

Social Dialect between Children and Parents in Children's Short Stories of Bobo Magazine

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Abstract. This paper discusses the social dialects of children and parents in the children's short stories in Bobo magazine. Humans often use language variations in the form of social dialects to mark their membership in certain social groups and to express their social identity. This also occurs in the social dialects of children and parents in short stories for children. However, this type of social dialect has never been studied by previous researchers because they mostly discuss regional dialects in literary works or social dialects of adult short stories. This research thus aims at finding out the form of social dialect between children and their parents in children's short stories in Bobo Magazine and also investigating the use of social dialects between children and their parents. Using qualitative content analysis, it was found that the dialect variations were manifested morphologically, syntactically, and lexically. Whereas the uses of social dialects in Bobo magazine were motivated by four aspects, namely: participants, settings, topics, and functions. Further studies on social dialect between children and parents might be expanded to data containing sounds as found in soap operas and films so as to make the four types of variations proposed equally observable.

Keywords: Social Dialect, Children and Parents, Short Stories, Bobo Magazine

1 Introduction

This study discusses the social dialects between children and parents in children's short stories published in Bobo magazine. Wardhaugh et al. [1] argue that social dialects arise due to various factors such as social class, religion, race, or ethnic group. They also assert that social differences motivate the differences in language use between social groups in the same way that geographical borders give rise to regional dialects. Furthermore, Wardhaugh et al. [1] state that linguistic differences due to differences in social variables is referred as social dialect which is the domain of social dialectology. So, social dialectology is a branch of linguistics that discusses how humans speak in relation to social differences. Holmes [2] adds that age can be one of the social factors causing differences in language use. Holmes [2], humans often use language to mark their membership in certain social groups and to express their social identity. This social group can be in the form of social status, gender, age, ethnic group, and other social networks in a community [2].

Holmes [2] says that differences in social dialects can be indicated by varieties of vocabulary, grammar or pronunciation. She gives an example of differences in pronunciation based on the age of speakers observed in her study in Glasgow, Scotland. According to the study, children in Glasgow pronounce the sound [t] in English as alveolar stop [t]. However, the pronunciation changes when they become teenagers (between 10-15 years old) as parents and

teachers encourage them to pronounce [t] as a glottal stop [ʔ] in accordance with the English dialect used in Glasgow in words such as matter and water. In addition, the use of impolite words also decreases with the older respondents in the study. When they reach adulthood, Glasgow men use only a few swear words while adult women use no swear words at all [2].

Holmes [2] also finds that the use of English becomes more standardized as a person ages. Children and adolescents tend to use non-standard English. However, as they get older, their language becomes more standardized because they realize the importance of standard language for their work and social life. What is interesting is that older native speakers return to using non-standard languages even though they always used standard languages when they were younger. This is because elderly speakers no longer feel the pressure from the environment to use standard language. Language variety in term of dialect is a common feature found in literature. Writers of literary works often use certain speech styles to describe interactions between characters, create realism, and provide resonance to their characterizations and identities. The representation of speech style is very important when writing a story so that readers can relate the content of the story to their personal experience. Dialogue in the story can give a spirit that brings the characters in the story to life, and makes them look more realistic. Accurate representation of speech style is very important, because inaccurate representation (for example, representation of speech style that is too formal and not contextual) can make the readers less attached with characters in the story. It is also important for writers to build characterizations with strong characters and identities.

Language is an integral part of identity. Giving the characters in the story an authentic variety of language is a great way to give them a strong identity. Therefore, a writer can choose to use the vernacular dialect in the speech style of the characters in the story he/she makes. The writer may have various motivations when deciding which characters in his story to use a certain dialect, for example, giving the characters a certain cultural identity, making them different from other characters, or describing a certain social status of the characters. Whatever the motivation, dialect representation is often an important part of a story and its character's identity. The representation of the use of dialect in a story is often present in the form of a dialogue between characters, rather than in the narrative of the story. In this regard, Toolan [3] emphasizes the importance of conversational analysis, which is not only focused on the structure and organization of conversations but also sees the importance of social context, one of which can be seen from the use of certain linguistic features. He asserts that "...what gets done conversationally is very much more than what actually gets said" [3]. From this, we can see that the social context of the conversation and interaction between characters is very important to the construction of meaning.

Dialectal differences can also be seen in children's stories which are usually characterized by easy choice of words and grammar [4]. There are several reasons why writers use dialect in children's literature. Wells [5], for example, said that "We can only speculate that their use of it is to communicate more effectively with their readers than by using Standard English. Meanwhile, Sands Hetherington, a writer for children's stories, encourages the use of dialects in children's literature to add "flavor" to writing, asserting that "...using dialect does help them [children] to sound out words and figure out their meanings based on that" (nightbuddiesadventures.com). The use of dialects in children's literature is still limited compared to adult and youth literature, and one of them can be found in Bobo magazine.

