

DIGLOSSIA AND LANGUAGE ATTRITION AMONG *COL* LANGUAGE SPEAKERS IN LUBUKLINGGA AS EFL SPEAKERS

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ABSTRACT

The research aims at 1) identifying the variety choice among native Lubuklinggau as EFL speakers between H and L variety and 2) explaining the attrition as the effect of language attitude. This is a descriptive-qualitative research. The data were collected from questionnaire and interview derived from 17 participants who are the Col language speakers in Lubuklinggau as EFL speakers. The result shows that H variety is preferred to use in public speaking, talking to a superior and doing assignment. L variety is used in chatting online, and talking to someone close. By analyzing the data, it is also found out that the informants has positive attitude toward their H and L variety to use them in different settings. Therefore, the language attrition can be fainted to avoid the language shift or lost.

Keywords: *Col Language, Diglossia, Language Attitude*

INTRODUCTION

Most of Indonesians are multilingual because of the diversity that Indonesia has. They master and are able to speak some first languages, second languages even foreign language. Moreover, it can be stated that multilingual is also happen in a place with diversity of ethnics. One of the cities in Sumatera Indonesia is Lubuklinggau. It is located in strategic location because the passengers from Java Island will pass the city heading to the east part of Sumatra. Therefore this city also lived by many different ethnics such as native Lubuklinggau and other south Sumatra ethnics, Javanese, Sundanese, Chinese, Batak, etc. Thus, those ethnics communicate with several languages depend on the situation.

In a communication, it is important to use the language in certain appropriate situations to avoid misunderstanding and dispute. This phenomena may occur differently

depend on the norm and culture in a speech community. For example, in Javanese community in North Luwu regency, Javanese societies speak H and L variety when communicating in different situation (Djamereng, 2021). The result of the research shows that L are mostly used in all age groups daily. The <12 age group do not totally understand H variety but they still use L of Javanese when communicating with friends and family. It means L is used in a close relationship and probably informal situation.

Another case is also found in Lubuklinggau city in South Sumatera. According to Seli, Arma & Syafitri (2021), native Lubuklinggau as foreign language speakers dominantly speak 4 languages, namely, Lubuklinggau dialect, *Col* language, *Bahasa* Indonesia and English. Those languages are used in different domains. *Col* languages is used in family, neighborhood and friendship domains; Lubuklinggau dialect is used neighborhood and friendship in education; *Bahasa* Indonesia is used formal and public domain; and English is only used in education domain (Seli, Arma & Syafitri, 2021:63).

Those four languages have different level of prestige viewing by the High (H) and Low (L) level. People usually can use H and L in the same speech community, of course, in different domains. This phenomenon called diglossia. Diglossia is a part of linguistics, which was first introduced by Ferguson in 1959. Ferguson (1959) stated that diglossia is a "relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes, but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation" (as cited in Wardaugh, 2010, p. 85). It is divided into two varieties which one is viewed as high (H) variety and the other one as low (L) variety. H and L varieties are used for different functions. Ferguson (1959) also stated that, H variety usually used for a formal context such as in education and religion, while L variety is used for informal contacts such as in daily conversation and local usage. Research done by Seli, Arma and Syafitri (2021) show that the four languages used by Native Lubuklinggau as *Col* language speakers showing the different prestige dealing with H and L varieties. Moreover, some native Lubuklinggau also speaks English in education domain that make them foreign language speakers. However, there is no research reveal about H and L

varieties in Lubuklinggau spoken by Native Lubuklinggau. Another research by Seli (2018) only shows about the positive attitude toward *Col* language by Native Lubuklinggau but not sufficient enough revealing and distinguishing the languages into different prestige. As standard language is considered as H variety and non-standard is considered as L variety, a further research is required to find out whether diglossia in this community is sustainable. Therefore, this research is significant to do in describing more about the use of languages into appropriate situation

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research. This qualitative study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources (Baxter&Jack, 2010:543).

This research will use a set of questionnaires in identifying students' English variety choice. According to Bhat (n.d.), open-ended questions are an integral part of qualitative market research. Since there was also an open-ended question written in the questionnaire, this means that the research design that was measured for this research is also a qualitative approach.

The subject will be selected through purposive sampling with certain criteria. Purposive sampling resides on the proposition that information-rich samples are to be selected to have an in-depth view of the phenomena (Shaheen et al., 2019). The data will be collected from *Col* language speakers who live in Lubuklinggau city and use English as communication in certain settings, including undergraduate students, post-graduate students, teachers and lecturers. They use English in both written and/or oral communication.

FINDINGS

The summary of the socio demographic background of the informants in this research is presented in the following table.

