



## Globalization and Indigenous Language: Maluku's Sociocultural and Historical Study from a Post colonialism Perspective

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this specific scientific writing was to analyze the cause of indigenous language death in Maluku, or also called bahasa tana, as well as the follow-up method from both national or regional institutions and/or individuals. This writing is analyzed through a qualitative method writing complimented with a Post colonialism theoretical framework and Globalization conceptual framework. These frameworks will be utilized to review the possible causes to language death in Maluku, that has strong correlation to Maluku's historical, cultural, and religious elements, which is ultimately intimate to the locals.

**Keywords:** *Globalization and Indigenous Language; Maluku's Sociocultural; Post colonialism Perspective*

### **Introduction**

This scientific writing was done as a form of the writer's urgency towards the condition of indigenous language in Maluku, or also known as bahasa tana by multiple factors, especially the effect of Colonialism that occurred in Maluku which formed a diverse sociocultural pattern of life, and also the influencing process of Globalization that constantly changes annually. This research will be reviewed using Post colonialism theoretical framework, equipped with Globalization conceptual framework through international relations literature review.

Especially in this research, the writer's interested to collect information and data from related institutions' perspective towards indigenous language, especially bahasa tana (historical point of view, the critical rate of bahasa tana's usage in Maluku currently, related institutions' strategy to empower, and to educate indigenous language in Ambon for the locals) which has majorly extinct, caused by

different factors, such as aging or even deaths of the last native speakers, lack of educational facilities and forums that provide learning instruments of these languages, as well as the vast cultural change and development caused the lack of interest and the usage of these languages that are considered 'outdated'.

By literal means, the term *bahasa tana* is used by Mollucans to define the authentic indigenous language or mother tongue that originated from the inland of *Nusa Ina*, which is considered as the first island, or the ancestral land of Maluku, before they are spread to various islands in Maluku. These languages were not limited to some villages or islands only, but are widely spread throughout the entire archipelago, starting from Kei to Ternate.

*Bahasa tana* in Maluku has a wide range of diversity, divided into many different dialects, accents, and various vocabularies. Some vocabs of *bahasa tana* nearly had no similarities to Melayu-Ambon (the language used by the majority of the locals nowadays), whereas Melayu-Ambon often shared its similarities with Dutch language. The reason this happened was due to the language centralization executed by the Dutch-Indies government to ensure the trading process at the time. That being said, the usage of *bahasa tana* was slowly sidelined, and the locals—especially the Christians—mostly preferred using Melayu-Ambon as their main language, due to the level of usage being more general.

Language holds a major role in building the sense of belonging of a society. The existence and resilience of a language, especially indigenous language, must be maintained and kept safe, in order to prevent the excessive influence of either culture assimilation or acculturation process. According to a mapping result from Development and Protection Center (Pusat Pengembangan dan Perlindungan) (1991-2017) in a research done by Language Development and Fostering Agency of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kemendikbud RI), the record shows that at least 13 indigenous language in Indonesia is already extinct, or is not used on daily basis anymore. Within those 13 languages, 11 of them are from Maluku, such as *Kajeli*, *Palumata*, *Serua*, and *Nila* language from Central Maluku; *Piru* language from Western Seram District; *Moksela* language from Sula islands; *Ternateno* language from Ternate city; *Meher* language from *Kisar* island (in critical or highly threatened condition); *Hukumina* language from *Buru* island; and *Hoti* language from East Seram.

The exclusive usage of *bahasa tana* by the locals caused only limited generations that understood and were fluent in speaking these languages, either on a daily basis or passively. Indigenous language usage these days is only considered as a formality in traditional rituals, welcoming ceremonies [of important guests], and other formal events. In a daily basis, the usage of indigenous language were only spoken in separate parts of sentences, so for the general people, especially the younger ones, these languages are considered odd.

This was caused by multiple factors; the main ones being colonialism and Christianity in Maluku. The needs and policies of the colonies 'forced' the locals to slowly and thoroughly use Melayu-Ambon as their main-speaking language or *lingua franca*, therefore leaving only certain social circles that comprehend and fluent in using indigenous language, especially the higher ranks and Muslims. Majority of the speakers are currently in an old age, so if there are no preventive acts to inherit these cultural assets, these languages will go extinct along with their last speakers. Other factors that pushed the disappearance of this cultural aspect are the lack of awareness from the locals, major changes in socio-cultural order, lack of initiative act from educational institutions regarding the teaching as far as language implementation on every level, government policies (either national or

regional) regarding the empowerment of indigenous language, and the influence of globalization became the reason why these languages are slowly reaching the point of extinction. Historical factors are also considered as a crucial point that changed Maluku's socio-cultural landscape.

Within this research, the writer will cooperate with several regional communities that took part in facilitating multilingual and multicultural education in Ambon, to examine their effort in push the people's interest from any range of age and classes to study and master several languages other than Bahasa Indonesia, which includes the effort to push the usage of indigenous language in Ambon that are nearing extinction.

Several institutions such as Kantor Bahasa Provinsi Maluku, Gereja Protestan Maluku (GPM), Badan Penerjemahan Alkitab (BPA), Bahasa Basudara (supported by Pusat Studi Bahasa or Language Study Center located in Pattimura University) alongside other educational and cultural institutions, and the contributions from academics, and cultural figures that serves the same purpose; to provide and facilitate the locals in linguistic and cultural education. Data as well as information collecting will be done by literature study and review from books, articles, research journals, news analysis, as well as direct contact or interviews with associated institutions and/or individuals that are related to this subject. This research will be analyzed from a Post colonialism & globalization perspective, that examines the influence of colonialism and the current global development towards the continuity of socio-cultural space in a region, which in this case is Maluku and Ambon specifically.

### ***Research Questions***

How does Post colonialism theory interprets Globalization and Indigenous Language: Maluku's Sociocultural and Historical Study?

### ***Methods***

#### **Research Design**

This research was done in order to obtain qualitative data such as perspectives, ideas, and opinions from various related literatures with the topic "Globalization and Indigenous Language: Maluku's Sociocultural and Historical Study from a Post colonialism Perspective". These qualitative data are also confirmed through multiple interviews with some key informants that are considered to be competent to provide valid and relevant information with the purpose of this research.

#### **Data Collection**

The writer intends to collect literature sources and data through research journal articles, government reports, referential books, results from previous researches, and other related documents. All of these data are completed with interview processes that were done directly with several source individuals in Ambon. Collected data are discussed reciprocally each to confirm between the information from literature and oral information from these key informants. These data will be processed interpretatively to locate the logical and historical correlation from various perspectives. Then, the processes and findings of the research itself will be narrated critical-descriptively to explain coherently the main concepts of this research topic.

