
THE NON-SYNCHRONICITY BETWEEN THE AVAILABILITY OF LANGUAGE PROGRAM IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES IN SURABAYA

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Abstract

In around 80's, English language program was still available in many senior high schools so that students had three optional programs: IPA (natural science program), IPS (social science program), and language program. The implementation of program classification in senior high schools is actually purposed to develop the abilities of students specifically. In fact, the adverse effect appears when discriminative labeling is pointed toward senior high school students from language program. This qualitative study was conducted by using descriptive method to depict the phenomena happening in educational settings in Indonesia. It described what has happened to language program in senior high schools by providing accurate data to support the disappearance of the program, especially in Surabaya. The qualitative data used in this study were collected by conducting library research and browsing the internet. Comparison and analysis of the data were done descriptively to explore the problems and discuss the results thoroughly. SMAN 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 which are located in Surabaya only provides MIA program which refers to mathematics and natural sciences and IIS program which refers to social sciences for their students. Only SMAN 3 Surabaya has language program. Those phenomena were resulted from the negative labels attached to language program in senior high schools and the government policies. Sharing information through seminars and other similar events was the best solution. In conclusion, the unavailability of language program in senior high schools and the more English education program in universities in Surabaya which is still not synchronous must be taken seriously as a vital problem which needs immediate solutions. Hence, a solid collaboration between the government and the society should be more developed to create positive images through the correct information and accurate data to counter the negative perception on language program.

Keywords: *language program, English education program*

Introduction

This study begins by posing some questions which are left unanswered by those who work in educational field: Why does language program in senior high schools in Indonesia disappear gradually? Is the low interest possessed by the students the only factor in this problem? Are there any other factors which contribute to this problem? No matter what it takes, language program should still exist because language mastery is the complementary skill for all sciences. This disappointing fact seems to be a disadvantage for Indonesian students who are interested in studying languages, especially English language which is mostly taken as the major language taught in senior high schools.

In around 80's, English language program was still found in many senior high schools so that the students had three optional programs: IPA (natural science program), IPS (social science program), and language program. The implementation of program classification in senior high schools as instructed by the Ministry of Education and Culture - Republic Indonesia is actually purposed to develop the abilities of students specifically. The students taking IPA program receive the subjects of study which mostly relates to natural sciences, whereas IPS program provides their students with any social sciences. Language program, on the other hand, provides the study of languages which are widely used by the people as the lingua franca. In fact, the adverse effect appears when discriminative labeling is pointed toward senior high school students from language program.

Research methods

This qualitative study was conducted by using descriptive method to depict the phenomena happening in

educational settings in Indonesia. This study described what has happened to language program in senior high schools by providing accurate data to support the disappearance of the program, especially in Surabaya. The factors which probably became the triggers of the unavailability of the program were depicted to answer why this phenomenon happens. Moreover, the increasing demands for language program, especially English language, in universities in Surabaya also needed to be exposed to present the opposition of the two different phenomena in language education and also discuss the possible solutions to the problems.

The qualitative data used in this study were collected by conducting library research to describe the availability of language program in senior high schools and English education program in universities in Surabaya. The data, also available, on trusted websites were retrieved to support the description of the problems existing in education. Comparison and analysis of the data were done descriptively to explore the problems and discuss the results thoroughly.

Results and discussion

As written to describe the non-synchronization between the availability of language program in senior high schools and universities in Surabaya, the first paragraph of this paper has shown a problem with our education system in which language program in most senior high schools has been closed or recently unavailable. The following evidences are supported by the data retrieved from Wikipedia. SMA 1 Surabaya only provides MIA program which refers to mathematics and natural sciences and IIS program which refers to social sciences for their students. In SMAN 2 Surabaya, language program also does not exist. In addition, SMAN 4 Surabaya, SMAN 5 Surabaya, SMAN 6 Surabaya, SMAN 7 Surabaya, SMAN 8 Surabaya, SMAN 9 Surabaya, SMAN 10 Surabaya, and many other state senior high schools in Surabaya do not have language program. Yet, the language program, now the so-called IBB program concerning with the study of language and culture, still exists in SMAN 3 Surabaya (https://id.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMA_Negeri_1_Surabaya). In other words, the low percentage of the existence of language program in high schools, especially in Surabaya, illustrates the gradual extinction of language program.

