

MARIND (MALIND-ANIM) LANGUAGE PRESERVATION IN MERAUKE REGENCY, PAPUA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

Indonesia is a large archipelago with a huge language and cultural diversity. The latest data shows that over 700 indigenous languages are spoken across 34 provinces of the country. Statistics show that of the 34 provinces, the largest number of indigenous languages exists in the Papua province, which covers more than 300 languages. This qualitative study was conducted in Merauke Regency, Papua, the largest regency in Indonesia. It is located in the easternmost tip of Papua island. The study aimed to discover the existence of the Marind language or in the local dialect known as Malind-Anim, one of the indigenous languages spoken by the native tribe of Merauke, and to find out the preservation effort that has been conducted in Merauke. The result of the study revealed that there have been many efforts conducted by the local government of Merauke Regency and the stakeholders to maintain the existence of Marind language. It was conducted through (1) Educational policy, (2) Marind language habituation in public spaces such as announcement at the airport, Marind language usage in public banners, and greetings in Marind language in every formal meeting, (3) Broadcasting media, and (4) Language documentation in the forms of songs and dictionary.

Keywords: Indigenous language, Marind (Malind-Anim), language preservation

Abstrak

Indonesia adalah negara kepulauan dengan berbagai keragaman budaya dan bahasa. Data terbaru Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia menunjukkan bahwa lebih dari 700 bahasa daerah digunakan di 34 provinsi di seluruh wilayah nusantara. Data statistik menunjukkan bahwa jumlah terbesar bahasa daerah terdapat di provinsi Papua yang mencakup lebih dari 300 bahasa daerah. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif yang dilakukan di Merauke, kabupaten terbesar di Indonesia yang terletak di ujung paling timur pulau Papua dan berbatasan langsung dengan negara Papua New Guinea. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui keberadaan bahasa Marind atau dalam dialek lokal dikenal dengan Malind-Anim, salah satu bahasa daerah yang dituturkan oleh suku asli Merauke, dan untuk mengetahui upaya pelestarian yang telah dilakukan di Merauke. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa telah banyak upaya yang dilakukan baik oleh pemerintah daerah Kabupaten Merauke maupun masyarakat untuk mempertahankan eksistensi Bahasa Marind (Malind-Anim). Pelaksanaannya dilakukan melalui (1) Kebijakan pendidikan, (2) Pembiasaan bahasa Marind di ruang publik seperti pengumuman di bandara, penggunaan bahasa Marind pada spanduk, pelayanan publik, dan sapaan dalam bahasa Marind di setiap pertemuan formal, (3) Media penyiaran, dan (4) Pendokumentasian bahasa dalam bentuk lirik lagu dan kamus bahasa Marind.

Kata kunci: Bahasa daerah, Marind (Malind-Anim), pelestarian bahasa

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country and the fourth most populated country with diverse ethnic groups and huge language diversity in the world. The latest data from the Indonesian Ministry of Education and culture shows that there are 718 indigenous languages spoken across 34 provinces in Indonesia. It is estimated that about 10% of the world's languages are spoken in Indonesia. A number of 324 indigenous languages are spoken in the Papua province (Kemdikbud, 2020). Indigenous languages in Indonesia are considered as an integral part of Indonesian cultural heritage which is embodied in Indonesia's slogan *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* which means 'Unity in Diversity'.

In order to maintain the unity and harmony among the diverse ethnic groups, the Indonesian government has implemented one language policy, bahasa Indonesia, as the lingua franca. This policy can be regarded as a form of language management carried out by the government to ensure peacefulness among people with diverse cultures and languages. So far, the language management in Indonesia has been conducted through top-down approach through large-scale language policy, such as the constitution. As stated in Article 36 C of the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia of the Year 1945 (UD 1945), provisions on the national flag, language, emblem and anthem are regulated in a law. As the implementation of this article, the government has issued Law No. 24/2009 which states that the Indonesian language, bahasa Indonesia, functions as an official language for transactions and commercial documents. To some extent, indigenous languages as well as foreign languages can be used to support the function of Bahasa Indonesia. In terms of public services, the use of indigenous language can be used alongside bahasa Indonesia. However, the usage of bahasa Indonesia should be prioritized. For instance, in a banner or flyer which is written in two languages, bahasa Indonesia and an indigenous language, prioritization is shown through the use of bigger font size for sentences written in bahasa Indonesia and smaller font size for sentences written in the indigenous language.

