

YOUNG ADULTS' AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE, AND USE OF LOCAL LANGUAGE BETAWI – ORA IN BEKASI

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Abstract

Language does not only play a role as a communication tool, but also as cultural identification. This paper aims to discover young adults' awareness of the local language in Bekasi, to find out the existence of the local language 'Betawi-Ora' in Bekasi, and its application of it in daily life. The writer applied the quantitative method to collect and analyze the data. The data were collected by online questionnaire and interview with 31 young adults from Bekasi in the range of age 16 – 26 and 27 – 38. The survey contained 27 questions which dived into 5 questions for the awareness aspect, 15 questions for the knowledge aspect, and 7 questions for the usage aspect. Moreover, the interview was represented by 4 young adults who were born in Bekasi. The result of the survey showed that plenty of them are aware of the local language and culture in Bekasi. More than half of them know that the local language is called 'Betawi-Ora' and its words, but only unfamiliar words they did not recognize them. They preferred to apply the local language frequently only to their close friends in Bekasi to strengthen their relationships.

Keywords: Awareness; Local Language; Usage

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that is known as the largest archipelago state in the world. Archipelago refers to a group of islands and the sea surrounding them. There are about six thousand inhabited islands out of more than eighteen thousand islands in total. Moreover, more than two hundred million populations are spread to various islands which makes Indonesia becomes a country with rich culture. Talking about culture has a broad meaning which can be seen from several elements, one of them is language. Language as an essential part of human life can be defined broadly based on the context and needs of research. According to Kridalaksana (2013), language is a system symbolizing arbitrary sound applied by a group of people for cooperating, communicating, and identifying. Thus, Bloomfield (1984) stated that language plays a great part in our life which is because of its familiarity. The relationship between language and culture has never been fully developed. Keraf (2005) divided the function of language as a tool into four roles; expressing self, self-communication, integration and social adaptation, and social control. As its functions, the development of language keeps going hand in hand with cultural development. For Indonesians, a language does not only a tool for communicating but also a self-identity since it has a position in their life. In certain situations, people can be known where they from are and what their ethnicity is the way of uttering or communicating. When people communicate, they use verbal and non-verbal behavior as sociocultural norms to have great social interaction in their environment. Thus, language, community, and culture are the aspects that complete to each other for humans in life. Based on Kramsch (1998), language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes cultural reality. Of its cultural diversity, Indonesia has about seven hundred local languages spread across the island. The variation of language includes based on regions which are called dialects. Furthermore, he mentioned that cultures are the interpretation

