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## The Development of Community Education and Language: An Exploration of the Riam Panjang in the Interior of West Kalimantan

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### ABSTRACT

*The study of the implications of education on societal change is important in social and educational contexts. This study was conducted in that context; it aims to describe how the implications of citizens' education on their language. Data were collected in Riam Panjang Village, Kapuas Hulu. The place is more in the upper reaches of the Kapuas River, about 400 km from Pontianak, the capital of West Kalimantan province. Data were collected through interviews and observation. Data analysis was conducted with the approach of Creswell (2015). In conclusion, the rapidly growing education in Riam Panjang has transformed monolingual societies into multilingual ones in the last 30 years. The community of speakers who initially spoke one language (monolingual), namely Malay Ulu Kapuas, became a bilingual community that spoke other Malay languages (Indonesian, Pontianak language), as well as several other languages. Changes are contributed by the need for interaction of society with the outside world, as a result of development and globalization. The implication of this study is the need for specific policies of decision makers about regional language retention. If there is no specific policy, it is feared that regional languages will become extinct, and that means part of the wealth of communal knowledge will also be extinct.*

**Keywords:** Education, Language, Bilingualism, Malay.

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious effort of society to meet their needs. Through education the community formulates the goals to be achieved. They plan for the future based on that formula and that path. (Aryanto, et al, 2021; Rini & Tari, 2013). Education affects them. The contribution of education to the economy-welfare, education and Environment,

Education and language, is already stated by a number of experts. (Indriani, Hasan, & Inanna, 2021; Yuristia, 2018).

However, education also has an influence on aspects of human life (Normina, 2018). What is and has been happening in human life into consideration in the preparation of the design of education and learning (Trianingsih, 2017). In short, there is a reciprocal relationship between education and culture. Both influence each other.

The extent of their influence is uncertain. Differences in society and its environment, as well as other factors, have resulted in different influences (Barth, 1988). A community that is of the same ethnicity or religion, with the same type of school environment; a religious school or a state school or even a public school, often shows “different results”.

This study becomes important in the context of such differences in situations. As already mentioned by the researchers, the interior of West Kalimantan has a special character that is different from other regions (Nieuwenhuis, 1994; Yusriadi & Hermansyah, 2003).

Difficult and remote rural terrain poses its own problems for the implementation of Education. Children are not much touched by the development of literacy. The learning environment is less supportive. Educational facilities, such as learning facilities and media, are also often very limited.

In the meantime, the teachers also do not feel at home to teach them. Local teachers are few and limited, while teachers from outside are reluctant to teach and persist for a long time. They often easily apply for moving duties to urban areas. Thus, the educational gap in the interior and in the urban area is present and becomes a national problem and even an international problem (Camarero & Oliva, 2019; Yuan, et.al, 2020; Lou, et.al, 2022); paradoxes regarding education in rural areas have been touched upon in many studies.

In addition, as far as is known, no research has been conducted to see how education and language change in the rural areas of West Kalimantan. The initial studies conducted only looked at changes in the general context in Jongkong (Yusriadi, 2017), changes in language and society in Suhaid and its surroundings (Collins, 2012), changes in the Iban community (Yonda, 2016), changes in the Malay community along the Kapuas River (Purwanto, 2018; Ibrahim & Muttaqin, 2019). The study can therefore contribute to providing additional data and provide insight into the educational development and language state of the community.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study was conducted in Riam Panjang, Kapuas Hulu. The village is located at the headwaters of Pengkadan River, a tributary of Embau River. Embau River is one of the main branches of the Kapuas River, in the upper Kapuas region. (Yusriadi, 2014). Riam Panjang was chosen as the research site on the grounds that the village is an enclave village, a village that was formerly isolated in West Kalimantan. Over time, this village became one of the open villages.

Riam Panjang village is also the leading village in education in Kapuas Hulu. In the 1970s, when education was not yet available in other areas, the Riam Panjang people's school was established. In the same decade in this village built *madrrasah ibtidaiyah*. In the 1990s in this village was built *madrrasah tsanawiyah*, MTS Al-Yaqin Riam Panjang.

