A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF PHONETICS AND PHONEME IN *NGGAHI MBOJO* LANGUAGE IN *BIMA*, WEST NUSATENGGARA

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ABSTRACT

As one of many local languages that belong to Indonesia, Nggahi Mbojo language has become a very interesting subject to be researched for its characteristics and its uniqueness. This paper entitled A Descriptive Study of Phonetics and Phoneme in Nggahi Mbojo Language in Bima, West Nusatenggara deals with one of the major branches in linguistics, phonology. This paper aims at analysing the distribution of vowels and also consonants sounds in Nggahi Mbojo language. Furthermore, this research also aims at finding phonemes in Nggahi Mbojo langue. In order to achieve the aims of the study, this paper applies qualitative methodology research and uses referring method with recording and writing techniques (Mashun: 2000) to obtain the data. Qualitative methodology research is an interpretive and naturalistic approach: "This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). At the end of this study, it is known that there are seventeen consonant sounds and five vowel sounds in Nggahi Mbojo language. The consonants sounds are [b], [c], [f], [g], [h], [k], [l], [m], [n], [ŋ], [p], [r], [s], [t], [w], [j] and [?] while the vowel sounds are [a], [i], [u], [e], and [o]. Out of those vowel and consonant sounds in Nggahi Mbojo Language, fifteen sounds take role as phoneme. They consist of eleven consonant sounds and for vowel sounds. They are [a], [u], [e], and [o] for vowel sounds and [m], [n], [f], [ŋ], [p], [r], [w], [h], [d], [s], and [r] for consonant sounds.

Keywords: *Nggahi Mbojo Language, vowel sound, consonant sound, phoneme*

INTRODUCTION

The republic of Indonesia or used to be shortly known as Indonesia is a nation that is located in Southeast Asia. Geographically, this nation is flanked by two oceans, Hindi and Pacific oceans and two continents, Australia and Asia. In the declaration of Djuanda on December, 13th 1957, it was said that Indonesian is a nation that adheres the principles of archipelago state (Ardiansyah, 2011:118). The expanse of archipelago of Indonesia lays down from Sabang in the west to Merauke in the east and from Miangas in the north to Rote in the south. According to the ministry of internal affair and Yulius (2009:44) this nation consists of 17.504 islands.

The geography condition of Indonesia has made this country or this nation own various kinds of culture. As a multicultural nation, Indonesia has various kinds of tribes and also languages. Na'im and Syahputra (2010) in the book of Kewarganegaraan, *Suku Bangsa, Agama, dan Bahasa Sehari-Hari Penduduk Indonesia (Hasil Sensus Penduduk 2010)* say that there are 1300 local tribes while Pitoyo and Triwahyudi (2017:65) state that there are 633 local tribes inhabit the archipelago in Indonesia. Every local tribe that lives in Indonesia certainly has their own local language, noted that there are at least 746 local languages in Indonesia, four hundred languages or sixty percent of local language in Indonesia are used by people who live in the eastern region of Indonesia, specifically in the province of Papua and West Papua, 132 local languages in Maluku and North Maluku, and at least forty local languages are found in East Nusa Tenggara (Dharma, 2011:2).

These local languages that belong to this nation certainly need a special attention from the government of Indonesia. This kind of action needs to be done in order to avoid the extinction of the local language, itself. Language extinction or usually known as language death is condition or situation in which one particular or specific language is no longer spoken by anyone as their main language, or a language, such as Latin, that is no longer learned as a native language by a speech community. This may happen when the last speaker of a language dies, the language too will die. In certain case, Sometimes it is not necessary to wait for the last speaker to die before considering the language as dead because the last speaker has no one to speak to fluently or frequently. So, the language is extinct, as good as dead (Isa, Ahmed, & Grema, 2014: 46).

Preventing language death or language extinction is very substantial because if there is any particular language has been declared extinct, then it also has an impact on the extinction of the culture and also science in it. As for efforts that can be done to avoid these local languages from extinction are not only incorporating regional subject into curriculum and revitalization but also documentation (Yati, 2015) and Hinton (2011: 291—293).