Table 1
Informants Group based on the socio-demographic Background

Gender	Age	Affiliation	Duration of Studying English
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Male	Female	Youth	Adult	Education	Non-education	Graduated (4years above)	Students (1-4years)
4	13	9	8	15	2	11	6

The socio-demographic background table above presenting the summary of informants' demographic data which were classified into gender, age, affiliation and duration of studying English. Totally there are 17 informants in doing this qualitative research. The researchers classified them into 4 classification without considering the equal numbers between them because it is impossible to justify between the two groups in each classification. Since it is a qualitative research, the description of the data is more important than counting in the exact numbers.

Research questions 1: What language choice between H and L varieties by native Lubuklinggau as EFL speakers in different settings?

There are some settings identified when the informants speak the languages, they are 1) online chatting, 2) public speaking, 3) doing assignment, 4) communication with someone superior and 5) communicating with someone who is close to you.

Table 2
Online Chatting

Q 5 Which variety do you usually use when you are chatting online?

Demographic Background Groups		High (H)	Low (L)	Both
Gender	Male	1	2	1
	Female	0	5	8
Age	Youth	1	5	3
	Adult	0	2	6
Affiliation	Education	1	6	8
	Non-Education	0	1	1
Duration of Study	Graduated (>4 years)	0	4	8
	Students (1-4years)	1	3	1
Total		4	28	36

The table above presents the data of language varieties chosen by the informants when chatting online using social media. The data show that most of informants in

different demographic groups chose H language in chatting online. The numbers show there are 64 scenes of H used in chatting online.

Table 3
Public Speaking
Q4 Which variety do you usually use when you are giving a speech/presentation in public?

Demographic Background Groups		High (H)	Low (L)	Both
Gender	Male	3	1	0
	Female	13	0	0
Age	Youth	8	1	0
	Adult	8	0	0
Affiliation	Education	14	1	0
	Non-Education	0	1	1
Duration of Study	Graduated (>4 years)	12	0	0
	Students (1-4years)	4	1	0
Total		62	5	1

The table presents which varieties chosen by the informants in giving a speech/presentation in public. The data show that L language is more preferred to use in giving a speech or presentation in public. It is quite surprising since the common language in giving a speech or having a presentation in public is H language. There 56 scenes where the informants use in this purpose.

Table 4
Doing Assignment
Q6 Which variety do you usually use when you are doing your assignment?

Demographic Background Groups		High (H)	Low (L)	Both
Gender	Male	4	0	0
	Female	13	0	0
Age	Youth	9	0	0
	Adult	8	0	0
Affiliation	Education	15	0	0
	Non-Education	2	0	0
Duration of Study	Graduated (>4 years)	12	0	0
	Students (1-4years)	5	0	0
Total		53	0	0

The table presents the language varieties chosen by the informants in doing the written assignment. There are 53 scenes of using H language to write the assignment.

Table 5

Communication with Someone Superior

Q7 Which variety do you usually use when you are communicating with someone who is superior to you?

Demographic Background Groups		High (H)	Low (L)	Both
Gender	Male	2	0	2
	Female	11	2	0
Age	Youth	6	2	1
	Adult	7	0	1
Affiliation	Education	11	2	2
	Non-Education	2	0	0
Duration of Study	Graduated (>4 years)	10	1	1
	Students (1-4years)	3	1	1
Total		52	8	8

The table above presents that L language is the most chosen by the informants when speaking to someone superior. There are totally 57 scenes showing this case.

Table 6

Communication with Someone in a Close Relationship

Q8 Which variety do you usually use when you are communicating with someone who is close to you?

Demographic Background Groups		High (H)	Low (L)	Both
Gender	Male	1	3	0
	Female	1	11	1
Age	Youth	2	7	0
	Adult	0	7	1
Affiliation	Education	2	12	1
	Non-Education	0	2	0
Duration of Study	Graduated (>4 years)	1	10	1
	Students (1-4years)	0	4	1

Total	7	56	5
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The data presents in the table above displaying that L language is most chosen in communicating with someone in a close relationship. There are 56 situations in using L variety when speaking to someone in a close relationship.

Do their English mastery affect the attitude toward the languages they use?

To answer this question, the data were collected from the questionnaire as well by the interview. The result shows that their English mastery does not affect their language attitude toward L language negatively. They, indeed, are proud of mastering English but they do not underestimate their mother tongue, *Col* language as well as their second language. Therefore L is chosen to identify the regional and H is chosen to identify the life value as well nationalism.

