

Minority Language Maintenance: A Case Study of Mandaran Language in Kampung Mandar Village, Banyuwangi

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Abstract—This study focuses on the maintenance of Mandaran as a minority language used by the Mandar community in Kampung Mandar Village, Banyuwangi. The primary objective of this research is to identify the factors influencing the sustainability of Mandaran as well as the strategies employed by the community to maintain its use amid the dominance of the majority language. This study employs a qualitative approach with data collection techniques including participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The findings reveal that the process of maintaining Mandaran involves several key aspects. First, language choice patterns across various domains of life, such as family, social environment, workplace, education, social media, and in customary practices and traditions. Second, the language attitudes of the Mandar ethnic community towards the use of Mandaran. Third, the degree of language maintenance determined by language choice, language attitudes, the role of rituals and traditions, and the intensity of language use. Fourth, determining factors affecting the maintenance of Mandaran include the language's social status, its speakers' distribution, and institutional support. Furthermore, the discussion addresses strategic themes such as language maintenance and revitalization, language attitudes about cultural identity, language choice dynamics within mixed families, the influence of language contact on language shift, the role of economic factors, and the contribution of rituals and traditions in sustaining the existence of Mandaran within a multilingual society.

Index Terms—language maintenance, minority language, Mandaran language, ritual, tradition

I. INTRODUCTION

The Mandar community in Kampung Mandar Village, Banyuwangi, is a minority ethnic group living alongside the Osing, Javanese, and Madurese ethnic groups. Although residing close to one another, social interaction between these ethnic groups tends to be limited. Since the Dutch colonial era, the Mandar people have settled in an area now known as Kampung Mandar Village. The majority of Mandar residents work as fishermen, so their social interactions while at sea almost exclusively occur among fellow Mandar. Interaction with other ethnic groups typically happens in trade contexts, such as selling fresh seafood catches or seafood-based culinary products at food stalls around the Kampung Mandar beach. Additionally, interethnic contact also takes place in governmental activities, cultural rituals such as Petik Laut—which has become part of the official festival of the Banyuwangi Regency Government—cultural tourism activities, as well as other activities outside the village, such as shopping and attending social events.

Kampung Mandar is located in Banyuwangi Subdistrict, Banyuwangi Regency, covering an area of approximately 91 hectares. This area is divided into two subvillages, Krajan and Krobokan. According to demographic data, Kampung Mandar Village is inhabited by 3,757 people, consisting of 1,844 males and 1,913 females (Central Bureau of Statistics, Banyuwangi Regency, 2017, p. 8). The majority of the population works as fishermen. Various factors play a role in maintaining the existence of a language. Giles (in Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015) identifies three main factors determining a language's sustainability: (1) social, economic, and historical status; (2) the geographic distribution and territorial concentration of its speakers; and (3) support from institutions or organizations. Based on initial observations, these three factors also serve as key determinants in the maintenance of Mandaran.

In Banyuwangi Regency, traditional leaders from the Mandar ethnic group are striving to revitalize their language and culture. The culture involved includes life-cycle rituals—such as pregnancy, birth, circumcision, marriage, and death—as well as enduring social traditions, one of which is the Petik Laut ceremony. This tradition has even been adopted by the Banyuwangi Regency Government as part of a cultural festival aimed at developing the local tourism sector (Sukatman, 2016). Against this backdrop of community conditions, culture, and language, this study aims to address the following questions: (1) What are the patterns of language use within the Mandar community? (2) What are the attitudes of the Mandar people toward the Mandaran language? (3) To what extent is the Mandaran language being maintained? and (4) What factors influence the level of language maintenance?

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The term social dialectology is indeed not as widely recognized as sociolinguistics or dialectology. This is due to its interdisciplinary nature, combining two main fields of study: sociolinguistics and dialectology. When a study emphasizes the relationship between language and social aspects of a community, it falls within the realm of sociolinguistics (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015; Holmes, 2013). Meanwhile, if the focus lies on language variation influenced by geographical factors, it is part of dialectology (Chambers & Trudgill, 2004). However, when the three elements—linguistics, sociology, and geography—are studied simultaneously, the field is referred to as social dialectology (Chambers & Trudgill, 2004; Trudgill, 2000; Holmes, 2013; Gumperz, 1982; Fishman, 1991; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). The study of language maintenance is influenced by factors of residential concentration, maintenance of rituals and traditions, economic independence of the community, social aspects of language choice, and language attitudes, which together constitute the field of study of social dialectology.

