Social Discrimination: A Case Study of Social Subordination to Eastern Vernacular Indonesian Speakers

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This research aims to explain the correlation between *Bahasa Indonesia*'s vernacular variation and the social discrimination experienced by Eastern Indonesian. The researchers apply qualitative-quantitative method. The data were collected from the distributed online questionnaires which were filled by 41 respondents from Eastern Indonesia (East Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi, Maluku, Papua). The findings show that there is a diglossic phenomenon between standard *Bahasa Indonesia* (High variety) and *Bahasa Indonesia* of Vernacular Eastern Indonesia (Low variety). The unique dialectal characteristics of Eastern Indonesian in *Bahasa* (phonological, lexical, and morphological) raised the issue of linguistic racism and linguistic privilege. Eastern Indonesian speakers of *Bahasa* are considered as minority speech community who suffered racism and discrimination. They experienced intimidation from people's undermining impersonation, underestimation, and exclusion from the dominant speech community. They felt ashamed of their vernacular language identity and tend to imitate dominant accents, such as Javanese or Jakartan Indonesian. This is a serious issue that can increase social disparities and conflict among Indonesians. To solve the problem, the researchers suggest that Indonesian government must introduce *Bahasa Indonesia's variation* (including morphological, lexical, and phonological variation from all Indonesian region) in the formal education as the best solution to give societies understanding of linguistic tolerance.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has more than 1000 ethnicities with around 700 vernacular languages (Agustina et al., 2019; Lan, 2011; Welianto, 2020). Among those ethnics and language diversities, *Bahasa Indonesia* become the national language either as the first or the second language (Paauw, 2009; Ravindranath, 2014). As a national language, *Bahasa Indonesia* is used in the educational institution, manufacturing industry, and all sectors in Indonesia. Java is the biggest and the most advanced region in Indonesia which is also the destination of people from the remote area to work and study. 76 million people are living in Java of which 40 per cents of them are coming from Eastern Indonesia (East Nusa

Tenggara, Sulawesi, Maluku, Papua) (Jones, 2020). To communicate in the workplace, these Eastern Indonesians speaks *Bahasa* for their daily communication either in a formal or informal situation. The rapid growth of *Bahasa Indonesia* and the demand to use it in the era of development has shifted people's language attitude to the vernacular version of *Bahasa Indonesia*.

Researches about the influence of *Bahasa Indonesia* to vernacular languages have emerged amongst Indonesian linguists. Agustina et al. (2019) conducted a study regarding the language attitude towards vernacular Indonesian in Jakarta. She focuses on showing how language shift happens among the second and third generation of newcomers in Jakarta. The findings show that most of the objects have lost their vernacular competencies due to the assimilation with *Bahasa Indonesia* or local vernacular version, Jakartan Indonesian. The assimilation happens because the newer generation gets heavy influenced from the local variety due to its popular use in public or in the media. Probonegoro & Imelda (2017) conducted research on the language shift to *Bahasa Indonesia*. Their study focuses on Maluku and Ternate speakers of Eastern *Bahasa Indonesia*. They incorporate ethnographic study to reveal how locals shifted to *Bahasa Indonesia* from their local vernaculars. The research shows that their local dialect is considered an old language that is only used for tribal tradition in their region and *Bahasa Indonesia* is chosen to be their daily language.

From the researches above, *Bahasa Indonesia* leads the shifting and influences the language choice of Indonesians. In fact, ethnicity and culture have big influences on people's language repertoire. People who utter a language directly share their identity which is acquired from their original culture (Bolban Abad & Hanifi, 2014; Salzmann *et al.*, 2012). Each *Bahasa Indonesia*'s speaker around Indonesia always belongs to certain ethnicity and identity, and it influences their *Bahasa*. They have a unique dialect that represents their certain region. As an example, Eastern Indonesia region has different production for sound of phoneme /e/, which is realized by one sound of /e/, instead of [ə], [ɛ], and [e] like in the Standard Indonesian (Klamer et al., 2020; Wahyuni, 2017; Wijana, 2003).

Their differences do not only occur in phonological aspect, but also in morphology and semantic. Many similar expressions in *Bahasa Indonesia* have different meanings in Eastern Indonesian context. As an example, Standard Indonesian Speakers will ask other to *"matikan lampu"* to switch off the lamp. However, Eastern Indonesian will ask people to *"bunuh lampu"* (which literally means to kill the lamp in Standard Indonesian) to switch off the lamp. Thus, the difference of meaning transforms as the barriers in their communication to the mainstream Indonesian speakers.

The different sound and communication context of non-standard Indonesian speaker leads to uncomfortable condition. Eastern Indonesian speaker often feels uncomfortable when they speak among people with standard *Bahasa Indonesia*. They limit themselves to express their opinion because they did not feel able to fit into the dominant mold of the Jakartan, or Javanese Indonesian speakers.

