



Does learning in mother tongue matter? Analysis of the Use of Kutai Language in Elementary Schools Learning

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Abstract- This study aims to describe the use of the Kutai Tenggarong language in elementary schools in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, East Kalimantan. This scientific study using descriptive qualitative research. Data collected from three sources: field information, learning activities in elementary schools, and supporting documents. The results of field research indicate that the Kutai Tenggarong language is still dominant in the learning process in elementary schools in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The factors that influence include (1) there is no balance of formal language in the learning process in the classroom, (2) the habits of class teachers who often speak Kutai Tenggarong, and (3) the Kutai Tenggarong language, which attracts students' attention. The use of their mother tongue has an impact on their understanding of the formal language or Indonesian, which they should have known since elementary school.

Keywords: Mother tongue, Kutai language, elementary school

I. INTRODUCTION

Today, language is becoming a career determinant in modern human life, especially in communication. (Dos Santos, 2020; Zorina et al., 2018). The use of language is also central to success in direct communication in the teaching and learning process of students in the classroom. (Johnson & Tweedie, 2017; Lin et al., 2017). Starting from its origins, learning a language helps students develop an awareness of themselves and their culture (Yan et al., 2010). More than that, the language will encourage students to be able to express their opinions, estimates, and feelings of their soul, as well as to participate in the sphere of social interaction. (Bontinck et al., 2018; Cinganotto & Cuccurullo, 2019; Perez, 2018).

The learning process in the classroom shows communication patterns in a multilingual society. (Ohoiwutun, 2002). If we consider each variety representing a language itself, the essential function of that language can be seen in the learning process. Moreover, language learning is contained in the curriculum. The curriculum places Indonesian as a bridge between subjects in the field or at school. Many studies have been conducted to measure language use in several countries. (Ariffin & Husin, 2011; Azizi, 2011; Jegede, 2012; Malone & Paraide, 2011). In general, local languages or mother tongue dramatically affect students' pronunciation or speech at school. (Piper et al., 2018). It is closely related to language skills, which are still limited, especially for children who are in elementary school.

Some factors influence the phenomenon of language that is pronounced or spoken by students in the learning process. These factors can be seen from internal aspects, from students, and external aspects, from the classroom teacher and the environment. These two factors play a role and can influence language in the learning process at the elementary school level, especially in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. Kutai Tenggarong language dominates a center for arts and cultural destinations for the Kutai tribe, especially the Kutai Tenggarong tribe, Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, the use of language. It also happened in public elementary schools there. Kutai Tenggarong language is often pronounced and spoken during the learning process in elementary schools. The results of field observations and information from interviews with elementary school children in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency frequently and regularly use the Kutai Tenggarong language Indonesian. It is motivated by the fact that the Kutai Tenggarong language is the language of everyday society, especially for some class teachers and elementary school students. The two languages are often used interchangeably in learning situations and language contact in the classroom.

The use of the mother tongue significantly affects the situation around the community. (Hamdani, 2012; Muharam, 2011). The use of the first language or mother tongue, especially the Kutai Tenggarong tribe, is also quite dominant in elementary schools. It has been proven by Malone and Paraide (2011) in previous research they conducted and discussed the influence of first language or mother tongue in elementary schools. Suwito (1985) states that the introduction of language in an individual has occurred since the individual was born. These individuals have experienced language recognition, which is often called bilingual. The use of more than one language and is used interchangeably by individuals or speakers is called bilingualism. Bilingualism has a central role in the learning or teaching and learning process to achieve an effective and efficient final result. This interaction often occurs between classroom teachers and students in the learning or teaching process.

On the other hand, children in elementary schools in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, and Kutai Kartanegara Regency at the low-grade level still experience difficulties. It is because they still do not have much Indonesian vocabulary. It is motivated by the first language or the mother tongue, especially the Kutai Tenggarong tribe's language. The first language or mother tongue they have often heard or heard so far is the first or first understanding in language learning. Moreover, sometimes young or young students are used to hearing their mother's language before going to school. Thus making these students experience difficulties in communicating in good and correct Indonesian. Differences in Indonesian language skills expressed by students will trigger language mixing in the learning or teaching-learning process. For this reason, this study is intended to thoroughly describe the phenomenon of the use of pronunciation in elementary schools in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency by limiting the problem of Kutai Tenggarong as the first language or mother tongue.

II. METHOD

This research was conducted in public elementary schools located in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, Indonesia. As for the subjects in the study were students and class teachers in the lower classes. Meanwhile, the research object is to analyze the role of mastery of Indonesian with good abilities, both in terms of productive (writing and speaking) and receptive aspects (reading and listening). The schools selected were based on special considerations related to using the language of the Kutai Tenggarong tribe in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The research approach is descriptive qualitative and emphasizes notes on the results of observations in the field. It is done to describe the real situation and support the final data from Sutopo's research (2012). Thus this research can be used as a reference for similar research.

