

Aspects of the Javanese Language and Its Preservation

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ABSTRACT

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The current millennial era has witnessed a decline in the support for the preservation and advancement of Javanese as a mother tongue among the younger generation. The frequency of errors that transpire in the application of Javanese demonstrates the carelessness with which individuals employ the language. In actuality, each language has regulations about writing, linguistic combinations, pronunciation, and vocabulary choice, which serve as the foundation for language utilization. The frequent occurrence of errors in their application demonstrates that Javanese language users often fail to observe these principles adequately. Prevalent errors manifest in both written and spoken forms of the Javanese language. There are numerous misspellings, improper pronunciation, and inappropriate selections of speech levels. However, errors in the organization of Javanese sentences are a recurring problem, regardless of whether children, adolescents (the newer generation) or parents make them. Subjects that are not clearly defined are frequently found in sentences composed by speakers or writers. In addition, the arrangement of words into clauses or phrases, which is recurrently impacted by the utilization of Indonesian language structures, presents additional challenges. The persistent presence of Javanese vocabulary and various forms of 'ngoko alus' and 'krama alus' impede effective communication. Therefore, in the face of the onslaught of global culture, it is necessary to make serious and continuous efforts to protect, develop, and foster the Javanese language, literature, script, and culture in a structured and massive manner through the involvement of experts and practitioners as well as regional government intervention, so that they become true identities for their owners.

INTRODUCTION

Language is an aspect of culture and is a prominent identity of a nation or ethnic group. The name of the language is generally associated with the name of the community that owns it. The Javanese language is Javanese; the Sundanese language is Sundanese; the Balinese language is Balinese and others. Every language has rules relating to pronunciation, writing, linguistic combinations, vocabulary selection, and others, which must be adhered to and used as the basis for language use.

As one of the regional languages in Indonesia, Javanese, which has tens of millions of users, has its uniqueness in that users must not only comply with grammatical rules but also pay attention to who they are speaking to to determine the right word choice. In addition, one must pay attention to pronouncing words, particularly vowel phonemes. There are seven vowel phonemes in Javanese (Sasangka, 2001): /a/, /ɔ/, /o/, /i/, /u/, /e/, and /ə/. Several vowel phonemes in Javanese have a variety of sounds called upright and oblique sounds. The phoneme /a/ in the word "sapa" [who] sounds upright, while the phoneme /a/ in the word "sapi" [cow] sounds oblique. While the phoneme /i/ in the word 'ati' [heart] sounds upright, the word 'apik' [good] sounds oblique. The phoneme /u/ in the word 'pitu' [seven] sounds upright, while the phoneme /u/ in 'pitik' [chicken] sounds oblique. While the phoneme /e/ in the word 'sae' [good] sounds upright, the phoneme /e/ in the word 'golek' [to look for] sounds oblique. Variations in the sound of these vowel phonemes can confuse their pronunciation; for example, the greeting word 'sapa' is often written as 'sopo.'

Changes in vowel sounds in Javanese also occur in words that undergo morphological processes. For instance, the phoneme /a/ in the word 'sega' [rice] sounds upright after

getting the suffix -e to become '*segane*' [the rice], and the vowel sound changes from upright to oblique.

Additionally, the rules for using vocabulary at the Javanese speech level often cause errors. The problem of choosing vocabulary in Javanese also brings difficulties. For example, the choice of words (diction), such as '*kowe*' [you] and '*panjenengan*' [you], '*tilem*' [sleep] and '*sare*' [sleep], '*nedha*' [eat] and '*dhahar*' [eat], '*nedhi*' [eat] and '*nedha*' [eat], '*tindak*' [go] and '*kesah*' [go], '*maringi*' [give], '*maringaken*' [give] and '*nyaosi*' [give], '*nyaosaken*' [to give], as well as '*ngaturi*' [to give], '*ngaturaken*' [to give], continues to be profoundly obscure in the perception of Javanese language users. The difficulty in choosing this word is because of various vocabulary words: '*ngoko*,' '*krama*,' '*krama inggil*,' and '*madya*.' In addition, there are various affixes of '*ngoko*' and '*krama*.' Furthermore, the use of various vocabulary words in speech or sentences can be mixed, where a type of speech does not have to use the same variety of vocabulary, such as all types of '*krama*.' The utterance '*ngoko alus*' is a mixture of the vocabulary '*ngoko*' and '*krama inggil*.' For instance, the sentence: '*Bapak arep tindak kantor saiki*' [Father will go to the office now]. In this sentence, the word *tindak* is the vocabulary '*krama inggil*,' and the others are the vocabulary '*ngoko*.' This mixture of vocabulary in a speech or sentence is one of the factors causing difficulties in Javanese.

