

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the rationale and background of the study by providing a more comprehensive description of the importance of this topic for study. It outlines the focus of the study and its objectives, which serve as the direction and guidelines for the implementation of the study, as well as the limitations of the scope of the study so that the study is more focused. In addition, this chapter also highlights the benefits of the study, which contribute not only theoretically but also practically.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is the symbols or rules that humans use to communicate, either verbally, in writing, or in gestures. Communication is the process of exchanging messages. It refers to any form of message, not only the structured symbolic messages found in language (Merrison et al., 2014). Language is not only a tool to convey information, but also a social system that reflects identity, culture, and human relationships. Holmes (2013) explains that language has a social function because its use always plays a role in social factors, such as who the speaker and listener are, where the conversation takes place, the topic being discussed, and the purpose of the interaction. Through language, humans can build social interactions, create relationships, and maintain cultural identity. Language also shapes human identity by influencing how people recognize and understand each other (Widiasmara, 2023). Without language, social life would be difficult because language is the main tool for building mutual understanding within society. According to Halliday (2007) language not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a means of expressing the social and cultural values that exist within a society. Therefore, studying language cannot be removed from the society that uses it, especially in this era where regional languages are beginning to be replaced by new languages that are appearing.

The study of language is called linguistics. Linguistics refers to the field that examines human language (Widdowson, 2009). Linguistics studies language as a structured system, both in terms of form and usage. However, linguistics does not

stop at the internal aspects of language, but also looks at how language is used in everyday life. One important field is sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and society. This is where sociolinguistics plays a very important role. Holmes (2013) explains that language use is never neutral; there are always social reasons behind a person's choice of words, style, or level of speech. Thus, language reflects social reality. Through language we assert or code control, we indicate the different social groups with which we identify, the social roles we embrace, and the sometimes conflicting values we espouse (Holmes, 1997). The main focus is on how social factors play a role the way a person uses language.

One topic in sociolinguistics is language variation. Language variation is a fact of everyday life and is unavoidable. People from different places or backgrounds naturally speak in different ways, and that's just how language works. Holmes (2013) mentions that language variation appears due to social differences between speakers. There are several factors that determine the choice of language variation, such as who is speaking, to whom they are speaking, in what situation the conversation is taking place, and what topic is being discussed. Language variation serve as a reflection of the interactions within a speech community, which are influenced by the functions of language, the contexts in which it is used, and the social attitudes of its speakers (Wirata & Rahman, 2021). One form of language variation based on use is register.

Register refers to language variation that is determined by the context of use, particularly the activity or occupation in which language is employed. According to Holmes, register is commonly associated with specific fields of work and social activities, such as education, business, or institution. This register helps explain why a speaker chooses a particular form of language. For example, when speaking to older people, Javanese speakers usually use the *krama* language level as a sign of respect, while when speaking to close friends, they use *ngoko* to show closeness. Register arises due to differences in situations and social factors in social interactions.

The phenomenon of register is seen in the Javanese language. The Javanese language is among the regional languages that have the most speakers in Indonesia.

Javanese has a system of speech levels, each of which is used according to the social relationship between the speaker and the listener. In Javanese, there is a very significant difference between formal and informal varieties, which may lead outsiders to think that they are two different languages (Poedjasoedarma et al., 2013). For example, *ngoko* is used in casual conversations or with younger people, while *krama* is used to show respect to older people or in formal situations. This speech level system shows that the variation in the Javanese language is not only related to vocabulary, but also reflects the norms of politeness and manners in Javanese culture (Poedjasoedarma et al., 2013)

In Tuban Regency, Javanese is still used in everyday life. Tuban people use Javanese in social interaction like BMT Surya Raharja cooperative. Every speaker has a social background as well as a regional location (Erito, 2020). BMT (Baitul Maal wat Tamwil) Surya Raharja Cooperative is a saving and loan cooperative located in Tuban East Java. This cooperative has several branches spread across the Tuban region, one of which is in the Soko subdistrict. In the Soko subdistrict, the people are still very fluent in the Javanese language. Javanese language consists of *ngoko* for informal Javanese language like *iyo* (yes) and *krama* for formal Javanese language like *enggeh* (yes). The use of Javanese *ngoko* and Javanese *krama* is closely related to language politeness (Atmawati, 2021). However, in its development, the use of Javanese has begun to shift. The younger generation more often uses *ngoko* dominantly, even in situations that actually require the use of *krama*. This condition is interesting to study because it can provide an overview of how the people in BMT Surya Raharja cooperative currently practice unique register of Javanese in social interactions, and the variations of Javanese in BMT Surya Raharja cooperative can contribute to understanding how regional languages are maintained.

