

Malay Language Teaching and Learning Strategies among Orang Asli Students in Terengganu

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Abstract: The Government is committed in developing Orang Asli communities especially in education. In 2007, the Peninsular Asli Curriculum (KAP) was introduced with the intention of improving students' academic excellence. However, until today, the issue of Orang Asli pupils dropping out of education is still ongoing. Achievement of Orang Asli students in academics is still lagging behind with other students in the mainstream. To continue the aspiration for the development of the Orang Asli communities, through the 2013-2015 Education Development Plan (PPPM) the government has targeted a quality education to all students through the acquisition of Bahasa Melayu including Orang Asli students. As the result, the government realized that the teaching strategies practiced by teachers had a huge impact on the students, especially in terms of the mastery of Malay Language. Regarding to the issue, a study was conducted at Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Pergam. This study was conducted using a qualitative method in the form of case study. The data collected through fieldwork which involves 25 respondents using participant observation techniques, document analysis, and interviews through on purpose sampling techniques. The data was analyzed using the Nvivo version 11 software. The findings of the study found that Malay Language teachers used teacher-centered teaching strategies and material-centered teaching as well as student-centered teaching.

Index Terms: Malay language teaching and learning strategies, Orang Asli education, Orang Asli students, Sungai Pergam.

I. INTRODUCTION

Malay language as set out in Article 152 of the Malaysian Constitution supports the role of national language and the language of unity that unites all races in this country. The position of Malay Language as a National Language does not deny the position and the language rights of other races. All races in Malaysia are free to learn and develop each language. However, the superiority of Malay Language remains intact as the main language for all races. In line with the development of the globalization era, the position of Malay Language remains a priority. Through the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025), the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) has targeted a strong Malay Language proficiency among all ethnic groups in Malaysia. With this, teachers are the most important group given the

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role of planning and implementing appropriate and effective pedagogy to school-children in this century to ensure that the goals are achieved [8]. Through PPPM (2013-2025), teachers are encouraged to use effective teaching resources in addressing the challenges faced in the acquisition of Malay Language among students in both urban and rural schools [5], [6].

The Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013-2025 targets a major shift in the Malaysian education system. The quality of teaching is the most important factor in transforming the primary and secondary education, and further enhances the students' success. The Ministry is committed to improve the quality of teaching in schools by strengthening the best practices among teachers in schools. Every subject taught in school depends on pedagogical knowledge controlled by a teacher, [15], [8].

In PPPM 2013-2025 the quality of education in rural schools was also given attention. All students are given the right to obtain effective learning quality regardless of their ethnicity including Orang Asli students [6]. Furthermore, teachers' pedagogy in educating Orang Asli children in schools is also emphasized by the KPM. This agenda is an effort to help Orang Asli children to master the subjects taught by teachers in the school. The failure of the Orang Asli children to master the Malay Language well had caused the Orang Asli children to be left behind in other subjects taught by teachers in school [8], [9]. However, the impact of changes in the education system of the century is still inadequate in the Orang Asli communities. A study from local researchers shows that the improvement of academic achievement among Orang Asli students is still at an alarming level. In [10] study of Orang Asli pupils in Kelantan shows that the achievement of Orang Asli pupils is still unreliable. 67% of Orang Asli students still cannot master well. In [10] study once again found that 75% of 115 students in Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Pergam face a speech problem in Malay Language and are involved with a great Malay Language literacy problem. The study [7], [14] found similar results when there were nearly 8 to 10 students in each class are unable to read and write properly. In 2016, the number of Orang Asli students in secondary schools was 27,603 and the total number of Orang Asli students who continued their education to 173 degree [11], [3]. This data shows that the Orang Asli education level still needs to be developed as the number of Orang Asli children



who are still studying is still small compared to the actual number of Orang Asli students in school. The sequence of identified problems has led the researcher to look by himself and collect data related to the challenges faced by the Malay Language teachers at the Orang Asli school.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study was a qualitative study of case study. The location of the study was Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Pergam (SKSP), in the district of Kemaman, Terengganu. The samples were 25 individuals consisting of eight individual groups, four Malay teachers, ten Orang Asli students, two school administrators, a representative of the Kemaman District Education Office (PPD), a representative of the State Education Department of Terengganu (JPNT), a representative of the Orang Asli Development Department (JAKOA), five parents and a local leader. The data was analyzed using Nvivo version 11. The data collection method was carried out through group interviewing, participant observation and document analysis. The study was analyzed using Nvivo version 11 software.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study focused on teaching strategies practiced by Malay teachers in Orang Asli schools. The Malay Language teaching strategy implemented by teachers was a teacher-centered teaching strategy and a material-centered teaching strategy. The explanation of the teaching strategies found in this study was as follows:

