

Language Choice in Interethnic Interaction: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Balinese Transmigrants in Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the language choices of Balinese transmigrants and the factors underlying their selection of a language in interethnic interactions in transmigration areas of Southeast Sulawesi Province. To achieve the research objectives, the researcher selected a sample of 66 respondents from four Balinese transmigrant villages, encompassing a range of ages, genders, and educational backgrounds. Data collection methods included surveys (using a sociolinguistic questionnaire), interviews, and participatory observations. The findings indicate that Balinese ethnic groups in transmigration areas predominantly use a localized variety of Indonesian in interethnic interactions. The variety of Indonesian used tends to align more closely with Tolaki and Bugis dialects. This suggests that Balinese transmigrants prefer a neutral language—Indonesian—to accommodate all ethnic groups they interact with. Their neutral stance is also reflected in their passive comprehension of other local ethnic languages. Indonesian serves as the primary lingua franca, predominantly used in cross-ethnic communication to enhance communicative effectiveness, build social relationships, and avoid conflict. Convergence toward Indonesian is strongest in occupational and economic domains, particularly in transactions and social interactions outside their own community. However, divergence occurs in certain situations, where Balinese continues to be used in intraethnic communication, particularly in intimate domains and the agricultural sector, as a means of maintaining cultural identity. The factors influencing language choice include the communicative context (formal vs. informal), social relationships, participant status, and pragmatic needs. Balinese transmigrants tend to accommodate the dominant language flexibly. These findings suggest that in multiethnic communities, a language with official status and broad reach is more likely to serve as a tool for convergence, while ethnic languages persist in limited domains as markers of social and cultural identity.

Keywords: Balinese language, language choice, Southeast Sulawesi, transmigration, interethnic interaction.

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1. Introduction

The transmigration program is one of the policies of the Indonesian government aimed at organizing population distribution in a planned manner across the country. This program has existed since the colonial era under Dutch rule as an effort to achieve demographic balance across the archipelago. Islands such as Java, Bali, and Madura have much higher population densities compared to islands like Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Papua. These regions were also considered underdeveloped in terms of infrastructure. Furthermore, increased control was deemed necessary in these areas, which are geographically distant from centers of power. In addition to security concerns, there was also a desire to improve the living standards of the Indonesian population (Martinez and Hudayan, 2022). This became the foundation of the transmigration program initiated by the Indonesian government after gaining sovereignty.

In the cultural approach, transmigration is seen not merely as the movement of people with their demographic characteristics but also as the transfer of culture from the transmigrants' place of origin, including their value systems, social systems, and material culture. Thus, in cultural terms, which are relevant to this research, the implication is that transmigration should be viewed as a process of transferring socio-cultural resources. This process is expected to facilitate integration with the local community and among fellow transmigrants, thereby maintaining the unity and integrity of the Indonesian nation (Malini 2012).

The process of transferring socio-cultural resources has been experienced by Balinese transmigrants in Indonesia. Balinese transmigrants have spread across the country, including almost the entire island of Sulawesi, particularly in Southeast Sulawesi Province. They integrate with other transmigrants and migrants from various ethnic groups, such as the Javanese, Sundanese, Bugis, and Lombok. Additionally, they share settlements with local ethnic groups, such as the Tolaki, Muna, Buton, and Moronene, living harmoniously alongside other communities in various locations. They have successfully adapted to the local community, both in terms of certain cultural aspects and other social matters, ensuring that their presence is well-accepted by the local population (Ismail 2006; Silda et al. 2021).

Human mobility, particularly migration and its impact on language practices and ideologies, has become a significant area of interest in sociolinguistic studies. In reality, migrants, as diasporic communities, constantly face decisions regarding language choice—whether to maintain the use of their mother tongue in interactions, switch to the national language, or use their ethnic language alongside the local language in their new environment. They strive to establish positive contact with the local community while simultaneously preserving their ethnolinguistic heritage. This process, on the one hand, leads to linguistic and cultural interactions that result in mutual influence, enriching the linguistic and cultural repertoires of both parties. On the other hand, it may contribute to the erosion of linguistic and cultural purity (Dhanawaty et al. 2020).

Southeast Sulawesi, one of the provinces in Indonesia, is characterized by its ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Several local languages, such as Tolaki, Muna, Moronene, and Wolio, coexist and develop alongside migrant languages, including Buginese, Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, and Sasak.

This linguistic diversity facilitates language contact among various ethnic groups, particularly in transmigration areas. Based on this context, the research focuses on two key issues of particular interest for further study:

- a. The language choices of Balinese transmigrants, an incoming ethnic minority, who have inhabited the region for approximately half a century.
- b. The factors influencing the language choices of the Balinese ethnic group in interethnic interactions within transmigration areas of Southeast Sulawesi.

In this study, language choice refers to the language used by Balinese transmigrants in interethnic interactions within the social domain, with a focus on the domains of work and kinship in Southeast Sulawesi. These two domains are of particular interest because interethnic encounters and communication occur with greater intensity compared to other domains. Additionally, the various dynamics of language use among the Balinese ethnic group in multiethnic transmigration areas are also of interest for further exploration.

This research is expected to contribute to a better understanding of the linguistic conditions of Balinese transmigrants in a multicultural region. The language choices of Balinese transmigrants are certainly influenced by specific factors to achieve effective communication. Therefore, language plays a role in shaping the character of Balinese transmigrants—spiritually, socially, intellectually, and in terms of nationalism. In the social reality of Balinese transmigrants, language has a significant influence on the dynamics of social interaction. Therefore, this topic remains highly relevant and continues to evolve, making it an interesting subject of study.

2. Related Studies

Several studies on language choice have been conducted in various linguistic and cultural contexts. For instance, Bissonauth (1998) researched language choice among Mauritians; Dweik & Qawar (2015) focused on language choice within the Arab Canadian community; Zhixiang (2016) studied language choice in Shenzhen, China; Amin & Rahman (2018) investigated the language attitudes of non-Malay speakers in Malaysia; and Gomashie (2022) examined language choice among Mexican youth. A different case is Akere's (1981) study in Nigeria, which revealed that a stronger command of English than Nigerian languages had influenced and permeated the structure of indigenous languages.

One interesting study on language use was conducted by Rousan & Ibrir (2018). The differences in language use between the Mzabi and Kabyle communities reflect their cultural identity and social integration. The Kabyle are more open to using French, indicating a closer connection to French culture, while the Mzabi tend to preserve Algerian Arabic, signifying a stronger affiliation with local Arab culture. The limited use of MSA (Modern Standard Arabic) suggests that this language does not play a significant role in daily communication within either community.

These various studies reflect diverse linguistic conditions and situations, including those found in Indonesia. Indonesia's linguistic landscape is highly diverse, with a relatively large number of local languages—718 in total (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa 2019). Many speakers of these

local languages interact within different regions of Indonesia, facilitated by interregional migration, such as the transmigration program. This intercultural interaction and communication are mediated by the Indonesian language, which serves as the national language and is widely spoken by the Indonesian population.

Language contact in transmigration areas in Indonesia has attracted the attention of several researchers, particularly from a sociolinguistic perspective. Malini (2012), Malini & Indrawati (2014), Malini & Dhanawaty (2015), and Putrawan & Ikhtiarti (2017) have described various linguistic aspects of Balinese transmigrants in Lampung. Djamereng (2014) studied language attitudes and the preservation of the Balinese language in the transmigration area of Luwu Regency. Rustiani et al. (2019) examined the use of the Balinese language by the Balinese ethnic group in Kendari City.

