

The Influence of the Malay Language on the Children of Indonesian Migrant Workers in the Kampung Bharu Guidance Studio, Malaysia

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Abstract. Sanggar Guidance is a place for the children of Indonesian migrant workers in Malaysia which was founded by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) as a forum for Indonesian children in Malaysia to get a proper education. However, it turns out that in teaching and learning activities, students more often use Malay to communicate. This research aims to identify Indonesian language mastery and character education for children of migrant workers in Malaysia. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The research was carried out at the Kampung Bharu Malaysia Guidance Studio with data collection techniques using observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis techniques use data reduction techniques, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of this study show that the use of the first language influences mastery of Indonesian. Indonesian became the second language, after Malay. Communication carried out using Malay is quite varied. Communication carried out based on its use is divided into communication between the family environment, social environment and social life. The migration movement of parents who have non-documentary status does not prevent a child from having a proper education in order to develop a nationalistic character education for the Indonesian nation.

Keywords: malay language, children of migrant workers, guidance workshop

1. Introduction

Indonesia is the country with the largest number of migrant workers in the world. The majority of Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) go to neighboring countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei Darussalam. Many of them leave their families and children in Indonesia, facing various challenges in maintaining relationships and communication with their families over long distances. Nevertheless, the world has guaranteed Human Rights, including the right to receive adequate education (Carl A. Hibah & Melissa L.G, 2013). Similarly, Indonesia will continue to ensure the rights of every child within the framework of human rights legislation, even if they are outside its borders (Rochmawati & Susilo, 2020).

The education system encompasses various regulations within educational institutions across different countries (Syakhirani et.al., 2022). Therefore, there are always language centers provided

by countries for their citizens outside Indonesia, such as the Bharu Language Center in Malaysia. The children of migrant workers will receive proper education at the Language Center established by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) in the area where each migrant family resides.

Research related to Language Centers has also been conducted by Subekti et.al., (2023), Wardhani et.al., (2022), Saputri, P.Y. et.al., (2023), Sulistyanto et.al., (2023), and Fauziyah et.al., (2022). These studies focus on the utilization of Language Centers for cultural introduction and the development of Indonesian national character. The children are also provided with numeracy literacy training to enhance and encourage their achievements.

According to Syah et.al., (2021), early childhood education is a fundamental and essential need in the developmental process of human life. Education plays a crucial role that can influence human character, especially character education within the educational context (Omeri, N., 2015). Therefore, early childhood education is crucial not only for survival but also for shaping the character of future generations.

One aspect influencing communication between PMI and their families is language. Indonesian migrant workers, as professionals, often master the national language of Malaysia, which is Malay (Nasirin, A.N., 2023). Malay is commonly used in neighboring countries with a significant PMI population. Therefore, proficiency in Malay is crucial for PMI to communicate effectively with the local community and perform their job duties efficiently. However, the impact of Malay is not limited to the workplace; it also affects the interaction and communication between PMI and their children in Indonesia. In this context, the influence of Malay can have both positive and negative effects on the language development of PMI's children.

Positive impacts occur when PMI children are proficient in Malay, as it helps them interact with their parents working abroad. Additionally, Malay opens opportunities for PMI children to broaden their cultural insights and knowledge during the learning interaction process at school (Jamian et.al., 2013). Despite the many positive effects of using Malay as the primary language, there are also negative consequences that are often overlooked and considered normal.

Negative impacts can occur if PMI children use Malay more frequently than their mother tongue. This may lead to difficulties in using the Indonesian language, affecting their ability to maintain their cultural identity as Indonesians. Moreover, the improper or even inappropriate use of Malay can influence the language abilities of PMI children. Therefore, it is crucial for PMI parents to pay attention to the influence of Malay on their children and find appropriate ways to maintain a balance between the use of Malay and Indonesian in their family communication. Preserving the existence of the Indonesian language as the national language involves diverse strategies, such as enriching the vocabulary of Indonesian and foreign languages (Assapari, 2014). The Indonesian government also needs to make efforts to enhance the Malay language skills of PMI and educate them about the importance of learning Indonesian to preserve culture and national identity.

2. Method

The method employed in this research is qualitative descriptive. Qualitative method is designed to construct a reality and as a step to understand the meaning inherent in it (Istiqomah, et al., 2019: 107). This method formulates problems to comprehensively, broadly, and deeply examine the condition to be investigated. The focus of this method is to interpret and describe data as a source of information.

Data collection techniques involve observation, interviews, and documentation. The researcher conducts field observations to obtain actual data, which is then recorded and further analyzed. Interviews are also conducted with students to obtain primary data. The students are also directed to fill out a provided Google form. The data analysis technique involves data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data is presented by providing a comprehensive description with the help of the data obtained and collected. The data collected in this study consist of soft data, such as words, expressions, and sentences obtained from students during interviews and the completion of the Google form. The data analysis technique used is descriptive analysis, which involves describing and elaborating on the data to achieve research results in line with the researcher's objectives.

