

US Raciolinguistics Heated Discourses: Can They be Brought to Indonesia?

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ABSTRAK

Rasiolinguistik mendapatkan momentum yang bagus untuk berkembang pesat ketika gerakan Black Lives Matter (BLM) mencapai popularitasnya di Amerika Serikat. Meskipun demikian, hangatnya perdebatan di kalangan pakar bahasa di Amerika Serikat mengenai kontribusi rasiolinguistik untuk meminimalkan tindakan rasisme ini tampaknya tidak berdampak signifikan terhadap kajian kebahasaan Indonesia. Dari studi pustaka yang telah saya lakukan, ditemukan fakta bahwa meskipun isu rasisme bahasa, baik individu, komunal, dan epistemik, sangat umum ditemukan di Indonesia, upaya untuk membawa rasiolinguistik dan rasisme bahasa sebagai sebuah wacana sentral masih sangat sedikit. Indonesia memiliki masyarakat multiras yang tanpa pengelolaan isu rasisme yang tepat, dapat membuat situasi ini rentan terhadap disintegrasi. Survei yang diterbitkan oleh surat kabar Washington Post menempatkan Indonesia ke dalam 5 negara paling rasis di dunia dan menyebutkan 30-39,9 persen warga Indonesia adalah rasis. Survei ini merupakan indikator bahwa rasisme sebenarnya adalah isu besar dan tidak terbantahkan yang ada di Indonesia. Atas pertimbangan-pertimbangan inilah artikel ini disajikan. Artikel ini secara umum menjelaskan tentang latar belakang munculnya rasiolinguistik, bagaimana bidang ilmu ini berkembang di AS, serta urgensi rasiolinguistik untuk dikembangkan di Indonesia. Artikel ini juga memaparkan beberapa tantangan yang akan dihadapi rasiolinguistik dalam upaya memperkenalkan rasiolinguistik di Indonesia.

Kata-kata kunci: *rasiolinguistik, rasisme bahasa individual, rasisme bahasa sistemik, rasisme bahasa epistemik*

ABSTRACT

Raciolinguistics gained its momentum to grow fast when the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement achieved its popularity in the United States. Although the number of debates regarding raciolinguistic contributions to minimize racism acts among language experts in the United States has been continuously growing, this condition seems to have no significant impact on Indonesian linguistic study. From the library research, it has been found that even though the language racism issues, whether individual, communal and epistemic, are very common to be found in Indonesia, the attempts to bring raciolinguistics and language racism as a central discourse is so little. Indonesia has a multiracial society which makes this situation susceptible to disintegration without proper racism management. A survey published by the Washington Post newspaper puts Indonesia into the 5 most racist countries in the world and mentions 30-39.9 percent of Indonesia's citizens are racist. This survey is an indicator that racism might become a great issue for Indonesia. Based on this reason this article is presented. The article explains the background of the emergence of raciolinguistics, its development in the US, and the urgency of raciolinguistics to be developed in Indonesia. This article also describes some of the challenges that raciolinguistics might face in their efforts to introduce raciolinguistics in Indonesia.

Keywords: *raciolinguistics, individual language racism, systemic language racism and epistemic language racism*

BACKGROUND

The Issues of Language Racism in the United States of America

John R. Allen, the President of The Brookings Institution stated that unaddressed systemic racism is, the most important issue in the United States today, and it has been so since before the founding of our nation (Allen, 2020). Before the states united, this issue merged with the issue of the slavery system that was mostly adopted in the southern regions of America. After the civil war between the Union and the Confederation ended and the United States actively improved its education sectors, the issue of racism has not disappeared. In the early days of US development, many schools were established. Because the concept of education at the time was poorly organized many disadvantages communities such as the local people, namely Indians from various tribes suffered from racism.

The educators at that time considered that the Indians should be able to integrate culturally with the white people. As a result, many harsh policies were carried out such as forcing Indian families to let their children be educated in camps that functioned like schools. In these camps, children were given western education and received racist treatment by the camp administrators. They were also forced to leave their indigenous culture, their way of life including their language. This was done in hoping that the Indian children could immediately integrate with white people and culture. Due to the policy that did not favor local wisdom, some local were likely to become endangered because they were not spoken by their younger generation.