## Data Analysis

Postcolonial approach is used as a lens to read selected literatures which are relevant and compare it with the collected data from interviews with several key informants in Ambon. These comparisons were done to observe historical perspective regarding socio-cultural situations that caused erosion of bahasa tana in (Central) Maluku and the strengthening of cultural articulation through the usage of Melayu-Ambon language. Besides that, data from historical literatures will also be compared with present perspective as stated by the informants as the perpetrators of contemporary culture regarding the existence and purpose of bahasa tana currently by Maluku/Ambonese people. By this postcolonial comparative perspective, an analytical conclusive statement will be withdrawn according to the purpose of this research.

## Theoretical Framework

### a. Globalization

Definitively, the term Globalization is described in a simplistic fashion, despite the wide and complex contextual reach. Globalization could also be defined as a wide, vast, and complicated process, covering a dependent connection of individuals, society, and nations. The process of globalization covers a trade and change of several aspects of life, such as economic, political, and socio-cultural dimensions.

Within the document “Globalization: A Critical Introduction”, the writer, Jan Aart Scholte described the process of globalization as a distribution of trans planetary and supraterritorial connection between humans, with a concept that describes the change of social space’s behavior, where there lies an involved connection that transcends traditional territorial limits. Scholte differentiates his comprehension about globalization with general understandings such as internationalization, liberalization, universalization, and westernization, by seeing contemporary globalization marked with a supraterritorial distribution by a large scale, where a relatively social connection can be dismembered from territorial geography.

Considering this description, the globalization process also had its significant influence on the change in global culture dimension, including Indonesia. The fading and extinction from globalization is something that has a special attention nowadays. There are several key points that can be reviewed through globalization’s understandings of cultural and language fading in Indonesia, especially in Maluku, such as:

- The process of globalization emphasizes the domination of global culture that sinks the essence of local culture and language.
- Global economy assesses that national and international language holds a higher value to economical and educational growth compared to indigenous language.
- Development of mass media and information technology prioritized the contents in global language promotion dominantly.
- Social and individual needs of the society triggers population migration from their place of origin to a more urban region or major cities, where facilities as well as employment and living opportunities are more guaranteed and affordable compared to rural areas.

The constantly developing educational system becomes the deciding factor in the process of globalization. Especially in Indonesia, where the education system pushes and prioritize global languages as the unifying language for the competitive needs between countries, thus sacrificing indigenous languages within the process.

### **b. Post-colonialism**

The main reference that was used as a base source of theory comes from the book “Black Skin, White Masks” by Frantz Fanon, a psychiatrist, philosopher, and intellectual from Western Indian French, who delved into studies such as Postcolonial, Critical Race Theory, and Marxism. Within the book, Fanon provides a number of arguments regarding the impacts of colonialism as well as racism to psychological aspects and black skinned culture in France.

One of the key aspects that Fanon stated regarding language and power; Fanon sees that the power of language plays as one of the strongest tools in colonialism. With the usage and comprehension of a colony's language, an individual or group will be considered as educated and civilized people. This point certainly brought a contradictory argument, that makes the minors, directly or not, feel alienated from their original language and culture, with no guarantee that by understanding and talking the colony language, they will receive recognition or be considered as one of the colonizers.

Fanon argues that in Postcolonial study, language is a tool of domination; not only as a communication purpose, but also has a deep connection with identity, culture, and power. As well as the case in this book, the issue in Maluku is similar: colonial language was applied as a reference or a measure of the society's intelligence, education level, and social mobility. Indigenous people were forced to adopt and use colonial language in their daily routines. Language centrality was used to prove the colonizer's domination and culture infiltration.

Through this point, Fanon also emphasizes how language assimilation applied by the colonizer was a ‘trap’. In the sense, although the minors mastered the colonial language (that they consider could give them a recognition) no matter how fluent it is, they (minors) will never be considered or accepted the same level as the colonizers, yet even will cause an interpersonal conflict, due to losing their original identity and pride, which was the main purpose of this manipulative system. The minor's status and racial identity could never be separated from themselves, despite having to adopt the colonizer's culture and language as well as they possibly could. Besides, there lies a construction done to label these indigenous languages as primitive and backward, thus forming an inferiority complex from the locals that stigmatize their original culture and language.

Reviewing this case, Fanon thinks that there should be a decolonizing process in order to restore and regain the cultural and language assets from the colonized. Decolonization was not only done to gain political independence and physical freedom, but also regarding mental and cultural freedom, recapturing language, narration, and pride of the locals, as a form of their social control.

## ***Result and Discussion***

### **Historical Study of Mollucan's Origins and Bahasa Tana in Maluku**

Historical search regarding the use of bahasa tana and its dynamics within Ambon society has its own level of difficulty due to having to go through a long and thorough study of archive, knowing that the archive materials are not easy to obtain. The colonizers forbid the locals to use bahasa tana (vernacular) which causes it to lose its relevance and importance being the main mode of communication used by previous generations. Word fragments that are left were local expressions used in custom rituals and were fluently mastered by a handful group of elders in the hinterland.

Fortunately, from the 16th to 18th century, there were several researches that resulted in scientific writings that analyzed the history of Maluku, geographically on the topography of Maluku's archipelago, or the socio-cultural life in Maluku, such as the distribution of mata ruma, the diversity of clans and linguistic aspects in Maluku, thus the stories delivered by the elders or orang tatau dolo-dolo can be noted and archived, connecting it with the results of scientific research about the origins of Maluku and its people.

Multiple researches by academics from the Netherlands, U.S, etc, stated that the indigenous people of Maluku were a result of the meeting and crossbreeding of several nations coming from different global regions that had diverse ethnic identity. These ethnical and cultural groups migrated to look for residence and natural resources such as herbs and spices, all the way to Maluku islands. These groups consist of Austronesian, Proto and Deutro-Malayu, Polynesian, Melanesian, and Mongoloids, which then spread to different major islands in Maluku, namely Seram (EKM. Masinambow : 1996). This distribution creates a socio-cultural and sociolinguistic diversity in several regions of Maluku.