This mixture of vocabulary in usage has given rise to various theories about the level of speech in Javanese. For example, there are various opinions regarding the classification of Javanese speech levels. Padmasusastra (1899) divided the levels of Javanese speech into 13: 1) *ngoko lugu*, 2) *ngoko andhap antya-basa*, 3) *ngoko andhap basa-antya*, 4) *kramantara*, 5) *mudha-krama*, 6) *wredha-krama*, 7) *madyantara*, 8) *madya-ngoko*, 9) *madya-krama*, 10) *krama desa*, 11) *inggil krama*, 12) *kadhaton krama*, and 13) *basa kasar*. Poedjosoedarmo et al. (1979) distinguished speech levels into nine: 1) *ngoko lugu*, 2) *antya basa*, 3) *basa antya*, 4) *madyantara*, 5) *madya-ngoko*, 6) *madya-krama*, 7) *kramantara*, 8) *mudha krama*, and 9) *wredha-krama*. Meanwhile, Sudaryanto (1989) classified speech levels into four: 1) *ngoko lugu*, 2) *ngoko alus*, 3) *basa lugu*, and 4) *basa alus*.

The aspects of the Javanese language mentioned earlier can potentially cause problems in its use. As such, this phenomenon of incorrect use of the Javanese language needs to be identified carefully, and a solution is required for its preservation and development.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative, where this research paradigm seeks to describe the research results in detail and in-depth (Sutopo, 1996). Research data encompassed errors in using Javanese, both written and spoken data. Written data were errors in language use, especially those found in writing Javanese song poems. On the other hand, spoken data were obtained from Javanese-speaking communities in various situations. These data were collected by *simak catat* [recording and taking note] and *simak libat catat* [involved recording-taking note] techniques. Data analysis was then carried out using interactive model analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1992), i.e., analysis in the form of interactions between three analysis components: data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions, and verification. After the data were collected in this analysis model, they were sorted based on their characteristics, such as errors in word choice in varieties of *krama*, *inggil krama*, non-standard *krama*, and editing affixes, including *ngoko* and *krama* variations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result of Bibliometric Analysis

Effective and accurate language usage can manifest in both written and spoken forms. The use of written language includes correct spelling in phonology (*titiswara*), morphology (*tititembung*), word choice (*titibasa*), and semantics (*titimakna*). The application of spoken language, also known as *swarabasa*, encompasses *pangucap* (voice, speech with intonation and tempo) and *patrap* (body part movements), in addition to diction suitable for the level of Javanese speech. Precisely at the speech level, there are numerous errors in spelling, pronunciation, arranging sentences, and choosing vocabulary in the written and spoken in the use of Javanese in society.

In writing vocal phonemes, errors occur both in pronunciation and writing. The vowel phoneme that should be written as 'a' is written as 'o'; for example, the word 'sata' [tobacco] is written 'soto' [saoto], 'rana' [there] is written 'rono' [there], 'lara' [sick] is written 'loro' [two], and others. This kind of error also often occurs in writing Javanese song poetry, as seen in writing the following poetry.

*Ning stasiun balapan
Kuto Solo sing dadi kenangan
Kowe karo aku
Naliko ngeterke lungamu
Ning stasiun balapan
Rasane koyo wong kelangan
Kowe ninggal aku
Ra kroso netes eluh ning pipiku
Da dada sayang
Da slamat jalan
Janji lungu mung sedelo
Jare sewulan ra ono
Pamitmu naliko semono
Ning stasiun balapan Solo
Jare lungu mung sedelo
Malah tanpo kirim warto
Lali opo pancen nglali
Yen eling mbok enggal bali
Ning stasiun balapan
Rasane koyo wong kelangan*

(<https://www.insertlive.com/film-dan-musik/20230921215332-197-319725/lirik-lagu-stasiun-balapan--didi-kempot>)

In the lyrics of the song, several vowels should be written as 'a' but are written with 'o,' such as the words *naliko*, *koyo*, *krroso*, *lungu*, *sadelo*, *ono*, *naliko*, *semono*, and *warto*. These words should be written *nalika*, *kaya*, *krasa*, *lunga*, *sadelo*, *ono*, *naliko*, *semono*, and *warto*. Likewise, regarding pronunciation, the vowel 'i' in the word 'apik' [good] should be read obliquely but is read upright.