Language revitalization is an attempt to restore endangered languages at a better level of use in society after a decline in use Hinton (2011: 291-293) while language documentation is a record of multipurpose and eternal language (Himmelmann, 2006: 1-5). Documentation of one particular language could be done in several ways. One of the many ways in documenting one particular language is the inventory of sounds or phonology inventory. This inventory act could be established by conducting an analysis of phonetic and phoneme that belong to this language. Phonetics is a discipline of linguistics that focuses on the study of the sounds used in speech (László, 2014). Meanwhile, phoneme is the smallest general phonetic unit of a given language which can be associated with sense notions and can differentiate words (Cooper, 1993). One of the many local languages that need to be preserved and documented is *Nggahi Mbojo* language in Bima, West Nusatenggara Province, Indonesia.

Nggahi Mbojo language is a local language or regional language that is commonly use by people in Bima, West Nusatenggara Province, Indonesia. West Nusatenggara province is a province in the republic of Indonesia that is located in 115° 46' east longitude – 119°'5 west longitude and $8^{o}10$' - 9°'5 south latitude. This province borders on Java and Flores sea in the north, Hindi ocean in the south, Lombok strait and Bali Province in the west, and Sape strait and east Nusa Tenggara Province in the east. This province covers ten districts. They are Dompu Regency, Bima Regency, West Lombok Regency, Central Lombok Regency, East Lombok Regency, North Lombok Regency, Sumbawa Regency, West Sumbawa Regency, Bima City and City of Mataram. In West Nusatenggara Province, Indonesia, this language is mostly used by residents who inhabit the Bima district and Dompu district, and include the Bima-Sumba language groups (Erwin, Wayan, & Arifin, 2013).

This paper entitled **A Descriptive Study of Phonetics and Phoneme in *Nggahi Mbojo* Language in *Bima*, West Nusatenggara** aims to first, analyzing and finding out the what vowel and consonant sounds that belong to *Nggahi Mbojo* language and second, figuring out what phonemes that are owned by this regional language.

The preservation and documentation of one particular language is extremely substantial because language has a very close relationship with culture so that they cannot be separated, because it is so closely connected between language and culture and without language, our culture will die (Yati; 2015). This statement is in line with Purwo (2000: 3) who says that language is the foundation of culture and most cultures are contained in language and expressed through language, not through other means. There are several ways that could possibly conducted, in order to preserve and document one particular language, such as incorporating regional subject into curriculum, revitalization and documentation (Yati: 2015) and Hinton (2011: 291—293). In making a documentation of phonological

features that belongs to one specific language, in this case *Nggahi Mbojo* langage in Bima, it is important to explain some particular theories that are related to the goals or aims of this study. There are two basic theories that are very substantial for this study. First is theory about phonetic and the second is theory about phoneme.

Phonetics is a discipline of linguistics that focuses on the study of on how the sounds are used in speech. It is not concerned with the meaning of these sounds, the order in which they are placed, or any other factor outside of how they are produced and heard, and their various properties. There are three major subfields of phonetics; each of them focuses on a particular aspect of how the sounds are used in speech and communication. First, auditory phonetics is concern with how people perceive the sounds they hear. Second is acoustic phonetics that looks at the waves involved in speech sounds and how they are interpreted by the human ear, and third is articulator phonetics that studies how sounds are produced by the human vocal apparatus. This third subfield is where the majority of people begin their study, and it has uses for many people outside of the field of linguistics, such as speech therapists, computer speech synthesizers, and people who are simply interested in learning how they make the sounds they do (László: 2014).

Phoneme is the smallest general phonetic unit of a given language which can be associated with sense notions and can differentiate words (Cooper: 1993). It's the smallest unit of sound that distinguishes one word from another. The phoneme can adequately be also be regarded as one of the most important concepts of linguistics, perhaps the most important one after the concept of the morpheme, the minimal linguistic union of signifié (signified) and signifiant (signifier)—the signe (sign).

This study applies qualitative methodology research. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) stated that qualitative methodology is an interpretive and naturalistic approach: "This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative methodology research is chosen to be applied in this study because qualitative research method is a method that is used to answer research problems related to narrative data derived from interview activities and document observation and qualitative research is a research procedure that produces a descriptive data in the form of utterance or text and people's behavior observed (Rahmat: 2009) and (Wahidmurni: 2017) while in colleting all the data that are needed this study uses referring method (Mahsun: 2000).

