

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Language plays an important role in our lives. It is a medium for communication and also a product of a culture of a nation that must be cultivated. As a medium for communication, language is used to express someone's ideas, thoughts, and feelings whether in spoken or written form. As a product of a culture, a language must be preserved so it could last forever and is used as a communication tool among society.

However, a language could be extinct for some reasons. First reason is that a massive natural disaster that killed speakers of a language. Another reason of language endangerment is if a local language is defeated by the massive expansion of national language. Zuckermann and Monaghan in Kroon (2016: 1) implied that such expansion could cause *linguicide* (language killing) and *glottophagy* (language eating). The last reason that may cause an extinction of a language is that the language is no longer acquired by young generations and they shift to learn a new language. Therefore, linguists or those who interested in linguistic are called to see the phenomena because they could find ways to maintain the language such as by documenting and then presenting the detailed linguistic description of the language that people in the future could absorb the language.

This study is born from the interest and a heart of the writer on Linguistics. This study is aimed to present the grammar sketch of Adonara-Lamaholot. In this study, the writer will argue whether Adonara-Lamaholot is another language apart

from Lamaholot Language or it is a dialect of Lamaholot. Lamaholot is a language spoken by three neighbouring small islands of Adonara, Lembata, and Solor and also some villages in eastern part of East Flores. In the definition, it is implied that Adonara is a dialect of Lamaholot. However, in this study, the writer will treat Adonara (adr) as another language since its language code (adr) is different from Lamaholot (slp) -see (Ethnologue.com). Moreover, the used language term in this thesis is Adonara-Lamaholot. In chapter two (ii), the writer will explain why he calls the language as Adonara-Lamaholot.

There are some reasons triggering the writer to conduct this study. First, during fieldwork last July (2019), the writer found out that the language seemed to extinct in the near future. Most Adonarese tend to speak by mixing Indonesian and Adonara. There is a language contact because most Adonarese are obliged to speak Indonesian since they were in the school. Moreover, in every spiritual ceremony, they always use Indonesian instead of Adonara-Lamaholot. Furthermore, Adonarese especially kids, are prohibited to speak Adonara-Lamaholot by their parents because they believe that they will find difficulties in schools since Indonesian is the one language besides English spoken in educational area. To their view, according to some parents, Indonesian is needed to learn for the economical benefits. In other words, Adonara-Lamaholot is no longer the first language that is acquired by children but Indonesian instead. One out of five children in Adonara is still using Adonara-Lamaholot in daily communication. Besides, in the community, whoever that is fluent speaking Indonesian has high prestige in the community. Therefore, their first language to

learn is Indonesian instead of Adonara-Lamaholot. Adonara-Lamaholot is pretty obvious at risk of extinction.

Second, this language is relatively understudied. So far, there have been three scholars who document the language. They are Philip Grange (2016), an Australian scholar, Elvis Toni (2018), an Adonarese linguist, and Felix Sanga (2002). Philip Grange examined phonological and lexical data in different Lamaholot dialects and subdialects in which he studied Adonara-Lamaholot as well. His fieldwork lay in the eastern part of the Adonara Island. Elvis Toni, on the other hand, examined the emotions in Adonara-Lamaholot as his dissertation. However in some parts of his dissertation, he also examined the syntax of Adonara-Lamaholot. Last, Felix Sanga wrote Indonesian-Lamaholot dictionary.

Third, Adonara is beautiful as well as its language. Adonara has some potential admiring tourism spots for the present and future economical benefits. Besides, the language is interesting as well. It enriches morphological process and extinctive phonological process. It is clear that this dialect is interesting and thus should have been project for linguists. Also, it is a call for linguists to save this special language. Furthermore, this study should be awareness for all young men in Lamaholot to save their culture that is coming to extinct. One way to do is to document their local language and introduce it publicly.

As an undergraduate student, the writer briefly introduces the grammar sketch of Adonara-Lamaholot. In this study, the writer will introduce the morphology and syntax in Adonara-Lamaholot. However, the writer will also include the phonology description of this language. This study does not present a very detailed linguistic description but just to introduce the sketch of its grammar

that linguists who are interested in the dialect could explore more and present a very detailed linguistic description.

