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**A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF SURYAKANCANA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS (A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF IDIOLECT AND DIALECT
LANGUAGE VARIATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE
OF THEIR SPEAKERS)**

Dinar Nursyifa

dinarnursyifa4@gmail.com

Suryakancana University, Cianjur, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the idiolect and dialect language variations used by Suryakancana University students from the perspective of their speakers in sociolinguistic studies. Language variations arise as a result of differences in the social, cultural, and geographical backgrounds of the speakers. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive method. The subjects of this study were Suryakancana University students who came from various regions and social backgrounds. The research data consisted of students' oral speech obtained through observation, recording, and interview techniques. The data were analyzed by identifying linguistic characteristics that reflect the speakers' idiolects and dialects. The results of the study indicate that there are idiolect variations evident in the choice of vocabulary, speaking style, and intonation of each student, as well as dialect variations influenced by the speakers' regions of origin. These language variations do not hinder the communication process between students, but rather enrich social interactions in the campus environment. This research is expected to contribute to the development of sociolinguistic studies, particularly related to the understanding of language variations in the university environment.

Keywords: language variation, idiolect, dialect

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in human life because it is the primary means of communication. As a means of communication, language encompasses words, groups of words, clauses, and sentences expressed orally and in writing. Language is a system of human communication expressed through a structured arrangement of sounds or



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written expressions that form larger units, such as morphemes, words, and sentences. Language is a reciprocal system of symbols and is formed from the sound elements of human speech. This is explained in the book "Khazanah Antopologi" (2009), published by the Center for Bookkeeping, Department of National Education.

Language is also part of the most basic human abilities and is a key characteristic of the Homo sapiens species. According to linguists, although animals have the ability to use symbols or signs to communicate, this communication system does not constitute language. The primary function of language is as a means of communication. Communication is carried out by humans, as social creatures. As social creatures, humans are constantly required to interact with other humans. Humans are creatures created to live in relationships with others. This interaction process requires tools to connect with other individuals. Based on this, what is called language variation emerged. Language variation itself arises from the social interaction process of diverse speakers. Language is a tool for interacting with other people. All ideas, thoughts, and intentions of speakers are conveyed through language.

Language is not only used by educated people but also by various groups, both educated and uneducated. Whether officials or ordinary people, all are language users. Therefore, a variety of languages are used by language users. Members of society usually consist of various people with different social statuses and cultural backgrounds. Due to the differences in background and environment, they use varied languages. According to Chaer and Agus Tina (2018:61), language as a language has systems and subsystems that are understood equally by all speakers. However, because these speakers exist within a speech community, not a homogeneous or identical group of people, the concrete form of language is not uniform. This diversity occurs not only because the speakers are not homogeneous, but also because their social interactions are very diverse. This diversity will increase if the language is used by a large number of speakers and over a wider area.

As time goes by, the language also evolves. Technological advancements also contribute to language development. Differences in social groups, occupations, activities, and communities also contribute to language diversity. These factors can be considered as one of the causes of language variation. This diversity or variation in language occurs not only because speakers cannot live alone, but also because of the different social interactions they engage in. Each person has different activities. Each individual speaker contributes to this diversity. Speakers spread across a wide area will result in greater language diversity.

Language variation is a type of language whose use is adapted to function and situation without adopting the basic rules that apply to the language in question (Suwito, 1985: 29).

Language variation related to its use, its users, or its function is called functionallect, variety, or register. This variation is usually discussed based on the field of use, style, or level of formality and means of use (Nababan, as cited in Chaer, 1995: 89-90).



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Characteristics of language variation that arise from differences in field of use include lexicogrammatical, phonological, and indicator features in the form of specific word forms, grammatical markers, or even phonological markers that serve to signal to language users that a particular register is being used. These markers or characteristics also differentiate one register from another.

According to Chaer and Agus Tina (2018: 62), there are two perspectives on this variation. First, language variation, or language varieties, is seen as a result of the social diversity of speakers of a language and the diversity of its functions. Second, this variation exists to fulfill its function as a means of interaction in diverse societal activities. Therefore, it can be concluded that language variation is a form of language variety that occurs due to social interaction between people.

