

THE SOCIOLECTS OF ANTIQUE MERCHANTS IN THE ULAR MARKET MEDAN

Sisi Rosida¹, Rizky Vita Losi²
Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi, Indonesia^{1,2}

sisi@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id¹, rizkyvitalosi@dosen.pancabudi.ac.id²

Received: 26/09/2022
Accepted: 06/11/2022
Publication: 01/12/2022

Abstract

The Ular Market in Medan facilitates buying and selling of antiques, making this place often visited by antique connoisseurs. This study examines the sociolects of antique merchants in the Ular Market, Medan. Sociolect is identical to language variations that are formed due to social factors. The purpose of this study was to describe the forms of sociolects and the factors causing the creation of the language variation of the antique merchants in the Ular Market. In this study, the researcher applied a qualitative study with a descriptive approach. Results showed that sociolects of antique merchants in the Ular Market were formed in three varieties: (1) lexical variations in Medan Malay vocabulary, (2) phonological variations indicated by the clarity of vowels /a/ and /e/ and the shift of the pronunciation of vowel /ə/ to vowel /e/, and (3) syntactic variations established by the Medan dialect in which the language develops in the local socio-cultural environment. Furthermore, the factors that cause the sociolects are educational factors (merchants come from mountainous areas so they do not receive high education) and socio-cultural factors (merchants stick to the strong family sense so that the duration of using their local language is longer).

Keywords—language variation, merchant's language, sociolect, sociolinguistics Ular Market.

Introduction

The market is a place of interaction between sellers and buyers to meet all needs. In Medan, we may find a place that sells various kinds of antiques called the Ular Market located on the outskirts of Jl. Soetomo. Like other markets, this market sells used, antique, and unique items. Various old-school goods, such as electronics, household appliances, and other used goods, are the target of buyers in this market. Therefore, although this market is called the Ular Market, which in English the word “*ular*” means snake, this market does not sell reptiles, especially snakes. The name “*ular*” comes from the nature of snakes that are considered to be lying, dangerous, and tend to be cunning. Despite having a negative nickname, this does not make buyers flinch. This market continues to exist and is bustling.

Merchants are social beings who need buyers to carry out buying and selling transactions in running their businesses. Furthermore, the merchant's speech describes the function of language as a tool for the buying and selling process in which they convey their ideas to the interlocutor using the language. Therefore, merchants should understand well the art of good trading through oral communication. However, each merchant has a different dialect according to the place of residence. This is the language variation that we may encounter in the Ular Market.

Negotiations between sellers and buyers in the Ular Market are interesting things to study, in which the merchants use the regional Malay-Medan dialect. This is influenced by the social and cultural conditions where language variation develops. Apart from the Medan dialect which is one of the variations of the Indonesian language that is widespread in North Sumatra, it is famous for its harsh and rude characteristics. In general, the Medan dialect is used in daily communication between people living in North Sumatra.

Medan is the capital city of North Sumatra. It is a metropolitan city characterized by

harsh language. A person's linguistics characteristics may be influenced by their group. Apart from that, sociolinguistics is a study of language that provides an overview of the influence of the situation as a social factor in the language (Fauziyyah, 2017).

This study aims to examine the sociolects of antique merchants in the Ular Market. The focus of this study is the merchants in the Ular Market which are dominated by people who come from mountainous areas, which is believed to affect the dialect of the language used, making this subject interesting to study. Furthermore, the influence of ethnographic and geographical factors from the merchant's area of origin (Brastagi, Tinggi Raja, Rantau Prapat, Aek Sijornih, and Tanah Karo) is still strong in the daily speech of these merchants. Based on researchers' observations, the merchants in the Ular Market have a certain merchant community that makes them continue to interact every day until a sociolect is formed. This is one of the routine activities carried out in maintaining their culture.

Sociolect as a language variant is influenced by social factors, such as the economy (material), occupation, education, age, politics, ethnicity, origin, and others. Another term for sociolect is social dialect. It is a dialect that grows in community groups and is influenced by social factors and social levels (Chaer & Agustina, 2010). Merchants who trade in markets with certain groups have interesting characteristics to study. This is influenced by the ethnographic factors (area of origin), education level, and cultural & community maintenance.

