

KITAB KUNING AND JAVANESE LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE IN PONDOK PESANTREN AL-FALAH SALAFI BREBES

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Abstract

This study reveals the role of Pesantren and Kitab Kuning in maintaining Javanese Language. This focus on how the Javanese language maintenance process through the transmission of cultural values and learning at the Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi Brebes and other supporting factors of the Javanese language maintenance process. This qualitative research uses a sociolinguistic approach. The type of data is the form of socio-cultural words and expressions, learning curricula, and Javanese language maintenance programs in Pesantren. Data collection techniques used were interviews, observation and document study. Data analysis technique is done by identifying, classifying and interpreting the data. The results showed that the process of maintaining Javanese language takes place on several ways: 1) Learning Kitab Kuning through Sorogan, Bandongan, Pasaran methods. 2) Tradition of dialogue through Khitobahan, Majlis Orda and Bahtsul Masail. 3) Personification of Kiai with the necessity to use Javanese language, and 4) Formal and informal communication. All these activities make Javanese language be maintained in Pesantren.

Keywords: *Pesantren; Language; Maintenance; Culture*

Introduction

The death of language is a problem for all nations in the world, including Indonesia. Indonesia with this language pluralism are challenged by the inclusion of foreign languages and national languages. Placement of regional languages as the nation's cultural wealth began to swoop in occupying a position that is no longer high. The local language is also being abandoned by its speakers, because it is considered as dishonorable language. Regional languages such as Javanese no longer dominate in public spaces and became an important domains of their citizens. This difference in language placement is referred to as diglossia.

Diglossia occurs when there is a language that is positioned at a low place, while other languages are at a higher place and are considered more prestige. This

'war' can not be avoided with the presence of foreign languages which are increasingly used in our country.

Hanafi (2017: 54) described that diglosia has the role of variations in language, dialect and variety of speech in the level of verbal communication in certain communities. The language terms known in diglosis are the variety of H (High Class) and L (Low Class). H is used for middle and upper level social class and formal conditions and L is used in the lower social class and informal conditions.

If we associate it with the factual conditions of our national education design, this problem is rooted in the curriculum content and policy direction of educational institutions which tend to be Internationally Based Oriented. For example, placing foreign languages and national languages as priorities with a variety of intensive and specialization programs. Besides indeed some of them become compulsory subjects. Contradictory, the regional languages do not get previlage such as foreign languages and national languages, so that participants are rarely interested in learning. Therefore it is urgent to give an assessment that the extent to which this nation seeks to respond to globalization, by not ignoring the traditions and culture.

The domain of life that plays an important role in solving these problems is education. Making awareness of each educational instrument in formulating education policies, environment and culture that is responsive to the preservation of regional languages. Through formal educational activities, informal and non-formal efforts to prevent language extinction can be done. Wardhaugh (2006) in his book *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* describes that the willingness to use certain languages in an educational area can extend the 'life' of that language. What should be developed is the mindset that we must preserve the local languages, prioritize the Indonesian and master in foreign languages.

There have been many studies examining language maintenance. Sudirman Wilian (2010: 23) conducted a study of language maintenance and bilingual stability in Sasak speakers in Lombok. Through a quantitative approach the researcher revealed the percentage of users and domains of the Sasak language that still survive. Besides that Widiyanto (2018) in his research conducted a

classification of regional language maintenance through learning activities in schools. Educational institutions are considered as effective media in maintaining local languages.

Research that reveals schools have a significant role in regional language maintenance also conducted by Zulaeha (2017). This can be done through formal and informal communication consistently and continuously at school. In addition, the efforts to maintain regional languages can also be done through traditional arts. As a study conducted by Mardikantoro (2016) that traditional songs and poems can be a tool for language retention through art performances. Nurhayati (2010) in her study found that the people of Jogjakarta made arts and culture as the main media of maintaining regional languages.

Language maintenance also turned out to experience obstacles and challenges. As a study conducted by Syahriyani (2017) reveals that age, interaction, economic development and education have a significant influence in inhibiting the process of keeping regional languages.

Related to Pesantren, some previous studies conducted by Hanafi (2017) revealed that there was Arabic diglossia in learning activities at Islamic boarding schools, besides pesantren had a contribution in maintaining local languages. In line with this, Ningsih, et.all (2019) concluded that santri through their conversation activities by using local languages became the way of language maintenance.

