



Preservation of the Gorontalo Language in Tutulo Village Community, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the usage of the Gorontalo language, the challenges regarding its preservation, and the efforts made by the community of Tutulo Village (Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency) to overcome these challenges. The research data consists of the speech used by the community in Tutulo Village, with data sources comprising community members, community leaders, and the younger generation. A qualitative descriptive method with a sociolinguistic approach was employed to analyze the preservation of the Gorontalo language in the area. Data were obtained through techniques such as non-participatory observation (*simak libat bebas cakap*), participatory observation (*simak libat cakap*), conversation (*cakap*), eavesdropping (*sadap*), and note-taking (*catat*). The collected data were analyzed by transcribing oral data into written form, translating, identifying, classifying, and analyzing the data, and drawing conclusions from the analysis. The results indicate that while the Gorontalo language is still used in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency, its usage is no longer dominant across all domains of communication.

Keywords : preservation, Gorontalo language, Tutulo village community

INTRODUCTION

Language serves as a vital and effective means of communication for the life of a nation. Its existence is a key factor in societal development; without language, the processes of information exchange and national progress could be hindered. Indonesian serves not only as a unifying force for the nation but also holds the status of the state language, the official language, and a medium for the advancement of science and technology. A community functions effectively when messages conveyed by speakers are understood by recipients exactly as intended, thereby preventing discrepancies in understanding or misunderstandings.

Language is one of the most essential human needs and the primary tool for communication and interaction in daily life, whether in formal or informal settings (Erniati, 2018:1117).

Language is not merely a tool for communication; it also functions as a vehicle for preserving and transmitting the values, knowledge, and traditions that have thrived and evolved across generations within a society. Language is a crucial aspect of social and cultural life, playing a strategic role in safeguarding regional identity. Regional languages represent a community's cultural wealth; they reflect the image of an independ-

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ent society and embody local wisdom as well as significant cultural values. Consequently, regional languages can be viewed as a reflection of the communities that speak them and as a noble cultural heritage.

Regional languages are valuable assets within the cultures of Indonesia's ethnic groups, preserving a legacy of thought and local wisdom. However, these languages are currently facing increasing threats and marginalization. If this trend continues unchecked, regional languages risk extinction. The extinction of a regional language would result in the loss of the culture of the ethnic group that speaks it. Furthermore, the current role and function of regional languages no longer align with their intended purpose (Raihany, 2018: 50). The Gorontalo language is a regional language rich in culture and history, serving as the mother tongue for the people of Gorontalo. Despite its significant cultural value, the use of the Gorontalo language in daily life is showing a downward trend, particularly among the younger generation. This shift can be attributed to the influence of globalization and technological advancements, as well as the fact that the national language has become the dominant choice for everyday communication. Currently, many regional languages face the threat of extinction—a fate caused by speakers failing to preserve their native tongues and by dwindling speaker populations (Nisah et al., 2020: 1118). The Gorontalo language is spoken by the community in Gorontalo Province. As a component of cultural heritage, it plays a vital role in shaping identity and strengthening social bonds among community members. However, in an era of rapid globalization, the use of the Gorontalo language among the youth—especially students—is declining. The influence of Indonesian (the national language) and foreign languages like English has come to dominate daily conversation, resulting in reduced usage of the Gorontalo language outside of its traditional community.

Language maintenance is an effort to protect and preserve a language, thereby mitigating the

impact of language shift and serving as an alternative to prevent language extinction (Prasetya et al., 2020). Furthermore, Salam and Ponto (2020) suggest that maintenance is closely linked to attitudes or evaluations regarding a language—specifically, the decision to continue using that language amidst a diversity of other languages. Language maintenance generally involves identifying the language used by a community and the contexts of its usage. During this process, a language may be successfully maintained or experience a decline in usage as speakers gradually shift to using another language. The phenomenon of language maintenance typically occurs in communities where individuals are proficient in more than one language (bilingual or multilingual speakers).

Tutulo Village, located in Boalemo Regency, Gorontalo Province, is an area that still upholds local traditions and cultural values. However, there are concerns that the use of the Gorontalo language in the village is beginning to decline. This phenomenon is evident in the tendency of the community—particularly children and adolescents—to use Indonesian more frequently in daily interactions, whether at home, at school, or in other social settings. If this trend continues without preservation efforts, there is a risk that the Gorontalo language will experience a functional decline or even face extinction in the long run.

