Language Choice by Bilingual Speech Community of Acehnese in Family Domain in Medan: A Case Study

Nuzwaty[1], Muhammad Ali Pawiro[1]*, Liesna Andriany[2], Risnawaty[3]

[1]*Faculty of Arts, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia*
[2]*Faculty of Teacher's Training and Education, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia*
[3]*University of Muslim Nusantara Al-Washliyah, Medan, Indonesia*

Corresponding Author: Muhammad Ali Pawiro, E-mail: mapawiro@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study is a case study that covers the presentation formats for language choice on the speech community of Acehnese based upon family domains in bilingual Indonesian speech behavior. The sources of variance are between Aceh and Indonesian languages in Medan. The parameters that are being used first through language choice between Indonesian, Indonesian/Acehnese, and Acehnese relating to the role relationship between husband to wife; father, mother and their sons and daughters. The second one is related to speech situation such as arguing, advising, chatting, and persuading. The method approach is quantitative descriptive and was employed by the samples of 200 persons. The result shows that the average persentage of the language choice in every single speech situation among the husbands to the wives was 86% and the wives to the husbands was 82% dominantly Acehnese. The average percentage of the language choice among sons and daughters to their parents or vice versa was 76 % constantly mixing language; Acehnese/ Indonesian in all of speech situations. The result of this study showed that mostly the husbands and the wives maintain their tribe language well. The result found that most of the children of Acehnese never totally leave their tribe language, even they live in Medan as a big city.

Key words: Family Domain, Speech Situations, Role Relationships

INTRODUCTION

Background

Every society from various nations uses different languages, and each of those languages has different variations. These varieties can distinguish between a nation to other countries in every single part of this planet Earth. This condition is because language as a social phenomenon is intimately tied up the social structure and value system of society; different dialects and accents are evaluated in different ways. Relating to this situation, Thompson (2003:53) takes Standard English as an example, which has much more status and prestige than any other English dialects. It is a dialect that highly valued by many people in the world. Social political and certain economic benefits tend to accurate to those who speak and write it. So, it is an indisputable fact that people from different nations tend to use different languages. Along with physical appearance, cultural characteristics and language differences are part of what distinguishes one speech community from another. Wardhaugh (1998: 98) reveals, the problem of language choice in a bilingual society is varieties that depend on several things concerning functions and situations. This expert takes the example of the bilingual community of Paraguay, who uses Spanish and Guarani as their codes of the language repertoire. Parents in Paraguay try to use Spanish with their children, but in husbands and their wives' interaction, they prefer to use Guarani to Spanish. Men generally use Guarani in an intimate conversation, but they use Spanish in business trades.

Indonesia, like some other countries, has dozens of languages, some confined to small areas, and the rest are spoken regionally. In some parts of Indonesia, two or more languages are spoken by different ethnic groups. These differences imply linguistics markers of regions that serve to identify people as belonging to particular social groups. Indonesia, however, uses the Indonesian language as a national and an official language. The government proposed Indonesian as an ordinary language in the formal registers for all of the ethnic groups in more extensive usage areas. Therefore it might not be difficult for Indonesian people to communicate between or among people from different ethnic groups. The Indonesian language serves and facilitates its nation with prominently usage areas.

The implication of this situation, almost every area or domain of the regional language, Indonesian also lives and develops. This fact shows that both the ethnic and Indonesian languages live side by side. It is commonplace; however, Indonesian is more dominant and more influential when

compared to the usage of tribal languages.Such a situation can provide for factors forming bilingualism in Indonesian society. Bilingualism is a term defined as the use of two languages or more by speakers in their relationships with others. Individuals and communities using these languages are called bilingual. Mobilization and economic growth could support the process of bilingual as well. This mobilization could influence language and cultural contacts at the same time. Urban communities commonly tend to learn the local language and next to use it. By doing this, psychologically, the interactions between the newcomers and the local community will run smoothly.