Since the 1980s, many children from this village have received higher education. Start high school (especially Tsanawiyah Madrasah in Jongkong). Subsequently, some people continue their education at the high school level, for example to school teacher

education (SPG), religious teacher education (PGA), Madrasah Aliyah and high school. In the 1990s, until now a number of village children became scholars. In the end they become teachers, civil servants, and so on. This kind of Education allows researchers to see how it affects the development of language in the village community as a whole.

Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with village community leaders, as well as educated citizens. They can provide the information needed in the study. Observations were made on community interactions to see the linguistic situation. In addition, the documentation of the WA group conversation was used to see examples of language use based on educational background.

The Data were processed in accordance with qualitative research (Crasswell, 2015). Data are grouped, interpreted, and then drawn conclusions. Data verification involved academics from Riam Panjang who had conducted studies on the community there.

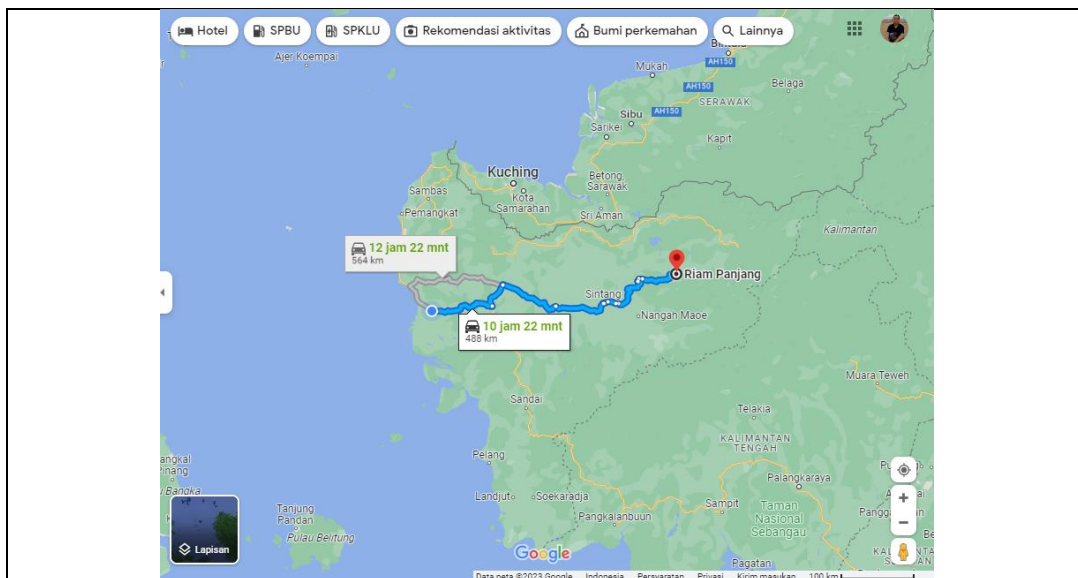
## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. Interior Community in Riam Panjang

Interior in West Kalimantan carries the meaning of a region far from the provincial capital. (Hermansyah & Yusriadi, 2006; Ibrahim & Muttaqin, 2019). Prof. Alqadrie, a sociologist, divides the interior into two parts; the near interior and the far Interior. This difference is seen in terms of geographic range or distribution. The near interior refers to the area that is close from Pontianak, while the far Interior refers to the area that is far away. This far or near based on this mileage consideration is a hedgehog or a distance of 300 kilometers. The area from the city limits to Ngabang is called the near interior, while the area above it to Kapuas Hulu is the far interior.

The study was conducted in remote rural areas. Precisely in Riam Panjang, Pengkadan district, Kapuas Hulu Regency. (Yusriadi, 2014). See Riam Panjang Map.

Map 1: Riam Panjang



Source: Google Map

Riam Panjang can be reached by road from Pontianak for approximately 10 hours. To arrive at Riam Panjang, go through Tayan, Sanggau, Sintang, to Tepuai. From Tepuai, the distance is only 21 kilometers or 30 minutes drive. That's the only path right now.

Prior to 2010 there were still crossing options through Pengkadan River and Embau River to Jongkong, from Jongkong across Kapuas River to Sintang, or continue to Pontianak. But, today, the Pengkadan River and Embau River routes, are no longer used. Climate change, river flow and changes in transportation modes make this area no longer recognize river transportation. The land route is the only mode of transport used for both people and goods. The river is more frequent. The flow of river traffic because it has never been used causes not awake. Many trees fell or drifted and crossed in the middle of the river closing the crossing. When the river was still in use, the wood across which the current closed was removed.

