



Youtube as a Means of Balinese Language Maintenance by Youth in West Lombok Regency

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ABSTRACT

The study of language defense has always been an exciting study for sociolinguists because we face the fact that more and more languages are almost extinct. However, one of the regional languages in Indonesia that is still actively used is Balinese. The younger generation is the next generation who should preserve culture, in this case, is language. Moreover, as a generation attached to the digital world, the younger generation can do this simultaneously by maintaining regional languages and remaining attached to the digital world simultaneously. This study aims to see the effectiveness of maintaining the Balinese language in the West Lombok district through YouTube media. The method in this study is qualitative, the primary data source comes from the Balok Kreatif youtube channel, and secondary data comes from the analysis of studies on language defense. The data collection techniques used in this study are observation and interview methods, then the data will be presented narratively. The results show that the Balok Kreatif YouTube channel, which has 128 videos, is a YouTube channel that uses the Balinese language, with a subscriber count of 28 thousand. They have succeeded in maintaining and introducing Balinese to the West Lombok district, and more importantly, they are proud to use the local language.

Keywords: *YouTube; Balinese Language Maintenance; West Lombok*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguists have carried out many studies on language preservation in various parts of the world. However, this study will become increasingly attractive considering that many local languages are found that are headed for extinction.

Unfortunately, the regional languages in Indonesia are not an exception to this threat of extinction. In his research, Sumarsono said that there are factors that cause language retention, namely external factors; (1) the concentration of residential areas, which are far from other communities, (2) the attitude of tolerance of the Balinese people using the Malay Loloan language, and internal factors include; (1) Islamic attitudes or views, (2) high loyalty to the Malay language Loloan and (3) the continuity factor of language transfer [1].

As a language that is still used by more than one million people in Indonesia, Balinese is classified as surviving in various linguistic obstacles. Although most Balinese live in Bali, many also live outside the island of Bali, one of which is on Lombok island. Based on data from the Hindu Pembimas Prov. Based on data from the

Hindu Community Advisor for the West Nusa Tenggara Provincial Office in 2021, the Balinese Hindu ethnicity in the province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) totals 169,604 thousand people. Geographical proximity makes many Balinese people live on the island of Lombok apart from historical factors. The Balinese tribe already existed on the island of Lombok around the 19th century or in the Gelgel era.

Language maintenance, especially among the younger generation, is currently a serious concern because the younger generation is the successor of this culture. Some of the obstacles in maintaining language among the younger generation include the massive use of the Indonesian language, the diglossic situation, loyalty to language use, and population movement. In his research, Wurm (in Mark Janse) [2] reveals that even an extensive language is gradually losing out to Indonesian, especially among the younger generation who have been indoctrinated during their formal education.

As a generation that is very attached to the media, the younger generation should be able to use the media to maintain regional languages. One of the exciting studies entitled "Actualization of Javanese Youtuber Efforts to

Maintain Javanese Language during the Covid-19 Pandemic", research conducted by Moh. Arif Susanto and Alita Arcelina Sandi [3], this research opened many people's eyes. It turns out that language defines can be done by using the YouTube media. Researchers are very interested in doing this research because they want to see how effective the YouTube media is to maintain the Balinese language for the younger generation in the West Lombok district.

2. METHOD

Methods that can provide data for sociolinguistic research can take advantage of the types of methods used in social research [4]. The primary data source of this research comes from the Balok Kreatif YouTube channel. The secondary data source comes from linguistic studies, the study of language defense. The data was obtained by using the observation method and interview method. Meanwhile, the presentation of the data is conducted using a narrative technique.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The younger generation, in this case, the Balinese youth, has a big responsibility to preserve the Balinese language. One way that can be done is by utilizing social media. Baker [5] argues that media availability in minority languages helps maintain stability regarding the

number of speakers. It gives them the status and prestige to be used publicly, rather than restricted to the private domain. In this case, the language status of a community can be improved and promoted through media presence.

There are many types of social media, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram, WhatsApp, and many others. One of the exciting phenomena in the West Lombok district, which has a population of Hindus ethnically Balinese, is 48,612 (based on the Observation of the Potential of Hinduism in West Lombok and the Results of Regional Observations). The youth, especially those in the Narmada sub-district, have their way of maintaining the Balinese language by using YouTube media. YouTube media was chosen because the media platform with the highest number of users in Indonesia is YouTube.

Their YouTube channel, called Balok Kreatif, has been active since May 28, 2018. Currently, the Balok Kreatif channel has 28,171 subscribers; compared to the number of Balinese Hindus in the Narmada sub-district, which is 11,300 people, the Balok Kreatif channel has exceeded the number of residents in terms of subscriptions. Furthermore, with 128 videos uploaded, the most-watched videos have 1.3 million views, which is quite a large number, meaning that this Balok Kreatif YouTube is an active YouTube account and has a large viewer.



Figure 1 The Description on the Balok Kreatif Youtube Channel

The Balok Kreatif channel chooses the comedy genre as the main dish on their YouTube channel, the only Balinese comedy channel that uses the Lombok dialect of Balinese. The comedy genre is currently the most popular

in Indonesia besides the celebrity life genre, the sports genre, and the traveling genre. Sitcoms and character comedies are genres presented on the Balok Kreatif YouTube channel. The maintenance of the Balinese

language, especially the Balinese Lombok language in this YouTube channel, is effortless to see from the language they used when it first appeared. This channel was very consistent in using the Balinese dialect of Lombok in their first video. The usage of the language indicates loyalty for the younger generation who are not ashamed to use their mother tongue on social media. Even their actions are not only to maintain the local language but also introduce the Balinese language with the Lombok dialect to the broader community. Although for wider viewer reach, the Balok Kreatif team began to use Indonesian and Sasak language on their YouTube channel, Balinese language with Lombok dialect is still used. Based on interviews with the Balok Kreatif team, they plan to make a particular segment in Balinese as a form of language defence.

Besides the crew and actors, both in their daily lives and on YouTube, actively using the Balinese language with Lombok dialect, many viewers also commented in the same language. This phenomenon shows that the audience also feels comfortable using their mother tongue in public to utter their opinion.

Another unique thing about this Balok Kreatif YouTube channel is that the viewers are not only from the island of Lombok, but some are from the island of Bali. This circumstance proves that this channel has a broad reach.

4. CONCLUSION

As a platform that is most in demand by the public, YouTube is overgrowing. Anyone can create a channel and be creative on YouTube. The younger generation in

the West Lombok district, especially in the Narmada sub-district, has successfully maintained and introduced the Balinese with Lombok dialect to the broader community. This condition is proved by the large number of their subscribers that exceed the population of Balinese Hindus. Besides the number of subscribers, the comments left by the audience are in Balinese as well. This situation also shows that the Balinese language remains stable in the West Lombok sub-district.

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