There are several steps that have been taken to collect all the data used in this study. The first step is determining the native speaker of *Nggahi Mbojo* langage. The speaker in this study is a fifty seven year-old man. His name is Mukmin Rawi Pahu. He was chosen to be the

speaker in this study due to several reasons. First, he is a native speaker of *Nggahi Mbojo* langage. Second, he was born and grew up in a society that used *Nggahi Mbojo* langage as their mother tongue. Third, he still uses this regional language to communicate with his family and the last is because he still often goes to his hometown. The second steps that were taken in conducting this study is finding out and also collecting the two hundred basic words of *swadesh*. Third is recording the speaker while he was pronouncing all the basic words of *swadesh* in *Nggahi Mbojo* language. Fourth is transcription his pronunciation into international phonetic alphabets and the last is analyzing the vowel and consonant sounds, and finding out the phoneme. Several techniques are needed in order to accomplish all the following steps above, the techniques are recording and writing technique.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

There are fifty seven consonant sounds and sixteen vowel sounds according to international phonetic alphabets. The consonants sounds that are noted in the international phonetics alphabet or IPA are [p], [b], [m], [B], [ɸ], [β], [ɱ], [f], [v], [ʋ], [], [Ɵ], [t], [d], [n], [r], [ɾ], [s], [z], [ɬ], [ɮ], [ɹ], [l], [ʃ], [ʒ], [t], [d], [ɳ], [ɽ], [ʂ], [ʐ], [l], [c], [ɟ], [ɲ], [ç], [ɟ], [j], [ʎ], [k], [g], [N], [R], [χ], [ʁ], [ħ], [ʕ], [ʔ], [h], and [ɦ], then these consonants sound are grouped according to on how these consonant sounds are pronounced and the position of the articulators as shown in the table below:

	bila bial	Labiod ental	den tal	Alve olar	Postalv eolar	retrof lex	pala tal	Ve lar	Uvu lar	pharyn geal	glot tal
Plosive	p b			t ð		t ɖ	c ɟ	k g	q g		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		N		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	N		
Trill	b			R					R		
tap or flap				ɾ		ɽ					
Fricativ e	ɸ β	f v	θ …	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç j	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approxi mant		ʋ		ɹ			J	ɰ			
lateral approxi mant				L		ɭ	ʎ	L			

Table 1 Distribution of Consonant Sounds in IPA

For the vowel sounds, there are sixteen vowel sounds according to international phonetic alphabets. Those vowel sounds are [i], [ɨ], [u], [I], [ʊ], [e], [o], [ə], [ɛ]. [ɜ], [ʌ], [ɔ], [a], [ɑ],

and [ɒ] . Different as with consonant sounds whose distribution is in the form of a table, the distribution of vowel sound is shown in the form of a picture below:

Figure 3 Distribution of vowel sounds according to International Phonetics Alphabet

In *Nggahi Mbojo* language, there are only seventeen consonant sounds. Those consonant sounds are [b], [c], [f], [g], [h], [k], [l], [m], [n], [ŋ], [p], [r], [s], [t], [w], [j], and [ʔ]. These consonant sounds are found in the words below:

[b]	/ka-lu-**b**u/	[ŋ]	/ma**ŋ**-go-ja/
[c]	/**c**a-ci/	[p]	/a-**p**u/
[f]	/a-**f**i/	[r]	/ŋa-**r**i/
[g]	/ŋ**g**o-mi/	[s]	/**s**a-baʔ-a/
[h]	/na-**h**u/	[t]	/mbo-**t**o/
[k]	/lo-**k**o/	[w]	/**w**a-ri/
[l]	/**l**i-ro/	[j]	/si-**j**a/
[m]	/a-**m**u/	[ʔ]	/ka-**ʔ**a/
[n]	/**n**a-e/		

Out of fifty seven consonant sounds, there are only seventeen consonant sounds in *Nggahi Mbojo* language in Bima, West Nusatenggara province, Indonesia. As for the distribution of consonant sounds in *Nggahi Mbojo* language according to how these consonant sounds are pronounced and the position of the articulators as shown in the table below:

	bila bial	Labiod ental	den tal	Alve olar	Postalv eolar	retrof lex	pala tal	Ve lar	Uvu lar	pharyn geal	glot tal
Plosive	p b			t ð			c	k g			ʔ
Nasal	M			N				Ŋ			
Trill				R							
tap or flap											