Different environments influence the use or usage of language within a given society. Types of Language Variation include:

- 1) Language variation based on speakers.
 - a. Idiolect language variation, which is a language variation that is individual in nature. According to the concept of idiolect, each person has their own language variation. This variation relates to the "color" of voice, word choice, style, sentence structure, and so on.
 - b. Dialect language variation, which is a language variation based on a relatively large group of speakers residing in a particular place, region, or area. Because this dialect is based on the region or area where the speaker lives, it is commonly called an areal dialect, regional dialect, or geographic dialect (but in this book we will simply call it a dialect).
- 2) Based on language usage, dialects are distinguished as follows:
 - a. Regional dialect, which is a language variation used in a specific area. For example, the Indonesian dialect of Ambon, the Jakarta dialect, or the Medan dialect.
 - b. Social dialects are dialects used by certain social groups or that indicate a particular social class, such as youth dialect.
 - c. Temporal dialects are dialects used during a specific time period. For example, the Malay dialect of the Srivijaya era and the Malay dialect of the Abdullah era.

Idiolects are individual language varieties. These idiolects relate to tone of voice, word choice, style, and sentence structure. However, the most dominant feature is tone of voice. If you are familiar enough with someone, you can recognize them simply by hearing their voice without seeing them. Recognizing someone's idiolect from their speech is indeed easier than from written works. If there are 1,000 speakers, for example, there will be 1,000 idiolects, each with its own characteristics that indicate their idiolect. Even twins can still distinguish the tone of voice that characterizes their idiolect.



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A dialect is a language variety of a relatively large group of speakers, residing in a particular place, region, or area. Because this dialect is based on the region or area where the speaker lives, it is often called an areal dialect, regional dialect, or geographic dialect. Speakers of a dialect, although they each have their own idiolect, share common characteristics that distinguish them. A dialect is a set of distinct local speech forms that share common characteristics, each more similar to other speech forms from other languages and from the same language. Another characteristic is that dialects do not necessarily adopt all speech forms from a single language. Speakers of a dialect, although they each have their own idiolect, share common characteristics that distinguish them.

Chambers (Nurhayati, 2009:6) states that a dialect is a system that influences a society by distinguishing it from neighboring communities using different, though closely related, systems. There are five types of differences found in dialects:

1. Phonetic, polymorphic, or allophonic differences. These differences lie in phonology, and speakers of the dialects in question are usually unaware of them.
2. Semantic differences, which are differences in meaning.
3. Anonymous differences, which indicate different names for a single concept given in different places.
4. Semasiological differences, which are the same name given to several different concepts.
5. Morphological differences, which are the differences between morphemes and words.

METHOD

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method because it qualitatively describes the idiolect and dialect forms heard from the speakers' speech in recorded interviews. This study used data sources in the form of audio recordings of the speakers' speech during interviews regarding character education. The data collection technique used was listening and recording interviews. This listening technique means the researcher first listened to the source data while recording the audio during the interview. Then, the recorded interviews were listened to in more depth to record the results. The data analysis used in this study was content analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research will focus on key aspects of language variation, namely idiolect and dialect. Data were collected from interviews with several students at Suryakancana University, Cianjur. The students who participated in these interviews came from diverse backgrounds, including those in southern Cianjur. The students spoke Indonesian, sometimes mixed with Sundanese. The students were interviewed with several questions regarding character education.



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The research data collected will focus on interviews with five Suryakancana University students, which were recorded. The recordings contained answers to questions about character education.

Idiolects in Interviews with Suryakancana University Students, Cianjur

The first linguistic data is the idiolect variation characteristic of the first respondent.

Language Situation: Formal (Shiva Salwa, a second-year PBSI student)

1. I agree, because all students will experience the educative actions **em** of their teachers...
2. Yes, perhaps the point **yah** that it should be with someone who is already educated...
3. **Eu** prefer to maintain a good attitude and a positive attitude...

Some idiolects characteristic of this student, Shiva, include the frequent use of the word "em" in his interviews. This use of "em" is not influenced by the speaker's native language, Sundanese. This can occur when the speaker feels awkward and stiff during the interview.

Secondly, the use of the word "yah" is a characteristic of the speaker, as he inserts "yah" several times in his interviews with a Sundanese-sounding tone and a lowering intonation. Furthermore, the use of "eu" is repeated several times during the interview, which is a characteristic of a speaker who seems somewhat nervous during the interview.



