

# Multilingualism in Cikoneng, Anyer, Serang, Banten, Indonesia

Raden Gunawan

*Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University*

*Serang, Banten, Indonesia*

radengunawan59@yahoo.com

**Abstract** - Many researches on multilingualism had been conducted and could be found in sociolinguistics books and journals. However, most of the researches involved not more than two languages that were used and spoken in certain communities. Researches that involved three languages (trilingualism) and four languages (quadlingualism) or more were still rarely found in the sociolinguistic literatures. In Anyer, Serang, in the Province of Banten, Indonesia, there is a village called Cikoneng. In this village, the native inhabitants, as it was said, could equally fluently speak four languages. There was no as yet evidence that showed that such a multilingualism really existed in Cikoneng. This study was very much focused on finding out whether or not Cikoneng's people were quadlingual. In other words, one of intriguing questions was: "Does multilingualism or quadlingualism in fact exist in Cikoneng?" Applying a phenomenological qualitative approach, the study was performed by using observation, interview, and document study techniques. The data and information obtained were qualitatively analyzed and summarized to draw conclusions and suggestions. It appears that the multilingualism or quadlingualism is really there in Cikoneng. The villagers can equally fluently speak four languages, that is, Lampungnese as their mother tongue, Indonesian as the National Language, and Sundanese and Javanese used and spoken with their neighboring villagers. This study can be considered a preliminary study for further reseaches on the multilingualism phenomenon in Cikoneng, Anyer, Serang, Banten of Indonesia.

**Index Terms** - *Multilingualism, quadlingualism, further researches.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Researches on multilingualism (including code switching and mixing) that involve various kinds of languages and dialects all over the world have been frequently made. However, most of the researches looked into not more than two languages used by certain communities. Code switching and mixing in a bilingual community. In other words, they talked about bilingualism only [6][3][1][13][15].

One research paper that reported code switching in a trilingual community was of [2]. He observed code switching among Kenyans in Upstate New York, USA. The focus of his study was on the first generation Kenyans in the US who were trilingual in Swahili, English, and Ekegusii. Trilingualism respectively in Canada and India. Other than the above three researchers' works, other research findings on the code switching and mixing in trilingual communities have not been found. An extent literature survey has to be carried out in

order to find research reports on trilingualism, quadlingualism, and other multilingualisms [7][12].

With regard to the multilingualism, that is, the ability to speak more than two languages, there was a multilingual people who live in Cokoneng, Anyer, Banten, Indonesia. The uniqueness of the Cikoneng people was that not only did they speak two languages but they could equally fluently speak four languages, that is, Lampungnese, Banten Javanese, Banten Sundanese, and Indonesian. Even, it could be predicted, some of highly-educated people of the village could speak English and Arabic as a foreign language. Thus, not only were they expected to be quadlingual but some of them might also be pentalingual and even hexlingual. Quadlingual, pentalingual, and hexlingual are in fact three words that are rarely found in sociolinguistic books and journals.

It seems, then, observing such multilingualism might be of importance. One might be so wondering if it is real that Cikoneng villagers can speak more that two languages. How many languages can they fluently speak? What languages? How do they use those languages in their daily life? Those are questions that might appear in one's mind. In terms of sociolinguistics, other more academic questions might be raised such as how code switching occur in a multilingual community in Cikoneng, how the villagers interact among themselves internally, and how they interact with the outsiders, and many other formal questions. As a matter of fact, an in-depth study needs to be carried out in ordr to answer such kinds of questions above.

As a preliminary study, the focus will be on answering whether or not the multilingualism, specifically quadlingualism, really exists in the village Cikoneng, Anyer, Banten, Indonesia. If it does, a further study needs to be conducted in order to uncover some unanswered questions.

## II. SUPPORTING THEORIES

### A. Speech Community

In a very simple way, sociolinguistics is defined as the study that is concerned with the language use within or among groups of speakers. The groups of speakers that sociolinguists have generally attempted to look at is called speech community. What is speech community? In his book "An Introduction to Sociolinguistics", [16] tried to explain about speech community. as cited by Wardhaugh defined a "real" speech community as "all the people who use a given

language (or dialect).” as quoted by Wardhaugh, tended to use the term “linguistic community” rather than “speech community”. He proceeded to define that term as follows:

*a social group which may be either monolingual or multilingual, held together by frequency of social interaction patterns and set off from the surrounding areas by weaknesses in the line of communication. Linguistic communities may consist of small groups bound together by face-to-face contact or may cover large regions, depending on the level of abstraction we wish to achieve.*