In bilingual societies, language dominance is not evenly distributed. Official state languages such as Indonesian tend to dominate formal domains like government and education (Wani et al., 2023; Scassa & Singh, 2015; Martín-Salas, 2022). Conversely, ethnic languages are more frequently used in domestic domains such as within the family (Sariono, 2000; Rochiyati et al., 2022). Thus, social dialectology not only offers a more comprehensive interdisciplinary approach but also provides sharper analytical tools to understand language dynamics in plural societies.

Language choice in bilingual communities is influenced not only by domains of use but is also closely related to speech components, as proposed by Hymes (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015; see also Zipagan et al., 2022). Official state languages, such as Indonesian, tend to dominate in formal speech situations—specifically when the speaker and interlocutor do not share a close social relationship, come from different ethnic backgrounds, and discuss official or institutional matters (Rochiyati et al., 2022; Tuah et al., 2021; Mis & Situl, 2022). In this context, language maintenance is strongly linked to the language choices made by speakers (Suharyo & Nurhayati, 2020; Kadir, 2021; Nguyen & Hamid, 2021).

A language is said to be maintained if it continues to be chosen and used across various domains of life, both formal and informal, by speakers from the same or different ethnic backgrounds. The presence of bilingualism and the process of language choice also shape and develop community language attitudes towards the languages they speak (Fitriati & Wardani, 2020; Ge, 2023). Language attitude is an internal condition arising from certain stimuli and serves as an intermediary for an individual's language behavior (Fasold, 1991, p. 147). Because it is internal, language attitude cannot be observed directly; therefore, its study must be conducted by observing the relationship between stimuli and the responses that arise. According to Baker (1992, p. 13) and Garrett (2010), attitudes consist of three main components: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive component relates to an individual's beliefs or perceptions about an object; the affective component involves feelings or emotions toward the object; and the conative component refers to the tendency or readiness to act toward the attitude object.

Language attitude directly influences the sustainability of a language, although the correlation is not always straightforward. In some cases, a language with a low level of maintenance still receives positive attitudes from its speakers, especially when the language continues to be used in certain domains or is still regarded as a symbol of cultural identity by a particular social or ethnic group.

Language maintenance refers to efforts to preserve the use of a language, especially minority languages, to ensure that it remains alive and functional within its speaker community (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). Minority languages generally face various pressures from social, economic, cultural, and political factors, which lead to a gradual decline in their usage and, in some cases, abandonment by native speakers over time.

The success of language maintenance is strongly influenced by several factors (Giles in Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 83). First, is the status factor, which includes the economic, social, and historical status of the language within the community. Second, the territorial distribution and demographic concentration of its speakers, such as the absolute number of speakers, birth rates, marriage patterns, and population mobility. Third, institutional support, both formal—such as the presence of the language in mass media, the education system, and public services—and informal, including use in workplaces, religious activities, cultural practices, and social environments. Various studies have highlighted the importance of these factors.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study aims to address four main research questions, each requiring specific types of data and analytical methods. The first research question concerns the level of Mandarin language use. Data were collected regarding language use in various social activities within the domains of family, neighborhood, work, education, social interaction, customs, and traditions. Data collection techniques involved direct observation and interviews, both participatory and non-participatory, as explained by Miles and Huberman (2014). Analysis was conducted using language choice theory, where a broader scope of Mandarin language use, a greater variety of social activities involving the language, and fuller participation across generations indicate a higher level of Mandarin language usage. Data obtained from observations and interviews, aided by questionnaires, were tabulated and converted into numerical data in nominal and percentage forms, then used to determine the level of language choice across different domains. Interview data were also analyzed using language maintenance theory, and the results of both analyses were combined to describe the level of Mandarin language maintenance within the Mandar community in Banyuwangi.