Literally, indigenous language can be defined as the language that belongs to a particular place rather than coming to it from somewhere else (Oxford University Press, 2020). Language is not only a means of communication, but it also functions as the representation of an ethnic identity. Language is a vital part of, and fundamentally linked to, indigenous people's ways of life, culture, and identities. Language is the manifestation of indigenous values and concepts and contains indigenous people's histories and development. They are fundamental markers of indigenous peoples' distinctiveness and cohesiveness as peoples (United Nations General Assembly paper, 2012).

Widely known and written in various literature as *Marind* (Eberhard et al., 2020; Daniel et al., 2019; Olsson, 2017; Hogg & Baal, 1968; Watkins et al., 1951) or in the local dialect called as *Malind-Anim*, Marind language is a language spoken by the Malind-Anim people, the native tribe of Merauke, Papua. Located in the easternmost tip of Papua island, Merauke is bordering directly with Papua New Guinea. It is the largest regency in Indonesia which covers the area of 46.791,63 with the population of 213.484 ([BPS] Badan Pusat Statistik, 2019). However, only 72.554 or 33% of the population are the native tribe. Furthermore, the lingua franca used in daily interaction among the multi-tribe people living in Merauke is Bahasa Indonesia. The Marind (Malind-Anim) people use their mother tongue in their familiar domains (home, family, and friends), while they use bahasa Indonesia in official domains such as school, church, and

government, and public offices (Sohn et al., 2009). Hence, the Marind language is hardly used in the daily conversation among the people outside the local community.

The United Nations Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) stated that languages are the important part of world's cultural heritage. However, these languages are in vulnerable state. The United Nations (UN) Resolution 56/262 and UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity both emphasize the urgency to take action in order to promote linguistic diversity as part of the world's cultural diversity. Linguistic diversity is a benchmark of cultural diversity (MacPherson et al., 2001). Cultural diversity is an essential of human civilization which can be regarded as a heritage for further generations (Brenzinger et al., 2003).

Over the past 50 years, because of the great number of the indigenous language loss, the preservation and revitalization of language had gain scholarly attention. Language loss is the indicator of the cultural extinction. A way of life disappears with the death of a language (MacPherson et al., 2001). There are several reasons why the indigenous language had begun to disappear, such as urbanization, globalization, cultural mixing, economic expansions, inter-ethnic marriages, political centralization, education, mass media, and the internet. The language loss phenomenon also can be occurred if the speakers do not use the language, or do some effort to passed down the language to the younger generation. Krauss (1992) argued that if there is no process of transmitting a language to the younger generations, then this language can be considered as an endangered language, and on the verge of extinction.

Language preservation can be described as necessary efforts taken by the stakeholders such as the government, community members, or educational institution in order to maintain the sustainability of a certain language.

METHOD

This study aimed to discover the preservation effort which was done by the stakeholders in Merauke regency to maintain the existence of the Marind or Malind-Anim language (henceforth, Marind language). The method used in this research was a survey which can be categorized as descriptive qualitative. This method was used to describe and interpret the objects in accordance with reality. Bogdan & Biklen (2003) stated that qualitative research is descriptive because the data is collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The real data gathered from the field was about the existence of Marind language and the preservation efforts. The researcher collected the data in the form of pictures which was taken during the field survey, and excerpts taken from documents gathered through library study. The results of this data collection then processed based on the parts adjusted for the purpose of research to be answered. The results of this data coding were then analyzed descriptively by combining the finding and the concepts used in this research, other studies, as well as other supporting data obtained from various media.

