

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS AND FAMILIES IN MAINTAINING MALAY LANGUAGE IN THE FAMILY AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role and factors related to language use and the attitudes of language users in efforts to maintain the Malay language. The research method used in this study is a factor design analysis to investigate the role of teachers and families and the factors that play a role in maintaining the Malay language in the Bagan area of Batam City, Indonesia. This study involved participants from teachers as education practitioners and several families with a total of 150 teachers and 150 family members each. The instrument used was a questionnaire that analyzed demographic factors, the role of each participant, language practices, language ideology, and language management. The data analysis used was bivariate analysis and multiple regression models to explore the role of teachers and families and the relationship between language use and attitudes and related factors. The results of the study indicate that teachers play a role as supporters of multilingual identity with Malay language teaching that facilitates students to gain a strong understanding of the Malay language and its use. Furthermore, the role of parents and children contributes significantly to language maintenance through the use of Malay in social situations. The most significant role is the use of Malay by parents and children, the frequency of family attendance and use of language at community events (language management) and demographic factors of age also play a role in Malay language maintenance. This study implies that the right approach in the family and educational environment can properly support language maintenance.

Keywords: Language Maintenance, Malay Language, Language Use And Attitudes, Language Ideology, Language Management.

INTRODUCTION

Today's multilingual society is supported by society because it has better benefits and opportunities in various aspects, such as career development, family, adaptability, appreciation of different cultures, and development of the brain function of its users (Bouchard, 2025; Liu, 2022). One of the efforts to support multilingualism is the maintenance of the first language. Language maintenance refers to attitudes and behaviors related to the continued use of language in various contexts and situations (Gorter & Berardi-wiltshire, 2025; Gruffydd et al., 2025). The use of language in the family environment and educational environment can be one of the main foundations in language maintenance (Kolancali et al., 2024; Phiranawong et al., 2025). However, the language system that exists in the community environment in urban areas has been eroded by international languages and national languages so that efforts to maintain the

first language, Malay, are quite difficult to do (Ariyani et al., 2022; Hadi & Mona, 2023). Although educational institutions schools are language communities that play an important role in maintaining regional languages through teaching and usage policies in their environment, they have limited effectiveness in their efforts. This is reinforced by several previous studies which revealed that schools have limitations in efforts to maintain regional languages (Gorter & Berardi-wiltshire, 2025; Gruffydd et al., 2025).

Efforts to maintain language are not only carried out in the educational environment, the family environment also has an important role in maintaining the first language. The family environment between the interaction of parents and children is the main medium that can be used as a foundation in maintaining the first language (Hasnain et al., 2024; Minh et al., 2024). However, language maintenance in the family environment also has its own challenges if the family has a mother tongue or first language that is a minority language in an area or comes from various regions of their parents, so that the child does not master it very well. The use of Malay as a means of communication is not monolithic, but varies greatly (Gorter & Berardi-wiltshire, 2025; Gruffydd et al., 2025). This situation leads to the linguistic reality that the speaker community will always be bilingual or multilingual rather than monolingual. In addition to the bilingual or multilingual factor, globalization itself is also a challenge in efforts to maintain regional languages (Bezcioglu-goktolga & Yagmur, 2022; Kolancali et al., 2024).

This study uses Spolsky's (2007) language policy theory and the sociolinguistic concept of language ideology as the basis for studying language use and attitudes in language maintenance efforts. Based on this theory, language policy consists of three components, namely language practice, language ideology, and language management. Language practice is language maintenance through the use of language according to context. Language ideology is an individual's beliefs and attitudes towards a language (Qiu, 2022; Romanowski, 2021). Language management is a policy to support the promotion of the use of a language. In the family environment, language practice is related to the use of language by family members, both parents and children, which can be done inside and outside the home (Breeze & Halbach, 2024; Hadi & Mona, 2023). This language practice is greatly influenced by the beliefs and attitudes of family members towards language or language ideology. Language ideology also influences the management of language policies and language maintenance efforts in the family environment (Bose et al., 2023; Palviainen & Räisä, 2023). Similarly, in the school environment, each language user is strongly influenced by the language ideology that encourages stakeholders to issue language policies that can encourage regional language practices proportionally (Ros et al., 2024; Shannessy, 2024). The current study investigates these three components (language practice, language ideology, and language management) both in the family and school environments.

