Language Choice of the 2nd and 6th Semester Students, Academic Year 2009 and 2011 at the Campus of Faculty of Letters Jember University

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilaksanakan karena adanya kesenjangan antara tingginya tuntutan kemampuan Bahasa Inggris mahasiswa Sastra Inggris dan minimnya penggunaan Bahasa Inggris di kalangan mahasiswa yang bersangkutan. Dengan teori domain, penelitian ini bertujunan untuk mengetahui pemilihan bahasa oleh mahasiswa secara umum serta alasan mereka memilih bahasa lain selain Bahasa Inggris di kampus dari sudut pandang kajian sosiolinguistik. Selain menggunakan interview dan observasi, penelitian ini juga memakai survey sebagai teknik pengumpulan data yang paling utama. Kuesioner didistribusikan kepada lebih dari seratus mahasiswa dari dua semester yang berbeda; semester dua dan semester enam. Dengan menggunakan metode analisa deskriptif, ditemukan bahwa di kampus, Bahasa Inggris digunakan pada situasi formal oleh mahasiswa semester enam, namun pada situasi informal, Bahasa Inggris tersisih oleh bahasa lain. Sementara itu, kurangnya kepercayaan diri serta kurangnya dukungan dari lingkungan, terutama dari kalangan mahasiswa sendiri menjadi alasan utama mereka untuk memilih bahasa lain dibandingkan Bahasa Inggris di kampus.

Kata Kunci: Sosiolinguistik, pemilihan bahasa, kompetensi, Bahasa Inggris.

Abstract

This research is conducted due to the gap between high qualifications of English Department Students' English competence against the limited use of English among them. Using domain theory, it aims at finding out their language choice and reasons to choose other languages instead of English at the campus through sociolinguistics spectacles. In addition to taking observation and interview, survey technique is also used as the main instrument. Questionnaires are distributed to more than a hundred of students of two semesters; 2nd and 6th semester students. Using descriptive method data analysis, it is revealed that at the campus, English is dominant in the education domain among the 6th semester students only, in which more formal situation occurs, but it is inferior against other languages in the friendship domain. Meanwhile, the students find lack of confidence and support from their surroundings as their main reasons of choosing other languages instead of English at the campus.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, language choice, competence, English.
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Introduction

English Department students are required to have excellent command in English. Consequently, it should be normal for them to use English in daily occasion, particularly when they speak to other students and lecturers. This corresponds to English Department graduates' qualification, which is being competent in English both theoretically and practically. It can be seen from some regulations issued; e.g. thesis writing and examination in English. However, the fact shows contradiction. Most of the writer's classmates less frequently speak English at campus. Local language still dominates most conversation among us, particularly outside the classroom, where we spend spare time before and after the class. Only few students speak English intensively at campus. From the above case, we can see an apparent gap between goals of studying in this department and the students' language habit. It is questionable then, whether a competent English speaker as one of the qualifications of English Department graduates can be achieved, considering the fact that their language choice is not dominated by English but other languages.

It is also realized that, the students may also employ English in other place. There is no guarantee that the students who less frequently use English at campus also do so outside. Nevertheless, their language choice is perhaps quite analogous, since as stated by Holmes (2002:10) that the member of each community has distinctive linguistic repertoire from the other. They ultimately have different list of languages or repertoire from others not included in their community as English Department students. English is one of the languages that distinguish them from the other

member. Consequently, only with students and lecturers within the same department they will show a certain and distinct language habit by using English, for example. Their language at campus can be a useful indicator of their language choice somewhere else. This makes sense. If in a very supporting place as in campus; students do not speak English, what will they do in the other place? Accordingly, taking campus as the settings of this research is very suitable, since it is the place in which the linguistic repertoires of the people at campus are relatively the same.

In addition to taking campus as the settings, students and lecturers within the same department are chosen as the participants, due to the complex situation both students and lecturers generally encounters. Not only do the situations consist of informal situations as outside classrooms but also formal ones; in the classrooms when having lecture. There are eight situations included both in informal and formal situations. The complexity of the situation then adds more information to this research and makes it more interesting, compared if only a single situation involved. This is under the consideration that different situation requires different language. The more situations included the more complex the language choice is. There is also another question regarding this. Why do some English Department students above use other languages instead of English, even though they have a company to speak English? Taking students and lecturers as the participants are very appropriate in this case, regarding the certain linguistic repertoire they share and the more situations encountered.