The Ular Market has speech communities with different backgrounds and social statuses. The buying and selling process requires language speakers to use language as a communication tool to convey ideas through language agreements until buying and selling occur. In the communication system between merchants and buyers, there is a diversity of languages as a function of the merchant's language.

Several studies have addressed the topic discussed in this study from different angles. For example, a study conducted by Fitriyani (2017) entitled "*The Language of Fish Merchants in the Panorama Market of Bengkulu: A Sociolinguistic Study*" examines language variations viewed from the aspect of speakers, such as idiolect, place of origin, gender, age, and language function, used by fish merchants in the Panorama Market of Bengkulu. The study revealed that the sociolects of language speakers from certain regions influence the occurrence of language variations. For instance, the Bengkulu Malay dialect has different language variants that can be seen based on gender, in which the utterances of male merchants tend to be short & clear and not have many pleasantries used in the speech. Meanwhile, for female merchants, it is the opposite. They seem friendly and full of pleasantries to attract buyers.

A similar study on variations in the language of merchants has been carried out by Waty *et al.* (2018) under the title "*The Use of Merchant's Language in Sales Transactions at the Kedinding Surya Market of Surabaya: A Sociolinguistic Study*" which investigated the function of language variation in buying and selling interactions in the Kedinding Surya Market of Surabaya. The study found that there were at least three languages used by traders in the buying and selling process in the market. Those languages were Javanese, Madurese, and mixed languages (Javanese, Madurese, and Indonesian). In addition, the factors of language use greatly affect users of the language. For example, in the case study of merchants at the Kedinding Surya Market, age, gender, mutual respect, and solidarity become factors that influence the occurrence of mixed languages.

It is in line with a study conducted by Maulud (2018) under the title "*Variations in the Oral Language of Street Vendors in the Bastiong Market: A Sociolinguistic Review*." It is found that the merchants or street vendors in the Bastiong Market of Ternate come from various tribes from all over Indonesia, such as Ternate, Tidore, Makian, Bugis, Butonese, Javanese, and even some other minor ethnics. This difference is reflected in daily communication between merchants who use various languages that are formed by their identities. However, it is undeniable that the use of the Ternate-Malay language is still limited, meaning that it is only used in the context of communication with new merchants or those who have not known yet. This is influenced by the occurrence of language variations at a social and cultural level of society.

Research on the sociolects of merchants in the Ular Market can provide a comprehensive overview of an in-depth understanding of the beauty of a difference in a

language context, in which studying this language variety can help us learn about cultural and social issues in community communication. In addition, this study is expected to enrich the linguistic and social treasures and to bring up new theories in public speech, especially for merchants at the Ular Market of Medan.

Literature Review

The sociology of language focuses on the entire gamut of topics related to the social organization of language behavior, including not only language usage per se, but also language attitudes, overt behavior toward language and language users. Sociolinguistics could be taken to refer to use of linguistic data and analysis in other disciplines concerned with social life and conversely, to use of social data and analysis in linguistics. Sociolinguistics is the study of the characteristics of language varieties, the characteristics of their functions, and the characteristics of their speakers as these three constantly interact, change and change one another within a speech community. One of the principal uses of language is to communicate meaning, but it is also used to establish and to maintain social relationships. Watch a mother with a young child. Most of their talk is devoted to nurturing the social bond between them. Listen to two friends talking. Much of their conversation functions to express and refine their mutual compact of companionship. When you meet strangers, the way they talk informs you about their social and geographical backgrounds, and the way you talk sends subtle or blatant signals about what you think of them. It is these aspects of language use that sociolinguistic study (Agustina et al., 2021).

This language variation occurs because of the basic factor that causes the emergence of sociolects, namely the influence of the mother tongue (interference). Language variation is one part of the variety of languages in which each variant forms a pattern that resembles the general pattern of the parent language. Due to the many languages used by speakers in interacting in a certain environment, this variety of languages emerges. This situation then affects the activities and development of language diversity (Chair, 2010).

