can be divided into two parts *utame* ‘prominent language’ and *tengaq* ‘medium langue’. (Mahyuni, 2006, p.96).

These are the examples of noble Sasak language.

Utame : *Sampun dekaji majengan?*

Tengaq : *Sampun pelungguh medaran?*

Bali : *Sampun ragane ngajeng/medaran?*

already you eat

‘Have you eaten?’

The acculturation does not only occur in culture and language but also in religion. The acculturation between Hindu and Moslem was called Moslem *Watu Telu* ‘Three Times Praying’. Moslem in general prays five times a day, but Moslem *Watu Telu* just pray three times a day.

Nowadays, Balinese is not superior in Lombok and live as a minority tribe. In daily activity, most people in Lombok use Sasak Language as home. Sasak language is used in school activity,

in office, in market, in agricultural area, and it is also used by most people in villages. In order to simplify the communication and also to get the goals, Balinese must be able to speak Sasak Language. Besides, Balinese must adjust their language and speech style into Sasak to obtain the same position and to reach the aims in social life. This adjustment must be done by most Balinese to improve effectiveness of communication, and to make other people more confident and willing to respond. In addition, Balinese adjust their language for obtaining the addressee's approval and promoting communicative efficiency. In sociolinguistics context, this adjustment is called 'convergence'. The adjustments done in the speech aim to the following goals: evoking the addressee's social approval, and promoting communicative efficiency between interlocutors.

However, Balinese in Lombok also keep their culture and their native language well. Balinese in Lombok keep preserving their mother tongue. They speak Balinese language as home language and as their daily communication among Balinese in Lombok. Besides, Balinese also speak Balinese language with Balinese in office, in school, in market, and in other social activities. Balinese usually do speech maintenance so that we can find some Balinese speak Balinese language with Balinese in public area, in office, in and school.

In particular area (in noble environment), when the noble Balinese in Lombok talk with noble Sasak we often find the Balinese talk with Balinese language, but noble Sasak still understand what the noble Balinese means. These phenomena usually occur between noble Balinese and noble Sasak. The noble Balinese talk using Balinese language with Sasak nobleman because the noble Balinese still feel that they are superior than Sasak (both nobleman or ordinary people). They still assume that Sasak is their subordinate.

In multicultural setting, many Balinese also speak Balinese with Sasak (noble Sasak and Ordinary Sasak/Non- noble Sasak) because Balinese have self-confidence with their language and their identity. This phenomenon can be found in several markets, several places and schools in west Lombok and Mataram town. In sociolinguistics field, this phenomenon is called 'divergence'. In a divergence context, interlocutors try to maintain a positive social identity with a reference group, thus causing a distant relation between the interlocutors. Maintaining a positive social identity would be considered divergent because it intends to keep an identity with a reference group. Keeping an identity with their first language, for instance, characterizes an external interaction since the interlocutors have external influences to the discourse.

Convergence and Divergence are parts of Accommodation Theory. Accommodation Theory was developed by Giles and his colleagues. Accommodation Theory is also known as Communicative Accommodation Theory (CAT). CAT deals with linguistic variation, more specifically, with the results of adjustments and accommodations made by the speakers during the

communication process. The adjustments can be convergent or divergent. CAT examines how we accommodate our communication to one another to become more alike or by defining our differences and examines our motivations for doing so and the consequences.

Based on the phenomena above, I myself, try to conduct a small research about “Balinese Convergence and Divergence in Sasak Community”. I am interested in studying convergence and divergence (Communicative Accommodation Theory) in order to find out what factors make Balinese do convergence and divergence in Sasak community.

2. DISCUSSION

Language and Identity

Language and culture are interrelated and difficult to separate. Language is embedded in culture and is one of the most powerful ways in which identity is shaped. It should be pointed out here that language and culture are fundamental building blocks of identity. Thus, language is inextricably bound up with identity, which suggests that one’s identity can be defined by the language one speaks. Gumperz (1982, p.7) states that ‘social identity and ethnicity are in large part established and maintained through language’ which suggests that one’s identity cannot be separated from the language that one speaks. Thus, identity, in turn, can be viewed as the way it is communicated by individuals within a particular culture and within the context of interaction (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2001, Zimmerman, 1998).

Tajfel (1981) views social identity as based on one’s group membership. This suggested that people from the same group may feel more secured interacting with each other than with someone from outside the group. The feeling of security in this situation is understandable as those from the same group share the same norms and values. Interaction with people from different groups may require a ‘negotiation of identities’ (Pavlenko, 2001). In an unfamiliar environment, individuals may need to reposition themselves in terms of feelings of being appreciated and understood, respected and valued by others. This is equally true when there are social differences among the group members. In the following, we shall look at Giles’ accommodation model to tackle the issue of identity first before discussing core values.