In addition to linguistics, other fields such as anthropology, sociology, geography, and architecture have also shown interest in studying the Balinese ethnic group in transmigration areas, particularly in Southeast Sulawesi (Ismail, 2006; Silda et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Husmawaty, 2018; Ariono et al., 2009). Research by Yadnya et al. (2010) and Dhanawaty (2012) highlighted that the ability of the Balinese ethnic group to adapt in the transmigration areas of Lampung Province has enabled them to accommodate other languages besides Balinese, including Javanese, Lampungese, and Indonesian, and they tend to master these languages fluently.

Research on Balinese transmigrants in Southeast Sulawesi has been conducted by Firman et al. (2023), which highlights that the linguistic adaptation of Balinese transmigrants can be observed at the phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels, particularly among the younger generation, who have limited knowledge of standard Balinese vocabulary. Most participants were unfamiliar with standard Balinese vocabulary, resulting in the dominance of everyday language over formal language in daily communication.

Reflecting on these studies, research on language use in the social life of the Balinese ethnic group in transmigration areas of Southeast Sulawesi presents distinct ethnic backgrounds and interactions. Moreover, such studies remain relatively rare in Southeast Sulawesi. Therefore, this research aims to fill that gap by revealing the linguistic phenomena of the Balinese diaspora in transmigration areas of Southeast Sulawesi.

In a culturally diverse setting like Indonesia, interactions often involve three or more cultures. Language plays a crucial role, particularly in the choice of language used for communication. In intercultural communication, both verbal and nonverbal accommodations and adjustments are made to achieve harmony. Conversely, differences—and even disharmony—can also arise through language. Gudykunst and Kim (1992, p. 215) assert that adaptation occurs in communication, and a key outcome of adaptation is the identification and internalization of important symbols from the local community. Similarly, residents acquire their cultural patterns through interactions with those around them, while migrants also adopt local cultural patterns and develop new cultural realities through communication. Furthermore, migrants' communication abilities reflect their adaptation, and this adaptation process is fundamentally aimed at achieving communication competence with the local community and culture. As

we strive to communicate with people from different cultures and adjust to our differences, it is important to remember that culture is learned (Tubbs & Moss 2000, 237). Therefore, language can essentially be learned as a strategy for social adaptation in a pluralistic culture. The decision to learn a particular language is based on its function and benefits within a broader context.

Language choice is inherently linked to adjustment and adaptation to the interlocutor. Communicative adjustment is universal and serves as a fundamental component—an essential element—of successful social interaction (Dragojevic et al. 2016). Therefore, language choice is directly related to Accommodation Theory (Coupland & Giles 1988; Giles et al. 1991), which identifies three key processes: convergence, divergence, and maintenance. Convergence refers to adjusting one's communicative behavior to become more similar to that of the interlocutor. Divergence, on the other hand, involves modifying one's communicative behavior to create greater distinction from the interlocutor. Meanwhile, maintenance refers to preserving a “default” level of communication without making adjustments based on the interlocutor. These three situations illustrate how a speaker may choose a particular language when engaging in interethnic communication.

The process of adaptation that leads to competence in using more than one language can be categorized as multilingualism (Clyne 1998, 301). Furthermore, he asserts that the factors influencing language choice in multilingual settings include the interlocutor, role relationship, domain, topic, venue, channel of communication, type of interaction, and phatic function. Fasold (in Dweik and Qawar 2015, 4) states that multilingualism serves as an interactional resource for multilingual speakers. This means that one language is typically used at home or with close friends, another language may be employed for business and trade, and a third language might be used for interactions with government institutions.

Fishman (in Dhanawaty et al. 2020, 981) discusses the consequences of language contact. First, immigrant languages may dominate speech situations and exert pressure on the use of local languages. Second, the opposite may occur, where the immigrant language is under pressure. The third scenario involves the immigrant ethnic language being used alongside the local language in a diglossic relationship. This means that each language is used in specific domains, and speakers of both languages hold positive attitudes toward them.

The phenomenon of language use in society is a central focus of sociolinguistic study, which examines language choice as a social fact and situates it within systems of symbols (codes), cultural behavior, and logic. Language choice refers to an individual's decision in a multilingual society to speak in their preferred language based on the context. Regarding language choice, Fasold (1984, 180) states, "The first thing that comes to mind when we think of language choice is 'whole languages.' We imagine a person who speaks two or more languages and has to choose which one to use." Similarly, Thomas and Wareing (2007, 17) argue that a speaker may seek to align themselves with different types of groups at various times, leading to fluctuating linguistic patterns—whether shifting between linguistic variants or switching from one language to another. Issues of group affiliation and identity play a crucial role in determining a speaker's linguistic choices, particularly for those proficient in multiple languages.

According to Appel & Muysken (1987, 23), when a person is proficient in two or more languages, they do not use both languages simultaneously in all situations. Instead, they choose one language for certain contexts and another for different situations. Several factors influence language selection, including group membership, context, and topic. Language serves as a means of expressing an individual's identity, and the identity derived from group membership plays a significant role in language choice. Additionally, the topic of conversation can also influence which language is selected.

Genemo (2021, 6–7) explains that individuals make language choices for various specific purposes. Both individuals and groups select words, registers, styles, and languages that align with their needs to communicate ideas, interact with others, express identity, and establish or maintain dominance. Each person possesses the ability to adapt their linguistic repertoire to new circumstances and develop their language use for specific purposes.

In line with this, Fasold (1984, 66) identifies three types of choices in language selection: code-switching, which refers to using one language for one purpose and another language for a different purpose; code-mixing, which involves incorporating elements of one language into another; and finally, the selection of a particular variation within the same language. This last type of choice often becomes the focus of studies on language attitudes. These three types of choices are viewed as a continuum, ranging from relatively large-scale to relatively small-scale selections, with code-mixing being particularly difficult to distinguish from the other two.

Several factors influence language choice, as summarized by Dumanig et al. (2013, 6) from various sources. These factors include native language proficiency, community language, age, education, role relationships, ethnicity, dominant language, social status, the economic and political position of the speaker group, and language neutrality. Meanwhile, Fasya and Sari (2021, 413) suggest that four key factors influence language choice in social interactions, based on the views of Ervin-Tripp and Grosjean: (1) participants, (2) context, (3) discourse content, and (4) interaction functions.

3. Methods and Procedures

3.1 Participants

The research was carried out in the Balinese transmigration area in Southeast Sulawesi Province, especially in South Konawe Regency (Jati Bali Village and Lalonggapu Village) with Tolakinese and Bombana Regency (Marga Jaya Village and Anugerah Village) with Moronene native speakers. There are also other ethnicities of migrants, such as Buginese, Javanese, Sundanese, and Sasak who interact with the Balinese. Furthermore, the participants in this study were Balinese in the study area. The Balinese speaker was a respondent with an age range of 17–65 years. The number of participants was 66 respondents and filled in the available questionnaire.

The description of demographic information above is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the respondents' background. Since the analysis focuses on situational aspects and interethnic interactions—such as familiarity, occupation, and social closeness among speakers—which have a greater influence on language choice, factors such as age and gender were not included. The study emphasizes

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situational variables (e.g., formality of the situation, communicative function, and work relationships) that more directly affect language choice in the context of transmigration.

