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## Indonesian Language Accuracy Issues on Television

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**Abstract:** Television influences the use and understanding of Indonesian language. Disobedience and ignorance of rules of the language bring a negative impact for the language itself. Such condition encourages the writer to carry out a study on the implementation of Indonesian language rules on television. This study aims to find out language issues on televisions. The method used in the study is documentation. The approach used is the video or photo recording approach. The findings of the data analysis reveal that some mistakes regarding the language rules are found on the media. The mistakes deal with academic title writing, capitalization, the sequence of letters, misspelling, vocabulary, and cohesions. These mistakes can bring negative impact to viewers. Viewers may believe everything presented on television is in accordance with provisions of Indonesian language rules. Therefore, journalists are required to be careful in presenting a program on television.

Keywords: language, mistakes, television, and issues

### 1. Introduction

Indonesian language is the unifying language of the Republic of Indonesia which was officially acknowledged on the Youth Pledge dated on October 28, 1928. However, the language was officially used on August 18, 1945 or one day after Indonesia's independence was proclaimed on August 17, 1945. On the proclamation day, Indonesian constitution, called the 1945 Constitution was signed. In one of the articles (Article 36), it is stated that Indonesian language is the official language of Indonesia. In addition, the refinement of the language continues.

On August 16, 1972, The Enhanced Indonesian Spelling System (Indonesian: *Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan*, abbreviated *EYD*) was officially issued. Then, *EYD* has changed to *EBI* (Indonesian Spelling System) since 2016. The recent spelling system is used now. Indonesian language continues to develop day by day. In order to be the unifying language, Indonesian goes through periods of negotiation and even struggle. These negotiations and struggles started from the Youth Pledge until Indonesia got the independence.

Prof. Dr. H. Muhammad Darwis, MS in his paper, *Mari Berikrar Menjunjung Bahasa Indonesia sebagai Produk Budaya yang Berprestise* (Let's Bear a Witness to Uphold Indonesian Language as a Reputable Cultural Product) affirmed that every nation needs to renew the oath (youth pledge) because there are symptoms of the nation's pride degradation in Indonesian as a national cultural product" (Dervish, 2015). This happens because the status of Indonesian is considered lower than other languages. This image slowly erodes the existence of Indonesian as a national and an official language. If the degradation continues, Indonesian will not be developed and used, even in Indonesia.

Inequality of using the language reflects that the Indonesian are still colonized by other nations through foreign languages. Such condition is similar to what Bhatt, an Indian poet said in his poem cited by Alwi Rachman in his book *Ruang Sadar tak Berpagar* (Consciousness without a Barrier):

*“Jika engkau punya dua lidah, punya dua bahasa,  
 (If you have two tongues, if you have two languages,)  
 Aku ingin bertanya, apa yang engkau akan lakukan,  
 (I want to ask what you are going to do,)  
 jika engkau kehilangan lidah pertama, kehilangan bahasa ibu,  
 (if you lose your first tongue, if you lose your mother tongue,)  
 Padahal engkau tak tahu betul lidah kedua bahasa asing”, ...  
 (Even though you don't really know the second tongue of a foreign language, ...)*

(Bhatt in Rachman, 2015)

The similar condition was revealed by Gloria Evangelina Anzaldua, an American writer, in her essay *How to Tame Wild Tongue*. He says "My tongue is my language. My language is my identity. My identity is my home." (Anzaldua in Rachman, 2015). Even so, language is "twin skins of self-identity." However, some Indonesian people show that Indonesian is no longer an identity but just a slogan. This phenomenon encourages the writer to carry out a study on the use of Indonesian language on television, especially regarding the language rules. This study aims to find out the Indonesian language issues on television. This study will reveal various writing mistakes of the language rules made by journalists of the media.

Television is a medium, tool or means to convey information or messages to the public or society. Yunus (2010) stated that a channel or means of communication is required to convey any kinds of information to the public. Putra (2007) said that is one of the media to convey information is television. Furthermore, Putra said that television is an audio-visual communication medium. The biggest advantages of television are its sound (audio) and image (visual). Television brings bigger impacts because it involves sound and images so that it influences public more than other media do.

Regarding the use of language on television, Luwarso (2006) affirmed that the language of mass media is a journalistic language used on television. Santana (2005) said that language understanding must be the main basis for every journalist in conveying information. He said further that language used to convey information shall be accurate, clear, straightforward, simple, effective, concise, and interesting. The media should use the official language and obey the Indonesian language rules. Journalist conveying information on television shall be aware of the rules of language, although mass media have certain characteristics in conveying information. However, journalists are expected not to disobey the rules possessed by the official Indonesian languages in terms of usage, punctuation spelling, vocabulary, syntactic structure, and discourse.

