# REGIONAL DIALECT FUNCTION IN DISCOURSE CLASSROOM

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates how regional dialects function in classroom discourse, with an emphasis on the ways in which linguistic variation impacts student interaction and learning. The study analyzes conversational data from multiple classes in multiple dialect-diverse regions using a qualitative methodology. The analysis's findings demonstrate how using regional dialects can help students develop their sense of social identity, fortify their bonds with their communities, and foster a local understanding. Regional dialects, however, have also been shown to impede communication and lead to misunderstandings when there are dialect differences between students and teachers or between students. According to this research, inclusive communication techniques and dialectal diversity should be taken into account when developing effective teaching strategies. Particularly in situations involving multiple languages and cultures, the findings have significant ramifications for educational policy and instructional methodology.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

People are proud of their regional dialect as they are one of the unique aspects of a particular region within a country. This is because in Indonesia there are hundreds of languages but dialects are always the center of communication and interpersonal interaction. These dialects are not only informative but also contain cultural issues, social norms, and people's personalities. Knowledge of the roles of regional dialects in discourse helps to comprehend the ways language determine interactions and social relations in the multicultural society (Ahmed, 2024).

This study aims to identify the effects of regional dialects in learning environment and its relation to students from different language background such as Batak, Javanese, Minang, Sundanese, and Malay. These dialects determine the manner in which students interact, contribute to discussions, and even learn in the classroom environment with or without the teachers. Consequently, the characteristics of each dialect enrich the discourse with different

features, for instance, Batak's assertiveness and vocal strength or Sundanese students' soft and musical intonation. These variations make classrooms very vibrant and interesting; however, they pose a lot of problems in as much as the interaction and interpretation of meaning between the learners and teachers is concerned.

Every dialect comes with the unique ways of speaking, which in turn influence student's language use and interactions with other students and educators (Hepburn, 2016). For example, Minang students' melodic intonations and Sundanese students' gentle tones complicate activity in the classroom. These dialectal variations therefore mean that there are possibilities of improved discussions due to diversity and at the same time the existence of communication breakdowns. Concisely, Algouzi and Elkhiar (2021) stated that learners with little or no intercultural practice have limited capability of communicating in intercultural context. Some of these dynamics include: It is crucial to grasp such realities to promote an integrated and productive educational setting.

Furthermore, regional dialects used in classroom are an aspect of cultures and backgrounds of students. This journal will focus on how these dialects impact students' personal development of identity and cultural representation. Analyzing the connections between dialect and discourse enables one to explore how students manage cultural practices in school environment. Such an understanding can help teachers to implement and enhance practices that appreciate and build on students' language resources.

Studies on the use of regional dialects in the classroom explain the role and benefits of the use of multiple languages in the classroom as well as the possible challanges that might be encountered. Although Batak, Javanese, Minang, Sundanese, and Malay students using their own regional dialect enrich the depth of cultural diversities and various points of view in classroom communications, they pose certain difficulties. Another challenge is that there may be problems with the interpretation of words and expressions due to the differences in speaking and pronunciation as well as cultural differences. For example, the way of speaking characteristic of Batak dialect implies a completely different level of assertiveness compared to that of Sundanese dialects which may result in misunderstandings and unequal involvement in conversations

It appears that the ethnography of communication should be introduced in EFL context, especially given the influece of the regional dialects on classroom talk. Ethnography of communication is therefore a process of studying the way in which people use language and how language is given meaning through cultural and social interactions. In view of the fact that communication in Indonesia involves the use of regional dialects such as the Batak, Javanese, Minang, Sundanese and the Malay language. This approach assists in elucidating the ways in which student and the dialects used in the classroom impacts on the learning and teaching processes (Tegegne, 2015).

Therefore, this research on the role of regional dialects in classroom interaction is particularly meaningful in the context of an English Education Department. This paper aims to describe the ways in which regional dialects, which are part of the linguistic variation in Indonesia, affect students' communication, learning and classroom environment. The dialects discussed in the study include Batak, Javanese, Minang, Sundanese, and Malay dialects and the study shows how they introduce different forms of communication and culture into the classroom. It is important for future English teachers to understand these factors in order to be aware of the opportunities for developing more profound and productive discussions and at the same time, the opportunities for potential communication difficulties.