Pesantren with its *Kitab Kuning* become models in education that are responsive to language issues. *Kitab Kuning* as revealed in Wahyuni and Ibrahim's research (2017) has the distinctiveness of using *Pegon* Arabic and Javanese language. This is supported by a study conducted by Thoriqussuud (2012) that not only has a function as a medium for regional language retention, but also *Kitab Kuning* developed into an authoritative and visionary knowledge discourse.

Some of the previous studies have described the contribution of education, especially Pesantren in maintaining local languages. Moreover, this research seeks to complete with a more radical and comprehensive analysis. It presents data and facts related to the contribution of local wisdom and pesantren culture in maintaining Javanese languages through education and learning. Interestingly,

Kitab Kuning as a typical model of Nusantara education is also described as a medium to maintain regional languages.

Theoretical Framework

Pesantren and *Kitab Kuning*

One of the educational institutions in Indonesia is Pesantren. An indigenous education model that teaches many things about religion, science and morals. According to Mulyadhi Kartanegara (2007, 80-91), Pesantren has some Pillars that support the cosmopolitan Islamic culture. *First*, inclusivism, namely self-disclosure to positive elements from outside and trying to develop it creatively. *Second* humanism, namely high appreciation of potential and basic values of humanity, *Third* tolerance, the greatness of the soul in dealing with differences of opinion, and *the Fourth* freedom (democracy) in opinion and thinking.

In addition, the culture that develops in pesantren is its appreciation of local traditions and wisdom. The concept of education is not anti-tradition and habits of the people. Local traditions and wisdom are accommodated in such a way that they are able to go hand in hand with the synergy. Through this culture pesantren have a big enough share to preserve the noble values of the nation's culture, including Javanese language.

Maarif (2016) in his book *Pesantren Inklusif Berbasis Kearifan Lokal* narrated that pesantren is able to unite Islam with the culture of the Archipelago. Islamic boarding schools are able to adopt indigenous cultures without any conflict with Islamic teachings. Furthermore, this institution teaches skills and morals at the same time. Santri learn with identical methods such as *Majlis Ta'lim*, *Mudzakarah*, *Syawir*, *Musyawaharah*, and *Bahtsul Masail*. Some of these methods aim to maintain the Islamic tradition with a local cultural background, including making Javanese language as a communication tool.

Pesantren according to Maarif (2016: 16) applies the concept of traditional education, with a good pattern of interaction between Kiai and Santri. Kiai is cultured as a person with high knowledge and spiritual teacher in getting closer to God. The pattern of education is carried out with care and compassion, by making students aware that humans are God's representatives in the world.

In addition to the strength of scientific basis, Pesantren are able to preserve local wisdom. Values derived from local traditions and Islamic teachings are synergistic and there is no contradiction. This is then able to shape the building of spirituality and intellectuality of the Santri through life (Maarif, 2016). Some pesantren local wisdoms that are relevant to the context of language and communication include:

Table 1. Pesantren Local Wisdom

Pesantren Local Wisdom	
	The concept of <i>ṣilaturrahīm</i> (connecting kinship)
	The concept of <i>Ukhuwwah</i> (establishing brotherhood): <i>Islāmiyyah</i> (fellow Muslims), <i>Waṭaniyyah</i> (compatriots), <i>Insāniyyah</i> (fellow humans).
	<i>At-takāful wa al-taḍamun</i> (shoulder to shoulder and solidarity)
	<i>Birru al-wālidain</i> (do good to both parents) and the obligation to respect the teacher
	<i>Wirā'ī</i> (stay away from acts that are prohibited, makruh and unclear whether or not)
	<i>Ikhlāṣ</i> and <i>ṣiddīq</i> (always honest and act truthfully)
	<i>Al-waṣṭiyyah</i> / <i>al-tawāzun</i> (moderation), <i>al-tasāmuh</i> (tolerant), <i>al-'ādalah</i> (fair)
	The principle of <i>amar ma'rūf nahī munkar</i> , collectivity, independence and simplicity

Some of the above local wisdoms become the strength of the pesantren tradition in education and social interaction with the community. So that the learning patterns are not only focused on spiritual education, but also intellectual and social. The concept of education that seeks to humanize humanity and struggle for human rights and dignity.

Siradj (1999: 201) in the Wahyuni and Ibrahim (2017) quotations described that in the beginning, *Kitab Kuning* was actually introduced by a circle outside pesantren. Its image embedded in very low level, because it was considered old-fashioned and not modern. *Kitab Kuning* is suggested as the cause of the decline of human civilization. But in its development this term actually becomes an identity that is proud of by the santri and pesantren.