Figure 1 Interview Process with Shiva Salwa.

The second linguistic data is the idiolectal variation characteristic of the second respondent. Linguistic Situation: Relaxed (Rachmah Nurjannah, a 3rd-year Islamic Economics student)

1. Because **eu** character education can build...



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The idiolectal form characteristic of this student, Rachmah, is her frequent use of the interjection "eu" when answering interview questions. This occurs because the speaker, or student, appears to be thinking before speaking.

The third linguistic data is the idiolectal variation characteristic of the third respondent. Linguistic Situation: Relaxed (Aldy Gunawan, Islamic Economics student, T3).

- 1) Okay, may I answer **yah**
- 2) Our language **mah** just a matter of words, but there's something wrong...
- 3) Because **da** of that, why bother going deeper into...
- 4) In our environment, it's all...

Several forms of idiolect can be found in the speech of this student named Aldy. First, the speaker says "yah" with a descending tone or intonation, which can indicate someone from West Java or the Sundanese ethnic group.

Second, the speaker uses the words "mah" and "weh" several times, indicating that their speech is influenced by their native Sundanese language.

Third, the word "da" is often used by Sundanese people, and this is also a characteristic of Aldy's speech.

Fourth, the word "ge" is influenced by Sundanese, which is also a characteristic of the speaker's speech. The fourth linguistic data is the idiolect variation that characterizes the fourth respondent.

Linguistic Situation: Casual (Eneng Epa Patimah, 3rd-year PBSI student)

- 1) **Tah** that person will never be wrong, like that...
- 2) **Tapi na** is sometimes inappropriate...
- 3) For example, his parents are wise, **huh**...
- 4) You should use the term **mah**...

The first manifestation of idiolect in the interview with a student named Eneng is the use of the word "tah." This word is characteristic of the speaker when referring to something, and it is a word frequently used by Sundanese people.

Second, the speaker inserts "na" into their sentences when answering questions.

Third, the word "yah" is often heard when Sundanese people speak, and this is also a characteristic of the speaker's speech.

Fourth, the word "mah" is inserted by the speaker into their speech, which is characteristic of Sundanese people.

In her speech, this student is characterized by her soft tone and distinctive South Cianjur dialect. The fifth linguistic data item is the idiolect variation that characterizes the fifth respondent. Language situation: Casual (Tsana Ridhwa, second-year Law student)

- 1) Of course I agree **yah**, because...
- 2) What **yo**, because it turns out character education is so important...



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The first manifestation of idiolect in the interview with a student named Tsana is the use of the word "yah." This "yah" is often heard when Sundanese people speak. And in every sentence he utters, it always sounds like a distinctive characteristic.

Second, the word "opo" is often heard when Javanese people speak.

Dialects in Interviews with Students at Suryakancana University, Cianjur

In every region, the people who live there have their own dialect. We can tell where someone lives or is from simply by listening to their dialect. However, someone may have a dialect that isn't native to a region, but rather because they have lived there for a long time, making the dialect inherent in their speech.

When speaking Indonesian, it's clear that students use the Sundanese dialect, especially those from southern Cianjur. Their speech has a distinctive characteristic that indicates they are from South Cianjur.

The following is a sampling of Sundanese dialects from interviews with several Suryakancana University students regarding character education.

The first linguistic data is dialect variation. Linguistic Situation: Formal (Shiva Salwa, 2nd-year PBSI student)

- 1) I agree because all students will experience the educative actions **em** of their teachers...
- 2) Yes, perhaps the point **yah** that it should be with someone who is already educated...
- 3) **Eu** prefer to be able to maintain a good attitude and a positive attitude...
- 4) For example, "Yes, students will do something..."

In the first linguistic data, the sentences used are Indonesian, but sometimes the word "yah" is inserted with a falling intonation, indicating the speaker is using the Sundanese dialect.

The second linguistic data is dialect variation. Linguistic Situation: Casual (Rachmah Nurjanah, 3rd-year Islamic Economics student)

- 1) To survive in her environment...
- 2) To survive, her Indonesian is "**naon sih**"

In the second linguistic data, the sentences used are Indonesian, but in the second sentence, Sundanese is seen, namely "naon sih." This student also uses the Sundanese dialect.