The language variant has different characteristics between groups of users, making speakers not able to replace the role of other variations. Language diversity is in the scope of all aspects that are closely related to the speech community and the relationship of the speaker in doing the speech. Therefore, language variations may exist in the wider community, small groups, and even individual users (Maulud et al., 2018).

Research Method

In this study, the researchers applied a qualitative approach, the data were taken from the conversations of merchants in the Ular Market during the transaction process. In other words, the researchers analyzed the speech produced by the merchants. According to Sugiyono (2008), qualitative research based on the philosophy of post-positivism is employed to examine the condition of objects naturally. This kind of research plots the researchers as key tools, the data collection is carried out by a triangulation system (combined), the data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and the results emphasize meaning rather than generalization.

In this study, the researchers also used a descriptive model, the collected data were analyzed from language variations in the form of written data from the speech of the merchants in the Ular Market. Furthermore, the data were based on natural conditions in the field. Descriptive research describes or explains information on a particular object as a social phenomenon, which reflects facts and social phenomena in a structured way.

According to Mahsun (2007:92), there are three methods of data collection: observing, speaking, and introspecting. In this study, researchers used the method of observing for collecting the data because this method was considered effective for this research. This method was used to obtain data by listening to language users during the communication process. In other words, the way for collecting data was carried out by listening to the spoken language of antique merchants at the Ular Market.

Results and Discussion

Sociolect is a language variant determined by the status, class, and social class of the speakers. The language variation discussed in this study focuses on sociolects that arise due to the influence of mother tongue and social level.

Lexical Differences (Vocabulary)

This study investigated the lexicon in the sociolects of the merchant's language, covering the Medan-Malay dialect and the pronunciation that accompanies the word formation process in the standard Indonesian language. Dialect in the form of a lexicon appears in merchants' communication that forms the sociolects from the mother tongue.

Table 1.
The Variations of the Language of Merchants in the Ular Market

Medan-Malay Dialect	Pronunciation	Standard Indonesian	English Translation
tengok	tengok	lihat	to see
cak	cok	coba	to try
kayak	kek	seperti	like
cendek	cəndek	dangkal	to be shallow
gondok	gondok	kesal	to be annoyed
pajak	pajak	pasar	market
sikit	sikit	sedikit	a little
sewa	sewa	penumpang	passenger
berselemek	bəsəlemek	berantakan	to be untidy
cepek	cəpək	serratus	one hundred
ceret	ceret	teko	teapot
gopek	gopek	lima ratus	five hundred
kali	kali	sekali	once
kede	kəde	warung	shop
kreta	kreta	sepeda motor	motorcycle
kede sampah	kəde sampah	warung kelontong	grocery shop
raun-raun	raon-raon	keliling	to go around
recok	recok	berisik	to be noisy
sikit	sikit	sedikit	a little
minyak lampu	minyak lampu	minyak tanah	kerosene
pasar	pasar	jalan raya	highway
limpul	limpol	lima puluh ribu	fifty thousand

The difference in the lexicon (vocabulary) occurs because of the close influence of the use of the mother tongue in Medan. This is a unique characteristic of the community, including the merchants. This is affected by the socio-cultural majority of the Batak, Karo, and Malay ethnic groups who have a strong family sense. This language variation is formed from a dialect of the Batak language which has many similarities in language and vocabulary with the Karo dialect. However, the Medan dialect is also heavily influenced by the Malay language. Each of the tribes living in Medan to date still maintains its mother tongue and still uses it in communicating among themselves. This happened because of large group migration in colonial times. In this condition, the Indonesian language becomes the main instructional language among these ethnic groups. In its development, there is a lot of vocabulary absorbed which is then used among the residents of Medan, especially the merchants of the Ular Market.