To answer those questions above, this research investigates the language choice of English Department students from two different academic years. This research is entitled "Language choice of English Department students of the 2nd and 6th semester, academic year 2009 and 2011 at the campus of Faculty of Letters, Jember University". Choosing the 2nd and 6th semester is because of one of the research's aims, which is to find out whether competence indicated by the length of study influence the students' language choice. The 6th semester students represent senior students and the 2nd semester represents junior students, where the senior ones are considered more competent than the junior ones, though that is not always true. However, taking this into account is very useful in answering these research problems explained before.

Considering the academic years differences, it is interesting to find out what language they choose in different situations at the campus and why they choose other languages instead of English. By answering these questions, the problems of the less intensive use of English by the students can be revealed.

Methods

There are four elements of this research method, which include the type of data, the type of research, the data collection and the data analysis. Each of them will be discussed further as follow:

The data in this research is included in both qualitative and quantitative data, since they can be in the form of numbers and descriptions. The data taken from the surveys are considered as quantitative data to which statistical formulas are applied. On the other hand, the data taken from the other two techniques, observation and interview are considered as qualitative data in which descriptions are used.

Regarding the type of research, this research can be categorized as field research, in which field as the main source of the data as opposed to library research, where documents as the main source.

To collect the data, three techniques; survey or questionnaire, interview and observation are employed.

Their language choice is discoverd through survey, while their reasons of their language choice is revealed via the interview as well as the survey.

The survey is used to make generalisation of the data, while the use of interview is for exploring further information.

Regarding the third technique, which is the observation, it is used to check the students' answer in the survey dealing with their language choice.

Considering the difference charactheristic, the subjects of this research have, stratified sampling is chosen as the suitable sampling technique (Masyhud, 2010:73). 2009 students are assumed to have different language habit from 2011 students. Consequently, the students or the subjects are treated separately based on their strata, or in this case based on their academic years.

Dealing with the use of observation, the suitable kind of sampling are also required. The sampling of observation does not concern with the number of persons of the population but rather, it deals with the time and duration. Sampling in observation is called time sampling (Friedrich, 1985:44)

In the survey, 101 students of two academic years are involved as the samples. This number is resulted from 50% of each academic year population. They are given two questions regarding their language choice and the frequency rate of each language chosen. For the latter questions, Likert scale is used, this follows Crawford (2002:http://rel.sagepub.com), the scale is used to find out the students' estimation on their use of a particular language chosen at the campus. The scale ranges from 1-4(a. Occasionally=1 b. Rarely=2 c. Frequently=3 d. Usually=4).

The questionaire reveals their language choice in two language domains; friendship domain and education domain. Also, from two settings, classroom and outside the classroom, lecturer, classmate, close friend and distant friend are included as participants. Besides, four topics, consisting of discussing the lecture, asking about an assignment, telling joke and gossiping are also included. The different settings, participants and topics are aimed to find out the influences of these social factors to the students' language choice.

Table 2. The distribution of domains of language use, which bases the questionnaire

Domain	Setting	Topic	Interlocutor
Education	Classrooms	Discussing the material	Classmates
	Outside	Discussing the	Classmates

	Classrooms	material	
	Classrooms	Discussing the material	Lecturer
	Classrooms	Telling jokes	Lecturer
Friendship	Outside Classrooms	Telling jokes	Classmates
	Outside Classrooms	Talking about an assignment	Distant friend
	Outside Classrooms	Talking about an assignment	Close friend
	Outside Classrooms	Gossiping	Close friend

In addition to revealing the students' language choice, the questionnaire is also used to discover their reasons of using other languages instead of English at campus. First, using interviews, the researcher collect several students' reasons of their language choice. After that, from the result of the interview, the new questionnaire is constructed. The interviewees' answers are listed in the questionnaire. The objective of using the questionnaire is to find out the most representative answers to the students' reasons in general.

In the observation, two situations are taken as the sample. First, is the situation in the class, in which the subjects or the students have a class. Second, it is the situation out of the class, in their spare time.

After the data are collected by some data collections mentioned. They are analyzed using descriptive analysis, following Mc Milan, (1992:2). The data analysis is divided into two categories, which are all done through analyzing the questionnaire.

This research analyze their language choice in two aspects. It includes, the percentage of the language users and the frequency rate of the language.

For the percentage of the language users, the number of students choosing a certain language is simply divided with the overal sample taken. The result of this calculation is in the form of percentage of each language users.

