

Sociocultural Factors that Determine Language Choice in A Multilingual Society

Sociolinguistic Study at Tanjungsari Market, Sumedang Regency

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ABSTRACT

The accuracy of language choice in Tanjungsari Market, Sumedang Regency (TMSR), is a complicated task. This paper describes the sociocultural factors that determine language choice in the TMSR speech community. This study used a sociolinguistic theoretical approach by utilizing ethnographic qualitative methods. This study involved 100 respondents, and data were collected from the use of Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesian in the TMSR speech community. The findings showed that there were five sociocultural factors that determined language choice: speech participants, speech situation, speech purpose, subject matter, and speech norms. Factors of speech participants included speakers, speech partner, and third speaker. In the speaker's reason, there were categories of gender, age, and level of education. Social status and level of intimacy were found in the speech partner reason. Code-switching from Sundanese code to Indonesian code to avoid language conflicts were also found in the third speech participant presence reason. The speech situation in TMSR is a relaxed situation, both in the family, work, and social domains. Two kinds of speech purposes in TMSR were found including representative speech and directive speech. The subject matter contained in TMSR is the topic of buying and selling and traditional topics. In the context of speech norms, there has been a shift in social norms in several utterances in TMSR, namely the choice of a Sundanese-familiar code with older people, both with family members and with other people.

Keywords: Language choice, sociocultural factors, Tanjungsari Market.

1. INTRODUCTION

Wardhaugh (1986) suggests that the accuracy of language choice in a bilingual or multilingual society is a complex task. Agreeing with this statement, the multilingual community in Tanjungsari Market, Sumedang Regency (TMSR), can also find this phenomenon because the speech community in TMSR at least deals with Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesian in their daily lives. They must choose and use the three languages interchangeably according to the context and situation. Thus, the accuracy of language choice in the speech community in TMSR will decide the atmosphere of harmony between them. Meanwhile, inaccuracy in language choice can cause various problems, both social, cultural, and situational problems (Fasold, 1984; Hudson, 1984; Kartomihardjo, 1981).

The choice of language by speakers should not occur randomly but must consider several sociocultural factors, including who is speaking, who is the

interlocutor, what topics are discussed, and where the speech events occur (Fishman, 1972). Therefore, the accuracy of language choice is very important.

Several researchers conduct studies on language choice in multilingual communities before. Trudell (2005) mentioned that mother tongue education could play an important role in the broader movement for developing minority languages and increasing the effectiveness of education. Kittel, Lindner, Tesch, and Hentschel (2010) analyze the socio-structural background in the choice of mixed language in Belarus. Furthermore, Ting (2010) examines the impact of language planning on language choice in the domain of friendship and transactions in Sarawak, Malaysia.

In Indonesian context, Sitaresmi, Sulistianingsih, Fasya, Fadlilah and Widawati (2011) reveals the choice of language in the Banten community in Labuan District, Pandeglang Regency, based on the practice of social interaction in various domains of language

choice. While Makhendra (2015) examined the language choice in daily social interaction in a community and analyzes the social factors that influence their language choice.

Based on the above background, previous research has not examined the potential for social, cultural, and situational problems in situations of bilingual or multilingual society. This topic is an important research issue. This study uncovers this important issue, namely several sociocultural factors inherent in language choice. So, the main problem in this study is the bilingual or multilingual society situation which tends to cause various problems, such as social, cultural, and situational problems. The researcher formulates the problem in the research question which is how are the sociocultural factors that determine the choice of language in various speech events in the TMSR speech community.

2. METHOD

This research uses a sociolinguistic theoretical approach. Fishman (1972) explains that sociolinguistics is a qualitative study. This study used a qualitative ethnographic method (Spradley, 1980; Muhadjir, 1996), where the researcher involved himself to associate with the indigenous people of TMSR.

The source of data in this research is from the Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesian languages use and their respective varieties that occur in the multilingual community in TMSR. This study involved 100 respondents with the following classification: 61 male respondents and 39 female respondents. Based on the age, there were 25 old respondents and 75 young respondents, while on the education level, there were 75 respondents with low education and 25 respondents with high education.

This study uses a data card as an instrument to record recorded utterances. The data card consists of five parts, namely (1) the data number, (2) the type of language code variation, (3) the domain at which the speech takes place, (4) the context of the speech, and (5) an excerpt from the recorded speech.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This paper describes five sociocultural factors that determine the language choice in the multilingual community in TMSR. The five factors including (1) speech participants, (2) speech situation, (3) speech goals, (4) speech points, and (5) speech norms.

