

# “Alah Ka Nggoh!” Language Map and Attitudes of Multilingual Speakers in Kluet Raya Districts

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## ABSTRACT

This research examines the growing interest in language attitudes over recent decades. Focusing on Kluet Raya region, this study explores the regional languages used across various sub-districts and the attitudes of residents toward them. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the geographic distribution and attitudes of local community in the Kluet Raya region toward their heritage languages. The researchers also use linguistic maps to reconstruct areas where Acehese, Aneuk Jamee, and Kluet languages are spoken within the sub-districts in Aceh Selatan district. This study adopts a qualitative approach in an attempt to gain a comprehensive understanding of community attitudes on language diversity in the region. Twelve participants, selected through purposeful sampling to represent diverse backgrounds, participated in in-depth interviews. Findings reveal a strong positive attitude toward heritage languages, with local languages viewed as equally prestigious across the region. There is also a clear preference for bilingual education that includes both Indonesian and local languages for children in Kluet Raya.

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## 1. Introduction

Acehnese is an indigenous language spoken in the northern part of Sumatra, Indonesia. The number of its speakers is estimated to be between 2.4 and 3.5 million, although the exact figure is uncertain (Aziz et al., 2021). However, Acehnese language is currently facing challenges to its survival, particularly among younger generations in urban areas of the province. Many Acehnese youths are increasingly adopting Indonesian as their primary language, which signals a concerning trend for the preservation of Acehnese (Al-Auwal, 2017). This shift away from their native language reflects a broader issue of language maintenance among its speakers. Furthermore, the situation is exacerbated by the absence of local language education in schools, further limiting opportunities for young people to learn and use Acehnese (Aziz et al., 2021).

The linguistic diversity in Aceh the importance of addressing language attitudes and promoting the vitality of indigenous languages (Al-Auwal, 2017; Husna, 2018). Academic research further supports the acknowledgment of Aceh's linguistic richness, urging efforts to foster positive language attitudes and ensure the continued use and appreciation of Acehnese and other local languages (Aziz & Amery, 2016; Syahputera et al., 2024).

However, the study of language attitude has gained popularity in the past five decades as there has been a growing fascination with exploring the connection between language usage and human cognition). Experts have provided explanations of language attitude. Lai (2005) and Coronel-Molina (2014) defined and analyzed language attitude from different perspectives, offering insights into how individuals perceive and respond to languages. Lai (2005) defines language attitude as an individual's tendency to respond positively or negatively to a particular language or linguistic feature emphasizing

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that these attitudes are latent and can only be inferred through observable behaviour. While for Coronel-Molina (2014) Language attitude is understood through two main perspectives: the behaviourist and the mentalist. The behaviourist view defines attitudes as observable responses to particular languages, focusing on their use in real interactions and perceiving attitudes as singular units expressed through behaviour. On the other hand, the mentalist perspective considers attitudes as internal mental states that may influence behaviour, breaking them down into knowledge, feelings and actions (Coronel-Molina, 2014; Lai, 2005).

The notion of language attitude becomes particularly significant when considering the role of linguistic and ethnic identities in social interactions (Aziz et al., 2021). Recognition of one's ethnic and linguistic background plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging within a group, especially in multilingual environments (Akintayo et al., 2024). Sociolinguistic structures also influence the choice of language in various contexts. Additionally, language situations can evoke both positive and negative emotions, shaping attitudes based on personal experiences, which in turn affect an individual's language usage (Garrett, 2010). Language attitude studies are generally conducted for two main reasons. First, they aim to evaluate different linguistic varieties, especially in terms of their prestige or lack thereof, as seen with pidgins and creoles. Second, they seek to understand the impact or negative consequences a particular language variety may have on society.

Looking back in history, the Acehnese people used a variety of languages such as Arabic, Malay, Dutch, and Japanese, particularly before the colonial era, even going back to the Lambri periods before the Aceh kingdom (Husna, 2018). In contemporary times, Acehnese primarily use Indonesian as a common language, using Acehnese more Informally (Aziz et al., 2021; Fakhrurrazi, 2016). Although Acehnese is recognized as a regional language in Aceh Province, it has been noted that Acehnese has a more intricate vowel system compared to Indonesian.

South Aceh Regency, one of the oldest in Aceh Province, comprises 19 sub-districts stretching from the southern to the northern regions. The administrative center is located in Tapaktuan District. Geographically, Kluet Raya includes five sub-districts: Kluet Selatan, Kluet Timur, Kluet Utara, Pasie Raja, and Kluet Tengah. In this region, unlike the northern part where Acehnese is predominantly spoken, people speak a mix of Acehnese, Aneuk Jamee, and Kluet.