The second research question concerns the language attitudes of the Mandar ethnic group toward the languages used in Kampung Mandar. Data were obtained through questionnaires designed to measure three aspects of language attitude: cognitive, affective, and conative. Interviews were conducted with 30 informants aged 30 years and above, who are members of the Mandar ethnic group. Each respondent's answers were calculated, tabulated, and analyzed to determine the strength or weakness of their language attitudes, particularly toward the Mandarin language. The third research question focuses on determining the level of Mandarin language maintenance. This issue was analyzed based on the results of the first and second research questions. The higher the level of Mandarin language use and the stronger the positive attitudes of the Mandar community toward the language, the higher the level of language maintenance.

The fourth research question examines the factors influencing the level of Mandarin language maintenance. Data were gathered from various sources regarding social, cultural, historical, settlement patterns, and economic conditions believed to affect the use of Mandarin language in various life domains. Data sources included informants from the first and second research questions as well as community and traditional leaders familiar with the linguistic conditions of the community. All data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis methods as outlined by Miles and Huberman (2014), concerning language choice and language maintenance theories. The final result is a comprehensive description of the factors determining the level of Mandarin language maintenance within the Mandar ethnic community in Banyuwangi.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Language Choice in the Mandar Community

(a). Language Choice Within the Family Domain

The nuclear families of the Mandar ethnic group in Banyuwangi are divided into two types: native families and mixed families. Native families consist of couples where both husband and wife originate from the Mandar ethnic group, whereas mixed families involve marriages between Mandar individuals and those from other ethnic groups such as Javanese, Madurese, or Osing. In native families, Mandarin is used as the primary means of communication between husband and wife. Generally, both partners have a good command of Mandarin, allowing smooth and uninterrupted communication. Mandarin is used in nearly all routine household activities, such as cooking, doing laundry, eating together, and everyday conversations. The use of Mandarin is also consistently applied by parents when interacting with their children, especially school-aged children. In this context, Mandarin is used to give commands, offer advice, provide information, or ask questions of the children. For example, when children take leave to go to school, parents deliver messages or advice—such as to be careful on the road, study diligently, obey teachers, and maintain good relationships with friends—all communicated in Mandarin. The entire daily life cycle within native families, both between parents and children and between husband and wife, takes place using the Mandarin language.

In mixed families, the family language used is also Mandarin. Non-Mandar family members generally adopt the use of Mandarin in daily life. This is due to two main factors. First, they live in a predominantly Mandar community, so socially and practically they are "forced" to adapt to the local language. Intensive interaction with the Mandar community in everyday life makes them a linguistic minority who must adjust. Second, the similarity between Mandarin and Indonesian facilitates linguistic adaptation. This transition happens naturally and without pressure, as they do not feel burdened learning Mandarin. Even before having children, couples in mixed families generally already speak Mandarin fluently. When children are born, the use of Mandarin in the family has become an established habit, making their language practice indistinguishable from that of native Mandar families.

Within the extended family environment in Kampung Mandar, Mandarin is used consistently as the family language by both native and mixed families. This is possible because all members of the extended family, including non-Mandar members, share proficiency in Mandarin. The language is used in all family interactions, formal or informal. When younger family members visit their parents' homes, communication is conducted in Mandarin. Because Kampung Mandar is relatively small, visits and meetings among extended families occur almost daily, making conversations in Mandarin part of the everyday routine and strengthening family cohesion. However, the situation differs when interactions involve extended family members living outside Kampung Mandar, particularly from the spouse's side belonging to other ethnic groups such as Javanese, Madurese, or Osing. Such interactions are occasional and irregular. Due to differences in mother

tongue backgrounds and lack of mutual language proficiency, communication in these contexts generally occurs in Indonesian. In some cases, Indonesian is interspersed with code-mixing involving Javanese, which may be better known by the non-Mandar parties.