In line with Ervin-Tripp (1972), Groesjean (1982) suggests four factors that influence the choice of language in social interaction, namely (1) participants, (2) situation, (3) content of discourse, and (4) function of interaction. Situational factors refer to (1) place or

setting, (2) monolingual speakers present, (3) level of formality, and (4) level of intimacy. Discourse content factors refer to the topic of conversation and the type of vocabulary. The interaction function factors include aspects (1) raising status, (2) creating social distance, (3) prohibiting entry/exiting someone from the conversation, and (4) commanding or accepting.

3.1. Speech Participants

The first sociocultural reason is the speech participant. Speech participants are one of the determinants of language choice. There are three speech participants, namely (1) speakers, (2) speech partners, and (3) third speech participants. Each speech participant chooses a different code according to the context. The following explanation explains that speech participants are one of the sociocultural factors in language choice.

3.1.1. Speakers (P1)

The source of speech in communication events comes from the speaker. Therefore, the dominant factor that determines the choice of language is the speaker. Factors found in speakers include gender, age, and education. Researchers describe it as follows.

3.1.1.1. Gender

Gender can influence speech participants to choose language codes, such as choosing the language to express respect in greeting certain people. The Sundanese code uses *bapa* 'father', *kang* 'brother', *aa* 'brother', *mang* 'uncle', and *aki/abah* 'grandfather'. The Indonesian code uses *bapak* 'father', *ayah* 'father', *kakek* 'grandfather', and *abang* 'brother'. The Javanese code uses *mas* 'brother' and *bapak* 'father'. Meanwhile, to greet people who are female, the Sundanese code uses *ibu* 'mother', *ema* 'mother/grandmother', *bibi* 'aunt', *nini* 'grandmother', and *teteh/euceu* 'sister'. The Indonesian code uses *ibu* 'mother', *mama* 'mother', *kakak* 'sister', and *nenek* 'grandmother'. The Javanese code uses *mbak* 'sister' and *ibu* 'mother'.

Speakers usually choose a greeting code that shows respect from children to parents, wives to husbands, and grandchildren to grandparents. The following discourse is an example of language choice with gender markers.

(58) Context: Conversation between P1 (Female, Trader, 49 years old) and P2 (Male, male, Trader, 54 years old) in a relaxed situation in the family domain (P1 rushes away).

P1: "Pa, mamah bade rapat heula ka sekolah. Saurna tadi tos seueur orang tua murid."

(Honey, I'll go to the school meeting now. I heard that there are already many parents.)

P2: "Nya, sok. Kade di jalanna!"
(Yes, please. Be careful!)

The discourse shows the choice of language in relaxed situations in the family domain with gender markers. In the conversation, P1 (wife) chose a subtle Sundanese code that shows respect: '*Pa, mamah bade rapat heula ka sekolah. Saurna tadi tos seueur orang tua murid*' to say goodbye to P2 (husband). Meanwhile, P2 responded with the familiar Sundanese code: '*Nya, sok. Kade di jalanna!*'

3.1.1.2. Age

An important factor in conducting social interaction is the age of the speaker. The age of the speaker is related to a person's status and position in the family structure or social group. In addition, age also affects the choice of language. For example, children will choose words or terms that are commonly used among children. The words chosen by the children to name the animals were *gukguk* for dogs, *embe* for goats/sheep, *meng* for cats, and *emoh* for cows. The choice of words other than mentioning animal names, namely *mamam* for eating, *cucu* for milk, *emen* for candy, and *bobo* for sleeping. The discourse below is an example that illustrates this.

(59) Context: Conversation between P1 (Female, Trader, 26 years old) and P2 (Female, Trader, 20 years old) in a relaxed situation in the family domain (P1 looks moody).

P1: "*Sugan teh bobogohan tilu taun moal putus.*"
(I think three years of dating will never end.)

P2: "*Atuh nu nikah ge bisa cerai.*"

(Married people can also get divorced.)

P1: "*Nya oge.*"

(You're right.)

P2: "*Si A Ajay teh gawe naon?*"

(What is Ajay doing?)

P1: "*Pengangguran, kalahkah maen bola we jeung ngurus manuk wae.*"

(Unemployment, he's mainly playing ball and taking care of birds.)

P2: "*Sok ayeuna mah geus gede, kudu bisa mikir realistis. Lain kudu neang lalaki nu geus beunghar, teangan lalaki nu daek gawe! Da ke geus kawin teh butuh biaya.*"

(Now that you're an adult, you should think realistically. Don't look for rich men but looking for men who are willing to work! Because marriage cost a lot of money.)

