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Language Variation in Minang Colloquial Language Spoken in Kabun Region: Sociolinguistic study on Millennial Citizens

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A B S T R A C T

Despite the endless discussion on standard and non-standard language, Minangkabau and its dialect have less attention from scholars to study. This paper, therefore, aims to elaborate and compare the variation of Minang colloquial language and Sijunjung dialect spoken in Kabun region. Sociolinguistic theory on language variation and contact were employed to reveal such differences. In terms of data collection, we make use of Buffalo Trophy" as the data source and transcribe some potential words that fit the criteria. Afterward, we ask Sijunjung speakers to respond to those words. This process is recorded in a way to get sufficient interpretation of the possible variation among speakers. This study revealed that Minang and Sijunjung have several prominent dissimilarities in terms of phonological aspects. The changes occur from alveolar /r/ to voiced velar fricative /gh/, from /r/-/w/, from /a/-/o/, and /a/- /aw/. The findings confirmed that Minang as a standard language has phonological variations in Sijunjung dialect. Some of them may carry out new meanings, but the rest may not.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since decades, Minangkabau has been deemed as the standard language of 'baso' Minang. Other variations surrounding Minang lands are considered non-standard, including Sijunjung variation. Sijunjung is often called as a dialect of standard Minang. The present paper does not attempt to discuss standard and non-standard language of Minang but to investigate dialect variation in

Minangkabau. Here the word **Minangkabau** is used interchangeably with **Minang**. It is worth noting that variation can occur on a lexical, syntactic, or phonological level. The current research focuses on the latter in the sense that sound change has greater potential to cause deviation from a standard variety. Auer & Schmidt (2010) that "sound material is never passed on exactly as it is received, so ultimately a much stronger differentiation can arise". To that point, the phonological

variation would serve as the central focus of this study.

In Short, this paper emphasizes the discussion upon three main topics; phonological divergence between the Sijunjung dialect and standard Minangkabau, distinctive phonological differences of the Sijunjung dialect compared to other dialects of Minangkabau. Afterward, we explicate such phenomena by employing the sociolinguistic approach to language contact and variation theory.

Minangkabau is an Austronesian language spoken by approximately 6 million speakers (Ethnologue, while Gordon (2005) in Crouch said 7 million). The Minangkabau vernacular, *Bahasa Minangkabau* ('Minangkabau language'), is considered to be an old dialect of Malay (Moussay 1981 as cited by Suryadi, 2014). Based on Ethnologue (2015), there are about 12 dialects spoken of Minangkabau; Agam, Aneuk Jamee (Jamee), Batu Sangkar-Pariangan, Kerinci-Minangkabau, Orang Mamak, Payakumbuh, Pancuang Soal (Muko-Muko), Penghulu, Si Junjung (officially known as Sijunjung), Singkarak, and Tanah, Ulu.



Fig 1: Sijunjung Map

(Source: <https://doniaries.wordpress.com>)

It is also interesting to note that Minangkabau is spoken through Indonesia due to *marantau* tradition (Drakkart 1999 in Crouch 2009). Ethnologue displays about 500 of them reside in Jakarta. Sijunjung, on the one hand, is the region in West Sumatra where the people speak a different dialect from other residents. Though its geographical factor, which is

surrounded by numerous varieties of dialects, Sijunjung has a unique phonological characteristic. Hence, inhabitants of this region can be identified from the sound they produce. In the following chapter, we are going to explore this distinct feature.

The Minangkabau were first studied by van der Toorn (1899, cited in Crouch 2009) in collecting folktales, Minang word lists, and dictionary, William (1961) in phonology and morphology, Moussay (1998) in Minangkabau grammar. Besides, the study of Minangkabau and its dialect was initiated by Kähler (1965) who compared the dialect of Tapa (T.), Simalur (Si.), and liken (L.) spoken in Agam, Payakumbuh, Tanah Datar, Solok, and Pariaman region. In his finding, it is stated that the changes occur in a single phoneme such as Lenggol (Si) > Linggol (L), and two vowels in the final position as in alimao (Si) > alimo (L) (Kähler, 1965: 501).

Furthermore, Yandra & Refnaldi (2013) did a comparative study on Minangkabau and Labuah dialect. They found some phonological and lexical dissimilarities in Minang and Labuah dialects. Correspondingly, they also found some words that are different in each dialect but have the same meaning. The study of the Minangkabau dialect is extended by the work of Yulis, Yufrizal, & Ardi (2013), who delineate some dead languages of Minangkabau in *Koto Padang-Pariaman* region. The respondents are divided into two groups; old and young. Interestingly, some Minangkabau languages are no longer comprehended either used by the young generation due to several reasons, including prestige. Based on the previous research, we try to draw our novelty of this present study in the phonological variation between *Baso* Minang and dialect Sijunjung. It is still worth doing since it can build the study of dialects in the Minang language and specifically meticulously identify phonological divergence as a distinct feature of the Sijunjung dialect.