Acehnese speech community in Medan was an urban society hundreds of years ago. Simply because both Aceh and Medan are in Sumatera Island, and these two regions are situated aside. Therefore the mobilities of society might not be avoided. But it should be emphasized that not all Acehnese who live in Medan today come from families or descendants who had migrated during that time. Business trades mostly cause some of the people of Aceh who domiciled in Medan at present. And in 2001, there was an exodus of Acehnese who worked on Exxon Mobil Company from the town of Lhok Seumawe (North Aceh) to Medan. The exodus happened due to the unsafe condition of the area because of interference from a particular group. Next, in December 2004, Aceh was hit by an enormously earthquake and tsunami, which forced a large number of re-displacement of the Aceh community to Medan (the nearest city). In Medan, some of them reside in the area of their ethnic cluster, but some live and settle in mix neighborhoods with other ethnic communities. Generally, Acehnese is their mother tongue and serves as the first language for the infants in the point of origin. Nowadays, one of the most significant numbers of urban communities in Medan is Acehnese after Javanese.

Medan is one of the biggest cities after Jakarta (the capital city of Indonesia) and Surabaya. It is a heterogeneous city supported by plenty of various ethnics along with multiple languages and dialects. The ethnic origin of Medan is Malay, with the ethnic vernacular called *Bahasa Melayu Deli.* In a situation of interaction that people come from, the mutual different ethnic group will use Indonesian as their code, which breeds on ethnic borders. Events, for instance, such as parties, intergroup meetings, and ceremonial platforms handled by the ethnic organization, could manage the ethnic language where most people of the same tribes involve and participate; therefore, those kinds of languages are likely to be used.

The Aims of this Work

This study conducts to observing the behavior of language choice on bilingual communities, Aceh Language and Indonesian, whereas the area of the field is in the domain of family. Appel (1987: 37) notes that the family domain has shown much determination in studies of language choice in bilingual or in multilingual communities. Simply because multilingual often starts or grows in the environment of the family domain. The home, according to Appel (1987), is a family gathering place; therefore, the use of minority, ethnic, or regional languages usually starts at home.

A large number of members of an ethnic community who live in big cities like Medan is not a determining factor for the individual ethnic groups to use their regional language. Using local or ethnic languages is based on the agreement among individuals community conventionally without concern on a large number of members of the ethnic community (Fishman 1972). According to Chaer et al. (1995: 107), today, in big cities of Indonesia, commonly mothers and fathers use their local language when chatting together. But on the other hand, they use Indonesian when talking to their children. As a fact, the children are only accustomed to using Indonesian in every speech situation and every role relationship. This situation might emerge in the Acehnese children group in Medan, who will, in turn, forget their ethnic language even though this community is one of the most significant numbers of ethnic groups in Medan.

The language choice used by the Aceh language community on this work happens in social interaction in the family sphere at home is associated with *speech situations* such as *greeting, persuading, chatting, asking for help* by involving mutual relationships between husband and wife, between father-son or daughter, between mother-son or- daughters, brother and sister. These reciprocal relationships determined as *role relationships*. The research problem is:

A. How is the average percentage of the language choice done by the language community in the family domain dealing with the speech situation and the role relationship?

B. How are the children of Acehnese concerned about their language choice as an urban community in Medan as a big city?

The Goal of the Research

The goal of this research is to gain an overview of the average percentage of language choice done by the language community in the family domain dealing with the speech situation and the role relationship and attitude of children of Acehnese towards their language choice. The description could inform the language maintained by Acehnese in urban societies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is under the umbrella of the sociolinguistics field. We can define sociolinguistics as the study of language in a given society. According to Fishman (1972: 4), Wardhaugh (1998: 12) that sociolinguistics itself is a study of the relationship between language and society to achieve better recognition of language structure and how the language functions in the communication of the speech community. Hudson (2000:4) defines sociolinguistics as the study of language concerning society; therefore, the investigation is more a kind of the interrelationship between any given language to any given community. Everyone in this given society utilizes the same language, and they know the same constructions of the same word, with the same pronunciation. And they recognize the same range of meanings for every single word in that language. It implies that sociolinguistics is part of

the study of language (Hudson 2000). Therefore the value of sociolinguistics is the light that illuminates the nature of language in general.

