

Indonesian as a Unifying Language of the Nation

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze Indonesian as a unifying language of the nation. Quantitative descriptive research method. Research subjects are selected from Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta students and Other Universities as many as 20 respondents. Subjects in this study are taken using a questionnaire distributed online via google form as many as 7 statements. The results show that students agreed with the statement that Indonesian as a national identity as well as a unifying language of the nation and Indonesian language must be preserved as long as the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia is established.

Keywords

Indonesian; unifying; language; nation



I. Introduction

Since the first, the Indonesian nation is known as a nation that is multicultural as well as multilingual. This means that each tribe or ethnic group has its own traditions and culture, including language diversity. The languages of these ethnic groups, or better known as regional languages, are not only spoken and supported by a very varied number of speaker groups, but also have wide areas.

The spread of certain regional languages to other regions in the archipelago certainly allows competition between these regional languages. This needs to be taken seriously by policy makers, in this case the government. If the friction between regional languages is allowed, it is feared that it will trigger the disintegration of the nation. Moreover, the territory of Indonesia has many islands and has many diverse cultures, this will certainly have an impact on the unity and integrity of the nation. To unite nations with different cultures, one of them is the national language, namely Indonesian.

Indonesian as a national language cannot be separated from Indonesian society. Indonesian society in general is a bilingual society. In general, in addition to mastering Indonesian, they also master the local language as their mother tongue. Thus, the linguistic situation in Indonesia is very complex because Indonesian and 700 regional languages are used by the people of Indonesia. Indonesian is a unified language that is upheld by all Indonesians. For a long time, Indonesian has become the official language as well as the unified language of the Republic of Indonesia. The Indonesian language was officially proclaimed at the youth oath event on October 28, 1928. The inauguration was used as a means of struggle to achieve an independent and sovereign state.

This is reflected in the third pledge of the 1928 Youth Pledge which reads "We, the sons and daughters of Indonesia, uphold the language of unity, the Indonesian language.

Indonesian is also the state language, that is, apart from being a unified language (national language), Indonesian is also the only nationally official language in Indonesia. This is in accordance with Article 36 of the 1945 Constitution.

Currently, the role of the Indonesian language is so attached to the lives of people who use Indonesian to be able to communicate easily. According to Richards et al. (1985:153), language is a human communication system which is expressed through the arrangement of sounds or written expressions that are structured to form larger units, such as morphemes, words, and sentences.

According to Keraf (2004:1), language is a means of communication between members of the community in the form of sound symbols produced by human speech. When community members want to communicate with each other, then that person will use a language that is already used to convey information. In general, these languages can differ from one region to another, this can be due to differences in culture, environment and habits that they have.

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, language is an arbitrary sound symbol system, which is used by a group of people to work together, interact, and identify themselves. Judging from the meaning in the dictionary, it can be understood that language can also function as a symbol of sound like notes in a tone, but the functions or benefits provided are very different between the two. The sound produced by language is prioritized to convey information and focuses more on the density of its content rather than on the aesthetic function it produces.

Based on some of these definitions, it can be concluded that language is a tool for communication that can be delivered orally or in writing. The language that is conveyed orally can be called the primary language while the language that is conveyed in writing can be called the secondary language (Chairunnisa et al., 2021).

The Indonesian nation has a single language unit as a unifier to foster a sense of nationalism in each region. Therefore, Indonesian is upheld as the language of unity by all Indonesian people. To maintain Indonesian as the official language as well as the language of unity, the government has included the 1945 Constitution, the 2003 National Education System Law, and the 2009 Language Law Indonesia.

Although the government has made efforts to maintain the Indonesian language, in its implementation it is not like which is expected. The emergence of foreign languages slowly which can worry about the role of the Indonesian language and the declining positive attitude towards Indonesian.

As Indonesians, we should realize that Indonesian has its own position. In its position as a national language, Indonesian serves as (1) a symbol of national pride, (2) a symbol of national identity, (3) a means of communication between citizens, between regions, and between cultures, and (4) a tool that allows the unification of various ethnic groups with their respective socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds into the unity of the Indonesian nation. As a symbol of national pride, the Indonesian language reflects the socio-cultural values that underlie the speaker's sense of nationality. On the basis of this pride, the Indonesian language is maintained and developed. As a symbol of national identity, the Indonesian language needs to be upheld so that it has an identity. As a means of communication between citizens, between regions, and between ethnic groups, Indonesian is an important means of communication for speakers within the territory of Indonesia so that everyone can freely explore the territory of Indonesia without any language barrier. In its position as a national language, Indonesian is a tool that allows the unification of various ethnic groups with different socio-cultural backgrounds and languages.

This study aims to analyze Indonesian as a unifying language of the nation

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Language

The change in behavior in question has a very broad meaning, namely changes in behavior from not knowing to knowing or from not understanding to understanding. Kunandar (2009) explains that learning is a process of interaction between students and their environment so that behavior changes for the better. With this learning process, it is hoped that the teacher will be able to change the behavior of students in a better direction. Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being. Each of them is of course inseparable from language, the first time a child gets a language that is heard directly from the father or mother when the child is born into this world. Then as time goes by and as the child grows, they will acquire a language other than the language taught by the mother and father, either in the form of a second, third, foreign language or so on which is called language acquisition where it depends on the social environment and cognitive level possessed by these children through the learning process in their environment. (Purba, N. et al. (2020).

Based on the education unit level curriculum, Indonesian language learning must be taught in schools. Learning Indonesian is an effort to train students to communicate well. Therefore, learning Indonesian aims to improve the ability of students to communicate both orally and in writing.

