LANGUAGE, DIALECT AND REGISTER IN A SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstrak

Sosiolinguistik memberi perhatian pada aspek sosial bahasa manusia. Sosiolinguistik membahas hubungan antara bahasa dengan dengan masyarakat. Artikel ini difokuskan untuk membahas (1) bahasa, (2) dialek, (3) variasi bahasa, (4) tingkatan sosial, dan (5) register. Kelima hal ini merupakan hal problematik yang mengubungkan kehidupan sosial masyarakat lokal suatu daerah. Yang paling penting untuk diketahui adalah pembedaan suatu istilah terhadap yang lain. Ada tiga hal utama yang dibahas; bahasa, dialek dan register. Bahasa memiliki banyak keragaman. Keragaman bahasa terjadi karena adanya perbedaan tingkatan sosial dalam masyarakat. Tingkatan sosial menentukan bahasa yang digunakan oleh penuturnya yang terlibat dalam interaksi tersebut. Variasi bahasa dapat terjadi dalam bentuk dialek dan register. Dialek sebuah bahasa berhubungan faktor-faktor sosial seperti status sosial ekonomi, umur, jabatan penuturnya. Dialek merupakan variasi bahasa yang digunakan oleh kelompok penutur tertentu yang ditandai dengan penanda sistematik seperti penanda sintaksis, fonologi, dan gramatikal. Register adalah variasi bahasa berdasarkan penggunaaanya atau tujuannya. Hal ini bergantung seluruhnya terhadap tujuan utama penggunaan bahasa.

Kata kunci: *bahasa, dialek, register, dan sosiolinguistik*

Abstract

Sociolinguistics pays attention to the social aspects of human language. Sociolinguistics discusses the relationship between language and society. this paper, discusses the use of (1) language;(2) dialects; (3) language variation; (4) social stratifications;(5) register. This discussion talks about the five types of those topics because they are really problematic sort of things, which relate to the social life of the local people. In relation to this, the most important point is to distinguish the terms from one to another. There are three main points to discuss: language, dialects and register. Languages which are used as medium of communication have many varieties. These language variations are created by the existence of social stratification in the community. Social stratification will determine the form of language use by the speakers who involve in the interaction. The variation can be in the form of dialects and register. Dialect of a language correlates with such social factors such as socio-economic status, age, occupation of the speakers. Dialect is a variety of a particular language which is used by a particular group of speakers that is signaled by systematic markers such as syntactical, phonological, grammatical markers. Dialects which are normally found in the speech community may be in the forms of regional dialect and social dialect. Register is the variation of language according to the use. It means that where the language is used as a means of communication for certain purposes. It depends entirely on the domain of language used. It is also a function of all the other components of speech situation. A formal setting may condition a formal register, characterized by particular lexical items. The informal setting may be reflected in casual register that indicates less formal vocabulary, more non-standard features, greater instances of stigmatized variables, and so on.

Keywords: *language, dialect, register and sociolinguistic.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of language which pays attention to the social aspects of language is commonly called sociolinguistics. The term sociolinguistics is used to discuss the relationship between language and society. It has been long known that there are many approaches used to discuss the function of

language in society. How people in certain communities use their languages to communicate among them. As mentioned by Southerland and Katamba (1996:540) the locus of all sociolinguistic investigations is the speech community. The speech community where the language is used as a means of communication can be a small town, village, or even a club or as large as nation or a group of nations. They further note that the important characteristic of a speech community is that its members share a particular language (or variety of language) as well as the norms (or rules) for appropriate use of their language in social context. Because of the different language background of the speakers in various communities will create different kind of language variety due to the different situation and social stratification of the speakers. In society, it is found that many causes of speech community differentiation. One of them is the social status of the speakers such as teachers, workers, government official who has high rank in the office, religion leaders, and so on. These differences influence the form of language choice to be used to communicate among them. They have to be aware of each other position. So it is really very important for those speakers who are involving in certain speech situation take into consideration the language to be used. The wrong choice of expressions used by speakers of different social status will be considered as impolite expressions.