(b). Language Choice in the Neighborhood Domain

The community in Kampung Mandar Village can be categorized as a bilingual society, mastering two languages: Mandaran and Indonesian. However, in daily practice, all residents—whether of Mandar ethnicity or not—generally use Mandaran as the primary language in interactions among neighbors. The choice of Mandaran in informal communication, especially in neighborly contexts, has become an established social norm. When residents meet on the street or in front of their houses, they greet each other in Mandaran. Often, such greetings are accompanied by exchanging news or light conversations about daily matters. Longer conversations usually occur in more relaxed and familiar situations, such as visiting neighbors' homes, gathering at prayer rooms (surau), security posts, local shops, or other communal places.

The use of Mandaran also remains dominant in various semi-formal and formal gatherings involving the local community. For example, in activities like neighborhood women's groups (dasa wisma), ritual committees' meetings, extended family gatherings for cultural ceremonies such as weddings (saulak), pregnancy celebrations, circumcisions, or youth organization events like karang taruna, Mandaran serves as the main language of communication among participants. However, language choice dynamics may differ in interethnic individual interactions. In interactions between Mandar husbands or wives and neighbors from other ethnic groups such as Javanese, Madurese, or Osing, the language choice typically adjusts to the interlocutor's background. In such cases, Indonesian becomes the primary language, often interspersed with code-switching or code-mixing with Javanese. Similar phenomena occur in children's interactions. Mandar children tend to use Mandaran when playing with peers of the same ethnicity but switch to Indonesian when interacting with friends from other ethnic groups.

(c). Language Choice in the Workplace Domain

In the workplace domain, the choice of language among the Mandar ethnic community is strongly influenced by the ethnic background of the interlocutor. In the fishermen's work environment, communication among workers generally takes place in the Mandar language. This is because Mandar fishermen tend to work in groups with fellow Mandar ethnic members, so Mandar remains the primary medium in fishing activities and other work-related tasks. Meanwhile, in the selling process of the fish catch, usually carried out by the fishermen's wives, language choice is adjusted according to the buyer's ethnic identity. If the buyer is from the Javanese, Madurese, or Osing ethnic groups, Indonesian is used, often interspersed with code-switching or code-mixing with Javanese. In situations where the buyer's ethnic identity is not known, Indonesian remains the primary choice as a neutral and inclusive means of communication.

A similar language choice phenomenon also occurs in other trade sectors, such as food stalls owned by Mandar community members along the coastline of Kampung Mandar Village. Traders tend to use Indonesian when serving customers from different ethnic backgrounds, while Mandar is still used in internal interactions among Mandar community members. This shows that in the work context, the Mandar community employs an adaptive communication strategy, taking into account the effectiveness of communication as well as the social and cultural backgrounds of their interlocutors.

(d). Language Choice in the Educational Domain

Mandar ethnic children use Indonesian in the classroom during learning activities, in line with its function as the official language of instruction in education. Indonesian serves as the primary medium of communication between students and teachers throughout the teaching and learning process. Outside the classroom, language choice becomes more varied and situational, depending on the social context and the ethnic background of the interlocutor. There are three common language choices used: Indonesian, Javanese, and Mandar. When speaking with teachers outside the classroom, children tend to use Indonesian, although in practice code-switching to Javanese or code-mixing between Indonesian and Javanese often occurs, especially if the teacher is of Javanese ethnicity or accustomed to using Javanese.

In interactions with peers outside class, language choice is determined by the ethnic identity of the interlocutor. If the friend belongs to the Mandar ethnic group, children usually use Mandar or Indonesian. Conversely, if their friends are from Javanese, Osing, or Madurese ethnic groups, they tend to use Indonesian interspersed with code-switching to Javanese or code-mixing between Indonesian and Javanese. This phenomenon shows that Mandar children have flexible linguistic competence and can adjust their language choices based on social context and the identity of their interlocutors, reflecting the dynamics of bilingualism and multiculturalism that develop in their school life.

