The Use of Kelantan Dialect in Cyberspace

¹Azrizan Abu Bakar, ¹Karim Harun,¹ Habibu Morsili and
²Zanariah Mat Isa

¹Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia,
43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia
²Faculty of Islamic Contemporary Studies,Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Gong Badak
Campus, 21300 Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia.

Abstract

People of Kelantan use the Kelantan dialect extensively, not only in private or in informal situation but it is also used in public spaces such as mosques, schools, the government institutions and in statutory bodies. The practice of the dialect displays the people's identity which demonstrates their individuality. Kelantan community regards their dialect as an important element in the process of constructing their sense of parochialism in order to maintain their individuality as the people of Kelantan. However, in conversational situation as in spoken form has some differences in compare to written form. There are two favourite applications in the cyber space that have been chosen as the research materials which are *Whatsapp* and *Telegram* as these have become one of the most preferable mediums for today's online community in line with the speedy progress in this globalisation era. These new tools in communication no longer require the user for a face to face conversation rather, it can be done via applications such as electronic mail, blog, short messaging service, internet chatting, Facebook, Twitter and others social media such as *Whatsapp*, *Telegram* without having to concern about the whereabouts and the challenge in language. This article will also discuss the usage of Kelantan dialect as in the cyberspace's communication in the written form. The researchers found out that the usage of Kelantan dialect is still sustainable in this cyber space nevertheless the different in compare to the spoken form.

Keywords: Dialect, Kelantan, Sustainable,Communication, Cyberspace.

Introduction

> "...Kelantan society has its own inimitable uniqueness of cultural
> and language versus other states.."
> (Winzeler, 1985)

Kelantan, with a population of about 1.68 million, is said to have a unique dialect alongside famous culture, tradition and artwork. All Kelantan people regardless of race communicate in the Kelantanese dialect as a process of building a sense of well-being as well as maintaining

their own membership as Kelantan (Zuraidah, 2003). They are proud of their ethnic origin and identity as well as using the Kelantan dialect as the main medium of communication despite being living outside of Kelantan.

Kelantanese dialect is not only spoken in Kelantan but also spread to other states. The spread of Kelantan dialect is the result of the migration of Kelantan population to certain regions which also carry their dialect (Zuraidah 2003). Spreading occurs not only through the transfer of speakers but also by diffusion that usually occurs in the language or dialect in social media. The spread of dialects through social media can be seen in the use of the word 'bootiful' in English in the United Kingdom as stated by Raj Sahota (2010: para 14):

"...not only is 'bootiful' in regular use far outside our Norfolk heartland, but an entire dictionary's worth of similar regional words and sayings is being increasingly adopted across the UK. This is down to social media like Twitter and Facebook eliminating regional barriers and allowing friends to adopt other regional dialects and words as their own..."

Along with that, dialectic studies outside the geographic environment need to be expanded to see the other side of the research findings. Hence, the study of virtual dialect using cyberspace such as Facebook, *WhatsApp*, *WeChat* and *Telegram* should be welcomed by researchers to explore diversities as well as to give a new breath in the world of dialectic study.

Conceptual Definition
1. Dialect
The dialect term is derived from Greek *dialectos* used in relation to the language of the place (Ayatrohaedi, 1979 in Abdul Hamid 1996). Chambers and Trudgill (1990: 3) define dialects as dialects of a language where dialect is regarded as small branches of a language.

Nik Safiah (1993) denotes dialect as a variation of language singled out by its users. This is because each dialect has its own character that distinguishes it from other dialects. Dialects are variations or languages (Simanjuntak 1982). This opinion is parallel to Collins (1986: 197) whom outlines the dialect as:
"... a diverse range of languages that can be distinguished expressly from the rest of the array based on attributes, vocabulary and grammar. This language range is within a certain geographical area and in a particular social setting. "

2. The Cyberspace
The term cyberspace was coined by William Gibson, a science fiction author in his novel entitled *Burning Chrome* published in 1982. The term was later popularized by his novel *Neuromancer* in 1984.
"......was a consensual hallucination that felt and look like a physical space but actually was a computer-generated construct representing abstract data"
According to *Que's Computer and Internet Dictionary 6th Edition* (1995), a cyberspace is a virtual space which was generated by computer systems. On the other hand, *The Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia* (2014) explains the cyberspace as a term to describe the basic computer and interactive communication contained in the internet space.

The cyberspace as one of the interaction spaces of the world today is seen as a metaphor for the real world and medium of information sharing, in line with Noriah (2006) statement that cyberspace or virtual space is created through technology and

communication (computer) networks and is considered a space that streams information which is channeled and structured through language.