A dissertation research of James T. Collins titled "The Historical Relationships of the Languages of Central Maluku, Indonesia." was one of a crucial academic review about the linguistic connection and the development of indigenous languages of Central Maluku, which turned out to hold a part in the Austronesian language family. Collins' analysis has a few key aspects:

- The relationship between Austronesian language family, spread to the entirety of Southeast Asia, Pacific regions, and some parts of Madagascar, was connected with the languages in Central Maluku.
- Connection of the origins of Proto-Austronesian and Proto-Melayu-Polynesian language to track the historical roots and the migration pattern of these groups that moved to Maluku.
- Evolution and language diversity in Central Maluku that developed from time to time covers the impact of geographical, trade, and inter-island conditions, by different factors such as migration, colonization, and regional development.
- Cultural and historical contextualization; bahasa tana is not only a linguistic term, but also has a connection in terms of culture and social identity in the local community. Factors like the spread of Islam, European colonization, and the establishment of trading networks contributed in the form of linguistic structure in Central Maluku.

Through the result of Collins' analysis, it can be seen that the diversity of Maluku's indigenous people as well as the cultural wealth can be reviewed from population migration from different races, such as Austronesia and Melanesia that began their move from some regions in

Southeast Asia far before the colonization event, bringing culture, especially language to Maluku, which can be seen from the similarity of language, genetics, and culture. Other than that, the old trading network that caused traders from the entire world to arrive in Maluku with the purpose of obtaining herbs and spices also contributes to bringing and merging cultures and languages in Maluku.

The socio-cultural frictions and dynamics that happened in the early years of colonization formed a segregated pattern of society; the colonizers with their interventional vision, changing the governmental order as well as the life pattern of society to comply with the western culture, and the spread of gospel and centralization of Christians in Maluku for their internal needs. The colonies do not pay attention to the existence of Muslims in Maluku. Therefore, local culture within the Muslims is still very strong, up until the present day.

During the VOC era, in order to ensure the domination of Dutch's power as well as to guarantee the continuity of spice trading, VOC spread Melayu language (which was the main language for the higher powers) to be used as the main communication tool, and also as evangelism tool by Dutch churches. Evangelism was only focused in Central Maluku, because there was no interest by the Dutch to spread gospel in North Maluku (Leirissa, 1999). The correlation between VOC's needs and the Christians in Central Maluku can be seen from the profession offered by the Dutch government as evangelists or as administrative staff, due to the language used, which is Melayu so it was obligatory for them, especially the Christians working under VOC. Thus, to maintain their position and prestige held among other Mollucans at the time, they need to use Melayu language daily.

As a result, the usage of Melayu language is slowly turning into a habit, merging with Maluku dialects as well as other foreign terms, forming the language Melayu-Ambon, a language that is used by the majority, or almost every Mollucans nowadays. Contradicting to the Muslim community in Ambon—that received minimum urgency from VOC occupancies regarding evangelism needs—still maintained the usage of bahasa tana in their daily life, and it can still be found in the present day. Although not all Christian communities were directly impacted by this culture shift, there are still a few remaining bahasa tana speakers, but the mass and vast change became one of the reasons why bahasa tana went through an intense level of extinction.

### ***Colonialism in Maluku***

There is not much archives left from the culture and/or socio-cultural life of the original pre-colonized Maluku society, and the majority of historic narrations within the indigenous people were told orally from mouth to mouth and the archiving tracks about Maluku's history was formed and arranged originally since the arrival of colonies to the archipelago.

Historical recording about Mollucans, either from a socio-cultural and political side, etc, was written since the arrival of the Portuguese, led by Antonio de Abreu, one of Afonso de Albuquerque's officer, that arrived in Banda in 1511 and successfully brought back herbs and spices to Melaka, followed by Francisco Serrao at 1512 in Hitu, Ambon. The arrival of Serrao was warmly welcomed by the local leaders, allowing him to build a loja there. Then, he was attracted by Sultan Bolief to establish a feitoria in Ternate. Serrao became the first Portuguese captain in Maluku, with Ambon and Banda as his "area of authority". This series of events caused the growth of Portuguese settlements, thus triggering a rapid evangelism and crossbreeding between the locals and the colonies.

For almost a century long of Portuguese occupying Maluku, accelerating their spice sea trade routes, executing a wide and fast evangelism, developing European technologies in Maluku especially

in the economic field, forming an educational governance that attracts Maluku's noblemen to scold their children, establishing Christian settlements, as well as defensive forts in central governmental areas such as Ambon, which almost mostly executed manipulatively. There were numbers of governmental coup d'etat and monopoly done to take down local leaders in Maluku so that their throne can be taken over by Portuguese captains, either manipulatively or spontaneously through assaults, murders, or coup d'etat.

Apart from the Portuguese, one of the colonizers that still has a strong influence on Maluku's socio-cultural development are the Dutch, who also have a trading company organization named Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (translation: Dutch East India Company), short for VOC. This trading union was founded on 20th of March 1602 as the first multinational company in the world, with the purpose to stabilize the Dutch's internal inter-company trade competition, and to strengthen their competitiveness towards other colony nations like Portuguese and Spain. The early vision of VOC was only to fulfill the needs and interest of Dutch East Indies, but ended up being a monopoly towards trading activities in Asia that are rich in spices and herbs, especially in Maluku. 2 years prior of VOC's establishment, the Dutch redo their expedition led by Jacob Van Neck and Wybrecht Van Waerwijck, whom arrived in Maluku Islands on March 1599. The success of this expedition led to 14 other Dutch companies to send 62 more armadas to Maluku.

The correlation between VOC's interest and the Christians in Central Maluku can be seen from the occupation offered by the Dutch governments as an evangelist or as an administrative staff, due to the daily used language as the main communication tool was Melayu language, thus this condition being an obligation for Ambonese, especially the Christians who were working under VOC, in order to maintain their position and prestige amongst other Mollucans at the time. Therefore, the usage of Melayu language became a habit, and blended with Maluku dialects as well as foreign terms, becoming the Melayu-Ambon language, a language used by nearly the majority of Mollucans in present day.

After the Portuguese handed their territory and their forts in Ambon to VOC, they ordered the Catholic priests to leave Central Maluku and told the Catholics to convert to Protestant. This series of actions was one of the early stages of religion spreading in Ambon by VOC. The Protestant religious congregation in Central Maluku involved one of VOC's staff who was French-Japanese blood, Franchois Caron, that described his duty as a priest. In his sermon book, he stated:

“Cardjahan deri pandita pandita, jang jaddi ancat deri pada Tsaurat Igresia, acan menoungou pada orang Nassarani, seperti Combala pada domba domba. Patut djanja adjar bahassa Malejo, daan djica dapat, bahassa Ambon...”

The duties from the priests, who was appointed by the church synod, was to look after the Christians, like a shepherd to his sheeps. He has to study Melayu language, and if possible, Ambonese language.