METHOD

This study employs a sociolinguistic approach utilizing a descriptive method. The descriptive method aims to gather detailed information regarding the phenomenon occurring at the time of the research (Sugiyono, 2015; Razak, 2017). This study is qualitative-descriptive in nature. According to Sukmadinata, qualitative research aims to describe a phenomenon—whether natural or constructed—by emphasizing characteristics and qualities relevant to the research topic (Sukmadinata, 2017: 73). The data for this study



were obtained from the speech of community members, community leaders, and the younger generation in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency. Data collection techniques included *simak libat bebas cakap* (unobtrusive observation/listening) and *simak libat cakap* (participatory observation/listening), wherein the researcher gathered data by listening to and capturing the language usage of the Tutulo Village community. The *cakap* (conversational/interview) technique was employed to interview informants using prepared questions aimed at identifying obstacles to the preservation of the Gorontalo language in the village. Furthermore, the *sadap* (eavesdropping/capturing) technique was utilized in conjunction with the listening and conversational techniques. Finally, the *catat* (note-taking) technique was used to record key details—such as the location, the domain of interaction, and the participants involved—during the observation process. The data analysis involved transcribing the recorded speech of the Gorontalo community into a text format. Subsequently, the data were translated into Indonesian, identified, classified, and analyzed, leading to conclusions based on the analysis. The results of this analysis were then compiled into the discussion section of the article.

RESULT

The results of this study cover: 1) the state of Gorontalo language usage in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency; 2) the challenges involved in maintaining the Gorontalo language in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency; and 3) the efforts made by the community in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency, to overcome these challenges regarding Gorontalo language maintenance. Based on the research findings, the results are presented as follows:

1. The State of Gorontalo Language Usage in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo

Regency.

1.1 State of Gorontalo Language Use in the Government Domain (Village Office)

Conversations between the Village Head and officials involve a mix of Indonesian and Gorontalo; this is evident in the excerpt below.

The following is an excerpt of the conversation between the Village Head and the officials:

Village Head : Risna, kase jo kase (Risna, just give it).

Risna : lagi mo ambe itu ayah (Father is going to take it).

Village Head : *Bo di mana? lah bo, penyerahan bo diya'a uwohi, hahahaha?* (Well, the handover is happening, but there is nothing to actually hand over, hahaha).

Village Head : *Isuda mamonao ami*, habis (We are leaving now. Is it all gone)

Official : *Habis* (It's all gone).

Village Head : *Oke terima kasih banyak untuk kita semua silahkan, kita juga akan pamit kurang menunggu ibu Kartin* (Okay, thank you very much to everyone; please go ahead. We will also be taking our leave; we are just waiting for Mrs. Kartin).

Thus, it is evident that the language usage in the example above involves a mixture of Indonesian and Gorontalo.

2. Conditions of Gorontalo Language Use in the School Domain

The conversation among Mutia, Fera, Iran, Ain, and Alda employs a mixture of Indonesian and Malay; this can be seen in the excerpt below. The following is a conversation between students in the schoolyard:

Mutia (Student) : *Dudu Fera*. (Fera sits)

Fera (student) : *Di sini?* (here)

Iran (student) : *Ala bo ti om sana yang ba kasebae, you don't care bae.*

- (oh that's uncle right there fix, they don't fix it well)
- Ain (student) : *Tawa, ja tau diri dorang ti. (yes they don't know themselves)*
- Alda (student) : *Apa yang mo kase bae? (what Want to fix it)*
- Iran, Ain (student): Pipe
- Iran (student) : *Kan dorang ada ba panjat kalapa baru itu kalapa ada taciri di pipa baru ada pica, baru bo ti ka Opin yang ba kase bae Mereka memanjat pohon kelapa, lalu kelapa itu jatuh mengenai pipa hingga pecah, lalu hanya si Opin yang memperbaikinya (You guys have climbing equipment the new kalapa is the kalapa that exists Taciri in the new pipe has pica, baru bo ti ka Yang opin ba kase bae They climb coconut tree, then the coconut fell into the pipe until broke, then only Opin fix it).*

Thus, it can be seen that the form of language use above uses Indonesian mixed with Malay.

