

The Factor of Language Shift at Cina Benteng Tangerang

Larry Dwi Liverda Sitorus^{1)*}, Michelle Andrea Mursalim²⁾, Ananda Fasya Salsabila³⁾

¹⁾²⁾³⁾University of Buddhi Dharma

Jl. Imam Bonjol No.14, Karawaci, Tangerang, Indonesia

¹⁾sitorus1425@gmail.com

²⁾malim9090@gmail.com

³⁾salsabilafa@gmail.com

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Abstract

This research aims to analyzed the factors of language shift in *Cina Benteng* especially at Tangerang. *Cina Benteng* is one of the mixed decendants in Indonesia which have the dialect that mixed with the local language that used at that time. According to Holmes (2001), language shift often refers to the process through which one language replaces another in a community's linguistic repertoire. Based on Holmes (2001), language shifting happens in 3 factors. According to Fishman (1972), language shifting often happens in several domains, such as in family, freinds, religion, education and employment. The researchers would like to do an analysis of language shift factors in *Cina Benteng* at Tangerang. The data were collected by questionnaire that filled by *Cina Benteng* community with estimated age 18-25 years old. The reserachers choose this object due to *Cina Benteng* is one of the big community decendants in Indonesia, especially at Tangerang, and because of several factors that may causing the language shift in *Cina Benteng* dialect. To collect the data, the research used descriptive qualitative approach. As the result, the researchers found out several factors that influence language shift in *Cina Benteng* and the domains that may influence the factors, which can be classified into those three factors, there are: 1. Economic, social, political factors, 2. Demographic factors, 3. Value and Attitude factors.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is already be a part of our life since we were born, it has naturally gets or teach by parents for children as their first language. Language is a tool for people to communicate each other. Chomsky (2002:1) stated that language is a natural object, a component of the human mind, physically represented in the brain and part of the biological endowment of the species. Most of all people using language from where they were born and grew up. Not a few people used the language from their ancestor's region.

Indonesia is a multicultural country that has a mixed populations of foreign imigrants, it creates this country may have hereditary language which applied in some race. The language may be taught from their ancestors from generation to generation. Since in one community may

* Corresponding author

involved by more than one ethnic and race, it makes that community have language changes or shifted.

Sociolinguistics is one of the branches study in linguistics. Sociolinguistics is a study that will elaborating why people could speak differently in different social condition or context. People could change how they speak or speech due to of several factors, such as social class, region, race, ethnicity, gender, relationship and etc. According to Spolsky (2010), sociolinguistics is the study of the connection between language and society, language variation, and language attitudes. Fishman (1971) stated that sociolinguistics is the study of varieties, function, and speaker of the language. Also, Janet Holmes () defines sociolinguistics as the study of the relationship between language and society, and how language is used in multilingual speech communities.

Multilingual defined as the ability of someone to speak or understand more than one language verbal and non-verbal. The ability of multilingual can help people to communicate with many people which came from other regions. According to Li (2008), he stated that multilingual is anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (thorough listening and reading). Due to the ability of multilingual, shifting the language may happend in one community.

Language shifting is one of the study in sociolinguistics. Language shifting is where one language replace another in a community due to several factors. Shifting itself means replace or changes. According to Holmes (2001), language shift often refers to the process through which one language replaces another in a community's linguistic repertoire.

One of the mixed descent in Indonesia, especially in Tangerang is *Cina Benteng* or people more used to called them *Ciben*. *Cina Benteng* is a mixed from two traditions, which are *Tionghoa* and aboriginal. In 1407, crossbreed of *Tionghoa* came to Indonesia and divided to 2 communities, one as farmer and the other one as trader. Most of those who came were men that married with women local resident. *Cina Benteng* is not like the other decents of *Tionghoa* either physically and language, however their *Tionghoa* tradition still maintained. *Cina Benteng* have a lot of descent and relation that widespread in Tangerang, they may have a common ancestor even they didn't know each other for the first time. Same as the other decents, *Cina Benteng* also have the language that show their identity.

Cina Benteng have their own dialect and accent that taught by their ancestor hereditary. Their language is mixed from the locals region at that time which are *Hokkien*, *Betawi*, and *Sunda*. They may have an accent like *Betawi* people with some words or phrases same as *Hokkien* and *Sunda* language, so it makes their language very unique. Since now *Cina Benteng* population has grown more in Indonesia, the language itself also start less used by *Cina Benteng* community. Nowadays they more used to speak Indonesian than *Cina Benteng* dialect, especially in young generation.