The above discourse occurs in the family domain, where P1 and P2 are relative. P2 tells about the end of his relationship with his partner. P1 tells the story: "*Sok ayeuna mah geus gede, kudu bisa mikir realistis. Lain kudu neang lalaki nu geus beunghar, teangan lalaki nu*

daek gawe! Da ke geus kawin teh butuh biaya". This statement is advice from P2 to P1 so as not to think too much about the partner who has left him.

3.1.1.3. Level of education

The level of education also affects the choice of language. For example, someone with low education will choose a language that can be understood by ordinary people, while someone with higher education tends to choose a language that is not easily understood by ordinary people. The conversation below is an example that demonstrates this.

(60) Context: Conversation between P1 (Female, Trader, 49 years old, SD) and P2 (Female, Student, 19 years old) in a relaxed situation in the family domain (P2 shows the Grab application on their device)

P1: "*Ari naik Grab teh siga naek angkot?*"

(Is taking Grab, like taking an angkot?)

P2: "*Naek Grab mah kedah nganggo heula aplikasi, janten pesen heula di aplikasi Grabna.*"

((No,) To use Grab we have to download the application first, then book the ride.)

P1: "*Oh, ari sugan teh siga naek angkot we kitu.*"

(Oh, I thought it's like taking an angkot.)

The conversation above shows that a person's level of education is seen as important. The speaker's level of knowledge characterizes his level of education. In addition, the level of education also determines the choice of language. In the speech above, P2, who is a student, told his mother who only graduated from elementary school with a subtle Sundanese code: *Naek Grab mah kedah nganggo heula aplikasi, janten pesen heula di aplikasi Grabna*.

3.1.2. Speech Partner

Speakers must make a choice of language based on the socio-cultural background of the speech partner. The socio-cultural background of the speech partners is including social status and level of intimacy. Below are the examples and explanations of the social status and level of familiarity that are caused different choice of language.

3.1.2.1. Social status

The social status of the speech partner has an influence on the choice of language. This social status includes education level, power, ancestry, age, and wealth. In language choice, speakers who have a higher social status than the speech partners will be freer in choosing the language code to be used in verbal interaction compared to speakers who have a lower social status. The following is an utterance that shows that social status influences language choice.

(61) Context: Conversation between P1 (Male, Ojek Driver, 40 years old), P2 (Male, Ojek Driver, 38 years old), and P3 (Male, Merchant, 60 years old) in a relaxed situation in the domain association (P1 encourages P2 and P3 comes to give advice).

P1: "*Ah da sia mah goblog!*"

(Oh, you idiot!)

P2: "*Punten atuh, A.*"

(Sorry, bro.)

P1: "*Ah teuing anjing!*"

(Oh, I don't know, dogs!)

P3: "*Eh teh kenging kitu cariosan teh! Awon ah.*"

(Oh, you can't say that! That's not appropriate.)

P1: "*Aduh, punten Pak Haji. Manawi teh teu aya Pak Haji*"

(Oops, I'm sorry Mr. Haji. I didn't know that you (Mr. Haji) are here.)

In the speech above, P1 is angry with P2. This can be seen in the expression of P1 to P2: *Ah, da sia mah goblog!* This happens because P1 considers that his social status is higher than P2. However, after being reminded by P3, P1 changed his language to more polite Sundanese "*Aduh, punten Pa Haji. Manawi teh teu aya Pa Haji*". This happens because P1 feels that P3's social status is higher than him.

3.1.2.2. Familiarity Level

The next factor that influences the occurrence of language choice is the level of intimacy between the speaker and the speech partner. If the speaker and the interlocutor are open to each other and there is no social distance, it can be said that the speaker and the interlocutor are very close. Usually, the code used is familiar code. The discourse below is an example which shows that the level of intimacy between the speaker and the speech partner influences the choice of language.

(62) Context: Conversation between P1 (Male, Trader, 21 years) and P2 (Male, Employee, 21 years) (P1 and P2 shake hands)

P1: "*Eh, si anjing karek panggih deui.*"

(Uh, the dog just met again.)

P2: "*Atuh pan urang nyiapkeun heula jang kawin.*"

(I'm getting ready for marriage.)

P1: "*Jadi oge geuning.*"

(So, it also turned out.)

In the context of the TMSR speech community, the word *anjing* is used as a greeting to friends who are already very close. As in the speech above, P2 does not feel offended when P1 greets him with the word *anjing*. The choice of this code makes it more familiar between speakers. However, this choice of code can only be used by people who are familiar, if used by people who are

not familiar, it will be seen as disrespectful and will be considered harassing the speech partner.