Indonesia, with more than 500 ethnic groups, cultures, and dialects, is in fact a multilingual community. Most of the Indonesian people can speak more than one language. Local language that is used by certain ethnic group such as Javanese, Sundanese, Lampungnese, Ambonese is as mother tongue and Bahasa Indonesia or Indonesia language as the second language. Most Indonesian, then, speak at least two languages. In certain region like Cikoneng in the Province of Banten, Indonesia, the people, as it was said, spoke equally fluently four languages (Lampungnese, Banten Sundanese, Banten Javenese, and Bahasa Indonesia). Even, some of them who were highly-educated could speak English and Arabic as well.

This phenomenon can be seen in the interaction within or among community in a certain region in Indonesia. They predominantly use their local language as their media of communication beside Bahasa Indonesia or mix their own local language with Bahasa Indonesia. This reality has been enabling the existence of bilingualism and multilingualism, that is, the ability to speak two or more languages.

#### B. Multilingualism

Simply put, multilingualism is the ability to use more than two languages. Accordingly, multilingualism includes trilingualism, quadlingualism, pentalingualism, and so forth. Existence of multilingualism in certain parts of the world [16]. An example of multilingualism, as noted by Wardhaugh citing exists among the Tukano of the North-West Amazon, on the border between Colombia and Brazil. *“The Tukano are a multilingual people because men must marry outside their language groups; that is, no man may have a wife who speak his language, for that kind of marriage relationship is not permitted and would be viewed as a kind of incest. Men choose the women they marry from various neighboring tribes who speak other languages. Furthermore, on marriage, women move into the men’s households or longhouses ... Multilingualism is taken for granted, and moving from one language to another in the course of a single conversation is very common...”* [16]

Moreover, Wardhaugh took Singapore when he gave an example of multilingualism and code switching. In a multilingual country like Singapore, he began to describe, the

ability to shift from one language to another is accepted as quite normal. Singapore has four official languages: English, the Mandarin variety of Chinese, Tamil, and Malay, which is also the national language. The language of government employment, he added, will be Standard Singapore English but some Mandarin will be used from time to time; however, shopping will be carried out in Hokkien, Singlish, and the ‘bazaar’ variety of Malay used throughout the region.

#### C. Methods and Instrument

On the basis of scope, purpose of research, and nature of subject that have been described in the Introduction, in this study, it might be acceptable that a phenomenological qualitative approach will be used. This approach had been supported by data collecting methods that comprises literature survey, observation, and interview.

Above all, the most important factor in the phenomenological qualitative study is the researcher himself as human instrument of research. Characteristics that uniquely qualify the human as the instrument of choice. These are as (1) **Responsiveness**, (2) **Adaptability**, (3) **Holistic emphasis**, (4) **Knowledge base expansion**, (5) **Processual Immediacy**, (6) **Opportunities for clarification and summarization**, and (7) **Opportunity to explore atypical and idiosyncratic responses** [8].

#### D. Findings and Discussion

Cikoneng is located in Anyer, a subdistrict of Serang, Banten Province, Indonesia. It was about 120 km to the west of Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. It takes about two hours from Jakarta by car. Cikoneng with the population of about 3500 people has the following borders: on the west is Sunda Strait, on the east is Tanjung Manis, on the north is Anyer, and on the south is Tambang Ayam.

The existence of Lampungnese speaking people in Cikoneng cannot be separated from the fact that there had been being a close relationship between the two regions long before the Dutch came to Indonesia in 1596. Not only the relationship was tied on the basis of common interests, that is, trade relationship and defense against external threats, but also it was related to the mission of spreading Islam teachings in Java and Sumatera. And more than that, the relationship was well-tied because of the brotherhood relationship between the leaders of the two regions [5].

### III. NOTES AND DISCUSSION

#### NOTE 1

Participants/Interviewees: 2 persons (Mr. and Mrs. UP)

Place: Mr. UP’s family house at Cikoneng

Time: 13.00 -14.00, 9 April 25, 2017

#### Activity: Interview & Observation

Based on Note 1 (NB: all the notes – from 1 to 5 – are not included in this report), the information was that the first language acquired by children was Lampungnese, the language spoken by their parents. In other words, Lampungnese was as the mother tongue of the native villagers. The respondent's statement that "at village Cikoneng the first language children learn and practise is Lampungnese. This is because Lampungnese is used at home" and "Even our children can speak Lampungnese more fluently than their father does" could be used in supporting the above-mentioned conclusion.

