

MAINTAINING LOCAL LANGUAGE SUSTAINABILITY IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNICATION ERA

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ABSTRACT

Globalization is identical with changes in all sociocultural aspects of human life, including languages. The use of local language as a medium of communication shifted by national language and English. Local language seems to be a rare item, as it is not easy to find parents teach local language to their children in the family. Attempts to maintain the local language sustainability never stop. One of the efforts is through writing. A number of writers in Bandung create their writings in Sundanese, although the readers are few. This study aims to reveal the motives of 8 writers produce writing in Sundanese and how their efforts to keep generating ideas for their writing. Based on the qualitative-phenomenology method used, this study reveals, the motives of the writers to produce works in Sundanese is the idealism as individuals born and raised in the Sundanese society. They feel they have a responsibility to maintain the existence of Sundanese in the community of native speakers. To keep writing on, they do not rely on personal experience as the idea. They also made an adaptation to the information technology by using social media to spread Sundanese language writings broadly.

Keywords: *globalization, Sundanese, writers, idealism, social media, preservation*

Sari

Globalisasi identik dengan perubahan dalam segala aspek kehidupan sosial budaya manusia. Bahasa termasuk di antaranya. Peran bahasa lokal sebagai media komunikasi tergeser penggunaannya oleh bahasa nasional dan bahasa Inggris yang menjadi dominan. Bahasa lokal seolah menjadi barang langka, karena jarang ditemui keluarga yang mengajarkan bahasa daerah kepada anak-anaknya. Upaya mempertahankan bahasa lokal pun tidak berhenti dilakukan. Salah satunya melalui tulisan. Sejumlah penulis di Kota Bandung masih menulis dalam bahasa Sunda, meski pembacanya sedikit. Studi ini bertujuan untuk mengungkapkan motif 8 penulis menghasilkan karya dalam bahasa Sunda dan bagaimana upaya mereka untuk tetap menghasilkan ide untuk tulisannya. Berdasarkan metode kualitatif-fenomenologi yang digunakan, penelitian ini mengungkapkan, motif para penulis bertahan menghasilkan karya dalam bahasa Sunda

adalah idealisme sebagai individu yang lahir dan besar di lingkungan masyarakat Sunda. Mereka merasa memiliki tanggung jawab untuk mempertahankan keberadaan bahasa Sunda dalam lingkungan masyarakat penutur aslinya. Untuk tetap menghasilkan tulisan, mereka tidak mengandalkan pengalaman pribadi sebagai idenya. Media sosial pun dimanfaatkan untuk menyebarkan tulisan berbahasa Sunda secara lebih luas.

Kata kunci: *globalisasi, bahasa Sunda, penulis, idealisme, media sosial, preservasi*

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Introduction

Globalization identical with changes in all aspects of human life, including in languages usage. Local language as a medium of communication in local community is no longer dominant, because it is displaced by Bahasa Indonesia and English. Local language becomes a rare item, since parents rarely teach local language to their children in the family. The local language print media is slowly fading because of the readership getting fewer. Change is a necessity and can not be avoided. The problem is how local communities are able to adapt to these changes, in order to survive the stream of global communication, which comes through a variety of Internet-based media. Attempts to maintain the local language sustainability never stops. One of them is done by writing. A number of writers in Bandung still writing in Sundanese, although the readers are few.

According to Larry L. Barker (1984: 22-23), one of language function is for transmitting information. As a means of information transmission, language has the ability of passing time, by connecting past, present, and future to enable the continuity of our culture and traditions. Without language, humans are cannot exchange information and may not present all objects. These function used by a number of writers in Bandung City to preserve bahasa Sunda, a language that is used by more than 27 million people Sundanese and is the second most common language users in Indonesia after Javanese. (Kompas Jawa Barat, 5 April 2008).

Preservation efforts continue to be done, because of concerns decreased number of Sundanese speakers, due to the influence of the development of information technology, which erodes the love of the local language. In Sundanese, 40% of West Java people

unable to speak Sundanese (Koran Tempo, 22/2/2008), because parents, especially young mothers do not want to use Sundanese in daily conversation, because they afraid to speaks rude Sundanese.