Boats and machines (motor speed), as a means of river transport is no longer there. The old boat has been destroyed by time. No new boats were built.

The rural communities in Riam Panjang and its surroundings are Malay, Muslim. They number up to 1240 people (Disdukcapil Kapuas Hulu, 2023). Compared to 20 years ago, the population increase does not look great, because since 2007 the Riam Panjang area has been divided into two, namely Riam Panjang and Hulu Pengkadan.

The increase in the population of Riam Panjang is caused by at least three things. First, the increase in population through birth. Second, the marriage is out of town. The population married to outsiders has increased. Third, the displacement of people from outside the village also occurred. For example, the transmigration of Javanese people around Buak Limbang and Boyan villages --several kilometers from Riam Panjang. The transmigration project began in 1996. (Samagat, 2014).

Another migration occurred due to nomads who came looking for work there. Some people become itinerant traders, business stalls, to farm laborers. In addition, there are also those who move from other places because they are married to Riam Panjang people. Displacement due to marriage has occurred since the 1990s.

In the end, this situation causes the composition of the population based on social aspects (eg ethnic-cultural) change. If in the 1980s, the population of Riam Panjang was calculated as 100 percent Malay, now in the 2020s, according to informants, Malays are 90 percent. The Rest, Java, Madura, Dayak.

The employment of the population also shows changes. At present, the work of the population is already diverse. Ranging from farmers, rubber tappers, laborers, traders to civil servants. The number of merchants, laborers, and civil servants increased.

Roughly speaking, the language is also undergoing changes. At present, the languages used and mastered are local Malay, Putussibau Malay, Pontianak Malay, Javanese, and Indonesian.

This ability and the environmental changes that occur in the long cascade, cause the population today is no longer backward and lagging behind. They have undergone significant development. The location of residence is in the interior, but, the development of society towards a global society.

Support towards the global community comes through the presence of facilities and infrastructure. Government-built facilities such as land roads (Jalan Lintas Selatan) that make this village connected to other areas, and become the main road crossing Putussibau-Sintang. The development of schools also provides a smooth path for citizens to pick up globalization. At the same time, television provides itself as an intermediary for outside life that excites the global Spirit. Through parabolic channels, citizens of all ages can enjoy a huge selection of movies, dramas, music, news and advertisements.

In the 2010s, as the development of global technology, telecommunications towers were built and people began to use smart handpoe in life. Like TV, handphoe provides more complete and convenient options. Instead, they can use their mobile phones to communicate directly in a global language with others in a global cultural setting.

It was this development that led to the Cascade Panjang community, although inland, not lagging behind. They also follow the development of the global community.

## **B. Development of Community Education**

Since the 1960s, there has been an educational institution in the neighboring village of Riam Panjang, namely Menick. The distance between the two villages is about 4 kilometers. Several children Cascade long commute to kick to study at the school. Then, about 10 years later, in the 1970s in Riam Panjang village there was a people's School (SR). The presence of this school gave many villagers the opportunity to learn to read, write and count.

In the late 1970s there was a Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. This madrasah is a development of SR. However, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah only three years, until later in 1979 the primary school was built with the full initiative of the government. After SD negeri was established, the madrasah was closed. Students are transferred collectively.

In the 1980s the private Tsanawiyah Madrasah was established. This level of Secondary Education is an educational institution established on the initiative of citizens to accommodate graduates of primary education. Generally, Riam Panjang elementary school graduates, and elementary school graduates from neighboring villages such as Buak Limbang and Boyan attend school here.

In 2000 stood the state high school (SMAN) was built on the boundary of the long-kicking Cascade. This school was also built by the government to give students the opportunity to get a better and easier education.

In general, according to the informant, the passion for learning of the long cascade people is very high. They try to send their children to the highest level. The spirit was clearly visible in the 1970-1990s. At that time many of the children of this village (compared to the children of neighboring villages) went to school in Jongkong. Jongkong was the main destination, and at that time could be considered as an educational city in Kapuas Hulu. (Aripin, 2018).

The schools available in the capital of Embau district were initially two: private religious schools (madrasas) managed by private educational institutions. This school was established by the community to provide learning opportunities, especially religious education easily at the ibtidaiyah and tsanawiyah levels. At that time a state high school was also in existence. After that, there were Madrasah Aliyah Jongkong and Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Jongkong, both of which were private schools.

