

The Use of Meher Language in Traditional Maso Minta Ceremonies in Oirleli Country, Romang Islands District Southwest Maluku Regency

Febrianti Salmanu¹, Iwan Rumalean^{2*}, Heppy Leunard Lelapary²

¹Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Pattimura, Ambon, Indonesia

²Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Pattimura, Ambon, Indonesia

*iwan197577@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to find out and explain how people's views or perceptions regarding the decline in the number of Meher language use in Oirleli Country, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency. The research was conducted in order to help the community in describing the use of Meher language in traditional maso minta ceremonies in Oirleli Country, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency. Meher language is the only mother tongue owned by the people of Oirleli Country, so the government requires the younger generation to learn and master the Meher language. The purpose of this study is to describe the use of Meher language in traditional maso minta ceremonies in Oirleli Country, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency. The result of this study is that there are several factors that influence the decline in the use of Meher language. Based on the research that has been done, the results show that the people of Oirleli Country do not understand about the Meher language, many factors affect people's knowledge about the Meher language, including the lack of use of the Meher language in everyday life, the condition of the community, especially young people who are able to master two or more languages, does not take advantage of globalization in preserving culture, especially the Meher language, the phenomenon of migration that occurs among the community, inter-ethnic marriages that occur among the community, and lack of respect for their own ethnicity.

Keywords: *Ceremony; Custom; Maso Ask; Meher Language*



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INTRODUCTION

Language as a tool for conveying messages that have emotive, affective, and reasoning connotations. (Suriasumantri in Tadjuddin, 2004). Language viewed from the functional perspective proposed by Suriasumantri shows that language fulfills its function as a communication tool. Communication plays a very important role in social, cultural, political, and educational life, because communication is a dynamic transactional process that influences behavior. Where the source and recipient intentionally encode (to code) their behavior to produce messages that they channel through a channel (Channel) to stimulate or obtain certain attitudes or behaviors as a consequence of social relations.

Humans can convey their ideas, thoughts, and feelings to others through language. Humans use language not only to share their feelings and thoughts with others, but also to express and describe their social relationships with those around them. As social beings, humans need a means to interact with their environment. For humans, language serves not only as a medium for expressing themselves, their feelings, thoughts, desires, and needs, both as individuals and as social beings, but also as a tool for social integration and adaptation among humans in developing their civilization. People use language as a means of communication in their activities in society (Parera, 2007).

Each region in Indonesia certainly has unique cultural characteristics within the context of ethnic and cultural diversity. Linguistic ethics, or cultural standards, align with language, language serves as a guide for human interaction in society. Language plays a vital role in social life as a means of communication. It is used as a communication tool to convey the speaker's message or intent to the listener. Therefore, "The most fundamental function of language is communication, namely as a means of social interaction and connection between humans, thus forming a social system or society" (Nababan, 1994). Communication involves several aspects. Alwasilah, (1989) said that "Communication as a process involves (1) the communicating parties, (2) the information communicated, (3) the communication tools." So, it is clear that language is an important factor for humans in society, and language develops along with the development of science and culture of the society that uses it.

Communication within society doesn't just take place in one language, but can also occur in more than one. We know that in many countries, even in many regions and cities, there are people who speak more than one language, for example, a regional language and Indonesian, or a foreign language and Indonesian. When two or more languages are used interchangeably by the same speaker, it can be said that these languages are in contact. Through language, the culture of a nation or region can be formed, and if it is developed and passed down to the next generation, through language, each person may learn the customs, culture, and background of each individual. (Suwito, 1993). Language also plays a role in social control, namely language has a relationship with the socialization processes of a society, for example, language is a channel or where the beliefs and traits of society to children who are growing, this is what will become the successor of culture to the next generation. The importance of language is almost enough to cover all areas of life because everything that is lived, experienced, felt and thought by a person can only be known to others if expressed in language, both spoken and written. Through language, the culture of a nation or region can be formed, and if it is developed and passed down to the next generation, through language, each person may learn the customs, culture, and background of each individual (Suwito, 1993).

The Meher language has become ingrained in its speakers because it is used daily. Therefore, it is not surprising that the regional languages we know today have had a significant influence on the Indonesian language that we now know as the national language. Indonesian is a symbol of nationality, a symbol of national identity, and a symbol that unites various communities with different socio-cultural backgrounds, its language, and a means of communication between cultures and regions (Finoza, 2004).