of actions and phenomena that people acquired through their socialization. It may change over time as they migrate or contact to others who are from different background. In addition, language variation can be distinguished based on education, behavior, and region (Aisah and Noviadi, 2018). As expounded by Chaer (2011), Dialect refers to language variation from a group of people which is in a place, region, or certain area. Risager (2006, in Sharifian, 2015) stated that the perspective of language usage, or linguistic practice, is concerned as the flows in people social networks and speech communities. Moreover, it expands further when people migrate or learn the additional language. A language becomes problem for people when they cannot speak it to understand what others are saying (Sharifian, 2015). For example, when people come to Japan, they need to know Japanese, otherwise they will face a problem due to limited interactional. Thus, language is like the air of breathe. Culture refers to the term of society, values, customs, and the way people do things around them. Language, culture and society are objects which found and explained formally, rationally, scientifically, analytically, and abstracted methods. The direct association between linguistic variety and cultural affiliation have equaled with the essential notions of identity (Norton, 2010). A native language is the essence of someone's identity. However, there are a number of researchers emphasizing the limitations of constructions of the language, culture, and identity relationships. Canagarajah (2014, in Sharifian, 2015) concerning on the use of 'community' ethnic as a unit of analysis for the researchers' language and identity. Furthermore, Pennycook (2007, in Sharifian, 2015) declared that local cultures at the intersection of how members in a community use language for their purpose such as negotiate meaning, identity, and status strategically to achieve common social goals. Since Indonesians interact with each other in different languages, it may be possible many of them are bilinguals. Bilingualism has a concept that indicates a person's level of second language mastery from the lowest level to the highest one as stated by Edwards (2008). On a certain level, bilingualism can establish a multilingual society, either a person or a group of people, that mastering two or more languages. A linguistics condition in which each language or language variation, either people with monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual has different functions and roles is known as diglossia (Fishman, 1967). It is also possible of mixing occurs among the local languages in an area. It occurred due to life-changing and people's needs. When the world is changing, language will follow as well. Not only changing, but language will also develop since it is applied in daily life either spoken or written. From this occurrence, a new language or dialect formed from two or more languages may appear naturally. People can also introduce their local language to others through various ways in preserving the language. Language preservation is related to people's attitude and awareness of their languages to be able to keep being used amid other languages. Moreover, language awareness itself defines as explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, teaching, and use. As stated by Ahn (2016), language awareness or LA can be delivered through other ways such as engagement with language and its learning process. These can construct LA including verbal and paralinguistic elements such as gesture, laughter, and gaze. Furthermore, language awareness has relation to the L2 learners' developing ability (Kennedy and Blanchet, 2014). On the other hand, Radinger (2018) said that there might relation between the participants' degree of language awareness and agency but in different interactional settings. Nevertheless, the local language is applied less and less in this current development. It can be happened due to fewer heritages from parents, education development, environment, and so forth. Whereas the application of local language to youth is essential as they play a role in the cultural maintenance of a country and a region in the future as their identity. This is related to the existence of the local language in Bekasi, one of the metropolitan cities inhabited by people from various regions of Indonesia. Sopandi (2012) declared that the existence of Bekasi dialect was influenced by various aspects, but as it grows naturally, there is not clear standard structure. However, native inhabitants from Bekasi still

exist and live in several areas of Bekasi city and regency. Therefore, it is interesting to observe what language Bekasi society uses for their daily communication and whether the local language exists in there. In addition, Hofstede (2001) as cited in Luthfia (2014) stated that to be proficient in communicating intercultural should go through the stages of awareness, knowledge, and skills. The writer believed that every region in Indonesia has a local language so Bekasi does. Most of native Bekasi society assumed that "Betawi Ora" is the local language of Bekasi. On the other hand, most of the immigrants considered that Bekasi society speaks Betawi language in Sudanese dialect. This paper aims to discover young adults' awareness of the local language in Bekasi, why the local language "Betawi Ora" exists in Bekasi, and how they apply it in daily life

METHOD

This paper applied the quantitative research method to collect the data. According to Paramita, et. al (2021), quantitative research is conducted on a population or particular sample as representative and uses a particular technique to collect the sample, so the result can be generalized to the population where it is obtained (pp. 5-6). The writer used an online questionnaire to obtain the data, and it was spread through social media WhatsApp. In addition, the writer conducted a brief interview as well to several participants to strengthen the research. As Paramita, et. al. (2021) stated that collecting data through a survey or experiment can be conducted by questionnaire, interview, and observation (p. 22). Moreover, the sample that can be applied with at least 30 samples, or more than 30 and less than 500 samples has been adequate for many researchers (Paramita, 2021; Roscoe, 1975; Sekaran, 2003)

Participant

The survey was completed by 31 young adults who are living and have ever lived for less or more than 10 years in Bekasi, both in the city and regency. The participants are from different origins and with different ranges of age categorized into two; 16-26 years old and 27-38 years old.

Instrument

The survey contained 27 questions in combination with English and Indonesian. The questions applied the Likert five-point scale agreement and frequency as they examined people's perceptions, opinions, and attitudes. Based on McLeod (2019), the Likert five-point scale is used to allow individuals to express how much they agree or disagree with certain statements. Moreover, The number of questions was divided into three aspects relating to the topic of this paper: (1) the awareness of culture and local language in Bekasi (5 questions), (2) the knowledge of dialect in Bekasi, 'Betawi Ora' and its common words (15 questions), (3) the application of local language in Bekasi in daily life (7 questions). The survey took around 15 minutes to complete. For the interview, it took about 10 minutes for the participants to give their perception of the existence of the local language in Bekasi. The interview was conducted with 4 young adults (SSH, DAAN, BS, and IF) who were born in Bekasi to strengthen the result of the survey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The data were collected from 31 samples of young adults in Bekasi. The result of the data showed in number and percentage of each part related to this topic. Some of the data is presented in a diagram chart to be understood easily by the readers.