Based on this explanation, further study is needed regarding the patterns, roles, and factors related to language maintenance in the family and education environment. Meanwhile, another study explained that the preservation of the first language can be done in various ways, one of which is through regional literary works written by authors

who are indeed oriented towards the preservation of the language and culture of their region (Li et al., 2025; Little, 2023). Another study confirmed that although there is an "extinction" of the language of immigrants in a region, the majority of whom do not use their mother tongue, because they use the regional language they come to every day, this does not mean that there is an extinction of the mother tongue of the immigrants (Huang & Liao, 2024; Murillo, 2024). This is because the communication used every day is only at a simple level such as ordinary greetings. Based on several studies, there are various factors that are very important in the preservation of regional languages, namely Malay. This study is different from previous studies, the current study investigates the role of parents and teachers in language maintenance, factors related to parents and teachers in maintaining Malay language in Batam City. In addition, the current study also investigates demographic factors, language practices, language ideology, and language management factors from families in the family environment and teachers in the school environment. Based on this explanation, the researcher formulates several problems, namely as follows.

- a) What is the role of parents and teachers in maintaining Malay language in the family and school environment in the Bagan area of Batam City?
- b) What are the factors related to the attitudes of parents and teachers in language maintenance efforts?

METHOD

The research method used in this study is a factorial analysis design to investigate the role of families and teachers and factors related to language maintenance efforts in the Bagan area of Batam City. This study involved 150 parents and children and 150 teachers from several schools in the Bagan area of Batam City. In the family environment, the age range of parents is 28-60 years ($M = 38.70$ years, $SD = 7.80$), the age range of children is 3-18 years ($M = 13.26$ years, $SD = 4.56$). In the school environment, the age of teacher participants is 30-60 years ($M = 41.28$ years, $SD = 7.30$). All participants were confirmed to have Malay as their first language, regardless of their daily usage habits. The educational range of participants from parents ranges from high school to master's level, while participants from teachers have educational qualifications ranging from bachelor's to doctoral degrees.

All participants involved in this study participated in the study voluntarily. Participants voluntarily filled out the consent form, so that all participants involved in the study had met research ethics. This study used several instruments to investigate the role of families and teachers in language maintenance, measuring factors and attitudes related to language maintenance of each participant. Parent and teacher language use refers to the language used by parents with their children, while teacher language use refers to the language used by teachers with students in various situations and with various communication media. Parent and teacher language use assessment with children was assessed using an item scale adapted from Tannenbaum (2003) in several different situations.

For example, during family dinners and daily life at home. The assessment uses a 5-point Likert scale with details (1 = always use Malay, 2 = English and Indonesian are balanced, 3 = Indonesian always, 4 = other languages, 5 = do not use both languages).

The factors investigated include language practices, language ideology, language management according to Spolsky's language policy theory (2004). The questions used to reveal the cohesion between parents-children and teachers-students were adapted from Olson, Gorall, and Tiesel (2006). Participants in the family scope were asked to provide responses to the family relationship questionnaire with a Likert scale of 1-5 points with details of point 1 strongly disagree to point 5 strongly agree. The number of questions consisted of 8 items. This instrument has been tested for validity with an empirical test on participants with a value of $\alpha = .93$. From this value, the validity value has met the criteria so that it can be used in this study. Furthermore, language practice factors include the use of language and Malay language proficiency in parents and teachers. The use of language by parents and teachers is used as an independent variable in investigating the attitudes of parents and teachers towards language maintenance. Participants were recruited online through a willingness questionnaire from families and schools to represent the roles and factors of Malay language maintenance in each participant's environment. Furthermore, the questionnaire was given to the families and teachers who were participants. The questionnaire was given to investigate the role of each participant in language maintenance efforts and factors related to language maintenance, such as language practices, language ideology, and language management in each participant.