A cultured society will naturally strive to maintain and preserve existing cultural values, which are then expected to be passed down from generation to generation. The inheritance of cultural values is intended so that the current generation can recognize and understand history itself. This is in line with what was conveyed by Taylor as quoted by Soerjono (2007) that culture is a complex that includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and others. The abilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society. In addition, Eugene in Sastrosupono (2014) said that culture is all things that constitute human behavior, culture is human behavior that is taught continuously from one generation to the next.

Culture is the whole idea, action and work of human in the framework of social life that is made

human property. (Koentjaraningrat, 2002) universal community culture continues to occur and is experienced by humans, wherever they are, they always live with culture because there is no human without culture and vice versa, there is no culture without humans Esten (1993). Cultural values and systems that live and are adopted by a regional community group (ethics). The Meher language is very varied and has its own characteristics so that it can differentiate one region from another.

Traditional ceremonies are a tradition of traditional societies that are still considered to hold values that are quite relevant to the needs of the community. Besides being a way for humans to connect with the spirits of their ancestors, they also represent a manifestation of their ability to actively adapt to nature or their environment in a broader sense.

The author chose the use of Meher language as a research topic because, to date, no one has specifically studied the use of Meher language in the maso minta traditional ceremony in Negeri Oirleli. This is the background to the author's decision to conduct this research. The author's reason for conducting this research is that one of the keys to successful communication is politeness in language. Without politeness, communication will be disrupted.

Based on the background presented above, the formulation of the problem in this study is "How is the use of the Meher language in the maso minta traditional ceremony in Oirleli Village, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency"? Nababan (1984) explains that language is one of the characteristics of humans that distinguishes them from other creatures. Language is a clear sign of good or bad personality, a clear sign of family and nation, a clear sign of human character. Bloomfield stated that language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols used by members of society to connect and interact with each other (Sumarsono & Pratana, 2004). Language is a system. This means that language is formed by a number of components that have a fixed pattern that can be regulated (Chaer & Leonie, 2010). Thus, it can be concluded that language is an important element in communication in the form of an arbitrary sound symbol system and is formed by a number of components that have a fixed pattern and can be regulated.

Language plays a vital role in human life because it is the primary means of communication. As a means of communication, language encompasses words, groups of words, clauses, and sentences, expressed both orally and in writing. Furthermore, in human life, language is also closely linked to cultural development. In its position as a regional language, such as the Meher language and so on. The regional language functions: a symbol of regional pride, a symbol of regional identity, a means of communication within the family and the regional community, a means of development and a supporter of regional culture, the regional language can be used as an introductory language in the early stages of education when needed in the delivery of certain knowledge and/or skills.

The status of regional languages is as follows: supporting the national language, a source of material for the development of the national language, and a language of instruction at the beginning level in elementary schools in certain regions to facilitate the teaching of Indonesian and other subjects. Therefore, these regional languages are considered second languages from a socio-political perspective. Meher is the oldest language spoken by the people of Oirleli. It has existed since ancient times. Therefore, Meher is well-known among the people, having been used since childhood. As a scientific concept, Meher was first researched and studied by Frans (1998).

Meher is one of the regional languages in Indonesia and is still used by the people of Negeri Oirleli, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency, Maluku Province. The people of Negeri Oirleli use Meher as a means of communication in every daily activity, Meher language essentially has the same value as other languages that have an important role in the life of the community itself. As a means of communication between community groups, of course, Meher language also has an essential role as the identity of a pluralistic community group.

Meher is a regional language in Indonesia and is still used by the indigenous Oirleli people. The sentence structure of Meher is not much different from that of Indonesian. The written structure of Meher also includes subjects, predicates, objects, and time adverbs, some of which are found in written Indonesian. Meher has linguistic elements similar to those of Indonesian, namely sound structure, word structure, sentence structure, and meaning.

The Meher language is typically used during traditional ceremonies such as maso minta celebrations, welcoming guests, inaugurating traditional houses, and inaugurating kings. The language used in these

ceremonies is Meher. Meher terms are often highly respected and have profound symbolic implications. Due to its uniqueness and sacredness, this language variety is considered a distinct language, distinct from the local dialects. Sometimes, Meher vocabulary and phrases sound the same when spoken. The only aspect of Meher that remains unchanged over time is its meaning (Frans, 1998).

The Meher language is divided into two varieties: the everyday variety and the traditional variety. The everyday variety is used in general conversation during daily interactions, while the traditional variety is used only in traditional ceremonies. The Meher language witnesses traditional ceremonies. The use of the Meher language in traditional speech still exists today. If a community's Meher language remains strong, its regional language will be preserved. Therefore, the community is very concerned about preserving the continued use of the Meher language, which will help ensure its continued survival.