1. Demographics

Based on the samples that the writer found, there were 29 respondents (93.5%) in the range age of 16 – 26, and 2 respondents (6.5%) in the range age of 27 – 38. They were born in a different city; 16 respondents (51.7%) were born in Bekasi, 10 respondents (32.3%) were born in Jakarta, and 1 respondent (3.2%) in each was born in Ciamis, Depok, Kebumen, Klaten, and Purworejo. However, all of the respondents have ever been and are living in Bekasi. The result showed that there were 29 respondents (93.5%) who have been living in Bekasi for more than 10 years and only 2 respondents (6.5%) who have been living in Bekasi for less than 10 years. Furthermore, the respondents live in various regions (both in the city and the regency of Bekasi). The result presented that there were 8 respondents (25.8%) who live in Bekasi city, and 23 respondents who live in Bekasi regency including West Cikarang with 2 respondents (6.5%), Cibitung with 3 respondents (9.7%), and Tambun area with 18 respondents (58%).

2. The Awareness of Young Adults on Local Language

The respondents were asked to self-rate of their awareness of the local language in Bekasi. The self-ratings provide a measure of awareness of the culture, local language, and geography of Bekasi. The data result for the awareness aspect is presented in a diagram chart below.

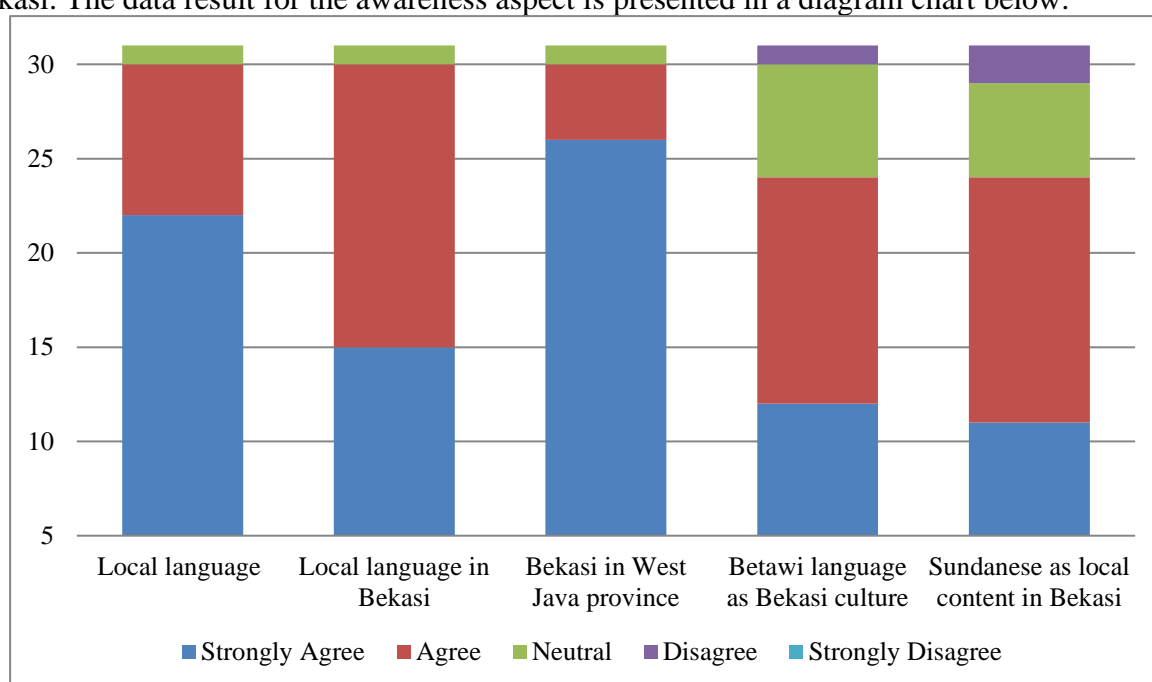


Figure 1. Awareness

According to the diagram chart above, it described that there were 22 respondents (71%) strongly agreed, 8 respondents (25.8%) agree, and 1 respondent (3.2%) neutral about the existence of the local language in Indonesia. Realizing the local language in Bekasi was shown on 15 respondents (48.4%) strongly agree and agree with each, and only 1 respondent (3.2%) was neutral about it. Furthermore, there were 26 respondents (83.9%) strongly agreed, 4 respondents (12.9%), and 1 respondent (3.2%) neutral aware of the geography of Bekasi in West Java province. Meanwhile, the Betawi language is known as Bekasi culture by several respondents which appointed on 12 respondents (38.7%) strongly agree and agree for each, 6 respondents (19.4%) were neutral, and only 1 respondent (3.2%) disagree with it. Relating to Sundanese as the local content in Bekasi, it indicated on 11 respondents (35.5%) strongly agree, 13 respondents (41.9%) agree, 5 respondents (16.1%) neutral, and 2 respondents (6.5%) disagree realizing it.

3. The Knowledge of Young Adults on Local Language

Here, the writers found out the knowledge of young adults in Bekasi. The respondents were asked to self-rate their understanding relating to this aspect. The measure of understanding was

about 'Betawi-Ora' and its words. The data result for the knowledge aspect was presented as follows.