A. Teacher-Centered Teaching Strategies

The findings of facilitator's technique showed that the implementation of teacher-centered teaching methods has been implemented using the facilitator's technique. This technique was used by 8 teachers in teaching and learning sessions with pupils from standard 1 to 6. Through this technique, teachers explained the contents of the lessons from the beginning to the end of the teaching and learning sessions in the classroom. Based on observations, teachers were the main planner, implementers and drivers of the teaching process. Every single process is managed by the teachers. All study respondents wrote a daily lesson plan in the teaching record book prepared by the State Education Department (JPNT) before beginning teaching the students a day before the teaching and learning process was implemented. The items that contained in the Daily Teaching Plan (RPH) were the topics, teaching objectives, learning outcomes, the use of teaching aids, reflection and learning activities of each class were clearly written on a daily basis based on the teachers' teaching schedule. Based on 25 observation sessions on the teaching and learning process among four respondents, the practice of eight Malay Language teachers at the beginning of the lesson was to illustrate the subject of learning in each teaching and learning session.

B. Copying Techniques

Copying technique is practiced by eight teachers in the study of writing essays and understanding. Based on the observation at SKSP, during the teaching, the teachers wrote

the full essay on the whiteboard, then they explained the concepts and requirements of the essay questions given to the students. After 10 minutes, the teacher wrote the main contents related to the essay title. Then, the teacher wrote the full essay on the whiteboard. Pupils simply copied what they wrote. Based on the passage in the Malay textbook standard 1 to 6, teachers instructed pupils to read the text and answer questions of understanding related to the texts read. Based on the observation, during the discussion of the answer, the teachers wrote the answers on the whiteboard and the students copied them into their exercise book. The teaching aspects also had to be repeated in teaching and learning sessions on other days as the students failed to write their own learning content because the level of reading and writing skill among the students was weak. Throughout this field study, copying technique was practiced by teachers at two locations. The results of observation and interviews of four teachers found that for some pupils who still did not master the reading and writing skills, the copying process was done in a rather slow state and also errors in their spelling. Student feedback in this case is explained through the following interviews transcriptions:

"My time to write a teacher on the whiteboard, rewrite".

(R: 7)

"Teacher teach all ... write an answer". (R: 9)

"A lot of writing time to write writing on the whiteboard, writing is written". (R: 9)

"I cannot write, teacher first teach then write an answer".

(R: 02)

"Teacher for training ... I read myself, answer teacher for, writing teacher on whiteboard". (R: 11)

"I write to the scribe". (R: 12)

Based on this interview's transcription, the students' weakness in carrying out the teaching and learning activities led the teacher to find an alternative by copying the answers to the students. This technique is a reinforcement activity among the students on the content of teaching with teachers [16].

C. Replication Technique

Based on observations and interviews at the location of the study, the teaching and learning process of the teacher was also conducted using repetition techniques. The use of repetition techniques in the context of teachers' teaching involved them teaching the same topic to the students. The use of repetition techniques also involved all students. Observation showed that four Malay Language teachers at the study site always repeated the contents of the lesson in the classroom so students understood and remember what they have learned. This practice coincided with the views by [9] relates to teacher-centered teaching that is repetitive in relation to the content of the lessons learned.

In the repetition process involves homework, re-explaining unclear facts and being re-followed by training of facts or skills that require attention. The use of this repetition technique was also suggested by the Behaviorist Theorists that the implementation of an act or



practice could bring positive change in a person. Through the process of formulating behaviors that were repeatedly performed will result in an action that is directed at the original objective [15], [4], [1]. However, the principles held by the followers of Theory of Behaviorism were hard to reach by teachers in the study site.

