Minority languages in Indonesia: Challenges and Opportunities

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Introduction
Different proportions of Languages and Speakers in Indonesian regions

Papua

Java, Bali, Madura
700+ languages in Indonesia

24% in PNG

76% in Australia
No of languages 2013 & 2050
Languages & grammatical descriptions

![Bar chart showing the comparison between languages and descriptions. The chart indicates a significant difference in the number of languages and descriptions.]

- Series 1
Is this a problem?

• How does a language die?
• Whose problem?
  – Speakers?
  – Their children?
  – Local government?
  – National government?
• Why?
• Challenges for speakers?
Against Minority Language

– Low status
– Unwritten
– Restricted domains: home, ‘old’ rituals
– Not used in school and media
Pro Indonesian

– High standard: language of education, media, government
– Parents speak Indonesian/Malay to their children because they believe this provides better opportunities
– More children acquire Indonesian as first language
Sumba

• 12,300 square kilometers = half of Belgium
• 320,000 inhabitants
• Languages:
  1. Kambera 150,000
  2. Weyewa 75,000
  3. Kodi 40,000
  4. Lamboya 15,000
  5. Wanukaka 10,000
  6. Anakalang 14,000
  7. Mamboru 16,000
Sumba
Pantar
Pantar

- 693 square km = the size of Singapore
- 40,000 inhabitants
- Languages:
  1. Teiwa 4000
  2. Western Pantar 10000
  3. Alorese 5000 (+ 10000 on Alor)
  4. Blagar 5000 (+ 5000 on Pura)
  5. Nedebang 200?
  6. Kaera 5500
  7. Bajau 300?
  8. Reta?
Pantar

- Small area, many languages
- Mostly Papuan languages
- Small speaker groups (average 2,500)
- Often several languages in 1 village
- Several languages in 1 primary school
- Some languages recently got an orthography
- Two languages have dictionaries
Sumba

• Large area, larger speaker groups (av. 45,000 speakers)
• Typically 1 language in 1 village
• 1 minority language in primary school
• Most of the languages had orthographies since the 1930’s thanks to Louis Onvlee’s work
• Bibles, hymn books, dictionaries of everyday and ritual speech, children’s primers, etc. etc.
Observations

• Linguists and missionaries provide materials but speakers don’t use them
• Primary schools prefer using Indonesian
• Teacher(s) are often from other islands and do not speak the local language
• Parents disfavour bringing up their children in local language
What linguists cannot do

• Change language attitude of communities
• Change school teachers
• Change language use of parents
• Change the influence of Indonesian
What linguists can do

• Support education of young local speakers by finding funds for:
  – University training in Kupang (Timor)
  – Extra training in English
  – Do an MA or PhD in Linguistics abroad

• Support university staff teaching linguistics by inviting them for workshops and conferences

• Develop orthographies
What linguists can do

• Archive language materials
• Make these materials available to speakers
• Language Archive of Insular South East Asia and West New Guinea (LAISEANG)
Language Archive of Insular South East Asia and New Guinea (LAISEANG)

• Preserve unique records of languages and the cultures encapsulated by them.

• Compile and archive language multimedia materials and written documents from over 50 languages in Insular South East Asia and West New Guinea.
Language Archive of Insular South East Asia and New Guinea (LAISEANG)