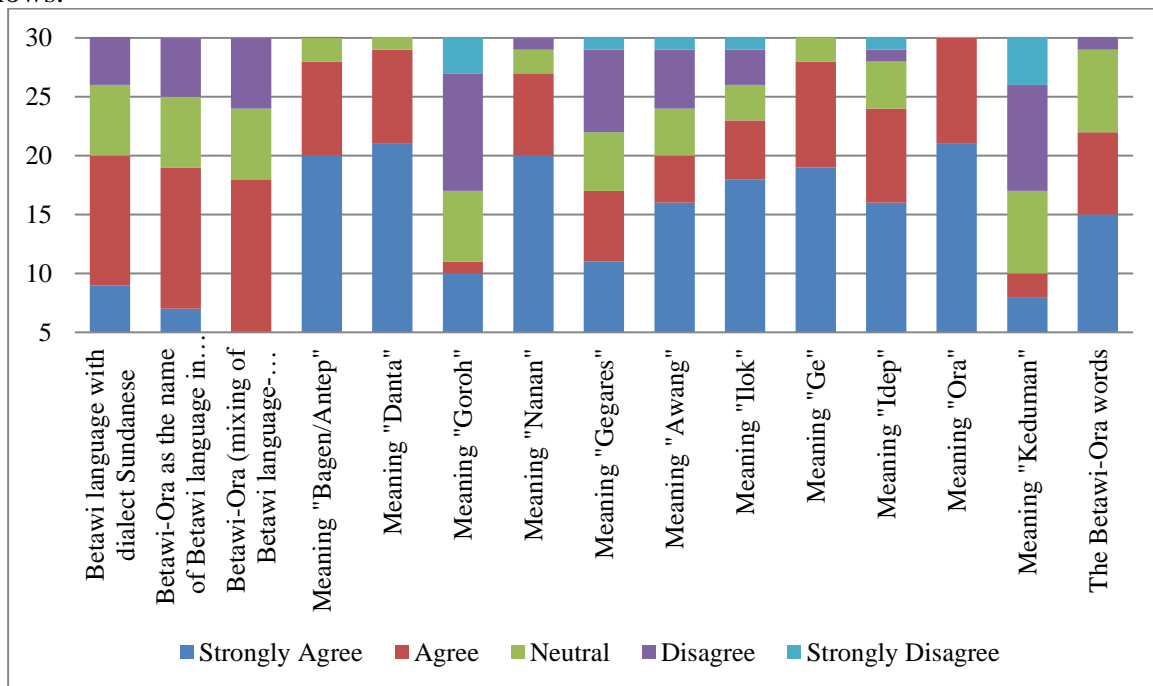


Figure 2. Knowledge

Based on the diagram above, the result showed a variety of each questions. It began with recognizing Betawi language in Bekasi has Sundanese dialect, there were 9 respondents (29%) strongly agreed, 11 respondents (35.5%) agree, 6 respondents (19.4%) were neutral, and 5 respondents (16.1%) disagree. Moreover, a number of 7 respondents (22.6%) strongly agree, 12 respondents (38.7%) agree, 6 respondents (19.4%) were neutral, 5 respondents (16.1%) disagree, and 1 respondent (3.2%) strongly disagree did not know that 'Betawi-Ora' is the name of Betawi language in Bekasi. Relating to 'Betawi-Ora' as a local language from the mixing of Betawinese – Sundanese – Javanese, it was admitted by several young adults in Bekasi which appointed a number of 5 respondents (16.1%) strongly agree, 13 respondents (41.9%) agree, 6 respondents (19.4%) neutral, 6 respondents (19.4%) disagree, and 1 respondent (3.2%) strongly disagree about it. After that, there were several words of 'Betawi-Ora' which are used commonly by people in Bekasi.

First, a lot of young adults in Bekasi know the word '*Bagen/Antep*' and its meaning, it was shown by 20 respondents (64.5%) strongly agree, 8 respondents (25.8%) agree, 2 respondents (6.5%) are neutral, and 1 respondent (3.2%) disagree. The same situation as the word '*Danta*', there were 21 respondents (67.7%) strongly agreed, 8 respondents (25.8%) agree, and 2 respondents (6.5%) neutral. Meanwhile, the survey showed 10 respondents (32.3%) strongly agree, 1 respondent (3.2%) agree, 6 respondents (19.3%) neutral, 10 respondents (32.3%) disagree, and 4 respondents (12.9%) strongly disagree know the word '*Goroh*'. For the word '*Nanan*', a few of them; 20 respondents (64.5%) strongly agree, 7 respondents (22.6%) agree, 2 respondents (6.5%) neutral, 1 respondent (3.2%) disagree and strongly disagree for each knowing the word and its meaning. Moreover, there were 11 respondents (35.5%) strongly agree, 6 respondents (19.3%) agree, 5 respondents (16.1%) neutral, 7 respondents (22.6%) disagree, and 2 respondents (6.5%) strongly disagree know the word '*Gegares*'.

