Lexicographic Challenges in Minority Languages of Indonesia

Dora Amalia
Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa,
Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan
Indonesia

Language Profile in Indonesia

- Number of local languages:746 (Badan Bahasa); 719 (Ethnologue), 749 (LIPI)
- 514 languages are registered in language map (Badan Bahasa, 2012)
- 13 major languages (Lauder and Lauder, 2012): Jawa, Sunda, Melayu, Madura, Minang, Batak, Bugis, Bali, Aceh, Sasak, Makassar, Lampung, Rejang
- Language status: 19 are institutional; 86 are developing; 260 are vigorious, 266 are in trouble, 75 are dying; and 13 extinct (Ethnologue, 2015)

Lexicographic Facts of Minority Languages

- No monolingual dictionaries for any minority languages; most are from minority languages into English/local national languages (Bradley, 2015)
- Only linguist/anthropologist are interested in minority dictionaries
- No commercial purposes for compiling process of minority languages, only for research and missionary purposes
- Only for documentation

Field lexicography, field dictionary

- *field lexicography* : *endangered languages lexicography*
- *field dictionary*: "*dictionaries exist only for 'minor' languages, spoken in small communities without any tradition of written literature*" (Bejoint, 1983).

- Dictionary function: *"satisfaction on the specific types of lexicographically relevant need that may arise in a specific type of potential user in a specific type of extra-lexicograpical situation"* (Tarp, 2008:81).
- *cognitive-oriented functions → documentary lexicography*
- *communicative-oriented functions → utility lexicography*
- Dictionaries of minority languages in Indonesian are mostly for documentation

The most widely methods used

- Text-based approach

- Direct observation

- Semantic domain

Text-based approach

- Swadesh list, wordlist of monolingual dictionary
  - translational methods → not natural
  - general words → not include cultural words
  - Tedious for both lexicographer and informants

Direct observation

- long-term field work $\rightarrow$ time consuming
- professional field lexicographer $\rightarrow$ high level of competence
- Multi-stimulus approach $\rightarrow$ touch, smell, taste
- Very reliable informants $\rightarrow$ hard to find

Semantic Domain

- Dictionary Development Process (DDP): *every language is unique and has different semantic domain* (Moe, 2007)
- 20-30 participants, divided into small groups for each domain
- 1.800 domains
- More enjoyable and fun $\rightarrow$ game

Semantic Domain (Moe, 2007)

Hear

- (1) What words refer to hearing something (in general or without conscious choice)? hear, overhear

- (2) What words refer to consciously listening to something? listen, listen to, listen for, eavesdrop, audit, give an ear to, lend an ear, heed, pay attention to, prick up one's ears, be all ears

- (3) What words refer to someone who hears? hearer, listener, audience, eavesdropper, auditor

- (4) What words refer to the sense of hearing? hearing, sense of hearing

Methods suggested

- Identify the culture background
- Use selected semantic domain as a manual
- Double check with lexical set and thematic thesaurus list
- Make smaller group (1-2 people with the same expertise/profession
- Make the collecting words into a game, give reward to the most active participants

Semantic domain