(e). Language Choice in the Domain of Customs and Traditions

The Mandar language plays an important role as a medium for passing down traditions and ethnic identity to the younger generation. The Mandar community continues to firmly uphold the implementation of customs and traditions related to life cycles, such as pregnancy ceremonies (saulak kehamilan), birth ceremonies (saulak kelahiran), ground-breaking rituals (tradisi turun tanah), circumcision ceremonies (saulak khitanan) for boys, wedding ceremonies (saulak pernikahan), as well as death rituals. Particularly in the wedding custom (saulak pernikahan), the Mandar people strongly

believe that this tradition must be carried out. They hold the belief that if the saulak pernikahan ceremony is not performed, a calamity will befall the family, potentially even resulting in the death of family members.

B. Language Attitudes of Mandar Ethnic Community

The language attitudes of the Mandar ethnic group were studied using a quantitative method. Data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of eight questions: three questions addressing the cognitive aspect, three questions addressing the affective aspect, and two questions addressing the conative aspect. The sample consisted of 30 Mandar ethnic residents aged 30 years and above.

TABLE 1
RECAPITULATION OF LANGUAGE ATTITUDE SCORES OF THE MANDAR ETHNIC GROUP (IN %)

No.	Attitude Aspect	Mandaran	Madurese	Javanese	Indonesian
1.	Cognitive	93.3	57.2	59.4	82.2
2.	Affective	87.7	54.1	61.7	78.3
3.	Conative	84.3	50.9	61.7	83.3
	Average	88.4	54.1	60.9	81.3

Note: Data was obtained with permission from Kartikasari (2024).

Table 1 shows that the language attitudes of the Mandar ethnic group towards the Mandaran language and Indonesian language are very positive, whereas their attitudes towards Javanese and Madurese languages tend to be closer to negative.

C. Level of Mandaran Language Maintenance

(a). Language Choice

The aspect of language choice shows that Mandaran language still strongly dominates social and cultural interactions in Kampung Mandar. Mandaran has strong vitality as a medium of social, cultural, and ritual communication. In the workplace, Mandaran remains highly dominant, especially when the interlocutor is from the same Mandar ethnic group. However, in the field of education, Indonesian is more dominantly used compared to Mandaran.

(b). Language Attitudes

The language attitude of Kampung Mandar residents towards Mandaran is very positive. Conversely, the Mandar ethnic group's attitudes toward Javanese and Madurese tend to be negative. Their attitude toward Indonesians almost matches the positive attitude toward Mandaran. This is because Indonesian is the national and state language, providing broader access opportunities in education and employment.

(c). Rituals and Traditions in the Mandar Community

The Mandar community in Kampung Mandar continues to uphold customs, rituals, and traditions passed down through generations. The implementation of these customs and rituals involves all generations, from the elderly to the youth. Mandaran language is used as the main medium in carrying out all these customs, rituals, and traditions, making the language play an important role in preserving the cultural heritage of the Mandar ethnic group.

(d). Level of Mandaran Language Maintenance

Based on the three main aspects previously discussed—namely language choice, language attitude, and the use of language in customs and traditions—it can be concluded that the Mandaran language is still used by all generations of the Mandar community in most of their daily activities, especially in intra-ethnic interactions. This intra-ethnic category also includes individuals from other ethnic groups who have become family members of the Mandar community and reside permanently in Kampung Mandar. Considering these three aspects, the level of Mandaran language maintenance in Kampung Mandar can be categorized as "safe" according to UNESCO's classification (Moseley, 2010).

D. Factors Determining the Maintenance of the Mandaran Language

Language maintenance is influenced by several factors as stated by Giles (in Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). These factors include: (1) language status, which encompasses economic, social, and historical aspects; (2) territorial distribution and concentration as well as the demographic conditions of the speaker community, such as population size, birth rates, marriage patterns, and population mobility; and (3) institutional support, both formal—such as mass media, education, and government services—and informal, such as the use of language in religious, social, and cultural activities.

(a). History, Social, and Economic Aspects of the Kampung Mandar Community

The arrival of the Mandar ethnic group in Kampung Mandar, Banyuwangi, began following the fall of the Gowa Kingdom in Sulawesi, which was taken over by the VOC in 1670 (https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kesultanan_Gowa). After this event, the people of the Gowa Kingdom, including the Mandar ethnic group, spread to various regions. The Mandar people arrived in Banyuwangi at the end of the 18th century. According to documents stored at the Mandar Museum in Kampung Mandar, Banyuwangi, the Mandar community in this area has been led by Datuk Puang Daeng Kapitan Galak since 1845. This leadership has been passed down through generations and is currently held by Puang Faisal Rizal Daeng Galak.