3.2. Instruments

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data and to keep the research aligned with its objectives, various instruments were used for triangulation. These included questionnaires, observation sheets, interview guides, and several data collection tools such as recording devices and writing instruments.

- a. Questionnaire – A document containing questions related to demographic data and linguistic issues, particularly language choice. The questionnaire consists of detailed questions that respondents answer in writing. It also includes questions regarding respondents' personal identities.
- b. Observation sheet – A document used to record observations, covering both linguistic issues and sociocultural aspects of Balinese transmigrants.
- c. Interview guide – A document containing key points of questions posed to informants orally. These questions address linguistic issues, geographical aspects, sociocultural aspects, community perceptions of their ethnicity, and the linguistic conditions of Balinese transmigrants.
- d. Recording devices and writing instruments – These tools are used to document data in audio-visual form. Recorded interviews capture various spoken conversations, which are necessary to support data accuracy. The recording devices used include a tape recorder and a camera. Writing instruments assist in note-taking for any details that cannot be captured by the recording devices. Additionally, these tools serve as backups in case of technical malfunctions.
- e. Human instrument – Most importantly, the researcher themselves serves as an instrument for data collection, acting as a natural observer. This is particularly relevant given the ethnographic nature of the study, which involves participant observation. Furthermore, some members of the research team possess proficiency in the Balinese language, which supports data collection.

3.3 Data Collection

Data were collected using three methods: participatory observation, interviews, and surveys. The selection of the village for this study was based on the ethnic plurality of its community. The Balinese migrated to the district 40–50 years ago and have lived in harmony without any conflicts. Interviews were conducted with various informants, including sub-district officials (head of the government section), village heads, school principals, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and members of the younger generation. Observation was carried out by attending several traditional events, such as the inauguration of a *sulinggih* (priest) and *pasraman* (Sunday school), where children learn about Hinduism and Balinese culture and participate in *megambel* activities (playing the gong). Additionally, we engaged in casual conversations with elementary school students on their way home from school to assess their fluency in Balinese.

Referring to the two research questions, this study employed a mixed-method approach for data collection and analysis, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data (Cresswell 2016). The

quantitative research in this study aimed to describe the number of languages chosen by respondents in two domains, based on speech acts as well as setting and scene. Meanwhile, the qualitative method, using a case study research design, explored the factors influencing language choice, including participants, the speech community, and domain.

The list of questions was compiled from various sources, including Mahsun (2006), Dhanawaty (2012), and Showalter (1991), and was modified and adapted to suit the purpose of this study. The questionnaire consists of several sections, including respondents' demographic data, language usage, and language choice when interacting in a multiethnic community within the domains of friendship and work. The demographic data section includes variables such as gender, age, and education. The sample consisted of 47 males and 19 females. In terms of age distribution, 10 respondents were between 16 and 25 years old, 11 were between 26 and 35 years old, 16 were between 36 and 45 years old, 21 were between 46 and 55 years old, and 7 were over 56 years old. The sample also covered a wide range of educational backgrounds: 9 respondents were elementary school graduates, 6 were junior high school graduates, 30 were high school graduates, and 21 held diplomas.

Based on the focus of the study, the questionnaire consisted of two parts: the friendship domain and the working domain. In the friendship domain, the questions focused on the social environment, including informal activities, visiting, welcoming guests, and both official and unofficial meetings. The working domain pertained to the respondents' daily lives, as most of them work as farmers. Therefore, the questionnaire primarily addressed interactions during land clearing and socio-economic activities. The collected data were analyzed and presented descriptively in the form of narratives and tables.

3.4 Data Analysis

In conducting the analysis, the first step is to organize the data collected in the field. The gathered data include questionnaire responses, field notes, photographs, documents such as reports and articles, and transcriptions of oral data related to the realities of transmigrants' lives in Southeast Sulawesi. Next, percentages for the questionnaire data are calculated using Excel. For observational and interview data, relevant information is identified and selected. The data are then sorted based on their applicability and grouped according to the research problems. Subsequently, they are organized according to the analytical requirements. The data are presented descriptively in the form of tables and narratives. This is followed by a thorough data examination and analysis in accordance with the relevant theories.

4. Results

4.1 Language Choices of the Balinese Ethnic in Transmigration Areas

Social interaction in a multilingual society, where multiple languages or language varieties are available, requires each speaker to accurately choose the appropriate language or variety for a given communication situation. This language selection is not arbitrary; rather, it is influenced by various factors. The discussion on language choice in interethnic interaction focuses on the domains of familiarity and work. The work domain in this study refers to the work environments of transmigrants, particularly in the informal sector, such as agriculture and plantations. Formal sectors, such as teaching, civil service,

and policing, are not included, as it is assumed that individuals in these roles primarily use the national language in the performance of their duties. The focus on these two domains is based on the assumption that they provide greater opportunities for language contact in interethnic interactions compared to other domains, such as family, religion, arts, education, and government, which are typically associated with ethnic languages and the national language.

The research focuses more on situational and functional variables in communication, such as the formality of the situation, communication effectiveness, and the dynamics of interethnic interactions. These variables are considered more influential in language choice within the transmigration environment. Demographic differences, such as age, gender, and education, do not show significant variation in language use patterns in the field. The researcher has observed that these factors do not contribute significantly to explaining differences in language accommodation.

In the context of the Balinese transmigrant community, social roles and community structure prioritize group solidarity and interethnic communication functions. Therefore, variables such as intergroup relationships and communication functions are more relevant than individual characteristics. A research approach that focuses on interaction and communicative situations allows the researcher to capture the dynamics of language use that are situational and contextual in nature, making demographic aspects less influential in explaining this phenomenon. Thus, the analysis emphasizes factors that are directly related to communication contexts and interethnic interactions, making demographic variables less of a priority.

4.1.1 Language Choice in Friendship Domain

The friendship domain in society refers to the social environment beyond family relationships, education, government, religion, and traditional ceremonies. This social environment encompasses a wide range of interactions. In this study, the friendship domain in the interethnic interactions of the Balinese transmigrant community in Southeast Sulawesi is linked to social associations in both formal and informal speech acts within the community.

The survey results, as shown in Table (1) below, illustrate the language choices of Balinese transmigrants in informal interactions. For example, if two people are conversing in Balinese (BL) and a guest who does not speak BL arrives, 30.30% prefer to continue the conversation in BL, 7.58% prefer switching to the language spoken by the newly arrived guest (either BL or another language), and 62.12% prefer shifting the conversation to Indonesian (IND).

Table 1: Respondents' Actions When a Friend Who Speaks Another Language Joins a Conversation in Balinese

Statements	Freq. (%)
Keep the BL ongoing	30,30
Switch to a friend's verbal repertoire	7,58
Switch into IND	62,12

The data reflect a dominant shift toward the use of Indonesian (62.12%). The majority of respondents chose to switch to Indonesian when a speaker of another language joined the conversation.

This indicates that Indonesian serves as a lingua franca or intermediary language in interactions between speakers of different languages. It also highlights the extensive reach of Indonesian in cross-linguistic communication.