Errors also often occur in arranging Javanese sentences (Javanese language pangrakiting), whether made by children, teenagers (younger generation), or parents. The subject (*jejer*) of sentences produced by speakers or writers is often unclear, especially subjects that begin with prepositions or prepositional phrases, such as *Dhumateng para tamu kasuwun sabar sawatawis*. The sentence's subject is unclear, as a preposition precedes it. The sentence would be correct without the preposition, to be *Para tamu kasuwun sabar sawatawis*. Alternatively, the preposition *dhumateng* can be kept at the beginning of the sentence, but a subject is added, such as *Dhumateng para tamu, Panjenengan kasuwun sabar sawatawis*.

Other problems are also encountered in arranging words into phrases or clauses, which are frequently affected by the use of Indonesian language structures; for instance, in the following sentences: a. *Rega pertamax saiki mundhak dadi 13.800 rupiah* [Price for Pertamax has now increased to 13,800 rupiahs]; b. *Komputer adhiku monitore rusak* [My sister's computer monitor is broken]. Javanese rules state that if two or more nouns form a phrase and have a possessive relationship, adding *-e/-ne* or *-ipun/-nipun* as a possessive marker is necessary. Thus, the sentence in Javanese would be more precise to be a. *Regane pertamax saiki mundhak dadi 13.800 rupiah*, and b. *Komputere adhiku monitore rusak*.

Further, the difficulty in using Javanese is related to using variety in Javanese vocabulary. In Javanese, apart from the variety of speech levels, there are also standard and non-standard varieties, such as the standard variety taken [ask] with the non-standard tanglet; the standard variety enjing [morning] with its non-standard variety enjang; the standard variety waja [gigi] with the non-standard variety waos, and others.

Mistakes that often occur include the use of *krama inggil* vocabularies, such as the words *miyos* [to go out], *garwa* [wife], and *dikengken* [to be told]. The error in the word *miyos* appears in the following sentence:

"Nalika kula miyos saking peken marginipun ketingal rame sanget."

The word *miyos* in this sentence is done by person 1 (O1), who should use the *krama* form in the context of the sentence, namely *medal*, not the *krama inggil* form of *miyos*. The word *miyos* in this sentence means respecting oneself, which is considered impolite.

Another *krama inggil* word that also has significant errors is the word *garwa*, whose *krama* form is *semah*, as in the sentence:

"Garwa kula ingkang ngentosi wonten parkiran semerep menawi kula sampun medal saking peken, lajeng enggal-enggal nyetater motoripun."

The word *garwa* in this sentence uses the *krama inggil* variety of words, which should use the vocabulary of the *krama* variety of *semah* because the word *garwa* in the context of the sentence refers to the speaker's husband, which should use the *krama* form, not the *krama inggil* variety. The use of *krama inggil* in this sentence implies respect for oneself. This is deemed impolite or arrogant.

Moreover, errors in applying *krama inggil* also often occur in the *krama inggil* variety for the second person (O2), as seen in the following sentence.

"Wau, Pak RT dugi dhateng ngriki, nyaosi undhangan menawi benjing Minggu ngarep warga dikengken kerjabakti."

The context of this sentence is that the child reported to his mother about the arrival of Mr. RT at his house to convey an invitation to do community service. The words *dugi* [come], *nyaosi* [give], and *dikengken* [ordered] in this sentence are actions carried out by the RT head, who is a leader respected by his citizens. The words *dugi*, *nyaosi*, and

dikengken in this sentence are the words of the krama variety, which should use the words of the krama inggil variety, i.e., the words used for the respected O2. The high number of editing errors in krama inggil vocabulary indicates a lack of understanding of its application, which is related to the difference in social status between the person speaking and the person being discussed. Based on these conditions, to preserve and develop the Javanese language, literature, script, and culture amidst the onslaught of global culture, it is necessary to continuously and earnestly strive to protect, develop, and foster them in a structured and massive manner by involving experts and practitioners as well as local government intervention in handling it. As a result, the Javanese language, literature, script, and culture can genuinely become an identity for the owner.

CONCLUSION

The preservation and development of Javanese as a mother tongue, widely used in the millennial era, tends to be of little interest to the younger generation. In its use in society, both written and spoken language, there are many errors in spelling, mispronunciation, and inappropriate choice of speech-level diction. Also, mistakes often occur in arranging Javanese sentences (Javanese language pangrakiting), whether made by children, teenagers (younger generation), or parents. The use of Javanese vocabulary and varieties of *ngoko alus* and *krama alus* also always appear and interfere with communication.

To safeguard, advance, and promote the Javanese language, literature, script, and culture in the face of the dominance of global culture, it is imperative to undertake substantial and sustained endeavors that are organized and extensive in nature. Local government intervention, in addition to the participation of experts and practitioners, is necessary to ensure that the Javanese language, literature, script, and culture become an authentic part of the identity of its owners.

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