The result also varied for the word '*Awang*' and '*Ilok*'. There were 16 respondents (51.6%) strongly agreed, 4 respondents (12.9%) agree and neutral for each, 5 respondents (16.1%) disagree, and 2 respondents (6.5%) strongly agree of knowing the word '*Awang*'. For the word '*Ilok*', it was indicated 18 respondents (58.1%) strongly agree, 5 respondents (16.1%) agree, 3

respondents (9.7%) were neutral and disagree for each, and 2 respondents (6.4%) strongly disagree knowing its meaning. Then, a number of 19 respondents (61.3%) strongly agree, 9 respondents (29%) agree, 2 respondents (6.5%) neutral, and only 1 respondent (3.2%) strongly disagree know the word 'Ge' and its function. The survey appointed that 16 respondents (51.6%) strongly agree, 8 respondents (25.8%) agree, 4 respondents (12.9%) neutral, 1 respondent (3.2%) disagree, and 2 respondents (6.5%) strongly agree to know about the word 'Idep'. There were significant differences between the result of knowing the word 'Ora' and 'Keduman'. It was presented with 21 respondents (67.8%) strongly agree, 9 respondents (29%) agree, and only 1 respondent (3.2%) neutral about the word 'Ora'. Meanwhile, very few for the word 'Keduman', there were only 8 respondents (25.8%) strongly agree, 2 respondents (6.5%), 7 respondents (22.6%) neutral, 9 respondents (29%) disagree, and 5 respondents (16.1%) strongly disagree knowing it. The last one, a lot of them recognized these words as the 'Betawi-Ora' which showed by 15 respondents (48.4%) strongly agree, 7 respondents (22.6) agree and neutral for each, and 2 respondents (6.4%) disagree.