The use of Meher during the Maso Minta ceremony is crucial for understanding and believing in the people of Negeri Oirleli. Speaking Meher during the Maso Minta ceremony is mandatory, as failure to do so is considered a disrespect for ancestors and others. Language plays a crucial role in human life. Humans need language for almost every activity, both in general life and in more specific domains such as science and art. Language is an indispensable sacred symbol. People use language in their daily lives, whether at home, in the marketplace, or in entertainment venues. It's hard to imagine a world where humans don't speak. Given the importance of language in human life, it's not surprising that topics related to language receive so much attention. The factors influencing the use of the Meher language are technological advances, such as the availability of radio, television, telephones, and the internet, which make it easier for people to obtain various information. For the world of knowledge, this progress is a very positive thing. However, for the world of culture, this progress has a major negative impact on the language used by people every day. This is because people tend to learn new languages and consider their Meher language to be ancient. As a result, they are slowly abandoning the Meher language, which is a symbol of regional cultural wealth that deserves to be preserved.

The Meher language is used in the Maso traditional ceremony. The Maso Minta traditional ceremony is a very important event because it concerns values. Therefore, it is a sacred duty for humans to build good offspring for the wider community (Thomas, 1990). In various regions in Indonesia, there are differences in the methods and ceremonies of the Maso Minta traditional ceremony, varying due to differences in religion and customs.

The word adat comes from Arabic which means 'custom'. According to (Van vollen in Laturake, 2009) adat is a part of the customs that are very binding on everyone in community life and have legal consequences. The maso minta traditional ceremony is a social event with norms that aim to bind and unite the bride and groom to become husband and wife who cannot be separated and cannot be disturbed by others. The Maso Minta traditional ceremony is a very important event because it concerns values. Therefore, marriage is a sacred thing for humans, namely, producing good offspring that are useful to society. (Thomas, 1990). The purpose of the Maso Minta traditional ceremony for husband and wife is to establish a happy family (household) based on the One Almighty God. Husband and wife help and complement each other. The purpose of Maso Minta for the community is to establish kinship customs to maintain and continue the lineage, ensuring happiness within the household, family, and relatives, and fostering customary, cultural, and peaceful values. The maso minta traditional ceremony in Oirleli is a traditional activity that has been passed down from generation to generation, and has the aim and purpose that the maso minta traditional ceremony will bring safety and prosperity and can bring happiness to the family.

METHODS

The type of research used in this study is qualitative research (Moleong, 2010). This is because the problems are directly related to the social strata regarding the factors of "Use of Information". Language Meher in the Maso Minta Traditional Ceremony in Oirleli Village, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency". Qualitative research methods are research that uses phenomena about what is experienced by research data sources. Holistically and by means of description in the form of words and sentences in a specific context experienced by utilizing various scientific methods.

This research was conducted for one month starting from July 1 to August 1, 2022. This research was conducted in Oirleli Village, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation techniques, interviews, note-taking techniques, recording

techniques, and documentation. The data in this study were expressions in the Meher language used in the traditional maso minta ceremony of the people in Oirleli Village, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency. To ensure the accuracy of the data obtained, both primary and secondary data, this study used a method called data triangulation as stated by Moleong (2010), that the triangulation process can be carried out by testing the researcher's understanding and the informant's understanding of the things the informant informed the researcher.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis conducted, Meher language is predominantly used in daily activities and the maso minta traditional ceremony. Maso minta occurs when a young man has decided on a girl to marry. He will inform his parents about this, then they will gather family members to discuss the matter and plan the maso minta traditional ceremony. Based on the results of this study, the same thing is supported by the results of the study. The Meher language in this study is spoken by the residents of Oirleli. The Meher language in that country can be said to be the Oirleli dialect of Meher. The Oirleli dialect is one of the dialects of the Meher language spoken in Oirleli, Kepulauan Roma District. There is a regulation of the State of Oirleli concerning the preservation of the Meher language through its use and is made in the school curriculum taught in the Mulok subjects, then every celebration is always used Meher language.

The Meher language is a key element supporting traditions and customs. It also forms the basis of literature, art, culture, and even the civilization of an ethnic group. Regional languages are used in various traditional ceremonies and even in everyday conversation. Elementary school students in Oirleli State preserve the Meher language in their daily lives. This school utilizes the language as a local content material. In implementing the Meher language, teachers' lessons are delivered to students and are understood by them. The important parts of the interview results can be stated as follows:

Mr. Petrus Nunusala. According to him, using Meher in the Maso Minta traditional ceremony is one way to facilitate the smooth running of the event. He further explained that the purpose of using Meher in the Maso Minta traditional ceremony is to strengthen family ties between the bride and groom.