### 2. METHODS

Data from discourse classrooms in various geographic locations will be gathered and analyzed for this qualitative study using ethnographic methods. Participant observation,

audio recordings of classroom exchanges, and semi-structured student interviews will all be used as data collection techniques. In order to find recurrent themes and patterns connected to dialectal regional functions in discourse classrooms, the study will use thematic analysis. Additionally, the linguistic characteristics and communicative techniques used by participants will be examined using discourse analysis techniques.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

# 3.1. The main regional dialect in classroom discourse at Riau and the differ from one another

In comparison to US classrooms, research on language variation in university settings in South-East Asia, specifically in Riau, has revealed variations in language use and discourse organizational patterns (Csomay, 2020). Regional dialects have an impact on these distinctions and can give rise to misunderstandings and discrimination (Jernudd, 2000). As demonstrated in southern Germany, speakers of regional dialects may occasionally face disadvantages in the classroom (Ammon, 1977). Disparities in student language and school discourse can cause miscommunication and conflict (Kleiman, 1993).

Actually, the original inhabitants of Riau are Malay. However, over time, Riau has become populated by migrants from various parts of Indonesia - such as Minangkabau, Batak, Javanese, and others -who speak different languages. The languages spoken by these migrants, like Javanese, are notably distinct from Riau Malay in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Despite their similarities, the differences between Riau Malay and Indonesian are significant enough for speakers to consider them separate languages. Local Malay is even considered a distinct "regional language", alongside other regional languages like Minangkabau, Batak, and Javanese, while Indonesian is seen as a different version that may not align with the "national language". For example, in conversations with students of English language education in Universitas Lancang Kuning, there are conversations that produce regional languages so that they often make mistakes or misunderstand the language.

There isn't much research on regional dialects in Riau classroom discourse, but related topics have some insights. Ubaidillah (2020) investigates the phonological innovations found in the coastal Malay dialect of Riau, which may have an impact on classroom discourse. Similar variances may exist in Riau, according to Csomay (2020) and Jora (2021), who both emphasize the influence of geographic context on language use and discourse organization in university classrooms. Finally, Fresnido (2017) addresses how English predominates in a Philippine secondary school's linguistic landscape, suggesting how a dominant language may affect classroom discourse. All of these studies point to the possibility that phonological innovations, geographic context, and the predominance of a particular language may have an impact on regional dialects in Riau classroom discourse. Nevertheless, more studies concentrated on Riau are required to offer a thorough grasp of these dialects.

Variations can be observed in the regional dialects used in classroom discourse at Riau, as demonstrated by the various teaching methodologies and approaches utilized by educators in the region. The use of approaches like Grammar-Translation, Communicative Approach, and Genre-Based Approach was highlighted in research conducted in Riau, demonstrating an eclectic teaching style influenced by a variety of factors like government policies, the school environment, teacher preferences, and student needs. Furthermore, the study on EFL teaching strategies in Riau universities highlighted the preference for Communicative Language Teaching over Grammar Translation and Audio Lingual Methods, suggesting a move in both public and private educational institutions toward learner-centered strategies.

Data attached is the three conversation transcripts that show the use of regional dialects in classroom interactions has various implications for communication between students. The variety of dialects and languages used in conversations reflects the cultural and linguistic richness of different regions in Indonesia.