In the early days of the US education system development, most schools used the monoglossic language ideology or a subtractive ideology that positions the US national language, namely English, as the norm. Thus, students were required to speak using Standard English (Flores, 2013). This ideology had a single goal, namely to

improve standard English competence by taking very little into account the locality values inherent in the social background of students such as the mother tongue, local traditional games, and others. The linguistic assumption implied by this ideology was that the students must be willing to give up their rights to speak the language they want (especially their mother tongue) to achieve Standard English proficiency. This led to another problem, especially in schools, located in areas where the majority of the students were not white. In this area, the students were dictated that there was only one language spoken in the United States and that language was English. Likewise, only one variation of English was recognized by the state, namely formal English. As for those who did not use English (used non-standard English) they were given a negative stigma at school.

In schools situated in some black communities, the application of monoglossic ideology or subtractive ideology led to fundamental trouble. In this setting, children from the communities often used the community English called Afro-American Vernacular English (AAVE) or Black English Vernacular (BEV) (see Labov in Wei 2004). They were accustomed to using this variety, and their parents supported the usage by building a 'language environment' through actively used the variation when communicating with their children. As a result, it was difficult for the children to speak using standard language because the Black English Vernacular became ingrained due to its function as a community identity. Those who spoke another language would be considered doing weird thingseven in an extreme situation, they were considered as non-members of the community.

The use of Black English Vernacular often clashed with the existing school policies which regulated the children to use the standard language. Schools often put a negative stigma on Black English Vernacular usages as 'bad English' practices with the consequence that students who spoke the language variety would be labeled 'bad students'. As a result, when the standard language was enforced, many black students dropped out of school and chose to live on the street because their graduation was hampered by language exams. Ironically, many of themwere talented dropouts but because of language barriers, they were forced to bury their dreams to pursue a higher education degree (Labov in Wei 2004).

This problem also arose in schools where students came from Hispanic families. Schools adopting the ideology often viewed their students' English proficiency based on their parents' racial background. Often, even though they passed the English test with outstanding scores, their English quality was still considered nonnative due to their race, ethnicity, skin, and mother tongue being different from their white teachers (Flores, 2019).

This unjust treatment was often brought into the public and became a major educational issue in the United States. One of them was the case of 'The An Arbor Black English Trial,' the parents' protests against The Martin Luther King Elementary School, which was considered to be racist due to the school system which marginalized their students who used vernacular English (See Labov in Wei, 2004). Although the settlement of this case became an abstention, after this case emerged and was followed by other cases that began to appear to the public, United States education authorities began to consider teaching a variety of English to students based on their racial backgrounds.

With the emergence of this problem to the public, the US education system has gradually improved. Schools began to look for an alternative ideology to address this language gap. One ideology that has been famously adopted lately is the Additive

Ideology (Flores and Rosa, 2015). This ideology is an alternative to the Subtractive Ideology which causes language problems such as the extinction of local Indian languages and the large number of black students dropping out of school.

The aim of the Additive Approach as a manifestation of the Additive Ideology is to increase students' linguistic diversity by positioning their skills in languages other than Standard English as a valuable classroom asset to develop rather than treating this diversity as an obstacle to overcome. One form of this approach is to promote students' code-switching skills between different variations of English and/or across languages as appropriate.

On the other hand, linguistic studies, especially sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics, have influenced the emergence of almost unanimous agreement among linguists about the legitimacy of minority linguistic practices. In the past, minority varieties, such as AAVE and Spanglish, were considered flawed English as well as the example of "bad" English. However, over time, these English variations have been considered exotic that have independent linguistic systems which make them equivalent to Standard English. This better position has been supported by the increasing number of language studies that recommend that language education carried out in schools should be a home language for immigrant children who practice their mother tongue well. Linguists are also increasingly criticizing the prescriptive ideology, which states that there is only one correct way of using language which prioritizes certain linguistic practices, which places a negative stigma on other linguistic practices.

The Additive's ideology as well as its approach, although supported by many linguists, does not necessarily make it free from criticism. Most of these critics which came later on assume that the additive approach to bilingual or multilingual education is an extension of the educational paradigm that still applies the Monoglossic ideology in which the ideology always positions monolingualism as the norm.

The additive approach is considered to have shortcomings because this approach considers bilingualism or multilingualism as a dual monolingualism or plural monolingualism capability. This means that this approach interprets bilingual and multilingual linguistic practices through a monolingual framework and denies the fact that linguistic practices in a language community carried out by students are fluid practices. This deficiency is seen from the fact that though many schools apply the Additive approach, they still marginalize the fluid linguistic practices of students who grow up in a multilingual environment. The teachers also often look down on their students' dynamic linguistic practices who combine English with their mother tongue by pointing them as semi-lingual or un-proficient English practices.