- Digitization:
  - Convert older recordings into WAV files
  - Scan paper materials and converting them into PDF files
- Compile metadata descriptions of language resources
- Store materials in The Language Archive at the Max Planck Institute in Nijmegen, NL.
- Make materials available online
LAISEANG languages
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>K</th>
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<td>1988 U Daud Maramba</td>
<td>Holle List (part)</td>
<td>In schrijfblok</td>
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<td>In schrijfblok</td>
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<td>1988 U Daud Maramba</td>
<td>(i) sentences and short story (ii) words (trans: getyp); In schrijfblok</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_02b</td>
<td>1988 U Daud Maramba</td>
<td>(i) minimal pairs (ii) Holle lists</td>
<td>In schrijfblok</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_03a</td>
<td>40/04/1988 U Daud Maramba</td>
<td>(i) nominal phrases/compounds; Holle lists (i) Exercisebook 88-2</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_03b</td>
<td>01-04-1988, 08-04-1988 U Daud Maramba (i), II, U Makaborang Watuwaya (ii), G</td>
<td>(i) sequel to The lost Son (ii) The Poor and The Exercisebook 88-1 (i) Verhaal A, (ii) Verhaal B, (iii) Verhaal C, (iv) Verhaal D</td>
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<td>1988 Grandfather Watuwaya, Daud Maramba; U. L. Watuwaya</td>
<td>(i) sequel to story (ii) reduplication (from 4 min); (iii) history of Wal Marang (from 8:19 min); (iv) minimal pairs (from 26:50)</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_04b</td>
<td>1988 U Daud Maramba</td>
<td>(i) sequel to translation of story grandfather (ii) reduplication old compounds (from 25 min)</td>
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<td>19/02/1981 R. Mitin (P); U. Tey (T); R. Danga (R); R. Hudang (H); L</td>
<td>(i) Conversation (ii) Religious speech with quiet Notebook</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>h.v, iv, jv</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_05b</td>
<td>19/02/1981 R. Mitin (P); U. Tey (T)</td>
<td>Sequel of Prayer</td>
<td>Green Notebook</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_06a</td>
<td>21-02-1991, 01-03-1991 R. Paki, R. T. i. l. M. Li; I. M. Li</td>
<td>(i) conversation at home (ii) watching pictures</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_07a</td>
<td>21/03/1991 Ibu Mitin</td>
<td>Personal narrative about the Japanese era</td>
<td>Smiling Face Notebook</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>g.v, m.v, n.v</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_07b</td>
<td>21-04-1991, (i) and (ii) R. Yama, R. A. Hamu, Ubu &amp; Bpk. Mitin (i) and (ii) L</td>
<td>(i) Conversation (ii) Process description</td>
<td>Smiling Face Notebook</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>g.v, m.v, n.v</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_08a</td>
<td>06/05/1991 U. Paki Malinya</td>
<td>Narrative ‘Li Ndai’ (Ancient story)</td>
<td>Young actress</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>o.v</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_08b</td>
<td>10/06/1991 U. Yama Maru Matu</td>
<td>Narrative ‘Pali Ndai’ (Old Lamp) Utterance</td>
<td>Brown Notebook</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>e.v</td>
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<td>KameraTape_1988_09a</td>
<td>11/06/1991 U. Yama Maru Matu</td>
<td>(i) Sequel narrative ‘Pali Ndai’ (Old Lamp) Utterance</td>
<td>Brown Notebook; Notebook L2 (2nd half)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>e.v; l.v</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_09b</td>
<td>26/01/1992 U. Pindu Jawa</td>
<td>Sorrow in church about John the Baptist (MiR)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>r.v</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_10a</td>
<td>26/01/1992 U. Ubu (H); U. Yina (Y); U. Raji (R); U. Pindu Jawa (P)</td>
<td>Meeting of congregation to discuss church at S</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>s.v</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_12a</td>
<td>17/02/1992 U. Tai Landu Parainga</td>
<td>Narrative ‘Mia Hauwa Uk’ (Flying Horse)</td>
<td>Q1 utterance 1-59, Q2 utterance 60-114</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>q.v</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_12b</td>
<td>17/02/1992 U. Tai Landu Parainga</td>
<td>Sequel ‘Ngia Hauwa’</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>q.v</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_13a</td>
<td>17/02/1992 U. Musa Maramba Hau</td>
<td>Narrative ‘Iwani’ (The name)</td>
<td>T1 utterance 1-68, T2 utterance 69-96</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>u.v</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>KameraTape_1988_13b</td>
<td>17/02/1992 U. Musa Maramba Hau</td>
<td>Narrative ‘Landu Niki’ (Landu Niki is a name)</td>
<td>U entire story</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>xxx</td>
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</table>

Additional utterances (written Feb 1990-March 1994)

Gentleman Notebook

yes

xxxx
Work Flow Overview

- LAMUS
- Import
- Export
- Remote Corpus
- Create
- Edit
- Local Corpus
- Add from favourites
- Add resources
- External editor
- Favourites
- Working Directories
The database
Lessons from the past

• Recordings (WAV / Mpeg-4) are extremely useful data for linguists, anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, historians.

• Metadata with recordings are essential: What? Where? When? Who?) are essential.

• A consistent system of archiving them will help future scholars in their search through cyberspace.
Open questions

• How can local communities benefit from language preservation techniques?
• What will be the role of internet?
• Should a language be documented when its speakers don’t mind it to disappear?
• Will researchers allow others to access and use their data?
The Language Archive (TLA)

• CLARIN-NL
• Leiden University Centre of Linguistics
• Max Planck Institute Nijmegen

• Data to archive? Google The Language Archive MPI or contact me (m.a.f.klamer@hum.leidenuniv.nl).