

## PHONOLOGICAL CHANGE IN LOCAL LANGUAGES IN INDONESIA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Alya Syahlani Saragih<sup>1</sup>, Dini Nur Aini Lubi<sup>2</sup>, Raja basya Turnip<sup>3</sup>, Yani Lubis<sup>4</sup>, Rasid Saleh Matondang<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara. E-mail: [alyasaragih21@gmail.com](mailto:alyasaragih21@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara. E-mail: [dininurainilbs09@gmail.com](mailto:dininurainilbs09@gmail.com)

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara. E-mail: [jajaturnip.18@gmail.com](mailto:jajaturnip.18@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara. E-mail: [yanilubis@uinsu.ac.id](mailto:yanilubis@uinsu.ac.id)

<sup>5</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara. E-mail: [rasidsalehmatondang@gmail.com](mailto:rasidsalehmatondang@gmail.com)

### INFORMASI ARTIKEL

Submitted : 2024-06-30

Review : 2024-06-10

Accepted : 2024-06-25

Published : 2024-06-30

### KEYWORDS

**Keywords:** Indonesian, local language, phonological change

### A B S T R A C T

*Phonological change in Indonesian local languages is a vital area of study, reflecting the dynamic evolution of language systems influenced by historical, social, and cultural factors. This article used library research as the method. This literature review synthesizes current research to explore patterns and influences of phonological change across Indonesia's diverse linguistic landscape. Factors such as language contact, sociolinguistic dynamics, and educational practices shape these changes, impacting vowel and consonant systems, syllable structures, and suprasegmental features like tone. Understanding these phonological shifts is crucial for preserving and revitalizing Indonesia's linguistic heritage through informed educational and preservation initiatives.*

## INTRODUCTION

Phonology, the study of the sound systems of languages, is a fundamental aspect of understanding the structure and organization of language (Chomsky, 1957). It is crucial for effective communication and plays a vital role in the development of language skills. Phonology change is a part of phonology. Phonological change is a natural process in the evolution of languages, and it is particularly significant in the context of Indonesia, where linguistic diversity is a hallmark of the country's cultural heritage. This literature review aims to provide an overview of the phonological change processes in local languages in Indonesia, examining the various factors that contribute to these changes and their implications for language preservation and education.

Phonological change, an essential aspect of linguistic evolution, reflects the dynamic nature of languages over time. In the context of Indonesia, a country known for its vast linguistic diversity, the study of phonological change in local languages offers valuable insights into the mechanisms and factors influencing language development. This article presents a comprehensive literature review on phonological

change in Indonesian local languages, synthesizing findings from various scholarly works to provide a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon.

Indonesia's linguistic landscape is characterized by over 700 local languages, each with its unique phonological system. This diversity results from complex historical, social, and cultural interactions. According to Sneddon (2003), the Austronesian language family, to which many Indonesian languages belong, exhibits significant phonological variation due to migration, trade, and colonization. Furthermore, phonological change in these languages can be attributed to both internal linguistic evolution and external influences such as contact with other languages and dialects (Adelaar, 2005).

Previous studies have identified several patterns of phonological change in Indonesian local languages, including vowel shifts, consonant alterations, and changes in syllable structure. For instance, Donohue (2007) highlights how vowel harmony and reduction processes have shaped the phonological systems of various languages in eastern Indonesia. Additionally, Blust (2013) discusses the role of language contact in introducing phonological innovations and borrowings, particularly in regions with high multilingualism.

The sociolinguistic context also plays a crucial role in phonological change. As noted by Kikusawa (2012), language attitudes, identity, and social prestige can influence how phonological features are adopted or discarded. Urbanization and the spread of Bahasa Indonesia as the national language further complicate this dynamic, leading to phenomena such as dialect leveling and the emergence of new phonological variants (Cohn, 1993).

This literature review aims to consolidate existing research on phonological change in Indonesian local languages, identifying key trends, methodologies, and gaps in the current scholarship. By examining the interplay between linguistic, social, and historical factors, this article seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of phonological change and its implications for the preservation and revitalization of Indonesia's linguistic heritage.

## **METHODS**

This research is a literature review that focuses on using literature as a data source to obtain information about phonological changes in local languages in Indonesia (Hadi, 2002). This research aims to collect data and information from various relevant literature sources, such as journals, articles, and research reports that have been published by trusted institutions both at the national and international levels. By analyzing previous studies, this research is expected to provide a clearer picture of phonological changes in local languages in Indonesia.