Language shifting in *Cina Benteng* occurs due to several factors, one of the factor is bilingual. According to Holmes (2001), language shifting happens 3 factors:

1. Economic, social, and political factors
2. Demographic factors
3. Attitudes and values factors

Those factors may occurs in several domains. According to Fishman (1972), language shifting often happens in several domains, such as in family, freinds, religion, education and employment.

Previously, a study about language shifting already done by several people. First by Umi Farisiyah and Zamzani (2018) entitled *Language Shift and Language Maintenance of Local Languages Toward Indonesian*. The second study done by Dina Sartika, Winda Setiasari, Anni Holila Pulungan (2023) entitled *Factors of Language Shift in Gayonese at Southeast Aceh Regency*. From those two previous study can be concluded that language shifting often happen in Indonesia as multilingual country. Also, found out that the user of Indonesian dialect is mostly young generation, meanwhile the older generation mostly used local dialect of their local regions. The difference this article with previous article is the object of the research and the observation technic. Also, the study of language shifting in *Cina Benteng* is not found yet.

The research would like to analyze the factors of language shifting in *Cina Benteng* at Tangerang. The researcher choose this object since *Cina Benteng* is one of the decents that already widespread in Indonesia especially Tangerang. The researcher used questionnaire method to gather the datas which will be answered by *Cina Benteng* community especially in Tangerang. This article were formulated to found:

1. What the dominant factors which cause language shift in *Cina Benteng* at Tangerang.
2. Which dominant domain of language shifting often happen in *Cina Benteng* at Tangerang.

II. METHODS

This research used a primary data and used a descriptive qualitative approach. Qualitative deals with a range of ways to make the most out of solving key research problem. The writer collected the data from questionnaire. The questionnaire was conducted in a Google Form which filled by *Cina Benteng* community especially at Tangerang. This study focuses on the factors and domain which contributes to the language shift in *Cina Benteng*. The questionnaire was filled 24 people.

The language shift in *Cina Benteng* community is important to study, because *Cina Benteng* has experienced linguistic and cultural acculturation with local residents. *Cina Benteng* includes a mix of *Betawi*, *Hokkien*, and *Sunda* language. While there are many studies which studied other aspects of *Cina Benteng*, there is no study about language shifting in *Cina Benteng* specifically.

Language shift happens when the mother language is replaced by the more dominant language. Holmes (2001) stated that the less domain of language is used, the more potential of the language shift to happen. On the other side, the more domain of language is used, the more potential of the language is to be maintained.

Language shift also occur in bilingual people which happened because of many factors according to Holmes (2001):

1. Economic, social and political factors: to achieve social acceptance, groups of people have to choose to speak in the language of the majority. This is how the language shift happens.
2. Demographic factors: language shift happens because part of the specific groups is forced to meet the dominant language because of urbanization or mixed-language marriages.
3. Attitudes and values: this is based on the perspectives. People seen the dominant language as modern, prominent and helpful, while local language are less functional and often connected to lower social class.

In *Cina Benteng* community, interactions through school, work, and social daily activity creates a dominant language which happened to be Indonesian. These theories of factors which contributes in language shifts helps to explain how factors such as economic, social, political, demographic, and attitudes contribute to language shift from *Cina Benteng* dialect to Indonesian.

Language shift can be identified by five (5) domains according to Fishman (1972) which are family, friends, religion, education, and employment.

1. Family: the use of language with family members using dominant language instead of their hereditary language.
2. Friends: the use of language socially with friends when interacting based on the dominant language in the environment.
3. Religion: the use of language in religious environment which adapting a dominant language by the people.
4. Education: the use of language for educational purposes which adapted a dominant language which often replace minority languages in school.
5. Employment: the use of language in work environment when a dominant language becomes relevant and forced a language shift to happen from their heritage language.

The researcher used Holmes' theory of factors in language shift in order to find the factors which influence the language shift in *Cina Benteng*. The Fishman's theory also contributes to help the researcher to find which domain that influence the factor of language shift in *Cina Benteng*.

III. RESULTS

The questionnaire contained questions about the use of language at home, school, work, and social activity which leads to the factors of language shift. In conducting this research about language shift in *Cina Benteng* at Tangerang, the researcher used a study by Holmes' about factors of language shift and by Fishman about domain which influenced the language shift. The language shift in *Cina Benteng*, especially by the young generation around 18-25 years old happened in several domain and affected by several factors.