## 2. Methodology

This study uses a descriptive documentation approach. The data obtained will be tabulated and analyzed based on the findings. The data are collected from electronic media, in the form of texts on television. The data presented are the basis of the analysis of this study. The technique used to collect the data is the documentation technique. The technique includes collecting data in the form of videos or photo recordings.

The steps of data analysis are: (1) collecting data, (2) identifying various forms of Indonesian language problems found on television, (3) analyzing data in accordance with Indonesian language issues on television, (4) describing data by connecting to several theories to answer the formulation of the problem and research objectives, and (5) drawing conclusions related to the formulation of the problem and the purpose of the study in accordance with the forms of Indonesian language issues on television.

### 3. Result and Discussions

#### 3.1. Academic Title Writing

Academic titles shall be written correctly. Various provisions have been explained in a book *Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia* (PUEBI) (General Guidelines for Indonesian Spelling System) and other books. Mistakes in writing academic titles on electronic media, especially television can have an adverse impact on viewers. The viewers may judge that the writing is in accordance with the rules of the language, even though not all information presented by the media is correct. The incorrect academic title writing can be seen in the picture below: (1) DR. AGUS GUMIWANG KARTASASMITA, M.SI (Metro TV).



Picture 1. Academic Title Writing

The academic title writing as seen in Text 1 does not meet the standard of the correct academic title writing. Hermandra & Zulhafizh (2017) said that academic title writing is not new in various media. Zulhafizh (2018) affirmed that academic title writing for the doctoral degree (S-3) can be abbreviated as Dr. (Philosophy Doctor). The doctoral academic title is written in [D] capital and non-capital [r]. Then in PUEBI (2016) it is stated that correct writing for Master of Science (in Indonesia *Magister Sains*) is M.Si. (M.Sc.). A period follows the writing of rank, position and academic title. In fact, in Text 1, no period is written after the academic title and the position. The correct writing can be seen in the text (1a).

(1a) Dr. AGUS GUMIWANG KARTASASMITA, M.Si.

#### 3.2. Misspelling

Misspelling sometimes is made by journalists or writers. The news on *TV One* shows a title that uses incorrect letters. This error can interfere with the information conveyed to viewers. In the picture below, there is a misspelling, namely:

(2) AKHIR CERITA KALOJODO (sumber TV One)



**Picture 2.** Misspelling

In Text 2, a mistake in writing the name of a place is found. The correct name of the place is *Kalijodo* not *Kalojodo*. *Kalijodo* is the name of a place in Jakarta. Stasinon (Pardali & Mizamidou, 2017: 96) said that this mistake may be due to visual similarities in spelling. The place is known for the location of prostitution. The correct writing can be seen in Text (2a).

(2a) AKHIR CERITA KALIJODO (THE END OF KALIJODO STORY)

### 3.3. Mistakes in Letter Order

A writer may make mistakes in writing due to carelessness. The mistakes can affect the reader's understanding. Tiono (2003) affirmed that it is important for the journalist or writers to use language functions correctly. The purpose is that information can be conveyed correctly and the information can be understood by viewers easily. A mistake in writing the correct name of a country can be seen in Text (3).

(3) QUEENSLAND, ASUTRALIA (TV One)



**Picture 3.** Mistakes in Letter Oder

In Text 3, a mistake in letter order is found. The letter component is complete but not properly arranged. Such mistakes can confuse viewers. It can even lead to failure to understand the information. It happens because the name of the state is written correctly. However, the name of the country is not written correctly. Those who have no background knowledge that Queensland is one of the states in Australia may get difficulties to understand the text. According to Jannah (2015: 59), a mistake such in Text (3) is a failure in utilizing the system or symbolization. The correct writing can be seen in the text (3a).

(3a) QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

### 3.4. Addition of Letter

Another issue regarding the use of Indonesian on television is the addition of letter. Such addition is a kind of misspelling too. The addition directly or indirectly can affect the quality of the information conveyed. Journalists or writers shall care about the writing system well in order that the information presented is clear. Santana (2005) said that written language understanding is the main basis for each journalists or writer in conveying information. An addition of letters can be seen in Text (4).