Thomason (2001) in Dweik (2015) proposed that language choice much depends on some factors, among others, the topic, the identity of the speakers, and their relatives' status. Ferrer and Sankoff (2003) handled research in Valencia, Spain, and found that the prominent language dominated the language choice of a speaker. Among which the most prestigious language supported the medium of communication in various domains. Almahmoud (2013) expresses that language choice in the Saudi context showing that the language communities use more colloquial Arabic in a broader social interaction compare to Standard Arabic; moreover, it is the mother tongue of plenty of Arabic people. Fishman (2013), as well as Finegan (1989:424), pointed out the language choice much depends on who talks to whom about what and use what language. Or other words, it conveys what language is being used, who is the participant, what the topics are, and where it takes place. Therefore language variety chosen supported by the setting in which the talk takes place, by the subject, by the social relations among the participants, and by several other features of the situation. Piller (2013), in his study on language choice in bilingual, cross-cultural interpersonal communication, expresses that language choice much depends on mutual understanding of participants to provide the proper language they use. He takes an example of a couple with different linguistics backgrounds having no difficulties in communicating and sharing mutual understanding where the ordinary language is not available or even if one takes his national language as an indicator.

An observation of Language choice in the multilingual community Larteh, Ghana, did by Ansah (2014) showed that there are three languages used in Larteh, Twi, Leteh, and English. Each language used is associated with conventional social rules and psychological motivations for making one language choice over another. English stood as a foreign language, while Twi and Leteh are the local codes that have their functional distribution. The educational fields, churches, and the official domain use Twi as a medium communication. The language community regards it as a prestigious language. Leteh is domestic and functioned as the first language of the language community. In traditional meetings and ceremonies, the language community uses Leteh thoroughly. Research on language choice and language attitude in the multilingual Arab Canadian community in Quebec by Dweik and Hanadi (2015) showed, Quebec Abarabian communities appretiated Arabic and used it as the mother tongue and spread out as a society functions. Such as they try to make used the ethnic language at home and family domains, religion, and social interactions as well. While they used English and French informal situations only, like in the educational field, the workplace to get the best job, using these two languages as their codes at formal places will help them acquiring Canadian citizenship. Mei et al. (2016) did research concerning the language choice used by three ethnic groups (Malay, Chinese, and Indian) of Malaysian Public university lectures in University Putra Malaysia as the respondents. The

finding revealed that English and Malay language were used as a common language by the three ethnic groups' respondents. Reverberi(2018) applied Multivariate Pattern Analysis and confirmed language choice in bilingual speakers relies on general domain processes where the medial prefrontal cortex is a general region of a domain for free language choice.

RESEARCH METHODS

The population of this study is an Acehnese family whose family members are husband, wife, and two children, namely one son and one daughter. They have resided in Medan for a minimum of five years. They can use Acehnese. The age range is around 5 to 60 years old. Ethnic homogeneity is also a specific demand of the population, where both husband and wife must be Acehnese. The sample was from 200 persons, obtained from two sub-districts. These two districts are purposely selected, simply because most of Acehnese settle in these areas; they are Medan Sunggal and Medan Helvetia. The data collection done was randomly, and each sub-district was taken 100 people consisted of 25 families. A sociolinguistics study recognizes the way of this kind of data collection.

The data were from survey activities that obtained through questionnaires. Participatory observations carried out are merely to support the questionnaire technique to gain the reliability of the data. In the questionnaire sheets, columns of questions are about questions relating to what language to use when they interact in respect of the role relationship and associated with speech situations of the language choice.

The Research Variables

The research variables include:
a. Language Use.
   The term language use is about the use of code as a language choice, which commonly provides an attitude of a person using a particular language. It deals with appropriate speaking partners in their verbal repertoire. The language use is associated with interaction situations in language domains and speech situations having to do with role relationships. This study covers the use of language directed to the use of whether Acehnese or Indonesian language.
b. Domain
   The domain is a sociolinguistics formula of interaction that covers situations in which one language or a variety of specific languages usage. Which associated with role relationships and particular speech situations. The domain of this research variable is the family domain. Fishman (1972:45) (2013) says that domains are extrapolated from the data of "talk" rather than being an actual component of the process of talk. However, domains are as real as the very social institutions of a speech community
c. Role relationship
   A role relationship denotes a relationship between the speaker and the speaking partner. Fishman (1972:37)

(2013) reveals that term role relationships are implicitly recognized and accepted a set of mutual rights and obligations between members of the same sociocultural system. The role relationships in the family domain comprise husband and wife or vice versa. Brother and sister or vice versa. A father and sons, a father and daughters, a mother and sons, a mother and daughters.

d. Speech situation covers the intersection between specific speech acts, a specific setting, and particular times, for example: quarreling, persuading, advising, telling stories, and so ford. The speech situations employed in this study are arguing, advising, chatting, and persuading.