Apart from the multiple versions of *Bahasa Indonesia*, this study also draws inspiration from some previous studies conducted in the field of vernacular and standard language in English. Filmer (2003) conducted research on African-American vernacular English (AAVE). His research focuses on ethics, ideology and conflict identity. The study was conducted in 3 years to understand how AAVE speakers experienced the linguistic problems in the educational institution. From the research, Filmer finds that the bidialectal nature of AAVE speakers becomes a significant problem that hinders them in pursuing their education. The variation, as well as the speakers, gets less favourable treatment in favor of the use of Standard American English (SAE). This label is problematic because it leads to the marginalization of AAVE speakers in US society. This research also

reveals how US historically and ideologically plays a significant role in infiltrating values and perception among societies from its language policy.

Chye (2010) studied the clash of values between Standard Singaporean English and *Singlish*. He applies critical discourse analysis by Fairclough to analyse the text and discourse about pro-*Singlish* (TalkingCock.com 'satire website) and anti-*Singlish* (SGEM 'Singapore Good English Movement') website. The findings show that SSE (Standard Singaporean English) is valued as a high language which is used for diplomatic and formal interaction. Meanwhile, *Singlish* is viewed as a low language that is manifested only in the informal setting of conversation. Wee (2005) conducted a study which discusses about how *Singlish* as vernacular English influences people's labelling and discrimination. His research shows the intra-language discrimination to *Singlish* from Singapore's language policy, SGEM. The policy is considered as a movement to diminish *Singlish* in society.

From the researches above, we identify several gaps that we are going to unveil within this research. First, we did not find any study from the previous researches that specifically discuss the first-hand information from the Eastern Indonesian *Bahasa Indonesia* speaker regarding the differences of their Indonesian as opposed to the major version of *Bahasa Indonesia* (Javanese, Jakartan, Standard). Second, the studies that we discussed above did not discuss about how the Eastern Indonesian encounter rejection from the major or more popular language variation speakers as in the studies regarding *Singlish* and *Australian English*. Lastly, we also did not find how the Eastern Indonesian people can adapt with the dominant *Bahasa Indonesia* speakers. These topics are still considered rare in the sociolinguistic fields of *Bahasa Indonesia*. Thus, we are curious to fill this gap and provide an enrichment in the field using the topic that we have.

Technically, we focused on revealing the subordination experienced by Eastern Indonesian speakers in uttering *Bahasa Indonesia*. Our research questions were focusing on the highlighted features from Eastern vernacular version of *Bahasa Indonesia*, the types of discrimination experienced by Eastern *Bahasa Indonesia* speakers and the strategies implemented by Eastern Indonesian in facing language discrimination.

The questions above will be discussed in the approach of language variation, language policy, and social discrimination in the scope of language and racism. We hope this research could give significant contribution through revealing factors of racism and language practices of Eastern *Bahasa Indonesia*.

THEORY AND METHODS

Theoretically, this study incorporates the theory of language and racism to unfold the possible impact from language variation's disparity and discrimination. Language and racism are related to ethnic studies where there is no exact approach to reveal the relationships among them (Bonfiglio, 2007). The concept comes from the prejudice of speakers' language proficiency in the speech community and how certain group has different ways of speaking, which is manifested in the social stereotype upon speech community. In the concept of language and racism, the dominant speakers of a language are the majority. On the contrary, language which is only uttered in a small speech community called a minority language. Cohen (1998) in Bonfiglio (2007) explains that race is the product of perception to certain physical appearance of a group of people (such as different skin colours).

The clash of discussion draw in this research is also related to standard and vernacular language variation among Indonesian. Some previous studies conducted in the field of vernacular and standard Indonesian are only in the scopes of language attitude. The same experience by the speaker of non-standard language comes from a variation of English in the study of African American Vernacular English and *Singlish*.

Filmer (2003) researched African-American vernacular English (AAVE). Filmer finds that the bidialectal of AAVE speakers is a significant problem in pursuing their education

due to the use of Standard American English (SAE) in the educational institution. The students from AAVE is also labelled as "Black English (BE) or Negro Non-Standard English (NNE) by the people in their school and around them. This label is problematic because it leads to the marginalization of AAVE speakers in US society. This research also reveals how historically and ideologically US plays a significant role in infiltrating the language and perception among societies with the language policy applied in the US. Moreover, Filmer (2003) could not draw a clear stance on what should they do to overcome the problem of AAVE, he only suggested the teacher in educational institution keep using SAE as their national teaching standards while teaching the students about AAVE as one of tribal tradition language that could not be replaced. I concede the suggestion of Filmer (2003) seems not to work to eradicate the label entitled by AAVE. US government has to take more concern in explaining the phenomenon of AAVE and force the society to respect their American English variation wisely.

Chye (2010) studied about Singlish vs SGEM (Singapore Good English Movement). The findings show that SSE (Singapore Standard English) is valued as a high language where functioned more in diplomatic and formal interaction. The discussion about how Singlish as vernacular English influences people's labelling and discrimination is also studied by Wee (2005). His research shows how intra-language discrimination related to language policy in Singapore. SGEM is considered as a movement to diminish *Singlish* in society. Ironically, *Singlish* is associated with the identity of Singaporean. *Singlish* considered broken English. This language is symbolized as something that hinder Singapore on achieving its twin goals that is competing in global economy while also maintaining racial harmony.