4. The Usage of Young Adults on Local Language

This aspect was discussed to find out how young adults apply the 'Betawi-Ora' in their daily life. The respondents were asked self-rate of their application to the local language in Bekasi. The self-ratings provide how they apply it to family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and new people. The data result for the usage aspect was presented in a diagram chart as follows.

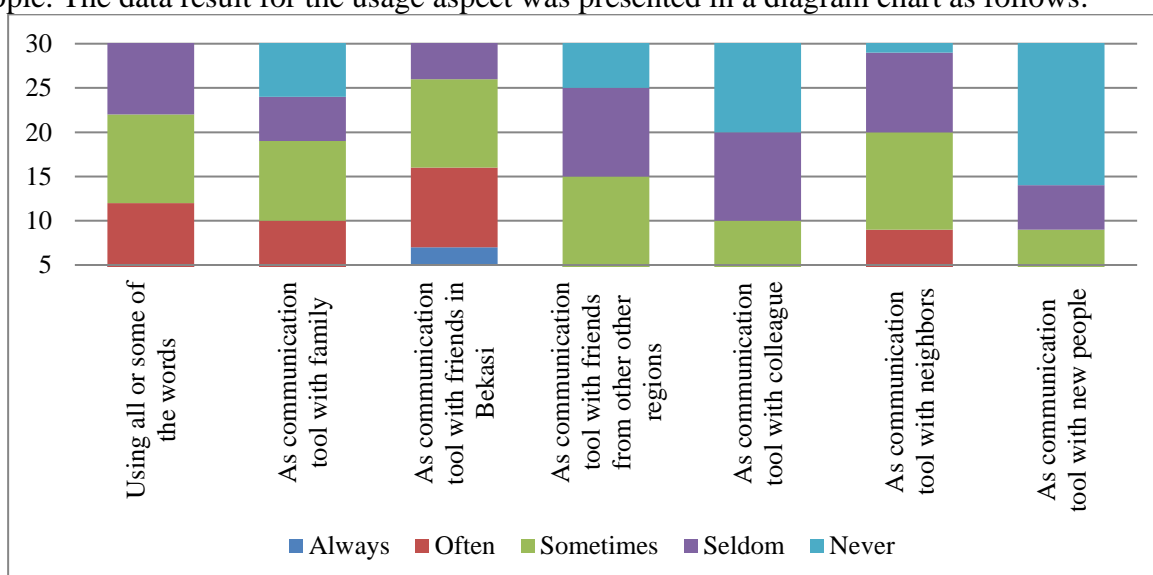


Figure 3. Usage

Relating to the diagram chart above, it can be seen that 3 respondents (9.7%) always, 9 respondents (29%) often, 10 respondents (32.3%) sometimes, and 9 respondents (29%) seldom used all or several words in the knowledge aspect. For the application, some young adults use the Bekasi's local language to their family as 3 respondents (9.7%) surveyed always, 7 respondents (22.6%) often, 9 respondents (29%) sometimes, 5 respondents (16.1%) seldom, and 7 respondents (22.6%) never. They like to use it when communicating with friends from Bekasi since the survey showed 7 respondents (22.6%) saying always, 9 respondents (29%) often, 10 respondents (32.3%) sometimes, and 5 respondents (16.1%) seldom. Meanwhile, there were only 1 respondent (3.2%) always, 3 respondents (9.7%) often, 11 respondents (35.5%) sometimes, 10 respondents (32.3%) seldom, and 6 respondents (19.3%) never applying the local language 'Betawi-Ora' to their friends who are not from Bekasi. Furthermore, to their colleague, it appointed that a number of 3 respondents (9.7%) often, 7 respondents (22.6%) sometimes, 10 respondents (32.2%) seldom, and 11 respondents (35.5%) never use it. Only some of them use it with neighbors when interacting with each other as presented by only 1

respondent (3.2%) surveyed always, 8 respondents (25.8%) often, 11 respondents (35.5%) sometimes, 9 respondents (29%) seldom, and 2 respondents (6.5%) never. Not even that many of them like to talk in the local language to new people as only 3 respondents (9.7%) said often, 6 respondents (19.4%) sometimes, 5 respondents (16.1%) seldom, and 17 respondents (54.8%) never.