Other than Franchois Caron, for example was one of the staff of VOC, a German botanist, Georg Rumphius, who made a writing (1983/1678:7) especially regarding indigenous language in Ambon Island, confirmed that the variations (dialectos) from Hative and Hitu language was the most elegant variants of language ('cirelijkste') (Collins, 2012b). Writings from Rumphius (1698, 1999) such as “Leijtimor” were the last remaining tracks from Hative language or other indigenous language that has been spoken in Ambon, due to these languages being extinct, along with its speaker currently.

In one of his article titled “Language death in Maluku: The impact of the VOC”, James T. Collins (2003) narrated about his research in Kelang, Batu Merah and Piru around the 1970s. He



discovered that a group of people that can be categorized as a native indigenous language speaker did not even reach 5% of the total population of those 3 villages. Collins managed to collect several vocabularies and various conjugation systems. But, by its pronunciation, some of these vocabularies can not compliment into a proper sentence. In conclusion, these remaining languages were not a daily used language, and only some individuals that are able to speak these indigenous languages. The remaining languages (which can still be spoken) were a result of different combinations of languages and the local languages in those villages.

### ***Globalization and Indigenous Language***

The expansion of bahasa tana was spread all over Maluku islands, starting from Kei all the way to Ternate. Different from Ambonese language that are used the most by the locals, or Ambonese in general, which was a result of fusion into Melayu-Ambon, bahasa tana was a communication tool for the Maluku elders in the past. Unfortunately, the fate of bahasa tana was not as lucky as other indigenous languages in Indonesia such as Javanese, that are still highly spoken and heard until now, even becoming one of a focused local content in most public school in Java.

Ethnologue reviewed that there are in total of 50 local languages in Central Maluku, 5 languages in Southeast Maluku, and 13 languages in Southwest Maluku, which is considered a lot compared to the amount of local languages in Java. Within the book “Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia”, Benedict Anderson reviewed the key factors of language extinction in Nusantara’s regions, starting from the eastern part of Indonesia, Java, all the way to Aceh. In the aspect of language extinction in the eastern part, Anderson sees that some other factors like colonial language domination such as Portuguese and Dutch had already ‘take root’ and are easier to learn in the socio-cultural society dimension, with the assumption that local language diversity in Eastern Indonesia that were so wide-scaled precisely became its own challenge for the locals.

Other than that, the existing dualism process between culture and local and colonial language that, in one side can compliment each other, but the struggle to balanced those two things can be so damaging, especially when a biased perspective towards one of the culture or language is formed. Anderson sees this process as a rather creative part, which can create a condition where the society pattern (if having a matured level of comprehension), can go against colonial culture using their own structure and system. Lastly, Anderson disclosed regarding the role of Melayu language (now Bahasa Indonesia) as a resistance language towards colonial culture and language, due to the nonexistent association of culture and hierarchy like Javanese language; seen as a democratic and flexible cultural element, as a unifying tool in the nationalist movement against colonial intervention.

In a large scale, it can be concluded that Anderson sees the nationalized process happening in Indonesia rather became one of a factor why several cultural and linguistic element in Indonesia is declining; language centralization, due to a wide range of diversity, communication and cultural mode was narrowed down into one main language, which is Bahasa Indonesia. Population migration process such as urbanization and migration into rural areas to large cities (that already applies Bahasa Indonesia as the main language) also became a supporting factors the lack of local language empowerment. Besides that, the formal educational system in Indonesia focused more on strengthening the development of national language in the education curriculum, narrowing the chance of indigenous language preservation for the previous generations, thus returning the environmental and parental role regarding cultural and linguistic education.

Nevertheless, in Java itself, the usage and empowerment of local and indigenous language are still fairly strong, becoming a local content in almost every educational level, starting from basic

education up to high school education. In that book, Anderson highlighted the political and cultural crisis happening in Java that ‘moved’ layers of society to fight against colonial language and culture merging. Governmental system in Java that were pseudo-feudal played a huge role on why the sociolinguistic element in Java survived consistently during the colonial and post-colonial era. This applied strategy developed and adapted with current development, aligned with the strengthening through educational field that supported language empowerment, complete archiving, and the daily usage of language (both harsh and soft language) becoming the reason why Java language are still holding strong until now.

There are a few main factors that became the reason why bahasa tana in Maluku experienced a intense and quick decline, even extinction, categorized as ‘potentially endangered languages’; First, certainly was the presence of VOC in Nusantara, the lack of written recordings or archives regarding the usage of these languages, the lack of government attention that has not consider this as highly urgent, the lack of policies that arrange regarding the preservation and maintenance of bahasa tana, also the lack of socialization about local language education through the government to parents so that it became a habit that will be taught for the next generations.

This situation was supported by the weak linguistic and literature work documentation (possibly due to the influence of colonialism that limits the usage of bahasa tana substituted with Melayu-Ambon language), adding to the fading of language introduction as well as the passing down of cultural assets to the next generations. Due to the colonial influence, the habit of using Melayu-Ambon language was used in nearly every social activity, either in the public domain or in the political realm, and certainly education, bahasa tana or the indigenous language of Maluku are not even considered relevant any more, caused by the Dutch government policy that requires Ambonese to speak Melayu-Ambon as the main and most common communication mode.

Despite all of this, the usage of bahasa tana can still be traced until present day (even though there were not much) on some cultural events and rituals, such as receptions or important days commemoration, namely raja-raja inauguration ceremony, baileo inauguration, opening ceremony and practice of *sasi*, *pela-gandong* ceremony and *cuci negeri*, reception of important guests, religious traditions, as well as other cultural activities. Though, the usage of bahasa tana these days are only limited to these events. Majority of bahasa tana speakers are in old age, and if this does not become an urgency from the government and the local linguistic institutions, or if it is not passed down to the following generations supported by the correct education empowerment, these language will ‘die’ alongside its speakers. Certainly, this discourse is considered as difficult to imply, due to the lack of resources we have.

### ***“Bahasa Tana” as Mollucan’s Cultural Identity***

For most Mollucans, bahasa tana is not a mere daily communication tool, but also contains a historical and cultural bond, as well as a strong level of sacredness towards the locals. Some Mollucans has some sort of dilemma that grew from themselves, especially for those majority that are migrates to outer regions for a long period of time in order to fulfill their individual needs as well as family well-being. Majority of Mollucans has their own restlessness for having close to no understanding towards Maluku’s indigenous culture and language.

“Nyong, ale orang Ambon maar kanapa seng tahu katong pung budaya deng bahasa?”

“Son, you are an Ambonese, but why don’t you understand any of our own culture and language?”

