



Integration of Language Variations in Indonesian Language Learning at High School (SMA) in Bulukumba District

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Abstract. This study aims to describe the integration of language variation in Indonesian language learning at high school level (SMA) in Bulukumba District. The focus of the study is on how teachers utilize language varieties, including spoken and written forms, as well as local dialects, in the teaching and learning process. This research employs a qualitative approach with data collection techniques consisting of observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that language variation constitutes an essential element in Indonesian language learning, as it enriches students' understanding of language functions within social and cultural contexts. Furthermore, the integration of language variation serves as a means of fostering positive attitudes toward local languages while simultaneously strengthening students' linguistic identity. Thus, the integration of language variation in Indonesian language learning at senior high schools in Bulukumba Regency not only supports the development of communicative competence but also reinforces local wisdom values that are relevant to the implementation of a culture-based curriculum.

Keywords: language variation, Indonesian language learning, senior high school, Bulukumba, language integration

1 Introduction

Language is the foundation of human civilization and a key pillar supporting national identity. In Indonesia, an archipelagic nation rich in ethnic and cultural diversity, the role of language is crucial. Indonesian, designated as the unifying language, is not merely a means of communication, but a concrete manifestation of the spirit of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). It functions as a bridge connecting more than 1,300 ethnic groups and hundreds of regional languages. Therefore, the success of the Indonesian nation in building unity is inseparable from the central role of Indonesian as a symbol of unity that unites a multicultural society under a shared linguistic framework. This national linguistic background is specifically reflected in Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi. This region has unique linguistic characteristics, where In-

Indonesian is spoken alongside Konjo and the Bugis Bulukumba dialect. These local languages and variations are vibrant and used intensively in social interactions, within families, and even in public spaces. This reality creates a complex linguistic dynamic, where students at every school level arrive with diverse linguistic backgrounds, bringing variations of their mother tongues into the learning environment.

Despite this linguistic richness, the formal education system, particularly in Indonesian language learning, often neglects it. Curricula and teaching practices tend to emphasize the strict use of standard Indonesian, often marginalizing or even prohibiting the use of local language variations. This monolithic approach creates a stark dichotomy between the language taught in schools and the language students use at home and in their communities. As a result, language learning becomes disconnected from their lived realities, leading to difficulties in understanding concepts and even stigmatizing their own language variations.

Furthermore, in initial observations in the field, it was found that there was an overlap between the use of local (regional) languages and Indonesian in the school environment, especially during the learning process, which should require the use of standard (official) language, but in reality there are still several schools that use local (regional) languages in the learning process.

This phenomenon highlights a fundamental challenge: how can Indonesian language education be relevant and effective in a region like Bulukumba Regency without eroding local identity? This dissertation argues that the solution lies in integrating language variations into Indonesian language learning at every school level. Therefore, this research aims to formulate a language planning framework and curriculum that can serve as a role model for strengthening national identity, starting with the recognition and appreciation of students' local linguistic identities.

To address this issue, a systematic approach is needed, namely language planning. Language planning is a conscious and organized effort to influence the function, structure, and acquisition of language. In the educational context, language planning focuses not only on standardization but also on the most effective linguistic choices and strategies to achieve national goals, including strengthening identity. This dissertation will examine how language planning can be implemented at the macro (national) and micro (local) levels.

The integration of language variations into the Indonesian language curriculum is not an attempt to "mix" languages, but rather to make learning more meaningful, contextual, and authentic. By using local language variations as a starting point, teachers can more easily explain concepts in Indonesian grammar, morphology, and semantics. For example, comparing sentence structures between Konjo and standard Indonesian can be an effective method for strengthening grammatical understanding.

