



Conversational Language Patterns Among Students at Darul Falah 3 Islamic Boarding School in Jombang: A Sociolinguistic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the pattern of language variation in the speech acts of students at the Darul Falah 3 Islamic Boarding School in Jombang using a qualitative approach through the method of communication ethnography. The research data consists of students' speech obtained through the technique of free listening and conversation (SBLC) and documentation in various communication situations in the Islamic boarding school environment. The results of the study indicate that students' communication is characterized by the use of diverse language variations, including Indonesian-Arabic, ngoko-krama, Javanese-English, Javanese-Indonesian, and kromo-ngoko. These variations emerge as a form of adaptation to the students' diverse linguistic backgrounds, communication situations, and social relationships between speakers. The use of Arabic serves as a marker of religious identity, the transition between ngoko and krama reflects an awareness of norms of politeness and social hierarchy, while code-mixing with English shows the influence of modernity and is used to create familiarity in casual interactions. Overall, the language variations in students' communication not only function as a means of conveying information, but also as a means of expressing identity, maintaining social relationships, and adapting to the norms prevailing in the Islamic boarding school environment, thus showing that students' linguistic practices are dynamic and contextual.

Keywords: conversational, language patterns, students, sociolinguistic study

Pola Bahasa Percakapan antar Santri di Pondok Pesantren Darul Falah 3 Jombang: Kajian Sociolinguistik

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pola variasi bahasa dalam tindak tutur santri di Pondok Pesantren Darul Falah 3 Jombang dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis metode etnografi komunikasi. Data penelitian berupa tuturan santri yang diperoleh melalui teknik simak bebas libat cakap (SBLC) dan dokumentasi dalam berbagai situasi komunikasi di lingkungan pesantren. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi santri ditandai dengan penggunaan variasi bahasa yang beragam, meliputi Indonesia-Arab, ngoko-krama, Jawa-Inggris, Jawa-Indonesia, dan krama-ngoko. Variasi tersebut muncul sebagai bentuk adaptasi terhadap latar belakang kebahasaan santri yang beragam, konteks komunikasi, serta hubungan sosial antarpener. Penggunaan bahasa Arab berfungsi sebagai penanda identitas religius; peralihan antara ngoko dan krama mencerminkan kesadaran terhadap norma kesopanan dan hierarki sosial; sedangkan campur kode dengan bahasa Inggris menunjukkan pengaruh modernitas dan digunakan untuk menciptakan keakraban dalam interaksi santai. Secara keseluruhan, variasi bahasa dalam komunikasi santri tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai sarana penyampaian informasi, tetapi juga sebagai sarana untuk mengekspresikan identitas, menjaga hubungan sosial, dan beradaptasi dengan norma yang berlaku di lingkungan pesantren. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa praktik kebahasaan santri bersifat dinamis dan kontekstual.

Kata kunci: pola bahasa, percakapan, santri, kajian sociolinguistik

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INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary means for humans to communicate and interact. It helps people convey ideas and feelings, and build social relationships with others. Language not only serves as a means of communication but also reflects the culture, society, and environment of the speaker (Chaer & Agustina, 2010). Therefore, language use within a community often exhibits certain characteristics related to the customs, values, and social systems that develop within that environment.

Every individual fundamentally needs a social life, both within the personal and group spheres, so social activities are closely linked to interaction. Interactions within a community typically involve greeting each other, joking, and sharing thoughts. In interactions, people never consider a language to be bad, even if linguistically it is not considered good. As long as the community's perspective on speech embodies values of goodness and politeness, and the community understands what is being discussed, it is considered good by that community (Sudali Ahmad, Pairin M Basir Udjang, 2020).

In sociolinguistic studies, language is viewed as a social practice that is inseparable from the context in which it is used. The speaker's social background, communication goals, and interaction situations influence the language choice used (Rokhman, 2013). This leads to the emergence of language variations in society, such as code-switching and code-mixing, which are common phenomena in bilingual or multilingual communities (Sumarsono, 2017). This language variation not only reflects the speaker's linguistic abilities but also demonstrates how the speaker adapts to the communication situation at hand.

To understand linguistic phenomena more broadly, this study uses an ethnographic communication approach. This approach emphasizes that language use must be understood within the social and cultural context in which it is used. According to Hymes (1974), communication can be analyzed through the components of SPEAKING: Setting and Scene, Participants, Ends,

Act Sequence, Key, Instrumentalities, Norms, and Genre. Through this framework, language is seen not only as a structure but also as a social action that has meaning within a specific context.