“Nak, anda orang Ambon tapi kenapa tidak mengerti budaya dan bahasa milik kita?”

Morally, this kind of question becomes a hard hit towards Mollucans that then, doubts their own identity. The term “Ambon kart” becomes even clearer to labeled Mollucans that almost had no comprehension on how to be ‘a Mollucan’. This might be underestimated by some, who sees that in order to become a Mollucan, you only need to inherit a family name or fam, fluent in speaking daily Ambonese language (Melayu-Ambon), or sufficiently prove that you were born in any region of Maluku. Certainly this basic perspective is not enough to be used as a reference to acknowledge someone as ‘a Mollucan’.

In general, this kind of question triggered a form of curiosity personally for me regarding this scientific writing. Though morally, this question became a ‘hard hit’ to me whom questioned my own identity. The term “Ambon kart” became even clearer to label Mollucan that almost had no understandings about what it means to be a ‘Mollucan’, including myself. This might be underestimated to some, who saw that to be a Mollucan, you only need to inherit a surname or fam, fluent in daily Ambonese language, or can provide sufficient amount of proofs that you were born in Maluku. But surely, this basic perspective can not be a mere justification for someone to truly acknowledge him/herself as a ‘Mollucan’.

The uniqueness as well absurdism of indigenous languages in Maluku draws a lot of attention from linguistic experts to review through its historical pattern, as a branch and inheritance from Proto-Austronesian language, such as Van Ekris (1864-1865) and Van Hoeffel (1877) who had made serious effort to understand the meaning of these languages, which then proceed specifically by other linguistic experts with a more thorough review, which was Streseman (1927) and Collins (1983).

In Collins’ research, this linguistic metaphor was based sound rules (Phonology) of these languages, and had the most complete classification so far. Collins named these languages as Proto-Central Maluku language, that is divided into 2 big parts, which was the western part (Buru and Sula-Taliabo), and the eastern part (Nunusaku and East Seram). The meaning of this local language for these villages are not only as a communication tool, but also has a deep historical value as well. These values then translated into poems or rhymes, which was called kapata (describes war events) and lania (describes ‘painful’ events such as betrayal, etc).

These poems were recorded by several Zending staffs, one of them was Van Hoeffel (Van Hoeffel, 1882) and was archived by the National Library (Katalog, 1980). Two forms of quoted poems were recorded by Dra. H. Maryam Lestaluhu (1988), concerning Perang Ambon, a series of events that occurred in the 17th century, divided into two events, which were Perang Wawani (1633-1643) in the form of kapata using Morela language in Hitu, depicting VOC’s attack on Hitu forts in Kapahaha Mountain (Rumphius, loc.cit, 1910; Knaap, 1992), and Perang Alaka (estimated around the year 1625 to 1637) in the form of lania using Haruku language, depicting the emergence of Christianity in Haruku island. The following is one of the quote along with its translation.

### ***Lania Perang Alaka***

#### ***Apa nene, youwa sui***

Hear my story, a story for all of us

#### ***Waa looka yama Rima Lounussa***

#### ***Nunu lau malaka***

From 5 villages of the island’s Malaka Banyan tree  
that is the metaphor of the 5 Lounussa villages for us

#### ***lau mau noo Loto Yasa i Lounussa***

One branch is facing west,

that is the metaphor of Latua Ronesina (leader of Pelau)

***Sana isa ekita lei Timuro***

***Upu Latua Makakuku***

A branch is facing east

an imagery of Monia Makakuku (leader of Ruhomoni)

***Sana isa ekoti lea matai***

***Pikai hehe Laisina***

Another branch is against the course of the sun

that is Pikai Hehe Laisina (leader of Hulaliu)

***Siiria u pasiri - sana eru pasana heu***

***Karia sina Surinai***

A sprouted Banyan branch as well

that describes Karia Sina Surinai

***Karia sina Surinai Ratua***

Karia Sina Surinai, king!

***Male irowa Lounussa***

Let us hike to Lounussa

***Male irowa Lounussa Yasalo***

Let us hike to Lounussa village group

***sala awwale jadi***

according to God's creation from the beginning

***Makakuku ihusa hale haita Pessy***

Makakuku submerged in Pessy harbour (Ruhomoni)

***Jikiro e kakura jawe***

with the recitation of dhikr and hymns

***Nai kela Kakisame waelo***

He then arrange Kakisame water

***kurang eui waa salo***

What flaw he encounters?

***Karia Sina i husa haita Humiase***

Kakiasina (leader of Kabau) appears there in Huniase harbour

***i husa kura ayate***

He emerged while reading verses

***Kela ei wae Taniha Panano***

He landed through Wai Tahina

***Kana pasa sala i***

His movement is jumping and dynamic

***Surinai ihusaa hale haita Seirambi***

Surinai (leader of Kailolo) also appears there in Seirambi harbour (Kailolo)

***i husa kura salawate***

He appears while praying

***I roha wa elo sanama isai***

He obtains a third of fresh water

***meito sanama rua***

while only using two thirds of salt water

***Rone sina ihusa haita nama latu***

Rone Sina (leader of Pelau) appears in Namalatu harbour

***i husa kura takabiri***

He emerged while saying takbir

***Kela i marikee wailo***

He went along Marike river to udik

***kuru u wape, tohuwu u rila***

while sugarcane branches curves

***Laisina i husa hoho haita Rakanyawa***

Laisina (leader of Hulaliu) appears in Rakanyawa harbour (Hulaliu)

***i husa kura nahase***

He came bringing bad luck

***I rowai yamana mapututi***

He hiked barren and arid lands

***loko, tahia mala loko***

sad, so sad

***Sou se elai, Upu Latua Ronesina***

An envoy once came to Latua Ronesina (leader of Pelau)

***tai mangaku nasarane***

but was never willing to be a Christian

***Suratu u ralai waa***

only persuasion and trickery

***Monia Makakuku, tai mangaku Nasarane******Sou miri marua waa Pikai hehe******Laisina i mangaku Nasarane***

comes to Pikai Hehe Laisina (leader of Hulaliu)

and he has admitted of becoming a Christian

***Turu au wasa sala Tualaisina***

Then, I invite him Tua Laisina (leader of Hulaliu)