Phonological Differences (Pronunciation)

The sociology of language focuses on the entire gamut of topics related to the social organization of language behavior, including not only language usage per se, but also language attitudes,

overt behavior toward language and language users. Sociolinguistics could be taken to refer to use of linguistic data and analysis in other disciplines concerned with social life and conversely, to use of social data and analysis in linguistics. Sociolinguistics is the study of the characteristics of language varieties, the characteristics of their functions, and the characteristics of their speakers as these three constantly interact, change and change one another within a speech community. One of the principal uses of language is to communicate meaning, but it is also used to establish and to maintain social relationships. Watch a mother with a young child. Most of their talk is devoted to nurturing the social bond between them. Listen to two friends talking. Much of their conversation functions to express and refine their mutual compact of companionship. When you meet strangers, the way they talk informs you about their social and geographical backgrounds, and the way you talk sends subtle or blatant signals about what you think of them. It is these aspects of language use that sociolinguistic study.

Syntactical Differences (Grammar)

Grammar is an important order in the structure of language. Differences in syntax (grammar) often occur in the language behavior of people from different ethnicities and social levels.

Table 2.
Language Variations of Merchants in Terms of Syntax

Indonesian Standardized	Medan dialect General	English Translation
<i>Coba</i> kakak cek yang ini barangnya bagus, Kak.	<i>Cak</i> kak cek la ini barang bagus, Kak	Check this one, please! This one is good.
<i>Kalau</i> yang ini mesinnya agak <i>ribut</i> .	<i>Kalok</i> yang ini agak <i>recok</i> mesinnya.	This one has an engine that is a bit noisy.
Tambah lagi kak, kalau <i>seratus ribu</i> belum dapat.	Tambah la kak, <i>kalok cepek</i> belum dapat.	Add more! One hundred thousand is not enough.
Yang seperti ini jarang didapat, Kak.	Yang <i>kayak</i> gini jarang dapat, Kak.	This is something rare.
Terkadang, kita sudah membeli barang namun kondisinya mati, perasaan kita <i>kesal</i> .	Kadang kalo uda dibeli gak idup, kita kan <i>gondok</i> .	Sometimes, we have bought an item but the condition is not working. Our feelings are upset obviously.
Pedagang warung kelontong banyak berbelanja barang seperti ini.	Orang-orang <i>kede sampah</i> pun banyak ngambil gini.	Many grocery owners buy items like this.
Barang ini sangat mudah digunakan, menghidupkannya hanya membutuhkan minyak tanah.	Ini mudah <i>kali</i> , ngidupkannya <i>pakek minyak lampu</i> aja.	This item is very easy to use. Turning it on requires only kerosene.
Kemarin angin kencang <i>sekali</i> , mengakibatkan daganganku <i>berantakan</i> .	Semalam angin kuat <i>kali</i> , <i>beserak</i> semua barangku.	Yesterday, the wind was very strong, causing my merchandise to fall apart.
Sudah <i>keliling-keliling</i> mencarinya tetap tidak ada.	Udah <i>raun-raun</i> kucarik gada juga.	I have searched everywhere but still nothing.
Tentu saja asli, <i>dilihat</i> dari sini.	Ori lah kak, <i>tengok</i> dari sininya.	This one is original of course. See from this

		angle!
Hanya ambil untung sedikit. Harga pas-nya lima puluh ribu	Untungnya <i>sikit</i> aja. <i>Gopek</i> gak kurang lagi.	I just take a little profit. The price is fifty thousand.
Harga teko <i>lima puluh libu</i>	<i>Ceret?</i> <i>limpul</i> aja.	The price of the teapot is fifty thousand.
Berbeda. Ini layarnya lebih <i>pendek</i> .	Bedalah...yang ini <i>cendek</i> layarnya.	It is different. Its screen is shorter.
Direkatkan di <i>sepeda motor</i> sudah bisa kalau untuk ukuran segini.	Disangkutkan di <i>kreta</i> pun uda bisa kalo seginikan.	To be attached to a motorcycle, this size is enough.
Aduh...pusing sekali. Jangan ditukar-tukar!	Aduh <i>pening</i> kali kepalaku. Jangan ditukar-tukar lah!	Ouch... I am so dizzy. Don't swap them, please!