Discussion

Relating to the data, each aspect provides a different result. Thus, the interview from 4 interviewees assisted in understanding it. For the awareness, most of them were aware that Bekasi is located in West Java provinces which majority is Sundanese ethnic as they learned in school. Similarly, with the existence of the local language, they realized there is a local language in Bekasi because they believed that every region has it. However, only some of them were aware that Betawi language as Bekasi culture and Sundanese as the local content in Bekasi, while a few were not as Indonesian is the standard language they used. For the knowledge of the local language, some young adults in Bekasi have recognized that 'Betawi-Ora' is the name of Betawi language in Bekasi which has Sundanese dialect since it is a mixture of Betawinese – Sundanese – Javanese, although there were a number of them has not known it yet because still lack of information they found about it. On the other, they knew several words such as '*Bagen/Antepin*', '*Danta*', '*Nanan*', '*Awang*', '*Ilok*', '*Ge*', '*Idep*', and '*Ora*' because these words are the most popular ones which used to each other frequently. The other words '*Goroh*', '*Gegares*', and '*Keduman*' are not commonly used for them.

In the interview, the interviewees expounded the meaning or function of each word: '*Bagen/Antepin*' – '*Biarin*', '*Danta*' – '*Jelas*', '*Goroh*' – '*Bohong*', '*Nanan*' – '*Biarin aja*', '*Gegares*' – '*Makan*', '*Awang*' – '*Males*', '*Idep*' – '*Paham*', '*Ora*' – '*Tidak*', '*Keduman*' – '*Kebagian*', '*Ilok*' is used when doubting of something, and '*Ge*' is used as the emphasis of utterance. Accordingly, a number of young adults in Bekasi knew of these words are part of the 'Betawi-Ora' language. For the usage, it is slightly opposite to the knowledge. Based on the survey, more than half of them do not use these words frequently, only for certain people and in situations. For example, young adults in Bekasi very rarely apply the local language 'Betawi-Ora' to their colleagues, friends from other regions, and new people because they do not feel confident and sometimes need to adjust to the situation. Nevertheless, they quite often use it when talking to their close friends in Bekasi because they have the same background so it makes them easier and more comfortable in communicating. Only those who are from the original Bekasi family background and live in around the countryside like to apply the 'Betawi-Ora' local language with their siblings, parents, and neighbors. It is because the local language 'Betawi-Ora' has become their colloquial..

CONCLUSION

Language does not only play a role in communicating to deliver a message, but also as cultural identification for a speaking community. The local language is applied less and less in this current development. Same as the existence of a local language in Bekasi that includes West Java province geographically which indicates to Sundanese ethnic group, but it is located near to Special Capital Region of Jakarta which refers to the Betawi ethnic group. However, as a metropolitan city, some of the population are Javanese as well. Therefore, the local language in Bekasi is called 'Betawi-Ora' which is a mix of Betawinese – Sundanese – Javanese. The survey showed that plenty of young adults in Bekasi are aware of the local language and culture there. Most half of them know that it is called 'Betawi-Ora' and its words, but only unfamiliar words such as '*Goroh*' and '*Keduman*' they did not recognize it. However, not many young adults in

Bekasi use the local language frequently. They apply it only to their close friends from Bekasi to strengthen the relationship. To preserve the local language 'Betawi-Ora', only a few of them use it with their family and neighbors as a colloquial. They prefer to apply standard Indonesian to others as they felt more confident and comfortable.

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