

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduced the focus of this study, outlining the research problem, its significance, and the objectives that guide the investigation. This chapter provided a foundation for understanding the context and rationale of the research before presenting detailed background information in the following section.

### **1.1 Background**

Language is a communication tool used by humans and there are various languages used to interact with each other. The common language is Indonesian and there are regional languages that can only be understood by people from each area. Indonesia which has 718 regional languages, and according to data from 2019, 11 of them have been declared extinct. From the data in 2021, 24 regional languages were declared to decline in terms of the number of speakers (UNESCO, 2024).

Uab Meto or Dawan is an Austronesian language spoken by the Atoni people of the Indonesian region. This language is from a tribe that is located in East Nusa Tenggara Province, South Central Timor. Dawan Language is used in almost all eastern lands or pah meto (dry land) society (Hajar 2020). Dawan Language is often called Uab Meto' by the speakers. In South Central Timor, the dawan language has three dialects, they are : Molo dialect, Amanuban dialects and Amanatun dialect.

Orthographic processing ability is the ability to understand orthographic forms in a language system that has a relationship between

writing and spelling. Orthography is a language writing system that involves the use of symbols in learning to facilitate reading, obtain information, so that the reader is motivated to read and write (Baird & Klamer, 2006).

Inconsistencies in orthography happen when a language does not apply spelling rules. As a result, features such as clitics, vowel length, possessive forms, and negation may be represented differently in writing, even when their function or sound is the same (Katz, L. & Frost, R., 1992). For instance, clitics might sometimes be written joined to their host word, separated by a space, or with a hyphen (Zwicky & Pullum, 1983). Long and short vowels are not always marked consistently, which can lead to ambiguity (Cahill & Rice, 2014). Possessive constructions and negation markers can also vary in their written forms depending on context or tradition (Crystal, 2003; Payne, 1997).

The researcher found that there are inconsistencies in writing system of clitic, long vowels, possessive, and negation in Sulat Knino Beno Alekot published by Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia-LAI (2011) and Bible of Amanatun by Unit Bahasa & Budaya (UBB) GMIT (2023). There are some differences as presented below :

1. Clitics ~ Both of them use the same clitic in the different position. UBB attached clitic in the base word and LAI attached in the free pronoun. The examples presented below :

- a. UBB : *ho mnao*
- b. LAI : *hom nao*  
Gloss = you walk

2. Long Vowel ~ They were used the different vowel which UBB

used long vowel and LAI used short vowel. The examples presented below :

- a. UBB : *neem*
- b. LAI : *nem*  
Gloss : come

3. Possessive. Possessive written in UBB and LAI also different.

UBB add *i'* to base word *ninen* while LAI did not.

- a. UBB : *in i'ninen*
- b. LAI : *in ninen*  
Gloss : its side

4. The Negation differs depending on the sentence and the words used. UBB and LAI used the same two negative markers, *ka* and *fa*. When attached to the following word, it becomes a short negation form. Examples *ka nalekof* (did not heal).

The researcher found that there are inconsistencies in LAI if compared to Unit Bahasa & Budaya. These inconsistencies can make reading and writing more challenging, especially for language learners. If the orthography cannot represent these writing systems well, the younger generation will have difficulty in learning to read and write in this language. That is why the researcher wants to find out the inconsistencies of this publication. The researcher hope that through this study, publisher UBB & LAI can work together and agree to use one orthography for future editions or publication so that they are easier for readers to understand.

Based on the statement above, researcher is interested in conducting a

study with the title “**INCONSISTENCIES IN THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF  
AMANATUN : IMPLICATIONS TOWARDS LANGUAGE  
LEARNING**”

## **1.2 Research Problems**

1. What are the representations of clitics, long vowels, possessive forms, and negation in the existing orthographies of Amanatun?
2. What are the inconsistencies in the representation of clitics, long vowels, possessive forms, and negation across the publications in Amanatun?
3. What are the implications of the orthographic transparency towards the learnability of the orthographies?

### **1.3 Aims of Study**

The aims of this research are to find out:

1. Describe the choice of clitics, long vowels, possessive forms, and negation representations in the existing orthographies of Amanatun.
2. To find out the inconsistencies of clitics, long vowels, possessive forms, and negation decision and suggestion in the orthography based on the document.
3. Discuss the implications of the orthography transparency towards the learnability of the existing orthographies.

### **1.4 Significance of Study**

#### **1.4.1. Implication**

The result of this study is expected to support the theory of (Baird & Klamer, 2006), which emphasizes that an orthography should reflect what is in a particular language, including its sounds and word forms.

#### **1.4.2. Application**

This orthography research benefits language learners if it is well organized by the Timor communities. This research can be applied in

several areas:

#### 1. Development of Educational Materials

A clearer and more systematic understanding of clitics has important implications for the development of high quality educational materials in the Amanatun Language. Consistent and accurate representation of clitics in written materials can help reduce confusion among learners, particularly in distinguishing between clitic forms and independent words, This is especially important in formal educational contexts, such as textbooks and literacy resources, where orthographic consistency plays a crucial role in language acquisition. Furthermore, for multilingual learners who are also exposed to other languages, a well-defined orthographic system for clitics can support their ability to differentiate Amanatun orthographic conventions from those of other languages, particularly in the representation of consonants and word boundaries. As a result, improved understanding of clitics contributes not only to more effective teaching and learning materials, but also to the broader goal of strengthening literacy and linguistic awareness in Amanatun.

#### 2. Community

The community is the most important group in the process

of orthography creation. The community of Amanatun must first know about the sociolinguistic context and how people want to use an orthography. Whether the local language has applied orthography and is accepted by the community or whether this orthography is only used to translate books such as the bible or newspaper, or create reading books for schools, orthography really needs the opinion of the community to be heard so that orthography can be used transparently and can be used in the community or school.

### 3. Academics and Researchers

Especially in the local language, really need orthography in writing, so with the existence of transparent orthography between the community and academics, it can facilitate academic writing so that the local language does not become extinct. For academics and researchers, particularly those working on local languages, a standardized and transparent orthographic system is essential for scholarly writing and documentation. Clear orthography enables consistent representation of linguistic data. which in turn facilitates analysis, comparison, and interpretation across studies. When there is alignment between the orthographic practices used by the speech community and those adopted by academics, the production of academic works such as grammars, dictionaries, teaching materials, and research articles becomes more efficient and reliable. Moreover, transparent orthography supports the long-term

documentation and preservation of the local language by ensuring that written records accurately reflect actual language use. This is especially crucial for languages at risk of decline, as well-documented and accessible academic materials can play a significant role in preventing language extinction and promoting sustained intergenerational transmission.

#### 4. Policy Makers

This can help the policy makers to develop effective language policies by understanding writing systems and linguistic structures, promote language standardization, preserve linguistic heritage through language documentation and literacy programs, and also support language education by considering the specific needs language learners. This understanding can assist policymakers in formulating effective and context-sensitive language policies by providing deeper insights into the writing systems and underlying linguistic structures of the language.

A clear grasp of orthographic conventions enables policymakers to promote language standardization in a way that is both linguistically and socially acceptable to the speech community.