Dealing with the frequency rate, the data are simply got by dividing the accumulation score of each language scale with the number of all the sample taken. The result of this calculation will be in the form of points, ranging from 1.0 as the lowest point to 4.0. as the highest.

Results

The results of this research will be started from the language choice in the two domains, and its implication over the students' use of English. Finally, the discussion will move to the reasons of their language choice.

As previously explained, that this study takes two groups of students from different academic years, 2009 and 2011. The discussion then begins with the former year followed by the latter one.

The Students' Language Choice
Their language choice is presented based on eight situations included in the questionaire as seen in table 2. The

first four situations, number 1 to 4 belong to education domain, while the rests, number 5 to 8 belong to friendship domain.

Table. 4.1.1 The percentage of language users of 2009 students

No	Eng	Ind	Jav	Mad	Kor	Sun	Tha
1	**96 %**	89%	26%	9%			
2	**92 %**	96 %	51 %	16 %			
3	**96 %**	100 %	77 %	34 %	4%		2 %
4	**94 %**	100 %	91 %	40 %	4%		
5	**51 %**	94 %	98 %	51 %	4%		
6	**73 %**	100%	79 %	32 %			
7	**90 %**	98 %	85 %	26 %	2%		
8	**79 %**	98 %	85 %	30 %	4 %	2%	

Table. 4.1.2 The percentage of language users of 2011 students

No	Eng	Ind	Jav	Mad	Fre	Usi	Kor	Jep	Ara	Bat	Sun
1	**98 %**	100 %	25%	2 %	13%			2 %			
2	**98 %**	98%	48 %	13 %	8 %		2%	2 %			
3	**100 %**	100%	92 %	33 %	6 %	2 %	2 %	2 %		2%	2%
4	**98 %**	100%	92 %	39 %	8 %	4 %	2 %	2 %	2%		
5	**87 %**	100%	92 %	39 %	8 %	4%	2 %	2%	2 %		
6	**67 %**	100%	69 %	21 %	2 %						
7	**98 %**	100 %	87 %	29 %	4 %	2 %					
8	**73 %**	98%	89 %	33%	6 %	2%	2%				

Table 4.2.1 The frequency rate of language choice of 2009 students

No	Eng	Ind	Jav	Mad	Kor	Sun	Tha
1	**3.3**	2.5	1.3	1.4			
2	**3.0**	1.8	1.9	1.8			
3	**2.6**	3.0	3.0	1.9	1.5		1.5
4	**2.3**	2.9	2.9	2.0	2.5		
5	**2.1**	3.0	3.2	3.0	2.5		
6	**2.0**	3.3	2.4	1.9			
7	**2.0**	3.1	2.9	2.2	2.0		
8	**2.1**	2.8	3.2	2.6	2.0	1.0	

Table 4.2.2 The frequency rate of langauge choice of 2011 students

No	Eng	Ind	Jav	Mad	Fre	Usi	Kor	Jep	Ara	Bat	Sun
1	**2.8**	3.2	1.4	1.0	1.0		1.0	1.0			
2	**2.7**	3.2	1.5	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0			
3	**2.1**	3.5	2.7	1.6	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0		1.0	1.0
4	**1.9**	3.2	3.0	1.5	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0		
5	**1.9**	2.9	3.1	2.1	1.5			1.0	1.0		
6	**1.8**	3.6	2.1	1.8	1.0	1.0					

7	1.8	3.1	3.0	1.9	1.0	1.0	1.0				
8	1.8	3.1	3.1	1.8	1.0		1.0				

1	The less confidence	27	25	**45**	**44**
2	The availability of company	**44**	**42**	27	32
3	The exclusive use of English	**37**	**28**	31	30
4	The high anxiety level	19	16	19	16
5	The other students' tease and mockery	**35**	**32**	31	**37**

Notes:

Eng: English Usi :Using

Ind : Indonesian Fre : French

Jav : Javanese Kor: Korean

Mad: Madurese Jap : Japanese

Bat : Batak Ara : Arabic

Sun : Sunda Tha: Thai

The students' reasons of language choice

These information provide five out of fourteen reasons revealed from the interview and survey. They are the top five reasons chosen by the students. Selecting only few reasons due to the limited space in this form of writing. The discussion then begin with their reasons in the education domain followed by those in friendship domain.