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Transkrip 1
       Speaker 1 [0:00-0:05] Woi kemaren ada tugas kan mata kuliah Technology for Teaching
English?
       Speaker 2 [0:06-0:08] Apo tugasnyo?
       Speaker 3 [0:09-0:14] Tugasnya teh bikin teaching media
       Speaker 4 [0:15-0:17] Kok aku ra reti?
       Speaker 5 [0:18-0:21] Ha? Ahade?
       Speaker 2 [0:22-0:26] Ya kan dia gak masuk matkul itu do
       Speaker 5 [0:27-0:28] Oiya, aku ra mlebu
       Speaker 1 [0:29-0:32] Ha? Apo tu?
       Speaker 5 [0:33-35] Ra mlebu tu artinya gak masuk
       Speaker 3 [0:38-0:45] Ya itu teh tugasnya, jangan lupa dikerjain. Aku pergi dulu ya
mau sholat
       Speaker 2 [0:46-0:50] Oke, aku juga baliklah mau langsung ngerjain
       Speaker 4 [0:51-0:54] Aku juga mau balik, mau nyari makan
       Speaker 1,5 [0:55-0:58] Oke tiati. Kami juga mau balik.
       Transkrip 2
       Speaker 1 [0:00-0:05] Ih sumpah capek banget aku teh
       Speaker 2 [0:06-0:07] Kenapa?
       Speaker 1 [0:08-0:10] Banyak pisan tugasnya
       Speaker 3 [0:11-0:13] Ha? Pisang?
       Speaker 4 [0:14-0:16] Pisan, pisan tuh artinya banget
       Speaker 3 [0:17-0:19] Oohh, ituu
       Speaker 4 [0:20-22] Tugas yang kemaren?
       Speaker 1 [0:23-0:25] Iyaa aku belum ngerjain
       Speaker 5 [0:26-0:29] Aku juga belum
       Speaker 4 [0:30-0:33] Katanya kemaren mau langsung nggarap
       Speaker 2 [0:34-0:36] Hah? Nggarap?
       Speaker 4 [0:37-39] Nggarap tuh maksudnya ngerjain
       Speaker 2 [0:40-0:42] Oohh, itu. Aku mana ngerti kau Bahasa jawa
       Speaker 5 [0:43-0:45] Kelupaan, kemaren asik main game
       Speaker 3 [0:46-0:49] Itulah kau, untung aku udah
       Speaker 4 [0:50-0:52] Aku sih gak ikut matkulnya, jadi selo ae
       Speaker 1 [0:53-0:55] Enak atuh kalian, ada yang udah selesai, ada yang gak ikut, jadi
tenang
       Speaker 5 [0:56-0:58] Ayoklah kerjain samo-samo
       Speaker 1 [0:59-1:00] Hayuklah
       Speaker 2 [1:01-1:03] Yaudahlah hati-hati, kami juga mau balik
       Transkrip 3
       Speaker 1 Weii, kapan kita buat tugas research ni?
       Speaker 2 Manut, aku bisa kapan aja
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Speaker 4 Manut itu artinya ngikutt

Speaker 3 Manut?

Speaker 3 Ohhh, Asik jawa aja, ga ngerti awak

Speaker 1 (Speaker 5) Ayok sore ini

Speaker 5 Beko den buek

Speaker 4 Apaa itu artinya?

Speaker 5 Nanti aku buat

Speaker 1 Ehheee tahee, Jangan nanti-nanti, Ga siap nanti ga ada nilai kelompok awak

Speaker 3 Ntah na (speaker 5) ni. Ayoklah sekarang jee

Speaker 5 Yoklah dima awak buek tugas nyo

Speaker 4 Pakai Bahasa Indonesia dong teman teman, ga paham nii

Speaker 5 Yoklah dimana kita buat tugasnya

Speaker 2 Bikin di pasca ajaa

Speaker 1 Gasss

Speaker 3 Otw

Speaker 5 Jemput aku (speaker 3)

Speaker 3 Oke

Speaker 4 Aku sama (speaker 2) udah di pasca yaa

Speaker 2 Kalian pada dimana?

Speaker 1 Bentar lagi sampai, dah di gerbang

Speaker 5 Aku sama (speaker 3) masih di jalan, (speaker 3) lama kali bawa motor

Speaker 2 Okee, tiati.

From the data presented in the three conversation transcripts, there are variations in the use of dialect and language that reflect the complexity in social interaction in the classroom. Transcript 1 shows the use of local language such as "Apo" and "ra mlebu" which are characteristic of Javanese dialect. This suggests that the student may come from an area that predominantly uses Javanese dialect in daily communication. The use of this dialect reflects their cultural identity and regional background. However, there is also the use of mixed words such as "teh" and "do", which shows language adaptation to create a more universal understanding in the classroom.

Transcript 2 shows more complex language variation, with the use of words in Sundanese dialect such as "pisang" and words in Javanese dialect such as "nggarap". However, these interactions also reflect efforts to achieve shared understanding between participants with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. There were also adjustments in language use, such as explanations of the meaning of the word "nggarap", which reflected responsiveness to communication needs.