3. The State of Gorontalo Language Use in the School Domain

The conversation between Mr. Fauzan, Ms. Mila, and Ms. Lidia involves a mix of Malay and Gorontalo; this is evident in the excerpt below.

The following is a conversation in Gorontalo between teachers:

- Mr. Fauzan : *So jaga aba eror dia punya. (His/ hers often malfunctions.)*
- Mrs. Mila : *Uwito moohe olau eyi. (That is what I am afraid of.)*
- Mrs. Lidia : *Soalnya itu cuman sampe tanggal 3 ibu eee? tadi malam sojam*

barapa dia so update kamari poli, ti Yanti so torang 2 yang ta maso di situ, upload video dan RPP. (The reason is that it was only valid until the 3rd, Ma'am. Yanti and I were the ones who logged in to upload the videos and lesson plans—she actually updated it again last night).

- Mrs. Lidia : *Eey dia uti, ti ibu ini mo suru ini pa saya dia punya itu, ti ibu Owan yang taman pa dia, tinggal wa 'u olo huku-hukuumani woliyo, mo 'opalata lodungga mota tapu jalo. (Oh, that's him. This mother told me to take care of that. Owan's mother helped him, while I was also tormented. so lazy that you get angry there)*

- Mrs. Mila : *Saya olo dia ada telpon, dia ada WA. (I received a call too; they contacted me via WhatsApp.).*

It can be seen that the language usage in the example above employs a mixture of Malay and Gorontalo.

4. The State of Gorontalo Language Use in the Mosque Setting

In the excerpt, Mrs. Yanti uses a mix of Indonesian and Gorontalo; this is evident in the conversation excerpt below. The following is an excerpt showing the use of the Gorontalo language at the mosque:

- Mrs. Yanti : *Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, disampaikan kepada masyarakat Tutulo agar bisa datang ke masjid untuk berbuka puasa bersama kami, matoduwolo bapak ibu. (Peace be upon you. We invite the residents of Tutulo to come to the mosque to break the fast with us. We look forward to welcoming you.)*

Thus, it can be seen that the language usage illustrated above involves a mixture of Indonesian



and Gorontalo.

5. The State of Gorontalo Language Use in the Family Domain

The conversation between Mother and Aunt involves a mix of Gorontalo and Indonesian; this is evident in the excerpt below.

The following is the conversation in Gorontalo between Mother and Aunt:

Mother : Hello

Aunt : Kuni

Mother : Yes

Aunt : Ti Kuni *oluwo* tabung kosong? (Kuni, are there any empty cylinders?)

Mother : Aaa *mamotatoli* Nina *ola* 'u no 'u (Mine is already with Nina.)

Aunt : Oooo *harapu latiya woluwo eyi, olatiya demopulita* hari Selasa *eyi* (oh, I think there is, mine will run out on Tuesday).

Mother : *Diya* 'a nu 'u *madilepita* li Eko *olango*, pokoknya *ola* 'u *uwito* nu 'u *wanu mamopulito poli magantialo patao mape* 'I *tuango, puasa boti jatawao* 'mao *wanu jawohiya lio*. (No, Eko already dropped it off yesterday; the point is, it belongs to me, and once it runs out, it will be replaced. I'm not sure what will happen during this fasting month if I don't get any more.)

Aunt : *Pata bowolo eyii, au masambe langgari da* 'a, (That's exactly why—it's still a long way off.).

Mother : *Ula* 'u *bo duhuwo pi* 'i (I only have two.)

Aunt : Hmmmm, *saya saya*. (Hmm iya).

Thus, it can be seen that the form of language use described above involves a mixture of Gorontalo and Indonesian.

6. Conditions of Gorontalo Language Use in the Family Domain

The conversation between grandmother and grandson uses Gorontalo language mixed with Indonesian, this can be seen in the conversation excerpt below. The following is a conversation between grandmother and grandson.

Grandma : *Anak lo kucing so tidak ada di situ so di mana?* (The kitten is no longer there—where is it?)

Grandchild : *Tau*. (Don't know)

Grandma : *Malopopowate?* (is dead)

Grandchild : *Oh anak kucing?* (Oh, a kitten?)