Mr. Matiasa Lekloor. The maso minta traditional ceremony in Oirleli Village, Romang Islands District, is held in a traditional house for the maso minta traditional ceremony. The bride and groom who will be married according to tradition wear traditional Romang (Oirleli) attire: the bride wears a black dress (rain momohon), a place for siri pinang (hilili), a soil cloth (homon awah), senikir (haiwawar), and the groom wears a loincloth (warpitar), a place for siri, areca nut and tobacco (poil). During the traditional ceremony, those sitting beside the bride are not only family members but also traditional elders and the same goes for the groom.

Mr. Agustinus Lekloor. According to Mr. Agustinus, the Maso Minta traditional ceremony is a traditional ceremony that has been passed down through generations by its adherents in a region. Therefore, each region has its own traditional ceremonies, such as those for marriage, birth, and death.

Mr. Nataniel Nunusala. The Maso Minta traditional ceremony has a spiritual function because it can evoke religious emotions and create a sense of security, peace, and safety. The Maso Minta traditional ceremony is a local tradition because it is an important part of the cultural heritage of a particular region or area.

Mr. Soleman Pookey. Each tribe has its own customs, each distinct from the others, but with the same goal and objective: to educate the community to be virtuous, polite, compassionate, and kind to others, especially the people of Negeri Oirleli. These customs provide a guideline for resolving problems or engaging in activities that adhere to established customs.

Grandpa Jhonias Nunusala. Customs are all the principles and teachings regarding how people should behave in society. In this sense, customs serve as the foundation for development within society. Customs that develop within a society always adapt to the times, thus maintaining their eternal nature.

Stages in the Maso Minta Traditional Ceremony

The Maso Minta traditional ceremony has several stages that need to be known, namely:

Family Gathering (Rauk Wuku). The gathering of the first line (biological) family is called it's safe to say yes, the next generation of younger siblings, is called father yain rauk wuku Meheromo, the mata house's family (notification to the girl's family for preparations), and both families agree to determine the time for the courtship event to take place.

Notification to Both Families (Rapanalh Mori Ra'u Wana). This announcement is made to both families present that the groom's family is ready to perform the traditional maso minta ceremony for the bride. This announcement is made using the traditional language (orkoto ornana).

Placing a Place for Betel and Alcoholic Drinks. (Sopi) (Namhoyola Namkauwala Hilili). Placing a container of betel and liquor (sopi) brought by the man who requested it on the table. Bringing sopi to drink together and betel nut to eat together by the bride and groom's families symbolizes togetherness and mutual acceptance.

Cium Penghormatan (Mo'Oniyana Maekana Rala LLS Wenwhe). The kiss of respect is a tradition where the bride and groom express their respect by kissing all the family members present at that time.

Request for Advice (Rapanakh Rala Naou Naku). The bride and groom will receive advice from specially prepared parents. The groom will receive advice from his parents, and the bride will receive advice from her parents.

Delivery of Discussion Results to Family (Mooniyana Norikama Kakan Alla). The man's family gathers all the families in one clan to convey the results of the speaker to the woman's family, regarding how the traditional marriage (rapanankh meekch) will be carried out and what things are prepared.

Agreement of the Day (Nelu lere). The two families gathered again to decide when the traditional maso minta ceremony would be held.

Father and Mother's Dismissal (Confirmation to Your Mother and Father). The groom's mother's family wishes to perform the maso minta ceremony. The mother's family, called I na ama, announces that their son will perform the maso minta traditional ceremony. The ina ama will bring sopi (sour drink), rice, and woven cloth to the maso minta traditional ceremony. This is an obligation that the ina ama must fulfill.

Notification to the Women (Man Hoo Lan Konohijala In Ama). In this case, the man plays a role where he goes to his mother's family (In ama) that he will carry out the maso minta. Customary Fine Tradition (Molu poi). A tradition of paying a traditional fine from the man's family and the state government. There is a designated day for the traditional fine to be carried out immediately. The materials (pig, cloth, and gold) for the traditional fine are presented to the community using the traditional language (Meher).

CONCLUSION

The use of the Meher language is not only used in the maso minta traditional ceremony, but the language is also used in daily communication that takes place in Oirleli Village which aims to strengthen and strengthen the bonds or relationships between the kidabela/pela that have been established. The Meher language is part of the national culture, and therefore, it needs to be preserved by the people of Negeri Oirleli in particular, and is the responsibility of all indigenous people everywhere. In this regard, this article on the use of the Meher language in the Maso Minta traditional ceremony in Negeri Oirleli, Romang Islands District, Southwest Maluku Regency, is an equally important part of preserving the Meher language.

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