In order to avoid misunderstanding between speakers in the society whenever the communication takes place is to understand the speech varieties. It means that speakers must know the norms of language function. Language function is how the speakers use their language which has already bound by the cultural or social norms. The understanding of the social norms which relate to the way how people use the correct language in certain communication domain by recognizing who involves in the communication. In all communities in the world, people have standard language to be developed as a guideline to communicate with each other.

According to Holmes (1992:76) a standard variety is one which is written, and which has undergone some degree of regularization or codification; it is recognized as prestigious variety or code by a community and it is used for H functions a long side a diversity of low varieties. It is further stated that standard varieties are codified varieties. Codification is usually achieved through grammars and dictionaries which record, and sometimes prescribed, the standard form of the language. The codification process, which is part of the development of every standard variety, was accelerated in the case of English by the introduction of printing in 1476, by William Caxton, the first English printer. He used the speech of London area the newly emerging standard dialect – as the basis for his translation. The most im-

portant point he emphasizes is that the development of Standard English illustrates the three essential criteria which characterize a standard: it was an influential or prestigious variety, it was codified and stabilized, and it serves H functions in that it was used for communication at court, for literature and for administration. It is very interesting to take into consideration the idea proposed by Holmes (1992) in which he states that a standard language is always a particular dialect which has gained its special position as a result of social, economic, and political influence. This is really in away with the language condition in Indonesia. The language situation in Indonesia is very complex due to the various vernacular languages used by the various communities which have different cultural background. This situation is very important to be taken into consideration by those who involve themselves in language, particularly socio linguistic study.

2. LANGUAGE SITUATION

The linguistic situation in multicultural communities like in Indonesia has long been considered, by linguists, as a complex and interesting to be investigated for mapping out the linguistic appearance in every area in Indonesia. There are many local vernaculars used by different people who live in different places in Indonesia. Ones who live in different regions use different local vernaculars of their own. They won't understand each other although they are from Indonesia because they speak different mother tongue. They will be able to understand each other if they use Indonesian language. If they use Indonesian language their tune of voice or pronunciation will be different because their Indonesian is influenced by their mother tongues. The difference use of the same language which influence by the local vernaculars or mother tongue of the speakers is normally called regional variation. This regional variation emerges due to the speakers different regions. There are often found that the use of different vocabularies in the varieties spoken in different regions. As mentioned by Holmes (1992:195), language varies in three major ways which are interestingly interrelated- over time, in physical space, and socially. Language variation over time has its origins in spatial (or regional) and social variation. All language change has its origin in variation. The possibility of linguistic change exists as soon as a new form develops and begins to be used alongside an existing form.

Language choice in multicultural societies normally influenced by certain social factors for example the factor of people you are talking with, the social context where the communication takes place, and other factor like the function and topic of what is being talked. Those are important factors to determine the form of language choice in multicultural society likes Indonesia. The difference choice of expressions and vocabularies will be strongly influ-

enced by the domains of language use. These domains of language use will be the focus of our attention in discussing the appropriate form of language choice. The interlocking system which is related to domains, addressee, setting, and topics to be found in people real life interactions have been identified as very relevant factors to describe pattern of code choice in many different speech communities. It can be said, further, that domain is one thing which is related to three important social factors in dealing with code choice they are participant who involve in the interaction, setting is where the interaction among community members taking place, and the third one is the topic of what is being discussed in the interaction.

In short, it can be said that the form of language choice in multicultural societies may be determined by the domains when the talk takes place. As what has been said that the complexity of language choice in multilingual societies because people who involve in the communication must take into consideration many factors related to the certain domain. This tells us very clearly that in choosing the variety of language to be used in real interaction in our daily life is that we have to be clear about what language variety to be chosen which are relevant to the domains. Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and society. Language is a very important means of communication. Society is the place where language is used