Oral Kelantanese Dialect

In Kelantan's community daily conversation, Kelantan dialect is widely used not only in private and informal situations, but also in public places such as mosques, schools, government institutions and statutory bodies. The use of this Kelantan dialect marks the identity of the localities that highlight their uniqueness. Zuraidah (2003) states that Kelantan dialect speakers will maintain their dialect even though they are among speakers of non-Kelantan and will change the code when they find that their dialect is incomprehensible. In other words, the use of Kelantan dialect in the oral context is very prominent.

However, conversational situations in oral form certainly have a twist of conversation in writing. Nik Safiah (1989) said the dialect is commonly used in the oral language of the Malay but in cyberspace, the dialect is used in the Malay language of writing. The use of dialect in writing arises when there is a social media medium. In other words, before the existence of social media the Kelantan community did not use the dialect in writing extensively. The dialect is used only in a verbal context. With social media such as Facebook, *WhatsApp* and *Telegram*, the people of Kelantan began to write using the Kelantan dialect in the media. Even in cyberspace, dialect spreading occurs faster than verbal use. The use of dialects in this cyberspace is also expressed by Schleef (2010: para 8):

"...Dialects were traditionally passed on relatively slowly through spoken language. But social changes such as the speed of modern communication mean they are spreading much faster than they would have. Twitter, Facebook and texting all encourage speed and immediacy of understanding, meaning users type as they speak, using slang, dialect respellings and colloquialisms..."

In addition, the use of this information technology has also resulted in the different linguistic forms that can be found in the online community of today's information technology era. For example the blogger community has their own sociolek that is different from the sociolek used in oral form (Idris 2014). Therefore, the study of social dialect in the form of writing should be explored because the form of this dialect has a disparity compared to the use of verbal dialect. Therefore, the form of this writing dialect in cyberspace should be explored to see the abnormalities.

Research Reviews

Based on the findings of the study, the study of dialects in cyberspace has been specifically discussed by researchers, including Eisenstein. J (2014) and Mohamad Shafiq (2013), while studies that see the dialect as part of the findings are also discussed such as Faridah (2010) and Latisha et.al (2013). Eisenstein. J (2014) focuses on four US-language dialects Yinz, Yall, Hella and Jawn using Twitter's Streaming API to collect 114 million "gestured" data from 2.77 million Twitter accounts. The high amount of data helps this study in terms of accuracy and validity of the findings. Eisenstein's study. J (2014) shows the most widely used Hell dialect word in Northern California is the most frequently found dialect in *Twitter* data which is one of 100 messages. The distribution of dialect usage is also widely found throughout the country despite its focus in Northern California. In contrast to Yinz dialect, the words found are only in several hundred messages from 100,000 quoted messages. The distribution of its use is also only around the city of Pittsburgh. The study of

Eisenstein. J (2014) proves that the most frequently used dialect word in Twitter is a dialect that has a broader geographic distribution.

The study of Shafiq (2013) found that the concept of the dialect chain is getting melted due to the impact of the existence of social sites like Facebook. This is because social sites across geopolitics have opened space for non-native speakers of a dialect to study and use dialects of other states indirectly through social sites like Facebook. This shows similarity to the study conducted by Sahota (2010) which found that the word 'bootiful' spread not only outside Norfolk's central area but has been adopted throughout the United Kingdom. This social media role has eliminated geography barriers by allowing other speakers to use dialects outside their areas like their own dialect.

Faridah's study (2010) shows the use of dialect in the internet chat room. There are six types of dialects identified in all 19 conversation events on the Anjung Cafe chat site. The most commonly used dialect is the Negeri Sembilan dialect (70 data), Penang (38 data), Terengganu (5 data), Perak (4 data) and Sabah (2 data). There are also dialect combinations, which are 2 dialect data Negeri Sembilan and Penang and I dialect data Kelantan and Negeri Sembilan. The effect of the dialect applies either the word or the entire sentence.

Asmaak, Shafie and Surina (2013) in the study of "Languages, Code-Switching Practice and Primary Functions of Facebook among University Students" used 100 Malay students aged 18-24 who are studying the third language such as Arabic, Mandarin, Japanese And Korea as informant. This study involved an analysis of 100 Facebook accounts with 5000 wall posts and 19,728 comments. The findings found that there were new forms of Bahasa Malaysia and the frequent use of dialectical Malay such as Bahasa Melayu Kedah and Bahasa Melayu Kelantan, when communicating with friends from the same states.