Several previous studies have discussed register, but they differ in focus, context, and theory compared to this study. The research conducted by Sapanti, Perihatin, and Purnawan (2022) was carried out in the same region, Tuban, but focused on lexical variation rather than register. Meanwhile, Erlangga (2023) analyzed formal and casual registers used by characters in the movie *Run* (2020) using Martin Joos's theory, its different with this study use Holmes' theory.

Futhermore, Haryani, Rosyidah, and Putry (2021) analyzed register used by photographers in social media community on Instagram, while this study focus in financial institution. In addition, research by Yuanita, Arifin, and Ariani (2022) examined the use of beauty register in beauty vloggers' videos on YouTube. However, this study was conducted in a digital media context and focused on online communication, while this study focuses on naturally occuring communication and interaction in a workplace setting using a local language.

All of these studies are important, but they only discussed a narrow scope: one is limited to lexicon, another is used different theory and in movie, and the last in the field on social media. This difference shows a clear research gap, as there have been no previous studies examining Javanese register in the social context of cooperative workplace setting using Holmes' (2013), Poedjasoedarma et al.' (2013) and Hudson' (1996) theoretical framework. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing how Javanese register naturally occur or used among members and employees of the BMT Surya Raharja Cooperative in Soko Tuban, taking into attention the social factors that play a role in the choice of register. The novelty in this study is how specific register are only understood by people within the BMT Surya Raharja cooperative in Soko Tuban.

In this study, the researcher focuses on the Javanese register occur and the social factors that play a role in these variations. The uniqueness of BMT Surya Raharja cooperative in Soko Tuban makes research on their register important. The researcher chose the BMT Surya Raharja Cooperative as the research location because this cooperative represents a professional institution where Javanese is still actively, naturally occur and used as the main language in daily interactions. This is in contrast to many other financial institutions that dominantly use Indonesian in their communications. Members and employees of BMT Surya Raharja often use different levels of Javanese, such as *ngoko* for informal Javanese language and *krama* for formal Javanese language, depending on the context, status, and level of familiarity. There is also a specific language that is only used and understood within the cooperative environment. This makes the cooperative a rich and authentic linguistic environment for observing how register in professional and social interactions.

The Javanese language in BMT Surya Raharja cooperative Soko Tuban is not only a means of communication, but also a signifier of social and cultural identity and values that exist within society. How the BMT Surya Raharja cooperative chooses register in formal and informal situations reveal the social relationships that exist among them. Therefore, this study is interesting to discuss because the topic is unique. Research on Javanese register generally focuses more on education, business, or medicine, while the use of Javanese in financial institutions such as BMT Surya Raharja cooperative is rarely studied. This study can show the forms of Javanese register occur and used in communication at the BMT Surya Raharja cooperative Soko Tuban, while also analyzing the social factors that play a role in it. Thus, the results of this study are expected to contribute to sociolinguistic studies, particularly in understanding the relationship between language and the social life of the Javanese in Soko Tuban.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, this study focuses on the following questions:

1. What forms of Javanese register occur in communication at BMT Surya Raharja Cooperative Soko Tuban?
2. What social factors play a role in the use of Javanese register at BMT Surya Raharja Cooperative Soko Tuban?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem of the study, this study has some objectives as follow:

1. To explain the forms of Javanese register that occur in communication at BMT Surya Raharja Cooperative Soko Tuban.
2. To explain the social factors that play a role in the use of Javanese register at BMT Surya Raharja Cooperative Soko Tuban.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this study can contribute to the development of sociolinguistic studies, particularly concerning register used in Javanese society. In addition, this study can also serve as an example of the application of theory of social factors in analyzing register, so that it can enhance academic references for students or other researchers interested in similar fields. In practical terms, this research is expected to benefit the people by raising awareness of the importance of maintaining and using the Javanese or regional language as a valuable cultural identity. For students and researchers, this study can be used as a reference in further research related to register. In addition, for educators, the results of this study can provide insight into maintaining and teaching Javanese language levels according to the social context in various everyday situations.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

To make this study more focused and targeted, the researcher limited the scope of the study to several aspects. The object of this study is the register of the Javanese language occur and used by the BMT Surya Raharja cooperative in conversation, particularly in social interactions within in the cooperative. This study focuses on form of register in Javanese and the social factors that play a role in this register, without discussing other linguistic aspects such as phonology, morphology, or syntax in detail. This research analysis uses Holmes' (2013) theory about register Poedjasoedarma et al. (2013) theory about javanese speech level, and for the social factors use Hudson' (1996) theory. In this study, the researcher focuses specifically on the conversation and utterance that occurs among register found in BMT Surya Raharja cooperative.