Decreasing number of Sundanese language speakers, also impact the interest of reading books and mass media with Sundanese languge, because many do not understand the meaning, so they choose to leave Sundanese publications. For local mass media, they local readers are old people who have long subscribed to Sundanese language magazines or newspapers. Nevertheless, there are writers who still consistently build communications with their readers about *kasundaan*. In this case, Sundanese language used as a communication tool, as well as a tool of developers and supporters of Sundanese culture itself (Pikiran Rakyat, 19 February 2005). Sundanese-language print media are still published in Bandung, among others Mangle, Galura and Sunda Midang. This paper will reveal the experience of Sundanese writers in preserving the Sundanese language through writing. What is their motive to produce works in Sundanese as an effort to maintain the Sundanese language as one of the communication media and how the writers of Sunda interpreted their efforts.

Methods

This research used qualitative method with phenomenology approach, because the main object of this research is the experience of Sundanese writers in using writing as a media of preservation of Sundanese culture. The subject of this study is Sundanese writers who works in pouring his mind through the paper about *kasundaan* that is disseminated through printed mass media (newspapers, magazines) and books, to be known and understood by the readers. With dissemination, the paper is expected to help preserve Sundanese culture as an asset of the nation's heritage.

According to Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong (2006: 4), qualitative methodology is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or oral words of the people and behavior observed. The Oxford Dictionary (Kuswarno, 1998: 1) defines phenomenology as a science of phenomena as dictinct from that of the nature of being, or an approach that concentrates on the study of conciousness and the objects of direct

experience. In other words, phenomenology studies the phenomena that appear before us and how they appear. According to Moleong (2006: 14), qualitative research with phenomenology approach is a study of consciousness from one's principal perspective through the disclosure of subjective experience or phenomenological experience related to an object. Qualitative research with phenomenological approach, as Polkinghorne said in Creswell (1998: 51-52),

”A phenomenological study describes the meaning of lived experience for several individuals about a concept or phenomenon. Phenomenologist explore the structure of consciousness in human experience”.

The subject of this research are Sundanese writers, who works in pouring their mind in the written on *kasundaan* disseminated through printed mass media and books. With dissemination, the paper is expected to help preserve Sundanese culture as an asset of the nation's heritage. To obtain relevant results, the subjects were chosen based on certain criteria, namely: a) Generally known as the Sundanese writers, both writing in Sundanese and writing about *kasundaan* in Bahasa Indonesia, b) Many of their works published and interested by the readers, c) Their written still exist and have new ideas to create writing.

One of the qualitative research with phenomenology characteristics is to observe and interact with informants to understand their language and their interpretation of the world they experience consciously. The observations are nonparticipant. This means researchers do not participate directly in observing the authors activities in create writing, because the timing process of writing cannot be predicted. The description of writing activities derived from the authors' statements when interviewed.

Creswell (1998: 122) explains that in phenomenology, the number of informants are three to ten people in single location or spread. However, Maxwell in Alwasilah (2008: 147) stated that in qualitative research, a number of subjects is not matter, as long as subjects could reflects the background, the individual and their activities. In this study, the informants are eight Sundanese writers. The selection of informants based on experience and ability of the Sundanese writers in preservation of culture through writing.

This study located in Bandung where the writers usually stayed. Location selection is base on the ease of researcher to communicate face-to-face with the informants, as recommended by Creswell (1998: 122),

“Because of the in-depth nature of extensive and multiple interviews with participants, it is convenient for the researcher to obtain people who are easily accessible... The access issue is limited to finding, individuals who have experienced the phenomenon and gaining their permission to be studied”

Results and Discussion

3.1. Sundanese Writers Motives

Motives are often interpreted as the condition of a person to achieve a satisfaction or achieve a goal, or it can also be said as a force that encourages someone to do something (Effendy, 2003: 51). In the study of phenomenology, Alfred Schutz mentions the existence of two types of motives, namely in order-to-motive, which refers to the future. This motive contains future-oriented intentions, plans, hopes, interests, and so on. The next motive is because-motive, which oriented in the past, because it relates to past experiences. This motive is needed to understand the meaning of Sundanese writers existence in preservation of Sundanese language. According to Max Weber (in Basrowi and Sukidin, 2004), understanding the motive and meaning of human action must be related to the goal. The action of an individual is a subjective action that refers to a purpose motive (in order to motive).

Motive of informants to do preservation of Sundanese culture based on idealism to love and proud being Sundanese. It emerged as an obligation to preserve Sundanese culture in a way of a writer.