The data resulted with 58.3% are students, 54.2% of 18-21 years old and 45.8% of 22-25 years old, dominated by men with percentage of 58.3% and 41.7% of women. The data are already collected will be discussed below.

Economic, Social, Political

Friends

Most people use language according to their environment to socialize with people their age. Most of them meet people their age at school, college, and workplace, which we collected by the questionnaire are mostly use the dominant language which is Indonesian even though they are *Cina Benteng* descendants.

Data 1

Question:

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di kampus?

What language do you often use at college?

From what the researcher has collected by the questionnaire, people are mostly use the dominant language which is Indonesian even though they are *Cina Benteng* descendants. The reason is because the dominant language is mostly use for educational environment in order to socialize with each other due to the large mix of other ethnicities on college where not all of them are *Cina Benteng*, therefore the use of dominant language is needed and easier.

Workplace

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di kampus?

24 jawaban

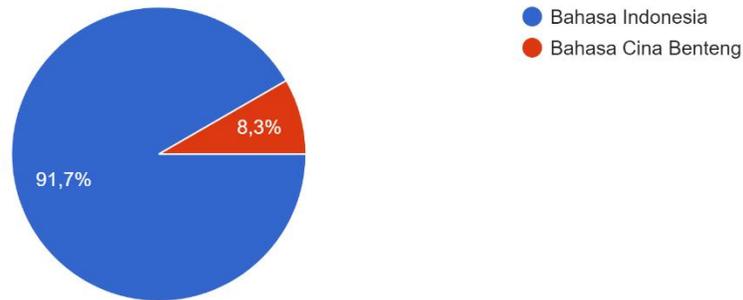


Figure 1. Distribution of Language Use on Campus by Students

Apa alasan Anda menggunakan bahasa yang dipilih di lingkungan kampus?

24 jawaban

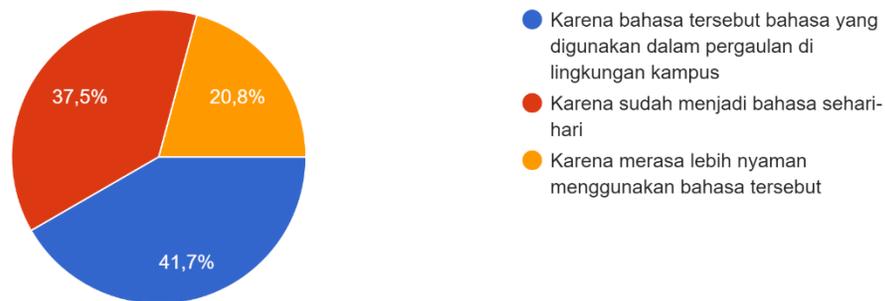


Figure 2. Reasons for Using Language in the Campus Environment

Data 2

Question:

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan dengan teman sebaya?

What language do you often use with people your age?

From what the researcher has collected by the questionnaire, people tend to use the dominant language which is Indonesian. The reason is because 50% people on questionnaire said that the dominant language is a language they use in daily activities.

Most people think that using a local language as less formal than dominant language. As well as at educational environment, the use of dominant language is seen more professional and the standard language which is essential.

Data 3

Question:

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di lingkungan kerja?

What language do you often use at work place?

From what the researcher has collected by the questionnaire, people are mostly use the dominant language which is Indonesian. The reason is, work place is a complex place where there are a lot of people with different background and identity. Until now, there are no work

place in Tangerang found that still use some of the local dialect, especially Cina Benteng, so they prefer to use dominant language which is Indonesian.

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan dengan teman sebaya?

24 jawaban

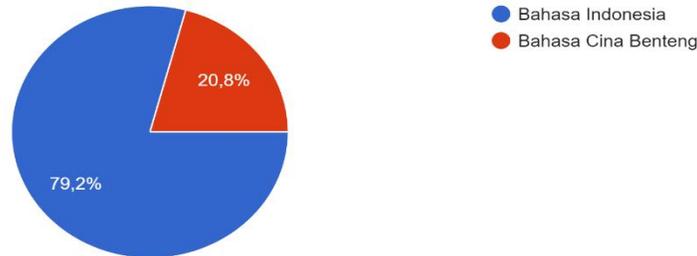


Figure 3. Distribution of Language Use with Peers

Apa alasan Anda menggunakan bahasa yang dipilih dengan teman sebaya?