The phenomenon of AAVE and Singlish above is called as the practice of linguistic racism. It does not only happen in institutional language but also in daily communication. As an example, according to CNN (2019) in Dovchin (2020b) many professors of universities in Australia encourage their Chinese students to speak English more than Chinese. The same treatment is also applied in Singapore and American where the government promote SGEM and ASE against *Singlish* and AAVE.

The concept of language and racism transform into a field study of linguistic racism which is researched in the approach of ethnography to understand how language and human rights are related. Dovchin (2020a) explains linguistic racism as the act of passive-aggressive against one's linguistic repertoires. An example of this concept is in the study of AAVE and *Singlish* (Chye, 2010; Filmer, 2003; Wee, 2005). AAVE and *Singlish* are considered as broken English variation which needs to be forgotten and replaced with more standard English. AAVE and *Singlish* is diminished by formal government policy made by the authority in the field of formal education. The authority promotes standard English and implement punishment for students who are not using standard English. The people who spoke AAVE and Singlish considered as an act to against economic and global development.

Linguistic racism increases social disparities among speakers. As an example, Australian international students who speak differently to the mainstream Australian English tend to have poor performance in academic since they are afraid to express their opinion or being involved in simple conversation among their friends (Dobinson & Mercieca, 2020). Meanwhile, the students who possess what they called "standard language" are considered the privileged. Ferguson (1959) in Bell (2014, p. 126) defines Diglossia as a situation where two linguistically related codes are used in different sets of social functions. Diglossia stratifies language into 'Low' and 'High' variety. Low variety is used in daily communication, while 'High' language variety is used in a most prestigious communicative situation such as education, media, government, and other formal settings.

There are 9 features of Ferguson's diglossia, which are; function, prestige, literary heritage, acquisition, standardization, stability, grammar, lexicon, and phonology (Faido

Simanjuntak *et al.*, 2019). In the feature of acquisition, H variety is acquired through formal teaching and learning process in education, while L is acquired naturally by socialisation among family or friends. In the process to acquire H, it has formal codification and fixed rule determined by the government. High (H) language is often standardized grammatically with more complex linguistics feature. In the feature of stability and lexicon, it is common to borrow H variety in L variety, contradicting the uncommon practice of L borrowing words from H variety. Considering the discussion above, Standard *Bahasa Indonesia* is H variety where the use of *Bahasa* is associated with prestige and superiority comparing vernacular language or local language (Cohn & Ravindranath, 2014). Vernacular language is the L variety where the acquisition is inherited naturally from family or the surrounding. This phenomenon leads to how local language preservation is forgotten and Indonesian has shifted their vernacular language to *Bahasa Indonesia* as the standard language (Agustina et al., 2019; Probonegoro & Imelda, 2017; Wati & Zulaikha, 2019).

In the end, the issues address above shown how language variation could lead to discrimination and social labelling. Although these issues occurred in Indonesia, they are rarely being discussed in Indonesian linguistics community. The study about how language racism related to Indonesia Language Variation is never be found before. Hence, this research discusses on how language variations of *Bahasa Indonesia* lead to certain stereotypes and discrimination. The discrimination occurs between indonesian vernacular eastern speaker and indonesian western speaker. Eastern is associated within their geographical region living in the east of Indonesia. Meanwhile western Indonesian is associated to the Indonesian who live in west Indonesia such as Java Island.

Methodologically, this research applied Dörnyei's (2007) mixed-methods design to get in-depth research data information. Following Dörnyei's argument, mixed-method was simply used because it helps researcher to combine the quantitative approach of linguistic research, where we remain objective in processing numerical data, with the quantitative analysis, where we inference the obtained data by following rich opinion of relevant studies.

In this research, the data were collected from questionnaires that were distributed online in Google Form and were filled by 41 respondents. The table below shows the profile of our participants who have filled the questionnaire.

Table 1. Participants' Background

Total of Respondents		23
Places of Origin	East Nusa Tenggara	11
	West Nusa Tenggara	2
	Southeast Sulawesi	13
	Central Sulawesi	5
	South Sulawesi	2
	North Sulawesi	2
	North Maluku	1
	Papua	5
Age Group	21-30	30
	31-40	11
Occupation	Civil Servant	5
	Student	15
	Teacher	8
	Private Company Officer	5
	Others	8

From the table above, we focused on the respondents who came from Eastern Indonesia. The respondents are distributed as from East Nusa Tenggara: 13, Southeast Sulawesi: 12, Central Sulawesi: 5, South Sulawesi: 2, North Sulawesi: 2, Maluku: 1, and Papua: 5. The respondents' age ranges from 21-30 and 31-40. The majority of the participants are company workers and university students.