		F	Đ					ħ	
Fricative		F	Đ					ħ	
lateral fricative									
Approximant						J			
lateral approximant			L						

Table 2 Distribution of consonant sound in Nggahi Mbojo Language in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia

Vowel sounds in *Nggahi Mbojo* language are [a], [i], [u], [e], and [o] It shows that out of sixteen vowel sounds in international phonetic alphabets, *Nggahi Mbojo* language in Bima, West Nusatenggara province, Indonesia only has five. The example of the distribution of vowel sound and in this local language can be seen in the example and picture below:

[a] : /**a**-mu/
[i] : /**a**ŋi/
[e] : /ŋ**e**-ŋe/
[e] : /**u**-fi/
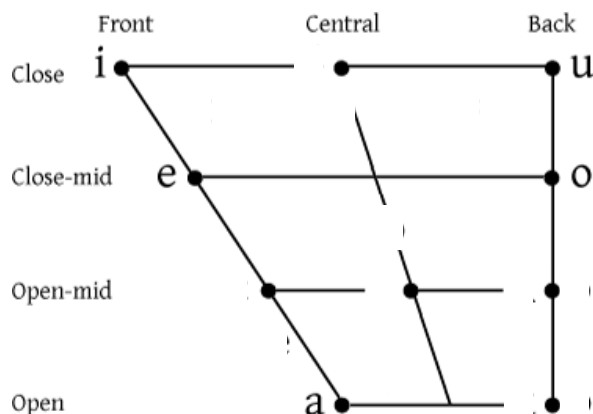[o] : /ŋg**o**-mi/

Figure 4 Distribution of vowel sounds in Nggahi Mbojo Language in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia

The distribution of vowel and consonant in *Nggahi Mbojo* language has completely shown the number of vowel and consonant sound in this regional language. This regional language that belongs to Indonesia has five vowel sounds and seventeen consonant sounds. However, it does not necessarily mean that all vowel sounds and consonant sounds that belong to this regional language are phonemes. There are only few sounds that may have a function as phoneme or the smallest unit of sound that distinguishes one word from another (Cooper: 1993). These phonemes can be gotten by finding a minimal pairs in *Nggahi Mbojo* Language. Out of two hundred *swadesh* words that have been translated into *Nggahi Mbojo* Language, there are twelve minimal pairs that can be found in this regional language. Those minimal pairs show what and how many phonemes that belongs to this regional language. Those minimal pairs are /a-m**a**/ and /a-m**u**/ for phonemes [a] and [u], /a-**m**a/ and /a-**n**a/ for phoemes   [m]   and   [n],   /a-**f**i/   and   /a-

ŋi/ for phonemes [f] and [ŋ], /a-*p*u/ and /a-*m*u/ for phoneme [p], /wu-*r*a/ and /wu-*w*a/ for phonemes [r] and [w], /i-*n*a/ and /i-*h*a/ for phoneme [h], /a-k*a*/ and /a-k*e*/ for phoneme [e], /u-*d*a/ and /u-*p*a/ for phoneme [d], /a-*n*a/ and /a-*s*a/ for phoneme [s], /do-*r*o/ and /do-*h*o/ for phoneme [r], /w*o*-i/ and /w*e*-i/ for phoneme [o], and /u-da/ with /u-ta/ for phoneme [t]. hence, it is known that there are [a], [u], [m], [n], [f], [ŋ], [p], [r], [w], [h], [e], [d], [s], [r], and [o] that take role as phoneme in *Nggahi Mbojo* Language in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The analysis above has shown that out of fifty seven consonants sounds that are valid globally in *International Phonetics Alphabet*, *Nggahi Mbojo* Language has seventeen consonant sounds while out of sixteen vowel sounds, *Nggahi Mbojo* Language has five vowel sounds. For consonant sounds, this regional language has [b], [c], [f], [g], [h], [k], [l], [m], [n], [ŋ], [p], [r], [s], [t], [w], [j] and [ʔ] while for vowel sounds this language has [a], [i], [u], [e], and [o]. Out of those vowel and consonant sounds in *Nggahi Mbojo* Language, fifteen sounds take role as phoneme. They consist of eleven consonant sounds and for vowel sounds. They are [a], [u], [e], and [o] for vowel sounds and [m], [n], [f], [ŋ], [p], [r], [w], [h], [d], [s], and [r] for consonant sounds.

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