**Table 1. Information of Kluet Raya population based on gender**

Districts	Population by Gender and Sex Ratio in South Aceh Regency in 2016	
	Male	Female
Kluet Selatan	6830	7112
Kluet Timur	6112	6289
Kluet Utara	12504	12926
Pasie Raja	8950	8954
Kluet Tengah	3436	3427
Total	76540	

All these languages differ in terms of linguistic origins, vocabulary, and phonological features. Furthermore, previous research on languages in Kluet Raya suggests that they do not have a close linguistic affinity with one another (Thurgood, 2007). For example, Acehnese is categorized under the Chamic subgroup, which has its origins in the region that now includes Vietnam, while the Kluet language belongs to the Batak subgroup, alongside languages like Alas and Karo Batak. Another language found in the Kluet Raya region is Aneuk Jamee, which has its roots in Minangkabau and is part of the Malayic subgroup. It is spoken by the Aneuk Jamee tribe, who have lived in Kluet Raya and reside in East Kluet, Central Kluet, and North Kluet, where they make up the majority of the population. Meanwhile, the Acehnese language remains predominantly spoken in these regions (Adnan et al., 2022; Zulkhairi et al., 2024).

As linguistics has increasingly focused on variation, it has become evident that earlier frameworks for explaining linguistic diversity were insufficient. There are researchers on vernaculars such as the study by Muhammad and Hendrokumoro (2022) about kinship level of local languages and Toha (2013) who discusses about isolect in Aceh Tamiang Regency, both of which have provided valuable insights about regional language variation (Muhammad & Hendrokumoro, 2022; Toha, 2013). However, there remains a gap in comprehensive research regarding the languages spoken in the Kluet

Raya region and their linguistic mapping. Therefore, this research fills this gap by examining regional languages in several sub-districts in Kluet Raya, and looking at the language attitudes of the residents towards their regional languages. This research will serve as a reliable documentation for future scholars seeking to replicate the same investigation. Linguistic ethnographers have the job of examining how language is used in a specific area, even when the linguistic boundary is not clear. In this regard, geographical information is vital, as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the correlation between linguistic diversity and its spatial distribution. This kind of analysis is not new; in fact, it has a long history in fields like geolinguistics and dialectology (Holliday et al., 2013). Therefore, we aim to reconstruct the areas where three local languages have been spoken in South Aceh districts using linguistic maps based on published ethnographic data and fieldwork accounts. Additionally, we are interested in understanding the attitude of the speakers towards their vernaculars. Following the background above, the problems formulated in this paper are as follows:

1. How is the distribution of Acehnese, Aneuk Jamee and Kluet in South Aceh districts?
2. What are the participants' attitudes towards the languages they speak: Acehnese, Aneuk Jamee, and Kluet?

## **2. Methods**

This research is a field of sociolinguistic study, namely examining the use of language according to the social context of the user (Holmes, 2013). The research was conducted descriptively, to find out the extent of the relationship between language use and speakers who describe the area of language use. An explanatory sequential mixed methods research design was used in the study. Using explanatory sequential design involves two-phase process – collecting and analyzing quantitative data first followed by collecting qualitative data to expound the quantitative findings (Creswell, 2014). The underlying purpose of this design is that results in the first phase give a general picture of the research problem but such are inadequate by themselves. Creswell (2014) identified the six most common designs, three concurrent and three sequential designs. One of these designs, the mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, is quite popular with researchers and entails gathering and evaluating quantitative and qualitative data in two consecutive phases within a single study. The primary form of data collection, i.e., survey questionnaire, was prioritized and supported by the secondary form of data collection, i.e Key Informant Interview (KII) to explain more the quantitative outcome results, understand better their difficulties not provided in the primary data source and substantiate further responses.

The research location was carried out in two out of five sub-districts in Kluet Raya regions, namely Kluet Timur and Kluet Utara. The determination of this location is based on considerations that the village areas of each of these sub-districts have three different regional languages. The source of this research data, namely informants from a language community group who have settled in the research area. Another reason for selecting informants from this community group is not only to gather spoken language data, but also to clearly observe the context of language use through their direct interactions. This study uses the observation method, which is done by observing the speech when the language is used directly by groups of people who speak the same language. In this study, we used the mentalist way (Coronel-Molina, 2014) to understand how Kluet Raya people feel about their local languages. The mentalist way sees attitude as a mental state of readiness, which means it cannot be studied directly. Instead, we learn about it by looking at how people respond, what they report about themselves, or what they think about.

The interview method employed was a planned semi-structured interview. Researchers prepared only fundamental questions adapted from Yusuf et al (2013) and Aziz et al (2021). The questions primarily focused on the language used by informants in their daily lives, their attitudes toward their heritage languages, and their efforts to preserve these languages. During the interview, the informants will provide an initial response, which the researcher will then clarify by asking more in-depth follow-up questions (Aziz et al., 2021; Yusuf et al., 2013).