The Birth of Raciolinguistics in the United States

In the 2008 general election, the United States, for the first time in history, elected a black president. On January 20, 2009, as the elected president, Barack Obama delivered his first presidential speech by using "black speech style." After the speech was delivered, many comments emerged. John McWhorter, an American linguist and professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University called his speech a speech that contain "blaccent," a black accent. Ralph Nader, an American political activist, author, lecturer, lawyer, and former perennial candidate for President of the United States described it as "black speech with a white style." Harry Reid, a former American lawyer and politician who served as a US Senator from

Nevada from 1987 to 2017 described his speech as one that "had no negro dialect unless Obama wanted to have one."

Why were many people interested in monitoring Obama's speech style in his presidential address and stamped his speech style with various names related to his skin color? Do these comments appear because Barack Obama was the first black president of the United States and it was normal for Obama to use a different language style? If this is indeed the case, it is clear that these questions seem to give legitimacy to the fact that racism exists like a big iceberg in US politics. It looks small, but behind it many facts are unrevealed.

Ideally, after passing many long historical events, some of which are colored by racism, the United States should be worthy of being called a post-racial country; so it can be said that racism was only a memory, not today's phenomenon. Post-racial itself is a theoretical environment in which the United States is free from racial preferences, discrimination, and prejudice. Unfortunately, many facts, including Obama's speech fact, show us that the United States is not as tolerant as many people think. Alim (2016) said that instead of being post-racial, American society is a hyper-racial society. This is very logical considering that every social indicator, ranging from income inequality, educational situation, conditions of prisoners in prison, provides a picture of the United States as a nation that is highly structured and racially divided.

Shortly after Obama was elected the US president, in 2008, the members of the Society of Linguistic Anthropology in San Francisco gathered to discuss whether the language domain should be included in race projects. In this event, the frame racing language and languaging race were introduced. This topic was then brought into a parallel discussion that elaborated the need to build a theory about language and race or what is known as raciolinguistics.

One year after the scientific discussion, a symposium under the theme "Race and Ethnicity in Language, Interaction and Culture" was organized by the Center for Language, Interaction and Culture, University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA), and introduced "racing language" and "languaging race" frameworks. In 2012, the Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Language (CREAL) at Stanford University later refined the pre-existing concepts to become more intelligible regarding raciolinguistics. In 2015, two prominent applied linguistics activists, Flores and Rosa, popularized the term raciolinguistics and since then, the term has become very popular in the realm of Humanities in the United States.

As a field of study, raciolinguistics is very interested in discussing, researching, and finding solutions to the emergence of racist discourses, knowledge, and social linguistic practices. Language racism is often found in the form of unfavorable treatments such as degrading, marginalizing, ostracizing, people or groups of people by building and perpetuating unequal power relations between a person or group of people with other people or groups determined by racial differences (see Kubota and Lin 2009). The scope of language racism is very broad. It can involve individuals, institutions, and epistemology.

Kubota (2019) states that individual language racism is targeted against individuals or groups of individuals, as seen in slurs and mockery, whether overt or covert. Institutional racism or systemic racism refers to racial inequality that occurs in a social institution, such as schools, offices, etc., and runs systemically because it interacts with the existing system in the social organization. Meanwhile, epistemological language racism is related to a system of academic knowledge that gives white scholars more privileges because of their historical background. In this

type of language racism, European-American white civilization is placed above knowledge and embraced by other civilizations, cultures, or nations.

Raciolinguistics had the right momentum to grow when the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM) showed its existence after successfully mobilizing thousands of people to demonstrate in the streets during the COVID pandemic after the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020. George Floyd was an Afro-American who died when he was detained by the Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA police on charges of buying cigarettes at a grocery store using counterfeit money.

It was when the BLM rolled out, that the linguistics community activists found their role in society. So far, linguistics has been included as a secondary branch of science because it has been considered too theoretical and its benefits to society are less pronounced. When this BLM is rapidly growing, raciolinguists show their position as the people who contribute to social change, especially to Black communities. Many raciolinguists have become key persons, consultants, analysts, and committee members of many organizations dealing with anti-racism.

