

Challenges of Javanese Language Inheritance in Family: A Cultural and Educational Perspective

Mita Wahyuni¹

SUBJECT

Essay

¹SMK Negeri 4 Semarang

Email: mitawahyuni180391@gmail.com

Received: November 12, 2024

Accepted: December 22, 2024

Online version: December 30, 2024

Keywords: -

Javanese is one of Indonesia's most significant regional languages, rich in philosophical values, traditions, and local wisdom. As one of the main tools of cultural communication, this language functions as a medium of conversation and as a carrier of identity and expression of social values of Javanese society. However, in recent decades, the inheritance of Javanese has faced various significant challenges. This inheritance, which should start from the family—as the primary social unit—is now hampered by various factors, such as changes in lifestyle, globalization, and less supportive education policies. This essay aims to analyze the challenges of the inheritance of Javanese in three main dimensions: the dominance of Indonesian and globalization, minimal exposure to Javanese in families, and the limitations of Javanese language learning in formal institutions.

One of the main challenges of Javanese language inheritance is the dominance of Indonesian as the national language. Indonesian is widely used to communicate across ethnicities and regions, making it the primary language in various fields, including education, media, and government administration (Suryadi, 2017). This condition causes many Javanese families to use Indonesian in everyday conversation to prepare their children to adapt to a broader environment. This choice, although logical, reduces the opportunity for children to learn and use Javanese at home.

In addition, the process of globalization has further weakened the position of the Javanese language. English, a symbol of modernity and social mobility, is increasingly accepted as an important second language in various circles (Mardikantoro, 2007). As a result, regional languages, including Javanese, are often considered to have no high economic value or are irrelevant globally (Alfarisy et al., 2022). This attitude contributes to the decline in interest of the younger generation in the Javanese language, which is considered less supportive of their professional and academic needs.

The family is the first and primary social unit that inherits regional languages. However, modern social dynamics often reduce the intensity of communication between

family members, especially in regional languages such as Javanese. Many families, especially in urban areas, prefer to use Indonesian in daily interactions because it is considered more practical and relevant to urban life (Mahmudah et al., 2023). This decision is often not accompanied by an awareness of introducing Javanese to children. Another factor that influences minimal exposure to Javanese is the lack of support from the social environment. Children who grow up in communities dominated by Indonesians tend to adapt to this communication pattern. In addition, changes in family lifestyles that are increasingly individualistic, especially among urban communities, reduce opportunities for children to learn Javanese through interaction with extended family members, such as grandparents, who often become informal teachers of regional languages and traditions.

Formal education should complement the role of the family in the inheritance of the Javanese language. However, Javanese language learning in schools is often not optimal. Javanese is usually taught as local content with limited time allocation, so students do not have enough time to understand the complex aspects of this language, including grammar and language levels such as *ngoko*, *madya*, and *krama* (Putri, 2018). The lack of innovation in teaching materials and teaching methods exacerbates this condition.

In addition, government policies related to preserving regional languages are still inadequate. Although Javanese has been included in the primary and secondary education curriculum, the lack of training for Javanese language teachers and engaging learning resources are significant obstacles (Utami & Zustiyanoro, 2022; Zustiyanoro, 2024). Without more concrete policies and significant support, it isn't easy to create a young generation fluent in Javanese.

The loss of Javanese language skills among the younger generation has significant social and cultural implications. Javanese is a means of communication and a carrier of cultural values, such as manners, social hierarchy, and oral traditions. Losing this language can lead to an erosion of cultural identity, where the younger generation loses connection with their ancestral heritage (Sutarto, 2007; Udasmoro et al., 2023; Zustiyanoro et al., 2020). In addition, the loss of Javanese can also impact cultural homogenization, which reduces the richness of Indonesia's multiculturalism.

In facing this challenge, strategic steps involving families, communities, and the government are needed. First, families need to revive the use of Javanese at home. Parents can integrate Javanese into daily activities, such as storytelling, playing, or using digital media that are interesting to children (Mahmudah et al., 2023). Second, the community can create a social environment that supports the use of Javanese. For example, local communities can hold cultural activities, such as poetry reading or speech competitions in Javanese, to increase the younger generation's interest in this language (Suwandi & Wibowo, 2021).

From the education side, the government must strengthen the Javanese language curriculum and provide adequate training for Javanese language teachers. In addition, the use of technology, such as Javanese language learning applications and interactive digital content, can help attract students' interest in learning this language (Yulianto et al., 2023). Stronger policies and support from more significant government and educational institutions will be the key to preserving the Javanese language (Suwarna, 1996; Suwarno, 2001).

The inheritance of Javanese language in families faces complex challenges, ranging from the dominance of Indonesian and the influence of globalization, minimal

exposure in families, to the limitations of Javanese language learning in schools. However, these challenges can be overcome with collective efforts involving families, communities, and the government. Active use of Javanese at home, community-based cultural activities, and supportive education policies will ensure that Javanese remains an integral part of the nation's cultural identity. With a holistic and comprehensive strategy, the Javanese language can be passed on to future generations as a valuable legacy.

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