3.1.3. Third Speaker

The presence of the third speech participant will affect the choice of language. For example, when a Sundanese speaker and speech partner initially choose a Sundanese language code for verbal interaction, then a third speech participant who is not fluent in Sundanese arrives, the speaker and speech partner will change it to Indonesian code as a neutral language so that they can avoid language conflicts. Below is an utterance that shows the presence of a third speech participant who makes a change in the language code.

(64) Context: Conversations between P1 (Female, Trader, 30 years old), P2 (Male, Trader, 35 years old), and P3 (Male, Agent, 36 years old) in a relaxed situation in the work domain (P1 indicates bill to P2) (P2 embraces P3).

P1: "*Pa, ka Taninci teh tos lunas.*"

(Sir, to Taninci has been paid off.)

P2: "*Ari ka Mbak Eva kumaha?*"

(How about Mbak Eva?)

P1: "*Paling enjing, da ayeuna mah kanggo mayar mie Fitri heula.*"

(At least tomorrow, now pay for Fitri's noodles first.)

P2: "*Eh baru diomongin, Mas.*"

(Eh, just said, Mas.)

P3: "*Panjang umur dong.*"

(Long live.)

The above statement shows that the presence of the third speech participant can change the choice of language. In the speech above, P1 (wife) and P2 (husband) who initially used Sundanese code to communicate chose Indonesian language code when P3 arrived. This is usually called code switching, which is changing the Sundanese code into the Indonesian code.

3.1.4. Speech Situation

In language choice, speech is one of the factors that influence language choice. Based on the observations, it is known that the speech situation in TMSR is a relaxed situation both in the family, work, and social domains. Every speech event that occurs in TMSR both in the family, work, and social domains occur in a relaxed situation. The language code chosen for the family domain is Sundanese, Indonesian, and Javanese. Meanwhile, the chosen language code is in the domain of work and association, namely Sundanese and Indonesian.

3.1.5. Speech Purpose

Wijana (1997) explains that speech forms can be expressed to state the purpose of speech. So, the speaker consciously has a speech goal when he utters an utterance. The purpose of speech will be achieved if what the speaker wants is achieved. Based on the observations, it is seen that the speech contained in TMSR has two functions, namely representative speech and directive speech. Representative speech is a speech that has a function to ask the speech partner to mention, show, or state something. The discourse below is an example that shows the presence of representative speech in TMSR.

(43) Context: Conversation between P1 (Male, Trader, 30 years) and P2 (Male, Buyer, 30 years) in a relaxed situation in the work domain at TMSR (P2 picks vegetables and P1 puts them in a plastic bag).

P1: "*Mangga, bade meser naon, A?*"

(Please, what do you want to buy, bro?)

P2: "*Wortel satengah kilo, kentang satengah kilo, bumbu kari tilu bungkus.*"

(Half a pound of carrots, half a pound of potatoes, three pounds of curry seasoning.)

The discourse above shows that there is a representative speech in TMSR. In the speech above P1 (trader) said "*Mangga, bade meser naon, A?*", which intends to ask P2 (buyer) to mention what he wants to buy. Then P2 responds by mentioning what he wants to buy carrots, potatoes, and kari's spices. This can be seen in the utterances "*Wortel satengah kilo, kentang satengah kilo, bumbu kari tilu bungkus*".

Meanwhile, directive speech is an utterance that asks the hearer to do what the speaker says. This directive utterance is usually intended to force, ask, order, plead, invite, and command. Below is a conversation that shows the directive speech in TMSR.

(01) Context: Conversation between P1 (Female, Kiosk Owner, 30 years old) and P2 (Male, Employee, 22 years old) asking for help to deliver goods (while pointing at the goods in question).

P1: "*Ri, itu anterin barang ke Pak Didin!*"

(Ri, that's delivering goods to Mr. Didin!)

P2: "*Iya, Ci*"

(Yes, Ci.)

P1: "*Tah ieu bonna, tadi geus dibayar da.*"

(Here's the bill, it's already been paid.)

P2: "*siap*"

(Ready.)

The conversation above shows that there is a directive utterance in TMSR. In the speech, P1 (the owner of the kiosk) said "*Ri, itu anterin barang ke Pak Didin!*" intended to ask P2 (employee) to deliver goods to customers.

3.2 Speech Points

The speech points are one of the factors that cause the choice of language. This utterance refers to the main topic discussed by the speech participants. Usually, the subject of this speech is related to the selection of terms or expressions that are in accordance with the subject of the speech. Based on the observations, there are main speeches contained in TMSR, namely the subject of buying and selling and the subject of traditional speech. Below is a conversation with the Sundanese code which shows the existence of the subject of buying and selling.