The data were analyzed and interpreted to gain a comprehensive understanding. Before being analyzed, it was ensured that all data met the criteria for analysis. Missing data on all variables were ensured not to affect the analysis results with a range of 0.5%-1.2%. Data analysis used the EM (Expectation-Maximization) method with the SPSS statistical program. Some of the data analysis used include Pearson correlation analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to investigate the role and relationship between the variables of parent and child Malay language use, teacher Malay language use, parent and teacher Malay language use in various social situations, parent and teacher attitudes towards language maintenance at home and various demographic factors and language policies. Furthermore, the results of the analysis of significant variables in the bivariate analysis were used in a multiple regression model to investigate the relationship between significant factors in each of the three variables related to parent, teacher, and child language use towards language maintenance at home and at school.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The results of the analysis showed that family members tend to be used more with children and at home ($M = 4.23$; $SD = 0.62$). than in the community environment which is sometimes combined with Indonesian when there are meetings in the community ($M = 3.31$; $SD = 0.60$). In addition, Malay in the school environment tends to be used more frequently when learning regional languages and when communicating between students

in informal conditions outside the classroom. Furthermore, in terms of attitudes towards language maintenance at home and at school. Parent participants reported that their children's Malay language skills in terms of listening, reading, writing, speaking skills with a value of ($M = 4.41$; $SD = 1.05$). Furthermore, based on the results of the repeated measures ANOVA test, there was a statistically significant difference in the aspect of parents' attitudes towards the importance of language maintenance at home in various forms of communication with a value of $F (1.50, 213.78) = 35.40$, $p < 0.001$. Specifically, parents and teachers are of the view that the aspect of understanding Malay language is the most important with a value ($M = 4.72$; $SD = 0.98$), followed by speaking ($M = 4.23$; $SD = 1.05$), reading ($M = 3.24$; $SD = 1.10$) and writing ($M = 3.26$; $SD = 1.12$) in the aspects of writing and reading no significant differences were found.

Furthermore, bivariate analysis was conducted on the use of parental language and their attitudes towards language maintenance at home. Analysis of the relationship between parental language use and various demographic factors, language practices, language ideology, and language management is presented in Table 1. First, the analysis of the relationship between language use and demographic factors of age, income, length of residence in the Bagan area, and parent-child cohesion. Specifically, the results of the analysis showed that age did not show a significant correlation with the use of parent and child language with values ($r = -.19$, $p < .05$). Parents with good family cohesion showed more intensive use of Malay language compared to families who were not close to their children with values ($r = .18$, $p < .05$). Furthermore, parents with lower income showed more intensive use of language with values ($r = -.27$, $p < .01$; $r = -.30$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, parents who had lived in Bagan for longer showed more Malay language in social situations with values ($r = -.54$, $p < .001$; $r = -.61$, $p < .001$).

Table 1: Bivariate correlations between parent-child language use and its use in various social situations and related factors

Factors			Parents and teachers' language use with child/students	Parents and teachers" language use in social context
Demographic/ personal	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Age	¹ $r = -.08$, ² $r = -.10$	¹ $r = -.18^*$, ² $r = -.19^*$
		Gender	$F (1,150) = .15$	$F (1,150) = .13$
		Education	$F (2,148) = 3.53$	$F (2,149) = .65$
		Income	$r = -.27^{**}$	$r = -.30^{***}$
		Age of partner	$r = -.22^*$	$r = -.11$
		Duration of residence in Bagan area	¹ $r = -.54^{***}$, ² $r = -.56^{***}$	$r = -.61^{***}$, ² $r = -.63^{***}$
		Cohesion between parents and children, teachers and students	¹ $r = .18^*$, ² $r = .20^*$	¹ $r = .07$, ² $r = .09$
	Community	Meeting place with the community	¹ $F (2,148) = .153$, ² $F (2,148) = .162$	¹ $F (2,148) = 1.70$, ² $F (2,148) = 1.73$