All of the data from the questionnaire sheet and participatory observations are summed and evaluated refer to the value scale associated with role relationships, speech situations, and domains of language use. The form of a range of value is used by what was stated by Fishman (1972: 120-121) (2013) as follows.

Almost always = Acehnese dominant
Frequently = Mix Acehnese and Indonesian
Almost Never = Indonesian dominant
A= Acehnese
I= Indonesian

The language choice will be performed the avarage in percentage forms.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the questionary sheets of the speech situation of husbands to wives in *arguing*, show that 43 husbands use Acehnese dominantly. And identical to 86%. Like speech situations of *arguing*, speech situations of *advising, chatting* as well as *persuading* posit 43 husbands to use dominantly Acehnese. 6 husbands used mix Acehnese and Indonesian in all of the speech situations which are identical to 12%. Only a single husband used dominantly Indonesian, and it is 2%. Table 1 displays the percentage of speech situations

concerning the role relationship husbands to wives in speech situations of *Arguing, advising, chatting*, and *persuading*.

The result in Table 1 shows that 43 or 86% of husbands use more dominantly Acehnese in every single speech situation to their wives. It denotes the significance of quantity of the ethnic language usage in those families. They have the fullest loyalty to their mother tongue, which can be seen that using this language is such a well-integrated part of their day to day communication.

The amount of 6 or 12% of husbands prefers to use mixing Acehnese and Indonesian. Through the data that were taken in participated observation illustrate that this condition came from the interference of the most usage of Indonesian in inter-ethnic interaction, in which Indonesian will eliminate the communication gap among them.

Language choice in Table 2 shows 41 or 82% wives using dominant Acehnese the role relationship of wives to husbands in every single speech situations, but 6 or 12 % wives used code mixing Acehnese and Indonesian in speech situation of *arguing* and *chatting.*,While 4 or 10% persons used the code-mixing in *advising* and *persuading*. Identical to 8%. While Almost Never Acehnese or similar to the Indonesian dominant used by only five persons in *advising* and *persuading*. And 3or 6% person used Indonesian dominant in *arguing* and *chatting*.

Table 2 presents 41 or 82% of wives using dominant Acehnese. They are accustomed to using the vernacular It is primarily because of their fashion within which it conveys the identity. The rest amount of the data (9 people) shows varieties of language choices based on the speech situation. Six persons of them or 12% were familiar with the code-mixing Acehnese/Indonesian, and the other three or 6 % preferred to use Almost Never Acehnese or Indonesian dominant on the speech situation of *arguing* and *persuading* and while on the speech situation of advising and *persuading,* four or 8% used code-mixing. This condition happened because, according to them, it would be easier for them to inform and

Table 1. Language choice

Role relationships	Speech situation	Husbands sample	Almost always acehnese		Frequently acehnese/ indonesian		Almost never acehnese	
		(Data)	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Husband to wife (51 to 60 years old)	Arguing	50	43	86	6	12	1	2
	Advising	50	43	86	6	12	1	2
	Chatting	50	43	86	6	12	1	2
	Persuading	50	43	86	6	12	1	2

Table 2. Language choice

Role relationships	Speech situation	Wife sample	Almost always acehnese		Frequently acehnese/ indonesian		Almost never acehnese	
		(Data)	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Wife to husband (51 to 60 years old)	Argueing	50	41	82	6	12	3	6
	Advising	50	41	82	4	8	5	10
	Chatting	50	41	82	6	12	3	6
	Persuading	50	41	82	4	8	5	10

to convince their husbands using code-mixing. Five or 10% used Indonesian dominant. It would, however, be more convenient for them to use entirely Indonesian when arguing and chatting because this language has influenced them in arguing and chatting with others, excluding their communities.

