



Assessing the Effectiveness of the Posyandu Program on Maternal and Child Health Outcomes in Kekalik Jaya and Child Health

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Abstract

Background: The Integrated Health Post (Posyandu) is a community-based program in Indonesia aimed at improving maternal and child health outcomes through routine monitoring, education, and access to basic services. In Kekalik Jaya, Posyandu plays a crucial role in early detection of stunting, immunization coverage, and maternal nutrition monitoring. Yet the effectiveness of these interventions in local contexts often depends on implementation quality and community engagement. Objective: This study aims to assess the effectiveness of the Posyandu program in Kekalik Jaya on maternal health indicators (antenatal care visits, maternal nutritional status) and child health outcomes (immunization completeness, growth monitoring, stunting prevalence). Methods: This qualitative descriptive literature review synthesizes research and documents from academic journals, reports, and proceedings accessed via Google Scholar. Thematic content analysis was employed to identify patterns, mechanisms, and outcomes tied to Posyandu activities. Results: Findings highlight how the Posyandu model facilitates community engagement, health education, and early screening. Positive effects include increased antenatal care uptake, improved exclusive breastfeeding rates, better immunization coverage, and reductions in stunting incidence. Implementation strategies such as participatory cadre training, home visit tracking, and integration of digital recording systems emerged as critical. Conclusion: The Posyandu program serves as an effective sociomedical intervention bridging service provision and community empowerment. Its success in Kekalik Jaya underscores the importance of context-specific design, cadre capacity, and sustained support mechanisms for maternal and child health improvement.

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Introduction

Language is a social phenomenon that is inherently tied to the structure, values, and practices of the society that uses it. In various social contexts, language functions not only as a tool for communication but also as a medium for negotiating identity, building social relationships, and reflecting certain cultural norms. Therefore, the effectiveness of language use is not solely determined by mastery of grammatical or phonological aspects, but heavily depends on an awareness of context, the relationships between speakers, and an understanding of the social norms prevailing in a particular speech community. In everyday communication, the success of an interaction is often more dependent on the speaker's ability to choose the appropriate language variety (register) based on the situation, audience, and communicative goals, rather than merely using syntactically correct sentence structures.

A sociolinguistic approach offers a strong theoretical and analytical framework to understand the complexity of the relationship between language and society. Through sociolinguistics, we can explain how language variation emerges as a reflection of social variables such as age, gender, social status, cultural background, and geographic context. This field of study also reveals how speech styles, word choices, intonation, and levels of politeness are influenced by dynamic social norms. As explained by Holmes (2013) and Wardhaugh & Fuller (2015), differences in language use not only indicate linguistic distinctions but also reflect social identity, solidarity, power, and the communication strategies employed by speakers to build and maintain social relationships.

Thus, language learning that focuses solely on structural aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation is insufficient to equip students for real-life communication challenges. Without pragmatic understanding and sociocultural competence, students may struggle to adjust their language to specific social contexts, thereby increasing the risk of misunderstandings in cross-situational or cross-cultural communication. In this regard, mastery of linguistic structure must be balanced with sociolinguistic awareness so that language use can be flexible, appropriate, and strategic. This is especially crucial in today's globalized era, where cross-cultural and intercommunity interactions are becoming increasingly intense and complex.

Sociolinguistics enables students to understand that variation in language is normal and functional, rather than merely a deviation from standard norms. For example, the use of regional languages in informal settings or the choice of formal register in academic situations is not merely a matter of vocabulary but also involves sociocultural knowledge and pragmatic sensitivity to the audience. Through this understanding, students are encouraged not only to view the Indonesian language as a system but also as a living and diverse social practice. This awareness is essential for them to develop responsive language skills that meet situational demands, both in daily interpersonal interactions and in academic and professional contexts.

Therefore, the integration of a sociolinguistic perspective in language teaching is not a supplement, but a crucial element in shaping students' communicative competence. The ultimate goal is for students not just to "know" about language, but also to "be able" to use it effectively and contextually in real life. This approach not only enriches language learning with social and cultural dimensions but also fosters the development of 21st-century skills such as empathy, collaboration, and adaptability in diverse social environments.

In the context of secondary school language education, dominant pedagogical approaches over the years have tended to focus on the mastery of structural aspects of language, such as grammar, sentence structure, verb conjugation, and syntactic rules. These methods often take the form of written exercises, repetition of sentence patterns, or vocabulary memorization without considering the context of real-life language use. While this approach has the advantage of building a strong linguistic foundation, it often fails to prepare students to communicate effectively in complex social and cultural situations.