Language practices	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Malay language skills	¹ r = .42***, ² r = .44***	¹ r = .68***, ² r = .70***
		National language skills (Indonesian)	¹ r = -.17*, ² r = -.19*	¹ r = -.44***, ² r = -.46***
		Use of Malay with children and students	¹ r = .57***, ² r = .59***	-
		use of language in various social	¹ r = .56***, ² r = .58***	-
Language ideologies	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Belief in the importance of maintaining Malay language	¹ r = .48***, ² r = .50***	¹ r = .12, ² r = .14
		Belief in cultural identity	¹ r = -.44***, ² r = -.46***	¹ r = -.43***, ² r = -.45***
		Belief in maintaining Malay culture, values and language	¹ r = .18*, ² r = .20*	¹ r = .12, ² r = .14
		Belief in the benefits of Malay language for familiarity	¹ r = .19*, ² r = .21*	¹ r = .23*, ² r = .25*
		Belief in the benefits of Malay language for career choice or academic	¹ r = .21**, ² r = .23**	¹ r = .22*, ² r = .25*
		Belief in maintaining national language	¹ r = -.05, ² r = -.05	¹ r = -.06, ² r = -.08
		Belief in the benefits of first language for second language learning	¹ r = .26**, ² r = .28**	¹ r = .24**, ² r = .26**
Language management	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Visits of newcomers to Batam City	F (1,150) = 1.99	F (1,150) = 8.34**
		Purpose of living in Batam City	F (2,148) = 6.58**	F (2,148) = 9.53***
		Existence of language policy	¹ F (1,145) = 14.65*** ² F (1,145) = 14.71***	¹ F (1,146) = 14.00*** ² F (1,146) = 15.001***
		Closeness to community	¹ F (2,148) = 1.92 ² F (2,148) = 1.94	¹ F (2,148) = 2.45 ² F (2,148) = 2.47
		Frequency of attending community events	¹ r = .08, ² r = .08	¹ r = .20*, ² r = .22*

Furthermore, analysis of language practices showed that parents who used Malay more often with their children at home showed more use of Malay in social situations with scores ($r = .56$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, parents who had better command of Malay ($r = .42$, $p < .001$; $r = .68$, $p < .001$) and low command of Indonesian ($r = -.17$, $p < .05$; $r = -.44$, $p < .001$) showed more intensive use of Malay in social situations. In addition, analysis of language practices among teachers showed that teachers who used Malay more intensively with their students also used Malay more often in various situations at school ($r = .59$, $p < .001$). Teachers who have better command of Malay and less command of Indonesian prefer to use Malay in the teaching and learning process ($r = .44$, $p < .001$; $r = .70$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, the results of the language ideology factor analysis show that parents are more intensive in using Malay with their children in families who believe in the importance of maintaining Malay at home with a value ($r = .48$, $p < .001$) and believe in the importance of maintaining Malay culture, values and language with a value ($r = .18$, $p < .05$). Parents who believe that their mother tongue will strengthen family ties showed value ($r = .18$, $p < .05$; $r = .23$, $p < .05$), and belief that Malay language can support career ($r = .21$, $p < .01$; $r = .22$, $p < .05$) showed more intensive use of Malay language with their children in various social situations.

In addition, parents who communicate with their children using Malay showed better cultural understanding ($r = -.44$, $p < .001$; $r = -.43$, $p < .001$) and believed that mastery of Malay as a first language will help in learning a second language with value ($r = .26$, $p < .01$; $r = .24$, $p < .01$). This is in line with the findings on the use of language by teachers and students in the school environment. Teachers who believe that the use of Malay in the school environment ($r = .50$, $p < .001$) and the maintenance of Malay language culture are more intensive in using Malay with a value ($r = .18$, $p < .05$). In addition, teachers also believe that the use of Malay in the school environment in informal situations will make communication more familiar with students and other teachers ($r = .21$, $p < .05$; $r = .25$, $p < .05$). Teachers also believe that students' mastery of Malay will support their academics in the school environment $r = .20$, $p < .01$; $r = .21$, $p < .05$). Teachers who use Malay more intensively in the school environment show a better understanding of local culture ($r = -.46$, $p < .001$; $r = -.45$, $p < .001$) and believe that mastery of Malay can also help students in learning other languages at school ($r = .28$, $p < .01$; $r = .26$, $p < .01$).