Economically, the Mandar people are known as skilled sailors whose main livelihood is fishing. They possess high expertise in catching fish and processing marine products, which serve as their primary source of livelihood. This economic self-reliance is reflected in their ability to conduct the annual "petik laut" ritual, an expression of gratitude to God for abundant marine harvests. During this ritual, offerings in the form of a buffalo's head are cast into the sea. Since the 1970s, fish processing businesses have grown significantly. Initiatives by the village head along with the community to organize what was once a slum area have transformed Kampung Mandar into a well-arranged and productive environment. The area has subsequently been developed into a culinary tourism, educational tourism, and cultural tourism destination. This economic development success has made the Mandar community in Kampung Mandar increasingly independent and prosperous.

(b). Residential Concentration

In the early 20th century, specifically in the 1900s, the Dutch colonial government implemented a settlement policy that required communities to reside according to their ethnic groups. This policy led the Mandar ethnic group—along with other ethnic groups such as Arabs, Mandar, and Malays—to inhabit a designated area that later became known as Kampung Mandar. This residential pattern has been preserved to this day. Kampung Mandar Village covers an area of approximately 0.91 km² with a population of 3,757 people (Central Bureau of Statistics, Banyuwangi Regency, 2017, p. 8). Although the area is relatively small, it is adequate as a residential settlement. Kampung Mandar lacks agricultural land; therefore, the majority of residents rely on the fishing industry and the trade of processed marine products for their livelihood.

Despite the high residential density, the area allows for the free flow of social, economic, and cultural activities. The community enjoys fairly adequate social facilities. There is one primary school and a well-known English language course institution in Banyuwangi. Places of worship include a mosque and several prayer rooms (musala). Health services are provided by one public health center (puskesmas) and several integrated health posts (posyandu). Local governance is centered in a representative sub-district (kelurahan) office. Along the coastline, a row of culinary stalls and a pier serve as hubs for the local fishermen's activities. Demographically, the majority of Kampung Mandar's residents are of Mandar ethnicity. Minority ethnic groups such as Javanese, Osing, and Madurese also live in the area. In social and cultural practices, these minority groups have fully adapted to the social norms, cultural practices, and language of the Mandar community.

(c). Institutional Support

One of the main focuses of the Banyuwangi Regency Government that has had a direct impact on the social, economic, and cultural development of Kampung Mandar is the tourism sector. Banyuwangi Regency is widely known as the "Festival Regency" due to its consistent organization of more than 40 cultural festivals each year. One of the Mandar community's cultural traditions that has been incorporated into the official regional festival agenda is the Petik Laut (Sea Harvest) ritual. This tradition has been passed down through generations since the Mandar people first arrived in the area and is now part of the Banyuwangi Cultural Festival, especially since the leadership of Regent Abdullah Azwar Anas. Tourism development has also had a positive impact on the local economy. Culinary stalls managed by the Kampung Mandar community have received support from the regional government through various infrastructure improvement programs, such as the construction and renovation of access roads, the building of fishing piers, and the arrangement of residential areas. All these efforts have contributed to the economic growth and welfare of the Kampung Mandar community.

(d). Rituals and Traditions in Mandar Society

In addition to the three main factors influencing language maintenance—namely social status, territorial distribution and demography, and institutional support—the Mandaran language is also preserved through the strength of customs, rituals, and traditions that have been passed down through generations within the Mandar ethnic community in Banyuwangi. Under the leadership of traditional figures, the Mandar people continue to uphold various customary norms and cultural rituals that play a vital role in reinforcing their collective identity. Two major rituals that are still solemnly practiced today are the Saulak and Petik Laut ceremonies. Both are regarded as mystical and sacred events, requiring specific preparations and procedures that can only be arranged by designated traditional leaders, whose knowledge is passed down through lineage.

