CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents several points, namely; background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, scope of the study, significances of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

In Indonesia, there are a lot of regional languages. Although Indonesia has Indonesian language as the national language, many Indonesian people use the regional languages in their daily conversations. Those regional languages are local products that become the expression or identity of certain societies in Indonesia. They spread from Sabang to Merauke and have been passed down from generation to generation as a form of cultural heritage.

Every language always experiences development and evolution. The development and evolution of a language occur due to social, economic, and cultural changes. The existence of the current languages does not just appear as what it is now. Before they become the languages as they are used currently, they have definitely undergone a long history from their proto language (ancient language). According to Keraf (1996, as cited in Halimatussakdiah & Widayati, 2019), proto language is an ancient language producing a language family, for example, Proto-Austronesia which is an ancient language of the languages in Indonesia.

Austronesia language is a language family which spreads widely from Madagascar to Rapanui Island and from Taiwan and Hawaiian to New Zealand (Keraf, 1983:37). Therefore, there are a number of languages that are included into this language family especially in Indonesia. Blust was one of the experts who mapped the largest Austronesia languages in Indonesia based on the area, one of which is in Nusa Tenggara

Barat area. Blust (2013) asserts that Nusa Tenggara Barat consists of Bali, Lombok, and Sumbawa which are formally assigned by Indonesian government. Moreover, the languages on this area are considered as Austronesia languages. In addition, he states that there are 4 largest Austronesia languages that can be found in Nusa Tenggara Barat, namely Balinese, Sasak, Sumbawanese, and Bimanese.

Sambori and Teta dialects are two dialects spoken by people that inhabit Sambori and Teta villages in Lambitu district, a mountain district in Bima Regency, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Budasi's research (2019) showed that Sambori dialect had 98% similarity with Teta dialect in terms of phonemes. It means that they are two different dialects of the same language. Although there are some researches that have been conducted about Sambori-Teta language, up to now, it has not completed yet, in the sense that it has not been made clearer, whether or not the Sambori-Teta language is passed down from Proto-Austronesia (PAn).

Prabangkara's study (2021) analyzed the forms of Proto Sambori-Teta (PSm-Te) using reconstruction theory, namely bottom up and top down reconstructions. The success of the reconstruction was showed by the identification of a number of proto lexicons, which were about 1800 proto lexicons of Sambori-Teta (based on the attached data). Prabangkara's study only analyzed the Sambori-Teta language until the reconstruction stage.His study did not analyze the phonological system of Proto Sambori-Teta. Moreover, the other researchers did not do a research yet that focused on the phonological system of Proto Sambori-Teta, whereas the grouping of Sambori-Teta language as the descendant of Proto Austronesia will be complete if the description of the phonological system is clear. Hence, the study about the description of phonological system of Proto Sambori-Teta is not only important, but it must be done immediately. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the phonological system of Proto Sambori-Teta.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of this study that has been mentioned above, the research questions of this study are:

1) What are the vowel phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions?

2) What are the diphthong phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions?

3) What are the triphthongs phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions?

4) What are the consonant phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions?

5) What are the consonant cluster phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions?

6) How are the syllabic patterns of PSm-Te?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

Based on the research questions, the purposes of the study are:

1) To investigate the vowel phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions.

2) To investigate the diphthong phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions.

3) To investigate the triphthongs phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions.

4) To investigate the consonant phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions.

5) To investigate the consonant cluster phonemes of PSm-Te and their distributions.

6) To investigate the syllabic patterns of PSm-Te.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study was designed as a descriptive qualitative study. The discussion of this study only focuses on the analysis of the phonological system of Proto Sambori-Teta in terms of segmental features and articulatory phonetics, such as vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs, consonants, and consonant clusters based on their distributions, as well as the syllabic patterns.

1.5 Significances of the Study

The result of this study is expected to have theoretical and practical significances related to phonological system.

a. **Theoretical Significance**

For the theoretical significance, the result of this study is expected to support, contribute, and give theoretical evidence of the exiting research finding in the study, especially the phonological system of Proto Sambori-Teta. Therefore, this study can be used as a proof of Sambori-Teta culture preservation. In other words, this study is useful as an existence of Proto Sambori-Teta (PSm-Te).

b. **Practical Significances**

For the practical significances, this study is useful for:

1) For Indonesian Government

The result of this study can be used as an authentic file or document about the phonological system of Proto Sambori-Teta, in which it is one of protolanguages in Indonesia.

2) For the Linguistics Field

This study is expected to be useful and beneficial for other researchers (linguists) to conduct similar studies. Moreover, this study can be used as a reference to linguistics study, mainly studies about phonological study.

3) For the Educational Field

The result of this study is expected to give beneficial input for lecturers that teach phonology. Moreover, it also can help students to get knowledge about phonology, especially about phonological system of a language.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

This section gives both conceptual and theoretical definitions about some key terms related to the topic of this study.

a. Conceptual Definition

1) **Language**

Language is a system or a non-instinctive method of communication used by human to transfer ideas, emotions, and desires from one person to another (Sapir, 1921:7).

2) **Proto Language**

Proto language is a language that becomes the ancestor of some languages which belong to a language family (Keraf, 1996as cited in Halimatussakdiah & Widayati, 2019).

3) **Phonology**

Phonology is a linguistics sub-discipline dealing with the systems and structures of sound in a language (Odden, 2013:2).

4) **Phoneme**

Phonemes are contrastive and minimal units (sounds) of a language distinguishing one word from another (Geigerich, 1995 as cited in Budasi, 2014:4).

5) **Phonetics**

Phonetics is a study of how speech sounds of a language are produced (McMahon, 2002:1).

6) **Minimal Pair**

A minimal pair is a pair of words of a language in which they are distinguished by a single sound or phoneme to mark distinctions in meaning (Barlow & Gierut, 2002).

b. Operational Definition

1) **Language**

   Language is a system of communication used by people in Sambori and Teta villages to transfer thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions from one person to another.

2) **Proto Language**

   Proto language refers to the ancient language that becomes the ancestor of Sambori-Teta language.

3) **Phonology**

   Phonology refers to the study dealing with the systems and structures of sound of Proto Sambori-Teta language.

4) **Phoneme**

   Phonemes are the smallest units (sounds) of Proto Sambori-Teta that distinguish one word from another.

5) **Phonetics**

   Phonetics refers to the study of how speech sounds in Proto Sambori-Teta are produced.

6) **Minimal Pair**

   Minimal pair is a pair of words of Proto Sambori-Teta in which they are distinguished by a single sound or phoneme that marks the distinction of meaning. Minimal pair is used to determine the phonemes of Proto Sambori-Teta.