In addition to the BLM movement, another prominent contribution of raciolinguistics in the United States is in the education world. Raciolinguist community members appear as a group of people who criticize the condition of education institutions, especially those which label themselves as the institution that applies the Additive curriculum, yet still very firmly adheres to the monoglossic ideology and approach.

One of the prominent figures of raciolinguistics community, García (2009), has always advocated for replacing monoglossic ideology with heteroglossic ideology. According to him, unlike the monoglossic language ideology which treats monolingualism as the norm, the heteroglossic language ideology puts multilingualism as the norm and perceives the practice of bilingualism or multilingualism through a bilingual or multilingual perspective. Within this framework, the languages used (English and mother tongues other than English) are seen as interacting in complex ways in the practice of linguistics and multilingual social relations.

Furthermore, García (2009) challenges the static language construction that favors monolingualism and advocates for conceptualizing linguistic practice and linguistic identity as dynamic phenomena. The framework is to challenge the principles of monolingualism which is manifested through distinctive terms such as “first language” and “second language” which demonstrate language castes. He argues that these old terms should be reconstructed into a friendlier construction to the dynamic language of linguistic practice that rejects the privileges possession of the monolingual population.

Another prominent figure in raciolinguists community, Alim (2005), considers that the time for monolingualism approach to be abandoned has come. He further emphasizes that in language education, students must have a critical awareness of the language position. Alim explains that a good language education approach must incorporate the linguistic practices of minority students into classrooms and provide spaces for these students to criticize the larger sociopolitical context that delegitimizes these students' daily linguistic practices.

Alim (2005) further states that there are two abilities that students must possess during this criticality process, namely 1) they must be able to criticize how language can be used to maintain and strengthen unequal relations between two or more languages, and 2) they must understand how language can be used to reject, redefine, and possibly reverse these relationships. The ultimate goal of growing critical language

awareness is to make students aware of their communicative behavior and with that, they can change their inferior condition and increases it into several levels higher. Thus, they already have an ideology that can fortify them when speaking and possibly reverse this relationship. The ultimate goal of growing critical language awareness is for students to be aware of their communicative behavior and with that, they can change their inferior condition and make it several levels superior. Thus, they already have an ideology that can fortify them when speaking.

Flores and Rosa (2015) state that the core reason behind the presence of language racism is very complicated. According to them, the language racism problem in education in the United States arises does not lie solely on students and their parents' less proficiency in objective linguistic practices, but beyond that, it is caused by the position of student parents' racial background in society which is considered inferior. This condition affects their children's linguistic practice when they are heard and assessed by language raters at school. There are many cases where state that even though long-term minority English learners have adopted ideal linguistic practices in school, they are still heard as poor language users simply because of their parents' minority racial background.

Furthermore, Flores and Rosa (2015) state that the act of giving reinforcement to the use of mother tongue in students' many language repertoires is not enough to encourage social transformation which has a strong influence on the elimination of language racism. The problem of marginalization of minority students in this linguistic context will also not be eliminated by adding objective linguistic practices to the students' linguistic repertoire, as many language education experts suggest, but far beyond it. The solution lies in how students, teachers, schools, and parents are actively involved in confronting and ultimately dismantling the racial hierarchy of American society. Inoue (2006) states that the right reinforcement action in minority languages is to change the language parameters which are usually based on white people's ears to become more colorful. If this is difficult to do, then white English raters are expected to have broadminded insight into language variations so that they become open to any variations shown by the rates.

A deeper exploration of raciolinguistic problems was carried out by Rosa and Flores in 2017. In their work, they identified five broad raciolinguistic themes that could be explored, namely (1) the co-naturalization of historical and contemporary colonialism of race and language, (2) perceptions of racial and linguistic differences, (3) the regimentation of racial and linguistic categories, (4) the intersection and confluence of races and languages, and (5) the contestation of racial and linguistic power formations (Rosa and Flores, 2017, p. 1). Most of the material in their writing was obtained from Stanford University's Center of Race, Ethnicity, and Language (CREAL). Since its founding in 2010, CREAL has brought together scholars from multidisciplinary fields such as Jonathan Rosa, H. Samy Alim, and Arnetha F. Ball, to advance research and engage in public debate that examines and shapes the construction and interaction of language and race.

DISCUSSIONS

Does Indonesia Need Raciolinguistics?