Some Riam Panjang children continue their education to high school and SPG in Putussibau and Pontianak. Putussibau is the capital of Kapuas Hulu Regency which is approximately 100 KM by road today, with a travel time of 2-3 hours. However, before the end of the 1990s, Riam Panjang to Putussibau could only be reached by using the river route via Jongkong. River trip through Embau River and down the Kapuas River, the average trip takes three days.

Another educational destination city, is Pontianak. Pontianak is the capital of West Kalimantan province. The Pontianak-Riam Panjang distance today is approximately 400 KM with a travel time of 10 hours. Before the late 1990s, Riam Panjang-Pontianak was only reached by river. Travel through Jongkong until you reach Sintang. From Sintang

then available the option of using the road. The journey through the river is taken during the 3 days of going with the flow, and 5 days of challenging the current.

Although the number of young people educated to Pontianak and Putussibau is not much but they have an influence on the development of society. When graduates of this school return home they introduce culture and especially foreign languages to their environment. Moreover, these early generations later became community leaders—generally they became civil servants, as teachers, and thus they became teachers for other villagers. When teaching they introduce Indonesian and use it in formal interactions at school. In the end, like a snowball, it rolls out to become larger and enlarged. If at first the number of people who can speak Indonesian is only a few people, then the number is increasing.

Another interesting development is that people's language attitudes have changed. In the 1990s when the number of people who could speak bahasa Indonesia and the Malay variant of Putussibau was still small, Riam Panjang Malay became the main language. It is also considered the language of pride. Indonesian and Putussibau languages are still considered strange and funny. So, it often happens at that time Indonesian and Putussibau become a laughing stock or material for humor. (Yusriadi, 2004).

Compared to now, in 2023, Indonesian and Putussibau are already known to many people and even many people can speak this variant well, as well as they use the local language. People with high mobility are even very confident in using the language wherever they are.

### **C. Eradication of Illiteracy**

Eradication of illiteracy (Pemberantasan Buta Huruf--PBH) is a national program of the Ministry of education to address the problem of public literacy. The policy has existed since the era of President Sukarno and is applied in several regions in Indonesia. (Chairunisa, 2018; Marthea, D. E. (2019). This Program continued in the era of Soeharto (Wulandari, 2013). In this era, the Kejar Paket A program was introduced to eradicate illiteracy. In the latest era, the program is also still running in the form of eradicating illiteracy. (Sahputra, 2014).

Riam Panjang is also one of the target areas of the literacy program. The activity was carried out in the 1980s involving teachers and the village staff, once a week every Friday. Participants of the program were elderly citizens who could not read and write. Children do not participate in this program because almost 100 percent of them are already in school.

The Program successfully taught participants to recognize letters and know how to spell and read them. More than that, through this program, residents are driven by the spirit of learning. In the end, their enthusiasm added to the enthusiasm that grew among the villagers.

PBH activities are also part of the introduction of citizens to be closer to the Indonesian language. Indeed, more learning activities are delivered in regional languages (Ulu Kapuas Malay), however, some parts use the Indonesian language. In practice, there is a mix of codes between the local Malay language with Indonesian in the semi-formal education activities. When spelling alphabets, examples given for reading practice materials are given in Indonesian:

I-ni Bu-di (This is Budi)

I-ni Ka-kak Bu-di (This Is Budi's Brother)

I-ni A-dik Bu-di (This Is Budi's Sister)

Some more study materials or so-called package books are written in Indonesian, read to the people who study it. When the process of reading by the teacher or tutor, and listening by the student, there is a mix of languages. In addition, in the process there are questions and answers by students and teachers in the regional language.

#### **D. Indonesian at School**

Elementary School in Riam Panjang, like most schools in Indonesia, organizes learning activities in Indonesian. Provisions regarding the use of the official language is already in Law No. 24 of 2009.

There is indeed a tolerance of mixing regional languages for the low classes. (Sitohang, 2017). Regional languages can be used as the language of instruction to adjust the student's condition as part of the transition in learning. The assumption is that children are still not familiar with using Indonesian because they grew up in a regional language environment.