One of the significant factors for this phenomenon is the students' low interest in taking language program in senior high schools because most Indonesian people think that language program is inferior compared to other competitor programs, such as science and social program. Most people assume that natural science program provides the students more opportunities to develop their creative and logical thinking than social and language program. This stigma definitely obstructs the development of certain programs, especially language program. The false and negative assumptions on the lower status of language program make the students reluctant to choose it. In other words, they prefer choosing natural science or social program for prestige and abandon language program in spite of their interest.

The negative assumptions on language program in high schools are not the only reason why this program becomes unpopular. The government in the 80-90's has made an educational system concerning with the admission to state universities in which the senior high school graduates from language program are not allowed to choose a program which has no relation with languages. Obviously, their opportunities become smaller. Therefore, they prefer choosing other programs which will give them more choices to enter the desired programs in state universities.

Recently, the government has made a great change on the requirements for admitting to state universities. Three categories are available for the high school graduates to choose: natural science program, social program, and mixed program. It means that the senior high school graduates from any programs can choose any desired programs in state universities if they pass the SBMPTN (Selection for State University Admission). Prof. Dr. Asep Saefuddin, the Rector of Trilogi University, claimed that universities should have re-considered the requirements for the admission. He also analogized the classification as the practice of caste discrimination (<http://jurusanku.com/ipa-dan-ips/>). This change widely opens the chance of the students from language program to join the competition to enter state universities they have been dreaming of during their study in senior high school.

However, this change seems to be so late for the continuity of language program in senior high schools. The minor perception living in the society on the program and the mistakes committed by the government when making the policies on educational system, especially dealing with the admission to state universities has decreased the students' interest in choosing language program. As the consequence, language program, especially in popular state senior high schools, is not available or vanished gradually.

The unavailability of language program in senior high schools in Surabaya seems ironical comparing with the higher interest of the senior high school graduates to choose English language as their major program in universities in Surabaya, such as University of Airlangga and State University of Surabaya. Many private universities, such as University of Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya, University of Petra, and University of Widya Mandala, open English education program and compete tightly to invite the senior high school graduates to

continue their study there. The opening of the English education program in the universities in Surabaya must have gone through some considerations. Market analysis is the main reason why a university opens the program. University of Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya, for example, has been running English education program under the Faculty of Teaching and Educational Sciences for three years. This program opened in 2016 with only 14 students. In 2017, the number of their students increased up to 50 students. Furthermore, the number is maintained 50 students in 2018. Those data clearly show the increasing number of students who have desires to continue their study in language field, especially English. This recent fact is in contrast with the phenomenon of extinct language program in senior high schools.

Indeed, re-opening language program in senior high schools needs many continuous great efforts. Since the government has made some corrections by widely open the opportunities for the students to choose any programs in state universities despite the program taken in senior high school, the society must also try to eliminate the negative label on language program. They must wipe out the stigma attached to language program in senior high schools. The correct and factual information about the bright future of the students taking language program in senior high school and universities must be spread through all kinds of mass media, both printed and electronic media.

Not only local, but also private universities abroad do not apply the requirement of admission based on the programs. Sampoerna University takes basic competences, such as creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration as the primary concerns. Unlike in Netherlands, in Switzerland and Germany, some high school graduates enter the Mechatronics program which deals with electronics, computers, and mechanics. They are not only capable to follow the lectures, but also to be in the top-three rank. (<http://jurusanku.com/ipa-dan-ips/>)

Seminars, conferences, panel discussions, and other events must be periodically programmed to promote the idea of re-emerging language program in senior high schools. Taking the program in high schools may probably become the basic knowledge for the students before entering English education program in a university. Linearity in education is highly important. Receiving subjects mostly dealing with English language for three years in a senior high school will be a significant benefit for the students to follow the lectures and make good achievements in the university.

Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, many senior high schools do not care about the needs of the senior high school students for language program. They indirectly support what most people think about language program in senior high schools. Unfortunately, the government with the policies in education system also plays a role in creating this problem. The unavailability of language program in senior high schools and the more English education program in universities in Surabaya which is still not synchronous must be taken seriously as a vital problem which needs immediate solutions.

The government of Indonesia, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, has made some innovations in education system, especially dealing with the admission to state universities. However, it is not enough to bring back language program in senior high schools. Hence, a solid collaboration between the government and the society should be more developed to create positive images through the correct information and accurate data to counter the negative perception on language program. When people are already aware of the importance of synchronicity in education, re-opening language program in senior high schools is possible. Consequently, the students' interest in the program is also expected to increase progressively.

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