The third linguistic data is dialect variation. Linguistic Situation: Relaxed (Aldy Gunawan, 3rd year Islamic Economics student)

- 1) Okay, I'll answer **yah**.
- 2) We're **mah** just talking nonsense, but there's something wrong...
- 3) Because **da** there's no point in going deeper...
- 4) In our environment, it's all about...
- 5) I agree, regarding character building, it's considered very important...
- 6) Within the family, parents, parenting, from parents, is very important...
- 7) There will be good output...



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The third linguistic data shows the use of Sundanese, the national language, and a foreign language by a student named Aldy. Sundanese is evident in the Sundanese dialect spoken, namely in the words "yah," "mah," "da," and "ge." Then there is code-mixing in the words "parenting," "parents," and "output." These words are foreign languages, but their pronunciation is influenced by the Sundanese dialect.

The fourth linguistic data is dialect variation. Language situation: Casual (Eneng Epa Patimah, 3rd year PBSI student)

- 1) Because it serves as a very useful benchmark for our community.
- 2) **InshaAllah**, the child will be able to socialize well.

The fourth linguistic data shows the use of Indonesian and Sundanese. The word "kitu" is pronounced with a descending intonation and is somewhat prolonged. The second sentence contains the word "InshaAllah," which is an Arabic loanword.



Figure 3 Interview with Eneng Epa Patimah.

The fifth linguistic data item concerns dialect variation. Language situation: Casual (Tsana Ridhwa, second-year Law student)

- 1) As for the influence itself, it seems there isn't one, **yo**...
- 2) Of course, it's our job; this **ndak** work if...
- 3) **Ora** many people understand the importance of character education...

From the three linguistic data above, it appears that there are several words frequently used by Javanese people in their speech. These words include "yo, ndak, ora." This is due to the speakers' background of Javanese descent, so it's not uncommon for conversations within their family to use some Javanese.

Throughout the interviews, the speakers, who are students, used the Sundanese dialect. This occurs because they live and grow up in a community where the majority of speakers speak Sundanese. However, some students use a foreign language in their speech, as they are accustomed to mixing Indonesian with foreign languages, even

Sundanese, in their daily lives. Some students also interject a Javanese word into each sentence.

DISCUSSION

The research results indicate that the language variation used by Suryakancana University students is inseparable from the social, cultural, and geographical backgrounds of their speakers. Findings regarding idiolect variation demonstrate that each student possesses distinctive linguistic characteristics, such as varying diction, intonation, speaking speed, and style. This aligns with sociolinguistic theory, which states that idiolect represents an individual's identity, shaped by personal experiences, educational level, family environment, and intensity of social interaction.

Meanwhile, the dialect variation found in student speech demonstrates the strong influence of regional languages, particularly in phonological and lexical aspects. Students from different regions tend to incorporate characteristics of their regional dialects into their use of Indonesian, both consciously and unconsciously. This phenomenon reinforces the view that Indonesian as a lingua franca is not homogeneous but actively interacts with the regional languages of its speakers.

The discussion also reveals the phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing in student communication, particularly in informal situations. The use of regional languages or other language elements within Indonesian serves as a strategy to build solidarity, familiarity, and communication efficiency. In formal contexts, such as academic activities, students tend to conform to standard linguistic norms, although the influence of idiolects and dialects can still be found to a limited extent.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that language variation in student environments is a normal phenomenon and should not be viewed as deviation, but rather as a form of linguistic richness. This discussion reinforces the importance of understanding sociolinguistics in higher education so that lecturers and students can be tolerant and adaptive to linguistic diversity in academic and social interactions.

CONCLUSION

This study describes the idiolects and dialects of the language community studying at Suryakancana University in Cianjur through recorded interviews. Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that: First, an idiolect is essentially a form of language or characteristic of speech used by an individual, whether in vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation. The students' idiolects in the recorded interviews are expressed in the words "em," "yah," "eu," "da," and "mah," which indicate the speaker's nervousness and awkwardness during the interview, using a descending intonation typical of the Sundanese accent. Second, the dialect used by the interviewed students is Sundanese. This occurs because the students live and grow up in a predominantly Sundanese community, so the dialect that emerges is Sundanese.



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However, some students also use a foreign language in their speech due to their habit of mixing various languages in their daily conversations.

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