Language choice in Table 3 below displays the condition, from 50 fathers acknowledged that the frequency of language choice in the amount of 9 or 18% of fathers concerning the role relationships with sons and daughters in the speech situation of *arguing*, *advising*, *chatting*, and *persuading,* denoted Acehnese dominant. And Frequently, Acehnese/Indonesian was 38 or 76 %. And three fathers or 6% of the data used Indonesian dominant or Almost Never Acehnese.

Table 3 performs that the most code used in the role relationship father to sons and daughters is code-mixing (Frequently Acehnese/Indonesian) by 38 0r 76 % persons in all speech situations. The fathers chose this mixing code simply because they fully realize that by doing this, they give their children a chance to recognize their tribe language and their identity. On the other hand, they support Indonesian used as well, because in interaction at schools with other entirely used Indonesian. Only nine fathers use dominant Acehnese. It is because the home is a gathering place which colored by ethnic performance. They are quite sure that it will be easy for their children to learn and to use Indonesian out of the home because all tribes speak this language at school and anywhere else.

Language choice in Table 4 shows that the condition of language choice used by nine mothers or 18 % on the role relationship with son and daughter in the speech situation of *arguing, advising, chatting,* as well as *persuading* conveyed Achenese dominant. While 36 or 72% of mothers used code mixing Acehnese and Indonesian in all of the speech situations, And the rest, five mothers or 10% preferred using Almost Never Acehnese or Indonesian dominant.

Table 4 above indicates the formula of language choice done by mothers to sons and daughters more about using code mixing Acehnese/Indonesian covered by 36 persons or 72%. Like the fathers, the mothers also expressed a similar reason in which they tried to support their children using the tribe language mixing with Indonesian. They hope this way will help the children love and recognize their ethnic well, without rejecting Indonesian at all. Nine persons or 18% used Acehnese dominantly. They attempt to support their children to use the ethnic one. In order, the children will not face difficulty when communicating with older speech partners from their hometown. According to them, the children will find much more chance to use Indonesian anywhere, anytime not merely in school time outside their home because everybody uses this one in every single situation.

Table 5 display 100 (50 sons and 50 daughters) with the role relationships to fathers found,13 persons or 13% used dominantly Acehnese when they communicate to their fathers. Seventy-six persons or 76% tend to use the mixing

Table 3. Language choice

Role relationships	Speech situation	Fathers sample	Almost always acehnese		Frequently acehnese/ indonesian		Almost never acehnese	
		(Data)	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Fathers (51-60 years old) to sons, daughters (5-30 years old)	Argueing	50	9	18	38	76	3	6
	Advising	50	9	18	38	76	3	6
	Chatting	50	9	18	38	76	3	6
	Persuading	50	9	18	38	76	3	6

Table 4. Language choice

Role relationships	Speech situation	Mothers sample	Almost always acehnese		Frequently acehnese/ indonesian		Almost never acehnese	
		(Data)	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Mothers (51-60 years old) to sons and daughters (5-30 years old)	Argueing	50	9	18	36	72	5	10
	Advising	50	9	18	36	72	5	10
	Chatting	50	9	18	36	72	5	10
	Persuading	50	9	18	36	72	5	10

Table 5. Language Choice

Role relationships	Speech situation	Son and daughter	Almost always acehnese		Frequently acehnese/ indonesian		Almost never acehnese	
		(Data)	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Sons and daughters (5-30 years old) to fathers (51-60 years old)	Argueing	100	13	13	76	76	11	11
	Advising	100	13	13	76	76	11	11
	Chatting	100	13	13	76	76	11	11
	Persuading	100	13	13	76	76	11	11

Table 6. Language choice

Role relationships	Speech situation	Son and daughter	Almost always acehnese		Frequently acehnese/ indonesian		Almost never acehnese	
		(Data)	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Sons and daughters (5-30 years old) to mother (51-60)	Argueing	100	13	13	76	76	11	11
	Advising	100	13	13	76	76	11	11
	Chatting	100	13	13	76	76	11	11
	Persuading	100	13	13	76	76	11	11

language Acehnese/Indonesian to their fathers in all of the speech situations. And the rest, those were 11 persons or 11% continuously using dominantly Indonesian.