According to Puang Faisal Rizal Daeng Galak, the Traditional Leader of the Mandar ethnic group in Kampung Mandar, the Saulak ritual includes three types: Saulak before marriage, Saulak before circumcision, and Saulak before childbirth (a seven-month pregnancy ritual). Particularly in the context of marriage, Saulak is considered mandatory and sacred. There is a collective belief that neglecting this ritual may bring disaster upon the family—even death of a family member (see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lW0gnBrnTyU>, minute 5:35). Meanwhile, Petik Laut is an annual ritual expressing gratitude and seeking protection from God and ancestral spirits for the bounty of the sea. In this ceremony, a boat is specially decorated to carry offerings to the open sea. Prayers are recited in the Mandaran language before the offerings—including a buffalo head—are set adrift as sacred tributes.

The implementation of these two rituals reflects the spiritual, cultural, and social strength embedded within the Mandar ethnic community. They are not merely ceremonial acts, but also serve as vital mediums for passing down values and

symbols of cultural identity that strengthen intergenerational ties. The consistent use of the Mandarin language throughout every stage of these rituals stands as evidence that the language retains a high degree of vitality and remains a living, integral part of the Mandar people's cultural life in Banyuwangi.

E. Discussion

In the context of Mandarin language maintenance as discussed in this article, the discussion can be expanded by comparing existing findings with several international studies on minority language maintenance, language attitudes, and revitalization. The following are some relevant comparisons.

(a). Language Maintenance and Revitalization

Hornberger (2012; see also Zabrodska & Ivanova, 2021a) emphasizes that minority language maintenance strongly depends on robust institutional support, including educational programs, government policies, and active community participation. In the case of Kampung Mandar, forms of institutional support are evident in the involvement of local government in strengthening local culture, such as through the Petik Laut ritual festival. However, unlike Hornberger's view that highlights the importance of formal structures in sustaining language maintenance programs, in Kampung Mandar, cultural festivals have already been institutionalized internally within the Mandar ethnic community itself. Thus, the role of the local government is more as a reinforcer of already established sociocultural structures rather than as the primary initiator.

(b). Language Attitudes and Cultural Identity

The findings presented in this article reveal that the Mandar community holds a very positive attitude toward the Mandarin language, which serves as a key factor in the high level of language maintenance observed. This result is consistent with several similar studies. Fitriati and Wardani (2020), for instance, in their study conducted in Yogyakarta, found that a positive community attitude toward the Javanese language significantly contributed to its maintenance, especially within the family domain. Similarly, Mendieta (2024) reported that the Latino community in Northwest Indiana exhibited positive attitudes toward local varieties of Spanish, which strengthened the continued use of the language despite the dominance of English in their environment. Research by Zemmour and Alghazo (2023) also showed that Kabyle immigrants in France maintain their mother tongue due to a strong positive attitude within the diaspora community. Meanwhile, Ukam (2023) noted that despite facing pressure from dominant languages like English and Igbo, Erei-speaking youth in Nigeria continue to express a positive attitude that supports efforts to preserve their language.

(c). Language Choice Dynamics in Mixed Families

Kadir (2021) studied language maintenance in mixed-ethnicity families and found that in urban contexts, the majority language tends to dominate family interactions. However, a different situation is observed in Kampung Mandar, where Mandarin remains the primary language of communication, even in mixed families. The sustained use of Mandarin in this region is supported by a socially cohesive environment and structural similarities between Mandarin and Indonesian, which facilitate linguistic adaptation. These findings highlight the importance of territorial concentration as a crucial factor in maintaining the vitality of minority languages.

(d). Language Contact and Language Shift

Zabrodska and Ivanova (2021b) explain that interlingual contact has the potential to drive language shift in bilingual communities. However, despite the Mandar people's intensive interactions with the Javanese, Osing, and Madurese ethnic groups, the Mandarin language continues to show strong resilience. This resilience can be attributed to the dominant use of Mandarin in the domains of family life, and neighborhood interactions, as well as in the practice of deeply rooted rituals, customs, and traditions. These practices indirectly limit the infiltration of external linguistic influences into the community.