In the Language Map (2017) published by the Language Development Agency of the Republic of Indonesia, it is stated that the number of regional languages in the territory of Indonesia that have been inventoried and codified is 652. If we add up the number of languages that have not been codified, the number will show 733. Most of

the languages that are not codified exist in Nusa Tenggara Timur, Maluku, Maluku Utara, Papua, and Papua Barat. This data was obtained from the results of verification and validation of 2,452 observation points throughout Indonesia.

With so many variations of language like this, without good language planning and policy, sensitive issues such as language racism that leads to language hegemony, language marginalization problems, can at extreme levels lead to national disintegration. The unmonitored raciolinguistics issues can be exploited by parties having political interests to achieve political goals.

The most common types of language racism cases that are acknowledged by the Indonesian public are individual racism. These cases usually emerge to the surface since they befall public figures. If they are carried out by ordinary individuals, their cases will unlikely have serious law consequences. One case that has recently been viral in mass media is the case of a social media activist, Permadi Arya, or well-known as Abu Janda, who questioned the evolution of the former Komnas HAM Commissioner Natalius Pigai, who has Papuan blood (see Andita, 2021). The word evolution is closely attached to Darwin's theory which refers to the evolutionary process of apes to become humans. This word is also synonymous with backwardness which is often used to label Papuan people who live in the rural area of Indonesia by some people living in the central part of Indonesia (such as Java).

Although the ending of Pigai case has not been settled in the legal realm, the case is a piece of empirical evidence that language racism is a fact in Indonesia and not a myth. Interestingly, the lack of clarity on the continuation of Pigai's case, proves that language racism in the country is not a crucial matter so that whoever performs this act will not need to face the law since his/her actions will easily be forgiven.

Another case of individual language racism is the emergence of various racist content wrapped in humor programs aired on Indonesian TV channels. One of them is in the Standing Up Comedy Indonesia talent show. In this program, some comedians often use racism-related materials (Mahadian, 2015). Comedians such as Ernes Prakasa who usually raises issues about Chinese, Taretan Muslim which raises issues about Madurese, and Mamat Al Katiri who usually raises issues about Papuan are three of several comedians who often utilize materials related to racism in their humor. Although the contents are labeled with the word humor, yet this phenomenon strengthens people's perception of the existence of stigmatization of races, especially minority races (in this case Chinese, Madurese, and Papuan) in Indonesia.

Many other individual language racism cases found in mass media that have not emerged as public attentions are committed by political buzzers as a result of political polarization after the 2018 presidential election. These buzzers contributed to racism cases of racism by introducing some new racist vocabulary such as *kadrun* which refers to Arab people (Heriyanto, 2019), *aseng* which refers to Chinese people, *antek barat* which refer to people who are pro-liberalism driven by the United States, etc., in which this phenomenon has clouded the linguistic situation in Indonesia. Until now (Oct, 2021) these racist vocabularies are still being used and the intensity of their use on social media is getting higher.

Institutional racism or systemic racism sometimes appears unnoticed. This type of racism can be large-scale because it involves government policy. The Indonesian government's lack of seriousness in preserving 733 local languages is one of many examples of systemic racism in Indonesia. One proof of the government's ignorance in this matter can be traced back to the dilemma of the 2013 national education curriculum which did not include local language conservation activities as part of it.

Wahyudin (2013) even stated his concern regarding the 2013 national education curriculum that the government was committing linguistic genocide crime because they did not explicitly obligate all Indonesian students to master their local languages besides Indonesian language and English to graduate from secondary school.

In addition, the huge gap that occurs regarding the government's attention to the three languages, namely Indonesian, English, and local languages, creates jealousy among the local language activists. The government, through the Language Agency of the Republic of Indonesia, has issued a motto, namely *'utamakan bahasa Indonesia, kuasai bahasa asing, pertahankan bahasa daerah'* 'prioritize Indonesian, master foreign languages, preserve regional languages.' This motto puts local languages in the third position to be attended. However, if we look closely at the concept, we will be able to see that there are misalignments between the positions of the three languages. Through this motto, the government hopes that all Indonesian people use the Indonesian language on every occasion. The motto also hopes that people will master foreign languages (especially English). But unfortunately, the motto also puts regional languages as entities that must be preserved. The word preserve here is a passive concept since it only demands maintenance of the local language from being extinct without having any effort to develop them and achieve their vitality. Thus, it is difficult for local languages to survive without being developed.

The condition of local languages are disoriented English is increasingly being used. As this happens, more and more schools are implementing a bilingual Indonesian English education. Thus, students are not required to practice other languages beside the two mandatory languages. Under these conditions, the marginalization of the use of mother tongue in schools often occur (see Piliang, 2021).