The term of *Kitab Kuning* is also equated with the Classic Book inherited from Islamic civilization written by scholars. The book contains Arabic writings without a *harakat* (*syakal*) making this referred to as a 'bare book'. Ali Yavie (1988: 03) in Wahyuni and Ibrahim (2017) describe that this book is often dubbed the Ancient Book.

In another explanation, Siradj (1999: 278) describes that *Kitab Kuning* has a central role in the lives of pesantren. Primarily as a guide for thinking and behaving. Santri through a good understanding of *Kitab Kuning* will also apply the knowledge in action. According to him, *Kitab Kuning* is a formulation of the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith written by scholars with high scholarship and nobility of character (Wahyuni & Ibrahim, 2017).

Language Maintenance and Shift

Fasold (1984) defines that language maintenance is a step to make a decision to keep using a language together in a society. It is a language that has been used before and trying to be maintained. The phenomenon of language maintenance is closely related to language shift. The decision for maintaining a language is usually a conscious response due to language shifts. Both are important studies in sociolinguistic discourse. Through these efforts, language extinction did not occur because of the shift and unwillingness to maintain it.

The reason for the language shift is the situation of diglossia. Certain languages are placed in lower positions and higher status. So that low-level languages began to be abandoned because they were not prestigious. Mardikantoro (2016) explained that language maintenance depends on several factors, including: economics, religion and politics. Agreement to maintain a language is determined based on collective decisions and applied in everyday life. Actually, language shift happens because of language leakage. Language that should apply to certain domains actually belongs to other domains. So that one of the languages becomes pressed and extinct, because of the choice of language that is considered more respectable (Mardikantoro, 2016).

Research Methods

This research used a qualitative descriptive method. The realization of this method was carried out with two research approaches, including: Theoretical Approach and Methodological Approach. Theoretically, this study was conducted by a sociolinguistic approach. This is according to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015: 2) examines language and society as an inseparable unity, both through collective and individual behavior. The data in this study were obtained by observing, interviewing and studying documents at the Al-Falah Salafi Islamic Boarding

School, related to the curriculum, educational and learning programs, as well as the academic and its culture. Then, the data is collected and reviewed.

Methodologically this study used a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Sugiyono (2011: 14) this approach examines and tries to obtain in-depth data. The data contains meaning. In this study, qualitative data through the process of data collection was analyzed from the text and its context. So we get an ideal and comprehensive conclusion.

Results and Discussion

Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi Brebes

Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi is the second generation of Pesantren Al-Falah Brebes. It build by KH. Mas Mansyur Tarsyudi, one of the influential figures in Brebes. He is a *Mubaligh* who is popular with the people of Central Java. Kiai Mansyur is the initiator and founder of the *Majlis Dzikir Mujahaddah* in Central Java, with thousands of worshipers scattered in almost all regions of Central Java and its surroundings.

Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi has a noble purpose for its establishment. Mastery of *Fardhu a'in* and *Fardhu kifayah* knowledge. It is oriented to faith and piety become the goals to be achieved this Pesantren. It will be realized by carrying out the mandate of Aqeedah *Ahlussunah Waljama'ah* through the development of education. Empowering Muslim struggle cadres with the insight of *ahlussunnah wal jama'ah* and developing the potential of humanity with all its dimensions, both intellectual, moral, economic, social, and cultural dimensions in order to create reliable human resources. In addition, by preparing young people who are able to face challenges in the future.

In addition, to provide a traditional learning model with *Kitab Kuning* as the main reference in learning, this Pesantren also provides formal education facilities. Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi has MTs Bustanul Ulum NU and SMK Bakti Utama NU. The two schools are used by students to gain access to formal education. Presently the pesantren developed by Kiai Mansyur has hundreds of students and is one of the biggest in Brebes.

Retention of Javanese Language in Islamic Boarding Schools

Moeliono (1991: 3) in Zulaekha (2017: 43) outlines several steps that can be taken in maintaining regional languages; *First*, using regional languages on various occasions in the family sphere, in meeting forums, and in educational institutions. *Second*, promoting the use of regional languages in mass media (print and electronic), such as newspapers, books, magazines, radio, television, and so on. *Third*, fight for regional languages into languages that should be maintained and developed by the government and the community.

Some of these steps can be decided through national education policies that favor the preservation of regional languages. This actually becomes the basis that the education sphere plays an important role in maintaining local language. Education must be able to formulate real concepts and actions in maintaining local languages, in addition to develop national and international languages.

