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**(ISOL-II)**

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**LANGUAGE AND CIVILIZATION**



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THE 2<sup>nd</sup> INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON LINGUISTICS  
(ISOL-2)**

**PROGRAM STUDI LINGUISTIK PASCASARJANA FAKULTAS ILMU  
BUDAYA UNIVERSITAS ANDALAS  
DAN  
MASYARAKAT LINGUISTIK INDONESIA  
UNIVERSITAS ANDALAS  
LANGUAGE AND CIVILIZATION**

**EDITOR  
RINA MARNITA  
HANDOKO  
JENNIFER ZIRBES  
DIANA FROST**

**DESAIN SAMPUL  
HANDOKO**

**DITERBITKAN OLEH**  
Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Andalas Kampus Unand Limau Manis,  
Padang – Sumatera Barat. Telp. (0751) 71227

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## FOREWORD

On behalf of Postgraduate Program on Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities and the Linguistics Society of Indonesia (MLI) Unand Chapter, we are greatly honoured and pleased to welcome all the keynote speakers and participants of the 2nd International Seminar on Linguistics (ISOL-2), 2015.

ISOL is a biennial international seminar held by the Linguistics Graduate Program of Faculty of Humanity, Andalas University in collaboration with the Linguistic Society of Indonesia (MLI), Unand Chapter. ISOL aims to provide a discussion platform for linguists and language observers across Indonesia. Its main objective is to enhance the exchange of research and new approaches in language studies. The seminar is open to interested people from outside of Indonesia.

The theme of the 2nd ISOL is Language and Civilization. Civilization is the process by which a society or place reaches an advanced stage of social development and organization. It is also defined as the society, culture, and way of life of a particular area. Over time, the word civilization has come to imply something beyond organization. It refers to a particular shared way of thinking about the world as well as a reflection on that world in art, literature, drama and a host of other cultural happenings. Language is itself a social construct – a component of social reality. Thus, like all social constructs and conventions, it can be changed.

A civilization is any complex state society which is characterized by urban development, social stratification, symbolic communication forms and a perceived separation from and domination over the natural environment. To advance civilization is to construct a new social reality which emerges through language. In other words, social reality is the operational expression of words and the meanings of them that society has agreed upon. Language is itself a social construct – a component of social reality. Thus, like all social constructs and conventions, it can be changed.

This seminar aims at facilitating diverse dialogues among scientists, linguists and scholars from different backgrounds about language as a social construct as well a tool to understand social reality.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the seminar key note speakers Prof. Dr. James T. Collins from The Institute of Ethnic Studies, The National University Malaysia (UKM), Dr. Suryadi, from the Southeast Asian Studies, Leiden University, the Netherland, and Tim McKinnon, from Delaware University, USA, and Dr. Khatrina Soekamto, Chief of Linguistics Society of Indonesia and Prof. Nadra. MS, the Director of Postgraduate Program of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities, Andalas University..

We are very grateful to the Mayor of Padang, Ir. H. Mahyeldi, S.P, for his great support to the seminar and for welcoming all the seminar participants at his place in an opening ceremony. Our gratitude also goes to the Rector of Andalas University, the Dean of Faculty of Humanities and our sponsors AIFIS Jakarta, PT. Semen Indarung Padang, PT.Bank BNI and Bank Mandiri.

Chairperson

**Dr. Rina Marnita AS, MA**

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# LANGUAGE USE IN CLASS DISCUSSION: STUDY CASE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ON LINGUISTICS

Ike Revita  
revita\_ike@yahoo.com  
Andalas University

## ABSTRACT

*This writing is aimed at describing the use of language by postgraduate students on Linguistics Andalas University. The objectives of the writing are to identify the language used and the motivations of choosing certain language in class interaction. Data are any utterances uttered by the postgraduate students on Linguistics in class interaction. The data are analyzed by referential, and translational identity method related to the concept of language use by Wardaugh (1986) and Crystal (1994 as well as context by Leech (1983) and Revita (2013). The result of analysis is presented descriptively and naratively. Having analyzed the data, it is found that there are some languages used by postgraduate students on Linguistics. They are (1) Indonesian; (2) Local language such as Minangkabau and Palembang; and (3) Foreign language like English, Japanese, and Arabic. The choices of language are motivated by several factors namely (1) habit; (2) expressive intention; (3) clarification; and (4) limited competence.*