Meanwhile, some respondents continued using Balinese (30.30%). A portion of respondents maintained their conversation in Balinese despite the presence of a friend who did not speak the language. This suggests that some respondents feel more comfortable or are accustomed to speaking Balinese. They may assume that the newly arrived friend understands Balinese or can adapt to the conversation. Group identity and solidarity factors likely influence their decision to continue using Balinese in interactions.

A small percentage of respondents switched to the language of the newly arrived friend (7.58%). Only a minority of respondents chose to switch to the language spoken by the new participant. This suggests that in such communication situations, respondents are more inclined to use a widely spoken language (such as Indonesian) rather than adjusting to an individual's specific language.

Considering these trends, it is evident that Indonesian plays a crucial role in bridging interethnic communication. Respondents perceive Indonesian as a language understood by the entire community, allowing them to communicate with people from different ethnic backgrounds instantly, without the need to learn other regional languages or rely on gestures.

According to respondents, there are several reasons why they continue using Balinese (BL) even when non-Balinese speakers are present. One reason is that the topic of conversation is not relevant to the non-Balinese speakers. Additionally, they consider it natural and believe that their friend will not be offended. On the other hand, a total of 69.70% of respondents switched to either Indonesian or the language spoken by their friend.

The friendship domain is indeed the most sensitive in language use. In this domain, interlocutors do not always share the same background, ethnic group, or speech community. Table 2 below illustrates the language choices of Balinese transmigrants in interethnic interactions within the friendship domain, specifically in the context of visiting (welcoming guests). The visiting context involves participants such as Tolakinese (TL), Moronene (MN), Javanese (JV), and Buginese (BG) as neighbors or friends. This type of interaction is also influenced by the level of familiarity between the visiting guest and the respondent. Meanwhile, in the context of meetings, greater emphasis is placed on participant factors and the formality of the topic.

Table 2: The Context of Interethnic Speech Acts in Different Settings and Scenes: Visiting or Meeting

Speech Context	IND	BL	BL+IND	MN	TL	BG	JV
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Known/Familiar	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Familiar; participants TL or MN	95,44	1,52	1,52	-	1,52	-	-
Familiar; participants BG or JV	93,92	1,52	1,52	-	-	1,52	1,52
Unfamiliar; participants TL or MN	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unfamiliar; participants; BG or JV	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unfamiliar; participants non-TL or MN and non-BG or JV	89,40	7,57	3,03	-	-	-	-
Some familiar; participants TL or MN; some unfamiliar, participants	93,92	1,52	1,52	3,03	-	-	-
Some familiar; participants BG or	95,44	1,52	1,52	-	-	-	1,52

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Speech Context	IND %	BL %	BL+IND %	MN %	TL %	BG %	JV %
JV; some unfamiliar Some familiar; participants JV, BG; some unfamiliar	95,44	1,52	1,52	-	-	-	1,52

From the table above, it is evident that in almost all given speech contexts, the choice of Indonesian (IND) as an interethnic communication tool is highly dominant. In nearly all contexts, IND holds the highest percentage, even reaching 100% in some situations. This indicates that speakers tend to converge towards Indonesian as a lingua franca in social interactions, especially when speaking with unfamiliar individuals or those from different linguistic backgrounds.

Balinese (BL) and a mix of BL+IND appear with small percentages (1.52%-7.57%) in certain situations. This suggests that, in some cases, there is a tendency to maintain group identity through the use of the regional language (divergence). However, since this percentage is relatively small compared to the dominance of Indonesian, it can be concluded that divergence through the use of regional languages only occurs in highly limited social environments.

When speakers are familiar with their interlocutors, even if they come from different language groups, there is a higher likelihood of continuing to use or mix the regional language (BL or BL+IND). Conversely, when speakers do not know their interlocutors, they are more likely to use Indonesian entirely (100%) as a maximum convergence strategy to ensure effective communication and avoid social barriers. In situations where some interlocutors are familiar while others are not, a combination of languages occurs, with a slight increase in the use of the regional language (BL or BL+IND).

Table (2) shows that the choice of IND is highly dominant because it serves as the national language and is used for interethnic communication. Interlingual accommodation is also evident in the use of a mixed language (BL+IND). Additionally, there is a small percentage of regional languages used, such as Tolakinese (TL), Moronene (MN), Javanese (JV), and Buginese (BG). Although TL is a regional language taught in formal education, Balinese transmigrants have a lower proficiency in TL compared to JV. This is because some Balinese (BL) vocabulary overlaps with JV, making it easier for Balinese speakers to acquire JV. Despite the higher frequency of interaction between Balinese and Tolakinese speakers compared to Javanese, Balinese speakers find it difficult to actively speak TL. They can understand TL but are unable to speak it fluently.

The respondents' language choices, particularly their preference for IND in the context of speech acts during visits, are shown in Table (3).

Table 3: Language Choice in Different Settings and Contexts: Visiting or Meeting with a Focus on the Topic

Speech Context	IND %	BL %	BL+IND %	JV %	MN %
Participants: family TL or MN; topic: unformal	96,96%	1,52%	1,52%	-	-
Participants: family BG or JV; topic: unformal	93,92%	1,52%	1,52%	1,52%	1,52%
Participants: family non-TL or MN; topic: unformal	96,96%	1,52%	1,52%	-	-
Participants: family TL or MN; topic formal	96,96%	1,52%	1,52%	-	-
Participants: family BG or JV; topic: resmi	96,96%	1,52%	1,52%	-	-
Participants: family non-TL or non-MN; topic: formal	93,94%	3,03%	3,03%	-	-

The data shows that when Balinese speakers visit other ethnic groups, the use of Indonesian (IND) is more prevalent, both in formal and informal situations. In the context of intraethnic interactions during visits, the data highlights how language choice is influenced by social relationships, group identity, and the status of a language.

In all categories of intraethnic interaction (whether within TL/MN families, BG/JV families, or non-BT/BM groups), Indonesian (IND) dominates, exceeding 90%. This indicates that IND serves as the primary tool for linguistic convergence, where speakers from diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds prefer to use IND to facilitate mutual understanding and smooth communication. This trend is particularly evident in visiting interactions, where norms of politeness and ease of communication encourage the use of a more inclusive and widely understood language.

Balinese (BL) or a mix of BL+IND appears only in small percentages (1.52%–3.03%) in interactions with families of BG or JV backgrounds. This suggests minimal linguistic divergence, where some individuals still maintain the use of their regional language as a symbol of group identity. However, since the percentage is very low, it indicates that convergence toward IND remains stronger than the retention of regional languages in visiting interactions.

Differences in topic (formal vs. informal) do not significantly impact language use patterns, as IND remains dominant in all situations. This suggests that language accommodation is driven more by social interaction factors (who the interlocutor is) rather than the content of the conversation. Politeness norms and social conventions in visiting events seem to have a greater influence on language choice than the topic itself, making IND the preferred language in both formal and informal discussions.

Speech events are determined by key factors that influence language choice in interaction. These factors include location, participants, topic, and situation. Additionally, language behavior patterns also play a role in guiding the community's language selection. In official or formal situations, the use of a standard language variety is more appropriate, whereas in unofficial or informal situations, a casual or colloquial variety is preferred. This study examines both situational variables.

An informal situation is a linguistic interaction that is not bound by official government regulations or directives from authorities and does not take place within an institution or agency (Pastika (2005)). Participants in such informal interactions can communicate without being strictly bound by language

choices that adhere to formal norms. In such situations, respondents predominantly chose IND, with minimal variation, as shown in Table (4).