### **Participants**

For quantitative phase, a total of 107 speakers living in the Kluet Raya region (79 males and 28 females) participated in our study, based on the following criteria: they were born and raised one of the

Kluet raya regions. In keeping with previous research (Schmid, 2011), a maximum age at testing of 67 years was set to exclude potential effects of advancing age on language abilities. These respondents were between the ages of 15 and 64 years of age. The age variable comprises four groups (Smagulova, 2008); 78 respondents are 23 years old or younger, 22 respondents are between 24 and 35 years of age, 4 respondents are between 36 and 55 years of age, and 3 respondents are older than 55. Then, the Language Attitude Questionnaire was randomly administered to a total of 107 Kluet Raya respondents.

**Table 2. Profile of Participants Based on Age Group**

Age Group	Gender	Number of Participants
15-23	M	57
	F	21
24-35	M	16
	F	6
36-55	M	3
	F	1
55+	M	3

In this case, we prefer to classify them as Generation or G (Aziz et al., 2021); Teenager (ages 15-23) as fourth generation or G4, Early Adulthood (ages 24-35) as third generation or G3, Early Middle Age (ages 36-55) as second generation or G2, and Late Middle Age (age 55+) as first generation or G1.

Meanwhile in the qualitative phase, diverse perspectives are obtained through interviews with 12 informants. We visited residential areas in Kluet Raya and engaged directly with the community in their homes and workplaces. There are women from three different generations included one man and two women in the age range of 15-20 years old (G4), five community members with the age range of 45-50 years old (G3), two males in the age range of 34-35 (G2), and two community members consisting of one man and one woman in the age range of 80-85 years old (G1).

**Table 3. Segregation of generation based on age group**

Generation	Age Group	Number of participants	Gender
G1	55+	3	2 Males, 1 Female
G2	36-55	4	4 Males
G3	24-35	2	1 Male, 1 Female
G4	15-23	3	1 Male, 2 Female

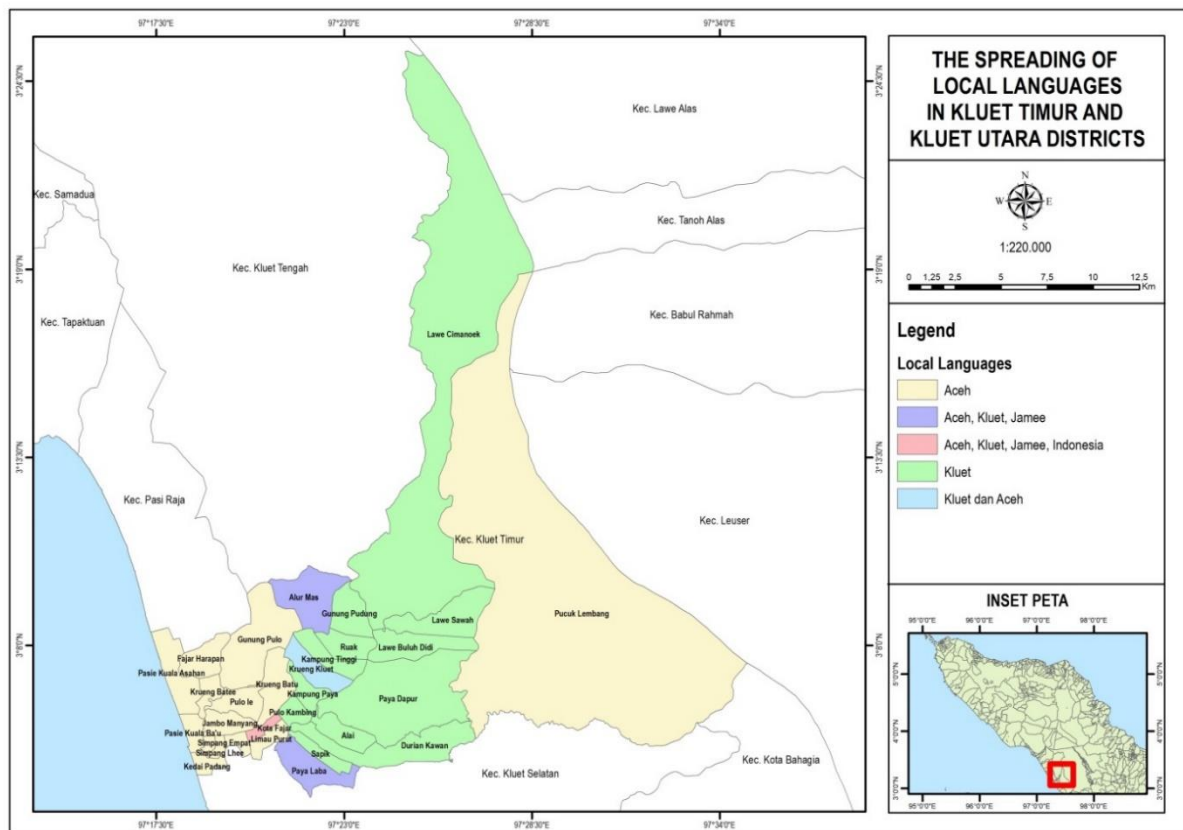
They were selected by using purposive sampling. These respondents were coded as G for Generation, which is preceded by the number of generations.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 The Distribution of Vernaculars in Kluet Raya regions