Table 2: Bivariate relationship analysis of parents' and teachers' attitudes towards maintaining Malay and related factors

Factors			The attitudes of parents and teachers towards maintaining the Malay language
Demographic/ personal	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Age	¹ r = $-.25^{**}$, ² r = $-.26^{**}$
		Gender	¹ F (1,149) = 3.21, ² F (1,149) = 3.24
		Education	¹ F (2,147) = 1.22, ² F (2,149) = 1.25
		Income	¹ r = $-.33^{***}$, ² r = $-.35^{***}$
		Age of partner	¹ r = $-.03$, ² r = $-.04$
		Duration of residence in Bagan area	¹ r = $-.42^{***}$, ² r = $-.43^{***}$

		Cohesion between parents and children, teachers and students	¹ r = .37***, ² r = .38***
	Community	Meeting place with the community	¹ F (2,147) = 2.23, ² F (2,147) = 2.25
Language practices	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Malay language skills	¹ r = .35***, ² r = .36***
		National language skills (Indonesia)	¹ r = -.10, ² r = -.11
		Use of Malay language in children and students	¹ r = .47***, ² r = .48***
		Use of Malay language in various social contexts	¹ r = .43***, ² r = .45***
Language ideologies	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Perception of cultural identity	¹ r = -.42***, ² r = -.43***
		Belief in the importance of Indonesian culture, values, and language	¹ r = .05, ² r = .06
		Belief in the importance of Malay culture, values, and language	¹ r = .22**, ² r = .24**
		Belief in the benefits of mother tongue for closeness	¹ r = .54***, ² r = .55***
		Belief in the benefits of Malay language for career choices	¹ r = .43***, ² r = .44***
		Belief in the importance of language for maintaining the national language	¹ r = .32***, ² r = .33***
		Belief in the benefits of Malay language for learning a second language	¹ r = .41***, ² r = .42***
Language management	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Regular visits by migrants to the Bagan area	¹ F (1,149) = .11, ² F (1,149) = .12
		Intention to stay in the Bagan area	¹ F (2,148) = 12.58***, ² F (2,148) = 12.60***
		Existence of language policies	¹ F (1,145) = 16.63***, ² F (1,145) = 17.65***
		Closeness to the Malay language community	¹ F (2,148) = .93, ² F (2,148) = .95
		Frequency of attending community events	¹ r = .05, ² r = .06

Parents' attitudes towards Malay language maintenance at home and their relationship with various factors related to language maintenance attitudes are presented in Table 2. Furthermore, the results of the analysis on demographic factors show a significant correlation between parents' attitudes towards language maintenance. Demographic factors that are significantly correlated include age, income, length of residence in the Bagan area of Batam City, and cohesion between parents and children. Likewise, teacher demographic factors that are significantly correlated with teacher attitudes towards language maintenance in the school environment include age, income, length of service, and familiarity with students.

In more detail, parents who have a strong belief in the importance of Malay language maintenance are younger ($r = -.25, p < .01$), lower income ($r = -.33, p < .001$), visit areas that do not use Malay for less time ($r = -.42, p < .001$), and have closeness between parents and children ($r = .37, p < .001$). Furthermore, the results of the analysis on language practices show that parents who believe in the importance of maintaining the Malay language show better mastery of the Malay language ($r = .35, p < .001$) and higher frequency of use with their children in various citations ($r = .47, p < .001; r = .42, p < .001$). This finding is also in line with the language practices of teachers. Teachers who believe in the importance of maintaining the Malay language have better Malay language skills ($r = .36, p < .001$). In addition, the frequency of teacher language use is also more intensive when talking to students ($r = .48, p < .001; r = .45, p < .001$). The results of the analysis of language ideology in parents show that parents who maintain Malay consider themselves as part of the culture of the Bagan Kota Batam area ($r = -.42, p < .001$) and believe that it is important to maintain the culture of values and Malay language ($r = .22, p < .01$).