Language variants are caused by the many languages used by the community to interact with each other. Every buying-and-selling activity carried out by the merchants is very influential in the variation of the merchant's language. The language will be more diverse and increase when the language is used by a wider group of people.

The syntax of the language is very attached to the speakers from the time they acquire their first language to adulthood, causing the development of language in the local socio-cultural environment where they live. Merchants have their respective language characteristics where they used to be (mountain areas). When they move to another community environment, such as Medan, they may find a different language. Therefore, they need to use a language that can be accepted by the new community where they are, in this case, people in Medan. It can be different in other locations depending on the environment of the communities there. In other words, they use the language according to the environmental and cultural context where they live. In the current era, the higher the human civilization is, the higher the intensity of language use will be, which is supported by technological advances, in terms of both the use of Indonesian and regional languages.

Factors Causing the Creation of Sociolects

Educational Factors: Sociolects occur because speakers do not receive high education. Based on interviews with several merchants, they do not have the opportunity to go to school because their economic conditions do not allow them. Many merchants come from mountainous areas. This low education makes the speakers not have sufficient language awareness and knowledge. This condition causes language control not to occur. In further analysis, if the speakers receive sufficient education, their language understanding will be more improved, directed, and controlled. Furthermore, they can minimize the use of regional language dominance or excessive mother tongue interference.

Socio-Cultural Factors: In terms of the socio-cultural community in Medan, especially the merchants in the Ular Market, they have a strong family sense. For this reason, the duration of using their local language will be longer. On the other hand, the duration of the use of the Indonesian language will be relatively less. This factor gives rise to interference when speakers switch codes from regional languages to Indonesian and mix codes, which leads to habits for language speakers. If the speaker is accustomed to using the mother tongue with certain characteristics, then the dialect can be controlled. Conversely, a variety of languages can describe the characteristics of self-identity that need to be known by others.

The Karo and Coastal Malay people are the original tribes in Medan. The rest are Batak, Javanese, Padang, and Chinese people. The culture that runs in society is carried out in line with the religious values they adhere to, which are mostly Muslim plus Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists with less quantity. The merchants in their social life are still holding relationships with one another. This is a form of mutual assistance that is still strong in their lives.

As for a similar study (Maulud, 2018) "Variations in the Oral Language of Street Vendors in Bastiong Market (A Sociolinguistic Review)" this study found factors that influence language variations in communicating with each other (buyers and sellers). The results of this study indicate that there are several languages involved in the interaction between buyers and sellers in Bastiong Market, namely Ternate, Ternate Malay, Tidore, Bugis, Makassar, Butonnesse, and Makian.

Conclusion

The speech describes language as a tool to express ideas to the interlocutor. The merchants in the Ular Market are bound in a strong community to form sociolects. This is a positive thing in maintaining their respective culture. The language variation discussed in this study focuses on sociolects that arise due to the influence of mother tongue and social level.

Variations of sociolects are grouped into three forms, namely as follows. (1) *Lexical differences*: It is caused by the strong influence of the use of the mother tongue by the people of Medan, making it a unique characteristic. In addition, it is also influenced by the socio-cultural condition, in which they mostly are Batak and Malay people who have a strong family sense. (2) *Phonological differences (pronunciation)*: The spoken language of merchants in the Ular Market of Medan is very clear only for vowels /a/ and /e/, while the others change. This means that words with the vowels /a/ and /e/ will be correctly pronounced according to the sound as they should be. (3) *Syntactical differences*: Language is attached to the speakers from the time they acquire their first language to adulthood, causing the development of language in the local socio-cultural environment where they live. This means that a person may have language characteristics depending on where he/she lives. When he/she moves to another community environment with a different language, he/she will use a language that can be accepted by the new community.

Factors causing sociolects to occur are education factors (limited level of education of the merchants) and socio-cultural factors (merchants stick to the strong family sense so that the duration of using their local language is longer).