Table 4: Interethnic interactions of informal meetings

Speech Context	IND %	BL %	BL+IND %	JV %
Meeting with participant TL/MN	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Meeting with participant BG/JV	95,44	1,52	1,52	1,52
Meeting with participant non-TL/MN dan non-BG/JV	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Unknown participant's verbal repertoire	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Unknown participant, known recently as participant TL/MN	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Unknown participant, known recently as participant BG/JV	93,93	1,52	1,52	3,03

In the time of interacting with the same ethnicity in everyday life, participants always use the first language (L1), such as TL, JV, MN, and BG. However, in informal meetings and interethnic interactions, the use of IND is higher than the use of participants' L1. This means that even in interethnic interactions, even in informal situations, IND is the most important means of communication.

Balinese transmigrants have lived in harmony with the majority community and indigenous Tolakinese for many years, but generally, Balinese is difficult to speak TL. They tried to understand the context of the speech and were unable to respond in TL. They responded back in IND. This reflects a convergence strategy, in which speakers choose IND as a neutral and inclusive language that can be understood by all participants, regardless of their ethnolinguistic background.

Although the speech situation indicates that Balinese transmigrants have integrated with the majority and local communities (the Tolaki ethnic group), their proficiency in Tolaki is generally limited to understanding the context of speech without the ability to respond in Tolaki, except in Indonesian. There is a strong tendency toward convergence with IND, but some individuals continue to use regional languages as a means of maintaining their linguistic identity. However, since the percentage of regional language maintenance is very small, it is difficult to assert that there is resistance to IND as the primary language of interaction.

If the identity of the interlocutor is initially unknown but later identified as a speaker of Buginese (BG) or Javanese (JV), the use of JV increases slightly to 3.03%. This suggests that after recognizing the interlocutor as belonging to a specific ethnic group, there is a slight language adjustment (albeit at a low rate). This reflects selective convergence, where speakers may attempt to adjust their language only in certain situations, but overall, IND remains the primary choice.

Social mixing or adaptation is characterized especially in linguistic terms. Ethnic Balinese transmigrants often modify their speech or choose the language of their spoken language. The form of convergence that arises in the form of replacing language elements (lexical and grammatical) and maximum convergence in the form of language change in the form of code-switching and code-mixing, especially IND and TL or BG (one or two words). There is also the form of borrowing vocabulary, for example from the BG: *grandong* 'tractor used to harvest rice', *dompeng* 'tractor used to plow the fields,

tangki 'rice or grass atomizer', *nabela* 'seed sowing activity using tools made of plastic pipes'; and from JV, for example, *pacul* 'hoe', and *legowo* 'make a path near the rice plant'. There is also a new vocabulary for objects they have just created to accommodate communication needs, for example, *cacingan* 'small aqueducts to irrigate the fields.

Regarding the explanation of the official and unofficial situation, it can be stated that the official situation referred to in this study is a linguistic relationship that is bound by official norms, such as the rules in an institution where interaction occurs (Pastika, 2005). In multiethnic interactions in the transmigration tutorial of Southeast Sulawesi Province, Balinese transmigrants, who used to be dominant as farmers, currently have various professions such as civil servants, teachers, traders, plantation owners, and entrepreneurs. In addition, the life of Balinese social organizations, such as Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI), is also well developed. The variety of professional backgrounds and the development of social organizations causes them to not rarely be in contact with the official domain, both with the government and with professional colleagues. In such a situation, it is necessary to have a steady attitude in determining the choice of language that supports the situation. That choice is inseparable from the function and position of language as a commonly prevailing means of nexus. In this case, the function and position of IND are the most important means of relationship (see Table (5) because IND is the official language, the language of education, a national language, as well as a medium for developing culture, science, and technology.

Table 5: Interethnic interactions of formal meetings

Speech Context	IND %	BL %	BL+IND %	BG %
Familiar participants of TL/MN	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Familiar participants of BG/JV	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Familiar participants of non-TL/MN dan BG/JV	93,94	4,54	1,52	-
Unfamiliar verbal repertoire participants	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Unknown participant, known recently as TL/MN	93,94	4,54	1,52	-
Formal act: Unknown participant, known recently as participant of BG/JV	93,94	1,52	1,52	1,52
Participants of TL/MN	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Participants of BG/JV	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Several participants of TL/MN and another participant of BG/JV	96,96	1,52	1,52	-
Participants are known as TL/MN, some as BG/JV, and another language speaker.	93,94	4,54	1,52	-

In bilingual societies even multilingual ones, such as in Southeast Sulawesi Province, it is difficult for people to avoid falling into the use of regional languages and mixed languages, even in official situations. How IND is used in official situations in multiethnic interactions can be seen in Table (5). The table shows that the frequency of IND usage is very high. This means that IND serves as the main language of instruction in interethnic interactions in official activities. The dominant regional language used by respondents was BL. It indicates that Balinese also have a role in formal or official situations, especially in traditional activities carried out in villages or a meeting. In an official situation interaction, it

is sometimes difficult to separate between the personal and social status of familiar participants if the conversation is interpersonal so they are not aware of using mixed language, BL and IND.

Participants tend to adjust their language to match the expected level of formality in formal interactions. The absence of a shift to regional languages after the interlocutor's identity is revealed indicates that the status of the interaction carries more weight than ethnic solidarity in determining language choice. The use of IND reflects a tendency to conform to linguistic norms perceived as more prestigious in formal contexts.

In groups with diverse linguistic backgrounds (BT/BM, BG/JV, and others), the use of IND remains high (93.94%), but the use of regional languages increases slightly (4.54%). This situation suggests a minor shift in language accommodation toward more heterogeneous groups. When regional language speakers are present in a group, some participants may attempt slight language adjustments to demonstrate inclusivity.

IND remains the primary lingua franca in formal meetings, even within groups where most members have regional language backgrounds. This limited convergence may be due to the prestige associated with IND in formal situations, which discourages a shift to regional languages. When a person's linguistic repertoire is unknown, participants continue to choose IND in 96.96% of cases. After the linguistic identity of the interlocutor is identified, there is no significant change in language use.

4.1.2 Language Choice in the Working Domain

Work can also be seen as an activity that connects people with others. One of the primary means of establishing and maintaining human relationships is language. The use of language in the workplace influences the cultural atmosphere, which, directly or indirectly, shapes a person's choice and use of specific language variations. This cultural atmosphere is also evident among Balinese transmigrants in their professional environments, particularly in traditional occupations such as farming. Upon their initial arrival, all adult Balinese transmigrants worked as farmers in the fields. However, over time, their professions have diversified. Today, Balinese migrants hold various occupations, including teachers, lecturers, office employees, police officers, traders, and livestock breeders. Nevertheless, many still own farmland and engage in farming or gardening as a secondary occupation. Due to these occupational ties, the linguistic varieties they use also vary. Balinese is predominantly spoken by farmers, especially those working in rice fields. Agricultural terms such as *nampadin* ('clearing grass in the rice fields'), *mamule* ('planting'), and *mecae* ('cleaning manure in the wet rice fields') remain the same as those used in Bali Province. These linguistic elements remain deeply embedded in their daily lives.

In Southeast Sulawesi, Balinese transmigrants primarily work as paddy farmers, gardeners/planters, and ranchers. In their daily interactions, they generally use both Balinese and Indonesian. A mix of Balinese and Indonesian (BL+IND) is particularly common in plantation product transactions with other speech communities.