***Rima i hoho peki uwa***

He has shook his hand with the scepter of power

***ia ei yoi naiminguwa***

to go to church

***wara huwani - nawaina sala latu***

with his graceful manner

***Pusu rasatela yurui silato******I saka eni sapu ratu***

He was defeated leaving only 4 leaders

***Kehe ei ma uri heri haasi******Ni sahadate maheri***

His sentence of shahada has vanished

***Rone sina - Makakuku Monia***

Leader of Pelau – Leader of Ruhomoni

*sala pari ase - Mara Wakan*  
*Ratu Ruri Rusun - kura Monia*  
*Makakuku - Mara hua wai*  
*Pinano - Kura Laisina*  
*si supu alamana - Lounussa Yasalo*  
 once had the chance to discuss  
 a discussion that took place in Lounussa  
*Hatua Hahai taha isi tewa*  
 Without being known by Hatuaha people  
*Isi salawai muria*  
 They are opposites  
*Nasi nahu ire sane*  
 One has fallen among them  
*Isi sature Laisina*  
 They brought Laisina down  
*Loko - taha - mala - loko*  
 sad, so sad  
*I kuru kurai kahani*  
 He came down wailing  
*I kuru heri hatama larira loto Lounussa*  
 He came down leaving the Khatam sunnah  
 abandoned in Lounussa  
*I kalalati wai Tanusa*  
 He went beyond Wai Tanussa  
*I Rawa wai e Matasiri Yasalo*  
 He avoids the land of Matasira  
*loko - taha malaloko*  
 sad, so sad  
*I kita ei amano mapututi*  
*Loko - taha - malaloko*  
 sad, so sad  
*Pasu rasa talea uru silato*  
*kara ele Lounussa*  
*Karu ele Lounussa yasalo*  
 The prayer headband fell from his head  
 He entrusted Lounussa to his two brothers  
*Waa ni waa rua, Ronesina Makakuku*  
 leader of Pelau and leader of Ruhomoni  
*Loto isi sa ia ele,*  
*Loto isi sa ia ele*  
*wa a ehe isi bujia ru maheeri*  
 They kept that headband  
 so that his worship does not vanish  
*Kawa muri, Matasiri Yasalo*  
 He turned his back from the land of Matasiri

***Tani te Pauna rua***

Mourn covers both of them (Kabau dan Kailolo)

***Isi re Marikee******I pasa sahu e Wailapia***

They walked across Marika river  
and across Waipia river

***Ia ei pala laue maai-maai***

Hopefully he is well aware

***I rena laina i hahiku sohura***

His path traces beach, surfing the waves

***I husa hoho haita Rakanyawa******I husa hoko Rakanyawa haita***

He appears in Rakanyawa harbour

***I rowo loto Haturesi***

Then hiked to Haturesi

***I rowo loto Haturesi Yasalo***

Hiked to Haturesi land

***Rulu mata waina***

with tears falling from both sides

***Tiha si amanue Rumasinggi Nambuasa***

Throwing away his original mosque, Mambuasa Mosque

***Tani teus si aelee******Teus isi aele waa hoho Haturesi***

He built church of Theos for Haturesi

***Rulu mata waina rua***

His tears rains down

***Awa wai e surate padoana ru molo******Taru hatua - Naru Molo - taru hatua******Waa iana - waa meito e pama miri***

How his letters and prayers came to waste

Like drowned stones

Drowned in store

***Kuru hoho Hatu malaka***

They came down to Hatumalata

***Kuru hale wae uta tulano***

If they head to Wai Uta Tulano

***Rimba waela maarita***

It's difficult to draw water

***Hoho si a olo si gareja Teuso***

They have built the church of Theos

***Ia ei pala e Poruta Hariaa***

To invite Portho and Haria people

***Seru eni Tiha meele***

That church's bell as a replacement of the mosque drum

***La e muria e waloko ei***

At last I pity him

***Kurang ei waa salo***

I shall find his weaknes

There are still many other forms of kapata and laina that depicts and describes certain events that happened in Maluku, but the challenge lies on the translation as well as tracing of these poem archives, because most of the speakers of this language are already elderly, or had passed away. Despite all of this, it is still interesting to review the translation of these words while noticing the slices of Melayu-Ambon and Bahasa Indonesia.

***Local Communities' Perspective and Follow-Up***

Post-independence, the national government emphasize numerous policies regarding local culture preservation as well as public freedom to develop each regional culture values. These points have been arranged fundamentally within the national constitution, Constitution of 1945 (Undang-Undang Dasar (UUD) 1945), the details are explained further on chapter 32, consisting two verses which reads:

1. The nation advances national culture of Indonesia in the midst of world civilization while guaranteeing people's freedom in preserving and developing the cultural values.
2. The nation respects and preserves local language as national culture wealth.

This chapter's implementation strategy towards local language resilience in Indonesia especially on the eastern part remains very difficult, with constraint from various factors:

- The lack of education staffs required with competence as well as limited teaching materials in most remote areas.
- The above factors are complicated by the lack of documentation as well as archiving of local language elements, either of basic vocabularies to language usage practice.
- The biggest difficulty lies on logistics and geographic field. Several small islands in Maluku has not even had proper transportation transit facilities such as airports and harbors, therefore complicating the logistic distribution as well as resources, both goods nor services to reach remote areas.
- The lack of empowerment through local mass media to develop the usage of local languages. Despite having several local medias that uses daily local language (Melayu-Ambon), there are still very few virtual articles and journals that reach out to the usage of indigenous language.
- The influence of globalization as well as rapid and massive social change also impacts to the decline of local language's decline and empowerment. Implementation through educational field, research and technology, as well as social culture has not been able to reach and facilitize further, and to also guarantee that indigenous language in Maluku could stand side-by-side with the modern contemporary cultures.

Several legislation arranged the essence and usage of local language, which became a complement to the ruling regarding Bahasa Indonesia as the national language, which is Law Number



20 of 2003 (Undang-Undang (UU) Nomor 20 Tahun 2003) about National Education System, coming from Law Number 4 of 1959, Law Number 12 of 1954, and Law Number 2 of 1989.

The essence of these regulations sees the usage of local languages as an introduction in the early stages of learning to deliver certain knowledge and skills, or can also be said as a complimentary mode of learning other than Bahasa Indonesia, as well as the usage of foreign language as language of instruction to develop students regarding foreign language comprehension skills. The value of both local and foreign languages are seen as a supporting function to Bahasa Indonesia as an introduction in the national education system.

Other than that in Law Number 24 of 2009, Chapter 41 and Chapter 42 also arranged the handling of local language and literature that is also the responsibility of regional government. This constitution regulates the coordination of regional and central government as the national linguistic policy maker, that is classified into three parts; development, coaching, and protection of local language and literature. The implementation of this policy was done with the effort to modernize language through vocabulary enrichment, language system consolidation and standardization, as well as the development of language scaling.