In addition, the presence of secondary schools in the cascade of long and kicking, giving the opportunity more space in speaking. At this level of education, students make full use of the Indonesian language and practice Indonesian both oral and written. Furthermore, high school is present at the boundary of the long and kicking Cascade, giving greater space to the development and strengthening of the multilingual situation in young people.

The use of Indonesian language in education has triggered changes in the linguistic situation in society. First, because most people have had an education they have acquired a language other than their mother tongue. They understand listening and can write in that language. Secondly, some citizens become bilingual speakers. They can speak Indonesian.

All of the informants who were asked about language proficiency other than the local language, said they had proficiency in more than one language and / or more than one dialect variation. Some can speak languages and dialects very well. That ability they get during the learning process. As is commonly the case, education has made them multilingual. (Duarte & Günther-Van der Meij, 2018). An informant claimed that there was a teaching role, but also a friend role. Friends who do not understand a particular language must quickly adapt to a language that is understood together in the educational environment and the environment in which they live during their education. If they can't adapt, they become inferior. Therefore, inevitably they will have to quickly master another language.

So, there is a contrasting situation compared to the previous one. In the 1980s the local language became a pride in its own area in Riam Panjang, on the contrary, in the 2000s the local language made less. This has led to some of the students of this long cascade of people when vacation or when finished Education, bring a new language to the hometown. This language is sometimes used in communication. They show that there is language mixing between languages. This situation has caused people to become accustomed to other languages, in addition to their own. Bilingualism is growing in the community.

#### **E. Technology Literacy and Global Language Use**

After acquiring Indonesian through education, the villagers also confirmed it in a global context. Those who are already tech literate can take advantage of smartphones to watch dramas, movies, tik Tok, in languages. (Hasan, 2009; Vaish, 2010). They can also

follow films that provide transliterations or translations in Indonesian. The availability of mobile phones gave them greater opportunities to communicate with speakers of Bahasa Indonesia or other Malay languages outside of Malay Ulu Kapuas.

Other language opportunities can also be obtained through mobility. The mobility of the population out of the village became their opportunity to get a language training place. In Putussibau, the capital of Kapuas Hulu regency, Sintang, the capital of Sintang Regency, and Pontianak, the capital of West Kalimantan province. In these cities, speakers of other dialects and languages can be found; either when dealing in markets, offices or in public spaces.

The rest of the time, they acquire other languages besides the mother tongue. Malay, Javanese, passive English and Arabic. After all, they are multilingual.

On the other hand, the position of the village is open and easy to access, causing people outside the region who speak other languages and dialects come to this village. Interaction occurs using Indonesian and other languages.

This situation allows people to get the opportunity to strengthen the position of their new language. They can also acquire new vocabulary. In the end, people are increasingly developing their language skills and the stronger their linguistic position.

TV and smartphones have become a medium that helps them strengthen language skills outside. Every night, the time most often chosen to watch TV, they watch TV dramas that use the standard Indonesian variant and The Jakarta variant. From this spectacle they have the opportunity to add new vocabulary to the vocabulary of the language. According to the informant, nowadays there is almost no dialogue on TV in Indonesian that they do not understand. Although the Indonesian language is also experiencing vocabulary development from English and semantic shifts in its vocabulary.

Researchers' search of several social media owned by Riam Panjang residents found an interesting fact. In general, on the videos and texts they upload, using Indonesian. Some people speak Indonesian very well. The local accent is no longer visible. Even if there are texts written in regional languages, some parts are still in Indonesian.

## **CONCLUSION**

Education in the interior has evolved in recent decades. Although not the same as the development of education in urban areas, but for the local community the situation is better. This development can be seen from the number of people who receive education at all levels has increased, from year to year, since 1970 to today, 2022. The development can also be seen from the number of existing educational institutions. If earlier educational institutions were limited, nowadays, all kinds of educational institutions are present around the society. Basic facilities in the field of education, especially getting a decent education can be obtained easily.

The development of this education influenced the development of the people's language. The Ulu Kapuas Malay language they speak is undergoing changes. About 30 years ago, Malay became the only language mastered, then after the presence of many educational institutions and the educated, the local Malay language experienced a shift. People have knowledge of other languages in addition to their own, and some people are multilingual. They can speak more than one language, and understand many more. However, the study was unable to reach that pattern of language and social shifts. More research is needed to understand the situation more deeply.



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