to share ideas among the community group members. Without language human being cannot do the communication with each other. So we are lucky because we have language to be used to share our way of thinking. In the society where he human being live as a member of particular group of people, there are various types of people and they have different kind of cultural background. Due to the fact that there are many group of tribes living in the world with different knowledge of language rules this will result in language variation when they are dealing with communication with each other. To do the communication, human being should understand each other position or post in order to be able to choose the correct language or expressions to be used. It is also often found that there are many dialects variation in the life of people in the same community. A part from dialects variation used by certain group of people, the use of specific lexical items also illustrate the functional use of language in particular speech events. Sociolinguistics can help us understand why we speak differently in various social contexts, because sociolinguistics also tells us that in some communities the social stratification plays important role for language choice. By knowing the social stratification of people who live in the society, at the same time they will be able to have the component of sociolinguistic competence. According to Canale and Swain (1980) this component included both socio-cultural rules of use

and rules of discourse; here only the former set of rules is referred to. Sociolinguistic competence thus addresses the extent to which the utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participant, purpose of interaction, setting and scene. Participant is considered to be most important aspect for language choice. For example, you probably wouldn't speak the same to your boss at work as you would do to your friends, or speak to strangers as you would to your family. Sociolinguistics may also wonder whether women and men speak the same each other. Or why do people of the same age or from the same social class or same ethnicity use similar language? Sociolinguistics attempts to explain all these questions and more. Ultimately, sociolinguistics is everywhere!

In the following part of this paper we are going to consider particular important of making a sociolinguistic mapping of language use characterized by different group of local people in the same community. The mapping will be particularly focusing on the use of (1) language (2) dialects, (3) language variation, (4) social stratification, and register.

In this part, the discussion will be dealing with the five types of those topics because they are really problematic sort of things, which relate the social life of the local people. In relation to this, the most important point is to distinguish the terms from one to another. We first need to consider the clear concept of the terms mentioned above to make it easier to create languages, dialects, and register mapping.

Language

It is a real means of communication. What does it mean to say that some variety is a language? How to differentiate between language and dialect? This is the focus of attention of this paper. According to Haugen (1966) there are two separate ways of distinguishing them, and this ambiguity is a source of great confusion. He further argues that reason for ambiguity, and the resulting confusion, is precisely the fact that dialect was borrowed from Greek, where the same ambiguity existed. On the other hand, there is a difference of size, because a language is larger than a dialect. This is the sense in which we may refer to English as a language, containing the total of all the terms in all its dialect, with Standard English as one dialect among many others. The other contrast between language and dialect is a question of prestige, a language having prestige which a dialect lacks.

Dialects

If we are talking about dialects it is necessary to understand, first of all, what is meant by standard language? Standard language is the only kind of variety which can be called a proper language. It is normally used by the government as a language to be

used as the administrative matters, in formal situation like the language for education, law, economic activities, and so on. In multilingual society, the use of standard language is very often deviate from its origin. The deviation is often found in the form of lexical choices, pronunciation, grammar, phonology, morphology, and syntax. This deviation from the standard use is normally called a dialect of the same language. Dialect may be defined as non-standard use of a particular language. This can also be called a language variety. Dialect is a variety of a particular language which is spoken by a group of speakers that is signaled by systematic markers such as syntactical, phonological, grammatical markers. Dialect may be in the forms of regional dialect and social dialect.

Language variation

As what has been stated by Wardhaugh (1986:22) that variety is defined in terms of a specific set of linguistic items or human speech patterns (presumably, sounds, words, grammatical features) which we can uniquely associate with some external factors (presumably, a geographical area or a social group). This paper focuses on how the larger social context affects an individual's use of particular linguistic forms illustrate a macro-level of social analysis and a micro-level of linguistic analysis. Moreover, it will be seen how geographical location, ethnic background, social class, and gender can all influence an individual's use of particular phonological, structural, lexical, and discourse features of English (McKay and Hornberger 1996:149). The discussion is followed by an examination of language variation due to age and social class and network.

Languages in the world will be different form one and another. Each language has its rule to be followed by the people of the same tribes or groups. In this part of the paper, we are going to see what is meant by language variation in more details. The important question may be raised "why language vary in its use?" The answer to this question is that the language as a means of communication can be used in different purposes in the real world. Due to the fact that the purpose of interaction, who are the people involving in the interaction, where does the interaction take place, social stratification, and so on, will contribute to the language variation. These factors are the main things which will influence the form of language choice to be used in the interaction.