FINDINGS

The portrait of Marind language

This part of the paper discusses about the portrait of Marind language in general. Based on the observation in the field, it can be seen that Bahasa Indonesia functions as a lingua franca, and is used in the daily communication among the citizen of Merauke. The use of Bahasa Indonesia is intended to bridge the communication among the multi-ethnics in Merauke Regency. For instance, during the transaction or bargaining between seller and buyer at the market, people used

Bahasa Indonesia instead of Marind language. Marind is the indigenous tribe of Merauke. Marind people proudly called themselves as, anim – ha/ [ʌnim- ha], “the genuine human being”. The Marind tribe has nine sub-tribes: Yeinan, Kanum, Nggawib, Langhub, malind, Saghuwab, Mbian, Maklew, Kimaam. These tribes spread across the 20 districts in Merauke Regency. Each tribe has its own dialect. However, this research focused on the largest tribe cluster, Marind.

Based on the Ethnologue database, the status of Marind language is categorized as threatened. It means that the language is still used in face to face communication within all generations in the community (intra-ethnic communication), but the number of the language user is decreasing (Eberhard et al., 2020). Therefore, it can be predicted that this language will soon be extinct if the stakeholders do not take immediate action to preserve the language.

4/15/2020 Marind | Ethnologue

Ethnologue
Languages of the World

Marind

LANGUAGE

A language of Indonesia

ISO 639-3	miz
Alternate Names	Gawir, Hollfoersch, Southeast Marind, Tugeri
User Population	7,000 (1987 SIL).
Location	Papua province: Merauke regency south coast area; also, enclave in extreme south Papua.
Language Status	6b (Threatened).
Classification	Trans-New Guinea , Marind , Nuclear Marind
Dialects	Gawir, Southeast Marind, Tugeri, Hollfoersch. Significant differences between inland and coastal dialects, but speakers report intelligibility.
Typology	SOV; 4 genders (male human, female human, 2 neuters (inanimate)); 18 prefixal and 2 suffixal positions on the verb stem; aspect; 19 consonants and 5 vowels.
Language Use	Vigorous. Home, market. Some young people, all adults. Children in towns have passive ability. Positive attitudes. Used as L2 by Morori (mōk), Yei (jəj).
Language Development	Dictionary. Grammar.
Language Resources	OLAC resources in and about Marind
Writing	Latin script (Latin), in development.
Other Comments	Christian, traditional religion.

Figure 1. Marind (Malind – Anim) language (Eberhard et al., 2020)

Considering the importance of the indigenous language, the existence of the indigenous language should be maintained across generations. The existence of Marind language position among all the living languages in the world can be seen in Figure 2 below. The Marind language is represented in a large colored dot.

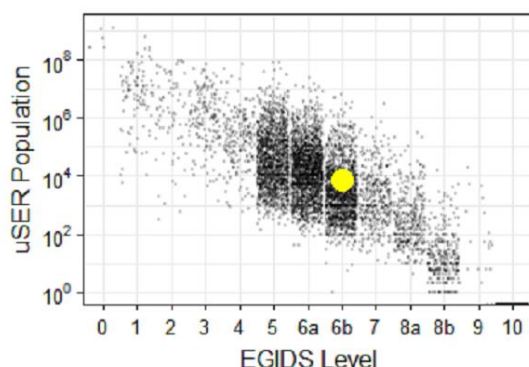


Figure 2 *Marind (Malind – Anim)* Language’s vitality (Eberhard et al., 2020)

The vertical axis represents the number of language users population, plotted on a logarithmic scale, where $10^0 = 1$; $10^2 = 100$; $10^4 = 10,000$; $10^6 = 1,000,000$; $10^8 = 100,000,000$, while the horizontal axis represents the level of language development or endangerment, represented in The Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (EGIDS) which was developed by Lewis & Simons (2010). The largest user’s population and the strongest language is at the upper left of the graph. Meanwhile, the smallest and weakest language (on the verge of extinction) is at the lower right of the graph. Each language in the world is represented by small dots scattered along the grid. The language existence is presented in large colored dots: purple, blue, green, yellow, red, and black. Each color represents the development level of the language (Eberhard et al., 2020).