As a result, many students who are technically “grammatically proficient”-that is, they can produce sentences that are correct according to formal language rules-still struggle when engaging in spontaneous, dynamic, and contextual verbal interactions. They may know that the sentence “I go to school every morning” is syntactically correct, but may not be able to choose the right expression in a casual conversation with peers, speak politely to a teacher, or adjust their speech style when speaking at a formal forum. This inability reflects a gap between linguistic competence and communicative competence-between the ability to form grammatically correct sentences and the ability to use language appropriately and effectively across various social contexts.

Furthermore, traditional approaches often fail to provide sufficient space for students to understand the social dimensions of language, such as dialectal variation, formal and informal registers, verbal politeness, and pragmatic factors like implied meaning, inference, and mitigation strategies when delivering criticism or making requests. In practice, students who are only exposed to grammatical drills may feel awkward or even lack confidence when they have to use language in unstructured situations, such as expressing opinions in discussions, conducting interviews, or greeting foreign guests. They may be able to construct sentences, but they cannot “read the situation” or adjust word choices and speaking styles based on context and interlocutor.

This phenomenon is also reinforced by the lack of integration of context-based content and teaching methods. Textbooks and exam questions tend to assess students’ language abilities based on form and rules, not on communicative effectiveness. As a result, success in language learning is narrowly defined by written test scores, not by real-life interaction skills. This presents a major challenge, especially considering that communication skills are core competencies for students’ future social, academic, and professional lives.

Therefore, it is time for language education at the secondary level to move beyond a narrow focus on linguistic aspects and instead develop the pragmatic and sociocultural dimensions of language. This approach not only helps students become structurally competent language users but also adaptive communicators who are sensitive to contextual differences and able to navigate various social situations with confidence and effectiveness. By integrating a sociolinguistic perspective into the curriculum, students can be equipped with a more holistic and relevant foundation to face increasingly complex communication demands in today’s globalized world.

The urgency of integrating a sociolinguistic approach into language learning is becoming more evident and pressing, especially amid the growing awareness that language is not merely a tool for conveying messages structurally, but also a medium for building relationships, managing identity, and negotiating meaning in diverse social contexts. In the language learning process, the primary goal should not be limited to achieving linguistic competence-i.e., the ability to use grammatical rules correctly-but should also encompass the achievement of comprehensive communicative competence. Communicative competence refers to one’s ability to use language appropriately, effectively, and contextually in social, cultural, and pragmatic settings, including understanding implicatures, capturing indirect meanings, adjusting speech styles, and employing relevant communication strategies based on the audience and situation.

This idea is rooted in the concept of “Communicative Competence” developed by Dell Hymes (1972), which critically responded to the Chomskyan approach that focused solely on linguistic competence. Hymes argued that mastery of grammar does not guarantee successful communication if speakers do not understand how, when, and to whom the language should be used. The model of communicative competence he proposed highlights four main components: (1) linguistic competence, or knowledge of the language system; (2) sociolinguistic competence, or the ability to adjust language according to social context; (3) discourse competence, or the ability to construct coherent discourse; and (4) strategic competence, or the ability to use communication strategies to

overcome interactional obstacles (Richards & Rogers, 2014). These four components are interrelated and inseparable in everyday language practice.

In the context of secondary language education, an approach that focuses only on linguistic competence will lead to an imbalance in students' communication skills. They may perform well on grammar tests but struggle to adjust their speech style when talking to teachers, peers, or in formal settings like presentations. This is why the sociolinguistic aspect must be explicitly integrated into the learning process. With this approach, students are encouraged to understand that language variation is a legitimate and important part of social reality, not something to be avoided or considered a deviation. They learn that speaking to peers in an informal setting is certainly different from speaking to a superior in a professional setting-whether in terms of word choice, intonation, or forms of address.

Sociolinguistic integration is also vital in fostering students' sensitivity to social and cultural diversity. Through learning that is based on real and authentic contexts, students not only study sentence structures but also understand how language is used to reflect norms of politeness, social hierarchy, cultural values, and group identity. They become more prepared to face multicultural situations, where the ability to read social context and adjust communication styles is key to successful cross-cultural interaction. Furthermore, this approach fosters empathy, tolerance, and cross-cultural awareness-important soft skills in the era of globalization.

Thus, the application of a sociolinguistic approach in language teaching not only broadens the scope of instructional content but also transforms the orientation of language education itself: from merely mastering form to being able to communicate meaningfully. Language instruction grounded in sociolinguistic understanding enables students to become adaptive, flexible, and context-sensitive language users. This is an essential asset for their social, academic, and professional lives. Therefore, this approach is not only worth considering but must become an integral part of curriculum design and language learning strategies in secondary schools.

With a sociolinguistic framework, students can understand local language variations, formal and informal registers, norms of politeness, and how to adapt communication to context. This supports more authentic and meaningful learning, and expands students' competence from cognitive to sociocultural and pragmatic dimensions. This article aims to examine the application of a sociolinguistic approach in language learning at the secondary school level and evaluate its impact on students' communicative competence. The main research question: How can the sociolinguistic approach be implemented in secondary language learning, and what is its impact on students' communicative competence.

