Journal of Humanity Studies
Volume 4 (2), 2025, 75 - 78

Observation Of Regional Language Use Patterns In Daily Interactions In Padang Traditional Markets

Miskal Ade Saputra, Rahmat Ilahi , Zahra Tuljnnah

Universitas PGRI Sumatera Barat, Padang, West Sumatera, Indonesia
Email: miskal_student@upgrisba.ac.id*

ABSTRACT

Regional languages are an important element in the formation of the social and cultural identity of local communities. In the midst of modernization, urbanization, and the dominance of Indonesian as the national language, the use of regional languages is experiencing interesting dynamics to be studied. Informal public spaces such as traditional markets are strategic places to observe people's natural language practices. This study aims to describe and analyze the pattern of use of regional languages, especially Minangkabau languages, in daily interactions between sellers and buyers in traditional markets in Padang City. This study uses a qualitative approach with participatory observation methods and speech recording. Data were collected through direct observation of verbal interactions, dialogue recording, and audio documentation with the informant's permission. Data analysis was carried out using a sociolinguistic approach with a focus on language selection, code switching, and code mixing. The results show that the Minangkabau language still dominates verbal interaction in traditional markets, especially in informal situations and between local speakers who share the same cultural background. Bahasa Indonesia is used selectively and strategically, especially when interacting with immigrant buyers, non-Minangkabau speakers, or in situations that demand clarity of meaning and more formal politeness. The phenomenon of code switching and code mixing is found quite frequently and reflects the speaker's linguistic flexibility in adapting the language to the social context, communication goals, and characteristics of the opponent. These findings show that traditional markets not only function as a center of economic activity, but also as a social and cultural space that plays an important role in maintaining the sustainability and vitality of regional languages in the midst of social changes in urban society.

Keywords: *regional language, Minangkabau language, traditional market, sociolinguistics, code switching*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a multilingual country with a very diverse linguistic richness. There are more than 700 regional languages spoken by people in various regions, each with a strong social, cultural, and symbolic function. Regional languages not only play a role as a tool of daily communication, but also as a marker of identity, a means of inheriting cultural values, and a symbol of social solidarity between its users. However, the development of the times, increasing population mobility, urbanization, and the dominance of Indonesian and foreign languages in various spheres of life have influenced the pattern of use of regional languages. In urban areas, in particular, regional

languages often undergo shifts in function and frequency of use, especially in formal public spaces. This condition raises concerns about a decline in the vitality of regional languages in the long term.

The city of Padang as the capital of West Sumatra Province is the center of economic, educational, and social activities of the Minangkabau people. Nevertheless, the Minangkabau language is still widely used in daily life, especially in family environments and informal public spaces. One of the public spaces that still shows the active use of regional languages is the traditional market. Traditional markets are a meeting place for various levels of society with diverse social backgrounds. The interactions that occur are spontaneous, intense, and natural, so that they reflect authentic linguistic practices. Therefore, traditional markets are a relevant location to observe how the Minangkabau language is used, maintained, and adapted in the context of urban society.

Based on this background, this study was conducted to examine the pattern of regional language use in daily interactions in the traditional market of Padang with a sociolinguistic approach based on empirical data. So, the formulation of the problem in this study is as follows:

1. What is the pattern of the use of regional languages in daily interactions between sellers and buyers in the Padang traditional market?
2. In what social context are Minangkabau and Indonesian used in market interaction?
3. What social factors influence language selection in buying and selling interactions in traditional markets?

This research aims to: (1) Describe the pattern of using regional languages in the interaction of sellers and buyers in the Padang traditional market. (b) Analyze the code switching and code mixing phenomenon that appears in those interactions. (c) Identify the social factors that influence the speaker's choice of language.

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich sociolinguistic studies, especially those related to the use of regional languages in informal public spaces. Practically, the results of this research can be a reference in efforts to preserve the Minangkabau language as well as a consideration for local governments and educational institutions in formulating language policies that are in favor of the sustainability of regional languages. Regional languages have an important role in shaping and maintaining the social identity of a community group. Fishman (1972) stated that language serves as a symbol of ethnic identity and a tool to strengthen group solidarity. The use of regional languages in daily interactions reflects a sense of belonging and pride in the local culture.

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and society. Holmes (2013) explained that in a bilingual or multilingual society, language choice is influenced by various factors, such as the place of interaction, social relations between speakers, topics of conversation, and communication goals. Code-switching is the switching of language from one code to another in a given situation, while code-mixing occurs when elements of another language are inserted into a single speech. This phenomenon is common in multilingual societies and reflects the ability of speakers to manage their linguistic resources.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of research. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand linguistic phenomena in depth based on natural social contexts. The research was carried out at Padang Supermarket, one of the largest and busiest traditional markets in Padang City. Data collection was carried out for two weeks during market operating hours, namely morning to noon. The subjects of the study include sellers and buyers who engage in direct verbal interaction in traditional markets. This study does not limit subjects based on age, gender, or social background.

The data collection techniques used include: (1) Participatory observation of buying and selling interactions. (2) Direct speech recording, and (3) Audio documentation with permission from the informant. Data analysis is carried out through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The data was analyzed by paying attention to the form of language used, the social context of interaction, and the social function of speech.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study demonstrate that the Minangkabau language remains the dominant medium of communication within the traditional markets of Padang. This regional language is utilized throughout every stage of the transaction, from the initial greetings used to attract customers and the intense bargaining process to the final closing of the sale. The consistent use of Minangkabau does more than just facilitate communication; it fosters a sense of familiarity and psychological closeness. By utilizing the mother tongue, the formal barriers between sellers and buyers are diminished, thereby strengthening the social bonds and mutual trust that underpin the grassroots economy in the region.

While Minangkabau is the primary language, Indonesian serves as a vital complementary tool in specific contexts. The use of Indonesian typically emerges when sellers interact with buyers from outside the region or different ethnic backgrounds to prevent communication breakdowns. Furthermore, Indonesian is often selected when high levels of clarity and precision are required, particularly regarding technical price specifications or detailed information about the quality of goods. In these instances, Indonesian functions as an informational bridge, ensuring that the transaction process remains efficient and free from ambiguity.

This linguistic duality naturally gives rise to the phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing. Code-switching occurs spontaneously as speakers adjust to the perceived background of their interlocutor; for example, a seller may switch from Minangkabau to Indonesian upon realizing the buyer is not a local resident. Conversely, code-mixing is frequently observed through the insertion of Indonesian vocabulary into Minangkabau sentence structures. These choices are heavily influenced by social factors such as age, education level, and origin. Younger speakers tend to demonstrate greater linguistic flexibility, often utilizing a hybrid of both languages, whereas older speakers maintain a more consistent and traditional use of Minangkabau.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the traditional markets of Padang serve as a critical social space that maintains the vitality of the Minangkabau language. The enduring strength of the regional language amidst modernization proves that local identity is preserved through daily interaction. The phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing reflect the linguistic adaptability of the Minangkabau people, who remain open to social change without sacrificing their cultural heritage. Ultimately, the traditional market acts as a cultural stronghold, ensuring the continuity of the mother tongue in an increasingly globalized era.

REFERENCES

Chaer, A., & Agustina, L. (2010). *Sociolinguistics: An Initial Introduction*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.

Fishman, J. A. (1972). *The Sociology of Language*. Rowley: Newbury House.
Holmes, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. London: Routledge.
Thamrin, T. (2015). *Language Vitality of Minangkabau in West Sumatra*. Padang: Universitas Bung Hatta.