- a) Purple = Institutional (EGIDS 0-4) means the language has been developed to the point that it is used and sustained by institutions beyond the home and community
- b) Blue = Developing (EGIDS 5) means the language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable
- c) Green = Vigorous (EGIDS 6a) means the language is unstandardized and in vigorous use among all generations
- d) Yellow = In trouble (EGIDS 6b-7) means Intergenerational transmission is in the process of being broken, but the child-bearing generation can still use the language. it is possible that revitalization efforts could restore transmission of the language in the home
- e) Red = Dying (EGIDS 8a-9) means the only fluent users (if any) are older than child-bearing age, so it is too late to restore natural intergenerational transmission through the home; a mechanism outside the home would need to be developed
- f) Black = Extinct (EGIDS 10), means the language has fallen completely out of use and no-one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language (Eberhard et al., 2020).

As can be seen in the Language cloud graph in figure 2 above, Marind (Malind – Anim) Language EGIDS score is 6b, and represented in a yellow dot. It means that although the language is “threaten to extinct”, but it still can be saved if all the stakeholders are aware and willing to take action to preserve the language.

Preservation Efforts of Marind Language in Mearuke Regency

Educational Policy

The local government of Merauke Regency had released a regional regulation (Peraturan Daerah) No. 3 Year 2018 about The Educational management and Administration in Merauke Regency. The code of conduct related to the use of Marind Language in Educational context can be seen in the Perda No.3 Year 2018 Chapter V Article No. 89 as follows:

- [1] formal and non-formal education units are required to teach local content subjects of Malind Anim language, the culture and the customary law of Malind Anim.
- [2] the curriculum of local content subject of Malind Anim language, the culture and the customary law of Malind Anim as referred to in verse (1) is prepared and prescribed by the local government.
- [3] The textbooks and local enrichment textbooks of local content of Malind Anim language, culture and customary law of Malind Anim as referred to in verse (1) are required to obtain authorization from the local government.
- [4] The local content subject of Malind Anim language, the culture and the customary law of Malind Anim as referred to in verse (1) can be integrated with other subjects.
- [5] The local content subject of Malind Anim language, the culture and the customary law of Malind Anim as referred to in verse (1) are directed to develop students' character.
- [6] The local governments are required to prepare and provide teaching staff /teachers of local content subject of Malind anim language, the culture, and the customary law of Malind Anim.
- [7] Further provisions on the local content subject of Malind Anim language, the culture and the customary law of Malind Anim as referred to in verses (2), (3),(4), (5), and (6) above, will be regulated in Regional regulation (Peraturan Daerah).

This regulation can be regarded as one of the preservation efforts conducted by the local government of Merauke Regency to protect the sustainability of Marind language. If this regulation can be fully conducted, it can prevent the Marind language loss, and maintain not only the language sustainability but also the culture and the customary law of Malind-Anim tribe.

Based on the data taken from the Indonesian ministry of education (Kemdikbud,2020), in Merauke Regency, there are 213 Elementary Schools, consists of 112 state schools and 101 private schools. The total number of Junior high school is 62 schools, consists of 42 state schools and 20 private schools. At the high school level there are 23 high schools consists of 13 state schools and 10 private schools. Meanwhile, the total number of vocational high schools is 15 schools, consists of 11 state schools and 4 private schools.

However, this policy has not been carried out properly. The major problem is the lack of teaching staffs. Some of the schools have tried to carry out the Marind language teaching program as a part of local content by empowering the teacher from Malind-Anim tribe background. The second major problem is the lack of teaching materials. Marind language is a language without a writing system, and there are not many documentations of the language. The language is passed down from generation to generation orally.

Language habituation

From the observation in the field, the researcher also found out that there is also another effort except from educational means conducted by the local government of Merauke Regency in order

to preserve the indigenous language, Marind. The model of the preservation effort can be called “language habituation”. Habituation is a form of learning. When an individual continuously exposes to particular knowledge, then he will gradually acquire the knowledge.