For example, in interethnic speech events related to land clearing between Balinese transmigrants and participants from other ethnic groups, Indonesian is the dominant language, used in 89–94% of cases.

In contrast, Balinese accounts for less than 5%, while other ethnic languages make up only 1.52%. These speech acts are presented in Table (6).

Table 6: Language Choice in Interethnic Speech Events During Land Clearing

Speech Context	IND %	BL %	BL+IND %	BG %	BL+TL %	JV %
Participants TL/MN; setting and scene: meeting for planning	89,40	4,54	4,54	-	1,52	-
Participants TL/MN; setting and scene: meeting for land clearing	92,42	4,54	1,52	-	1,52	-
Participants TL/MN; setting and scene: break/rest	92,42	4,54	1,52	-	1,52	-
Participants BG/JV; setting and scene: meeting for planning	93,93	1,52	3,03	1,52	-	-
Participants BG/JV; setting and scene: meeting for land clearing	92,42	1,52	3,02	1,52	-	1,52
Participants BG/JV; setting and scene: break/rest	93,93	1,52	3,03	1,52	-	-

IND remains dominant (89.40%–93.93%), though there is some use of regional languages (1.52%–4.54%). In land-clearing planning, participants tend to be more flexible with language, especially if they share the same regional linguistic background. A phenomenon of partial convergence occurs, where BT/BM speakers use more BL and mixed BL+IND (4.54%) compared to BG/JV speakers (1.52%–3.03%). However, IND remains the dominant language, indicating that regional languages are only used in a limited scope and do not serve as the primary means of communication.

The use of IND increases during the land-clearing process (92.42%) compared to the planning stage, suggesting that more formal situations encourage less use of regional languages. The use of BL+IND decreases (1.52% for TL/MN speakers; 3.02% for BG/JV speakers). Speakers prefer IND to emphasize a formal and professional impression, reducing the use of regional languages, which may be perceived as less appropriate in official events.

During break times, IND remains dominant (92.42%–93.93%), but the use of regional languages slightly increases again. This minor shift indicates that informal situations allow for greater language flexibility, although IND continues to prevail. Partial convergence toward regional languages reappears but remains minimal. While IND remains the dominant language, regional languages are used more frequently in relaxed settings, suggesting that language use in interactions is more influenced by formality than by ethnic background.

In interethnic socio-economic interactions, particularly in transaction activities related to selling crops—both agricultural and plantation products—the choice of Indonesian (IND) appears to dominate. This is followed by the use of Balinese (BL) and a mix of Balinese and Indonesian (BL+IND). Socio-economic interaction in this context refers to social interactions within the work domain that involve economic transactions, such as buying, selling, and bargaining, especially in agriculture and plantations, which serve as the primary sources of livelihood for transmigrants.

The respondents' language choice in socio-economic activities was predominantly Indonesian (IND), followed by a mix of Balinese and Indonesian (BL+IND), as well as Buginese (BG), Moronene (MN),

and a mix of Balinese and Tolakinese (BL+TL). The high preference for IND occurs when respondents interact with speakers from other linguistic communities.

When communicating with speakers of BG, Javanese (JV), TL, or MN, 3.02% of respondents tend to use BL+IND. However, during buying and selling transactions with BG or JV speakers, 4.54% of respondents accommodate by using the language of their speech partners. This linguistic adjustment is influenced by the desire to foster mutual intelligibility and build trust between interlocutors. The following table presents the language choices in socio-economic activities.

Table 7: Language choice of socioeconomic activities

Speech Context	IND %	BL %	BL+TL %	BL+IND %	MN %	BG %
Participants TL/MN; setting and scene: break/rest harvest in a field	92,42	1,52	1,52	3,02	1,52	-
Participants TL/MN; setting and scene: buy and sell crop	93,94	1,52	1,52	-	1,52	-
Participants BG/JV; setting and scene: break/rest harvest in a field	93,94	1,52	-	3,02	-	1,52
Participants BG/JV; setting and scene: selling crops	93,94	1,52	-	4,52	-	1,52

IND is the primary choice for intergroup communication, indicating convergence in social and economic interactions. In the context of selling crops, IND is more dominant (93.94%) than during break times, suggesting that economic activities require a more universal and inclusive language. In economic interactions, speakers strive to adapt to a broader market by using IND as a lingua franca. In informal interactions, there is still some space for regional languages, but their use remains limited, indicating that IND also functions in cross-group interpersonal interactions.

Regional languages (BL, BG, BL+IND) are slightly more frequently used during harvest breaks compared to selling crops. The use of BB+BI increases among BG/JV speakers when selling crops (4.52%), which is higher than during break times (3.02%). In informal settings, such as harvest or plantation breaks, regional languages continue to be used in small amounts as a means of maintaining ethnolinguistic identity. In an economic context, BG/JV speakers use more BL+IND (4.52%) compared to break times (3.02%), possibly indicating a desire to maintain their identity within local business interactions.

Although IND dominates, there are still efforts at divergence through the use of regional languages in specific contexts, particularly in internal community interactions. In economic activities, some groups continue to use regional languages as a means of negotiating identity, but only to a limited extent to ensure interaction with other groups remains possible.

IND, as the primary communication tool in economic interactions, is widely used to facilitate transactions and intergroup communication. Communication efficiency is the main factor influencing language choice in buying and selling transactions. Regional languages still appear as symbols of identity in informal situations, even though they are maintained in small proportions. The BG/JV community is

more likely to retain their regional language in economic interactions compared to the TL/MN community.

The dominance of IND reflects changes in socio-linguistic dynamics, with bilingualism becoming increasingly prominent in the economic domain, indicating shifts in communication patterns within the broader social environment. Ethnolinguistic identity persists, but in a more situational manner, particularly in informal interactions.

The verbal repertoire in socio-economic activities has a specific form in the context of trade. It is closely related to the exchange of goods or services, particularly in price negotiations. In this speech act, the majority of respondents (96.96%) chose to use IND. This choice is influenced by linguistic plurality and the ease of interaction. Additionally, IND is a language that is easy to understand and is mastered by all participants in transactions. Meanwhile, the use of Balinese (BL) or a mix of Balinese and Indonesian (BL+IND) occurs when buyers and sellers are familiar with or already know each other. The results of this language choice in socio-economic speech acts can be seen in Table (8).

Table 8: Speech Acts of the Speech Community in Socio-Economic Interactions

Speech Context	IND %	BL %	BL+IND %
Participant: trader of TL/MN	96.96	1,52	1,52
Participant: trader of BG/JV	96.96	1,52	1,52
Participant: unknown trader repertoire	96.96	1,52	1,52

IND is used almost exclusively in interactions with shop owners, regardless of whether they belong to the TL/MN or BG/JV groups. The minimal use of local languages indicates a strong convergence toward BI in the domain of trade. This linguistic convergence reflects an effort to facilitate communication and enhance transaction efficiency.

In the economic context, IND functions as a lingua franca that is understood by all parties, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings in trade. Since shops are open transaction spaces for multiple communities, using IND becomes a more efficient communication strategy. The convergence toward IND suggests that economic interactions prioritize clear and practical communication over maintaining ethnic identity through local languages. The role of BI as the primary language of transactions has displaced local languages in informal economic settings such as shop trade.