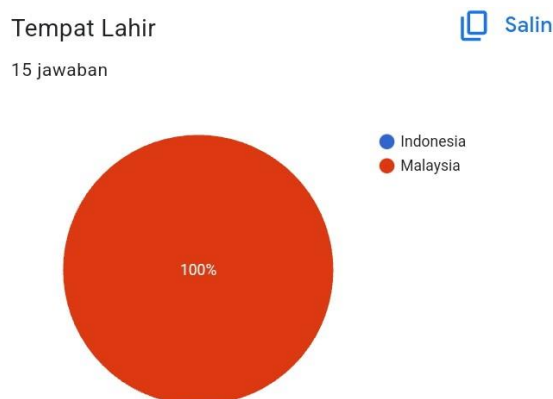
3. Result and Discussion

The following are the results of data collection activities via questionnaires (google form) from 15 students of Sanggar Guidance Kampung Bharu, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.



Gambar 1. Hasil Kuesioner

Figure 1 shows that 15 people were sampled and answered the questionnaire, consisting of 6 women and 9 men.



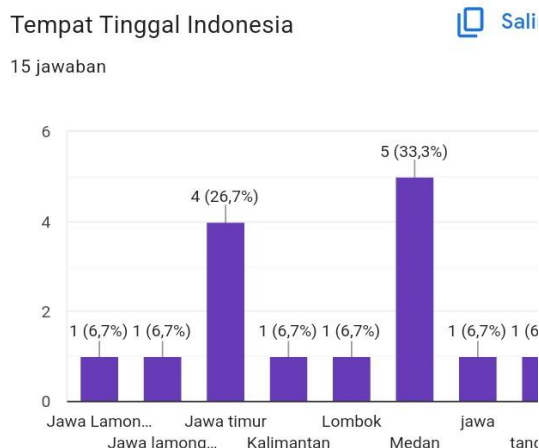
Gambar 2. Data Tempat Kelahiran Anak Laki-Lakai

Figure 2 presents data that the sample shows 100% of children were born in Malaysia. The diagram shows data that those who answered the questionnaire ranged from class 3 to class 6.



Gambar 3. Data Kemampuan Berbahasa Indonesia

The diagram presents data in the form of 80% of children not being fluent in Indonesian and only 20% being fluent in Indonesian. Because, indeed, they were born and use Malay as their first language. Although, their parents are originally from Indonesia.



Gambar 4. Data Tempat Tinggal Siswa saat di Indonesia

Figure 4 presents data regarding their place of residence in Indonesia. This supports the student's real profile. From the results of observations and questionnaire data collection used by 15 children who were used as samples of high class students (grades 4, 5 and 6) who were carried out during the Real Work Lecture service at the Kampung Bharu International Partnership Guidance Studio, 90% of the possible causes were Barriers to mastering Indonesian are caused by several things, including:

a. Communication in the Family Environment

In everyday life, all activities and communication within the family environment play a crucial role. Indonesian Migrant Workers, who have been laborers for decades, and others, engage in daily interactions using the Malay language, gradually making it a habit. According to their statements, when interviewing parents of students, they mentioned that they must use Malay when socializing with Malaysians and communicating with their bosses. This is because if they use their own language, Malaysians and their bosses won't understand the language they are using. Consequently, this affects how they interact with their children in the family environment, as Malay becomes the everyday language or, in other words, the mother tongue.

b. Communication in the Social Environment

The practice of using Malay during teaching activities indirectly teaches some educators at the Kampung Bharu Guidance Center to communicate with the children. It implies that the Indonesian National Language becomes the second language, not the first.

c. Communication in the Community Environment

Community life requires the children of Indonesian Migrant Workers to use Malay in their daily lives, as these children have been living in Malaysia since birth. This aspect is crucial in mastering the Malay language. This research is supported by previous studies conducted by Suarno et.al.,

(2023), and Khairul et.al., (2023), stating that the communication of Indonesian Migrant Worker's children in Malaysia is influenced by the environment and speech partners. As a result, it is found that the daily life of these children predominantly involves using Malay, both in the family, school, and community environments. The difference from previous research is related to the domicile of residence and the frequency of children in each level of non-formal education institutions at the Language Center.

4. Conclusion

From the research results, language is a communication medium inherent in the social life of the community. In social life, we acknowledge the existence of open-minded communities, utilizing the chosen research methods by the researcher. Indonesian Migrant Workers also observe the daily lives of children at the Kampung Bharu Guidance Center. From the conducted research, three factors influencing the lag in proficiency of the National language (Indonesian) have been identified, namely: (1) communication within the family environment plays a crucial role in teaching children to cultivate the Indonesian language, (2) direct communication within the family environment teaches the children of Indonesian Migrant Workers at the Kampung Bharu Guidance Center to cultivate the Indonesian language, and (3) environmental factors that require them to adapt and master the Malay language first. Character education goes hand in hand with the reinforcement of the Indonesian language as a manifestation of preserving the national identity wherever Indonesians may be.

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