Table 3: Results of multiple regression model analysis for the use of parents' and teachers' languages in various social situations

Factors		Significant factors from bivariate analysis	Parents' and teachers' use of language in social situations	
			β	p
Demographic/ personal	1Parent 2Teacher	Age	¹ -0.17, ² -0.18	¹ p = 0.03*, ² p = 0.05*
		Income	¹ 0.06, ² 0.07	¹ p = 0.52, ² p = 0.54
		Long lived in a Malay-speaking area	¹ -0.03, ² -0.05	¹ p = 0.80, ² p = 0.82
Language practices	1Parent 2Teacher	Malay language skills	¹ 0.38, ² 0.39	¹ p < .001***, ² p < .001***
		Indonesian language skills	¹ -0.27, ² -0.29	¹ p < .001***, ² p < .001***
		Use of language by parents to children and teachers to students	¹ 0.25, ² 0.27	¹ p = 0.001**, ² p = 0.001**
Language ideologies	1Parent 2Teacher	Perception of cultural identity	¹ -0.04, ² -0.06	¹ p = 0.73, ² p = 0.75
		Belief in the benefits of the Malay language maintains sibling ties	¹ -0.01, ² -0.03	¹ p = 0.10, ² p = 0.12
		Belief in the benefits of the Malay language in career choices	¹ -0.02, ² -0.04	¹ p = 0.93, ² p = 0.95
		Belief in the importance of maintaining Malay language	¹ 0.09, ² 0.10	¹ p = 0.36, ² p = 0.37
		Belief in the benefits of first language for second language learning	¹ 0.07, ² 0.08	¹ p = 0.35, ² p = 0.36

Language management	¹ Parent ² Teacher	Existence of language policy	¹ –0.05, ² –0.06	¹ p = 0.50, ² p = 0.52
		Plan to stay in Bagan area for migrants	¹ –0.12, ² –0.14	¹ p = 0.19, ² p = 0.21
		Belief to stay in Bagan area forever	¹ –0.14, ² –0.15	¹ p = 0.12, ² p = 0.14
		Regular visits to Bagan for migrants	¹ 0.06, ² 0.07	¹ p = 0.44, ² p = 0.45
		Frequency of attending community events	¹ 0.18, ² 0.19	¹ p = 0.005**, ² p = 0.006**

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify significant factors that correlate with parents' use of Malay and parents' attitudes towards maintaining Malay in the home environment. In addition, multiple regression analysis was also conducted to analyze significant factors in the use of Malay by teachers and students in the school environment. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3, Based on the results of the multiple regression analysis in Tables 3, only one significant factor was found to be able to predict the use of Malay by parents with children and five factors were found to be able to predict the use of Malay by parents in various social situations. Parents who use Malay more intensively with their children in various social situations showed a value ($\beta = .31$, $p = .004$). The model can explain 40% of the variance in the use of Malay by parents with children. Furthermore, from the results of self-reports, parents were found to use Malay more with their children in various social situations ($\beta = .25$, $p = .001$), younger ($\beta = -.17$, $p < .05$). In addition, they also have better language skills ($\beta = .38$, $p < .001$), but have no better Indonesian language skills ($\beta = -.27$, $p < .001$), and often attend community events in the community ($\beta = .18$, $p < .01$). From the results of the analysis, in total it explains 60% of the variance in the use of parents' Malay in various social situations. Furthermore, the results of the analysis show that teachers who use Malay more often with their students can explain 40% of the variance. Teachers who use Malay more often with their students other than in the teaching process and on certain days are also found in informal situations ($\beta = .27$, $p = .001$), are younger ($\beta = -.18$, $p < .05$). Some teachers have better Malay language skills compared to Indonesian. In addition, teachers who intensively use Malay are active in community events in the community. The model shows 62% of the variance in the use of Malay language in teachers in the school environment.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of teachers and parents in Malay language maintenance and factors that correlate with language use and attitudes of teachers and parents towards Malay language maintenance in school and home environments. This study contributes to language maintenance and language policies that should be formed in supporting language practices and attitudes towards language maintenance. The results showed that factors that significantly correlated with the use of language by parents and children, as well as teachers and students, were the use of Malay in various social situations.