"If i look to the money i got, it makes me don't want to write. But, there is an idealism as a Sundanese who does not want the language to die.. " (Aam Amilia)

"Despite the humor, I had an idealism in the first place to make people, parents, teenagers and children love *Basa Sunda*. "(Taufik Faturohman)

"If we abandon it because it can not bring anything materially, it is extinct already. So, it works for me to extend the functions of Sundanese especially in the form of writing " (Dadan Sutisna)

Reading habits influenced by the family and social environment also contribute to the desire of preserving Sundanese language. Their reading habit settles and raises the informants desire to express their feelings and thoughts about the things they see and understand in writing.

3.2. Meaning Construction of Writer as Sundanese Language Preservator

Meaning construction of Sundanese writers is based on the ability of informants to understand their existence in the world of authorship of the experience with his environment and his position in the environment. Each individual will interpret their involvement differently. Husserl (in Kuswarno, 2009: 45) explains that the meaning we give to an object is influenced by the empathy we have toward others because we tend to compare our experiences with the experiences of others. Therefore, an intersubjective factor also plays a major role in the formation of meaning.

According to Berger & Luckmann (1990, 28-35), daily life presents itself as a reality interpreted by humans and has a subjective meaning as a coherent world. The reality of everyday life presents itself to the individual as an intersubjective world, a world inhabited by others. Husserl (in Kuswarno, 2009: 41 & 45) explains that to create the meaning there must be cooperation between "I" and the world outside of "I", because even though Husserl believes that the reflection intuitive process occurs due to ego and superego factors, it does not reject the intersubjective factor at all which also plays a major role in the formation of meaning.

Based on Sundanese writers efforts in preserving Sundanese culture, the meaning of Sundanese writers existence as cultural preservers is divided into two types, namely the heir of Sundanese culture and the Sundanese cultural developer. As the heir of Sundanese culture, authors efforts of preservation tends only through one channel, namely writing. As a Sundanese cultural developers, the authors effort more than through writing in books or print media, such as through performances, movies, making software and through online media. Sundanese writers who classified as the inheritors of Sundanese culture are Us Tiarsa, Usep Romli, Aam Amilia and Aan Merdeka Permana. Selection of four informants as the inheritors of Sundanese culture is based on

their role as Sundanese writers who consistently preserving Sundanese culture through writing in books, newspapers and magazines, without accompanying any other efforts to create innovation.

Sundanese writes who classified as Sundanese cultural developers are Eddy D. Iskandar, Taufik Faturohman, Hawe Setiawan and Dadan Sutisna. The four person is young generation who seeks to preserve Sundanese culture through writing, as well as other efforts. Eddy D. Iskandar, for example, has written scenarios of some Kabayan movies, based on Sundanese culture, but packed in the film with national story content. He also designed some musical performances on the theme of kasundaan.

Taufik Faturohman innovates the preservation of Sundanese culture by combining magic and Sundanese tales, which usually packed in humor by using Sundanese language. Hawe Setiawan also innovated in Sundanese authorship, by attempting to elevate Sundanese culture to a more global, international realm, which he manifested by writing about kasundaan in English, which published on his blog site, <http://sundanese-corner.org>.

Dadan Sutisna innovates in Sundanese authorship by incorporating technological elements into the themes of his writing, to enrich existing themes. He poured the idea into a novel for children titled Rasiah Kodeu Biner (The Secret of Binary Codes) and some of his poems. With the capability in information technology, Dadan created a software of Sundanese digital dictionary in order to facilitate the search for appropriate words used in writing. The emergence of Sundanese writers self-role meaning, cannot separate from continuous interaction they live with themselves and the environment. In the position as a messenger, the Sundanese writers interpreted their existence based on the process of understanding activities they have done based on the accompanying motives.

Conclusion

The gait of Sundanese writers who consistently write about kasundaan in Sundanese, Bahasa Indonesia and English, is a form of idealism as the Sundanese person to

contribute to their culture to survive in the midst of the times development, which shifts the Sundanese culture with a more global culture. Idealism grew because of environmental influences and experiences passed by Sundanese writers. The message delivery of Sundanese writers as cultural preserver tailored to their habits and abilities to pour their thoughts and feelings into a form they feel appropriate and comfortable to live in. Through this idealism, the authors hoping that Sundanese culture, including language, will sustain in its various forms, even widely known and recognized as a cultural heritage that needs to be preserved.

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Biography

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