Kelantan Dialect in Cyberspace

The Kelantan community uses the Kelantan dialect widely not only in personal and informal situations, but also in public places such as mosques, schools, government institutions and statutory bodies. The use of this Kelantan dialect marks the identity of the localities that highlight their uniqueness. For the people of Kelantan the dialect is the main element in the process of building a sense of identity and thus maintaining the membership of Kelantan. However, conversational situations in oral form certainly have a twist of conversation in writing. The study selected two applications in cyberspace namely *WhatsApp* and *Telegram* as a study material as this medium is gaining momentum in society now along with the rapid development triggered by the current globalization. New ways in the world of face-to-face communication such as electronic mail, blogs, short messaging, Internet chat, Facebook, *Twitter* and apps via smartphones like *WhatsApp*, *Telegram*, as well as various other social media have given a new breath in communication that goes beyond geographic boundaries border of language.

As suggested by Zuraidah (2003) that the Kelantanese people continue to use the Kelantan dialect in communication despite being beyond the geographical boundaries, so did Azrizan (2016) find that 'Kelantan people' are loyal to their dialects even in written cyber space mediated communications. Among the lexical dialects of Kelantan used in cyberspace communications are *bui* (give) *kor* (to), *kor* (or), *rano gamok* (what's up?), *doh kor* (have you finished?), *hapok kohong* (foul), *ngenak* (teasing), *x puk* (still raw/naive), *jong* (worker), *yolo* (that is right), *murih* (upset), *getek* (also), *dekpon* (if), *petung* (throw), *tok soh* (don't), *bo* (enough), *ndoo* (crib), *nyanyo* (pity), *lok* (let it be), *sekin* (poor), *slamo kening* (all this while),

koksir (careless), *oyak* (tell), *gonih* (this thing), *kube* (chaos), *sengoti* (that is right), *tubik* (go out), *bekwah* (festive) dan *kain kano* (prayer veil).

Informants in cyberspace are examined using lexical dialect of Kelantan when they communicate with purpose to say hello, stuttering and fostering relationship. Although informants are professionals and educated, social status does not limit them to use dialect in conversations through this cyberspace.

The use of the lexical dialect of Kelantan in cyberspace communication makes them stick as a group besides maintaining the identity of the Kelantan without being restricted by social status. It coincides with Lyons (1970: 326) stating that everyone who uses a common language or dialect is a member of a language community. However, this situation contradicts Fadzeli & Idris (2011) which says that the original dialect of a region is more used in the speech of subordinates and less educated speakers.

Conclusion

The study on the use of dialect language in cyberspace communication still has many aspects to be explored as the phenomenon of using dialects in cyberspace such as Facebook, *WhatsApp* and *Telegram* is a good sign for dialect preservation. This is because it can indirectly nurture elements of the use of dialect language among young people as there are not many of them are able to master their respective dialect languages.

The rapidly expanding information and communications technology creates the diversity of forms of communication within cyberspace. Many researchers focus on new languages that sparkle in cyberspace such as code conversion, language improvements, SMS language, emoticons, slang languages, paralinguistic and so on. However, the existence of new languages in this cyberspace does not affect the use of dialects. Dialect preservation is very important as a retention of the nation's heritage, culture and language that is of great value for the sake of future generations.

Corresponding Author
Azrizan Abu Bakar,
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia,
43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia
azrizanksm@gmail.com

References
Mahmood A. H. (1994). *Sintaksis Dialek Kelantan*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Aziz A. Y A. (2011). *Suku Kata Dasar Dialek Kelantan Berdasarkan Teori Optimaliti*, GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies Volume 11(2) May: 2011.

Aziz A. Y. A. (2012). *Analisis Koda Berdasarkan Kekangan Dalam Dialek Kelantan* GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies 1127 Volume 12(4), November: 2012.

Aharony, N. and Gazit, T. (2016) 'The importance of the Whatsapp family group: An exploratory analysis', *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, 68(2), pp. 174–192. doi: 10.1108/ajim-09-2015-0142.

Abdullah A. R. (2009). Konsonan dialek Kelantan: satu analisis pemanjangan bunyi. In. Rohani Mohd Yusof et.al (editor). *Segunung Budi Selautan Kenangan*. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, pg.14-29

Kob A. C. (2007). "Dialektologi" dlm. Zulkifley Hamid, Ramli Md Salleh dan Rahim Aman, *Linguistik Melayu Edisi Kedua*, pg.129-143. Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Omar A. (1985). *Susur Galur Bahasa Melayu*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Omar A. (2015). *Nahu Melayu mutakhir*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka,Fifth Edition.