Transcript 3 shows a clearer mix of local language and standard Indonesian. The use of the words "manut" and "bejo den buek" indicate the use of Javanese, while the request to use Bahasa Indonesia indicates an awareness of the need to convey the message clearly to all participants. These interactions reflect the dynamics of language adaptation that occur in diverse communication situations.

Overall, the three transcripts illustrate how the use of diverse dialects and languages creates a culturally rich learning environment but also poses challenges in communication. The ability to adapt and incorporate different languages and dialects reflects participants' flexibility and responsiveness to diverse communication needs, which is an important aspect of creating an inclusive and dynamic learning environment.

This variety of dialects enriches interactions by bringing different cultural perspectives into class discussions. This diversity also creates a dynamic and engaging learning environment. However, these dialectal differences also present significant communication challenges. Often, students have to explain the meaning of certain words or phrases to their classmates who are not familiar with the dialect. For example, in Transcript

1, Speaker 5 explains "Ra mlebu tu means not going in" and in Transcript 2, Speaker 4 explains "Pisan tuh means really". In each transcript, there were several moments where students had to explain the meaning of words or phrases in their dialect to other classmates. For example, in Transcript 1, Speaker 5 explains "Ra mlebu tu means not going in" and in Transcript 2, Speaker 4 explains "Pisan tuh means really". This kind of misunderstanding shows the need for clarification that often occurs due to dialect differences.

Students showed high adaptability and collaboration in overcoming language barriers posed by dialectal variations. They often switched to standard Bahasa Indonesia to ensure all conversation participants understood. This is evident in Transcript 3, when Speaker 4 asks, "Use Bahasa Indonesia guys, don't understand nii". Standard Bahasa Indonesia serves as a lingua franca that helps bridge dialectal differences, allowing all students to participate in discussions more effectively and reducing misunderstandings.

This dialectal diversity not only enriches the teaching and learning process with different cultural perspectives but also adds to the positive dynamics in the classroom. However, the communication challenges arising from this diversity require extra effort to ensure that all students can communicate and collaborate effectively.

For students in the Department of English Education, understanding the dynamics of regional dialects is crucial to building inclusive and effective teaching strategies. English teachers in Indonesia need to accommodate this linguistic diversity and develop methods that value and utilize the language skills of different dialects to enrich the learning experience. Overall, this research shows that while dialectal diversity brings challenges, with the right approach, it can be a source of richness that strengthens the learning process and enriches interactions between students. An understanding and appreciation of regional dialects is essential in creating an inclusive and productive learning environment.

For prospective English teachers in Indonesia, an understanding of regional dialect dynamics is essential for developing effective and inclusive teaching strategies. Teachers need to appreciate this linguistic diversity and utilize the language skills of different dialects to enrich the learning experience. This inclusive approach can help overcome communication challenges and capitalize on the richness of existing cultures to create more in-depth and productive interactions and discussions in the classroom.

Thus, this study emphasizes that regional dialects do not only function as communication tools but also as cultural bridges that enrich social and academic interactions in the classroom. The linguistic diversity presented by regional dialects can be integrated into the learning process to create a more inclusive, dynamic and culturally rich learning environment. Through adaptation and collaboration, students and educators can overcome language barriers and utilize this diversity to enrich their learning experience, making regional dialects a valuable asset in classroom discussions.

In a linguistic context, the use of regional dialects in classroom conversations exposes language variations that reflect the linguistic complexity of society. The dialects not only reflect geographical differences, but also mark the social and cultural identities of the participants. The use of Javanese, Sundanese and Minang dialects in daily interactions shows the existence of phonological, morphological and syntactic variations that are unique to the language. These variations include differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure that can affect the understanding and interpretation of messages between participants. In addition, the use of regional dialects also enriches the vocabulary and linguistic expressions in the learning environment, providing opportunities for participants to broaden their understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity. It also creates opportunities to learn diverse language structures and recognize the role of dialects in social interaction and communication. Thus, in a linguistic context, the use of regional dialects in

classroom conversations illustrates the complexity and richness of language in a multicultural society.