The Accommodation Model

The primary objective of accommodation theory, developed by Giles and his colleagues, was to specify the strategies of convergence and divergence. The terms refer to the ways in which a person or people modify their language (and other behaviors) to reduce or increase differences

between them. Both convergence and divergence have also been recognized as accounting for the dynamics of speech styles in ethnic interaction. The implementation of each strategy is associated with a range of particular socio-psychology contexts such as integrative motives in the case of convergence, and dissociative motives in the case of divergence and maintenance (Giles and Powesland, 1975, Giles and St Clair, 1979, Giles and Saint Jacques, 1979, Giles and Robinson, 1992). So speakers' orientations to their listeners can be classified as either convergent or divergent, 'depending on the speaker's experiences, needs, and other socio-psychological states, as well as the contextual demands of the speech encounters' (Giles, Coupland and Coupland, 1991, p.26).

The first concept is speech convergence. It refers to 'the process whereby individual adapts to each other's speech on a number of linguistic levels and in a manner that is not easily explicable simply in terms of normative demands of the situation' (Giles, 1977, p.28). Studies on this notion have shown that during interpersonal encounters, speakers often adopt the speech patterns of their interlocutor. This further suggests that speech shift can occur in many types of social encounters and many reflect speakers' conscious and unconscious needs for social integration with their interlocutors (Bourhis, 1979).

A person would try to reach a higher recognition and common understanding by e.g. adapting to a certain dialect within the community she/he is trying to converge to. This also means that the interpersonal differences between the interlocutors would be attenuated or even reduced, as the individual converging would to some extent attempt to assimilate him/herself through communicative actions (Giles & Coupland, 1991, p.64). Convergence becomes relevant in second language learning, since a typical pattern of the individuals' language acquisition would be to converge; not only in accordance with speech patterns but also other socio-cultural elements.

The second concept is speech divergence. In other circumstances, speaker may choose (consciously or unconsciously) not to converge linguistically but to maintain their own speech style. This might be done as a strategy, among other things, to maintain a speaker's identity. Divergence can be seen as the way in which speakers accentuate speech and nonverbal differences between themselves and others (Giles & Coupland, 1991: 65). Divergence is thus the opposite of convergence, where the actor emphasizes the differences between the interlocutors rather than attenuating them, this concerns both individuals and groups of any kind. Divergence refers to the instances in which individuals accentuate the speech and non-verbal differences between themselves and their interlocutors. Divergence is a linguistic strategy whereby a member of a speech community accentuates the linguistic differences between his or herself and his/her interlocutor. In the most part it reflects a desire to emphasize group distinctiveness in a positive

manner and it usually takes places when an individual perceives interaction as an intergroup process rather than an individual one.

Conversation in Traditional Market

In Traditional Market, several Balinese sellers always talk in Sasak with their colleagues (Sasak seller). The researcher found that the Balinese spoke Sasak with other sellers (Sasak) in free time; they talked about their products, news, gossip, general conversation and for business purposes. Below is the conversation that was found and then transcribed between Balinese seller and Sasak seller. Balinese seller always spoke Sasak with Sasak seller. The Balinese seller was from *sudra* caste ‘ordinary person’ and Sasak is from *Bulu Ketujur* caste ‘ordinary person’.

Balinese seller: *Berembe Kabar ?*

How condition

‘How are you?’

Sasak seller: *Alhamdulillah, Sehat. Side berembe? Wah nyampah?*

Alhamdulillah, Healthy. You how ? already breakfast?

‘Alhamdulillah, I am O.K. How about you? Have you had a breakfast?’

Balinese seller: *Pade, tiang sehat. Uwah oneq nyampah leq bale.*

It is same, I am fine too. Already at the moment breakfast at home.

Ndeq araq dengan belanja. Sepi peken nane.

No one buy. Quiet market now.

‘ I am fine too. Yes, I have. I have had breakfast at home. The market are quiet now. The buyers are nothing’.

Sasak seller: *Iye wah. Sepi peken nane, sengaq baruq na engkah lebaran.*

Yes already. Quiet market now, becuse just to finish Idul Fitri.

‘Yes, the market is quiet enough now. It is caused by Idul Fitri Holiday’.

Balinese seller: *Mbe taoq na sekolah nane bija ‘nde saq paling beleq?*

Where school now child your who the oldest

‘Where is your oldest child studying now?’

Sasak seller: *Bija tiang saq paling beleq nane sekolah leq SMAN 1 Gerung.*

Child My who oldest now study at SMAN 1 Gerung.

‘My oldest child is studying in SMAN 1 Gerung now’.

Balinese seller: *Kelas Pire? Ampura, Anteh semendaq, araq dengan belanja.*

What grade? Sorry, Wait a moment, there is someone buy.

‘What grade/class? Sorry, wait a moment, the one will buy my product’

Sasak seller: *Kelas telu nane. Enggih. Tiang mele ngepak dagangan, wah tengari.*

Class three now. Yes. I want to pack merchandise, already afternoon.