This map was created during a one-month visit at multiple sites to the Kluet Raya regions in May 2023. Prior to this, we had collated a series of maps that we could refer to for guidance, as well as the information from the informants. Some of the village community leaders and speakers of local languages joined the mapping effort for a day to offer their feedback based on their personal experience as speakers of languages that we were mapping, and also as linguists. The researchers also referred to the map created by Balai Bahasa (Bahasa, 2025) as the initial source. The methods for creating the map were somewhat crude. Access to GIS databases for the region was not available, and even if it had been, there were concerns about the adequacy and detail of the data for mapping purposes. Therefore, Adobe Photoshop was used to create the map. The language distribution was traced onto a transparent layer and positioned on the regional map in relation to county boundaries. After creating and positioning layers for all languages, a PSD file was delivered to a professional cartographer, who produced the final version of the map. We then distributed map and collected feedback from experts in the field regarding the distribution of languages which they had knowledge of, and modified the map accordingly. However, to address mobility issues in language mapping, we specify the time period the map represents since language use and movement change over time. Additionally, working with local linguists, community leaders, and long-term residents can help capture migration patterns and speaker movement that formal data might miss. This approach ensures the map reflects a more accurate and flexible view

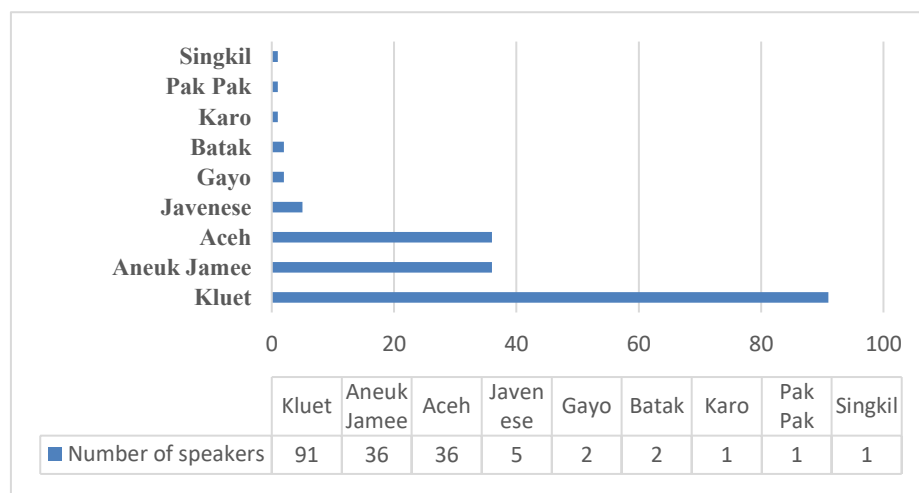
of the region's linguistic landscape of vernaculars distribution in Kluet Timur and Kluet Utara



There are nine sub-districts in Kluet Timur district, namely Paya Dapur, Sapik, Alai, Durian Kawan, Lawe Sawah, Lawe Buluh Didi, Pucuk Lembang, Paya Laba, Lawe Cimanok. Meanwhile there are 21 sub-districts in Kluet utara district, namely Krueng Batu, Fajar Harapan, Krueng Batee, Pasie Kuala Asahan, Gunung Pulo, Pulo Ie I, Jambo Manyang, Simpang Empat, Kampung Tinggi, Ruak, Limau Purut, Pulo Kambing, Kampung Paya, Krueng Batu, Krueng Kluet, Alur Mas, Simpang Lhee, Suaq Geringgeng, Pasie Kuala Ba'u Kedai Padang, Kota Fajar, and Gunung Pudung (Data from <https://klikdesaku.id/id/kecamatan/>). Despite the fact that there are five districts in the Kluet Raya region, owing to time and financial constraints, this mapping only includes the two districts with the most diverse languages, Kluet Utara and Kluet Timur.

Based on the interview, there are nine languages spoken in Kluet Raya regions, namely, Kluet, Aneuk Jamee, Aceh, Jawa, Gayo, Batak, Karo, Pak Pak, and Singkil.