DISCUSSION

Language varieties chosen by native Lubuklinggau as EFL speakers

As presented in the findings, the informants understand the different varieties to use in different settings. H is listed as Standard *Bahasa* and Standard English and L is listed as Indonesian Slang/English and regional dialects. Ferguson named the English language variety used in a formal situation and most written and formal purposes as high (H) variety, while the regional dialect that is used in daily conversations as low (L) variety.

The classification into demographic background was done to present the distinction of diglossia happen in different groups of society. The data were presented in findings and classified based on the demographic background of the informants.

- a. Research questions 1: What language choice between H and L varieties by native Lubuklinggau as EFL speakers in different settings?

Certain social factors such as interlocutor or who you are talking to, the social context where the conversation is taking place, the function and topic or what the speaker is talking, influence how people choose a language in many different kind of speech community (Holmes, 1992:23 ; Qawar & Dweik, 2015:4). It is clearly explained that the selected language in language choice depends on the speakers, context and also the topic. These things are known as domain, domain can be described as participants, setting and topic (Holmes, 1992:23). It also can be seen that language choice is caused by many

factors such as social status, gender, educational attainment, ethnicity, age, occupation, rural and urban origin, speakers, topic, place, media and formality of the situation. Human tend to use their first language (L1) because of their familiarity and fluency in that language, the more familiar and fluent people are in certain language, the more they used it, the choice of first language is also seen as a form of showing one's identity (David, 2008:219).

There are some settings identified when the informants speak the languages, they are 1) online chatting, 2) public speaking, 3) doing assignment, 4) communication with someone superior and 5) communicating with someone who is close to you. The description is presented by classifying it into socio-demographic backgrounds of the informant.

1). Gender Group

According to the gender group, female informants mostly speak H language more often than male in different settings such as public speaking, doing assignment, and communication with someone superior. Even in an online chatting, females attempt to use both variety L and H where online chatting is an informal situation. This is also happens when male informants speak to their superior, some of them choose to speak H the rest use both variety H and L. It means, male informants still consider to choose L to speak with their superior.

Public speaking is a condition when speakers speak in certain public areas such as speech in front of audience, giving lectures, promoting some items, etc. Therefore, the language which is used is a formal or standard language (High variety). However H is not always the only one language to use. Speakers can use both varieties to attract the attention of audience.

Speaking in public based on the gender group, both groups male and female had the same option to use the language. They both preferred H to speak in public because this is a formal situation. However, there is still a male informant chose L to speak in public area. This male informant used L when he talked to customers who have a distant relationship to him. Gopar stated that when he want to communicate with the other people, he read the condition such as like when he met his customer that want buy something in his small shop he usually used Indonesian language or Malay- Palembang dialect Lubuklinggau. In the other hand when he met his chines friend he used Indonesian

language and when he met his neighbors he used *cul* language.

The finding above is supported by Robin Lakoff (1975), that describes male language as stronger, more prestigious and more desirable. She argues that women are socialized into behaving like 'ladies' (linguistically and in other ways too) and that this in turn keeps them in their place because 'ladylike' precludes being 'powerful' in our culture. They are powerful as a good role model in the society. Finch (2003:137) also strengthen by his statement that "The overall pictures which emerges from Lakoff study is that women"s speech is generally inferior to men"s and reflect their sense of personal and social inferiority."

Someone superior means someone with a higher position in the society. It can be the employer/boss/manager/director/lecturers. Most informants preferred to use H to speak with someone superior. It is supported by then statement by a female and a male student bellow.

"It's because of when I speak to my lectures I have to be formal than when I communicate to friends."

"I use standard language when with lecturers."

Surprisingly there are 2 female informants chose L to this participant and none of males choose to speak using L. Some male informants use combination both between H and L.

2) Group of Age

In group of age, the data show that the youth choose L variety more often than adult informants. Newport (1990) suggests that "less is more" in this respect: one reason younger learners develop more native-like grammatical intuitions is that they are in a nonanalytic processing mode. This call for another qualification: younger learners are probably more successful in informal and naturalistic L2 learning contexts, and older learners in formal instructional settings. Younger learners may have are being less inhibited than older learners, and having weaker feelings of identity with people (other than close family or caregivers) who speak the same native language (Saville-Troike, 2012:89).

Adult informants preferred to use both varieties H and L when speaking in online chatting (with mostly L) and talking with someone superior (with mostly H), chose H in public speaking and doing assignment and chose L in communicate with someone closer. It is supported by some research findings. Adults have had more life experiences and are

more experienced speakers in general, they are able to use language with **more purpose and autonomy** than younger people. Adults tend to also exhibit **more morphological awareness** than younger generations, which allows them to use language with more nuance, and achieve different purposes more effectively.