Table. 4.2.1 The students' reason of choosing other langauges instead of English in education domain

No	Domain	Education					
	Situation	With Lecturer in the Class		With Friend in the Class		With Lecturer out of the Class	
	Year: 2009/2011	09	11	09	11	09	11
	The percentage	%		%		%	
1	The less confidence	**69**	**74**	**44**	**30**	**58**	**53**
2	The availability of company	2	0	19	21	2	5
3	The exclusive use of English	2	5	2	14	4	2
4	The high anxiety level	**44**	**16**	**33**	**25**	31	23
5	The other students' tease and mockery	2	2	6	12	16	5

Table. 4.2.1   The students' reason of choosing other languages instead of English in frienship domain

No	Domain	Friendship	
	Situation	With Friend out of the Class	With Friend Talking about Assignment
	Year: 2009/2011	09 | 11	09 | 11
	The percentage	%	%

Discussion

First, from their language choice as revealed in the tables 4.1.1 until 4.1.2, it is discovered that 2009 students' language choice has some differences and similarities against 2011 students. The latter-year students use more languages than the former-year students do. Despite the differences in their number of languages, there are five languages both academic years share; English, Indonesian, Javanese, Madurese and Korean. In addition, there are also languages that are exclusive to each academic year. Sundanese and Thai are exclusively used by 2009 students, while more languages including, Using, Batak, French, Japanese and Arabic are only employed by 2011 students.

In addition, among those languages mentioned, both academic years share three dominant languages. They are Indonesian, Javanese and English.

Regarding the use of English against other languages, it is revealed that from two domains of language use, English becomes dominant in the class, which is in the education domain. While out of the class, which is in the friendship domain, English is inferior against the other two dominant languages above.

This is because many students still find English an inappropriate language to use at the campus, especially in the interaction among them in friendship domain. Consequently, even competent and high-motivated students may not choose English at the campus with friends due to the poor support they get from his surroundings.

Also, English is more dominant among the former-year students in the class as part of education domain. The domination of their use of English is especially in the intensity, since in fact more junior students use English than they do, but most of them use it not very intensively, especially in the class as the most appropriate place to use English at the campus.

As found in the table 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 It is revealed from both academic years' frequency rate, ranging from 1.8 to 2.1, that the students rarely use English in friendship domain. The difference is only in the score, in which 2009 students is always above 2011 students with 2.3 points against only 1.9 points as the highest scores between each academic year. It is also shown that 2009 students use English more often than 2011 students in the education domain, with 3.3 points against 2.8 as their top frequency rates.

These differences can be positive and negative indications as well. The greater intensity shown by the senior students is

good indication, since they are expected to use English dominantly as seniors. While the lower number of users than their juniors means that, there is a gap among 2009 students' use of English. There are number of senioir students who apparently do not use English, despite the intensive use of English by their friends.

Second, regarding the reasons of the students' language choice, it is found that, the students give numbers of reason of not choosing English at the campus. Among them, there are some reasons, which have considerable percentages.

As it is previously revealed, among 14 reasons selected there are five reasons, which are most popularly chosen by the students in different situations. In the formal situations, both academic years find less confidence their main reason of not choosing English at the campus, followed by the high anxiety level as the second most popular reason when talking with both lecturer and friend. Mean while in the informal situations, they find their friends' tease and mockery their main reason to choose other languages instead of English, followed by the exclusive use of English and the availability of company as the other most chosen reasons when talking to friend.

However, despite the reasons both academic years share above, there are some differences between both academic years. From their reasons, it is discovered that, the former–year students feel more anxious than the latter-year do when talking to lecturer in the class where the situation is formal (Table 4.3.1 number 4). Also, the latter year students feel more confident when talking to friend in the class (Number 1) than their seniors.

Conclusion and Suggestions

As we can see above, there is a considerable difference between both academic years' language choice, especially their intensity in using English but in general, they share their reasons of not choosing English at the campus. This indicate that both academic years have the same idea dealing with the domains of their language, especially when and where to use English at the campus.

This means that they actually require the same solution that is to maximize their use of English in the education domain, which is in the class with lecturers and peers, and out of the class with lecturers. Only in these situations, they generally get enough support to use English at the campus, as indicated by their reasons. They do not find problems such as their friends' mockery and the availability of company like they usually face at the campus. The solution for this problem is the language choice by the lecturers. Lecturers should consider English as their main medium of communication at the campus, especially in the class, since the students may not get enough support from their surroundings out of the class, especially their friends.

Acknowledgement

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