(4) CATATATAN AKHIR TAHUN (TV Kompas)



**Picture 4.** Addition of Letter

A mistake found in Text 4 deals with the addition of letters. In other word, a misspelling is found n the text. Such mistake makes the word meaningless or the word has no meaning at all. A piece of writing is useless if no information is conveyed to readers. Journalists or writers are required to be careful in writing a text presented on television. The correct writing of the text can be seen in Text (4a).

(4a) CATATAN AKHIR TAHUN

### 3.5. Non-Standard Vocabulary

All media that function to convey information are required to use standard vocabulary. Standard vocabulary is a word or an entry that has the standard of Indonesian language. Journalists or writers must have good background knowledge and understanding of the standard vocabulary n order that the information conveyed is not misinterpreted. A mistake regarding the standard vocabulary can be seen in Text (5).

(5) IDULFITRI JATUH PADA RABU, 6 JULI 2019 (TV One)



**Picture5.** Non-Standard Vocabulary

A mistake regarding a standard vocabulary is found in Text (5). The mistake deals with the writing of an Islamic holy day. According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, abbreviated KKBI (Great Dictionary of The Indonesian Language of the Language Center) (2008) the correct writing of the holyday is *Idul Fitri*. It is an Islamic holyday after Muslims complete the fasting in *Ramadhan* (Islamic calendar) which falls on 1 Shawwal. *Idul Fitri* consists of two words and the words must be written separately, *Idul Fitri*. The correct writing of the text can be seen in Text (5a).

(5a) IDUL FITRI JATUH PADA RABU, 6 JULI 2019

### 3.6. Ineffective Text

Ineffective texts sometimes are found on television. Such texts may lead to various interpretations of meaning. The biggest concern is the failure of viewers to understand what journalist or writers actually intend to convey. One of the mistakes regarding the ineffective text can be seen in Text (6).

(6) SOPIR DAN TRUK TEWAS DI TEMPAT (TV One)(DRIVER AND TRUCK KILLED ON THE SPOT)



**Picture 6.**Ineffective Text

Text (6) contains an ineffective text. The text leads to the meaning that 'Drivers and trucks are those that have an accident. Then, they are killed on the spot. In that case, the one killed is a truck driver. A truck is inanimate so it will never be killed. The word *tewas* (killed) is used for animate creatures, not for inanimate ones. Such mistakes need to be clarified by the journalists or the writers. As Swain (1985: 245); Sheppard (1992: 105) said that journalist or writers should make clarifications in order to avoid negative image or new misinterpretation. The correct writing of the text can be seen in Text (6a).

(6a) SOPIR TRUK TEWAS DI TEMPAT(TRUCK DRIVER KILLED ON SPOT)

### 3.7. Shortage of Background Knowledge

A person in charge of writing and resending a text on a television screen should have good background knowledge. Misspelling can lead readers or viewers to the wrong interpretations of meaning. In the end, it can damage knowledge of public. A mistake due to the lack of background knowledge of journalists or writers can be seen in Text (7) below.

(7) PALEMBANG, SUMATERA UTARA (TV One)



**Picture7.**Shortage of Background Knowledge

A mistake in writing the correct name of a place is found in Text (7). Such mistake is a kind of shortage of background knowledge of the journalists or writers. They are required to good knowledge

so that they do not make a mistake when conveying information or presenting a written text on television. Regarding the text (7), the city of Palembang is geographically located in *Provinsi Sumatera Selatan* (South Sumatra province), not in *Provinsi Sumatera Utara* (North Sumatra. North Sumatra is one of the provinces whose the capital city is Medan, not Palembang. To anticipate such mistake, Alreo (2011: 38) said that awareness to have broad knowledge and insight is needed. The correct writing of the text can be seen in Text (7a).

(7a) PALEMBANG, SUMATERA SELATAN



**Picture 8.**The Concept Mappng of Language Accuracy Issues on Teevision

#### 4. Conclusions

Television plays an important role in conveying information. It also can promote rules of a language. However, the findings of this research reveal that some language mistakes are found on television, such as academic title writing, misspelling, mistakes in letter order, addition of letters, standard vocabulary, and ineffective text. Such mistakes can bring negative impressions to the reader or the audience. Readers or viewers may believe everything that is written correctly according to the provisions of Indonesian. In fact, they are not in accordance with the provisions. Therefore, journalists or writers are required to be more careful when conveying information or presenting a text on television. As a result, information conveyed or text written can be understood by viewers well.

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