In February 2022, coinciding with the commemoration of International Mother Language Day (February 21st 2022), The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbud Ristek) launched the 17th episode of Merdeka Belajar program, which is Local Language Revitalization (Revitalisasi Bahasa Daerah or RBD) (2021-2024). Within the implementation and execution, the Language Development and Coaching Agency (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan bahasa or BPPB) Kemendikbud Ristek analyzes the characteristic dynamics of each region in Indonesia as well as the contribution and involvement of both local government and related institutions such as Kantor Bahasa Provinsi Maluku, to the role of social environment, families, educational institutions, as well as experts of this field so that this program can be executed maximally and according to its target. There are three models of revitalizations that are applied according to each local characteristics in its practice, which is model A, B, and C. The province of Maluku itself was categorized into model C, with features such as:

- The vitality of language is classified within the category that experiences decline, endangered, or critical.
- The number of speakers are very small and the distribution of speech area is limited.

The applied strategy of implementation by BPPB Kemendikbud Ristek to Kantor Bahasa Provinsi Maluku was done through collaboration with several parties in educational field:

1. Coordination and cooperation with local stake holders so that the partnership between central party and or through technical implementation units (language hall/office) throughout Indonesia alongside local government can be implemented on an ongoing basis.
2. Adjustment of language condition and characteristics done to adjust the preparation of local language learning model(s).
3. Technical guidance for main teachers or master that will also be taught to co-workers and especially to students. These masters come from certain individuals that are fluent in speaking

local language, either if its from teachers, headmasters from elementary and middle schools, local communities, PKK, and education authorities.

4. Induction of related parties as well as the execution of program implementation dissemination that contributes in the RBD program.
5. Monitoring, evaluation, as well as the RBD program quality assurance.
6. Procurement of Mother Language Bud Festival (Festival Tunas Bahasa Ibu) in stages as a form of appreciation for the involvement of talented young generations on held competitions, as well as lifting the 'pride' of local language.

From a total of 92 targeted local languages planned to be revitalized until 2024, per 2022, BPPB Kemendikbud Ristek managed to revitalize 39 languages in 13 provinces in Indonesia, that consists of 3 local languages in Maluku, which is Buru language in Buru District, Kei language in Southeast Maluku District, as well as Yamdena language in Tanimbar Islands District, and by 2023, these numbers rose to 72 languages of 19 provinces that was managed to revitalized, with the addition of 2 languages from Maluku, which is Seram language in East Seram District, and West Tarangan language in Aru Islands District.

This program's implementation per 2022 was done by procuring six (6) competitions taught to the students, that are poet writing and reading, storytelling, singing, short story writing, speech, and standup comedy. This program received positive support from both province and district governments, as well as from the locals. RBD program target on 2023 in Maluku covers 94 schools in 2 districts, which is East Seram (25 elementary and 16 middle schools) and Aru Islands (40 elementary and 16 middle schools).

Some independent linguistic institutions such as Bahasa Basudara also started their effort on language empowerment for children and teenagers in Maluku. Bahasa Basudara is an online-based independent linguistic institution that was pioneered by a Maluku academic domiciled in England named Dr. Jeff Malaihollo. The essence and purpose of this institutions were to facilitate and accommodate children and teenagers in Maluku to study foreign languages, supported by teaching volunteers coming from a variety of countries, starting from Netherlands, Germany, etc.

Learning models as well as classes were done virtually and gradually for 4 to 6 months. The division of classes will be determined according to the students' level of comprehension. The participants could pick a class according to their interest of a certain language. These classes are still very abstract due to the availability of the teaching volunteers. Although a curriculum had not yet existed or even the introduction and learning process of local languages (possibly due to the lack of teachers and learning materials), this initiative could be a strong trigger to language interest for the young generations in Maluku.

In socio-cultural scope of Maluku society, church also held a major role in the development of culture and language. In Maluku and surrounding areas, Protestant Church of Maluku (Gereja Protestan Maluku or GPM) has a wide networking to the congregations, both in central or rural areas. Based on the interview with the General Chairman of GPM Synod, whom at the same time works as one of GPM priest from 2008, Pdt. Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, M.Si, or often called Bu Eli, is one of a notable figures that delved into sociolinguistic field as well as Maluku culture.

He perceived bahasa tana in Maluku as a linguistic construction that was built and grew within indigenous people of Maluku, as well as other local language absorptions. Each of these language has

its own connection, either by definition, vocabularies, to its roots. This language is not merely used as a communication tool, but rather has its own deep meaning, especially from a theological. The absorption of these languages came from various ways, starting from population migration as Maluku society origin, the contact between traders from Nusantara and from abroad, all the way to the colonialism era alongside Portuguese and Dutch, as well as Arab and India, which can be discovered in Southeastern Maluku.

His emphasized points were how the religious civilization also took part on building a linguistic and cultural construction in Maluku overall, especially in Central Maluku. Evangelism process and Christianity also had a significant impact towards language death; indigenous language was described as a form of infidelity, due to its connection to the ancestors of Maluku, that on the colonial era, the usage of indigenous language was briefly cut with language centralization towards Melayu-Ambon (*lingua franca*), initiated by the Dutch government at the time.

Protestant Church of Maluku has a high urgency and had already initiated several efforts to develop language on theological fields and churches. One of the significant effort was to advance bible translation. GPM have tried cooperating with some missionaries and academics from the US, Australia, England, etc. to strive bible translation using indigenous language, such as Mehier language of Kisar, Luak and Tehar language, as well as 7 other languages from Southwest Maluku that are still being attempted, like Lune, Wemale, Naulu, Melayu-Ambon, Buru and Kei (on final progress), Koa of North Seram language (under translation surveying process), and several other language families.

This strategy was implemented with a purpose so that gospel can be comprehended by indigenous people according to their own cultural understandings that is strongly framed by language. That being said, indigenous congregations could feel the strong bond delivered through biblical understanding, by using their own local languages. Through bible translation, a familiar impression can be made for indigenous people towards evangelism, yet on the other hand, could revived a near-extinct or rarely known and used indigenous language.

GPM also strived several other approach either institutionally or individually. The intimacy and closeness of these supporting elements starting from Daily Workers Assembly (Majelis Pekerja Harian or MPH), the preachers, all the way to the other internal parts, alongside the public became a positive element towards cultural and linguistic development. The existing connection and wide networking with educational institutions, stakeholders, as well as traditional leaders—which mostly bonded while they were assigned to the hinterlands—also handed large contributions to these related agendas.