Bakar A. A. (2016). *Leksikal Dialek Kelantan dalam Aplikasi Whatsapp*. *Proceeding International Social Sciences and Tourism Research Conference*. UniSZA: Kuala Terengganu

Biesenbach-Lucas, S., & Wiesenforth, D. (2001). E-mail and word processing in the ESL classroom:How the medium affects the message. *Language Learning and Technology*, *5*(1), 135-165.

Cheng, N. C. (2014). *Youth networking interactions: Performing identity online through stance and humour* .Doctoral dissertation. National University of Singapore

Collins, T. James. (1996). *Khazanah dialek Melayu*. Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Collins, James T.(1989). *Antologi Dialek Melayu*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Collins, James T dan Hussin Dollah.(1988). *Catatan Fonologi Kelantan: Konsonan (g)* Jurnal Dewan Bahasa, 32:12. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Aman I. (2014). Dialek Sosial. Dlm *Variasi Bahasa*, disunting oleh Idris Aman & Mohammed Azlan Mis, pg.39-55. Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
Holmes, Janet.(1996). An introduction to sociolinguistics. Longman:London and New York
Mohamed H. (1995). Nilai Budaya dan Risiko kuasa dalam Politik Melayu Kelantan. In Mohammad agus Yusoff (ed.). *Perkembangan dan Perubahan sosio-politik Kelantan, 1955-1995*: Fakulti Sains Kemasyarakatan dan Kemanusiaan, UKM, pg. 25-40.

Eisenstein J, Brendan O'Connor, Noah A. Smith, and Eric P. Xing. (2010). A latent variable model for geographic lexical variation. In *Proceedings of the 2010 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing* (EMNLP '10). Association for Computational Linguistics, Stroudsburg, PA, USA, 1277-1287.
J.K.Chambers & Peter Trudgill. (1990). *Dialektologi*. (terj.) Annuar Ayub. Kuala Lumpur : Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Asmak L. & Nayan S.(2013). Language, Code Switching Practice And Primary Functions of Facebook Among University Students. *Study in English Language Teaching*. Vol.1 No.1, February 2013

Gazit N. A. T .(2016).The importance of the Whatsapp family group: an exploratory analysis. *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 68 Iss 2 pp. 174 – 192 http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-09-2015-0142

Noriah, M. (2006). *Penggunaan Bahasa Dalam Ruang Siber: Mode Lisan Dalam Bentuk Bertulis.* Pulau Pinang: Universiti Sains Malaysia

Karim N. S. (1996). Antara Dialek Dengan bahasa Baku. *Pelita Bahasa*: 28-29.

Karim N. S. (1985). Dialek Kelantan –Satu Lambang Sosio-Budaya Wilayahnya. Dlm. Nik Safiah Karim & Wan Abdul Kadir Yusuf (peny.) *Kelantan Dalam Perspektif Sosio-Budaya*.Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, pg.121-130

Lebar O. (2012). *Penyelidikan Kualitatif. Pengenalan kepada Teori dan Metod*. Tanjong Malim. Penerbit Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris.

Rahman R. A. (2010). Peristiwa Bahasa Dalam Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi dari Sudut Etnografi Komunikasi. Tesis PHD, UPM

Ryan, M. (ed). (1999) *Cyberspace Textuality, Computer Technology and Literary Theory*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Baharuddin S. A. (1995). Kelantan dalam Pembentukan Bangsa Malaysia: Sebuah Catatan Analitikal. In Mohammad Agus Yusoff (ed.) *Perkembangan dan Perubahan Sosio-Politik Kelantan, 1955-1995*. Bangi: Penerbit FSSK Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, pg.55-63

Shiri, S. (2013), Learners' attitudes toward regional dialects and destination preferences in study abroad. *Foreign Language Annals,* 46: 565–587. doi: 10.1111/flan.12058

Sweeney, A. (1987). *A Full Hearing. Orallity and Literacy in the Malay World*. Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press.

Winzeler, Robert L. (1985). *Minorities in a Malay state; ethnic relations in Kelantan: a study of the Chinese and Thai ethic*. Singapore: Oxford University Pres.

Don Z. M. (2003). Language-dialect code-switching: Kelantanese in a multilingual context. *Multilingua*, *22*(1), 21-40.

Don Z. M. (2005) *Persepsi Pelajar Kelantan: Suatu Kajian Vitaliti Etnolinguistik.* In: Seminar Zaaba Mengenai Alam Melayu II (23-37).