Indonesian language learning is divided into four aspects of language skills. The four aspects of these skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Learning objectives are one component of the learning system. This learning objective is the main component that must first be formulated by the learner in learning activities. Learning objectives start from the most general goals to the most detailed ones, so that the learning objectives are classified based on their position, namely:

- 1.The general objective of national education, namely the formation of a whole person.
Educational goals for all types and levels of education.
- 2.Institutional goals, namely the goals of each educational institution, such as elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, and universities.
- 3.Curriculum goals are the goals of various fields of study, such as mathematics, language, religion, and the arts.
- 4.Learning objectives, namely the objectives of the learning program in the field of study for each class or the objectives to be achieved in learning activities. Many people learn languages with different goals. There are those who learn just to understand, there are those who learn to understand the contents of the reading, there are those who learn to be able to converse fluently, there are also those who learn for prestige, and there are those who study with various special purposes.

The purpose of language learning is communication skills in various communication contexts. The abilities that are developed are the ability to grasp meaning, roles, basic interpretations, assess, and express themselves in language. All of them are grouped into understanding, understanding, and use.

Language is a communication tool used by humans to interact with each other, share experiences, learn from each other, and improve intellectual abilities. With language, people can convey various information, thoughts, experiences, ideas, opinions, desires, and hopes. In that connection, Indonesian language learning is directed to improve students' ability to communicate, both orally and in writing. However, it must be realized that most Indonesians consider Indonesian as a means of communication only. Once they feel able to use it, feel able to express their thoughts and ideas, and others are able to understand them.

However, it is necessary to know that good and correct Indonesian is identical to standard Indonesian. Standard Indonesian is the language used by the people with the widest influence and the greatest authority.

In line with the development of science and technology, humans are required to have good language skills and convey information both orally and in writing. There are four aspects of language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Thus, language learning in schools does not only emphasize theory, but students are required to use good language when communicating. Among the four language skills, speaking is one of the skills that must be possessed by students.

Language errors are impossible to do completely without a good understanding of interference, bilingualism, language acquisition, and language teaching which are closely related to each other. Language errors often occur in certain situations or fields that require regularity of language rules, especially in the use of language that does not only prioritize communicative factors as the final result in language activities language. Mastery of the Indonesian language is clearly needed in teaching and learning interactions in schools.

III. Research Method

Quantitative descriptive research method is a method that aims to make a picture or descriptive about a situation objectively using numbers, starting from data collection, interpretation of the data as well as appearance and results (Octiva et al., 2018; Pandiangan, 2018). Descriptive quantitative research attempts to collect quantifiable data of the population sample for statistical analysis. The descriptive method of research is used to describe a population or situation accurately (Asyraini et al., 2022; Octiva, 2018; Pandiangan, 2015).

Research subject is an individual that participates in research. Information or data is collected from or about the individual to help answer the question under study. Sometimes research subjects are referred to as human subjects, research participants or study volunteers (Jibril et al., 2022; Pandiangan et al., 2018; Pandiangan, 2022). Research subjects are selected from Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta students and Other Universities as many as 20 respondents.

Questionnaire is a list of questions or items used to gather data from respondents about their attitudes, experiences, or opinions (Octiva et al., 2021; Pandiangan et al., 2021; Pandia et al., 2018). Questionnaires can be used to collect quantitative and qualitative information (Pandiangan et al., 2022; Tobing et al., 2018). Questionnaires are commonly used in market research as well as in the social and health sciences. Subjects in this study are taken using a questionnaire distributed online via google form as many as 7 statements.

IV. Result and Discussion

Research data related to the analysis of Indonesian as a unifying language of the nation is obtained through a questionnaire that has been distributed online. The results of the questionnaire that have been distributed have a total of 20 students from Several Universities. The following data were obtained:

Table 1. Questionnaire Statement

No.	Statement
1	The use of Indonesian is fairly easy.
2	Indonesian language has its own characteristics.
3	Indonesian language makes it easier for us to communicate.
4	Indonesia has a diversity of languages, but Indonesian is able to unite all differences.
5	Indonesian language rules must be used appropriately.
6	Indonesian as a national identity.
7	The Indonesian language must be preserved as long as the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia is established.

Table 2. Questionnaire Result

Statement	Total Respondent			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0 (0%)	5 (25%)	10 (50%)	5 (25%)
2	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (55%)	9 (45%)
3	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (45%)	11 (55%)
4	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (40%)	12 (60%)
5	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (50%)	10 (50%)
6	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (20%)	16 (80%)
7	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6% (30%)	14 (70%)

The results show that students agreed with the statement that Indonesian as a national identity as well as a unifying language of the nation.

In the first statement about the use of Indonesian is fairly easy, the majority of respondents answered "agree" with the percent reaching 50% and the rest of the respondents answered "disagree" and "strongly agree" with a balanced portion each getting 5 respondents with a percentage of 25%.

From the data above, respondents also gave responses "strongly agree" (45%) and "agree" (55%) for the statement questionnaire about the Indonesian language which has its own characteristics, namely the vocabulary element. Usually someone who is just learning Indonesian or a foreign learner will experience fundamental difficulties, such as difficulty understanding the process of affixing. Followed by the statement that using Indonesian makes it easier for us to communicate, the majority of respondents answered "strongly agree". This proves that it is true that with the Indonesian language we can understand communication between each other even though we come from different tribes or regions. Judging from the results of the existing data, the majority of respondents answered "strongly agree" on the statement that Indonesia has a diversity of languages, but Indonesian is able to unite all differences. Furthermore, in the statement that Indonesian language is a national identity, the majority of respondents again answered "strongly agree" with the largest total of 16 respondents. This proves that the Indonesian language

unites various languages from various regions with a single unit that forms a language which is then called Indonesian and has become an identity for the Indonesian nation.

V. Conclusion

The results show that students agreed with the statement that Indonesian as a national identity as well as a unifying language of the nation and Indonesian language must be preserved as long as the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia is established.

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