The data collected came from three research sources: information in the field, direct interviews, and other supporting documents. It is an effort to add data in technical content analysis. According to Holsti's opinion in Moleong (2017), some techniques can be used to make conclusions that are objective and systematically arranged and identify all specific characteristics of the message conveyed in every content analysis. The sampling technique regarding specific considerations is called purposive sampling.(Sugiyono, 2018).

The data were collected using participatory techniques, direct field observations, and research results. The sample data comes from research data sources and is directly related to the problem being observed. These data are then collected periodically by applying observation or observation in the field, analysis of existing documents, and detailed interviews. Overall data analysis used an interactive analysis method, which consists of three main components. The components are data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions from the data that has been studied. Based on all the data that has been obtained, the researcher develops a structured theory using contextual approaches, which are connected with other components.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kutai Kartanegara Regency's position is very strategic. It has been named the center of all culture of the Kutai tribe can be seen from the Mulawarman Museum's existence, which stands firmly. Besides, the Kutai Kartanegara Kedaton, which is owned by the Sultan of Kutai Kartanegara, adds to the cultural treasures in Kutai Kartanegara and triggers the phenomenon of the use of the Kutai language, especially Kutai Tenggarong. Research conducted by Saddhono and Rohmadi (2014) shows that most elementary schools have a strong culture as the background of their identity. It can also be seen from various other ethnicities, both from Indonesia and outside Indonesia.

A teacher usually uses the Kutai Tenggarong language in his conversations outside of school; meanwhile, Indonesian is generally used in reasonably formal situations such as subject teacher deliberation meetings. In the learning process, the classroom teacher uses the official language, namely Indonesian.

However, the lack of Indonesian vocabulary has resulted in the mixing between the Kutai Tenggarong and Indonesian languages, intentionally or unintentionally. This mixing is an effective way to provide understanding and information to students in lower grades and make it easier to communicate. This situation is called code-mixing and code-switching.

Public elementary schools in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency have a very thick and inherent culture. The original culture reflects the influence of the Kutai tribe culture, especially the Kutai Tenggarong, and is packaged in an informal language or the surrounding area's language. From this data, the classroom teacher has started the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

Speaker: the speaker is a lower-class classroom teacher with a bachelor's degree and has taught at a public primary school for several years.

Listener: listeners are students in the lower class who were taught by the teacher of that class in the same public elementary school located in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The class consists of male and female students. The majority of them are of Kutai Tenggarong ethnicity.

The speaker uses formal words but mixed with informal language, as happened in these public elementary schools' teaching and learning process. The speaker starts the teaching and learning process as the classroom teacher greets the students who have been present. Then, the class teacher asks about students who are unable to attend class by asking why. It is all done as a goal and an effort to arouse students' enthusiasm before starting learning and asking why students cannot attend class today.

These data show how the classroom teachers and students started the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In the initial activity, the teacher greeted "Good morning, all children" which was then continued to say greetings, namely *Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*. All students answered the greeting with *Wa'alaikumsalam warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*.

The recitation of greetings has become a tradition in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, and Indonesia in general, where the majority of Muslims are Muslims. It has also become a national greeting informal or official situations. It is also motivated by the existence of public elementary schools where the majority of students are Muslim.

After reading the greetings, the teacher asked questions about which students were not present. The class leader, as the class leader, replied that there were students who were not present. The student has permission to visit his grandfather's house. In the dialogue, the class leader speaks in the local language, namely Kutai Tenggarong, as he often hears from his mother at home, who uses the Kutai Tenggarong language. The class leader used the word "Datuk" which in Indonesian means "grandfather". The class teacher has also done code-mixing in the Kutai Tenggarong language. The class teacher used "nak" which in Indonesian means "child," to call the class leader as a courtesy and thanks for explaining the situation during the reading of the attendance list.

This situation shows that Kutai Tenggarong as the first language or the mother tongue is still often used by speakers, in this case, the class teacher and students, even though this happens informal situations. Kutai Tenggarong as a mother tongue is influenced by several factors that are quite dominant, both from speakers (class teachers) and listeners (students). (Saddhono & Rohmadi, 2014). There are many factors behind using the first language or the mother tongue (Kutai Tenggarong), pronounced by the classroom teacher and students in the teaching and learning process. The teacher must balance the language skills possessed by students so that these students can understand all the information conveyed by the class teacher (Paker & Karaağaç, 2015). On the other hand, classroom teachers must understand that students' skills in Indonesian are still low, so that class teachers must do language mixing or code-mixing, from Indonesian to Kutai Tenggarong.