As of now, it only depends on the dexterity as well as the awareness of the urgency of this issue from each parties to cooperate. Some parties helped in research fields, by executing personal research or cooperating with certain institutions in Maluku, such as priests, whom at the same time, works as academics or education staffs on colleges in Maluku, namely Indonesia Christian University of Maluku (Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku or UKIM), that often conducts academic researches on remote areas, to examine socio-cultural dynamics in each society. Some engaged individually, such as Bu Eli, who also wrote daily journals titled “Kutikata”, a daily biblical reflection written in Melayu-Ambon language; with the hopes to grow motivation from the public regarding the interest of local language usage, through theological context.

This done strategy to reach an optimal approach with multiple ‘forms’ of society is certainly not an easy task. In the case of Mollucans, surely there lies the need to comprehend that there are various social patterns, if compared to other indigenous society, while reviewing the proximity of Mollucan with strong elements of culture and history, and the daily basis of religious belief. It can be

studied from this point that a more formal and systematic approach is a must to be viewed as a foundation, but with a more intimate contact, such as a shared identity element; by the line of descent, kinship, religion, etc. could trigger the ‘openness’ of the society, while considering their existence would be more ‘recognized’ in a socio-cultural ecosystem.

### ***Post colonialism and Globalization: the fate of Indigenous People in Ambon, Maluku***

Widely speaking, Indonesia is one of the countries that owns a long history of colonialism. Numerous colonizers arrived and occupied Indonesia for various needs. In the process, many aspects have been sacrificed, either by material, lives, even regarding assets that has become a regional or national identity. Within this context, the word ‘colonization’ does not perceive as a process of one country dominating the other, but rather on the impact of that process formed a mindset as well as society lifestyle for a long period of time, even far after the colonization era had finished and the colonized country [technically] had been acknowledged as a whole country, and free from any form of physical colonization.

The impact of colonialism in Maluku can still be felt in the present day, from the description of society’s lifestyle; identity forms, such as names and surnames; undergoing culture; to the language used. Only a few social classes that still has a strong bond with the indigenous culture and language, and also has high attention to take care and maintain the remaining assets. Despite that, these groups can not be simply classified as ‘indigenous people’ wholly. Several social strata were some parts that felt to have shared identities towards these culture, and felt motivated or moved to study and re-develop the culture or language that are nearly extinct.

The meaning of colonization could be multi-interpretable and does not only stand by traditional definition. Globalization process, supported by colonialism influence, may be classified as ‘colonization’ towards indigenous people along with their culture and language. Economical, political, educational, as well as social competition globally becomes the main factors. Globalization and Internationalization process becomes two complimentary aspects; maintaining the existence and position of a country in a global space, and surely with an appropriate handling and strategy, could form a mutualism pattern, even supporting the local society and cultural development while not harming and overlapping each other.

Achievement of this plan can be reviewed from different factors; a governmental form and strategy, geographical condition, socio-cultural compatibility pattern of a society, resources and facility ability, as well as national interest(s). A challenging geographical situation due to the archipelago-like form of the region, a traditional perspective of some parts of the society that perceives indigenous culture as a primitive thing, the lack of attention and urgency by the regional government to strive such issues, an insufficient resource and facilities, as well as the local educational system that has not been able to juxtapose the usage and development of indigenous and local language with international and national language, complements this whole issue.

Culture and religion are two major factors in Maluku, both in central and rural areas. Several parties like Protestant Church of Maluku, has held a role as one of the driving force and as a public advocate to balance between both of these aspects. Public’s perception about their life pattern is determined by religious teaching as well as a deep cultural understanding, compared to metropolitan regions with a large scale urban in Indonesia, society in Maluku still holds a strong religious and cultural principal and is inviolable by the process of globalization.

Several social strata still base their lives by their belief, by theological and cultural principals. The perception of God and customs is described as a “provider for all being to live, while teaching on

how to co-exist one another”. Solidarity pattern of the society can be observed from those who shares a strong collective identity, line of descents, place of origin, as well as other forms of kinship. Despite it not being displayed frontally, but these habits and customs differentiates the society dynamics in Maluku from other regions in Indonesia. The church is not limited to being a container to fulfill the public’s theological or religious needs, but also plays a role on facilitating socio-cultural education, that extends to every layers of society. The nature of church synod that is capable of balancing technology development as a tool of information spreading as well as public education, helped by other expert parties, such as educational institutions (schools, colleges, and other education facilities), government parties, independent educational and socio-culture based institutions, as well as other external parties that has similar interests and attention towards cultural and linguistic empowerment in Maluku. One of the department that GPM has is Bible Translation Agency (Badan Penerjemahan Alkitab or BPA), whose also serves the purpose to reach out to indigenus people for the needs of language empowerment in theological realm. This was one of the implemented strategy in order to revive and normalized the usage of indigenus language, starting from the strongest aspect in Maluku, which is religion.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, bahasa tana can be interpreted by basic as the majority of other indigenus language in general; an original language of a region that becomes the main communication tool of the local people, which then developed into a cultural asset and an identity of the region itself. Even so, bahasa tana surfaced its own difference from the other indigenus language, saving historical sources that can not be found in national or regional archives. Furthermore, bahasa tana also symbolizes a form of Mollucans’s fight against colonization, either physically, or mentally and emotionally. In the sense that this language had become a ‘weapon’ of resistance against the colonizers that occupied Maluku hundreds of years prior, and had still become a ‘shield’ towards a newer form of colonization, that is [still] happening in the globalization era; culture merging, as well as the domination of national and international language, encouraged by various interests and demands from many aspects, such as education, economics, politics, etc.

The critical level of this issue has not yet draw the attention from majority of social layers as well as stakeholders in Maluku, and only a number of parties and institutions that owns interest within this issue, such as Kantor Bahasa, Protestant Church of Maluku (GPM) along with one of its department which is Bible Translation Agency (BPA), supported by some individuals under these institutions. Reviewing the concentration of national education that are focused towards national language empowerment with international language such as English and indigenus language as supporting elements, leaving the locals and several institutions having to put double the effort to emphasize a revitalization so that the indigenus language like bahasa tana will not be sidelined and extinct.

This scientific writing is expected to raise awareness especially towards Mollucans and related parties to accelerate more programs and priority plans to cooperate the effort to emphasize the preservation and revitalization of indigenus languages, especially to bahasa tana in Maluku. Certainly this needs to be triggered by an empowerment from the educational field, that stimulates indigenus language education, alongside national and international language(s). That being said, at least the preservation of cultural legacy could last much longer for generations to come, and does not stop at a certain one. It is inevitable that despite a consistent effort given, these language is still highly potential to be extinct, but at least recordings and archiving can be done and protected in order to keep it maintained in the midst of current development as well as globalization.

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