The government's lack of attention in preserving local languages is also reflected in the absence of initiatives to encourage Indonesian state universities to offer a local language study program. So far, only 1 local language, Javanese language, has its home base, while other 732 local languages do not yet exist (which 3 of them are major languages in Indonesia such as Sundanese and Madurese which have more than 4 million speakers.) This fact confirms the existence of another language racism phenomenon where Javanese language is indirectly designated as the 'favorite language' desired by the government, while other local languages are 'non-favorite.'

Epistemological language racism in Indonesia mostly appears in the form of an inferior point of view. One of them is related to people's view towards other races/nations and languages which consider others are better than selves. Motha (2020) refers to this kind of view as contemporary colonialism. In more detail, epistemological racism in Indonesia is embodied in the government and people's view which places English as a vital language that is urgent to master. This is marked by the inclusion of English mastery, which is juxtaposed by the exclusion of regional languages mastery, as a component that nationally determines the quality of Indonesian students. The government's much attention to English, rather than regional languages, is also marked by the frequent project launching to procure listening labs and English books for schools as a means of supporting English language learning (see Hamzah, 2012). This policy once again shows concrete evidence of languages imbalance. From this fact, it can be seen that there exists an inferiority point of view towards white supremacists (white supremacist here refers to the native speakers of English) so that the government forces Indonesians to learn English. As a consequence, the citizens who master English would be considered as 'ideal' citizens, and those who have no 'English tongue' are not 'ideal' citizen.

One case that shows the racial inferiority view is the presence of many criticisms addressed to Jokowi's (the Indonesian President) English speaking ability, which considers his ability below standard compared to other world leaders' (see Kominfo.go.id, 2020). From the presence of the criticisms, there lies an explicit statement that Jokowi's English speaking ability humiliates Indonesia since Jokowi is the representative of the whole nation. Here we can see how Indonesian adore English as a respected language and somehow put it in a parallel position with national leadership ability.

This epistemological language racism also exists in English teaching, especially in universities. In this domain, issues on racism also appear.

The first example relates to the instructors' English competence. There is an assumption that white English instructors are considered better than colored English instructors (Black, Hispanic, or Asian). Holliday mentions that those who have such thoughts are referred to as Native-Speakerism or Nativism ideology supporters (Holliday in Liantas, 2018).

The second is the instructors' background. There is also an assumption that lecturers in the English Language and Literature Study Program who earn overseas academic titles (such as MA or Ph.D.) from US, UK, or Australian' universities, are of better quality than those who earn the title from domestic universities. This perception negates the teaching experience of lecturers, and other non-academic abilities such as leadership, research, and community service.

The third is references/reading materials for classrooms. As an institution that focuses on the scientific mastery of English language, English Study Program/Department at the university is very oriented towards references written by white people, especially those from the US or the UK even though books are written by Asians and Indonesians are also widely available. Croom (2020) refers to this phenomenon as the white orientation.

The fourth is inequality access to teaching and learning facilities as well as research. English language and literature study programs located outside Java are left behind in terms of teaching facilities such as listening and drama laboratories possession. Further, academics who have overseas study backgrounds and work on campuses located in Java have a greater opportunity to access research funds provided by the government.

Based on the racism phenomena mentioned above, especially those related to language racism, Indonesia is included in the 5 most racist countries in the world. A survey published by the Washington Post newspaper in 2013 stated that as many as 30-39.9 percent of the Indonesian population belonged to the racist category (see Wijaya, 2013). The survey's result is very surprising considering that Indonesia has a law that regulates racism, namely Law Number 40 of 2018 concerning the Elimination of Discrimination Based on Race and Ethnicity which requires the government to have policies on preventing and taking action against racial issues. In addition to this law, Indonesia also has another regulation namely the 1945 Constitution article number 28, paragraph 2, concerning Human Rights which states that every Indonesian citizen has the right to be free from discrimination. This paradoxical condition should have led raciolinguistics to become one of the most popular issues in Indonesia, especially since Indonesia has a very large number of speakers of local languages in the world which put the country susceptible to internal conflicts, but unfortunately, that is not the case.