The phenomenon of language variation is often found in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), which are social communities with diverse speaker backgrounds. Students come from various regions with different mother tongues, so their interactions demonstrate the use of diverse language variations. In addition to Indonesian and regional languages, Arabic is also frequently used in religious activities and learning. This diversity makes student communication an interesting linguistic phenomenon to study from a sociolinguistic perspective (Alfien et al., 2022).

Several previous studies have shown that language variation in educational and Islamic boarding school contexts is influenced by social and situational factors. Research (Alfien et al., 2022) found that code-mixing and code-switching in Islamic boarding schools emerged as a form of adaptation to the diverse linguistic backgrounds of students. Meanwhile, Furqan et al., 2024 showed that the use of code-mixing among the younger generation is also influenced by the development of social media and globalization. Furthermore, Zahroh et al., 2025, revealed that language variation in educational settings reflects the flexibility of speakers in adapting language to the communication context. However, research specifically examining the meaning of language variation in student communication using an ethnographic communication approach is still limited.

Based on this background, the research questions are: (1) what forms of language variation are used by students at the Darul Falah 3 Islamic Boarding School in Jombang in their daily interactions, and (2) what is the meaning of this use of language variation in the context of student communication. In line with this research question, the objectives of this research are: (1) to describe the forms of language variation used by students in their daily interactions, and (2) to analyze the



meaning of the use of language variation in the context of student communication.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with communication ethnography methods to examine the practice of language use in student interactions at the Darul Falah 3 Islamic Boarding School in Jombang. This method is used to study how speakers use their language in specific social contexts. It examines the relationship between language style, communication context, and social relationships between speakers. Through direct observation of naturally occurring communication activities, qualitative research enables researchers to gain a deeper understanding of linguistic phenomena occurring within a speech community (Sugiyono, 2020; Razak, 2017; Abubakar, 2021).

The data analysis technique in this study was descriptive qualitative, where the collected data were analyzed through several stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2020). In the analysis stage, the researcher identified forms of language variation, such as code-mixing and code-switching, then grouped them based on their type and context of use. Next, the data was studied from a communication ethnography perspective, considering communication elements such as the speech situation, participants, goals, and norms that influence language use. The purpose of this analysis was to discover the meaning of utterances and to explain the components that influence the use of language variation in student interactions.

The data collection technique in this study used the Free Listening and Conversation (SBLC) method and observation. The SBLC technique was carried out by listening to conversations between students without directly participating in the interaction, so that the data obtained were natural and not artificial (Sudaryanto, 2015). Furthermore, observations were also conducted to observe communication events occurring within the Islamic boarding school environment, both in formal and informal situations.

RESULTS

The research results show that in their daily interactions, students at Darul Falah 3 Islamic Boarding School in Jombang use a variety of languages. This variation occurs because the students use more than one language when communicating and come from diverse backgrounds. The language variations used by the students include Indonesian–Arabic, Ngoko–krama, Javanese–English, Javanese–Indonesian, and Krama–ngoko. The data were collected based on the results of free listening and observation. These language variations emerged in various communication contexts, such as while studying, participating in religious activities, and casually conversing with other students.

1. Indonesian-Arabic Variation

Student A: "Is my Jurumiyyah book with you?"

Student B: "Yes, I'll borrow it for a moment."

Student A: "Don't take too long, I'll use it."

Student B: "Here it is, thank God."

The conversation took place in the boarding school dormitory before Islamic activities began. At this time, the students usually prepare the books they will use in their lessons. In this conversation, Student A asks Student B about the whereabouts of his Jurumiyyah book, as he will be using it soon. Student B explains that he is borrowing the book for a short time and will return it when finished. The conversation is brief and casual, reflecting everyday interactions among students in the dormitory environment.

From a linguistic perspective, the conversation is conducted largely in Indonesian with elements of simple Arabic. Therefore, it can be considered a type of mixed Indonesian-Arabic code. The word "Jurumiyyah," which refers to the name of a book studied in the science of grammar (*nahwu*), and the expression "*jazakilah*," which is an expression of gratitude, have Arabic elements. The presence of Arabic elements in this discourse indicates that the religious environment of the Islamic boarding school influences the way students communicate with each other.

2. Ngoko-Kromo Variation

Student A: "Miss, how do you say this when you visit?"

Miss, how should I address you when you visit?

Student B: "Nyapo sowan?"

Why visit?

Student A: "No cell phone, campus lady."

Using cell phone on campus

Student B: "Okay, I'm sorry, I'm visiting my cell phone while I'm at college."

Okay, just say, "Excuse me, I'm here to use my cell phone while I'm at college."

Student A: "Oh, thank you, miss."

Oh, thank you, miss.