Using the literature review method, this research identifies and examines various findings and views in literature to understand the dynamics of phonological change. The main focus is on the patterns of phonological changes that occur, the factors that influence them, as well as the implications for the language and its speakers. Through this approach, this study not only presents comprehensive information but also contributes to the scientific discussion on linguistic evolution in Indonesia, assisting in the preservation and revitalization of endangered local languages.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Phonology is a crucial aspect of linguistics that deals with the sound system of a language, including the distribution and patterning of speech sounds. It is a fundamental component of language structure and plays a significant role in shaping the way we communicate. In this context, I will provide an overview of phonology, highlighting its key concepts and theories, and referencing relevant literature from the field (Kent, 1996). Phonology is the study of the sound system of a language, focusing on the distribution and patterning of speech sounds. It examines the sounds that are used in a language, how they are produced, and how they are organized to convey meaning. Phonology is a subfield of linguistics that is closely related to phonetics, which deals with the physical properties of speech sounds (Selkirk, 1982).

Phonological change is a part of phonology. Phonological change refers to the systematic alterations in the sound system of a language over time (Crowley, 1997). These changes can affect individual sounds (phonemes), sound patterns, and the rules governing the pronunciation and structure of words within the language. Phonological changes (Sneddon, 2003) can result from various factors, including internal linguistic evolution, social influences, and language contact. They encompass a wide range of phenomena such as sound shifts, assimilation, dissimilation, lenition, fortition, metathesis, epenthesis, and elision (Labov, 2011). Understanding phonological change is essential for historical linguistics, as it helps reconstruct earlier stages of languages and explains the diversity of phonetic systems in related languages (Campbell, 2004).

Phonological change refers to any sound change that alters the distribution of phonemes in a language. This change can result in the development of a new system of oppositions among phonemes, where old contrasts may disappear, new ones may emerge, or they may be rearranged (Hale, 2007).

In historical linguistics, phonological change is categorized into three types based on the effects on the phoneme inventory (Hale, et al., 2017):

1. Conditioned Merger

Some instances of phoneme A become an existing phoneme B, without changing the number of phonemes.

2. Phonemic Split

Some instances of phoneme A become a new phoneme B, resulting in phonemic differentiation and an increase in the number of phonemes.

3. Unconditioned Merger

All instances of phonemes A and B become phoneme A, leading to phonemic reduction and a decrease in the number of phonemes. (Hoenigswald, 1965)

Phonological change can occur through various processes such as assimilation, metathesis, epenthesis, and deletion. For example, in English, the process of assimilation can result in changes like /ea/ shifting to /e/ or /i/ shifting to /i/ when two vowel phonemes meet (Diani & Azwandi, 2021)

Several factors have been identified as contributing to phonological change in local languages in Indonesia. These include

1. Language Contact

Language contact between different languages can lead to the borrowing of phonological features, which can result in changes to the original phonology of a language.

2. Language Shift

Language shift, where speakers shift from one language to another, can also influence phonological change. For example, the shift from traditional languages to Indonesian or English can lead to the adoption of new phonological features (Aminoedin, et al., 1984).

### 3. Language Education

Language education plays a crucial role in shaping the phonological features of a language. The use of standardized languages in education can lead to the suppression of local phonological features, contributing to language change.

### 4. Cultural and Social Factors

Cultural and social factors, such as the influence of urbanization and globalization, can also impact phonological change. For instance, the increasing use of English in urban areas can lead to the adoption of English phonological features in local languages (Bochhioua, 2019).

In addition, several phonological change processes have been observed in local languages in Indonesia. These include:

#### 1. Assimilation

Assimilation is a common process in which sounds in a language change to become more similar to surrounding sounds. For example, the assimilation of the English "th" sound to the Indonesian "s" sound is a common phenomenon.

#### 2. Elision

Elision is the process of omitting sounds in a word. This can occur due to the influence of other languages or as a result of language contact.

#### 3. Epenthesis

Epenthesis is the process of inserting sounds into a word. This can occur to maintain the syllable structure of a word or to make it more intelligible to speakers of other languages (Carter & Nunan, 2011).

Phonology in local languages in Indonesia exhibits a diversity that reflects the complexity and dynamism of history, culture, and contact between languages in the region. Indonesia is home to more than 700 languages, most of which belong to the Austronesian language family, while some belong to the Papuan family. The study of phonology in Indonesia covers various aspects such as vowel and consonant systems, syllable structure, and suprasegmental phenomena such as tone and intonation.

Languages in Indonesia have diverse vowel systems, although many of them show basic similarities such as the presence of front, back, high, and low vowels. According to Sneddon (2003), Indonesian, which is the national language, has six vowel phonemes: /i/, /e/, /ə/, /a/, /o/, and /u/. This vowel system is relatively simple compared to some other local languages that may have more or fewer vowels. For example, Javanese has a more complex vowel system with both long and short vowels.