Grandma : *Tan malo dilelolingolio to* 'utonu. *Ito he* 'entela 'u *bilohu lingoli* (It must be down there somewhere—that's what makes me angry, if you guys notice.)

Grandchild : Sapa bawa?(siapa yang membawa)

Grandma : *Ti mama lio, kira matoli tantemu beee* (her mother, probably already with your aunt)

Grandchild : *Aku ada lia tidak ada, baru mama lio so bawa* (I didn't see it earlier, but then his/her mom had already taken it.)

Grandma : *Ti mama lio* mara dia itu mo *lia-lia* turus (Her mom got angry because she was constantly being stared at.)

Grandchild : Iyo? (yes?)

Grandchild : *Ti ade yang ba lia* (The younger sibling who saw it)

Grandma : *Uwito maheolou dahalo boma tete lodehu totibawa* (That's what you must be careful not to do cat falling down).

Thus, it can be seen that the form of language use above uses Gorontalo language mixed with Indonesian.

7. The Use of the Gorontalo Language in the Market Domain

The conversation between the seller and the buyer involves a mix of Gorontalo and Indonesian; this is evident in the excerpt below. The following is a conversation between a seller and a buyer at

the market:

- Buyer : *Limo lihu odiye? Ngolo odi?* (Five thousand like this? How much is this?)
Seller : *Empat belas ribu.* (Fourteen thousand)
Buyer : *Haa, empat belas ribu?* (Fourteen thousand?)
Seller : *Empat belas ribu.* (Fourteen thousand)
Buyer : *Ito ngolo kikinga odito?* (How much is the small one?)
Seller : *Sepuluh ribu.* (Ten thousand)
Buyer : *Ngolo botu utiye?* (How many of these are there?)
Seller : *Harapumu uwito bo wolo, nde rekeniapo uwito.* (What do you think that is? Just try counting it.)
Buyer : *Hamai tas he 'o.* (Bring the bag here.).
Seller : *Nde bilehi mola, hitungia mota.* (Try looking over there, count over there.)
Buyer : Hahahahah

Thus, it can be seen that the form of language use described above involves a mixture of Gorontalo and Indonesian.

2. Challenges in Preserving the Gorontalo Language in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency

The preservation of the Gorontalo language in Tutulo Village currently faces a range of complex challenges. The influence of globalization and technological advancements has driven the younger generation to prefer using modern languages over the regional language.

1. **Dominance of Indonesian:** Indonesian serves as the primary language for formal education, administration, and official communication, thereby gradually displacing the use of the Gorontalo language across various spheres of community life. In school environments, students are more accustomed to using Indonesian, as it is the main medium of instruction during the learning process.

2. **Low Usage of Gorontalo Language Among the Younger Generation:** Although most young people still understand the Gorontalo language, only about 30–45% actively use it in daily communication. They prefer using Indonesian or a mixture of languages, as these are perceived as more practical and modern.
3. **Influence of Social Media and Technology:** The growth of social media and digital technology encourages the use of Indonesian and slang in modern communication. Consequently, the Gorontalo language is used less frequently, particularly among teenagers and the younger generation.
4. **Absence of Formal Policies (Schools & Village):** The lack of formal policies—such as specific local content curricula in schools or structured village programs—hinders the systematic and sustainable preservation of the Gorontalo language. To date, the use of the Gorontalo language in educational activities remains very limited.
5. **Shifts in Modern Lifestyle:** Changes in modern lifestyles have influenced community communication patterns, leading to a decline in the use of the regional language in daily life. Community members, especially the youth, more frequently use Indonesian in various social and educational activities.
6. **Interaction with Outsiders:** In social interactions—particularly in markets and community settings involving newcomers—Indonesian is the dominant language; consequently, the Gorontalo language tends to be used only in specific situations. People choose to use Indonesian to ensure that communication is easily understood by all parties.

3. Efforts to Overcome Challenges in Gorontalo Language Preservation by the Community in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency

Various efforts can be undertaken by the community of Tutulo Village, Botumoito District,



Boalemo Regency, to address the challenges involved in preserving the Gorontalo language. These efforts are carried out across family, community, cultural, and educational spheres to ensure the continued use of the Gorontalo language amidst the influence of the Indonesian language and the changing times.