Keywords: language use, utterances, bilingual

## I. INTRODUCTION

Multicultural community has possibility to be bilingual or multilingual. This is due to the fact that each culture has their own way of speaking. One of the ways is the use and the choice of language.

Language which is also sometimes called as code mainly functions to communicate. In communication, people commonly choose the code based on the context. This is in line with Poedjosoedarmo's statement (2001) that human beings will chose any code they like, depending on their convenient. This convenience must be considering several aspects like the situation, participants involved, or the topic being discussed. This is what is called as context.

Revita (2013) defines context as every aspect being the foundation to the production of language for communication. Whatever the background bringing about the utterance occurred is categorized as context. It can be in form of linguistic or non linguistic features. Since context deals with anything, context is also called as everything.

One phenomena reflecting the importance of context in communcation is in the use of language. People will consider and notice several aspects to choose certain language-- also sometimes called code. Thus, this brings about the presence of code-switching and code mixing. For example is as being seen in the following utterance (1) – (2).

- (1) **Thankyou. Terimakasih. Saya ingin menanggapi...**  
Thank you. Thank you. I want to give comment...
- (2) **...Yang saya pahami berbeda dengan yang saudara jelaskan. Maksudnya begini. Bahaso Minang se lah ndak, Buk?**  
...What I know is different from what you explained. I mean is like this. May I speak in Minangkabau language, Mam!

These two utterances (1) – (2) are uttered by two students from postgraduate study of Linguistics Andalas University. The situation is in the class where there is a discussion. The presenter wants to response the question from his friend. He, then, says *Thank you* to gratitude that question. However, he switches into Indonesian language *Terimakasih* for similar expression. This happens due to in Postgraduate Study of Linguistics, most students are multilingual and some others are bilingual. This makes them possible to choose any code they like. Even, for speaker in utterance (1), switching code is commonly done since he had ever lived in America for about 9 years. So, English and Indonesian is quite often used at the same event.

This is however little bit different from utterance (2) where the student switched into Minangkabau language. He even asked permission to the lecturer to use this Minangkabau. The preference of using Minangkabau language instead of Indonesian is due to the expressive reason. According to this student, he is much more convenient saying something in Minangkabau than other languages. For him, delivering anything in this local language--speaker's mother tongue--is more expressive.

This situation is often found while the interaction in the class among postgraduate students of Linguistics Andalas University. Based on the above phenomena, this writing is aimed at describing the use of language in class interaction involving postgraduate students of Linguistics Andalas University. The objectives of the writing is to identify the language used and the motivations of choosing certain language in interaction.

The research is conducted in 2013 and 2014 at postgraduate class. The data are any utterances uttered by Postgraduate Students of Linguistics in class interaction during the process of learning and teaching Sociopragmatics. The data are collected by observational method with note-taking, recording, and interviewing technique (Sudaryanto, . The analysis is done by applying referential and translational method related to the concept proposed by Wardaugh (1986), Leech (1983), and Revita (2013). The result of analysis is descriptively and narratively presented.

## II. METHOD

### 1. Language Use and (Multi)Bilingual

As a social creature, human beings can not live apart from language. Language is a means to express their thought. Language is used for communicating things in their mind. In other words, we can say that people will learn various languages in order they can interact with many people from different background of culture or society.

These people will choose different language in different context. For example, when they interact with their villagemate, they will use their own mother tongue. When they meet the foreigners, English as the international language becomes the choice. When they give advice and have to quote Quran, Arabic is the preference. Such phenomena is called as the language use.