Education and Learning of the Yellow Book

Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi Brebes makes the study of *Kitab Kuning* as the main thing in learning. In addition, the pesantren has given serious attention to the preservation of Javanese language through various *Kitab Kuning* studies conducted. Several *Kitab Kuning* studies were carried out;

First, Sorogan. This method places the santri as the sole learner (Individual) directly dealing with Kiai or Ustadz. This personal model is carried out at the Pesantren to improve the skills of santri in understanding *Kitab Kuning*. Technically, students read several sentences in *Kitab Kuning* by reciting the meaning and translation in Javanese, and analyzing the grammar content. Through the Arabic pegon transcript, the santri tried to explore his enrichment of the contents of the Book and were given a response by the Kiai. This activity is carried out twice a week, Monday and Thursday with several Ustadz, including the Boarding School leader.

Second, Bandongan. It is different from Sorogan, the method is done like a lecture or seminar with a single speaker. This activity is carried out by Kyai or Ustadz by reading *Kitab Kuning* in Arabic, translating and describing it in Javanese. Santri listened and recorded the translation read by the Kyai and understood the explanation. This learning model is Pasive Learning with only focused on the Kyai.

Bandongan activities at Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi take place every day after dawn, dhuhur, asr and Isha.

Third, Pasaran model. This activity is similar to *Bandongan*, but the implementation is carried out in the month of Ramadan. This study takes place after the fardu prayer time and tarawih with a variety of selected *Kitab Kuning* and is retained in one month. Kyai / Ustadz read the Book in Arabic, translating and explaining it in Javanese. Santri notes and understands its meaning solemnly.

Tradition of Dialogue

Apart from an intensive study of *Kitab Kuning*, Pesantren also predominates other scientific activities, such as the *First, Khitobahan*. This is an activity to practice speaking skills through speech in every Thursday night and is followed by all students. Santri take turns to become lecturers and participants. It is hoped that in the future students can become *Mubaligh* and preachers. Uniquely, the speeches were carried out using Javanese as the core language. So this becomes a space where Javanese language is placed in an honorable position.

Second, Bahtsul Masail. Like other pesantren, the tradition of scientific dialogue is also carried out by the Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi Brebes. Organizing scientific forums to discuss issues surrounding contemporary issues of religion, worship and faith. The ability to argue with authoritative references is carried out by students. Communication activities carried out entirely using Arabic and Javanese language.

Third, Orda Majlis. In contrast to the classical tradition that developed in the Islamic Boarding School, this forum is routinely carried out by the Pesantren as a regional-based hospitality space. But unlike the others, the regional organization forum is designed to discuss the problems faced by their respective regions. This scientific discussion is held once a month by formulating recommendations given to local governments to resolve these problems.

Personification of Kiai

The traditions of learning in Islamic boarding schools is the respect of students to Kyai. For students, the personification of the teacher becomes very important in learning. Teachers who are worthy are good dignity, know the law, persevere in worship, and are pious. The kyai is considered to be a true teacher,

who has abandoned all of his worldly desires and does not expect rewards. Then they are the most appropriate as teachers to increase our knowledge.

The importance of contextualization in understanding *Nash* is one of the skills expected in boarding school education. This is obtained besides through the learning process is devotion to the Kyai. This was later applied in the culture of communication at the Pesantren Al-Falah Salafi. Santri communicates with Kyai and Ustadz using Javanese language. Because Javanese is considered as a communication tool that shows students respect for the Kyai.

Formal and Informal Communication

In addition to some of the above, Javanese language maintenance is also carried out with formal and informal communication activities. Formal communication is done through regular pesantren learning, both through the study of *Kitab Kuning*, as well as other learning activities. Whereas informal communication activities are through the use of Javanese as the everyday language of students. The students' choice to use Javanese became a tradition that was considered honorable, although it also continued to use Indonesian and Arabic in other contexts.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the authors conclude that the phenomena of language shift and extinction can actually be minimized through education. Education plays an important role in formulating regional language preservation agenda. Although impressed slow, but changes through education can occur without anarchism. Mainly through pesantren education that is able to accommodate the culture and traditions of the Indonesian people. Islamic boarding schools which are not anti-tradition have proven to be able to become models of regional language maintenance programs, both through classroom learning and outside the classroom. Through the study of *Kitab Kuning*, the tradition of dialogue, Kyai personification and formal and informal communication activities become an ideal model in maintaining regional languages.

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