According to Holmes [2], linguistic variations that can be found in a dialect include sounds, word structures, sentence structures, and vocabularies. Whereas, the use of linguistic variations is determined by several aspects such as participants, settings, topics, and functions of the conversation. A number of linguistic researches on children's stories have been carried out. One

study was done by Nurfiana [6] which examined the form and meaning in language variations in local wisdom-based short stories written by students of class XI MIA 3 at Astanajapura Public High School (SMAN) 1. They found that the languages varied in term of the speaker's perspective related to dialects and sociolects. Another study was by Suhardi [7] that investigated the use of the Banyumasan dialect in the prose of Ahmad Tohari, a famous writer who was born in Banyumas. It was found that Ahmad Tohari's prose used a lot of Banyumasan dialect.

Based on the two previous studies described above, there are at least two research gaps which can then be developed through this research. First, in terms of the object of research, the two studies above did not examine children's literature as the object of study. Meanwhile, this research will examine the short stories in Bobo magazine. Second, this research will focus on the study of social dialects found in short stories in Bobo magazine, while the two previous studies above examine the variety of languages differently. Nurfiana [6] examined language variety more generally. Meanwhile Suhardi [7] discussed more about the Banyumasan dialect as a regional dialect. Therefore, this study aims at finding out the form of social dialect between children and their parents in children's short stories in Bobo Magazine and also investigating the use of social dialects between children and their parents.

2 Research Method

The qualitative content analysis was adopted as an approach to investigate the short stories with researchers playing a vital role in researching the form and meaning of the text [8]. This way, new categories can be created in data that can answer research problems [8]. Data collection was done by identifying sentences containing the social dialects of children and parents from 16 short stories published in Bobo magazine from January to July 2020. Then, the data were analyzed using Holmes [2] theory of linguistic elements of the social dialect as mentioned in the introduction above.

3 Finding and Discussion

3.1 Finding

3.1.1 The Linguistic Variations of Social Dialect

According to Holmes [2], The social dialect variations include phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical variations. However, based on the results of the study, only three types were found, namely morphological, syntactic, and lexical variations. It was because the data were from Bobo magazine and were in written form so that phonological variations could not be observed.

a) Morphological Variations

Morphological variations are variations of word forms. Morphological variations that were often found in short stories from Bobo magazine were indicated by the use of interjections, imperative verbs, negations. The examples are as follows:

(1) *Sekali-sekali, liburan di desa, yuk.* (ED40Jan)

Why do not we go to countryside for vacation, shall we?

- (2) *Laras, tolong buatka dua teh manis hangat, lima es jeruk, ya.* (ED46Feb)

Laras, please help me make two cups of sweet warm tea and five glasses of iced orange squash.

- (3) *Jangan marah, Ma. Enggak akan kuulangi lagi.* (ED05Mei)

Please do not get angry, Mom. I promise not to do it again.

- (4) *Do, antar dulu kue ini ke rumah Nenek Johani.* (ED05Mei)

Do, please help me deliver the cake to Grandma Johani.

Example (1) illustrates the use of interjections in the short stories of Bobo magazine. In this case, the interjection used is imperative, namely *yuk* "shall we". With this interjection, the speaker expects the interlocutor to do what is suggested by the speaker. Meanwhile, examples (2) and (4) show the use of imperative verbs in the short stories, indicated by verb *buatka* "make" in example (2) and *antar* "deliver" in example (4). The difference in examples (2) and (4) is that the imperative verb in example (2) has an affix *-ka*, while the imperative verb in example (4) does not have an affix. Another morphological feature found is the use of the negative expression *enggak* "will not" in example (3) which is adapted from Jakarta dialect of Indonesian which is now better known as the informal variety of Indonesian.

b) Syntactic Variations

In addition to morphological variations, there are also syntactic variations related to social dialects between children and their parents in short stories from Bobo Magazine. In this case, the syntactic variation is related to the variety of sentence types that are commonly used. The syntactic variations found include: imperative sentences, interrogative sentences, declarative sentences, and exclamative sentences. Examples of each type of sentence are as follows:

- (5) *Bersiaplah, ayo mama antar latihan.* (ED47Feb)

Get ready. Mommy will take you to practice.

- (6) *Bagaimana latihan baletnya, sayang?* (ED51Mar)

How was your ballet practice, honey?

- (7) *Hmm...tapi Braman enggak datang.* (ED02Apr)

Hmm... But Braman does not come.

- (8) *Aduh, Bu. Aku capai.* (ED09Jun)

Oh, mother. I am tired.