Table 5 shows that 13 people of them or 13% consists of five sons, and eight daughters used Acehnese dominantly. This generally because their fathers continually use the language to the sons and the daughters. Seventy-six people used the mixing ones because the fathers take this kind of code when interacting with the sons and the daughters. All of them (sons and daughters) fill comfortable using this mixing.

The frequency of language choice on Table 6 from the amount of 100 samples (50 sons and 50 daughters) concerning the role relationships of sons and daughters to mothers in all of the speech situations showed that 13 persons of them or 13% using almost Acehnese. And the usage of mixing code (frequently Acehnese/Indonesian) dominated by 76 persons or 76%. For Almost Never Acehnese (Indonesian dominant) was only used by 11 persons or 11%.

Table 6 above shows that 13 people of them or 13% consists of five sons, and eight daughters used Acehnese dominantly. It is because mothers merely use tribe language to the sons and the daughters all the time when they were at home. This condition, of course, supports them in maintaining their loyalty to using the language. Seventy-six people used the mixing ones because the mothers take this kind of code when interacting with the sons and the daughters. All of them (sons and daughters) fill easier using this mixing.

CONCLUSION

The average percentage of language choice among husbands to wives seemed to be in the top position concerning the role relationships, and the speech situation of *arguing, advising* as well as *chatting* and *persuading* pointed that 86% used almost Acehnese as shown on Table 1. It is followed by the language choice done by wives to husbands, 82% dominantly Acehnese as shown on Table 2. Some factors support this condition. First, it illustrates most husbands, as well as wives, much aware of the existence of their tribe language. It means that they maintained their language well. They had a feeling of being guilty if they did not maintain the language because the choice of code usage is associated with sets of attitudes and socio-cultural values held by the members of the language community. Secondly, communication will run as a relatively simple process of passing information. It is because the participants involved, utilized the same language, recognized its structure, and all of its sounds as well.

The language choice on the role relationship among husbands to wives or vice versa on the range of frequently Acehnese/Indonesian (mixing Acehnese/Indonesian) does not draw on a significant amount. It was only 12 %. It was found that only 2% of the samples use Almost Never Acehnese (dominantly Indonesian)

The percentage of language choice in the role relationships among fathers with sons and daughters, the usage of Acehnese dominant was only 18%, but the usage of mixing code (Indonesian/Acehnese) was 76%, and the rest was 6% place in the position of Indonesian dominant as shown on Table 3. While the average percentage of language choice done by mothers to sons and daughters showed that the usage of Acehnese dominant was only 18%, but the usage of code-mixing (Indonesian/Acehnese) was 72%, and the rest was 10% place in the position of Indonesian dominant, as shown on Table 4. It means that the average percentage of language choice of code-mixing (Indonesian/Acehnese) was 76% in top position.

From all of the average percentage of language choice between Acehnese and Indonesian done in the family domain could be determined that Acehnese is the dominant language used by the husbands to the wives and the wives to the husbands in communicating because more than half amount of the samples prefer to use Acehnese dominantly in the entire speech situations.

From the average percentage of language choice among parents to children, vice versa shows the significant points 76 % of the language choice dominated by mixing Acehnese and Indonesian.

Finding

The result of this research denotes the children in Acehnese society have not left their tribe language at all even they stay in Medan, one of the biggest city in Indonesia. The result showed the significant points (76%) in which the language choice was mixing Acehnese and Indonesian. Simply because the parents habituated using code mixing Acehnese and Indonesian to their children. By continually doing this, the children were familiar with this mixing. Moreover, husbands (86%) and wives (82%) used Acehnese in every single speech situation. Therefore, the parents would get a good impression on the part of solidarity on their ethnic language. In this case, the result did not agree with Chaer et al (1995: 107) statement, "the children in a big city of Indonesia today have already been accustomed to using merely Indonesian to their parents in every speech situation."

Recommendation for Further Study

It is recommended to do on the study of pattern phrase or lexical pattern used by parents to children vice versa in mixing Acehnese and Indonesian in the family domain of the language society that has been discussed above.

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