According to Hudson (1980:24) the term variety of language can be used to refer to different manifestations of it in just the same way as one might take 'music' as a general phenomenon and the distinguish different varieties of music . What make one variety of language different from another are the linguistic items that it includes, so we may differ a variety of language as a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution. So, language variation is considered to be the way of how

people use their language or languages for different purposes. Consequently, no speaker of a language or group of people will speak exactly the same as others. Wardhaugh (1987:127) mentions that language is varies in a number of ways. One way of characterizing certain variation is to say that speakers of a particular language sometimes speak different dialect of a language. He further says that sociolinguistics today are concerned more with social variation in language than with regional variation. Linguists have along been aware of variation in the use of language: individual do speak one way on one occasion and another way on another occasion, and this kind of variation can be seen to occur within even the most localized groups. Hudson (1980) further claims that the very general notion 'variety' includes examples of what would normally be called, languages, dialects, and register, it will be noticed that it is consistent with the definition to treat all the languages of some multilingual speaker, or community, as a single variety, since all the linguistic items concerned have a similar social distribution – they are used by the same speaker, or community. Thus, a variety can be much smaller than a 'language', or event that a 'dialect'. The flexibility of the term 'variety' allows us to ask what basis there is for postulating the kind of 'package' of linguistic item to which we conventionally give label like 'language', 'dialect' or 'register'.

Social stratification

According to Southerland and Katamba (1996:542) it is possible to correlate differences of how people speak with their membership in various social groups. Perhaps the most frequently invoked social correlate of language differentiation is socio-economic status. What is meant by socio-economic status is that something associated with income level, type occupation, type of housing, educational level, and similar characteristics of speakers. These social statuses will influence the forms of language use to communicate in the social groups. The people will be aware of how to use the language with those people who have high status in the society. The form of language choice depends upon the people who involve in the communication.

It is further explained that the approaches to study the linguistic differentiation in the speech community which proceed from the assumption that socio-economic status is an important (or the most important) correlate of differences in language usage generally arrive at (or proceed from) a view of vertical variation which is referred to as the social stratification of language. Having seen the short explanation about social stratification proposed by Southerland and Katamba about the important factor that affects the form of language choice in the society it is reasonable to claim that social differentiation of one sort or another is universal. Based on these ideas it is believed that there are al-

ways differences in speech communities and that these differences correlate with the existence of social group within the community.

The term speech community is widely used by sociolinguists to refer to community based on language, but linguistic community is also used with the same meaning. Although we know that there are many definition of speech community given by different linguists, with different sort of expressions, but we are sure that they have the same meaning. In short, it can be said that speech community is the interlocking system of where the communication among people who live in the same community take place. This may be nearly the same as what is called speech situation. It is a condition in which there is appropriate use of language by speakers of a particular community, with specific circumstances such as setting and scene, participants of the interaction, and ends of the communication including both functions and outcomes.

Register

The form that talk takes in any given context is called a register. Different register may be characterized in phonological, syntactic, or lexical items. A register is also a function of all the other components of speech situation. A formal setting may condition a formal register, characterized by particular lexical items (Southerland and Katamba, 1996:579). They further mention that an informal setting may be reflected in casual register that exhibits less formal vocabulary, more non-standard features, greater instances of stigmatized variables, and so on.

Hudson (1980:48) mentions that the term register is widely used in sociolinguistics to river to variety according to use, in contrast with dialects defined as varieties according to the user. It is very important to make distinction between register and dialect because the same person may use different linguistic items to express more or less the same meaning on different occasions, and the concept of dialect cannot reasonably be extended to include such variation. Each time a person speaks or writes he not only locates himself with reference to the rest of society, but also relates his act of communication to a complex classificatory scheme of communication behavior.

3. CONCLUSION

This short paper focuses on the social aspects of language use in real life speech situation. There are three main points to discuss: language, dialects and register. Languages which are used as medium of communication have many varieties. These language variations are created by the existence of social stratification in the community. Social stratification will determine the form of language use by the speakers who involve in the interaction. The language variation can be in the form of dia-

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