24 jawaban



Figure 4. Reasons for Using Language with Peers

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di lingkungan kerja?

24 jawaban

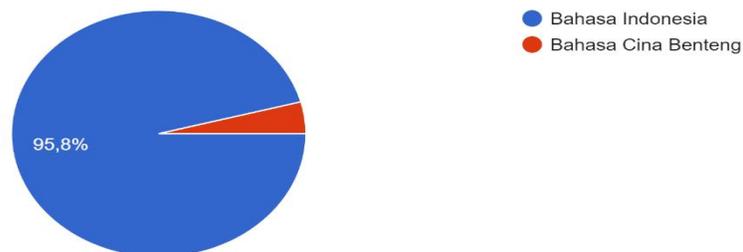


Figure 5. Distribution of Language Use in the Work Environment

Apa alasan Anda menggunakan bahasa yang dipilih di lingkungan kerja?

24 jawaban

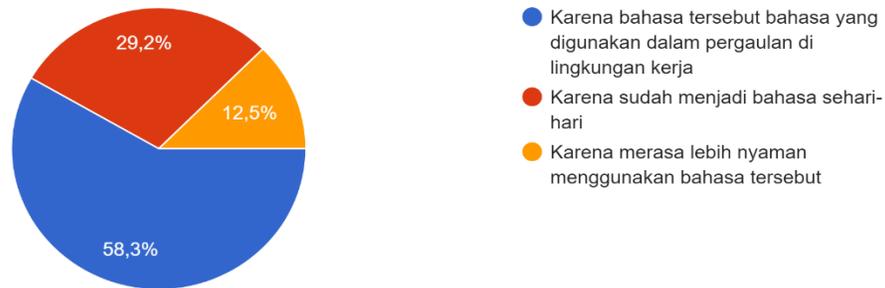


Figure 6. Reasons for Using Language in the Work Environment

Religion

A worship place such as Church, Mosque, Vihara (Monastery) have people from different background and identity, so it can cause language shifting from especially Cina Benteng.

Data 4

Question:

Bahasa apa yang sering Anda gunakan di tempat ibadah?

What language do you often use at your place of worship?

From what the researcher found by the questionnaire, the use of language people mostly use is the dominant language, which is Indonesian. The reason is because the people who go to the specific place of worship such as Church, Mosque, Vihara (Monastery) are not only come from Cina Benteng background, but from other ethnicity and background. Social environment like this make Cina Benteng indirectly shift their language to Indonesian.

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di tempat ibadah?

24 jawaban

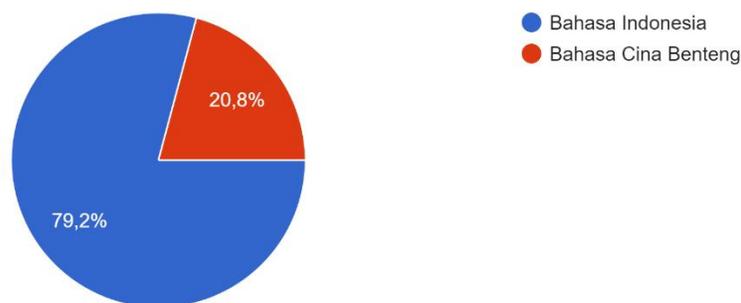


Figure 7. Distribution of Language Use in Places of Worship

Apa alasan Anda menggunakan bahasa yang dipilih di tempat ibadah?

24 jawaban

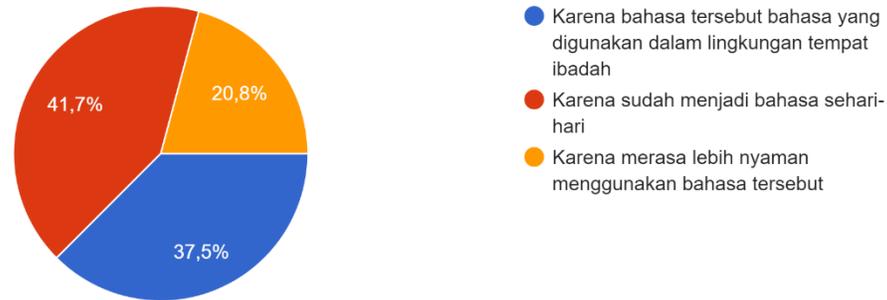


Figure 8. Reasons for Using Language in Places of Worship

Attitudes and Values

Family

Most people acquired their language by family. They choose to teach their children or the younger generation about their heritage to keep their cultural identity. However, the current data indicates a shift, with younger generation using a dominant language. This shift is influenced by their own family of using the dominant language on their daily activities because the younger generation see a local language as less functional and dominant language more efficient.