Although shops can serve as intra-ethnic social interaction spaces, language choice does not show significant differences based on the shop owner's identity. Local languages are rarely used as a tool for social differentiation in these interactions. Shop owners and customers recognize that using IND enhances communication convenience for customers from various backgrounds. If local languages are used, it is in very limited instances, possibly in the form of greetings or specific expressions to create a more personal connection.

IND remains dominant even when the shop owner's linguistic background is unknown. In situations of uncertainty, speakers tend to choose the safest and most widely accepted language—IND. The automatic convergence toward IND in these situations highlights its role as the default language in the

economic domain. Linguistic uncertainty does not lead to exploration of local languages; rather, it reinforces the use of IND.

4.2 Influential Factors in the Language Choice of Balinese

Language choice can be influenced by various factors. Based on observations and interviews, there is a noticeable tendency among the Balinese ethnic group to adjust their language use and selection to facilitate communication. This adjustment supports their work efficiency and mobility, even if it requires adapting to the language and speaking style of other ethnic groups. The following are some key factors underlying these language choices

4.2.1 Improving communication effectiveness

To make communication more effective, a Balinese speaker, for example, strives to accommodate the languages of the surrounding ethnic groups. For instance, if the local area or village is predominantly Tolaki-speaking, they will attempt to adapt by learning Tolaki, even if, in practice, they can only understand it passively or use Indonesian in the specific variety spoken in the region. This language choice is driven solely by the desire to enhance communication effectiveness with other ethnic groups.

4.2.2 Creating interethnic familiarity

This can be observed when Balinese speakers accommodate the languages of the surrounding ethnic groups. They make an effort to actively participate in various conversational situations, whether in formal gatherings or informal exchanges such as small talk or gossip. As a result, Balinese speakers can understand several other local languages, including Javanese, Tolaki, Buginese, Sundanese, and Moronene, especially in everyday interactions. With this understanding, they can engage in conversations using these languages to the best of their ability. Their limited proficiency in these languages is generally understood by other ethnic groups and is sometimes perceived as humorous. Similarly, some speakers of other ethnic groups, even if they do not speak Balinese fluently, make an effort to accommodate by using a few Balinese words. At the very least, they can understand or passively comprehend the language.

4.2.3 Building good working relationships

Good working relationships among transmigrants are built through efforts to establish trust with their conversation partners. A conversation partner is more likely to trust someone who accommodates their language. Therefore, many Balinese farmers, as well as farmers from other ethnic groups, make an effort to modify their speech when interacting with one another. This is particularly evident in their use of the local variety of Indonesian or a mix of Indonesian with local languages, as seen in discussions related to socio-economic activities in the workplace, as mentioned above.

4.2.4 Respecting differences and diversity

Mutual respect and appreciation are key factors in fostering positive interethnic interactions. The Balinese ethnic group recognizes their status as transmigrants living alongside the Tolaki and other migrant ethnic groups. Acknowledging this, they tend to make efforts to adapt to and understand the languages of other ethnic groups. When using Indonesian, the Balinese are more likely to adopt the

Tolaki accent, as the Tolaki are the indigenous ethnic group in the area. However, other ethnic groups do not pressure the Balinese to learn their culture or language.

It is important to note that these factors are interconnected and can be complex. Each individual has a unique background and circumstances, meaning their language choice is often influenced by a combination of these factors.

5. Discussion

Based on the research findings, several key points can be highlighted regarding language choice in interethnic interactions. Language choice in these interactions tends to favor a language that facilitates all community activities. Indonesian, as both the national language and a lingua franca, serves as a unifying medium. Its dominance arises from the need to bridge communication between speakers of different ethnic languages. As a result, no single ethnic language holds a more dominant position than the others.

Based on observations, the Balinese ethnic group in Southeast Sulawesi adopts a local variety of Indonesian. One of its distinctive features is the use of particles such as *mi*, *ji*, *to*, *kah*, and *ki*. Every regional variety of Indonesian across different parts of the country has unique characteristics (dialects), which can serve as markers of a speaker's place of origin. The Indonesian spoken by the Balinese ethnic group in the transmigrant areas of Southeast Sulawesi differs from the Indonesian used by Balinese transmigrants in other provinces or their place of origin.

Although the Balinese ethnic group can speak more than one language, in certain situations, they must choose to use a single language (Clyne, 1998; Dweik & Qawar, 2015). This aligns with Appel and Muysken's (1987) view that bilingual or multilingual individuals, in specific contexts, must select one of the languages they know. This research shows that when interacting with friends from different ethnic backgrounds, the Balinese ethnic group generally switches to Indonesian. This choice reflects respect for new acquaintances and an effort to include them in the interaction.

This situation aligns with the view of Landry and Allard (in Mitchell 2010) that one of the variables influencing language choice is the speaker's relationship in terms of solidarity and non-solidarity. Language shift occurs because the topic of conversation is highly general and reflects a sense of camaraderie toward newly arrived guests. Based on these reasons, it is evident that the respondents' language choice is influenced by individual attitudes and their perceptions of others. Moreover, the data also show that while Balinese transmigrants strive to maintain the use of the Balinese language, there is also a group that tends to be more accommodative. In this case, linguistic accommodation occurs, with Balinese speakers opting for a neutral language—Indonesian.

The language use of Balinese transmigrants in Southeast Sulawesi demonstrates patterns of communication accommodation through convergence and divergence (Coupland & Giles 1988; Giles et al. 1991). Convergence is evident in their tendency to use Indonesian (IND) as a lingua franca in interethnic interactions, both in social and economic domains. This aims to enhance communication effectiveness, foster familiarity, and build good working relationships with other communities. Compared to the study by Rousan & Ibrir (2018) in Algeria, where Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is used only in

formal contexts, it becomes clear that MSA lacks strong social accommodation power, unlike IND in Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. Thus, in Southeast Sulawesi, IND serves as the primary tool for social integration, whereas in Algeria, no single language fully functions as a lingua franca accepted by all groups, leading to stronger linguistic divergence between communities.

Accommodation to Indonesian occurs in interactions with all ethnic groups. However, the situation differs when some respondents interact with Javanese speakers. Balinese speakers are more likely to switch to Javanese, even if they are not fluent. This is because the Balinese ethnic group perceives Javanese as relatively easy to learn and closely related to Balinese. Balinese speakers who accommodate Javanese, especially in informal situations, can create a more familiar and comfortable atmosphere compared to using Indonesian, which tends to feel more formal and rigid.

From various observed interaction events, supported by questionnaire data and interview results from informants in the field, it is evident that in interlanguage accommodation, Balinese speakers tend to accommodate Indonesian. In contrast, their tendency to accommodate Javanese, Tolaki, Moronene, or Bugis is lower. This is due to the region's diversity, which results in frequent interactions with various ethnic groups. The frequency of these interactions is relatively equal, and Balinese speakers generally have only a limited understanding of other ethnic languages. However, this low level of proficiency does not hinder language accommodation. On the contrary, their passive understanding of several ethnic languages fosters positive accommodation without distinguishing between one ethnic group and another. This contrasts with several studies on the use of the Balinese language in transmigration areas in Lampung (Malini 2011; Malini & Indrawati 2014; Malini & Dhanawaty 2015; Yadnya et al. 2010; Dhanawaty 2012), which found that Balinese speakers were able to accommodate other ethnic languages, such as Javanese and Lampungese, fluently.