Consonant systems in Indonesian languages are also very diverse. Languages such as Sundanese, Madurese, and Balinese have an extensive consonant inventory, covering plosives, nasals, fricatives, laterals, and rhotic. Adelaar (2005) notes that languages in eastern Indonesia such as the languages of Papua, have distinct phonological features with a more prominent presence of glottal and nasal consonants. For example, the Yali language in Papua has glottal stop consonants that contrast with other plosives.

Syllable structures in local languages in Indonesia vary, but generally follow a CV (consonant-vowel) or CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) pattern. Donohue (2007) notes that languages in eastern Indonesia tend to have simpler syllable structures than those in the west. For example, Timorese languages such as Tetun tend to use simple CV structures, while Javanese can have more complex syllable structures including CCV and VCC.

Suprasegmental phenomena such as tone and intonation are also important in the phonology of Indonesian languages. Some local languages, such as Toba Batak and Minangkabau, use tone to distinguish word meanings (Sneddon, 2003). In addition, intonation plays an important role in distinguishing sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative) in Indonesian and other local languages.

Phonological changes in local languages in Indonesia are influenced by various factors, including language contact, social change, and migration. Contact with Indonesian as the national language has led to several phonological changes in local languages, including the absorption of new words and changes in syllable structure (Cohn, 1993). Kikusawa (2012) notes that phonological change is also influenced by social attitudes and identity, where changes in language use reflect social and cultural dynamics.

An understanding of the phonology of local languages in Indonesia is important for language preservation and revitalization efforts. Proper documentation and phonological analysis can help in developing teaching materials and language resources for native-speaking communities. Blust (2013) states that language preservation efforts should consider phonological aspects to ensure that the nuances and phonological uniqueness of each language can be maintained and learned by future generations.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that phonological change in local languages in Indonesia is a complex and dynamic phenomenon, influenced by various factors such as language contact, language shift, language education, as well as cultural and social factors. Phonological studies in Indonesia show significant diversity in vowel and consonant systems, syllable structure, as well as suprasegmental phenomena such as tone and intonation. A deep understanding of these phonological changes is crucial for language preservation and revitalization efforts, as proper documentation and phonological analysis can help in developing effective teaching materials and language resources. Language preservation efforts should consider phonological aspects to ensure that the phonological nuances and uniqueness of each language can be preserved and learned by future generations.

## DAFTAR PUSTAKA

- Aminoedin, A., Soedjatno., Razaq, H. S., Marsoedi, I. L., & Taryono. (1984). *Fonologi bahasa Indonesia: sebuah studi deskriptif*. Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa.
- Adelaar, A. (2005). *The Austronesian Languages of Asia and Madagascar*. New York: Routledge.
- Blust, R. (2013). *The Austronesian Languages*. Australia: Asia-Pacific Linguistics.
- Bouchhioua, N. (2019). Epenthesis in the production of English consonant clusters by Tunisian EFL Learners. *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, 3(4), 33-44. doi: 10.14744/alrj.2019.87487.
- Campbell, L. (2004). *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

- Carter, R., & Nunan, D. (2011). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Cohn, A. C. (1993). *The Role of the Lexicon in Phonological Variation: A Case Study of the Stigmatization of /r/ in Jakarta*. *Papers in Laboratory Phonology II: Gesture, Segment, Prosody*.
- Crowley, T. (1997). *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Diani, I., & Azwandi. (2021). *PHONOLOGICAL CHANGE PROCESSES OF ENGLISH AND INDONESIAN LANGUAGE*. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature*, 6(1).
- Donohue, M. (2007). *The Papuan Languages of Timor, Alor, and Pantar: Sketch Grammars*. Australia: Pacific Linguistics.
- Hale, M. (2007). *Historical linguistics: Theory and method*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hale, M., Kissonock, M., & Reiss, C. (2014). *An I-Language Approach to Phonologization and Lexification*. Chapter 20. In P. Honeybone & J. Salmons (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Phonology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hoenigswald, H. (1965). *Language change and linguistic reconstruction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kent, R. D. (1996). *The Role of Phonology in Speech Therapy*. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Research*, 39(4), 731-744.
- Kikusawa, R. (2012). *Historical Linguistics and the Comparative Study of Austronesian Languages*. New York: Routledge.
- Labov, W. (1994). *Principles of Linguistic Change: Internal Factors*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Selkirk, E. O. (1982). *The Syllable Theory of Morphology*. In A. Bell & J. B. Hooper (Eds.), *Syllables and Segments* (pp. 1-17). New York: Academic Press.
- Sneddon, J. N. (2003). *The Indonesian Language: Its History and Role in Modern Society*. Australia: UNSW Press.
- Sutrisno Hadi. (2002). *Metodelogi Research*. Yogyakarta: Andi Offset.