Language use is defined as the use of language for communicative meaning (Hornby, 1986). This implies that the use of language is closely related to the communicative purpose. yiconsidered. The use of language here may also refer to the term commonly called as code.

Code refers to any kind of system that two or more people employ for communication (Wardaugh, 1988). This is in line with what Hoffman (1996) says that code is a system of communication in form spoken and written.

The use or the choice of language or this code can be clearly seen in the society in which the members of this society are able to communicate or use two or more languages (codes). Such member of society is named as (multi)bilingual. The phenomena of using two languages or more in communicatin is called (multi) bilingualism.

The (multi)bilingual speaker may alternate the languages for various reasons. Crystal (1994) explains that there are three reasons (I, however, prefer using motivation since it relates to inner intention of the speakers) of people alternate the use of certain language in communication. They are (1) making easier communication; (2) showing solidarity; and (3) expressing emotional attitude of the speaker.

These three reasons become the consideration of the people in choosing the appropriate language. Even, it is not impossible that there still other aspects influencing people in using the language in communication.

## 2. About Postgraduate Study of Linguistics Andalas University

Linguistics is one of many Postgraduate studies at Andalas University. This postgraduate study belongs to Faculty of Humanities. It was founded in 2008.

The students of this postgraduate study comes from various institutions in Indonesia with various educational background. Thus, many students speak different language as well as dialect there. This brings about the interaction is naturally done in Indonesian language.

The (multi) bilingualism in this study does not lead to the inharmony. Even, the differences make each student learns many things, especially related to linguistics. The (multi) bilingual students are of great possibility to choose any language or code they want, depending on the situation. This causes the occurrence of various languages in interaction, like Indonesian, local, even foreign language.

## III. Analysis

### A. Language Used by Postgraduate Students on Linguistics

Postgraduate students are mostly multilingual. The multilingualism may bring about the occurrence of various language in interaction. In the teaching and learning process, generally, there are three languages that the students use. They are (1) Indonesian; (2) Local Language like Minangkabau; and (3) Foreign Language, like English and Arabic. The detailed explanation can be seen in the following description.

#### 1. Indonesian Language

As national language, ideally, Indonesian is mastered by all Indonesian people, including postgraduate students. Even, the use of this Indonesian is already ruled by the government in which this lingua franca is used in formal situation. Consequently, Indonesian is applied in teaching and learning process in class. This can be illustrated in datum (1) – (2).

(1) **...Bagaimana saudara bisa mengatakan hal demikian?**

‘...How can you say such a thing?’

(2) **Maaf jika saya memotong! Saya rasa saya kurang sependapat dengan anda.**

‘Excuse me! I disagree with your statement.’

These two utterances are uttered by two different students. The first speaker comes from Bengkulu and the second one is from Jambi. Both of these speakers speak their local language--Serawai and Kerinci. Furthermore, they also know and understand Minangkabau. However, they use Indonesian since they know that the situation is formal. That is why they prefer Indonesian to other languages.

#### 2. Local Language

Since the mastery of local language is better than Indonesian, it is of great possibility that some students use their mother tongue. For example is as being demonstrated in datum (3) – (4)

(3) **...Ini adalah sebuah fakta yang kontradiktif dengan apa yang saudara katakan. Acah jo bahaso Minang se lah. Bia sampai.**

‘...This is a contradictory fact related to what you said. Let me speak in Minangkabau language. It can be more understandable.’

- (4) **...Kito ni apolah. Cak mano yo?...**  
'I am nothing to loose. How can I say to you.'

The datum (3) is uttered by a student originally from Minangkabau. He also graduated from Minangkabau Department for his undergraduate. He chooses Minangkabau language after he delivers his idea in Indonesian. For him, what he wants to say can be fully expressed through Minangkabau language. This can be seen from his statement **Bia sampai**. Meanwhile, the datum (4) is uttered by a student from Palembang. This student uses her local language, Palembang, to express her feeling. At that time, some of students make joke. This joke is then delivered to her. Feeling annoyance, she then swiches into Palembang language after using Indonesian.