The use of language by parents and teachers in these various situations was significantly predicted by several language maintenance factors, namely Malay language practice, Malay language proficiency, Malay language use, Malay language management (frequency of attending activities), and demographic factors (age). Other findings showed that positive attitudes of parents and teachers towards language maintenance at home and school were predicted by several factors, namely language ideology, belief that Malay language can strengthen intimacy, better career opportunities, and belief in the importance of Malay language maintenance, and demographic factors of income. This finding reinforces previous studies that revealed that language maintenance is greatly influenced by the frequency of language use and the user's belief in the benefits of maintaining the first language for their lives (Li et al., 2025; Little, 2023). In addition, this study is reinforced by the results of previous research that revealed that parents who use Malay more often with their children at home tend to have a higher frequency of Malay use in various social situations (Huang & Liao, 2024; Müller et al., 2020).

In addition, other findings also found that teachers who use Malay less often in various contexts also use Malay less often when interacting with their students. Individuals who have better mother tongue (Malay) skills than the national language (Indonesian) tend to use Malay more often in various social situations. Previous studies have also revealed that parents of immigrants in the Batam City area tend to use the national language (Indonesian) more in various domains (family and society) (Grasso, 2024; Romanowski & Romanowski, 2022). In addition, other findings also revealed that the use of Malay by parents was significantly correlated with their activeness in social situations that used Malay. This finding is in line with the theory that community representation is one of the significant factors that can encourage the maintenance of the mother tongue or first language (Breeze & Halbach, 2024; Qiu, 2022). The next finding in this study is the attitude of parents and teachers towards language maintenance is related to several language maintenance factors. This finding is reinforced by previous studies in Several countries, such as Korea, Canada, and the US, revealed that parents maintain their regional language or first language because they believe in its benefits for closeness between family members and their children's career opportunities (Palviainen & Räisä, 2023; Pan et al., 2024).

The next finding is that parents and teachers who have low incomes tend to have more positive attitudes towards maintaining the Malay language. However, families and teachers who have higher incomes and less Malay language skills show less supportive attitudes towards maintaining the Malay language in Batam City. This finding is reinforced by previous studies which found that there is a significant correlation between income and the use of regional languages (Et-bozkurt & Yağmur, 2022; Gruffydd et al., 2025). Other studies also confirm that language ideology, namely attitudes towards language maintenance, is very much determined by the socio-economic status and socio-cultural factors of the individual (Bohnacker, 2022; Hatoss, 2024; Liu, 2022). Language ideology is related to income, socio-cultural environment, and first language ability or mother tongue. So, the language ideology of individuals, both families and teachers, strongly supports the maintenance of the Malay language in the Bagan area of Batam City.

In addition, other findings reveal that parents and teachers who have a sense of cultural identity and belief in the importance of maintaining the Malay language have more positive attitudes towards maintaining the Malay language. This finding reinforces previous findings which reveal that families who have a mother tongue, Sundanese, will continue to use it at home because they feel they have a positive ethnic identity and self-identity when using their regional language (Huang & Liao, 2024; Li et al., 2025).

The next finding is that the sense of regional identity and attitudes towards maintaining the Malay language are significantly related to Malay language proficiency and its use in various social situations.

The mother tongue is maintained by parents because of their limitations in using the national language and a strong sense of ethnic identity (Qiu, 2022; Wąsikiewicz-firlej et al., 2025). However, the motivation to maintain this mother tongue will be lost in the next generation of the family if the parents' national language skills are better than the regional language.