The ability of the Balinese ethnic group in the transmigration areas of Southeast Sulawesi to accommodate other languages, even if not fluently, indicates that they are an ethnic group open to other cultures. Consequently, instances of code-switching and code-mixing by Balinese speakers are frequently observed in communication (Fasold 1984). These situations suggest that the Balinese have the motivation to learn and use one or two languages in addition to their mother tongue, even if only passively and not fluently (Coulmas 1998; Tubbs & Moss 2000).

The lack of proficiency among the Balinese in other ethnic languages in Southeast Sulawesi is due to two factors. The first is the region's highly heterogeneous linguistic landscape, as observed in Mekar Jaya Village and Anugrah Village. These villages are home to multiple ethnic groups, including the Bugis, Javanese, Sundanese, Moronene, and Sasak. This linguistic diversity encourages the community to use a language that is easily understood by all ethnic groups—Indonesian. As no single ethnic group dominates the area, Indonesian serves as the primary means of communication.

Another factor influencing language choice is linguistic proximity. For instance, the Balinese tend to have a better command of Javanese than other ethnic languages due to the similarities in vocabulary between the two languages. Additionally, in regions with a relatively homogeneous ethnic composition, such as Jati Bali Village and Lalonggapu, where the majority of the population is Balinese, Balinese

remains the predominant language. However, other ethnic languages, such as Tolaki, are occasionally heard and used, particularly in government offices, albeit not fluently.

The language choices made by the Balinese in transmigration areas serve specific purposes (Coulmas 1998). Their primary motivation for language selection is to facilitate work and create comfortable interactions with other ethnic groups. In this context, language choice functions as a means of managing social distance, fostering closeness, and ensuring smooth communication with other ethnicities. Unlike the perspectives of Dumanig et al. (2013) and Fasya and Sari (2021), who argue that ethnic groups focus on a single factor in their language selection, the Balinese interact with other ethnic groups without the intention of marking ethnic identity or asserting dominance. Their decision to learn specific languages is driven by practicality and the benefits these languages provide for ensuring a safe and comfortable existence in transmigration areas.

6. Conclusion

The Balinese transmigration area in Southeast Sulawesi is a multicultural and multilingual region. Therefore, in interethnic interactions, particularly in domains of familiarity and work (such as agriculture), the dominant language chosen is Indonesian (IND), specifically the local dialect. The use of IND in various contexts, where the percentage of IND usage reaches very high levels (often approaching or reaching 100%), especially when the identity of the interlocutor is unknown or when the interaction takes place in a formal situation.

There is a strong pattern of language convergence, where speakers tend to adopt IND as a neutral language to minimize misunderstandings and bridge ethnolinguistic differences. Although there are moments of regional language use (such as Balinese (BL) or a mix of BL and IND), this occurs in a limited and situational manner.

The Balinese ethnic community in the transmigration area can understand several ethnic languages, albeit passively, enabling them to engage in various interactive activities with different ethnic groups. They effectively manage this diverse linguistic situation, helping to mitigate and control potential social, cultural, and situational challenges. In the context of interethnic interactions, especially those involving economic and social activities, the language accommodation strategies used reflect efforts to foster familiarity and build trust, emphasizing the importance of inclusive and effective communication.

In relation to the function of interaction, language choice, particularly the local variant of IND, tends to focus on managing social distance by balancing closeness and intimacy in communication with other ethnic groups. The key reasons behind the BL choices include enhancing communication effectiveness, fostering interethnic familiarity, building strong working relationships, and demonstrating appreciation for differences and diversity.

There is still much to explore in research on multiethnic and multilingual situations like this. Code-switching and code-mixing in contexts involving more than two languages are particularly intriguing areas of study. Various forms of linguistic adaptation warrant investigation, both in relation to local languages and the languages of migrant communities. The characteristics of Balinese language use in

Southeast Sulawesi are also interesting when compared to those of the Balinese in their region of origin. Topics related to multiethnic and multilingual communities remain highly relevant and continue to evolve, making them compelling subjects for further exploration.

اختيار اللغة في التفاعل بين الأعراق: تحليل سوسيو لغوي للمهاجرين بالي في سولاويزي الجنوبية، إندونيسيا

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قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية العلوم الثقافية، جامعة أديانا، دنباسار، إندونيسيا

الملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى وصف خيارات اللغة واستكشافها لدى المهاجرين الباليين والعوامل التي تؤثر في اختيارهم للغة معينة في التفاعلات بين الأعراق في مناطق الترانسمجریشن في مقاطعة سولاويسي تنغارا، ولتحقيق أهداف البحث، اخترنا عينة مكونة من 66 مشاركاً من أربعة قرى للمهاجرين الباليين، مع مراعاة الفئات العمرية والجنس والخلفيات التعليمية المختلفة، واستخدمت الدراسة منهجية المسح من خلال استبانة سوسيو لغوي، والمقابلات، والملاحظة بالمشاركة لجمع البيانات، وأظهرت النتائج أن المهاجرين الباليين في مناطق الترانسمجریشن يفضلون استخدام اللغة الإندونيسية بلهجتها المحلية المميزة عند التفاعل مع الأعراق الأخرى، حيث تتجه اللغة الإندونيسية المستخدمة نحو اللهجات التولاكية والبوقية. وهذا يعني أن الباليين يفضلون لغة محايدة، وهي الإندونيسية، لاستيعاب جميع المجموعات العرقية التي يتفاعلون معها. ويتجلى هذا الموقف المحايد أيضاً في معرفتهم) وإن كانت سلبية بلغات الأقليات العرقية المحيطة بهم، وتعمل اللغة الإندونيسية (BI) كلغة تواصل مشتركة رئيسية، حيث تُستخدم بشكل واسع في التواصل بين الأعراق لتعزيز فعالية التواصل، وبناء العلاقات الاجتماعية، وتجنب النزاعات، وتظهر أقوى حالات التقارب اللغوي نحو اللغة الإندونيسية في مجالات العمل والاقتصاد، وبخاصة في المعاملات والتفاعلات الاجتماعية خارج المجتمع البالي نفسه، ومع ذلك؛ ثمة حالات من التباعد اللغوي في مواقف معينة، حيث يتم الحفاظ على استخدام اللغة البالية في التواصل الداخلي بين أفراد العرق نفسه، لا سيما في مجالات العلاقات الوثيقة والقطاع الزراعي، كوسيلة للحفاظ على الهوية الثقافية، وتشمل العوامل التي تؤثر على اختيار اللغة: طبيعة الموقف التواصلية (رسمي مقابل غير رسمي)، والعلاقات الاجتماعية، والوضع الاجتماعي للمشاركين، والاحتياجات البراغماتية، إذ يميل المهاجرون الباليون إلى التكيف مع اللغة السائدة بمرور الوقت، وتُظهر هذه النتائج أنه في المجتمعات متعددة الأعراق، فإن اللغات التي تتمتع بوضع رسمي ونطاق استخدام واسع تكون أكثر عرضة لأن تصبح أداة للتقارب، في حين تظل اللغات العرقية في نطاق محدود كرمز للهوية الاجتماعية والثقافية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة البالية، اختيار اللغة، سولاويسي تنغارا، الترانسمجریشن، التفاعل بين الأعراق.

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