Language choice is informed by the kind of participants in a communication situation, the topic, social distance, and location as well (Ansah, 2014, p. 37). The choice of language occurs based on the condition of the speaker and the interlocutor of the speaker in that environment.

3) Group of Affiliation

In this research there are two groups of affiliation, i.e., Education and non-education both Employees and Students. The number of informants seems bias since this is not equal between two groups. However, qualitatively it can be described whether or not there is a possible different.

In group of affiliation where the informants study and work, even though the classification is seems bias, the informants with non-education-setting preferred to use L and combination between both in an online chatting. The informants from education background, including students and employees preferred to use L and combination between both. Therefore, there's no difference of language choice in both group of affiliation.

According to the affiliation, most informants preferred to choose H and never mix both varieties in public speaking.

“H variety used for lectures and also office”

This female informant use H such as English and *Bahasa* Indonesia and also use it when she is at the office because she also works.

Doing assignment is the part of studying at school and at work. It is completed by doing it in a written language. Written language is more formal and standard than spoken language. Therefore, they all agree that in doing the assignment they preferred H language. It is supported by a statement from a female informant bellow

“I used H variety for education and my job...”

It shows that this informant prefer H when study at university and work as an English teacher. In doing the job, she uses H both in spoken and written form.

However, in non-education background, the informants do not choose H but they chose L and combination between both. It can be interpreted that the reason they never use H in public speaking is because the interlocutors were not superior since they do not work in education sector.

4) Group of Duration of Study

In group of duration of study, graduated informants preferred to use L and combination between both varieties in online chatting. On the other hand, students mostly chose L in an online chatting. It can be interpreted that graduated informants mostly speak to adults as their co-workers while students mostly chat with their friends and family. Thus, L variety becomes the most preferred by the informants from different demographic backgrounds in an online chatting. It happens because most of online chatting happens privately such as in whatsapp, Instagram, messenger, etc to someone they close to.

In group of duration of study, most of graduates tend to choose H to speak in public setting as well of students. There are only 1 student who chose to use L to speak in public.

a. Do their English mastery affect the attitude toward the languages they use?

To answer this question, the data were collected from the questionnaire as well by the interview. The result shows that their English mastery does not affect their language attitude toward L language negatively. They, indeed, are proud of mastering English but they do not underestimate their mother tongue, *Col* language, as presented as follow.

“I feel happy, proud and confidence when I using my English or *bahasa Indonesia* in public places because not every people understand our mother tongue or our regional dialects when we communicate, so using English or *bahasa Indonesia* is the right choice to speak with another people.”

This female informant explained that she feels proud in speaking English or *Bahasa Indonesia* as H variety even so not all people understand this. Therefore, she still

considers which variety to speak to a different interlocutor. Thus, L variety is chosen to identify the regional and H is chosen to identify the life value as well nationalism.

There are some factors that influence language choice happened intimacy, prestige, social bound, social accommodation, social interaction, politeness, respect, strengthen religious, superiority, and institutional force. Lists the following societal, in-group and individual factors as being among those factors central to language maintenance:

- a. Demographic factor (same area of living)- a large number of speakers from the same L1 live together (Myers-Scotton, 2006: 90).
- b. Educational factors (medium of teaching and institutional force)- eg the official provisions of L1 as a medium of teaching (Myers-Scotton, 2006: 90).
- c. Social factors and dimension (social dimension, social scale, status of language and functional scale) (Holmes, 1992: 11)

The informants use more than one even two languages in different settings. On the other side, using two or more varieties of the same language by some speakers may have great impacts on issues related to Diglossia and attrition. Diglossia refers to using two or more varieties of the same language by some speakers under different conditions. Language attrition refers to the loss of the first language elements seen in the inability to produce, perceive, or recognize particular rules, lexical items, or concepts distinctions due to influence or dominance of a second language. (Cailey Cron, 2016) Diglossia denotes a linguistic situation characterized by the side by side existence of spoken vernacular dialect(s) and a “very divergent, highly codified...superposed variety” (Ferguson in Bassiouney 2009, 10).

When the speakers are proud of their languages, language attrition will be fainter because the speakers will always use both H and L varieties without domination. Therefore, this becomes good news that the positive attitudes may support the language maintenance in Lubuklinggau.

CONCLUSION

In this research there are three research questions proposed. After conducting the research, there are conclusions as follow, 1) According to the socio-demographic

background, the informants choose H variety when speaking in front of public, doing a written assignment and speaking to superior. L variety is chosen to speak when chatting online and speaking with someone close; 2) Some informants from group of age (male) and affiliation (non-education) choose L even if they speak in public and to superior; 3) The language attitude is positive both to H and L variety. Therefore, the language attrition can be avoided to avoid language shift or loss.

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