The most visible example of Marind language usage is written in Merauke Regency’s emblem. As shown in the picture below, there are 11 symbols in the emblem. One of which is the slogan of Merauke Regency written in Marind language at the bottom part of the emblem, “*Izakod Bekai Izakod Kai*”. In English, it can be interpreted as “One heart, one common goal”. It symbolizes the spirit of togetherness, and the spirit of nationalism of the people to unite towards a common goal. United in diversity, and acknowledge the differences in unity.



Figure 3 Merauke Regency’s Emblem

The meaning of the terms is as follows:

Marind (Malind – Anim)	Indonesia	English
<i>Izakod</i> : [ɪzɑʼkod]	<i>Satu</i>	One
<i>Bekai</i> : [bɛkɑɪ]	<i>Hati</i>	Heart
<i>Kai</i> : [kɑɪ]	<i>Jalan/tujuan</i>	Path / Goal

Another example is the greeting used by the regent’s official in every formal gathering or social events in public spaces. At the opening speech, the speaker will greet the audience by saying “*namek, namuk. Entago?*”, and the audience will replay “*wanningap ka*”.

Marind	Indonesia	English
<i>Namek</i> : [nɑmɛk]	<i>Saudara (laki – laki)</i>	Brother (masculine)
<i>Namuk</i> : [nɑmuk]	<i>Saudara (Perempuan)</i>	Sister (feminine)
<i>Entago</i> : [ʼɛntɑgo]	<i>Apa kabar</i>	How are you
<i>Wanningap</i> : [wɑnɪŋgɑp]	<i>Baik</i>	Fine /Good
<i>Ka</i> : [kɑ:]		Just

The following picture is the logo of Merauke Regency’s 118 anniversary in 2020. As can be seen in Figure 4 below, the theme of the celebration is written in Marind language. *Makep*

Kwahvus Mba Ihzakod “ Malind Anim Ti “ Almasu Mba Haedeh Kame Ai. It can be interpreted as “Going forward together with "Malind Anim" Towards a Prosperous Merauke”. The local government of Merauke strives to use Marind as much as possible at every opportunity so that the entire Merauke community consisting of various ethnic tribes is more familiar with the Marind language, not just the Malind-Anim tribe.



Figure 4 Merauke Regency’s 118 anniversary logo

The famous landmark, University, and government buildings are also named in Marind language. For instance, sports center *Hiad sai* [hiad sai], office building at Wasur National park *Bomi sai* [bomi - sai], and *Musamus* [musamus] University. The military task force also named in Marind language. The army battalion 755 based in Merauke regency is called *yalet* [yaleʔ] means “fierce /strict”. The military territorial command of Merauke Regency (KOREM) is called *Animti- waninggap* [animti- waniŋgap] means “being kind to others”.

Broadcasting Media

Mass Media is considered as the main institution functions to facilitate dialogue and provide relevant information to the citizens. Community members can get a better understanding of their society through the news and messages provided by these media. Nowadays, the term broadcasting media covers a wide range of various communication methods which include podcasts, websites, online streaming media, radio, and television. Due to the lack of communication network facilities in Merauke, as well as the challenging landscape, radio is one of the broadcasting media that is quite capable of conveying information to the public in Merauke Regency. Radio broadcasts can reach remote areas that do not have internet networks.

Radio Republik Indonesia, Radio of the Republic of Indonesia, abbreviated RRI is the oldest radio station in Indonesia. It is the state radio network which has several stations broadcast all over Indonesia and overseas. In general, RRI offers a maximum of four main stations in a region. However, in Merauke, there are only three main stations:

- a) Channel Pro 1. This channel is a national simulcast. RRI Pro 1 is known as regional Radio, Channel of Inspiration. It serves as a community empowerment center for the rural, urban, mountainous and industrial communities. It mainly broadcasts local news and education as well as music for 19 hours a day, from 5 am to midnight local time.
- b) Channel Pro 2. RRI pro 2 is transmitted locally, producing local programs as well as relaying programs from RRI central station in Jakarta. It is known as music and entertainment radio, Voice of Creativity. It serves as a youth creativity center for the teenager urban contemporary

community. It mainly broadcasts music, entertainment, and lifestyle programming for 19 hours a day, from 5 am to midnight local time.