The questionnaire is focused on three parts; a) vernacular variation of eastern Indonesian in Bahasa, b) language racism experiences of respondents, and c) language strategy to blend in with the majority. The answers were analysed by Diglossia theory and linguistic racism theory. Each of the answer were summarized and linked to the research questions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Revealing how language correlates with the act of social discrimination needs the exploration of social experiences. At first, we tried to understand the language profile of the participants. In summary, we got the following data which shows the language background of the participants.

Table 2. Participants' Language Background

Language(s) used	Indonesian	23 (57%)
	Indonesian/Local/Foreign	18 (43%)
Experience of visiting/staying in other areas	Yes	34 (82%)
	No	7 (18%)
	Duration	1 week – 9 years
The use of local language	Frequent	22
	Rare	15
	Never	4
The use of Indonesian	Frequent	39
	Rare	2
	Never	0

Table 2 shows the personal data regarding the participants' language background. First, we asked the participants regarding the language that they speak. It turned out that 23 out of 41 the respondents only speak Indonesian, while the rest are either bilingual or multilingual. This fact supports the studies conducted Paauw (2009) and Ravindranath (2014) that many people in Indonesia are bilingual considering that they use the language either as their first or second language after their mother tongue.

Then, we asked the participants regarding their experience of staying or visiting an area where their language is a minority comparing to a more dominant one in Indonesia (such as Java). We got 34 (82%) out of 41 participants who have experienced living or visiting other areas in Indonesia. These participants stayed in the area for different ranges of period, starting from one week to nine years, depending on their purpose. This fact is in line with the study conducted by Jones (2020). According to Jones, Eastern Indonesian tends to live in Java to pursue higher education or work for a better quality of life.

Next, we asked the participants regarding their frequency of language use. We found that the participants were most likely using local language or vernacular version of Bahasa Indonesia (22 participants frequently spoke the language). As in Cohn and Ravindranath (2014), the participants demonstrated that they are still in favor of using the local language for their daily communication. When we asked the participants further regarding the domain of the language use, they usually use the language when they communicate casually with their friend who have the same language background or when they are in their native area and communicate with their family. Further, we also found that these speakers tend to have diversified language options. As an example, some of them might

use local languages (Papuan, Buton) and the others might also use the local variation of Indonesian in their area (*Melayu Kupang*, Sulawesi-based Eastern Indonesian, General Eastern Indonesian).

On the contrary, more participants mentioned that they spoke Indonesian frequently (39 out of 41). With higher frequency, it shows that the participants had more tendency to speak Indonesian than their local language or local variation. When we asked the participants regarding the domain of the language, they answered that they mostly used the language in the situation that they mostly face, such as in educational institution, formal office situation, and while handling government administration. Naturally, these people will change their language mode to a formal one since the situation leads them to a formal situation. This is in line with Sneddon (2003), where Indonesian people will switch to formal language automatically when they enter formal institution. Yet, apart from the formal institution, we also found that the speakers also use Indonesian when they communicate with other speakers who do not speak their local language or the local variation of their language.

In the end, we found that the language profile of the speakers reflect the Indonesian diglossia as stated by Sneddon (2003). Specifically, the language is divided into two parts, which are "Low" and "High" language. The "Low" languages are the languages or vernacular variation that are used by the participants to speak with the same language speakers for casual conversations. Meanwhile, the participants also speak "High" language in formal situation, such as for the formal institution (government, administration, education) or for communicating with other people who have more dominant language profile than them.

From this fact, we found that there are frequent encounters between the Eastern Indonesian respondents with the dominant language speakers (Javanese or other versions). In sociolinguistic perspective, this fact affects people's language attitude which eventually leads to favorable or less favorable action. Hence, after obtaining the information above, we tried to use this fact and dig deeper in answering the research questions. We then asked the participants the questions with regards to the stereotypes against Eastern Indonesian vernaculars and the discrimination that they encountered from the dominating population. Their responses are reflected on the explanation below.

Stereotypical Features of Eastern Indonesian Vernacular in Bahasa

Bahasa Indonesia has its complex standard and grammatical structure. The language is taught and used in the school formally. According to the respondents in this research, they speak *Bahasa Indonesia* in a formal setting and daily communication. The difference between the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* in formal and informal context, such as in Eastern Indonesia can be seen from the linguistic code. In formal setting such as education, office, and formal meeting people tried to use the full code of *Bahasa Indonesia* without any combination to their local language. While in the informal situation, people tend to switch their *Bahasa* and vernacular language at the same time. In conclusion, following the grammar of *Bahasa Indonesia* based on EYD (Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan) is possible, but erasing vernacular identity in *Bahasa* is impossible.

Table 3. Influence of Local Language to Proficiency of Bahasa Indonesia

Influential	Not Influential
22 (53.6%)	19 (46.4%)

In Table 3, most of the respondents answered the questions of "how their vernacular language influences their *Bahasa Indonesia*?" 53.6% (22 respondents) answered by stating

that it has great influence. The rests (46.4%/19 respondents) did not feel with the influence. The influence reflects the study conducted by Cohn and Ravindranath (2014). In this case, the participants can switch their language from the standard Indonesian language to Eastern Indonesian *Bahasa Indonesia*.