Chart 1. Language background of participants



The findings reveal a diverse language background among participants, with a notable dominance of certain heritage languages. The majority of participants, 91 in total, identify Kluet as their primary language, indicating a strong presence of this linguistic group within the sample. This is followed by Aneuk Jamee and Aceh languages, each spoken by 36 participants, underscoring their significance as well. In contrast, fewer participants report using Jawa (5 speakers), Gayo (2 speakers), and Batak (2 speakers), while Karo, Pak Pak, and Singkil are minimally represented, with only one speaker each. This distribution illustrates the multilingual nature of the participant group, with Kluet, Aneuk Jamee, and Aceh speakers forming the core linguistic identities, while other languages play a lesser role in the overall language composition.

### 3.2 Language Attitude of Speakers in Kluet Raya District

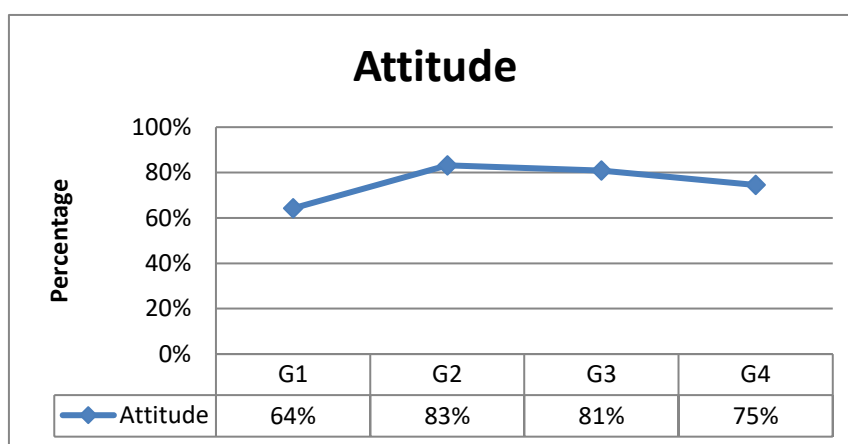
#### Quantitative Phase

The results of the data on the language attitudes of the Kluet Raya community in South Aceh towards Kluet, Aneuk Jamee, and Aceh languages are presented in the Chart 2. It shows that, overall, the attitude towards these vernacular languages in the Kluet Raya region is 75%, indicating a positive perception.

**Table 4. Interval level and criteria**

Interval	Criteria
0%-19.99%	Very poor
20%-39.99%	Poor
40%-59.99%	Fair
60%-79.99%	Good
80%-100%	Excellent

**Chart 2. Language attitude of Kluet Raya residents**



The figure shows that the first generation (G1) and fourth generation (G4) have good attitudes towards the language, with percentages above 60% and 70%, respectively. The second generation (G2) and third generation (G3) show excellent attitudes, with 83% and 81% respectively. This indicates a strong belief in the importance of heritage languages to one's identity, with variations across generations. These findings suggest a positive trend in the linguistic vitality of Kluet, Aneuk Jamee, and Aceh. This positive attitude is crucial for maintaining and preserving these languages. Furthermore, the figure indicates that Kluet, Aneuk Jamee, and Aceh are widely used among the community, with Kluet usage exceeding 60% in all cases. It is important to note that Indonesian, as national language, also prefer to use in their daily use, higher than Aneuk Jamee and Aceh.

#### Qualitative Phase

In general, the participants had a very positive view of their heritage languages. Most indicated that they spoke Kluet, Aceh and Aneuk Jamee with family and friends but not at schools. A

significant majority of the sample also felt that a school that taught in Indonesian and local languages would be better than an Indonesian only school for Kluet Raya children. These studies also showed that in Kluet Raya these vernaculars, mentioned above, enjoy the same degree of prestige.

*First Generation (55+ years old)*

Based on the responses given during the interviews, the respondents said they dominantly use Kluet language in conversations. Most of them used their native language to communicate among them at the home, market, school, and other public places.

They also admitted that they are proud of their language and pass it on to their children at home. As YL (age 80) who have lived in the area for decades said,

“When my son, even my grandchildren, returns home they still communicate in Kluet here. Even though some of them study in Banda, or work there, and they speak Indonesia n there. But when they came back here I won’t speak with them except in Kluet.”

However, to communicate with neighbors and local people, she and her family will adapt to the person they are talking to. Most importantly about what to say and how to say it when people communicate with each other (Dewi et al., 2021). This is because the Kluet Timur sub-district has varied regional languages. As SY (75 years old) puts it,

“Within this setting, there are five languages—or, to be precise, six, including the Karo language.”

However, despite the linguistic diversity present in this locality, the various regional languages coexist harmoniously. The attitude of tolerance is highly essential in social life, particularly in multicultural societies, as it fosters harmony among cultures (Fatimah, 2025). This is as stated by YL (80),

“Here we speak three languages, no dominant language. But the majority use Acehnese, Jamee, and Kluet. Almost all the people here understand all these languages. I speak with my grandchildren in Jamee, but with my husband, I will use Kluet”

Living in a multilingual area, ST (60 years old) states sometimes they have certain phrases to include all these three vernaculars.