This is a conversation that took place in an Islamic boarding school (pesantren) as a student was preparing to visit a religious gathering (sowan). Student A asked Student B how to convey his intentions during the visit, for example, by asking permission to use a cell phone for lectures. Student B then inquired about the purpose of the visit and provided examples of polite language to use when speaking with someone who disagreed. This conversation demonstrates that students typically consider the language they will use before visiting to ensure it conforms to the prevailing standards of politeness within the Islamic boarding school. Communication with those in authority is ethical, so the interaction is relaxed yet serious.

The conversation demonstrates the use of various Javanese dialects, shifting between ngoko and krama styles. This is evident in the initial exchange, with expressions such as "nyapo sowan?" and "gae HP-an neng kampus," as the conversation occurs between fellow students on a close relationship. Meanwhile, when Student B provided examples of appropriate language to use during the visit, he included krama styles, such as "ngapunten bade sowan HP-an damel kuliah," which are used to respectfully address someone in a higher position. This shift in speech level indicates that students use linguistic strategies to adapt their language to the communication situation at hand.

3. Javanese-English Variation

Student A: "Hey, ladies, everyone, I have some hot news."

Hey, ladies, everyone, please come over here. I have the latest news.

Student B: "Huh? What's the hot news, miss?"

Huh? What's the latest news?

Student A: "Sek, ben rene kabeh"

Hang on, let's get everyone here first.

This conversation takes place in an Islamic boarding school environment when a student calls his friends to gather to share some information. During the conversation, Student A uses the term "hot news" to get his friends to gather before sharing the information. Student B then asks what the term means, but Student A still asks his friends to gather first. This conversation occurs among students in a casual setting, likely in the dormitory environment when the students are not involved in formal Islamic boarding school activities.

This conversation uses the Javanese ngoko variety as the primary language with elements of English, so it can be classified as a form of ngoko-English code mixing. Utterances such as "rene kabeh" and "opo mbak" indicate a close and equal relationship between the messengers. Meanwhile, Student A uses the expression "hot news" to refer to news he considers interesting or important, and there is an element of English is included. By using English terms in these conversations, you can enhance your expression and capture the attention of your interlocutor. This type of code-mixing is often seen in casual conversations, especially among young Islamic students (students) who are also influenced by the language used in social circles and on social media.

4. Javanese-Indonesian Variations

Student A: "Miss, wait a minute, I want to say something."

Student B: "What? Hurry up, I'm going to the TPQ."

Student A: "Hmm, I'll be fine. I'll die soon."

Okay, later. Please go now.



In an Islamic boarding school, this conversation occurs when one of the students is about to leave for a TPQ class. Initially, Student A calls Student B to say something and asks for a moment to talk. However, Student B responds that he has to leave for his class soon, so there's no time to talk. Student A ends up postponing the conversation after realizing the situation. The spontaneous interactions that occur in the students' daily lives are illustrated in this conversation, where communication often has to adapt to each student's activities and busy schedules.

In this conversation, Indonesian is used as the primary language, with elements of the Javanese ngoko variety adding mixed Indonesian-ngoko code. Expressions such as "I want to say something" and "I want to go to TPQ" demonstrate that Indonesian is the basic language of conversation. Meanwhile, the expressions "ya wes" and "ndang mangkat" contain elements of ngoko (intelligible characters), which are used to indicate familiarity between speakers. The ngoko (intelligible characters) used in this discussion demonstrates an equal social relationship and an informal communication atmosphere. This phenomenon of code-mixing Indonesian and Javanese is common in student communication, especially in Islamic boarding schools located in Javanese-speaking areas.

5. Kromo-Ngoko Variation

Student A: "Excuse me, miss. Is it possible to pay the tuition fee by bank transfer?"

Excuse me, miss. Can tuition payments be made via bank transfer?

Student B: "Yes, that's fine. It's fine."

Yes, you can. Please let your friends know.

Student A: "Thank you, miss. Thank you."

Yes, miss, thank you.

This conversation takes place in the Islamic boarding school office regarding tuition payment administration. Student A comes to inquire about whether payment can be made by bank transfer. Because he is dealing with an administrator or a student with administrative responsibilities,

politeness is required in the office. Consequently, Student A begins his speech with "ngapunten mbak," which is a request for permission and a sign of respect. Student B then explains that payment can be made by bank transfer and asks that the other students be aware of this. Overall, the interaction is mildly formal, functional, and focused on administrative needs, with Student A expressing his gratitude at the end.