# 3.2. The use of dialectal varieties that can become a habit of communication in English education students

Several techniques and methods can help the use of dialectal variations in English instruction become second nature:

# 3.2.1 Code-Switching and Contrastive Analysis

In order to effectively communicate with students, teachers can employ codeswitching, which involves switching between various dialects or languages. This aids in teaching students the validity of various dialects and their applicability in various situations. Teachers can assist students in gaining a deeper comprehension of linguistic variations and their applications by examining the similarities and differences between dialects.

# 3.2.2 Linguistically Informed Instructional Strategies

Teachers ought to acknowledge and capitalize on students' linguistic diversity. This method fosters a positive attitude toward linguistic diversity and makes students feel more at ease speaking in their dialects in class.

## 3.2.3. Evaluating English Language Varieties

Teachers are able to identify and value dialects as distinct forms of English that are influenced by local, cultural, and social factors. This method encourages students to use their dialects successfully in a variety of contexts and helps them grow to be proud of them.

# 3.2.4 Language Diversity and Structured Literacy

Teachers can support students in gaining Academic English proficiency while appreciating their linguistic backgrounds by fusing structured literacy training with a knowledge of dialect diversity. This method recognizes the full range of English as it is spoken throughout the nation and improves overall language development.

### 3.2.5 Educators Can Promote Dialect Awareness

Teachers can do this by compiling a list of the many dialects spoken in American communities. Students benefit from this by learning more about the diversity of English and their own part in its celebration and preservation.

### 3.2.6 Sociolect and Language Education

Understanding Sociolect: Teachers can comprehend how social factors like age, gender, and socioeconomic status influence dialects. This viewpoint aids students in realizing that their dialects reflect their social identities in addition to being regional.

There are various ways in which the use of dialectal varieties in English education can become ingrained in communication practices. Educators should acknowledge and accept dialectal varieties as legitimate forms of English, rather than considering them to be inferior or erroneous. This promotes greater comfort among students in speaking in their native tongues in the classroom, which can result in a welcoming and encouraging learning environment. Including Dialects in Instruction: By utilizing real materials and examples that correspond to the students' native dialects, teachers can include dialects into their lessons. This can assist students in appreciating the language's relevance and in drawing connections between the language they are learning and their daily lives. Encouraging Multilingualism: Teachers can encourage multilingualism and the importance of varied linguistic backgrounds by embracing dialectal variations. Students may feel more a part of a community and have a shared cultural heritage as a result, which may improve their educational experiences in general. Using their own dialects in the classroom to show that they respect and value the diversity of language forms, teachers can serve as role models for dialectal varieties. This can foster an environment that is welcoming and encouraging for students to speak in their native tongues. Language Awareness and Education: Teachers can assist students by helping them with language awareness and education.

The use of dialectal varieties can become a habitual form of communication among English education students due to various factors. Research has shown that code switching, including the use of different dialects, is common among university students, especially in informal contexts like social media, where it serves functions such as attracting attention and expressing mood. Understanding language varieties, including dialects, is crucial for effective communication, as they can both connect and separate individuals based on linguistic differences. Additionally, the influence of different codes and dialects used in society can shape an individual's communication habits, with exposure to various codes leading to the frequent use of specific dialects in interactions with different people. Incorporating dialects in education has been a topic of debate, with arguments supporting the use of students' native varieties for better learning outcomes and overall development. Therefore, exposure to and awareness of dialectal varieties play a significant role in shaping communication habits among English education students.

# 4. CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the mini-research on the "Regional Dialect Function in Classroom Discourse," regional dialects greatly improve classroom interactions and student learning. Students feel appreciated and a part of the classroom community when they speak in these dialects, which promotes a sense of identity and inclusion. Teachers who speak the local dialect well create effective communication dynamics that promote greater understanding and rapport. Including regional dialects in instruction fosters active engagement and makes learning more relatable and interesting from a pedagogical standpoint. Furthermore, students' linguistic competence is enhanced and their adaptability in diverse linguistic contexts is aided by exposure to both standard language forms and regional dialects. However, thorough professional development for teachers is required to address issues like possible misunderstandings and the requirement for balanced language instruction. The study's overall findings emphasize the critical role that regional dialects play in fostering a diverse, vibrant, and productive learning environment.

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