- c) Channel Pro 3. RRI pro 3 is known as news and talk radio, Voice of Indonesian Identity. It relays directly from RRI central station. It broadcasts 24-hour news, current affairs, and talk programming nationally supplemented by reports from local RRI stations.

As a public broadcasting institution, RRI has played a significant role in unifying the nation since it was established in 1945. In order to preserve and introduce the Marind language and culture to the young generation, one of its stations, RRI Pro 2 Merauke has a special show dedicated to broadcast the Marind Culture. During the show, the broadcaster shares some information or topic related to Marind culture, and plays the song performed in Marind language. Sometimes, the program also offers comedy shows. This program is broadcasted every Wednesday, at 19.00 WIT (Eastern Indonesian Time).

RRI Pro 2 also names their program in Marind language. For instance, the *Manemna Show*. In Marind language, *Manemna* means telling stories. This is a talk show where the source or invited guest shares stories about anything from all aspects such as lifestyles, education, entrepreneurship, art, and many more. This show is broadcasted every Thursday, at 16.00 WIT (Eastern Indonesian Time). During the Covid – 19 Pandemic, RRI also actively promoted health and safety precaution which broadcasted in Bilingual, in Bahasa Indonesia and Marind language as well.

Language Documentation

The term “language documentation” used in this section is to describe the efforts that have been made by the government, society, cultural practitioner, and language observers to archive the Marind language in the form of written manuscripts. To prevent the Marind language loss, the local government of Merauke Regency through the Department of Culture and Tourism alongside with the cultural practitioner had tried to archive the Marind language in a dictionary. However, it is only distributed in limited circle in Merauke, and has not been published and distributed widely. The book entitled “Etnolinguistik: Kamus Bahasa Malind Jilid I”, is a book written by Issaias Y. Ndiken a local cultural practitioner from Malind tribe. In the preface, he mentioned that in compiling the book, he did not emphasize the differences in cultural elements from each area of the distribution of various languages and dialects. Furthermore, he added that the cultural zone boundaries should not be an obstacle, the book is the solution to explain to the public to save the noble culture as a legacy of the ancestors (Ndiken, 2013). The book consists of seven chapters which include: the use of Marind language symbol and sound, a list of vocabularies, idioms, parts of speech, and Marind-Anim cultural philosophy.

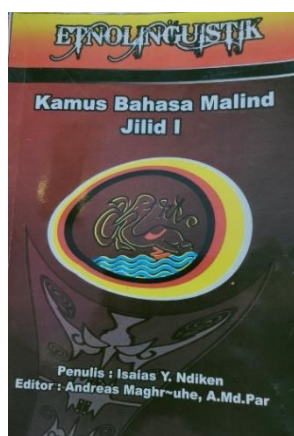


Figure 5 Dictionary of Marind Language

The documentation also can be seen in form of songs performed in Marind language. These songs were created by artists from the Malind Anim tribe and were disseminated through radio and local television broadcasting, as well as through online social media platforms such as YouTube, Spotify, and Facebook. The songs can be easily found by typing down the keywords such as “*lagu daerah Marind, Malind anim, animha, waninggap*” on the internet search engine. The local government of Merauke Regency through the Department of Youth and Sports in collaboration with the local artists also had created a workout exercise using the Marind songs. The workout is called “*senam animha*”. The songs used in this workout exercise entitled *Malind Milaf and Waninggap nanggo*.



Figure 6 Marind songs on YouTube Platform

CONCLUSION

The indigenous language is an integral part of cultural heritage. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that although the Marind language is on the verge of extinction, there is still hope that this language might still exist for further generations. The preservation efforts conducted by the local government by issuing policy (Perda) and forming the habit of using Marind language or language habituation should not be taken for granted. It is an essential stepping stone in preserving Marind language and should be supported by all the stakeholders. The active

participation of the Malind tribe artists and all the stakeholders in the society shows that the Marind language will continue to survive amidst modernization and globalization.

NOTE

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