“...So, for example, if there is work that this person has accomplished, we immediately say Alah Ka Nggoth. Alah ka nggoth, it means the same thing. If translated Alah (in Aneuk Jamee, red.) it has been done, Ka (in Acehnese, red.) and Nggoth (in Kluet, red.) also have the same meaning”

The purpose of mixing words from various languages is none other than to respect diversity. This newly formed phrase is also generally accepted.

However, unfortunately, their local languages are not being taught at schools. Unlike the first generation in the past. As YL (80) explained:

“Today's children are no longer taught Kluet, or other regional languages at their schools. In the past, we were even taught Kluet language. There is a teacher here. That was when I was at school during the big flood, around the 1970s.”

According to the informants’ response, the first generation of Acehnese reported using their local languages dominantly. One of the sources also said that she always spoke these three languages, they still use these languages simultaneously.

*Second Generation (36-55 years old)*

In accordance with the first generation, it was found that the second-generation informant spoke these three vernaculars well and sometimes mix between these local languages as well when speaking to another people from the Kluet Raya regions.

AN (40 years old) describes his living condition with multilingual community as the following,

“Like a row of houses here, the brothers speak Acehnese, next to the house they speak Kluet [pointing]. The house at the end of the row speaks Acehnese, here the languages are mixed, Jamee language, Indonesian.”

Meanwhile, according to most interviewees, they continue to use the Kluet language in various settings outside their homes to preserve its usage. As pointed out by ZF (50), a very influential person in Kluet Raya. He confidently says,

“One of the positive attributes of this area, and what distinguishes the Kluet Raya region, is the prominence of the Kluet language in these five sub-districts. Kluet Raya's identity is defined by the Kluet language.”

When approaching individuals who are Kluet tribe in the regions, whether in the market, rice field, workplace, or other settings, they still used Kluet while letting the interlocutors speak in their preference of languages, in Kluet, Aneuk Jamee or even in Acehnese languages. While when they meet acquaintances or friends who originally from Kluet Raya who can speak Kluet outside the district, they will choose to use Kluet rather than Indonesian.

In line with ZF statement, SS (43) his friends also added,

“Like me who live in Krueng Kluet, I can speak 3 languages, the first is Acehnese, the second is Kluet and the third is Jamee. Most maintain their respective identities. Understand or not, they don't care. But on average here they understand. Aneuk Jamee understands Acehnese, Aneuk Aceh understands Kluet. That's what makes the Kluet community unique.”

Finally, this pride and practice have become one strategy of preserving of their languages, particularly Kluet. However, similar to the disappointment of the first generation, FR (42 years old) who is holding important position in his village, regrets that there is no special curriculum in schools to teach regional languages. Especially the Kluet language which only belongs to the Kluet Raya areas.

“If Kluet generation is not systematically taught their languages, they will disappear in the future, especially Kluet language. Maybe they can speak, but for writing it will be difficult. Like the Acehnese language there are certain symbols.”

Lastly, he hopes that the language in his region will be maintained through the curriculum.

### *Third Generation (24-35 years old)*

In Kluet Raya, the heritage languages are handed down from parents to children. This aligns with the statement of SD (34 years old). He acknowledged that since childhood, he had been accustomed to an environment where multiple languages were spoken. He told his journey of acquiring these vernaculars.

“Similar to me, I originate from North Kluet. Both my mother and father are from North Kluet and they speak Acehnese Following their marriage, they acquired land in this region and opted to move here. By chance, the dialect being used is Jamee, originating from southern Kluet. Despite being born into the Acehnese language, both Acehnese and Jamee languages were present, and eventually, we conversed in Kluet as well”



Another statements from a lecturer who currently resides in Meulaboh SA (35 years old) show us how 'special' the Kluet language for their community. At work, she constantly uses either Indonesian and Acehese. But when she came back home to meet her family and relatives, she has to speak in Kluet.

"My grandparents and my relatives, and my uncles always speak to me in Kluet. When I speak other languages, they won't answer it [laugh]. So, when there is gathering in my grandparents' house in Kluet Timur, we will speak in Kluet only, and they urge me to teach my little kids Kluet language as well."

#### *Fourth Generation (15-23 years old)*

The explanations were given by the informants who expressed their attitude toward their local languages. This is substantiated by the statement of AM, a 15 years old boy.

"I can speak in three languages, Kluet, Jamee and Aceh. But I did not use these languages at school, because we speak Indonesian."

Another informant AB (22 years old) explained that she always uses Kluet language in everyday life, although she also can speak Acehese and Aneuk Jamee.