1. Normalizing the Use of the Gorontalo Language within the Family

One measure the community can take is to make the use of the Gorontalo language a habit during family activities. Parents should continue to use the Gorontalo language when communicating with their children and other family members.

2. Using the Gorontalo Language in Social Interactions

The community of Tutulo Village must strive to preserve the Gorontalo language by continuing to use it in daily social interactions, such as conversations between neighbors, *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) activities, and other community events.

3. Preserving the Gorontalo Language through Customary and Cultural Activities

Another measure that can be taken is using the Gorontalo language in customary activities, traditions, and community cultural events. The Gorontalo language should continue to be used in family gatherings, customary rituals, and religious activities.

4. Instilling Pride in the Regional Language

The community can work to foster a sense of pride in using the Gorontalo language. A positive attitude toward the regional language is crucial for raising awareness—especially among the younger generation—about the importance of continuing to use the Gorontalo language in daily life.

5. Introducing the Gorontalo Language to the Younger Generation

Language preservation efforts can be carried out by introducing the Gorontalo language to the younger generation through daily communication and community social activities.

6. Utilizing Local Media and Community Activities

The community can utilize local media and community events as platforms for using the Gorontalo language. Examples include using the language in speeches, village activities, or communication during community gatherings.

7. Using the Gorontalo Language in Religious Activities at the Mosque

The mosque serves as a strategic space for preserving the Gorontalo language. The language is used in sermons, religious study sessions, and religious counsel, particularly to clarify messages for the congregation, especially the elderly.

8. Establishing a "Gorontalo Language Day" in Schools

Schools can designate a specific day as "Gorontalo Language Day," a time when the entire school community—both teachers and students—is encouraged to use the Gorontalo language for communication.

9. Strengthening Local Cultural Content in Schools

Schools need to strengthen instruction regarding local content related to Gorontalo language and culture. Learning materials should not focus solely on vocabulary acquisition but may also encompass oral literature, traditional expressions, customs, folklore, and Gorontalo cultural values.

10. Expanding the Use of the Gorontalo Language Across Various Activities and Subjects.

The use of the Gorontalo language should not be confined to the regional language subject alone. Schools can encourage its use in various school activities and, where feasible, in other subjects by incorporating terms, examples, dialogues, or materials related to the local environment and culture.

DISCUSSION

The State of Gorontalo Language Use in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency

Research findings regarding language use among the residents of Tutulo Village in their daily lives indicate that while the Gorontalo language is still employed across various domains—including government settings (village offices), schools, mosques, family life, and markets—it is no longer the dominant language of communication overall; Indonesian predominates over Gorontalo in most contexts. In government settings (village offices), usage involves a mix of Indonesian with Gorontalo and Indonesian with Malay. Schools also utilize a mix of Indonesian with Gorontalo and Indonesian with Malay. Mosque settings involve a mix of Indonesian and Gorontalo, while family and market environments feature a mix of Gorontalo and Indonesian.

Regarding language maintenance, families and traditional leaders play the most pivotal roles in ensuring the continuity of the Gorontalo language. Families serve as the primary agents of language transmission, whereas traditional leaders help sustain language use within cultural and social activities. Meanwhile, the roles of schools and other formal institutions remain supportive in nature and require strengthening through more targeted policies. This aligns with the views of Alimin et al. (2020), who identified four factors influencing language maintenance: family, socialization, activities, and desire.

In the market domain, the Gorontalo language remains the dominant medium for buying and selling activities, with a very high frequency of use. This demonstrates that the Gorontalo language retains a strong practical function as the primary tool for economic interaction within the community, while also fostering an atmosphere of familiarity and trust.

Meanwhile, in the religious domain—specifically within mosques—the Gorontalo language serves as a supplementary language for conveying religious messages, such as sermons and lectures; it helps clarify meanings and build emotional rap-

port with the congregation, particularly among the elderly. This aligns with the view of Komalasari (2017:109), who states that one measure for preserving regional languages is the delivery of religious lectures in the local language. In contrast to other domains, the school environment exhibits a relatively lower level of language preservation. This is attributed to the dominance of Indonesian as the official medium of instruction within the education system. Nevertheless, the Gorontalo language continues to be used in informal interactions and is integrated into cultural and religious activities; thus, it still plays a role in language preservation, albeit not yet optimally.