(e). Economic Factors and Language Maintenance

Diskin (2020) emphasizes that economic self-sufficiency can be a significant supporting factor in the maintenance of minority languages. This finding is relevant to the situation in Kampung Mandar, where the Mandar community has successfully developed a culture-based economy, including the culinary and tourism sectors. These initiatives not only reinforce ethnic identity but also increase the prospects for preserving the Mandarin language. Language attitudes within the community are generally shaped by a combination of social, cultural, and economic factors, all of which contribute to language sustainability. Gribauskienė (2024), for instance, in her research on the Lithuanian diaspora communities in Ireland and Norway, found that the maintenance of the Lithuanian language is heavily influenced by the degree to which individuals identify with their ethnic community. Meanwhile, Mat Awal et al. (2014) revealed that language choice in the Malaysia–Thailand border region is influenced not only by individual attitudes but also by ethnicity and local economic conditions.

(f). The Role of Ritual and Tradition in Language Maintenance

Another crucial factor contributing to the maintenance of the Mandarin language is the strong commitment of the Mandar community to preserving and practicing local rituals and traditions. The Saulak and Petik Laut rituals, passed

down through generations, hold deep spiritual and social significance for the community. In the performance of these rituals, Mandarin is used exclusively, making it the primary medium for transmitting cultural values and reinforcing ethnic identity. The use of language in such ritual contexts illustrates how tradition and customary practices play a direct role in sustaining language vitality.

This finding aligns with research from various other communities. Abbasi and David (2024) reported that although the Hindko-speaking community regularly uses Urdu and English in daily life, they continue to maintain the Hindko language during religious rituals, sermons, and prayers. Language use in religious contexts acts as a critical safeguard against the pressures of dominant languages. In another study, Abbasi et al. (2021) found that while younger generations of Sindhi speakers tend to use Urdu and English for daily communication, cultural practices such as Sindhi Topi Day, the wearing of ajrak (a traditional Sindhi shawl), and the consumption of traditional Sindhi foods serve as effective means of language maintenance through meaningful cultural engagement. Music and songs in the Sindhi language, performed at community events, further reinforce young people's exposure to their mother tongue.

Meanwhile, Kamau and Motanya (2024) observed that the Shona community in Kenya consistently uses the Shona language during religious and traditional ceremonies, including weddings, births, and funerals. Children and youth are actively involved in these events, and cultural values as well as the language are transmitted orally by elders through folklore, community gatherings, and informal education. In addition, annual festivals conducted in the Shona language serve as key moments for strengthening collective identity and language resilience against the influence of Swahili and English.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the language vitality criteria formulated by UNESCO, the Mandarin language in Kampung Mandar is categorized as "Safe," the highest level on the scale of language sustainability. This classification is evident in the consistent use of Mandarin as the primary means of communication across all generations, from children to the elderly, especially within family interactions, neighborhood conversations, and semi-formal gatherings. Furthermore, Mandarin serves as the main language in traditional rituals such as Saulak and Petik Laut, which carry profound spiritual significance for the Mandar community. The continuity of the Mandarin language is strongly supported by the community's highly positive attitude toward their mother tongue and several key factors.

Historically, socially, and economically, the Mandar community in Kampung Mandar comprises a complete social structure that includes nobles, traditional leaders, and ordinary citizens. Economically, they are relatively self-reliant, with fishing as their primary occupation and a growing culinary sector based on seafood products that attract visitors due to the natural beauty of the Bali Strait. Residentially, the high concentration of Mandar ethnic residents ensures that everyday interactions occur almost entirely in Mandarin, even among non-Mandar individuals who have married into the community and adopted its social and linguistic norms. Institutionally, the community benefits from local government support, which plays a significant role in preserving customs and culture, thereby reinforcing the maintenance of the Mandarin language. Community efforts to preserve the language include informal language teaching within families, the intergenerational transmission of historical and ethnic values, the maintenance of local customs and rituals, and the development of cultural tourism. These strategies collectively support the sustainability of Mandarin, maintaining its vitality and ensuring its continued use by UNESCO's criteria for a safe language.

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