"Yes, I speak Kluet at home and with the community here. Sometimes I use Acehese and Aneuk Jamee when we meet newcomers or guests."

Interestingly, one of respondent is aware of her identity of being a Kluet community. LN (20) will use Kluet even when communicate in social media.

"When I want to type something or update status in social media, mostly I use Kluet. Then my friends who understand Kluet will respond in the same way. But I also understand Jamu (Jamee, red) and Acehese, but only for oral communication."

All respondents in the fourth generation admitted that they did not have special regional language subjects. So, she does not have the knowledge of how to write or read in the regional language, and has never seen texts in the vernaculars.

A notable feature of this research is its distinct focus on language attitudes toward three languages within diverse contexts. The findings from this study reveal a generally positive attitude toward heritage languages among the sampled population in Kluet Raya. The respondents expressed a strong preference for using Kluet, Acehese, and Aneuk Jamee in their interactions with family and friends, but not as prominently in school settings. This finding contrasts with Al-Auwal's (2017) study, which points to negative attitudes among Acehese youth toward their native language. In the Kluet Raya region, however, pride in local languages spans all age groups, with parents and elders actively fostering their use. Although Indonesian is the only formal language used in schools, vernacular languages continue to hold a significant role in the region. Therefore, a language shift (Al-Auwal, 2017; Husna, 2018), where a dominant language overtakes a minority one, is unlikely to occur in this context because each vernacular holds equal significance and is not overshadowed by other vernaculars or Indonesian. Interestingly, most participants suggested that schools incorporating both Indonesian and local languages would be more beneficial for Kluet Raya children than those using only Indonesian. This reflects a collective effort to preserve and integrate linguistic diversity into the education system.

Among the first generation (aged 55 and above), the dominance of the Kluet language in daily conversations was evident. Respondents highlighted the use of their native language in various settings. Meanwhile, the findings regarding the second generation (aged 36-55) reveal a continuation of the multilingual proficiency observed in the first generation. Similar to their predecessors, individuals in this age group are adept at using the three vernaculars—Kluet, Acehese, and Aneuk Jamee. An interesting observation is the occasional mixing of these local languages in conversations, especially when engaging with people from the diverse Kluet Raya regions. Furthermore, the living conditions within the multilingual community were aptly described by AN (40), illustrating a dynamic linguistic

landscape where various languages are spoken depending on the proximity to different households. This blending of languages is particularly evident in communal settings, emphasizing the adaptability and fluidity of language use within the community.

Despite the dynamic linguistic landscape, there is a concerted effort among the second generation to maintain the use of Kluet, especially outside their residences. ZF (50), a notable figure in Kluet Raya, emphasizes the significance of the Kluet language in defining the identity of the region. This sentiment is echoed by SS (43), who underlines the uniqueness of the Kluet community's linguistic diversity, highlighting the mutual understanding among speakers of different regional languages. However, challenges persist. FR (42), holding a significant position in his village, expresses concern about the lack of a specialized curriculum in schools to teach regional languages, particularly the Kluet language. He stresses the importance of systematic language education to ensure the preservation of these languages for future generations. His concern reflects a broader sentiment within the community about the potential loss of language skills, especially in written form, if not addressed through formal education.

In the community of Kluet Raya, the transmission of heritage languages occurs within families, as parents pass down linguistic traditions to their children. This is exemplified by the narrative of SD (34 years old), who shared his upbringing in an environment where multiple languages were spoken. Growing up in a household with parents from North Kluet, SD became fluent in Acehnese and Jamee due to his family's migration from South Kluet. The convergence of these linguistic influences eventually led to the adoption of Kluet as a means of communication within the family. This insistence on using the Kluet language within familial contexts reflects a sense of cultural uniqueness and attachment to linguistic heritage (Little, 2020). The sentiment surrounding the Kluet language is not only a personal choice but also a communal one. SA's experience highlights the expectation within her family for the younger generation to learn and maintain the Kluet language. The narratives of SD and SA illustrate how heritage languages in Kluet Raya are not merely linguistic tools but essential components of familial and cultural identity. The intentional transmission of the Kluet language within families underscores the community's commitment to preserving its linguistic heritage across generations. This cultural significance is reflected not only in everyday communication but also in the shared responsibility to teach and uphold the Kluet language within the close-knit familial and community networks.

The insights provided by the informants offer a nuanced perspective on the use and perception of local languages within the Kluet Raya community. One noteworthy aspect is the acknowledgment of multilingualism among respondents, exemplified by AM's proficiency in Kluet, Jamee, and Acehnese. However, a critical observation arises when AM reveals that these languages are not utilized at school, where the predominant language of communication is Indonesian. This brings attention to the impact of formal education on language dynamics, potentially contributing to a linguistic hierarchy where certain languages are prioritized over others in academic settings (Fitriani, 2024).