This study will be divided into five main parts. The first chapter will present the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, and significance of the study. The profile of the language and people, the concepts of linguistic theories, and previous studies on Lamaholot language will be presented in chapter ii (2) entitled review of related literature. Chapter iii (3) will mainly present the research methodology. While the grammar sketch of Adonara-Lamaholot will be presented in chapter iv (4). The final chapter will be restating the study and giving some suggestions for the coming project of this language.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The main question that would be answered in the study is “What is the grammar sketch of Adonara-Lamaholot?” The general question will be split up into two specific research questions that are formulated as follows:

1. What is morphological typology in Adonara-Lamaholot language?
2. What are the syntactic patterns of Adonara-Lamaholot language?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

As it is stated in the research questions, the main objective of the study is to present the grammar sketch of Adonara-Lamaholot Language which is covered in specific objectives are as follows:

1. To describe morphological typology in Adonara-Lamaholot language.
2. To describe the syntactic patterns of Adonara-Lamaholot language.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

In connection with its problems and aims, the writer would like to draw the significance of the study as they will be explained below:

##### **1. Academic Significance**

This study will enrich the linguistic research and meet the demand of linguistic existence which is to save the endangered language. This study which is about the grammar sketch of Adonara-Lamaholot Language will be a reference for the coming study and scholars who are interested in the language. Through this study, young generations are called to cultivate their culture. Furthermore, by conducting this study, the writer expands his knowledge on the linguistic theory.

##### **2. Practical Significance**

The practical significance means the reader will know how to conduct a linguistic study especially about describing a grammar of a language. Therefore, readers could document their language, analyze it, and present the study.

##### **3. Language Teaching**

Graduating from English Educational Study Program, readers would be sceptical if there is a relationship between linguistic and language teaching. Quoting Johnson in Van der Walt, he noted that language teachers have always looked to the linguist for guidance on how to teach languages (1992: 169). In other words, the writer would like to share that in teaching a language, the linguist had provided the description of the language such as its grammar, and

the teacher will look up the description and start teaching using an appropriate method.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation**

This study belongs to linguistics. Linguistic is divided into two major parts, namely microlinguistics and macrolinguistics. Microlinguistics covers phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantic. Macrolinguistic on the other hand describes the relationship between linguistic to another disciplines. It covers psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, philosophical linguistics, anthropological linguistics, stylistics, language teaching, mathematical and statistical linguistics, ecolinguistics, and cultural linguistics. In terms of the scope, this study belongs to microlinguistics.

In this study, the writer limits his grammar description on morphology and syntax. However, the writer will also introduce the phonology of the language which is about phonemes inventory and the phonological characteristic of the language the writer is carrying out.

### **1.6 Definition on Terms**

In this part, the writer will identify some keywords that relate to the topic of this study in order to assist the readers to understand the issues which the writer discussed in the study. The identification of each keyword is as follow:

#### **1. Grammar**

Kroon noted that a language grammar covers a wide range of linguistic aspects including phonology and phonetics, morphology, syntax, semantics, and

pragmatics, even socio-cultural features (2016: 9). In this study, the writer will describe the grammar of Adonara-Lamaholot whether its morphology or how the Adonara people construct sentences in their daily communication and in other discourses.

## 2. Sketch

Sketch in Cambridge dictionary is a simple, quickly made drawing that does not have many details (2008). Relating to this study, it is a kind of an introduction of Adonara-Lamaholot in its morphology, phonology, and syntax. However, the description will not be in detailed since the writer is undergraduate student, having lack of linguistic theories and the definition of sketch that notes ‘does not have many details’.

## 3. Morphology

Haspelmath (2010: 2) defines morphology as the study of systematic covariation in the form and meaning of words. Booij (2005: 7) also gives his definition on morphology as the study of internal structure of words and of the systematic form-meaning correspondences between words. Take for example, the word *cat* and *cats* have covariation in the form and meaning.

## 4. Syntax

The word syntax is derived from Greek meaning arrangement (Aitchison, 1972: 65). McIntosh in Erom (2017: 7) noted that syntax is grammatical arrangement of words in a sentence. From the definition, it is clear that a sentence does consist of words/linguistic elements.

## 5. Adonara-Lamaholot

Adonara (adr) is a language spoken in Adonara island. The number of speakers of this language is about 98.000 people which was based on 2008 census (<http://www.ethnologue.com>). Adonara language belongs to Central-Eastern Malayo Polynesian which is the branch of Austronesian language family (Blust, 2013).