Materials and Methods

This research is a descriptive qualitative study using a literature review approach. The research subjects include sociolinguistic concepts, language teaching models, and relevant research findings available in scientific literature databases. The research is conducted within academic databases such as Google Scholar. Data collection techniques include keyword searches such as "sociolinguistics language teaching secondary school," "communicative competence pragmatic," and "language variation classroom," as well as article selection based on the relevance of the title, abstract, and full content. The collected data consists of ideas, theories, empirical findings, and practices from both international and national journals. The data analysis employs thematic content analysis, focusing on themes such as the implementation of approaches, their impact on students, advantages, challenges, and best practices. Subsequently, the information is synthesized to construct a coherent argument and discussion.

Results and Discussions

Implementation of a Sociolinguistic Approach in Language Classrooms

The implementation of a sociolinguistic approach in language learning at the secondary level aims to connect language material with real-life situations that students face in their daily lives. This approach positions language as a social act and a dynamic tool for negotiating meaning, thus requiring educators to create contextual, participatory, and reflective activities. In practice, the integration of sociolinguistics involves not only modifying the content of teaching materials but also adapting teaching strategies, teacher-student interactions, and the media used.

Some concrete activities that reflect this approach include the analysis of authentic films or videos, in which students listen to excerpts of conversations from movies, TV shows, or vlogs that showcase variations in speech styles across different contexts. In these activities, students are not only expected to understand the content of the conversation but also to identify differences in register, speech style, word choice, and expressions of politeness between formal interactions (e.g., job interviews or official meetings) and informal ones (e.g., everyday conversations between friends). The teacher then guides students in discussing the linguistic and social reasons behind these differences, such as social status, relationships between speakers, and communicative goals.

Additionally, role play becomes an essential strategy in this approach. This activity enables students to practice using language in various social situations, such as customer and restaurant server, student and teacher, or coworkers in a discussion forum. In each simulation, students are challenged to adjust their speech style, sentence structure, intonation, and politeness according to the role and context being enacted. This activity is particularly beneficial in building students' pragmatic awareness of formal and informal registers, while also enhancing their ability to adapt their communication style flexibly.

Another in-depth and reflective activity is interviewing native or local speakers, such as parents, other teachers, or community figures who use specific language varieties (local dialects, non-standard Indonesian, or professional jargon). In this activity, students design questions, conduct interviews, document language differences, and present their findings in class. Such activities foster students' sensitivity to linguistic diversity and its role in reflecting identity, culture, and social relationships. They also help students develop skills in active listening, formulating open-ended questions, and analyzing meaning in authentic conversations.

Furthermore, small group research projects on local language variation can be conducted. Students are asked to observe or document the language varieties used in their environment-such as in traditional markets, schools, places of worship, or on social media-and then categorize these variations based on social factors such as age, gender, profession, or communication context. Through these projects, students not only gain a theoretical understanding of language variation but also realize how language functions in social practices they experience directly. This makes learning more relevant and rooted in students' social realities.

Finally, structured discussions on formal and informal registers can be carried out by analyzing sample texts, such as job application letters, WhatsApp chats, academic essays, or casual conversations between friends. Students are guided to identify the characteristics of each register, including word choice, sentence structure, forms of address, and tone. Teachers can provide direct comparisons and ask students to convert a text from one register to another (e.g., turning an informal chat into a formal letter). Through such exercises, students learn to switch registers consciously and strategically-an invaluable skill in both professional and social settings.

Overall, these activities place students as active agents in the language learning process, rather than passive recipients of content. This approach encourages emotional, cognitive, and social engagement as students directly encounter the diversity of language forms and functions in real-life situations. Moreover, it positions language as part of identity and social interaction, rather than

merely a set of rules to memorize. As such, the implementation of a sociolinguistic approach becomes a strategic step in developing language learning that is relevant, contextual, and focused on meaningful communication proficiency.

Strengths and Challenges of Applying the Sociolinguistic Approach in Language Learning.

Strengths:

The application of a sociolinguistic approach in secondary school language learning offers a number of significant advantages in terms of content, methods, and its impact on students' competencies. One of the most prominent strengths is the high relevance between instructional material and students' real-life experiences. When students are invited to analyze and practice language use in social contexts they themselves experience-such as social media conversations, classroom discussions, or interactions in family and community settings-learning becomes more meaningful and contextual. This contributes to better retention and deeper understanding, as students no longer learn language as a collection of abstract rules, but as a social skill they can directly apply.