First, the imperative sentence is shown by example (5), which is indicated by the use of the imperative verb *bersiaplah* "get ready" and the interjection *ayo* "let's". Imperative sentences are the most common syntactic variations found in short stories from Bobo Magazine. However, there are also other types of sentences found from the data, such as the interrogative sentence as described by example (6) which contains the question word *bagaimana* "how". In addition, the declarative sentence is also found in the short story of Bobo Magazine, which is shown by example (7) as this sentence serves to express information. Finally, the exclamative sentences or exclamations are shown by example (8). In this case, the interjection is *Oh*.

c) Lexical Variations

This type of variation is divided into formal and informal vocabularies as exemplified in the following sentences:

- (9) *Berarti Danang harus masak. Kan, repot.* (ED45Feb)
So it means Danang must cook. What a job!!
- (10) *Lagian Halia enggak kenal siapa-siapa di sana.* (ED47Feb)
Besides, Halia does not know anyone there.
- (11) *Semangat dong! Masih ada latihan berikutnya.* (ED47Feb)
Keep your spirit! There is still another practice.
- (12) *Coba kamu tanyakan saja pada beliau, daripada Uli penasaran dan menebak-nebak sendiri.* (ED03Apr)
Why do not you ask him yourself? So you (Uli) can bear out your curiosity.
- (13) *Doakan, ya, Bun, semoga berhasil.* (ED13Jul)
Please pray for my success, Mom.

Examples (9), (10), and (11) show the use of informal vocabularies in short stories from Bobo Magazine. First, the informal variety in example (9) is indicated by the particle *kan*. Then, example (10) uses the conjunction *lagian* “besides” and the negation *enggak* “no”, thus reflecting the informal vocabulary variations in the sentence. In addition, the informal vocabulary in example (11) is indicated by the use of the interjection *dong*. Meanwhile, examples (12) and (13) reflect variations of formal or standard vocabularies. These two examples have a thing in common, namely that they contain a standard form of imperative verb, namely *tanyakan* “ask” in example (12), and *doakan* “pray” in example (13).

3.1.2 The Use of Social Dialect

Based on Holmes [2], there are four aspects that must be considered in order to understand the use of social dialects, namely the participants, settings, topics, and functions. These four aspects have also been analyzed from the collected data so the background of the social dialects used between children and their parents in the short stories can be understood.

a) Participants

First of all, the identified participants in the short stories of Bobo magazine are: mothers and children, and fathers and children. It is because this study only discusses the use of social dialects between children and parents. The examples that can be displayed are as follows:

- (1) *Mama mau ikut? Sungguh?* (ED47Feb)
You will come along, Mom? Really?
- (2) *Ya sudah, kamu membonceng papa aja, yuk.* (ED49Mar)
Come on. Let Daddy give you a ride.
- (3) *Eva menemani Ibu ke pasar, ya.* (ED09Jun)
Eva, let's go to the market (with Mommy).

The findings showed that the participants who dominated the short stories of Bobo Magazine were mothers and children. Examples that can illustrate this are examples (14) and (16). However, in example (14), the speaker is a child, with his mother as the interlocutor. Meanwhile, the speaker in the example (16) is a mother and the interlocutor is her daughter named Eva. In addition, the findings also showed examples of conversation participants consisting of fathers and children. This is shown by example (15) where the father is the speaker and the child is the addressee.

b) Settings

The second aspect that needs to be considered in understanding the use of social dialects is the social setting or context of the conversation. In this case, the settings that are often used in short stories from Bobo Magazine are at home, outside home, and in a car. Examples of each of these settings are:

- (1) *Jangan lupa, sampahnya dibawa turun.* (ED45Feb)
Don't forget to bring the trash down.
- (2) *Ayo, Damar, mumpung ada teman belajar bersama!* (ED50Mar)
Come on, Damar, go study while you have a company.
- (3) *Eh, aku malah disuruh untuk membantu Maudy.* (ED51Mar)
Eh, I was asked to help Maudy instead.
- (4) *Yuk, kita mulai.* (ED11Jun)
Come on. Let us start.

The setting that dominates the short stories of Bobo Magazine is at home. This is shown by examples (18) and (20). The sentence in example (18) is uttered by a father to his child on the terrace of the house, while example (20) is a sentence that is conveyed by a mother to her child in the house, somewhere near the kitchen. In addition, there is also a short story from Bobo Magazine which takes place outside the house, and the setting is often related to tourist objects or during family vacation. For example, the setting in example (17) is located at a family tourist attraction called *Bukit Kambing*. Apart from being at home and outside the home, the settings used also include traveling, as in example (19) where a child spoke to his mother on a vehicle.

c) Topics

In addition to the participants of the conversation and settings, the topic of conversation has also been analyzed in this study. The topics in the short stories of Bobo Magazine include activities to help parents with household chores, activities on vacation with family, as well as a child's complaint about something. Examples of each topic of conversation are as follows:

- (1) *Huh, pahaku jadi pegal.* (ED47Feb)
Huft, my thighs are sore.
- (2) *Mila, setiap pagi tolong beri burung itu makan ya! Kasih beras yang ditumbuk kasar saja.* (ED52Apr)
Mila, please help feed the birds every morning! Just give them coarsely ground rice.
- (3) *Eva, bantu Ibu mengepel lantai, yuk.* (ED09Jun)
Eva, help mother mop the floor, will you?
- (4) *Tidur lagi saja, Nak.* (ED12Jun)
Just go to sleep, child.