This happens because the national language skills are not better than the regional language in all family members so that there are no more communication barriers and there is no self-identity as strong as the first generation. The extinction of regional languages or mother tongues across generations is reinforced by previous studies which revealed that the habit of using language at home greatly determines the continuity of the first language in the family (Mirvahedi, 2024; Romanowski, 2021). Another finding is that the sense of regional identity of teachers in the school environment is also significantly correlated with the practice of using the Malay language in schools in the Bagan area. In addition, teaching Malay to students can foster a sense of love for their regional identity which will help pass on Malay language skills to the next generation. From these findings, it can be concluded that maintaining the Malay language or mother tongue cannot only be done through individual commitment, but requires the involvement and support of broader and stronger human resources including in the educational and community environments (Bose et al., 2023; Hasnain et al., 2024; Zou, 2022).

The results of the elaboration of findings on the four factors of teachers and parents that contribute to the maintenance of Malay language. Personal demographic factors of parents and teachers that greatly contribute to the maintenance of Malay language are age and income. This finding is reinforced by previous studies that revealed that older parents tend to have younger ages and lower incomes in families in several regions of Korea and Japan (Noar, 2024; Smith-christmas & Smith-christmas, 2021; Tamleh et al., 2024). The next finding is that the contribution to the language use factor is highly dependent on the mastery of Malay language skills of the participants and the intensity of Malay language use.

Parents who use Malay more often with their children at home tend to be more intensive in using Malay in various social situations. Likewise, teachers who use Malay more often with students both during teaching and outside of teaching tend to have higher use of Malay outside of school.

This finding is also reinforced by previous studies that revealed that the use and mastery of the first language or mother tongue is greatly influenced by the frequency of use of the language (Gu & Han, 2021; Hu & Yagmur, 2024).

The next factor is the finding on language ideology. The language ideology of parents and teachers greatly determines the belief in the benefits of Malay language maintenance for individual familiarity, career choices, and cultural identity. High confidence in these factors encourages individuals to maintain Malay from generation to generation. The last factor is language management.

The findings that contribute to the language management factor are language policies in both the family and school environments and planning to live in the Malay-speaking Bagan area. The findings on the language ideology factor are reinforced by previous studies that revealed that language ideology in communities in several areas in New Zealand contributes to the maintenance of regional languages in the area (Ros et al., 2024; Tran et al., 2021).

In addition, other studies reveal that language policies in schools that regulate the use of regional languages and family environments that require the use of their first language (Berke et al., 2025; Hing et al., 2024; Torsch, 2025). This study contributes to the picture of the pattern of Malay language maintenance, so that stakeholders can determine the right strategy in maintaining the mother tongue in an area.

CONCLUSION

Language use and family and teacher attitudes towards Malay language maintenance are the most important factors in Malay language maintenance. Parents have a very important role in maintaining Malay across generations through instilling language ideology, language practices, and language management in their children.

Teachers play a role in maintaining Malay through teaching their students and language policies implemented in the school environment, thus encouraging teachers, staff, and students to use Malay language in the Bagan area, Batam City.

Language practices in the family and school environment are greatly influenced by language ideology and language management. Language use among parents and teachers is significantly correlated with age, level of Malay language proficiency, and intensity of language use at community events.

Furthermore, the attitudes of parents and teachers towards language maintenance are significantly related to a sense of cultural identity, belief in the benefits of multilingualism, income, and national language maintenance. This study implies that language policy has a significant influence on the maintenance of Malay both in the family environment and in the school environment, including encouraging families with high economic status to maintain Malay. Promotion of a sense of cultural identity and increasing awareness of the benefits of maintaining Malay need to be integrated into the education curriculum so that students know it clearly so that it can encourage more active maintenance of Malay.

This study has several limitations, including samples that are still limited to the family and school environment in the Bagan area of Batam City, focusing on one regional language, namely Malay, the analysis focuses on quantitative analysis, and the factors investigated are still limited to language ideology, language practices, language management, and the role of families and teachers. Based on these limitations, the researcher recommends several suggestions, including that the sample should be expanded, for example in a wider community environment, investigations are needed on other regional languages, qualitative analysis needs to be completed, and analysis of factors that contribute to language maintenance needs to be expanded, for example psychological factors and others.

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