References

- Agustina, I., Hariadi, J., & Hidayat, M. T. (2021). Variasi Bahasa Pedagang Di Pasar Penanggalan Kota Subulussalam, Provinsi Aceh. In *Seminar Nasional Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan* (Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 116-121).
- Aisah, S., & Noviadi, A. (2018). Ragam Bahasa Lisan Para Pedagang Buah Pasar Langensari Kota Banjar. *Literasi: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia serta Pembelajarannya*, 2(1), 81-87. <http://dx.doi.org/10.25157/literasi.v2i1.1230>
- Arifianti, I. (2015). Variasi Tutar Penerimaan Dan Penolakan Pembeli Dalam Transaksi Jual Beli Batik di Pasar Grosir Setono Pekalongan–Kajian Sosiopragmatik. *Pena Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Teknologi*, 22(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.31941/jurnalpena.v22i1.59>
- Asturi Rofi'ah, V., & Markhamah, M. (2020). *Sapaan Dan Variasi Bahasa Yang Digunakan Oleh Pedagang Dan Pembeli Di Pasar Nglangon, Sragen* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta).
- Budiono, S. (2015). Variasi bahasa di kabupaten Banyuwangi: penelitian Dialektologi. *Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia*.
- Chaer, A., & Agustina, L. (2004). *Sosiolinguistik: pengenalan awal*. Penerbit PT Rineka Cipta.
- Coupland, J., Coupland, N., & Giles, H. (1991). Accommodation theory. communication, context and consequences. *Contexts of accommodation*, 1-68.
- Efendi, M., Rusminto, N. E., & Agustina, E. S. (2017). Tindak Tutar Transaksi Jual-Beli di Pasar Tradisional Central Kotabumi dan Implikasinya. *Jurnal Kata (Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pembelajarannya)*, 5(3, Nov).
- Fauziyyah, D. F. (2017). Ragam bahasa penawaran pedagang asongan di Pantai Pangandaran. *JURNAL PESONA*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.26638/jp.300.2080>

- Fishman, J. A. (Ed.). (1971). *Advances in the Sociology of Language* (Vol. 2). The Hague: Mouton.
- Fitriani, Y., Rahayu, N., & Wulandari, C. (2017). Bahasa pedagang ikan di pasar panorama bengkulu (kajian sosiolinguistik). *Jurnal Ilmiah KORPUS*, 1(1), 118-131.
- Holmes, J., & Wilson, N. (2017). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. Routledge.
- Hymes, D. (2013). *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach*. Routledge.
- Kartikasari, R. D. (2016). Ragam Bahasa Pedagang Kaki Lima di Terminal Purbaya Surabaya: Kajian Sosiolinguistik. *Buana Bastra*.
- Mantiri, G. J. M. (2017). Variasi Sosiolek Para Pedagang di Distrik Heram Kota Jayapura. In *Prosiding Seminar Hasil Penelitian Edisi III* (pp. 57-63).
- Nasution, L. Y., & Mulyadi, M. (2020). Market Names In Medan: A Natural Semantic Metalanguage Study. *Retorika: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, 13(2).
<https://doi.org/10.26858/retorika.v13i2.11985>
- Ramendra, D. P. (2013). Variasi pemakaian bahasa pada masyarakat tutur kota Singaraja. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora*, 2(2).
- Rubin, J., & Jernudd, B. (2019). *Can Language be Planned?: Sociolinguistic Theory for Developing Nations*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Viswanathan, M., Rosa, J. A., & Ruth, J. A. (2010). Exchanges in marketing systems: the case of subsistence consumer–merchants in Chennai, India. *Journal of marketing*, 74(3), 1-17.
- Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J. M. (2021). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Waridah, W. (2015). Penggunaan Bahasadan Variasi Bahasa dalam Berbahasadan Berbudaya. *Jurnal Simbolika: Research and Learning in Communication Study*, 1(1).
- Wijana, I. D. P. (2021). *Pengantar Sosiolinguistik*. UGM PRESS.