When the debates about race and its relation to language are heating among language experts in the United States, this condition does not seem to have had a

significant influence on the situation of linguistic studies in Indonesia. From my library investigation on literature regarding race and language, I conclude that this issue does not receive much attention, especially from higher education academics. Not many language experts are interested in discussing this topic. Some of the literature that I encountered mostly discussed racism using a limited scope, such as written by Mahadian (2015) through a semiotic perspective, Juditha (2019) through a communication perspective, Ghassani and Nugroho (2019) through a communication perspective, Sunaryo & Purnamawati (2020) through a legal perspective, Alam (2020) through a communication perspective, and Afriza, et.al (2021) through a communication science perspective. Multi perspective approaches that are widely used in the United States, such as Applied Linguistics, and Linguistics-Anthropology to review racism, have so far not been found.

Besides the gap of study above, there are other reasons why Indonesia needs raciolinguistics. First, many debates regarding race and racism that are often found on Indonesian mass media, still focus on urbanization/social mobility (moving people from areas outside Java, for example, Papua to Java or vice versa) and immigration or migrant integration (migration of international communities, for example from China to Indonesia). There is no doubt that this discussion is important for the community to increase their urbanization and migration understanding and the social impacts they may have, yet these debates ignore one important internal issue, namely the reality of *non-brown* (*non-sawomatang*) people (eg, the yellows and the blacks) who are still occupying a non-favorable social position which often becomes a polemic. This assumption indirectly gives birth to a racist ideology namely the '*brown skin*' ideology, or tribal egocentric views such as Java-centric, Malay-centric views, etc, in Indonesia. In such conditions, raciolinguistics can come forward by providing additional nuances of discussion topics that are very much needed to enrich people's knowledge, for example by revealing and most importantly legitimizing new approaches that can reconstruct the traditional vague boundaries of race and language that have been understood by society and often results in prejudice, exclusion, and oppression of ethnic, racial, and linguistic minority groups

Second, although Indonesia has legal instruments that regulate any racism acts and the government possesses programs that can support equitable development of racism justice in Indonesia, yet so far the government has not fully been successful in educating the public so that they have a complete understanding about how racism forms and what are the ideal ways to treat people who come from different races and ethnicities. Raciolinguistics has a role to educate the public by showing the domains of racism, especially in the language context. Raciolinguistics can also encourage the government to initiate a national language plan that is linguistically anti-racist.

Third, until now, Indonesian people have not been free from the hyper-admiration shackle of white people's supremacy. This shackle gives birth to an unproductive inferiority feeling because they thought that white people are better than them. This perception occurs due to the past trauma of oppression and colonialism by white colonialists such as Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, and English which cause Indonesian people to become mentally inferior. This false understanding leads to unhealthy motivations (either possessed by the government or the communities) and force them to master English thus can grow their confidence, by assuming that their English mastery would make them equal to white people. This is a counterproductive situation because naturally this inferiority feeling will still exist considering that English is not Indonesian mother tongue. Raciolinguistics plays a role in changing this

understanding, by showing a more balanced social reconstruction which considers all races, nations, and languages equal. The consequence that arises from this reconstruction is that English is placed only as a medium of communication which does not have any significance on the rise of the nation's prestige. Motha (2020) calls the reconstruction of inferior thoughts regarding race, as linguistic de-colonialization.

Based on the above facts, it can be concluded that Indonesia is in dire need of raciolinguistics. Raciolinguistics not only provides a scientific explanation of the linguistic facts above but also its applicative and dynamic character as a branch discussion of Applied Linguistics (see Wei, 2004) makes the field can give birth to applicable solutions to the problems listed above. In the future, language challenges in Indonesian will become more complex considering that language will develop far beyond people's expectations. More language variations would emerge. More international languages would be considered by the Indonesian to master. Consequently, more local languages would become extinct and thus lead to more complex situations. Raciolinguists are expected to help the community by advocating for people who have problems regarding language racism.

Promoting Raciolinguistics in Indonesia

Considering that raciolinguistics is not very popular in Indonesia, this condition demands hard work to start various projects related to this field. Those who wish to be involved in raciolinguistics projects should pay attention to the challenges that might appear in the future.

At least, there are four challenges that raciolinguists will face when introducing this field to the public. First, by exploring issues on raciolinguistics and language racism, it is possible that various hidden, sensitive language racist problems can be revealed. With this disclosure, the victims of language racism who have successfully negotiated with their bitter experiences in the past could be hurt again. On the other hand, the perpetrators of this racist act may not accept that their actions are brought back to the public.