II. METHODS

Regarding the characteristics of the data, this study is designed in terms of descriptive-qualitative, which later attempts to analyze words, phrases, sentences, and expressions from both informants and video (Miles & Huberman 1994). Besides, the standard Minang and Minangkabau dialects are distinguished following Crouch's (2009) definition that standard Minang is spoken in a formal situation or written in a newspaper or magazine, while colloquial is used in informal communication (Crouch, 2009: 10). This comparative analysis of Sijunjung dialect and colloquial Minangkabau is the pivotal tenet in the present study to shed light differences and uniqueness, be it a phonological aspect or morphological one.

The data collection process is as follows. The first is transcribing data from Minangkabau language from "Trophy Buffalo" retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGdhQx0GyP0>. Second is listing potential words that are suspected of having the variation extracted from the transcription. Thirdly, those collected data were then sent to Sijunjung speakers and had them make a recording. Then, the last step is data transcription.

The analysis encompasses data from Sijunjung Dialect spoken speakers from Kabun sub-village (*Jorong Kabun*). Administratively, the sub-village is a part of Sisawah village (*kenagarian Sisawah*), the lowest administrative government in West Sumatera Province, Indonesia. There are approximately 1000 speakers of Kabun-Sisawah sub-dialect of Sijunjung (Kabun Institute, 2013). The speakers are roughly 3.500 villagers in Sisawah village in 2010 (BPS, 2015). Sisawah belongs to Sumpur Kudus sub-district. The location can be seen from the map we have mentioned earlier. It shows Sumpur kudus sub-district (*Kec. Sumpur Kudus*), which is bounded by Muaro Sijunjung sub-district, Koto VII sub-district, as well as 50 Kota regency.

Furthermore, several IPA references such as Indonesian native phonetic inventory for Indonesia (as Adapted from Maddieson, I. (1984) by George Mason University), the phonetic chart from omnigot.com, and Arabic IPA for a specific phonetic transcription like /gh/. was also employed in analyzing the data.

III. RESULT

The study reveals some phonological, as well as the morphological difference of the understudied dialects. The sound /r/ in Minang, for instance, can change into sound /gh/ in Kabun dialect. Here is the result of our study.

Table 1: phonemic changing from /r/ to /gh/

Words	Meaning	Bufalo Tropy	Kabun Regency
<i>Dari</i>	From	[dari]	[dayi]
<i>Diri</i>	Self	[diri]	[diyi]
<i>Mancari</i>	Search	[mancari]	[mancayi]
<i>Caro</i>	Way	[caro]	[cayo]

Table 1 shows that there is a change from alveolar /r/ to voiced velar fricative /gh/. The change occurs when /r/ is in the middle position and preceded and followed by a vowel. The possible explanation is that for every /r/ in colloquial Minang language, which occurs in the middle position, before, and followed by a single vowel, it is changed into /gh/ in Kabun speaker. For example, Ronsi (2012) reveals the following case for the word '*lemari*' meaning 'cupboard', and '*perut*' meaning 'stomach'.

In addition, we presented the consecutive results of phonological differences found in those dialects; /r/ to /w/, /a/ to /o/, /a/ to /aw/, and /s/ to /h/.

Table 2: phonemic changing from /r/ to /w/

Words	Meaning	Bufalo Tropy	Kabun Regency
<i>Katurunan</i>	Descendent	[katurunan]	[katuwunan]
<i>Taruhan</i>	Bet	[taruhan]	[batawua]
<i>Taruiah</i>	Continue	[taruih]	[towi]
<i>Turuik</i>	Follow	[turuui?]	[tuwi?]

The table shows phonemic changing from alveolar /r/ to bilabial /w/. It occurs in the middle position. The change from [katurunan] into [katuwunan] is similar to the change from /r/ to /gh/ in table 1. It occurs when preceded and followed but a single vowel. Hence, the question remain whether or not the variation of the individual speaker in Kabun is also possible to be uttered as [katughunan] besides [katuwunan]. The rest of the words in table 2 are just identified in terms of changing from /r/ to /w/ regardless it follows or preceded the sound.

Table 3: phonemic changing from /a/ to /o/

Words	Meaning	Bufalo Tropy	Kabun Regency
<i>Alah</i>	Finish	[alah]	[ola]
<i>Baa</i>	How	[ba a]	[ba apo]
<i>Bajanji</i>	Promise	[bajanji]	[bajonji]
<i>Cameh</i>	Worry	[cameh]	[come]

The change from /a/ to /o/ occurs in initial position like from [alah] to [ola], in middle position like from [bajanji] to [bajonji], from [cameh] to [comeh], from [kabau] to [kobau], but not [kobou], etc. Besides, there is an additional /po/ prior to changing from /a/ to /o/ like in the changes from [manga] to [mangapo] and from [baa] to [baapo].