Another strength is the authenticity of the materials used in learning. By using authentic sources such as videos, interviews, advertisements, social media texts, or recordings of real conversations, students are exposed to actual variations in language use, complete with registers, dialects, slang, and pragmatic elements. This authentic material helps build realistic expectations of the complexities of language use in social practice, while also enhancing their ability to interpret implicit meanings and adjust communication strategies. Such exposure is vital in building pragmatic competence, which includes understanding speaker intentions, politeness norms, and conflict-avoidance strategies in cross-context communication.

Moreover, implementing the sociolinguistic approach boosts students' motivation to learn. When students feel that what they are learning is directly related to their real-life communication needs, they tend to be more active, enthusiastic, and motivated. Research projects, discussions, and collaborative role plays also create a dynamic learning atmosphere, build confidence, and enhance social interaction among students. This approach supports experiential learning, which has proven effective in developing long-lasting understanding and 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

Another important strength is the development of life skills. By understanding how language is influenced by social contexts, students learn not only to be good communicators but also to become adaptive, empathetic individuals capable of building ethical and effective social relationships. They learn how to adjust speech styles across different situations, use communication strategies to build rapport or avoid conflict, and demonstrate respect through language. These abilities are crucial in the workplace, higher education, and community life in general.

Challenges:

Despite its many advantages, the application of a sociolinguistic approach in language learning faces a number of practical and structural challenges that must be carefully considered. One major challenge is the limited time available within the curriculum structure. National curricula are often packed with goals focused on cognitive and grammatical aspects, such as grammar, vocabulary, and basic reading-writing skills. As a result, teachers often do not have sufficient time to explore alternative approaches that are contextual and communicative-especially those requiring time-consuming project work, deep discussions, or social observation.

Another challenge is the lack of teaching materials specifically designed to integrate sociolinguistics into the language classroom. Many textbooks still focus on structural models of learning and do not provide examples of language use across different registers or social contexts. Teachers who wish to apply this approach often have to create materials from scratch, including

finding authentic sources, designing project tasks, and developing suitable assessment instruments. This demands considerable time, effort, and creativity.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need for professional development for teachers on sociolinguistic concepts and their classroom applications. Not all teachers have a sufficient background in linguistics or sociolinguistics, which may lead to uncertainty or a lack of confidence in explaining concepts such as social language variation, register, politeness, or pragmatics. Without strong conceptual understanding, it is difficult for teachers to translate this approach into meaningful and concrete learning practices. Therefore, ongoing and collaborative teacher training is essential to support the effective implementation of this approach.

A final but equally important challenge is the difficulty in assessing students' pragmatic and communicative competence holistically. Unlike grammatical structures, which can be evaluated using multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank questions, contextually and pragmatically appropriate communication is more subjective and situational. This requires more authentic assessment tools, such as performance rubrics, interaction observations, or portfolios, all of which require time and specific evaluation skills. Without appropriate assessment systems, students' sociolinguistic competence may be difficult to measure objectively, and the potential benefits of this approach may not be fully realized.

Impact on Student Competence

- Cognitive: Improved understanding of language variation, register, and linguistic choice awareness.
- Affective: Increased motivation, communication confidence, empathy toward different speakers, and reduced language anxiety.
- Social: Enhanced adaptability in social interactions, negotiation of meaning, and interaction across diverse social backgrounds.

Analysis Using Theories and Previous Research

These findings are consistent with research that shows explicit instruction in pragmatic awareness (such as the SURE model) enhances students' pragmatic sensitivity (John Benjamins Publishing Catalog + E-Journal UNP + ResearchGate). Other studies indicate that students tend to recognize pragmatic errors more easily than grammatical ones, regardless of their proficiency level (MDPI, ResearchGate). The integration of sociolinguistics is also aligned with register theory in school-based approaches and the increasing awareness of register among students (Cambridge University Press & Assessment).

Strengths and Challenges Summary

- Strengths: High relevance, authentic materials, increased motivation, and development of life skills.
- Challenges: Limited time in the curriculum, lack of specific teaching materials, need for teacher training in sociolinguistics/pragmatics, and challenges in holistic assessment of pragmatic competence.

Conclusion

The sociolinguistic approach has proven to offer an effective framework for enhancing students' communicative competence in secondary schools. Key findings show that the integration of authentic activities, role plays, and register discussions leads to significant improvements in students' cognitive, affective, and social domains. Teachers should utilize authentic materials and interactive

activities that raise pragmatic awareness. Students will become better prepared for real-life communication in various social contexts. Curricula should formally incorporate sociolinguistic dimensions into language subjects. For further implementation, the development of pragmatic/sociolinguistic teaching modules, teacher training, and cross-disciplinary collaboration is needed. Future research could involve empirical studies such as case studies or classroom action research to measure direct impact in the field.

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