Challenges in Preserving the Gorontalo Language in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency

The preservation of the Gorontalo language in Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency, demonstrates that the regional language still plays a vital role in community life, despite facing various challenges arising from changing times. Research findings indicate that the use of the Gorontalo language persists within family settings, as well as in social, customary, and religious activities. However, the frequency of its use among the younger generation is declining, as they predominantly use Indonesian or mixed languages in daily communication.

The dominance of the Indonesian language poses a major challenge to the preservation of the Gorontalo language. As the official language for education, administration, and formal communication, Indonesian is widely used, making the community—particularly the younger generation—more accustomed to it than to the regional language. This aligns with the view of Chaer and Agustina (2010: 84) that the dominance of a majority or national language can lead to a decline in the use of regional languages within bilingual communities. The prevalence of Indonesian in education, mass media, and formal communication encourages people to use it more frequently than the



regional language, thereby reducing the intensity of Gorontalo language usage in daily life.

Furthermore, the low usage of the Gorontalo language among the youth indicates a decline in the intergenerational transmission of the language. Although most young people still understand Gorontalo, they predominantly use Indonesian in their daily interactions. This supports Badjo's (2015: 4) argument that fostering awareness among the youth—as the heirs of the regional language—requires cultivating a genuine love for the language itself.

The influence of social media and technological advancements also plays a significant role in the preservation of the Gorontalo language. The rise of digital media means young people more frequently access content in Indonesian or foreign languages rather than in the regional language. The scarcity of Gorontalo language usage in digital media limits its presence in modern communication. This aligns with Chaer and Agustina's (2010: 60) observation that communication technology developments encourage the use of widely understood and popular languages, particularly the national language and colloquial slang. Since social media is dominated by Indonesian, young people become more accustomed to using it over the regional language.

Another obstacle is the absence of formal policies supporting the preservation of the Gorontalo language, whether in schools or at the village government level. To date, there is no specific local curriculum content dedicated to the Gorontalo language in secondary schools, nor do village governments have structured programs for regional language preservation. This aligns with the view expressed by Halim (1987:7), who explains that fostering a positive attitude toward a language requires language education implemented in a purposeful manner. Such education should not focus solely on mastering linguistic rules and norms but must also integrate the social and cultural values prevalent within the speech community.

Shifts in modern lifestyles have influenced language usage patterns among the public. Some

people consider the use of Indonesian to be more in tune with the times, leading to a decline in the use of the Gorontalo language within both family settings and social interactions. Furthermore, interactions with the wider community have contributed to the dominance of Indonesian, as it is perceived to be more easily understood in general communication. This is consistent with Fasold's (2001:148) assertion that language attitudes encompass all behaviors regarding how a language is treated, including attitudes toward efforts regarding language planning and preservation.

Efforts to Overcome Challenges in Gorontalo Language Maintenance by the Community of Tutulo Village, Botumoito District, Boalemo Regency

Despite facing various obstacles, the community of Tutulo Village continues to make efforts to maintain the Gorontalo language. A primary effort involves making the use of the Gorontalo language a habit within the family environment. The family serves as the initial setting for the process of passing down the regional language to children. By using the Gorontalo language in daily communication, the younger generation can become familiar with Gorontalo vocabulary, expressions, and cultural values ??from an early age. This demonstrates the family's crucial role as a primary agent in regional language maintenance. This aligns with the view of Alimin et al. (2020), who identified four factors influencing language maintenance: family, socialization, activities, and desire.

Beyond the family, the use of the Gorontalo language is also maintained in social interactions, such as *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) activities, *arisan* (rotating savings clubs), religious study gatherings, and everyday conversations among residents. Using the regional language in social activities helps sustain the Gorontalo language amidst the dominance of Indonesian. The regional language also serves to strengthen social ties and reinforce the local community's cultural identity. This is consistent with the recommendation by Dardjowidjojo (2016: 1–8) that communi-

ties should cultivate the habit of using either Indonesian or the regional language in their immediate environments, including within the family, at work, and during social interactions.