(22) Context: Conversation between P1 (Male, Trader, 40 years old, P1) and P2 (Female, Shopper, 45 years old, P1) in a relaxed situation in the work domain (P2 browses the store and P1 picks up a book that intended).

P1: "*Peryogi naon, Bu?*"

(What do you need, ma'am?)

P2: "*Peryogi buku tulis kanggo murangkalih*"

(Need a notebook for children.)

P1: "*Mangga, bade nu mana?*"

(Please, which one do you want?)

P2: "*Sidu nu 58 lembar.*"

(Sidu which is 58 sheets.)

The choice of code in the form of buying and selling terms can be seen in the speech above. The terms *peryogi*, *buku*, *nu mana*, and *sidu* are terms of buying and selling used in the subject matter of buying and selling above. In addition to the selection of the Sundanese code, there is also the selection of an Indonesian language code in the form of buying and selling terms at TMSR.

In addition to the subject of buying and selling, the TMSR speech community is also familiar with the traditional subject matter. The main traditional speech found in TMSR, namely traditional expressions. Danandjaja (1982) explains that traditional expressions are a form of oral folklore that grows and develops from generation to generation through oral traditions in traditional community life. Below are the traditional utterances found in TMSR.

(63) Context: Conversation between P1 (Female, Student, 19 years old) saying goodbye to P2 (Male, Trader, 48 years old) (P1 kissing P2's hand).

P1: "*Pa, abdi bade ka kosan*"

(Dad, I'm going to the boarding house.)

P2: "*Kade sing ati-ati! Kudu bisa mihapekeun maneh!*"

(Be careful! You must be able to behave!)

In the speech above, the expression must be able to "*mihapekeun maneh!*" which is a traditional expression to describe that one must be able to take care of oneself in association. The choice of Sundanese is usually seen

as more appropriate in speech with a traditional subject matter.

3.2. Speech Norms

One of the factors that indicate the existence of language choice is speech norms. This speech norm is related to language ethics. Poedjosoedarmo (1978) explains that the limits of speech norms are the rules of speech that affect the alternatives for choosing speech forms. In general, there are three basic norms in Sundanese social interaction. This is stated by Fasya (2009) that the three basic norms that form the basis of the Sundanese people are (1) *ngaragap hate batur* (tolerance), (2) *someah hade ka semah* (harmony), and (3) *handap asor (tazim)*. However, nowadays there has been a shift in social norms, especially in TMSR.

Based on the observations, the TMSR speech community applies speech norms when interacting verbally with new people, while when communicating with people who have been known for a long time, speech norms are not applied too much. Below is an utterance that shows the application of speech norms to people who have just met.

(22) Context: Conversation between P1 (Male, Trader, 40 years old, P1) and P2 (Female, Shopper, 45 years old, P1) in a relaxed situation in the work domain (P2 browses the store and P1 picks up a book that intended).

P1: "Peryogi naon, Bu?"

(What do you need, ma'am?)

P2: "Peryogi buku tulis kanggo murangkalih"

(Need a notebook for children.)

P1: "Mangga, bade nu mana?"

(Please, which one do you want?)

P2: "Sidu nu 58 lembar."

(Sidu which is 58 sheets.)

The above utterance shows the existence of speech norms. In the speech above, there is a choice of fine Sundanese vocabulary that is used to communicate with new people. Below is an utterance that shows that there is a shift in speech norms in TMSR.

(10) Context: Conversation between P1 (Male, 55 years old, SMA, Trader) and P2 (Male, 30 years old, Junior High School, Trader) in a relaxed situation in the family domain (P2 while packing his merchandise).

P1: "Iyan, ka si mamah isukan urang ka Purwakarta!"

(Iyan, Mom, tomorrow we are going to Purwakarta!)

P2: "Heeh ke urang bejakeun. Jam sabaraha, Mang?"

(Yes, I'll tell you later. What time, sir?)

P1: "Jam salapan we, da Mang dagang heula pan."

(It's only nine o'clock because uncle trades first.)

In the speech above, there is a shift in speech norms because the language chosen in the speech is familiar speech. Even though P1 (uncle) is older than P2 (nephew), P2 still chooses the familiar Sundanese code. This happens because of a shift in speech norms in the selection of speech levels. The level of smooth speech that is usually used for older speech partners, is now starting to experience a shift.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, the situation of the TMSR speech community in this study is bilingual or multilingual society that is characterized by the choice of Sundanese, Javanese, and Indonesian. The three languages were chosen in the domains of family, work, and association by considering various sociocultural factors that play a role in language choice. Thus, the TMSR speech community can manage these diverse linguistic situations well so that potential problems, such as social, cultural, and situational problems, can be muted and controlled.

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