Build Javanese Language Chain with Optimization of Literacy

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Abstract

The problem of Javanese language existence until now is still a public discussion. The function of Javanese language as a means of communication increasingly displaced by the Indonesian language. Javanese language is considered non-communicative and unpopular, so its use in various domains disappears. In the field of education, Javanese language lesson have not been taught optimally. In fact, the community agreed that the Javanese language is the identity of Javanese culture and one of the state assets that must be preserved and developed. Efforts to preserve and develop the Javanese language have been undertaken by various stakeholders, but the results have not been significant. Those efforts have not supported the survival of Javanese language in this modern era. The young generation that expected to be the successor of the survival of Javanese language, has not been touched optimally. Javanese language is still limited to the consumption of the elder generation or communities of Javanese language and culture activists. This paper contains an alternative effort that can be done to build the chain of survival of Javanese language. The way offered is the optimization of literacy for the younger generation. The ways that need to be done are: a) giving the widest opportunity to the younger generation to express their ideas about Javanese culture; b) explore the potentials of young generation to create works according to their competence in Javanese language; c) making new masters of Javanese language in the millennial era.

Keywords: Javanese language, optimization, young generation, literacy

A. Introduction

Javanese language as a regional language has a deep-rooted power. In Indonesian Constitution, Article 1, on Flags, Languages, State Symbols, and the National Anthem, it is said that "regional language is the language used by future generations by Indonesian citizens in the territory of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia." Similarly, Article 42 Paragraph (1) states that "local government must develop, preserve and protect local languages and literature in order to maintain its position and function in social life over time and remain a part of Indonesian cultural wealth. Tubiyono, in Oktafiarni (Kompasiana) said that the Javanese language in its position as a regional language, has functions as: (1) the symbol of regional pride, (2) the symbol of regional identity, and (3) the means of communication within the family and local community. Javanese language has the same right to live like Bahasa Indonesia.

In line with the contents of the constitution above, various efforts to conserve and preserve the Javanese language, especially in Central Java, has been done by many stakeholders. During this time, local government through related institutions and Javanese cultural activist community have routinely held various forms of activities. Form of activities that have been done include: discussion of language and literature of Java by the Central Java Province Language Service (*Balai Bahasa Provinsi Jawa Tengah*); various Javanese competitions both at the district/city and provincial levels; gamelan music performances (*uyon-uyon*) at Wisma Perdamaian, Semarang; performing arts by *Teater Lingkar* under the auspices of the Central Java Provincial Tourism Office; staging *kethoprak, wayang orang, wayang kulit* in *Taman Budaya Raden Saleh* Semarang; and many more. In addition to these routine activities, the Office of Education and Culture of Central Java Province has also issued a decision on the compulsory requirements of each school level to teach Java language subjects.

Although these activities were held regularly, they could not yet touch the sensitivity of the young generation to realized that they are genuine cultural heirs and have a sense of responsibility to play a role in the preservation of local culture. Most of the people present in the above activities are dominated by Javanese cultural figures; elders; and Javanese cultural activists from various communities who feel they have a common interest in preserving Javanese culture (*nguri-uri kebudayan Jawa*). While a small percentage of the younger generation is present, students are usually junior high, high school, and college students, and they are not so instrumental. The younger generation is afraid to play an active role because they feel they cannot speak Javanese well. They are afraid of being wrong, and ultimately prefer to remain silent. If such conditions are not immediately sought the solution, then the link that connects the culture of Java with his heirs will be cut off. Therefore, in this paper, will be discussed how efforts to build the Javanese language links through the optimization of literacy.

B. Various Forms of Efforts to Establish the Javanese Language Chain Through Literation

Building on the Javanese language chain is meant here is an attempt to form a network of Javanese cultural heritage without breaking, that is, from the predecessors with the heirs of Javanese cultural at every time.

Culture as the main pillar of development, is dynamic. This condition causes a change that gives a new form to the existing culture. Javanese language which is actually the mother tongue for most of Javanese society also always grow and develop according to the times (Rayanto, 2016). In this case, the younger generation becomes the sole main actor as the recipient of cultural heritage which will build strength in preserving and maintaining the Javanese language. The young generation with all its potential needs to be empowered to the best of their expertise. The younger generation as the spearhead of change actors needs to be given the opportunity and the facility to be able to express all forms of creativity. They are not adequately presented in any activity as

listeners or witnesses that the existing Javanese culture has noble values that can be used as a guide in behaving. With its potential, young people can be empowered from an early age. Therefore, the potential of the young generation with them literacy capability, should be accommodated as a form of appreciation of Javanese culture in accordance with the era.

Literacy is the use of social, historical, and cultural practices in creating and interpreting meaning through text. Literacy requires at least an unspoken sensitivity about the relationship between text conventions and the context of their use and ideally the ability to reflect critically on those relationships (Nugraha, 2016). A comprehensive understanding of the definition of literacy by giving some of the markers of a person has literacy skills, including: a) the ability to read explicit meanings; b) the ability to speak clearly, precisely, and logically; c) the ability to write easily and conveniently; d) the ability to communicate key ideas through writing; e) the ability to understand oral