Thus, the research on the integration of language variations in Indonesian language learning at the senior high school (SMA) level in Bulukumba Regency aims to examine in more depth how the status and use of language variations (Konjo Language and Bugis Bulukumba dialect) among students at the senior high school (SMA) level in Bulukumba Regency? This study is expected to describe the status and use of language variations (Konjo Language and Bugis Bulukumba dialect) among students at the senior high school level in Bulukumba Regency.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Language Variation and Language Vitality

Language variation refers to differences in language use caused by social, geographic, or situational factors (Fasold, 1984). In the context of this research, the language variations focused on are the Konjo language and the Bugis dialect of Bulukumba. The theory of language vitality (Giles et al., 1977) is relevant for analyzing the extent to which these local languages are still used and continued by the community, especially among students. Language vitality is influenced by three main factors: status, demographics, and institutional support. This study will measure the vitality of local languages in Bulukumba by identifying the frequency of use (demographics) and support from educational institutions (curriculum and language planning).

2.2 Code-Switching and Code-Mixing

The phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing frequently occur in bilingual or multilingual communities, including in school environments. Code-switching is the shift from one language to another in conversation (Gumperz, 1982), while code-mixing is the use of elements (words or phrases) from another language within a single sentence. Code-switching and code-mixing, practiced by students and teachers, are natural indications of interaction between Indonesian and local languages. This phenomenon is not seen as a threat, but rather as a bridge indicating positive dynamics in the learning process.

2.3 Language Planning Theory

Language planning is the process of deliberate decision-making about how a language will be used, learned, or taught (Spolsky, 2004). This theory is relevant for analyzing how language policies at the national and regional levels influence practices in schools. Language planning encompasses two main aspects: language status planning (determining the status of a language) and language corpus planning (standardization and development of the language). In the context of this research, the focus is on how language planning in Bulukumba Regency affects the status of the Konjo language and the Bugis dialect of Bulukumba in the educational curriculum.

3 Research Method

This type of research is a field study. Field research is a type of research conducted directly in the location or natural environment where the phenomenon being studied occurs. The goal is to collect data from primary sources. This study used a qualitative approach with participant observation, in-depth interviews, and conversation recordings. Data were collected from high school students in Bulukumba Regency. Data were analyzed using three stages: 1) Data Reduction: Selecting, focusing, simplifying, and

abstracting raw data. Reading interview transcripts and observation notes, then selecting information relevant to your research problem (curriculum implementation and language planning). 2) Data Presentation: Organizing and arranging the reduced data into a systematic form, such as a matrix, table, or chart. This will help identify patterns and themes. 3) Conclusion Drawing (Verification): Drawing conclusions from the patterns and themes discovered. These conclusions will answer the research problem in depth, such as how teachers integrate language and how policies are implemented in the field.

4 Research Results and Discussion

4.1 Research Results

The results show that both the Konjo language and the Bugis Bulukumba dialect still maintain functional status as living regional languages and are used in informal communication within the family and community. Indonesian is used in learning, but some schools integrate variations of the language, both dialects and code-mixing.

[1] Variation Based on Speaker (Dialect and Idiolect): Teachers and students frequently use the local Bugis-Makassar dialect in classroom interactions, especially when explaining concepts that students find difficult to understand. The use of this dialect helps clarify meaning and builds emotional closeness between teachers and students.

Data 7 (Context of Conversation between teachers and students at the beginning of the lesson):

Iw : "Saya absen dulu di"

(Iw: "I'll check in first.")

Sw : "Iye ibu"

(Sw: "Yes, ma'am.")

Iw : "Resky Ardiansya"

(Iw: "Resky Ardiansya.")

Sw : "Tidak ditau ki kenapai ibu"

(Sw: "I don't know why, ma'am.")

Iw : "Jadi di alfa mi ini?"

(Iw: "So, at Alfa?")

Sw : "Iye ibu"

(Sw: "Yes, ma'am.")

This conversation clearly uses the Bugis Bulukumba dialect, characterized by distinctive particles such as "*ki*," "*mi*," and "*di*," as well as the use of the word "*ie*" as a polite affirmation. This dialect exhibits a local politeness system, phonological patterns, and code mixing. Idiolect: the personal speech styles of teachers and students that reflect differences in social roles (teacher-student), educational levels, and local customs for polite interaction.

Data 6 (Context of Conversation between teacher and student at the start of the lesson):

Iw: "Dimana "ki" itu yang dua orang?"

(Iw: where are those two people?)