Many students do not understand the class teacher's formal language, so it will make students passive. It then encourages teachers to switch to the Kutai Tenggarong language to balance the language skills that students already have. The habits of classroom teachers in using the Kutai Tenggarong language affect their students' formal language skills. When they are in school, they are accustomed to using the Kutai Tenggarong language as their first language or their mother tongue. However, the situation is also relatively good to attract students' attention to the classroom's lessons.

The phenomena of mixing code and code-switching among primary school-aged children in bilingual societies are indeed exciting. Many studies in several countries have carried out this phenomenon for a long time. (Brice & Anderson, 1999; Gutiérrez-Clellen et al., 2009). This research shows that the mother tongue is the dominant language used by the community. It also happened in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. The first language or mother tongue's role greatly determines the student's language in the future.

Other studies also obtained relatively the same results as previous studies. It is as happened in the research of David C.S. Li (2008) and XU Qing (2012). Even though the study looked at the use of different languages, the mixing code and code-switching phenomena were relatively similar. It shows the central role of the first language or mother tongue in activities that occur in elementary schools (Yan et al., 2010).

Another phenomenon is also explained by Irawati (2012) in the research that has been completed. The study stated that the general characteristics of low-grade students' speech in the first year of elementary school were straightforward but concrete. Students tend to use vocabulary that uses their first language or their mother tongue. The mother tongue's use causes some words and sentences to be influenced by the pattern of the first language or the mother tongue.

Research conducted by Yulianti (2013) shows that mixing code and code-switching in the learning process can be in the form of words, sentences, etc. The supporting factors are the language background, which is relatively the same between the classroom teacher and students, the same habits, the same environment, and the perceived comfort. Mixing code and code-switching help students understand the explanations the classroom teacher provides. Moreover, to strengthen the bond between the classroom teacher and students, to become an active learning driver, such as responding to class teacher explanations, asking, and answering questions. Anwar (2013) conducted a more detailed explanation in analyzing the use of the first language or mother tongue by students at the elementary school level. This study pays more attention to the level of understanding of the class teacher's explanation regarding the use of Javanese "ngoko" and "krama". Despite the result, there are still some misapplications of the language itself.

The dominant factor that encourages classroom teachers (educators) in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency to use the Kutai Tenggarong language is the lack of vocabulary Indonesian words as an everyday language. Thus, classroom teachers still often use terms in the Kutai Tenggarong language in the class's teaching and learning process. It is very reasonable and aims to attract and increase students' attention to understand the teacher's explanation better, hoping that the learning process will run smoothly.

The use of the Kutai Tenggarong language positively impacts the classroom's teaching and learning process. Class teachers who teach using the Kutai Tenggarong language and mixed Indonesian are more comfortable for students to understand because not all elementary school students understand Indonesian. (Carrió-Pastor & Vallés, 2015). Therefore, the use of Kutai Tenggarong and Indonesian is felt to be more useful to inform information and knowledge to students in elementary schools (Awopetu, 2016).

On the other hand, mixing code and code-switching can have adverse effects because Indonesians' grammatical aspects are confused. Due to the improper mixing of codes in Indonesian, they are resulting in situations that should be formal to informal. Mixing code and code-switching also cause Indonesian to be misused. The distraction destroys grammar, while the classroom teacher must introduce Indonesian to the students in the classroom. Class teachers can indeed teach with ease when using mixed code and code-switching. However, students become accustomed to listening to what the class teacher says. It impacts their understanding of the formal language or Indonesian, which they should have known since elementary school. (Çakan, 2014)

IV. CONCLUSION

From this discussion, the researchers concluded that the use of Indonesian in elementary schools in Kutai Lama Village, Anggana District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency is still heavily influenced by the language of Kutai Tenggarong as the mother tongue and is the daily language of the people there. Many supporting factors influence the use of the Kutai Tenggarong language in the classroom's teaching and learning process. These factors are (1) being a balance between students' language skills so that students can easily understand the lessons taught in class, (2) the habits carried out by class teachers to use the Kutai Tenggarong language, and (3) become power attract the attention of students in the class. The use of the Kutai Tenggarong language by class teachers and students in the learning process is the lack of vocabulary in Indonesian by teachers and students. Apart from that, classroom teachers are also accustomed to using the Kutai Tenggarong language without realizing it. The determinants of code-mixing and code-switching are (1) the habit factor of the surrounding community, (2) the spontaneity factor that comes out of the self, and (3) the deliberate or accidental factor in language. The determinants of code-switching are (1) changing the topic of conversation, (2) feeling angry, (3) the influence of the language of the surrounding community, (4) the classroom situation at school, and (5) religious factors in the community. However, on the other hand, using the Kutai Tenggarong language in the classroom can damage the grammatical aspects of the Indonesian language itself. It triggers code-mixing in the learning process, code-switching occurs, and disturbances that create informal learning situations.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflicts of interest.

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