LN's awareness of her identity as a member of the Kluet tribe is notable. Her deliberate use of Kluet in social media interactions emphasizes the importance of language as a marker of cultural identity (Zulkhairi et al., 2024). The fact that her friends respond in kind indicates a shared sense of linguistic identity within the community, even in digital spaces. However, the limitation to oral communication in Acehnese and Aneuk Jamee highlights a potential gap in written language skills, particularly in the regional languages. However, the absence of vernacular language subjects for respondents in the fourth generation raises questions about the role of formal education in language preservation. The lack of knowledge in reading or writing regional languages suggests a potential disconnect between the oral proficiency of the younger generation and the written skills necessary for comprehensive language preservation. This raises considerations about the efficacy of current language education approaches and the need for more comprehensive strategies to ensure the holistic preservation of local languages. In conclusion, the critical examination of informant statements reveals a complex interplay between formal education, social dynamics, and cultural identity in shaping language use within the Kluet Raya community. The choices individuals make regarding language use in various contexts underscore the dynamic nature of linguistic practices (Muthalib et al., 2024), calling for a more nuanced approach to language education that addresses both oral and written proficiency while recognizing the sociocultural significance of local languages.

Meanwhile, the ecological framework of biliteracy proposes a policy paradigm that takes account of 'the interrelationships across micro and macro (local and global) levels of context (Jafar, 2010), and across oral and literate and multilingual and monolingual mixes of language use; and reminds educators of the need to provide space for the traditionally less powerful ends of those continua, i.e., for oral, multilingual interaction at the local, micro level (Hornberger, 2004). Viewing from the lens of the biliteracy model, the power relation and privileging of languages is rather implicit rather than explicit in Kluet Raya context. The last pole of this continuum, which is about bi/multilingual versus monolingual, if applied to the language-in-education scenario in Indonesia, demonstrates that monolingual policies in the government as well as private schools and colleges are officially mandated and implemented. Indonesian remains the medium of instruction. At the micro level, teachers may use local languages by practicing code-switching or translation to facilitate learning; however, that role is more of a peripheral and micro dimension rather than at a central or institutional level.

Indonesian serves as Indonesia's official language and plays several essential roles: it acts as the language of the state, is used for instruction in schools, enables national communication in social and governmental affairs, and supports cultural growth as well as scientific and technological progress. In addition to Bahasa Indonesia, there are two main language groups in Indonesia—local vernacular languages and foreign languages (Hamied & Musthafa, 2019). In the context of Kluet Raya, the power dynamics and language privileges align implicitly with the principles of the biliteracy model. This model aims to maintain cultural identity and linguistic diversity, allowing individuals to access opportunities in the dominant language while also preserving their local language and cultural heritage (Hornberger, 2006).

Language teachers, at the micro level, may incorporate local languages through code-switching or translation to facilitate learning. Nevertheless, this practice is more of a peripheral and micro-level dimension rather than being central or institutional. The emphasis placed on schools as hubs for activities aimed at preserving and enriching traditional languages is evident in the unanimous belief of nearly all respondents that these languages should be incorporated into the curriculum. Significantly, a majority of respondents expressed the view that integrating traditional languages into the educational framework contributes to the success of their students. These firm convictions underscore the vital role schools can play in upholding traditional languages and, in doing so, providing enhanced support for their students. It's noteworthy that a substantial majority of respondents are open to non-Indigenous individuals learning their languages, indicating that this should not pose a barrier to implementing language programs in schools. While it is widely acknowledged that family and community serve as the cornerstone for language use and transmission, schools can serve as crucial supplementary environments where languages are not only utilized but also recognized as valuable. In essence, while the heart of language preservation lies within the home and community, schools emerge as significant additional spaces where languages are actively employed and appreciated. This dual role positions schools as key allies in the broader effort to safeguard and celebrate traditional languages.

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, Kluet communities exhibit a strong commitment to maintaining linguistic diversity within the Kluet Raya community. Their multilingual proficiency and pride in their heritage languages contribute to the unique identity of the region. The examination through the lens of the biliteracy model's ecological framework sheds light on the language dynamics within Kluet Raya and the broader context of language-in-education policies in Indonesia. The model highlights the complex relationship between different levels of language use: local and broader societal influences, spoken and written forms, and multilingual and single-language practices. In Kluet Raya, the subtle power dynamics and language preferences reflect the biliteracy model, showing how local and global language contexts interact in a nuanced way.

The study's findings align with the biliteracy model, which promotes the use of both local and national languages in education to foster balanced bilingualism. While the community's multilingual practices are well-supported in informal, home-based settings, formal education has yet to reflect this multilingualism. Respondents expressed that integrating heritage languages in school curricula would enrich students' learning experiences, strengthen cultural identity, and maintain linguistic continuity across generations.

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