According to Steinhauer (1994), the influence happens because of the strong reciprocal assimilation of major language, such as *Bahasa Indonesia*, to the local language. Prior to *Bahasa Indonesia*, many areas in Indonesia have already been influenced by different version of localized Malay. These local dialects have been stamped as a popular *lingua franca* into each area and being identifiable through mutual intelligibility. However, the popularity of the dialects was switched to *Bahasa Indonesia* for decades due to the government's program of nationalizing *Bahasa Indonesia*. Despite having the strong support from the government, *Bahasa Indonesia* has been assimilated into different areas and being localized as vernaculars on the underground level, like its sibling, Malay.

With regards to this question, we then further asked the participants regarding any dialectal feature that can be highlighted from their area. They stated the most influential part of their vernacular to *Bahasa Indonesia* are their dialects, vocabularies, and intonation. The clear difference is on the production of /e/ among eastern Indonesian. According to Wijana (2003) *Bahasa Indonesia* has six vowels, which are /i/,/u/,/e/,/o/,/a/ and /ə/. In standard *Bahasa Indonesia*, the sound of /e/ is realized by [ə], [ɛ], and [e], while in Eastern Indonesia (East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, Sulawesi, Papua), they only have one sound of /e/ (Klamer et al., 2020; Wahyuni, 2017). The different sound of /e/ directly impacted their speaking of *Bahasa Indonesia* in expressing the word and sentence. Their sounds of speaking *Bahasa* are considered as bizzare or uncommon to most of Javanese people or Indonesian western vernacular speaker.

The other contrast differences are in suprasegmental features, especially accent and stress. Pitch or volume in language has the role to indicate specific functional grammar and expression (Hasanah, 2018). In standard *Bahasa Indonesia*, medium pitch and medium stressing at the end of utterances associate with interrogative expression, while high intonation and strong stressing of utterances indicate exclamative expression (Halim, 1981). Meanwhile, in Eastern Vernacular Indonesian, it is common to have high pitch intonation. Since it has been naturally attached to the speakers, most of the time, the Eastern Indonesian do not realise if they speak in high pitch.

In lexical and morphological aspects, respondents explained the difference between their vernacular *Bahasa Indonesia* and standard *Bahasa Indonesia*. The pragmatism in their la language's expression is different. Respondents from Sulawesi, Papua, Maluku, and NTT are most likely to shorten Noun Phrase and Verb Phrase. For example, in standard *Bahasa Indonesia* to express the phrase "I go to market, they say '*saya pergi ke pasar*'. Meanwhile, in vernacular eastern *Bahasa Indonesia* is "*sa pi pasar*". Another difference is about pronominal "we", which is translated as "*kita*". In standard *Bahasa Indonesia*, "*kita*" means "You and I", meanwhile in vernacular *Bahasa Indonesia* of Sulawesi "*kita*" means "you*" as a polite and formal expression.

However, according to Indonesian Diglossia profile, Vernacular *Bahasa Indonesia* is considered a lower language and associated with inferior language (Filmer, 2003; Ming, 2020). The language is only used for underground level of communication. Meanwhile, the popular use of Indonesia touches more domains, such as the formal institution and inter-ethnic communication.

Further, we asked the participants further regarding what language variety that they favor in response to the influence of their *Bahasa Indonesia*.

Table 4. The most favorable dialect of Indonesian Language

Dialects	Participants
All dialects are the same	22
Standard Indonesian, Javanese, Jakartan	7, 4, 1
Participants' dialect	3
Did not answer	3
Not the participants' dialect	1

Table 4 shows the answer to "which dialect you consider as the best *Bahasa Indonesia*?" 22 respondents answered that all dialects are equal, 12 respondents answered that the Standard Indonesian, Javanese or Jakartan dialect is the best, and only 3 of them answered their vernacular accent is the best. Regarding the answers given, we study more about the factors why they answered so, while their respond for the next question of strategy to face language discrimination na dhow often they got mistreatment due to their accent is in contrast with their answer in Table 4 which stated all dialects are the same.

We see that most of the respondents answered that all dialects are equal or good. It shows that the participants did not have inferior or superior feeling towards any dialect of Indonesian. When we asked further regarding the reasons why the participants responded so, most of them answered that each region has its own uniqueness. They have understood that *Bahasa Indonesia* has varieties of dialects which leads to different production of sounds and meaning. As in Bolban Abad & Hanifi (2014), the participants, who encounter different dialects by staying in a predominantly Javanese or Jakartan area, understand that due to Indonesia's rich resources of local languages, each area should have different perception and production of *Bahasa Indonesia* in favor of their local languages.