Second, the activities of raciolinguists may intersect with national security and political issues. This happens because the issues of language racism that are revealed can have implications for changing public perceptions of law enforcement quality provided by the government. It might also bring a consequence towards peoples' perception on government image by degrading its positive face since it might reveal the government vision whether the government is anti-racism or not and whether it is competent in maintaining justice and equality of Indonesian citizens or not.

Third, there is a possibility that the results of the raciolinguistics research, are misused as a tool to carry out a political agenda, both to criticize the government and to trigger disintegration. In other words, these linguistic rationalists can be used as tools to legitimize certain 'harmful' agendas that are possessed by anti-government and anti-integration parties.

Fourth, research activities and other activities around this field might restructure the Indonesian socio-demographic profile. As a consequence of the re-structuralization, the minority will gain more power in society while the majority may get the impact since they would no longer get the privileges they usually have as majority people.

Considering that activities related to raciolinguistics would invite high challenges and difficulties due to their involvement towards the national system, the initiative to establish Center for Race, Ethnic and Language Studies in Indonesia by

involving multidisciplinary experts which bridges various projects related to the interaction between race, ethnicity, and language, is highly expected. By having the study center, research on raciolinguistics would become more comprehensive since they will be enriched by different backgrounds experts. Their different point of view would improve language racism discourses. In addition, all research results in this field can institutionally be well documented. The researchers also have institutional protection because they are considered to be working legally and collegially.

To make the raciolinguistics activities rhythmic, the activists are expected to focus on several domains that are considered urgent to be worked on in Indonesia. Following Flores and Rossa's framework (2015) would be a good idea, yet however, they need some adjustments to the existing conditions in Indonesia. I propose six strains of studies related to raciolinguistics that should be prioritized to be carried out in Indonesia.

The first strain is racial/ethnic and language interactions. This strain covers the investigations of the extent to which local race/ethnicity intersects with language, particularly when they are at a crossroad. This domain also examines the intertwine of studies that relate to the interactions of local race/ethnicity and language.

The second strain is the mapping of language hegemony. This strain explores the possibility of language hegemony within the Indonesian territory arising from historical ties (such as colonization, migration, etc.) or due to other contemporary factors. It also provides recommendations on the reconstruction of social structures that are free from racism. By doing the mapping, it will be known which areas are susceptible to language imbalance which leads to language racism. Apart from this, the strain can also be expanded in scope to explore the possibility of regimes that insist on maintaining language exclusivity (see Urciuoli (1995) and Irvine & Gal (2000)).

The third strain is people's perceptions of racial and linguistic differences. This strain maps people's perceptions on language differences, various language variations such as dialects, sociolects, etc., as well as various kinds of language racism phenomena found in society. This mapping can be done through surveys or other methods. Their main purpose is to map the mindset, attitudes, norms, and actions of the community members regarding language racism.

The fourth strain is the vitality and the contestation of the power of race and language. This strain specifically observes the vitality of languages that exist in Indonesia and if necessary makes a simulation of how these languages compete with each other so that it can be predicted which language will become dominant which languages will become marginalized and feeble. With this knowledge, targeted policies to reinforce languages that are projected to experience marginalization can be made.

The fifth strain is anti-racism language planning and the revitalization of marginalized languages. This strain is an applied strain because it produces a product, namely a blueprint or policy model for anti-racism and anti-marginalization planning in the area that is believed to be susceptible to the linguistic racist situation. The document is expected to be used by local governments to maintain languages that are experiencing vitality declination.

The sixth strain is other domains that are not covered in the five domains above. This strain is an additional strain to accommodate various phenomena of language racism that arise due to the development of the current social situations in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Although raciolinguistics has become popular in the United States, its popularity seems to be overlooked and has not yet become the focus of academics attention in Indonesia even though language racism issues are very common to be found in daily lives. Due to its multiracial structure, Indonesian society is very vulnerable to social and national disintegration. A survey published by the Washington Post newspaper which puts Indonesia into the 5 most racist countries in the world is an early indicator that the issue of racism can become a big problem in the future without proper racism issue management.

Based on the above-mentioned fact, raciolinguistics needs to be considered as a way to educate Indonesian people regarding language racism so that they know how to avoid committing racist actions through language. The presence of the Center for Race, Ethnic and Language Studies in Indonesia whose members are from multidisciplinary fields is very urgent and relevant to introduce raciolinguistics. The challenge to promote raciolinguistics in Indonesia is indeed very big, but it must be overcome for the sake of national integrity.

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