

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Language is a communication tool used by humans and there are various languages used to interact between them. 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 data from (UNESCO, 2019), 11 of them have been declared extinct.

Lii Hawu is one of the local languages in East Nusa Tenggara Province, which spread across Sabu archipelago. Sabu also has 5 dialects, namely Seba dialect, Rajua dialect, Mesara dialect, Timu dialect, and Liae. Each dialects has its own distinctive sound and vocabulary variations. This dialectal diversity poses significant implications for the standardization of orthography. The existence of disparate sound systems and vocabularies among dialects necessitates the implementation of a linguistically sound approach to the development of a writing system that is both phonologically representative and socially acceptable to speakers of all dialects. Consequently, a thorough comprehension of the distinctive attributes of each dialect is imperative for initiatives pertaining to language preservation, the development of bilingual educational materials, and the formulation of regional language policy.

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

writing and spelling in a language. 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). According to Agustina (2014), there are several phonological differences between *Lii Hawu* and Indonesian that require people to adapt to the text. Indonesian only has 18 native consonants (consonants), with four of them borrowed from other languages, such as Arabic.

Lii Hawu is more complicated with 20 native consonants and four that have been borrowed. According to linguistic research academic research from (*Unit Bahasa & Budaya (UBB)*, 2006), the sound spelled with /w/ is not a semivowel, but a fricative spelled with /v/ in the International Phonetic Alphabet. However, based on the characteristics of Dutch from the Old period, the sound is written *Rai Hawu* with the sound /w/. Although Indonesian is analyzed using six vowels, Indonesian is only written using the five vowels available in the traditional writing system, moreover, this is possible because pure e- is only available in a small number of words. In *Lii Hawu*, if the schwa sound /ə/, takes word stress, the following consonant is lengthened, or in other words drawn long. Whatever it is, the length of the consonant does not need to be divided by two. It is enough to write one consonant, remembering that if there is a schwa vowel /è/, the consonant will be read long. In *Lii Hawu*, the schwa vowel is written with a backward accent mark above the letter e [è].

From the phonological system of writing the *Lii Hawu* it turns out that there are still publications that write with different writing systems, such as biblical publications from *Yayasan Lembaga SABDA (YLSA)*, (2000), *Unit*

Bahasa & Budaya GMT (UBB-GMIT), (2006) and story about Kahi Dema by Paddi (2019). There are some differences in implosive writing as presented in the table below:

Table 1. Inconsistent Sound-Symbol Representation.

Publications	Implosive sounds			
YLSA (2000)	ɓ (bh)	ɗ (dh)	ɟ (jh)	ɡ (gh)
UBB (2006)	ɓ (b')	ɗ (d')	ɟ (j')	ɡ (g')
Paddi (2019)	ɓ (b)	ɗ (d)	ɟ (j)	ɡ (g)

There are several reasons why the researcher is interested in researching this topic. Implosive is a unique and there are not many in the world language, in the national language, there are no implosive sounds, so proper representation in orthography is a challenging. If the orthography cannot represent these sounds well, the younger generation will have difficulty in learning to read and write in this language.

Furthermore, in *Lii Hawu* besides implosive sounds, there also glottal sounds which have an essential role in phonological system. These sounds are often not written explicitly in orthography, even though their presence can distinguish the meaning of words. Therefore, the orthography must be designed in such a way to reflect the phonology of the language accurately. Based on the statement above, researcher is interested to conduct a study of **“THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF *LII HAWU*: IMPLICATION TOWARDS LANGUAGE LEARNING”**

1.2. Research Problem

1. What are the sound-symbols representation in the existing orthography of *Lii Hawu*?
2. Are the sound-symbols consistently represented across the publications in *Lii Hawu*?
3. What are the implications of orthographic transparency toward the learnability of the orthographies?

1.3. Aims of study

The aims of this research is to find out:

1. Describe the choice of the sound-symbols representations in the existing orthographies of *Lii Hawu*;
2. Find out whether the sound-symbols are consistently represented across publications in *Lii Hawu*;
3. Present the implications of the orthographic 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 accurately represent the linguistic elements of 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 Sabu communities. This research can be applied in several areas:

1. Development of Educational Materials

A better understanding of implosive will have important implications to enhance the quality educational materials in *Lii Hawu*, and help multi-lingual learners distinguish orthography in other consonants.

2. Community

The community plays a vital role in orthography development, making it important to consider the socio-linguistic context and its practical application. Regardless of whether a local language's orthography is used in Bible translation, newspapers, or school materials, community acceptance is essential to ensure transparency and functionality in both educational and social contexts.

3. Academics

Academics, especially in 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 local language to preserve it from extinct.