First, examples (22) and (23) describe the topic of conversation that dominates the short story of Bobo Magazine, which is related to activities to help parents. In example (22), the activity is in the form of feeding pet birds, while the activity in example (23) is mopping the floor. Meanwhile, the topic in example (24) is vacationing with family, and the conversation takes place on a long trip. There is also a short story from Bobo Magazine which contains the topic of a child's complaint as shown by an example (21). In this case, the complaint expressed relates to a child's fatigue.

d) Functions

Finally, the function or purpose of speech is also important to consider when analyzing the use of social dialects. In short stories from Bobo Magazine, the functions that are often encountered include functions to express complaints, ask questions, and give orders or invitations. Examples that can be shown include:

- (1) *Huh, Ibu selalu begitu.* (ED46Feb)
Huft, you did it again Mom.
- (2) *Uh, terus kita mau lihat apa di sana?* (ED12Jun)
Oh, so, what are we going to see over there?
- (3) *Kita ikut rombongan saja, yuk.* (ED12Jun)
Let us just go with the group.
- (4) *Selesai kamu makan, tolong bantu Bunda, ya.* (ED13Jul)
Once you finish eating, please help Mommy.

Examples (25) and (26) illustrate the function of expressing a complaint, and this is indicated by the use of the interjections *huh* and *uh*. In these two examples, each of these complaints was made by a child. However, apart from expressing complaints, example (26) also shows the function to ask something to parents (to the mother). Meanwhile, functions (27) and (28) are related to the function of giving orders or invitations. Example (27) is more directed to an invitation that is marked by the exclamation word *yuk* “let’s”, while example (28) uses the word *tolong* “please” which indicates a hedged-imperative sentence.

3.2 Discussion

Previous studies discussing dialects in short stories show that such stories cannot be separated from both the dialect and sociolect of the characters in the stories. Nurfiana [6] who examined the forms and meanings of language variations in short stories of students of class XI MIA 3 at SMAN 1 Astanajapura found that these short stories feature the dialect and sociolect of the characters. Shows that the dialect in short stories is important as an expression of the author’s cultural identity as done by the author Ahmad Tohari who used the Banyumas Javanese dialect in his works.

In line with the above-mentioned studies, this paper also shows that the short stories in Bobo magazine also display some forms of social dialect between children and their parents. The form of social dialect found is mainly the use of imperative sentences from parents to children. These imperative sentences are characterized by imperative verbs, both un-affixed and affixed with *-kan*. Meanwhile, the social dialect is mainly used by parents to invite their children to help them with activities at home or during family activities such as traveling together to tourist attractions. In contrast, children use social dialects to complain to their parents. Complaints are usually made with informal vocabularies.

The dialect direction between parents to children and children to parents also exhibits interesting findings. When it comes to children speaking to their parents, the function is mostly to complaint about something, as characterized by sentence 8, 9, 10, 19, 21, and 25. This tendency might be used by the authors of the stories to indicate the inquisitive and free-will nature of children. So, when their desires are not fulfilled, they complaint. On the other hand, when it comes to the opposite direction – parents speaking to children, most dialectal forms are

characterized by imperative functions (thus syntactically manifested in imperative sentences). This can be seen, for example, in sentence 2, 4, 5, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, and 28. In fact, most of the sentences in the collected data are of this kind. This might be intentionally done by the authors of the stories to indicate an equal power relation between children and parents.

4 Conclusion

It can be concluded that the forms of social dialects between parents and children in Bobo's short stories are as follows: (1) morphological variations are manifested in the use of interjection, imperative verbs, and negation. (2) syntactic variations are in the forms of imperative sentences, interrogative sentences, declarative sentences, and exclamative sentences, (3) lexical variations are of two kinds, informal words as well as formal words. Meanwhile, the uses of social dialects in Bobo magazine are motivated by four aspects: (1) participants: parents and children (2) setting: at home, outdoors (family attractions) and inside or above the vehicle, (3) topics: activities to help parents or homework, activities on vacation with family, and child's complaints about something, and (4) functions: expressing complaints, asking for/about something, and giving orders or invitations. Further studies on social dialect between children and parents might be expanded to data containing sounds as found in soap operas and films so as to make the four types of variations proposed by Holmes [2] equally observable.

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