‘She is studying in third grade now. Alright. I will pack my merchandise, it is time to take a rest’.

From the piece of conversation above, I conclude that the Balinese spoke Sasak language to her colleague in order to intimate their relationship. The Balinese was aware that she must be approved as a part of Sasak community so that the Balinese was easy to do partnership with them. Balinese spoke Sasak because she felt that she and her colleague were in the same profession. The Balinese thought, in order to succeed her business; she must be able to win social approval. Through social approval, the Balinese obtained good position in her society so that the Balinese was able to sell her merchandise conveniently. Besides, the Sasak would not assume that the Balinese as his/her enemy because many Sasak people assumed the Balinese as comers or not as indigenous people. Through this strategy, the Sasak seller would assume the Balinese as her good colleague. The Balinese used this strategy in order to succeed her business so that when the Balinese seller needed help, for example financial loan or she needed to borrow other things, of course the Sasak seller would help.

Coversation in School (Senior High School)

Balinese Student 1 (Putu) : *Halaman kude lakar dikusiang jani?*

Page How will discussing now

‘What page that will be discussed now’.

Balinese Students 2 (Nyoman) : *Halaman dasa. Topikne ‘lingkungan’*

Page ten. Topic ‘environment’

‘Page Ten. The topic is about environment’.

Putu (Speak with Sasak students 1) : *Sudah dibaca topiknya Wan?*

Already read the topic Wan?

‘Have you read the topic, Wan?’.

Sasak student 1 (Wawan) : *Ya sudah, udara di kota besar sudah tercemar.*

Already, air in city big already polluted

‘Yes, I have. The air in big city is polluted now’.

Nyoman : *Ia, itu benar. Penyebab terbesarnya adalah asap*

Yes, it is right. Factor main is fume
kendaraan dan pabrik.

vehicle and factory.

‘That is right. The main factors are from vehicle and
factory fume’.

It can be seen from the conversation above that Balinese students in Lombok liked to converse using Balinese language with their Balinese friends, even though in that group there were Sasak students, because Balinese students wanted to keep their identity. The Balinese students tried to maintain a positive social identity. The Balinese students spoke using Balinese with their Balinese friends to show their intimacy. Even though Balinese keep their identity well, the Balinese also appreciate students from other tribes. If the Balinese students speak with Sasak students, they will directly change their language into Indonesian language.

Conversation in *Menak* Environment (Noble Environment).

Noble Sasak usually speak using *Base Alus* (refined language). Refined language in noble Sasak can be divided into two parts, they are *utame* (prominent) and *tengaq* (medium) (Mahyuni, 2006, p.96). Refined language in Sasak language are like Balinese language. It occurs because there is acculturation between Balinese and Sasak when Karang Asem Kingdom invaded Lombok. Besides, acculturation also occurs because of several factors, such as: 1. Marriage, 2. Several ancestors of noble Sasak were from Bali. There are several data stated that several ancestors of noble Sasak were from Bali, than they made their kingdom, custom, and social rules in Lombok. Some of them then became Muslim. For example '*Arya Banjar Getas*' that is claimed as original Noble from Lombok, but the fact that he was from Klungkung. Besides, in recent years (1990-now) many noble Sasak in Lombok, for example *Lalu* 'one of several terms of noble Sasak' find out their family tree up to Klungkung Bali. It can be concluded that several ancestors of noble Sasak were from noble Balinese that moved to Lombok and several of them became Muslim and then they changed their noble term to be *Lalu*, *Raden*, *Baiq*, *Dende*, and so on. In addition, if the noble Balinese in Lombok for example *Gusti* or *Dewa* marry moeslem Sasak woman, they must change their noble degree become *Lalu* or *Raden*.

In this small research, the researcher did not transcribe the dialogue, because it was seldom found that noble Balinese speak prominent Balinese language with noble Sasak, because both of them did dialogue usually in private area and in important events like wedding, local ceremony, and meeting between Sasak leaders and Balinese leaders.

Nowadays, if we want to listen to the conversation using Balinese prominent language in Sasak community or the combination between Balinese prominent language and Sasak prominent language, we can watch the Sasak *Wayang* Show (Sasak Puppet Show) or by visiting wedding ceremony in central Lombok.

Utame 'prominent' language is the highest style, used to respect the *menak utame* 'the highest nobleman' in Sasak community. Such people are now still found in certain places on Lombok Island. As a result, *utame* style appears fairly commonly in Sasak literature, such as folk stories.

Conclusion

The Balinese do convergence in Sasak community because the Balinese in Lombok want to intimate their relationship, to maintain the equality in term of profession, to win social

approval, and to avoid conflict. Besides, it was found in this study that the several factors which cause Balinese do convergence are for maintaining a positive social identity, keeping intimacy among Balinese and Balinese, and to show superiority.

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