#### NOTE 2

Participants/Interviewees: 4 persons (Mr. N, Mr. HB, Mr. M and Mr HAM)

Place: Office of Village Chief, Cikoneng

Time: 9.30 – 12.00 AM, April 25, 2017

Activity: Interview & Observation

Information obtained from the respondents, as detailed in Note 2, could be summarized as follows:

- (i) The first respondent (Mr. HB) admitted that he himself was quadlingualism as he said, "I speak four languages, Indonesian, Lampungnese, Sundanese, and Javanese." "If he or she admitted that he or she is native Cikoneng villager but he or she can not speak four languages, he or she is not really Cikoneng villager," he added.
- (ii) The second respondent (Mr. N) naturally showed the evidence that quadlingualism does exist in Cikoneng. This was shown from the fact he could switch from one language to another without any obstacle.
- (iii) The third and fourth respondent (Mr. M and Mr. HAM) justified the fact as mentioned in (i) and (ii) above.

Based on the above information, it could be said that in Cikoneng, Banten of Indonesia, multilingualism or quadlingualism does exist. Not only could the natives speak two languages – Lampungnese and Indonesian – but they could also speak Sundanese and Javanese. They were in fact quadlingual people.

#### NOTE 3

Participant/Interviewee: 1 person (A villager at the mosque)

Place: Masjid Assyauroh Salatuhur, Cikoneng

Time: 12.00- 12.15 PM, April 25, 2017

Activity: Interview & Observation

The substance of Note 3 was in agreement with the previously mentioned information, that is, the first is that Lampungnese is as the first language in Cikoneng, and the second is that multilingualism is really there. This is shown by the fact, in responding the researcher's inquiry, that the respondent clearly said, "Yes, sure. Only in formal context we the natives use Indonesian. But in our daily conversation among the natives we always speak Lampungnese." "We speak Sundanese dan Javanese when we are dealing and interacting with our neighboring villages," he continued.

#### NOTE 4

Participants/Interviewees: 6 persons (Mr. IP and 5 students)

Place: SMAN (Senior High School) One , Anyer.

Time: 9.00 – 11.00 AM, April 27, 2017

Activity: Interview & Observation

The facts observed as described in detail in Note 4 simply show as well that (1) Lampungnese is as the mother tongue of the people and (2) quadlingualism really exists in Cikoneng. Again, this conclusion is in accordance with the phenomena as described in Note 1, 2, and 3.

#### NOTE 5

Participants/Interviewees: 3 persons (Ms. RA, Ms. MG and Mr. F)

Place: The Village Chief's office

Time: 9.00 – 10.00 AM, May 2, 2017

Activity: Interview & Observation

Once again, in brief, the essence of Note 5 suggests that native inhabitants of Cikoneng are multilingual. They are able to use and equally fluently speak four languages. Also, this conclusion is in support of all the above-mentioned conclusions.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Researches on multilingualism that involve various kinds of languages and dialects all over the world have been frequently reported. However, most of the researches tried to observe not more than two languages used and spoken in certain societies. Whilst, research papers that reported trilingual communities were still a few [6][1][13][3][15][2][7][12].

Studies on multilingualism or quadlingualism were reported by [16]. Multilingualism in the Tukano community in North-West Amazon. Wardhaugh also mentioned an example of multilingualism in Singapore in which people spoke four languages: English, Mandarin, Tamil, and Malay.

With regard to the multilingualism, that is, the ability to speak more than two languages, there was, as it was said, a multilingual people who lived in Cikoneng, Anyer, Banten, Indonesia. The uniqueness of the Cikoneng people, it was said, was that not only did they speak two languages but they could equally fluently speak four languages, that is, Lampungnese, Javanese, Sundanese, and surely Indonesian. Accordingly, the main question is “Does multilingualism or more specifically quadlingualism really exist in Cikoneng?” As an attempt to answer the question, a preliminary study was conducted.

Based on the observation and interview that had been conducted, it could be concluded that multilingualism does exist in Cikoneng. The Cikoneng people can use and equally fluently speak four languages: Lampungnese, Indonesian, Sundanese, and Javanese. They are in fact quadlingual. Since this report is merely as a preliminary study, a further research needs to be carried out in order to obtain more convincing answers to some more intriguing questions.

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