D. Group Project Technique

The use of group project techniques was carried out using natural resources as the teachers' interviews explained that pupils love activities that used natural resources because natural resources were part of their lives. This learning activity was carried out among standard 5 and 6 students as it facilitated teachers to monitor students' movement. This technique was carried out through teaching and learning processes in the classroom that focus on group activities using natural materials such as coconut leaves, bamboo leaves and bamboo trunks and wooden twigs. Apart from the teacher's explanation of the importance of nature to human's life in the group, pupils were given the freedom to create creative things by using natural resources that suit the content of learning [17].

Through this teaching method, the teacher found that the students enjoyed their activities. The creativity of the Orang Asli students was proven when all the student groups succeeded in producing creative inventions without guidance from teachers. The findings of this study found the creative nature of the Orang Asli children as the result of the creation in the activities carried out by the Malay Language teachers using natural materials such as leaves, trees and twigs. Pupils showed more courage in game-shaped activities. The findings were consistent with the concept presented by the western scientist [13] that student-centered teaching and learning activities performed by teachers are a constructive game that occurs when children build something by manipulating the environment. Through teacher-centered teaching and learning activities, Orang Asli children worked together in doing the activities involving motor skills such as weaving, jiggling, folding paper and embroidery. Games such as building blocks from blocks, playing sand and creating craft materials are constructive games. Constructive games gave children the opportunity to learn something and when the children played constructively, they learn to do something until they were done. This technique was parallel to the view [2].

However, the use of language in communication is 100% of the Orang Asli language rather than Malay Language. Discussions and tutoring from peers could enhance their interpersonal skills. However, in the objective aspect of teaching Malay Language to Orang Asli children was not achieved because pupils use their original language completely in group activity. In addition, at the level of presentation the group work was only dominated by students who could read and write only.

E. Material-Based Teaching Strategies

Based on the observations, four respondents practiced teaching-based teaching methods. The materials used by respondents at the study location were textbooks, questionnaires, worksheets, cards, and pictures. The use of all the materials according to the needs of the pupils and the objectives set by the teachers. All respondents used the

teaching materials based on textbook using the Malay textbook to pupils of standard 1 to 6. At the beginning of the teaching and learning process, teachers wrote the learning title on the whiteboard and then they explained the concept of the lesson to all students. Guided by textbooks, teachers helped students in reading aloud helped by some students. The processes of teaching and learning also focused on the ability to interpret the information contained in the comprehension quotes that have been read by the students. In the discussion aspect, almost all respondents stimulated the students' mind to mention some of the important information from the passages which contained in textbooks. In the efforts of teachers to strengthen pupils' understanding, structural questions exercises also referred to the questions in the comprehension quotes that had been learned from the teacher. Textbooks are also used for the teaching and learning process for grammar and writing skills which used the texts contained in the textbooks.

Besides textbooks, the study also found that teaching materials also used questionnaires. The questionnaires used in the form of questionnaire exercises in the form of objective questions and structural questions. The questionnaire material was mostly used in the teaching and learning process of standard 1 to 6. The usage of questionnaire for standard 1 to 4 was applied by teachers to focus more on reading and writing skills. Furthermore, the use of television in the teaching and learning process was more focused on the group of students involved with Malay literacy and rehabilitation programs. The use of a solid check on the teachers showed that the images based on existing knowledge in the students. Referring to the pictures, the pupils mention and rewrite what they had seen using the correct spelling. The display of the pictures was further strengthened by the description of the teacher. The observation showed that the usage of television was also used in the teaching and learning process of standard 4 and 6 students who focused on the show which could be aimed at increasing the knowledge of the students. This knowledge was very important for students to write Malay language.

IV. CONCLUSION

Generally, it can be concluded that a more effective teaching approach needs to be applied to overcome every challenge that exists at the Orang Aslischool. Teacher is the key indicator that can develop the Orang Asli community in the education stream. Educators need to be dynamic in coping with every challenge in teaching and learning with the students. An effective approach in teaching the Malay Language can attract pupils if the implementation is in line with the needs of the Orang Asli students' culture and life [12], [13]. The findings suggest that Orang Asli children are difficult to accept learning situations that are against with their way of life. The Orang Asli children grow up in the forest and mixed with nature. The concept of learning which is beyond their way of life causes the Orang Asli students to hardly understand what the teacher is teaching. This situation clearly shows that Malay pedagogy at existing

Orang Aslischool needs to be improved to fit the Orang Asli community.

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