Sw: "Tidak "ktau ki" ibu"

(Sw: *"I don't know, ma'am."*)

This conversation clearly uses the Bugis Bulukumba dialect, marked by distinctive particles such as "ki." The idiolect displays a mixture of formal and local idiolects, demonstrating social roles and adaptations in communication.

[2] Situational Variation (Formal and Informal): In formal activities, exams, scientific discussions, and presentations, teachers and students use formal language styles appropriate to the academic context. However, in group discussions or casual activities, informal styles are used to maintain communication dynamics.

Data 9 (Context of conversation after explaining the material to students to assess their speaking skills):

Guru: Saya minta kalian untuk diambil nilai keterampilan berbicaranya.

(Teacher: I'm asking you to assess your speaking skills.)

This conversation clearly demonstrates the formal language style used in formal situations, demonstrating the teacher's social role as an educator and the function of language as a means of conveying academic instruction.

[3] Field-Based Variations (Scientific and Everyday Language): Teachers strive to connect scientific language in teaching materials, such as in writing expository texts or reports, with students' everyday language to make learning feel contextual.

Data 11 (Context during speaking practice):

Guru: Kalau bicara membawa buku, namanya bukan bicara tetapi membaca, keterampilannya berbicara to?

(Teacher: If you're talking about carrying a book, it's not talking, but reading. Is that a speaking skill?)

This conversation is clearly a mixture of these two styles, demonstrating the teacher's ability to adapt the language style to the learning context so that it remains scientific but easy for students to understand.

4.2 Discussion

Research findings indicate that the use of language variations in high schools in Bulukumba Regency is strongly influenced by the speakers' social and cultural backgrounds, particularly in the form of the Bugis Bulukumba dialect and individual idiolects. Teachers and students frequently use the local Bugis-Makassar dialect in classroom interactions, particularly when explaining concepts students find difficult. This dialect serves to clarify the meaning of messages, build emotional closeness, and maintain local linguistic identity amidst the dominance of Indonesian as the primary language of instruction.

Language use in the educational context of high schools in Bulukumba Regency is also influenced by the speech situation, namely whether the interaction takes place in a formal or informal context. In formal activities such as exams, scientific discussions, and presentations, teachers and students tend to use formal language that conforms to academic norms and standard grammar. Conversely, in group discussions, casual conversations, or interactions outside of class, informal language is used to maintain communication dynamics and familiarity.

In addition to variations based on speakers and situations, research also shows language variations based on the field of use, particularly between scientific and everyday languages. Teachers strive to integrate scientific terms or styles of language found in

teaching materials with everyday language that is easier for students to understand. This strategy aims to make the learning process more contextual, communicative, and relaxed.

Overall, this discussion shows that the Konjo language and the Bugis dialect of Bulukumba still have a strong functional status and social role among high school students in Bulukumba Regency. Although Indonesian is the primary language of instruction, the use of regional dialects persists in daily interactions, both as a means of clarifying meaning, strengthening social solidarity, and refining communication.

The language variations that emerge, both in terms of speakers (dialects and idiolects), situations (formal and informal), and fields (scientific and everyday), reflect a balance between preserving regional languages and the function of Indonesian as a national language. This indicates that the Bulukumba community, particularly among students, still maintains local linguistic and cultural values through everyday language practices in the school environment.

5 Conclusion

The Konjo language and the Bugis dialect of Bulukumba still maintain strong functional status as living regional languages and are actively used by both teachers and students. Both regional languages serve as communication tools in informal contexts, strengthen local cultural identity, and foster emotional closeness between speakers. Although Indonesian remains the primary and official language of instruction, regional dialects still exist and play a vital role in supporting smooth communication in schools.

Overall, this demonstrates a balance between preserving regional languages and using Indonesian as the national language. The Bulukumba community, particularly high school students, continues to maintain local linguistic and cultural values through daily language practices at school. This indicates that local identity remains intact amidst the tide of modernization and the dominance of the national language.

The integration of language variations serves as a means to foster positive attitudes toward regional languages while strengthening students' linguistic identity. Thus, the integration of language variations in Indonesian language learning in high schools throughout Bulukumba Regency not only supports the achievement of communicative competence but also strengthens local wisdom values relevant to the development of a culture-based curriculum.

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