However, the table also shows how Eastern *Bahasa Indonesia* speakers are not favouring their language variation. 12 participants favored the Standard, Jakartan, and Javanese variation. There are two major arguments by the participants. First, the participants mention that they should not speak their own variety while speaking in formal situation or in a situation where they meet people from language repertoire. In this situation, they are in favor of the Standard version of the Indonesian since it is the language that could accommodate them, as speakers, and their target of communication to mutually understand what messages are being transferred. This idea matches the registers which is stated by Sneddon (2003), especially regarding formal and informal Indonesian.

Further, the language of dominant or majority speakers in Indonesia is Javanese as it represents the major race of the nation (Paauw, 2009; Simanjuntak, 2009). However, Indonesia chooses *Bahasa Indonesia* as the national and official language that unites Indonesian, instead of Javanese. *Bahasa Indonesia* is chosen because it is less complicated compare to the Javanese language. However, Javanese has greater influence in *Bahasa Indonesia* (Paauw, 2009; Simanjuntak, 2009). The policy of disseminate *Bahasa Indonesia* in all Indonesian region has succeeded through the teaching and learning process and be uttered in all vital sectors in Indonesia (Probonegoro & Imelda, 2017; Setyabudi, 2017).

Yet, while being in Java, some participants also answered that they are in favor of copying the Javanese or Jakartan dialect due to its popularity and acceptance within the locals. The automatic favoritism of the dialect in the area and the popular use of tha language in the media (Poedjosoedarmo, 1982), it emphasizes the participants' inferiority to the majority. Their imitation to Javanese or Jakartan reflected their mindset of valuing Javanese or Jakartan dialect as a high (H) variety comparing to their vernacular as a Low (L) variety.

In this case, we see that the some of the participants still have the inferiority of using their own language in front of dominant Indonesian dialect speakers. They are afraid of being rejected by the society for their different way of speaking non-standard *Bahasa Indonesia*. Further, we tried to analyze this matter by seeing the possibility of

discrimination faced by the participants. We further seek the information on how participants cope up with the discrimination that they might face due to their non-popular dialect.

Social discrimination through Eastern Indonesian Vernacular in Bahasa

Like English, *Bahasa Indonesia* is constantly evolving. It is used in by different communities in Indonesia, which leads to different production of the language amid its variation. Since the language has its Standard and favorable dialects, people tend to rank types of *Bahasa Indonesia* higher than others (Ro, 2021). This means that each speaker is judged, marginalized, and penalized for the way their Indonesian sounds.

In this study, we asked the participants deeper regarding how they face the social discrimination that possibly happens due to their Eastern Indonesian dialects. First, we asked them their experiences of miscommunication that might happened due to their distinct dialect. Table 5 shows the miscommunication experienced by the participants.

Table 5. The miscommunication that was experienced by the participants due to their language variation

Yes	No
30 (73%)	11 (27%)

In Table 5, most participants experienced miscommunication from the words or sentences that they utter in their dialect to the other speakers of *Bahasa Indonesia*. We then asked them further regarding the form of miscommunication that they experienced. Mostly, they got misunderstood due to the specific terms that are not familiar to the other dominant speakers (Javanese or Jakartan). This, as explained by the respondents, is caused by morphological and lexical differences. As an example, the respondents from East Nusa Tenggara explain that there is a difference on the meaning of the expression of "putar balik", which is translated as "U turn" in Standard *Bahasa Indonesia*" and interpreted as "tukang tipu" or "liar" in *Bahasa Indonesia* in East Nusa Tenggara. They also shorten their Noun Phrase and Verb Phrase by, such as "saya" become "sa" and "pergi" become "pi". Another particle expression of vernacular *Bahasa Indonesia* is found from respondents from Sulawesi, where they use the term "mi" after Verb Phrase. They used it in a sentence, which is "sa pi makan mi".

Next, the speakers are misunderstood due to their different sound production to the Javanese or Jakartan people. Their high intonation is often considered rude. In addition, their /e/ sound is associated with a specific geographic region where they come from. This is in line with what Paauw (2008) mentions regarding the limited /e/ sound amongst Eastern Indonesian Trade Malay (EITM) speakers. Further, the respondents also mentioned that the misunderstanding mostly happened if they started to explain complicated stuffs. They spoke faster and started to get back to their original accent. Although the respondents mentioned that this might lead to misunderstanding, it is something that is inevitable. According to Sharma (2018), people with bidialectal nature might have the tendencies of returning to their original dialect depending on the attentional burden that they experience. In this case, the higher the pressure that a person gets, the higher the chance that they wil change to the more natural dialect. This thing does not only happen while communicating complex stuffs, but it also happens when the speakers communicate with people who have the same language background to them.

Ironically, the miscommunication of Eastern Indonesian speakers from the dominant Javanese possibly leads to some misstreatment. We further asked the participants regarding the intimidation that they experienced due to their specific feature.