Data 1

Question:

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di rumah?

What language do you often use at home?

From what the researcher has collected by the questionnaire, although younger generation of Cina Benteng were taught or used to speak Cina Benteng dialect, most of them prefer to speak the dominant language which is Indonesian. The reason is because the language they are often faced with the environment is the dominant language which is Indonesian.

Data 2

Question:

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di keluarga inti?

What language do you often use at nuclear family?

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di lingkungan keluarga besar?

What language do you often use at big family?

From what the researcher has collected by the questionnaire, the language choice in the family both in nuclear and big family has influenced the people of Cina Benteng and plays a significant role in language shifting. The use of dominant language has become more common and parents often prioritize languages which relate to their children education and for socializing. Therefore, they prefer to use dominant language which is Indonesian.

Apa alasan Anda menggunakan bahasa yang dipilih di rumah?

24 jawaban



Figure 9. Reasons for Using Language at Home

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di rumah?

24 jawaban

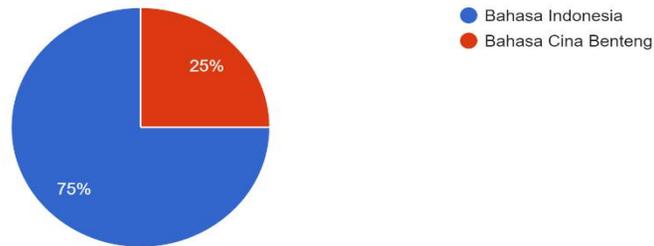


Figure 10. Distribution of Language Use at Home

Apa alasan Anda menggunakan bahasa yang dipilih di lingkungan keluarga inti?

24 jawaban



Figure 11. Reasons for Using Language in the Family Environment

Bahasa apa yang paling sering Anda gunakan di lingkungan keluarga besar?

24 jawaban

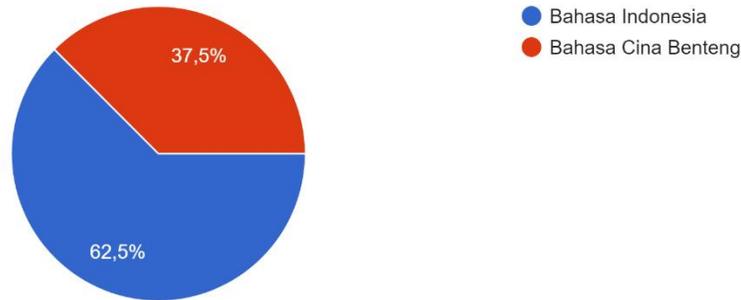


Figure 12. Distribution of Language Use in the Large Family Environment

Apa alasan Anda menggunakan bahasa yang dipilih di lingkungan keluarga besar?

24 jawaban

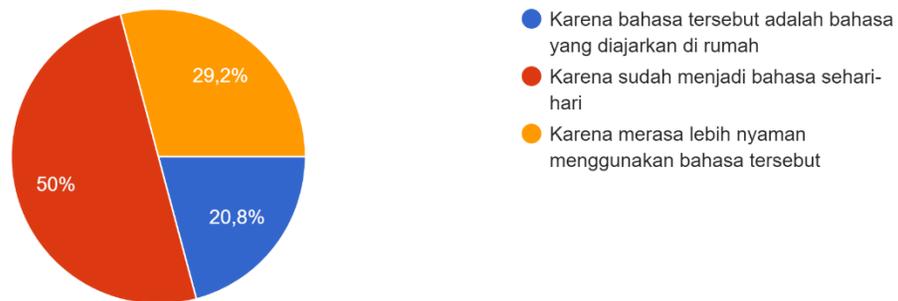


Figure 13. Reasons for Using Language in the Large Family Environment

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Cina Benteng in Tangerang have been affected by language shifting from Cina Benteng dialect to Indonesian. With the research, researcher found the most factor which affected the language shift in Cina Benteng, which is social factors. The domain which causes this factor of language shift in Cina Benteng are friends, employment, and religion. The use of dominant language is a more developed and formal way to interact for Cina Benteng At Tangerang according to the data research gathered by questionnaire on Google Form.

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