This conversation combines krama and ngoko Javanese. Krama forms such as "ngapunten," "saged," "nopo," and "enggeh" are used by Student A to show respect to a more senior or powerful interlocutor in the office. Meanwhile, Student B uses more casual ngoko forms, such as "iyoo iso" and "kandani kancane liaye ben eruh." This difference in speech levels indicates an unequal social relationship. Speakers in lower positions use krama as a form of politeness, or linguistic etiquette, while speakers in higher positions or with authority can use ngoko without being considered impolite. This phenomenon demonstrates that the context of the setting and the social relationships between speakers significantly influence the choice of speech level in student communication.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the language used by students at the Darul Falah 3 Islamic Boarding School in Jombang is not merely linguistically diverse but also reflects their social meanings, identities, and the communication strategies they employ on a daily basis. In other words, the language used by students serves a function beyond disseminating information; it serves as a tool for adapting to their social and cultural environment.

First, the use of Indonesian-Arabic code-mixing in students' conversations demonstrates the significant influence of the religious environment at the Islamic boarding school. The Arabic terms that emerge in conversation indicate that the language has been internalized in the students' daily lives, particularly in scholarly and religious contexts. Thus, the use of Arabic is not simply a

language choice but also a form of affiliation with the Islamic values ??entrenched within the Islamic boarding school environment. This phenomenon demonstrates that Arabic plays a practical and symbolic role in the students' lives, particularly in religious studies.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this phenomenon demonstrates the ability to speak two languages ??and serves as a marker of social and religious identity. The use of Arabic elements demonstrates the instilling of Islamic principles in the students' communication.

Second, the variation between ngoko and krama in Javanese demonstrates that students are aware of ethical standards and communication hierarchies. As seen in the preparation for a sowan (visiting a meeting), the shift from ngoko to krama demonstrates that students are able to change their language choices according to the audience and the communication situation. This shift in speech level demonstrates that students possess strong pragmatic competence, namely the ability to adapt language to the situation and audience. In this context, language functions as a tool to maintain harmonious social relations, especially when dealing with those with higher authority.

This phenomenon demonstrates that language is used as a communication strategy that takes into account the social relations between speakers, not randomly. Language functions as a tool to maintain social balance and demonstrate respect in these situations.

Third, the variation in Javanese and English seen in casual conversation demonstrates the influence of modernity and the contemporary era on students' language. In everyday conversation, the use of the term "hot news" demonstrates linguistic creativity and an attempt to express something more engagingly. This type of code mixing is typically expressive and used to create intimacy and attract the attention of the audience. This indicates that students are not unconnected to global language dynamics, even within the relatively traditional Islamic boarding school environment. English terms are used not solely for

communication purposes, but rather for expressive purposes, namely to attract attention, create a contemporary impression, and foster closeness between speakers.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the use of English in this context is not only a need for communication, but also a stylistic strategy to create a contemporary and familiar impression.

Fourth, the language of Islamic boarding school students (santri) is flexible in communication, as demonstrated by the Javanese-Indonesian variations used in everyday conversation. In semi-formal or casual situations, a combination of the two languages ??is often used, especially when students want to convey a message more clearly while maintaining a sense of familiarity. Indonesian functions as a unifying language, while Javanese is still used to maintain social closeness, according to this phenomenon.

Fifth, the use of krama and ngoko in the same conversation indicates an imbalance in social relations recognized by the speakers. Speakers with lower positions tend to use krama as a form of respect, while speakers with higher positions can use ngoko without being considered a violation of norms. This phenomenon confirms that language in the context of Islamic boarding schools functions as a marker of social structure as well as a tool to emphasize each individual's position in interactions.

Overall, the language variations used by Islamic boarding school students represent a dynamic and contextual form of sociolinguistic practice. The code-mixing and code-switching that occur are not random but are based on considerations of the situation, the purpose of the communication, and the social relations between the speakers. This indicates that students possess good communicative competence in adapting their language use to the context they encounter. This finding aligns with the concept of communication ethnography, which emphasizes that understanding language cannot be separated from the social and cultural context in which it is used.



CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussions conducted, it can be concluded that communication among students at the Darul Falah 3 Islamic Boarding School in Jombang exhibits diverse and dynamic language variations. These variations include the use of Indonesian–Arabic, ngoko–krama, Javanese–English, Javanese–Indonesian, and kromo–ngoko. This diversity arises from the students' diverse linguistic backgrounds and the influence of the multilingual and religious environment of the Islamic boarding school.

This language variation is influenced by the communication context, the intended meaning of the utterance, and the social relationships between speakers. Students tend to use more polite language, such as krama or more polite expressions, in formal situations or when dealing with people of higher authority. However, in more casual situations, fellow students often use code-mixing, using Indonesian and English.

Thus, it can be understood that language in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) serves not only as a means of communication but also as a means of expressing identity, maintaining norms of politeness, and reflecting the existing social structure. Students indirectly possess the ability to adapt their language use to the situation at hand, thus demonstrating strong communicative competence in their daily language practices.

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