Customary and cultural activities also serve as vital avenues for preserving the Gorontalo language. The language remains in use during traditional ceremonies, customary deliberations, weddings, and other cultural events. The use of the regional language in these activities demonstrates that the Gorontalo language functions not merely as a communication tool but also as an integral part of the Gorontalo community's cultural identity. Through these customary activities, the younger generation can learn how the Gorontalo language is employed within cultural texts and local traditions. This aligns with the view of Tarigan (2018: 1), who emphasizes the importance of raising public awareness regarding linguistic diversity through the involvement of mass media, social campaigns, and cultural activities.

The community also strives to introduce the Gorontalo language to the younger generation through daily communication and social activities. Community leaders, parents, and religious figures play a crucial role in teaching children how to use the Gorontalo language. Furthermore, the use of the Gorontalo language in religious activities at mosques helps preserve the regional language. This is consistent with the view of Komalasari (2017: 109), who states that one method for preserving regional languages is through religious lectures delivered in the regional language itself.

Designating a special day for the Gorontalo language is a concrete measure to increase its usage while fostering a sense of pride among students regarding the regional language. Such an initiative could take the form of a "Gorontalo Language Day"—observed, for instance, once a month or on specific occasions related to culture and the regional language. On this day, members of the school community could be encouraged to use the Gorontalo language for greetings, simple conversations, announcements, artistic activities, and various competitions. This aligns with the concept

of "language pride" described by Garvin and Mathiot (cited in Chaer, 2004:152)—a sense of pride in one's language that motivates individuals to develop and use it as a symbol of identity and a unifying force for the group.

Strengthening local cultural content is a crucial step because language and culture are inextricably linked. Language cannot be separated from the values, customs, history, arts, and worldviews of the community that uses it. Therefore, instruction in the Gorontalo language becomes more meaningful when linked to Gorontalo culture. This aligns with the view of Otoluwa et al. (2016: 6), who state that teachers should raise students' cultural awareness regarding the local language so that they can more easily grasp the cultural aspects embedded within it.

Preserving the Gorontalo language requires more than just limiting its use to regional language lessons; a language is more likely to endure if it is utilized across various communicative contexts. Consequently, the use of the Gorontalo language can be expanded to include school activities and—gradually and in accordance with student competence—integrated into various other subjects. This is consistent with the position of Otoluwa et al. (2016: 7), who argue that teachers and school administrators should create an environment conducive to learning the local language, enabling students to practice and use it within the school setting.

CONCLUSION

Research findings regarding the preservation of the Gorontalo language in Tutulo Village (Botumoit District, Boalemo Regency) reveal various insights into the language's continued use across different domains—including the community, schools, mosques, families, and markets. Several conclusions can be drawn:

First, the status of the Gorontalo language in Tutulo Village is characterized by continued use, yet it is undergoing a shift; Indonesian has become the dominant language—surpassing Gorontalo—in settings such as village offices, schools,



mosques, families, and markets. The use of the Gorontalo language is declining, particularly among the younger generation, thereby weakening efforts to preserve it. Nevertheless, the Gorontalo language remains in use, serving either as a primary means of communication or as a supplementary language. The school domain, however, exhibits a relatively lower level of language preservation. This situation stems from the dominance of Indonesian as the official medium of instruction within the education system. In the religious sphere—specifically within mosques—the Gorontalo language serves as a supplementary language for conveying religious messages and fostering emotional bonds with the congregation, particularly the elderly. Within the family domain, the environment in Tutulo Village plays an active and pivotal role as a primary stronghold for the preservation of the Gorontalo language. In the marketplace, the language remains the principal means of communication, especially during interactions between local traders and buyers. However, the use of the Gorontalo language among the younger generation is beginning to decline due to the dominance of Indonesian in education, social media, and formal communication.

Second, challenges in maintaining the Gorontalo language in Tutulo Village include low usage of the local language among the younger generation, the dominance of Indonesian, the influence of technological advancements and social media, shifts toward modern lifestyles, interactions with the outside community, and a decline in the practice of parents teaching the Gorontalo language to their children from an early age.

Third, efforts to address these challenges include enhancing the family's role in normalizing the use of the Gorontalo language at home, instilling a sense of pride in the local language among the youth, and involving the community and village government in initiatives to preserve Gorontalo language and culture. Additional efforts can be integrated into social interactions—such as education, traditional ceremonies, arts and cultural activities, and the use of the Gorontalo language

in various community events—to ensure the local language is preserved and passed down to future generations.

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