CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of three parts, namely background, research problem, aim of study, significance of study, implications, and application.

1.1   Background

Language is a system of communication for human beings that is expressed through a structured arrangement of sounds or written expressions to form larger units, such as morphemes, words, and sentences (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985, p. 153) in the Santosa and Wiratnno book (2014). Language holds an important role in our lives. It means language is a tool or important instrument for communication that helps people to do anything related to human needs. People cannot interact with each other without language, but they can use language when they understand and can communicate it. It supports every aspect of human life, such as the development of education, science, and technology. In addition to this language, it is important to know that dialect is a form of language that is spoken in areas with grammar, words, and pronunciation that may be different from others or the same language (Hornby, 2003, p. 346).

There are 718 languages found in Indonesia. Those languages are spoken or used in all Provinces of Indonesia. East Nusa Tenggara Province is one of the provinces in Indonesia that has many languages. According to (Grimes, 2000, p. 11), there are 60 native languages in East Nusa Tenggara Provinces: one of them is Tetun Terik language, but now it has grown to 72 languages. Tetun Terik is an Austronesian

language mainly spoken in the Timor region, especially by people of Belu. Therefore, the Belu people live on flat slopes, both in the interior, at the foot of the mountain, and on the beach, which is called Fehan or rai ktetuk. This means that Tetun Terik is the language used by the people of Belu in everyday communication.

Personal pronouns in a language hold an important role in communication and social interaction (Subroto, 2007, p. 12). Personal pronouns are pronouns used for people or things. According to (Yamada, 1997, p. 1), personal pronouns are traditionally so termed from the relevance to them of the category of person. In this context, the people of Belu mainly speak the Tetun Terik language. Belu people generally emphasize social contexts when they are in a particular event or situation.

In the social context of society, personal pronouns are not just substitutes for names; they carry significant meanings and implications. First and foremost, they indicate levels of formality. In many cultures, the choice of pronouns clearly reflects the degree of formality between the speaker and the listener. Additionally, personal pronouns are a powerful means of showing respect, according to Alwi et al. (1998, p. 249). The selection of specific pronouns often conveys a strong sense of regard for others. Finally, they distinctly illustrate social relationships; the pronouns used can reveal the nature of the interaction between the speaker and the person being spoken to. In the social context, they use more personal pronouns when talking to those who are considered more mature or people who are socially higher and still closely related to the culture of the Belu people. Tetun Terik, as one of the variants of the Tetun language, has its own uniqueness in the way it is used. Personal pronouns in this language not only function as name substitutes but also reflect the social relationship

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between the speaker and the interlocutor, including aspects of respect, closeness, and situational context (Kridalaksana,1983, p. 139).

The researcher is interested in conducting this research because speakers of the Tetun Terik language actively use personal pronouns in their daily communication. However, there are indications that many of them do not fully understand the various types of personal pronouns. This highlights the need for further research to explore the understanding and usage of personal pronouns and parameters that influence the use of personal pronouns in Tetun Terik within the social context of the Tetun Terik language.
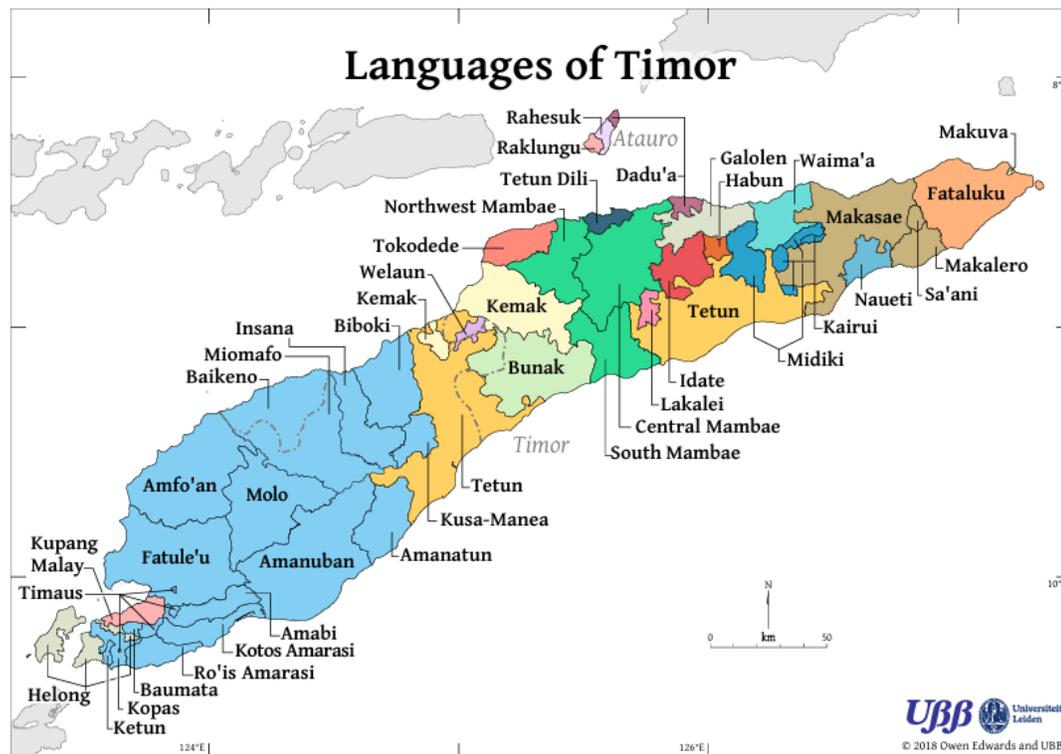

Figure 1.1 Maps of the Languages of Timor
Source : Unit Bahasa dan Budaya GMIT

The image above shows the distribution map of various regional languages in East

Nusa Tenggara, including the Tetun language.

1.2 Research Problems

1. What are the personal pronouns used in Tetun Terik?

2. What are the parameters that influence the use of personal pronouns in Tetun Terik language in social contexts?

1.3 Aim of Study

1. The researcher aims to identify the use of personal pronouns in the Tetun Terik language.

2. The researcher aims to examine the parameters that influence the use of personal pronouns in Tetun Terik language in social contexts

1.4 Significance of Study

Based on research on the diversity of local languages in East Nusa Tenggara Province, particularly in the Belu district, further research on the Terik Tetun language is considered crucial to understanding the roots of the local community's culture, preserving linguistic heritage, and supporting human resource development in the region.

1.4.1 Implication

Personal pronouns refer to spesific person or thing and changes its form indicates person, gender, number, and case (MacFadyen, 2007:1). There are generally

three parameters that influence the use of personal pronouns : (1) age, (2) social status, and (3) closenes (Alwi et al., 2003: 331).

1.4.2   Application

The outcomes of this research are to contribute to knowing more about the local language and provide information about the Tetun Terik language:

1. This research contributes to the development of knowledge about personal pronouns in Tetun Terik, especially for students in the field of education.

2. This research contributes to Tetun-speaking communities' knowledge of personal pronouns.

This research contributes to the writer's understanding of personal pronouns in Tetun Terik.