Table 4: phonemic changing from /a/ to /aw/

Words	Meaning	Bufalo Tropy	Kabun Regency
<i>Bana</i>	True	[bana]	[bonaw]
<i>Baraja</i>	Learn	[baraja]	[baajaw]
<i>manjua</i>	Sell	[manjuwa]	[manjuwaw]
<i>Subananya</i>	Actually	[subanajo]	[habonaw bonawjo]
<i>Takana</i>	Remember	[takana]	[takonaw]

The change from /a/ to /aw/ occurs in final position. The variation of /a/ changes to /aw/ when it places the final letter such as [bana], to [bonaw]. The sound of /a/ in Minang changes to /aw/ in Sijunjung dialect. Thus, such feature enriches the discrepancy of Vernacular Minang and Sijunjung dialect in phonology level.

Table 5: phonemic changing from /s/ to /h/

Words	Meaning	Bufalo Tropy	Kabun Regency
<i>Saketek</i>	a little	[sakete?]	[hanene?]
<i>Sakik</i>	Sick	[saki?]	[haki?]
<i>Salamo</i>	During	[salamo]	[halamo]
<i>Salamoko</i>	all this time	[salamoko]	[halamoko]
<i>salanjuiknyo</i>	Further	[salanjuy?no]	[halanjuy?no]
<i>Salasai</i>	Finish	[salasai]	[halosay]
<i>Sambie</i>	a little	[sambi:e]	[hambi:e]

Table 5 shows the change from /s/ to /h/ in which it occurs in the initial position. This variation only occurs in Kabun, and thus make it distinct from other vernacular Minang. For this reason, we count the change of sound /s/ in the initial position to /h/ as the distinct feature of Sijunjung dialect in Kabun region.

IV. DISCUSSION

As we stated in the background of this paper, we are going to deal with the following cases; phonological discrepancies of Sijunjung dialect and its standard Minangkabau, distinctive phonological difference of the Sijunjung dialect compared to other dialects of Minangkabau, and lastly the explication of such phenomena.

The changes from Colloquial Minangkabau to Sijunjung dialect spoken in Kabun can be categorized into three: /r/, /a/, and /s/ changes. The /r/ in middle changes to either /gh/ or /w/ whenever it is flanked by a single vowel as in Table 1. However, it will change to /Ow/ when it is followed by double vowels such as in the word /paruik/ to [pO^wiy?]. In addition, the /a/ may change to /o/ in initial or middle position (table 3) and /aw/ in final position (table 4). Consequently, the /s/ in initial position changes to /h/.

The last variation shows the distinct feature of Kabun dialect, where it does not occur in other areas either in villages Sumpur Kudus sub-regency or other regions. Moreover, the dialect is not specific to Kabun-Sisawah village but also the case in other regions both inside and outside Sijunjung dialect. Still, we need to find more literature and research to justify the proposition.

Since several scholars come with several terms to pick the notion of dialect, such as language variation (Appel & Muysken, 2005; Hinsken, Auer, and Kerswill, 2005), individual dissimilarity (Paul in Murray 2010), regional variant (Wieling, 2007), social and geographical of language variation (Trudgill, 2004), and individual speakers' repertoire (Murray, 2010), we count dialect as language variation spoken in a speech

community. The occurrence may be due to the existence of "standard language", geographical, or social. Furthermore, the idea of "lect(al)" also attributes such variation to gender.

Minangkabau as the standard language has several phonological variations in its regional dialect. In the case of Sijunjung, especially in Kabun, we find that the change from /s/ to /h/ as its distinctive feature, a clear discrepancy from other Minang colloquial. Consequently, the speakers from Kabun can be identified from the way they pronounce /s/, whether they will change the sound to /h/ or not. As we have mentioned, the variation in Kabun region presumably as the contribution of Minang as standard language and geographical location. In the final remark, we realize that, indeed, it needs further and more comprehensive research to support that claim. Yet, variation of individual speaker in /r/ to /gh/ or /w/ such as [katughunan] or [katuwunan] can be taken into a primary consideration for future research.

V. CONCLUSION

This study revealed that Sijunjung dialect differs from Minang language. The phonemic change occurs in several sounds of either vocal or consonant. For example, the sound /r/ in Minang changes into sound /gh/ or /w/ in Sijunjung dialect. The most interesting part to note is the evidence that the sound /s/ in Minang may be pronounced as /h/ by Sijunjung speakers. The difference is the only distinguishable feature of Sijunjung dialect compared to other regions in Minang islands. Dialect and language variation may lead to the awareness of language diversity among speakers. Besides, it may also help us identify which part of the group the speakers belong to.

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