Table 6. The intimidation that was experienced by the participants due to their language variation

Yes	No
15 (37%)	26 (63%)

Based on the findings, 37% respondents experienced intimidation, while 63% of them did not while they were staying in Java. We see that this is a good finding considering that there were lesser people experienced intimidation by the other speakers. However, we then tried to focus on finding what types of intimidation that they experience. We found that the respondents got laughed, avoided, and underestimated by the dominant speakers. Further, their other dominant speakers, likely Javanese or Jakartan made fun of them by joking, intimidating, and impersonating their way of speaking. Hence, due to their differences in expressing *Bahasa Indonesia*, they often feel ashamed of their *Bahasa* when speaking to Javanese or interact with the people in Java when they visit or stay in Java.

Miscommunication on different culture is normal and understandable. However, fake miscommunication from impersonating people with a different culture is unjustified. When Javanese hear the expression of "sa pi makan mi", they laughed and asked, "do you mean a cow eating noodles?". The question is inappropriate due to the underestimation of the conveyed meaning. It is not only they do not understand the culture, but sometimes they have already understood the meaning, yet still make fun of it and think it is normal.

In the teaching and learning process in the classroom or school, they often get bullied due to their /e/ accent in speaking *Bahasa Indonesia*. The locals frequently impersonated their /e/ accent followed by asking them sensitive question, such as "are there mall or big company in your hometown?". Impersonating Eastern Indonesia in speaking *Bahasa* and asking them some stereotypical question related to their region development is inappropriate. It gives pressure to the Eastern Indonesian speaker. They become marginalized in the Indonesian speech community. This is bad and it leads to serious psychological issues, such as becoming less confident and ashamed of accent (Dovchin, 2020b). The condition is like the treatment for non-standard speakers in America, Australia, or Singapore where the minority got low academic performance and less confidence in a public place amid the stereotype (Dobinson & Mercieca, 2020; Filmer, 2003; Wee, 2005).

However, some respondents considered the jokes about their accent and Eastern language is normal. 63% of respondents answered they do not feel intimidated. Making jokes for specific *Bahasa Indonesia* with vernacular linguistic features is considered common things. This fact is disappointing because normalizing bullying towards accents means admitting the stereotype of weird and funny as what their interlocutor perceived. Respondents also stated that vernacular linguistic features mean their cultural identity. 5 respondents from Papua answered that they think the discrimination is not intimidating, but they choose to exclude themselves in the discussion with the mainstream community and interact with people coming from the same region as them. As explained in many researches, most Eastern Indonesian exclude themselves in community, especially Papuans that have already got racism issues for decades. Papuans exclude themselves from Indonesian and are being labelled as "Blacks of Indonesia" (Anderson, 2015; Surya, 2016).

Social and economic disparities between eastern and western Indonesia should not be the reason to justify any discrimination and stereotyped given to eastern Indonesian while speaking *Bahasa Indonesia*. However, the fact states that based on 2017 Human Development Index (HDI) data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), only three provinces in Eastern Indonesia (Bali, South Sulawesi, and North Sulawesi) have a high HDI category (Mulyadi & Amalia, 2019). Later, this economic and social disparities should

trigger the government of Indonesia to put significant effort to solve the problem by maximizing infrastructure development in Eastern Indonesia (Salim et al., 2018).

The discrimination against certain language accent that is associated with racial and cultural background is similar to general bullying that could lead to a serious psychological problem (Dovchin, 2020b). Linguistic racism and linguistic privilege are the issues discussed in social discourse. The clash between majority and minority speakers become the main cause of social discrimination related to linguistic features. Accent or different way of speaking in *Bahasa Indonesia* should be embraced as the variation of *Bahasa Indonesia* instead of the gap in communication or non-standard *Bahasa Indonesia*. When most Indonesians who are considered as the majority with linguistic privilege give negative attitude or reaction towards Eastern speakers, it will only worsen the condition. The tension among Indonesian will only worsen due to act of linguistic racism experienced by eastern Indonesia.

After understanding the discrimination that is encountered by the participants, we decided to get more information on how the participants cope up with the condition. We asked their strategies on facing the less favorable treatment that they got. First, we asked them a question on whether they tried to imitate or mimic the locals' way of speaking. From the question, most of respondent answered their strategy to face the discrimination are by imitating or mimicking local dialect which is dominant dialect where they live or visit. Their answer regarding the mimicking local dialect is stated in the following table 7.

Table 7. Imitating or mimicking local dialect

Yes	No
32 (78%)	9 (22%)

Table 7 shows that most of the respondents imitate the local dominant language (Javanese or Jakartan). The respondents mainly mentioned that they need to imitate since they need to adapt with their new area. They believe that they could do it best by imitating the local language or local version of *Bahasa Indonesia*. This is in line with Poedjosoedarmo (1982), where many non-Javanese tend to copy the Javanese language since they could adapt to the location better if they could understand the language. They even bring the influence back to their home due to the habituation. Most of the respondents believe that their mimicking is the sign of pride to speak western vernacular dialect of *Bahasa Indonesia*.