### 3. Foreign Language

English and Arabic are foreign language that are commonly used by pstgraduate students on Linguistics. This is caused by this study allows students to write their thesis or paper in English. Even, they are encouraged to present their paper in English though that paper is written in Indonesian. For example is as being seen in datum (5) – (6).

- (5) **Ok, friend. Let me introduce the member of the group!...**

- (6) **...Apa yang saya jelaskan ini sesuai dengan apa yang dikatakan dalam Alquran. Quu anfusyikum waahlikum naara...**  
'...This is in accordance with what Quran says that Keep eyes on your body and your family from the fire of the hell...'

The speakers in datum (5) – (6) use English and Arabic in their interaction. In datum (5), the utterance is the beginning of the interaction. Meanwhile, in datum (6), the speaker quotes certain information from Quran. These two speakers choose these two languages because they think that they need to do so. Besides, there is specific intention implied in this choice of language.

## B. Motivations of Using Certain Language

There are some motivations of the students being their consideration in choosing the language in class interaction. They are (1) habit; (2) expressive intention; (3) clarification; and (4) limited competence.

### 1. Habit

Habit is a kind of custom of someone in communcation. Having related to the choice of language, there are certain people who like to use certain language in certain situation. For example is as being seen in datum (5) and (6). The speakers always use English as the opening of his conversation. He does not only do this in presenting the paper but also when giving question. Eventhough his English is very limited but he is very confident to begin any statement with English. This is also found in datum (6) where the speaker uses Arabic. The speakers' undergraduate background from Arabic Department and his job as the lecturer of Arabic course make his Arabic is very good. Besides, whenever delivering something, he always uses Arabic to higlight his statement quoted from Quran and Hadits.

### 2. Expressive Intention

Sometimes people feel that using certain language is more expressive than others. This is due to the sense of the language itself. This is found in datum (3) where the student even explicitly says that it will be more understandable using Minangkabau



language than Indonesian. For him, he can be fully expressive when his idea is delivered in Minangkabau.

**3. Clarification**

To make information clearer, it is possible that someone quotes other information. This is often found in class interaction while teaching and learning process at Postgraduate Study on Linguistics. For example as being illustrated in datum (6). This student quotes Quran to assure the hearers that what he is saying is true. This is a kind of clarification and highlight that he is telling the truth.

**4. Limited Competence**

Motivation of getting better can be a kind of stimulation to be success. This is in line with what the students from Postgraduate Study on Linguistics do. Their willingness not to get the knowledge about Linguistics but also the competence of English motivate them to practice in class interaction. Eventhough they have limited competence in English, the spirit of speaking English keeps being in their mind. However, the limitation of vocabulary forces them to switch into Indonesian. This can be seen in datum (7) below.

(7) **I try to answer question from Ibu Ayu. I am agree with you, Bu. But...I....I....I think....Ibu saya sarankan membaca buku...**

'I try to answer question from Ibu Ayu. I agree with you. But I think ...I suggest that you read the book...'

In this datum (7), the speaker does not know how to say in English anymore. Then, he switches into Indonesian language. He even needs time to think what to say in English. Indonesia, therefore, becomes the choice.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Mastering more than one language, nowadays, is very common. Many people become bilingual and multilingual. The need of interaction and communication motivate people to learn other languages than their mother tongue. This phenomena brings about the (multi)bilingualism.

The (multi)bilingual people are free to choose any language that they use in interaction. However, context still becomes the main consideration.

As (multi) bilingual, Postgraduate Students on Linguistics often use different language in class interaction. The languages they commonly use are (1) Indonesian; (2) Local language like Minangkabau and Palembang; and (3) Foreign language like English and Arabic. The use of this language is motivated by several aspects. They are (1) habit; (2) expressive intention; (3) clarification; and (4) limited competence.

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