The fact that they are proud to speak using Javanese/western vernacular dialect of *bahasa Indonesia* is a proof how unconsciously the dominant accent and the mindset of western vernacular dialect of *Bahasa Indonesia* has already infiltrated their mindset. Their way of mimicking Javanese accent in speaking Bahasa Indonesia shows their tendency to surpress their local accent.

Further, we also asked the participants regarding their specific strategies on facing the discrimination. Then, we got the displayed data as follows.

Table 8. Specific strategies to face discrimination

Dialects	Participants
Learn local language by themselves	11
Asking the locals	9
No specific strategies	5
Use Standard Indonesian	4
Explain further to the locals	1
Avoid communication or stay communicating although being bullied	1

In Table 8, half of the participants specifies their strategy of imitating the dominant language speakers. 11 respondents mentioned that they learn local language by themselves. In this case, they specifically listen and observe how the Javanese or Jakartan speak Indonesian. Then, they tried their best to talk like a Javanese that they believe as more prestigious and better than their vernacular. Meanwhile, 9 speakers asked the locals on how to speak Javanese. Apart from Javanese, 4 participants favor the use of Standard Indonesian as a safe option.

Meanwhile, the other group of the participants do not have specific strategies on imitating the locals. 5 participants mentioned that they did not have specific strategies since they just adapt by observing and using the language that they have since they did not have problems using it in public. Meanwhile, minority of the participants need to explain further to the people that they meet, or they just avoid communicating with other people.

The specific strategies shown in Table 8 is strengthen the position of dominant dialect as standard variation of Bahasa Indonesia that must be followed by most of Indonesian regardless their race and cultural background. Meanwhile, the government of Indonesia still never mention the language variation of *Bahasa Indonesia* as rich as the vernacular language that exist in Indonesia. Nurwahidah (2019) presents the dilemma of Indonesian language policy. As stated in Article 36 UUD 1945 about local language preservation as a part of indonesian culture that contradicts with the government regulation No.25 of 2000 about promotion and development of Indonesian language and literature. The government regulation made the use of vernacular language is forgotten and only used for specific occasion in specific region that in the end consider as Low variety. Instead of admit the language variation of *Bahasa Indonesia*, the government keep promoting standard indonesian language as High Variety of *Bahasa Indonesia* that should be taught formally at school.

The attempts to comply with the condition of language racism that done through individual approach as stated in Table 8 is not effective to promote language variation of *Bahasa Indonesia*. The factors why the respondents did the strategy is not only because language racism they experienced, but also due to the factors of social mobility, industrialization, politics, language's efficiency and education (Nurwahidah, 2019). We admit how succed our government of Indonesia promote standard *Bahasa Indonesia* massively. But in the other hand, it destroys the spirit of vernacular language.

As government of Indonesia, this is the right moment to conduct more research about language variation of *Bahasa Indonesia* and make specific policy regarding this issue. Promoting language variation of Bahasa Indonesia with the uniqness of vernacular accent is one step forward towards preservation of local language along with establishment of better *bahasa Indonesia* which accommodate equality among all races and regions across Indonesia. This idea should be promoted at least by *Balai Bahasa* in each region of Indonesia.

In the end, from this study, we learned that linguistic racism through the variation of *Bahasa Indonesia* should be explored more to understand how far this linguistic racism has impacted social bonding among Indonesian and how it impacts the knowledge acquisition in the school or future career of eastern Indonesian. The government of Indonesia has to put concern on the policy that promotes the variation of *Bahasa Indonesia* Nusantara and explains the uniqueness of languages and identities from different regions. The government may manage the program of disseminating language variation of *Bahasa Indonesia*, including the types of accents formal education. Thus, *Bahasa Indonesia* will not only be standardized in one perspective of *EYD* (*Ejaan Yang Disempurkanan*), that is easily labelled by other variation of *Bahasa Indonesia* as non-standard. By implementing this language policy in the future, we believe better understanding and tolerance of each *Bahasa Indonesia* speakers will be achieved with better harmony among society.

CONCLUSION

From the study, we conclude that language has a strong correlation with social discrimination experienced by eastern Indonesia speakers. They stereotyped the way of speaking *Bahasa* differently in the aspects of phonology, morphology, and syntaxis. Considering *Bahasa Indonesia* as the official language acquired in formal education. It has shaped the mindset that *Bahasa* which is uttered by Eastern Indonesian is non-standard. The difference also leads to miscommunication and lack of understanding that become communication barriers among Indonesian. The problem makes eastern Indonesian exclude themselves from the speech community which is dominated by Javanese. As the dominant and major population that influences the development of standard *Bahasa Indonesia*, Javanese dialect of *Bahasa Indonesia* is considered as superior to vernacular eastern Indonesian. The fear of rejection and intimidation towards eastern Indonesian speaker make them imitate the accent of Javanese and ashamed to maintain their vernacular language. To avoid more serious conflict and nurture a better sense of tolerance and understanding in the future, Indonesian government must implement a language policy to fight linguistic racism by promoting a variation of *Bahasa Indonesia* with uniqueness and ethnic identity of all regions in Indonesia.

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