

Analysis Diachronic Swadesh Wordlist Between Ngapaknese and Javanese

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Abstract

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The qualitative research entitled “Diachronic Analysis Swadesh Wordlist: Ngapak vs Java” will focus on examining historical linguistic changes and relationships between Ngapak and Javanese dialects using the Swadesh wordlist. The study will use a diachronic approach to analyse the evolution of vocabulary and phonological aspects over time, providing insight into the linguistic kinship and differences between these dialects. This research applies qualitative methods by utilizing historical-comparative linguistic approaches and corpus-based analysis to identify significant changes and retentions in core vocabulary. The results show that Ngapak dialect tends to retain more archaic phonological and lexical forms, while Standard Javanese undergoes innovation and simplification in a number of basic vocabularies. In addition, it was found that retention, innovation, and external influences distinguish the two dialects, both in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary selection. These findings enrich the understanding of the dynamics of Javanese language change, the importance of local dialect preservation, and contribute to the mapping of linguistic kinship in the Java region.

Kata Kunci:

*Analisis Diakronis,
Perubahan Bahasa,
Bahasa Ngapak,
Bahasa Jawa Baku, dan
Daftar Kata Swadesh.*

Abstrak

Penelitian kualitatif berjudul “Diachronic Analysis Swadesh Wordlist: Ngapak and Java” akan berfokus pada kajian perubahan linguistik historis dan hubungan antara dialek Ngapak dan Jawa menggunakan daftar kata Swadesh. Kajian ini akan menggunakan pendekatan diakronis untuk menganalisis evolusi kosakata dan aspek fonologis dari waktu ke waktu, memberikan wawasan tentang kekerabatan linguistik dan perbedaan antara dialek-dialek ini. Penelitian ini menerapkan metode kualitatif dengan memanfaatkan pendekatan linguistik historis-komparatif dan analisis berbasis

korpus untuk mengidentifikasi perubahan dan retensi signifikan dalam kosakata inti. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dialek Ngapak cenderung mempertahankan bentuk fonologis dan leksikal yang lebih kuno, sementara Bahasa Jawa Baku mengalami inovasi dan penyederhanaan dalam sejumlah kosakata dasar. Selain itu, ditemukan bahwa retensi, inovasi, dan pengaruh eksternal membedakan kedua dialek, baik dari segi pengucapan maupun pemilihan kosakata. Temuan ini memperkaya pemahaman tentang dinamika perubahan bahasa Jawa, pentingnya pelestarian dialek lokal, dan berkontribusi pada pemetaan kekerabatan linguistik di wilayah Jawa.

INTRODUCTION

Regional languages are an important asset in Indonesia's cultural wealth, serving as both a means of communication and a marker of community identity. Among these, Javanese stands out due to its large number of speakers and the diversity of its dialects (Kaharuddin, K. et al. 2024). However, despite its rich history and literary tradition, the Javanese language faces challenges in preserving its dialectal diversity. One notable dialect, ngapak (Banyumasan Javanese), retains unique phonological and lexical features that distinguish it from Standard Javanese. Previous studies, such as those by Vionita Erin D. A (2024), have shown that dialect differences are shaped not only by geography but also by historical and socio-cultural factors. Nevertheless, research on these variations remains limited, particularly regarding the preservation and documentation of less-studied dialects in the face of modernization. This highlights the need for further study on the phonological and lexical differences among Javanese dialects to support their preservation, and explicit statement of the main issue or research gap regarding the Javanese language and its dialects.

METHOD

Through qualitative methods and the use of historical-comparative linguistics and Corpus-based analysis to identify significant changes and retention in core vocabulary, the following results and discussions were found. Data

collection is included Swadesh word list, interviews, documentation, listening, and note taking in the method, and in the purpose, it contains gather core vocabulary, native insights, and capture natural language use. Besides that, there is also Data analysis we use, there is qualitative comparison, descriptive analysis, and dialectometric formula for the method, also for the purpose in to identify patterns of change/retention and quantify lexical differences. In the analysis of vocabulary changes based on Swadesh wordlist, where this study uses Swadesh basic word list which is the main instrument to identify historical linguistic changes between Ngapak dialect and standard Java language. "Standard Javanese" refers to the variety of Javanese developed at the Yogyakarta and Surakarta royal courts, based on the Central Javanese dialect. This standard is used in formal writing, education, and official contexts, and is characterized by strict speech levels (*ngoko*, *krama*) for politeness. Also, Ngapak retains older pronunciations and certain words that are no longer present in Standard Javanese, the proof is standard Javanese is explicitly defined as the variety based on the Central Javanese dialect used in Yogyakarta and Surakarta, while Banyumasan (Ngapak) is grouped with other regional dialects.

From the qualitative analysis of vocabulary data collected through documentation (vocabulary and interviews with native speakers, several patterns of vocabulary change and retention in Ngapak dialect compared to standard Javanese), native speaker is someone who has acquired the Ngapak dialect as their first language typically from birth, and uses it in daily communication, were found, namely:

1. Preservation of ancient vocabulary in the Ngapak dialect, where one of the distinctive characteristics of the Ngapak dialect is its ability to preserve forms of vocabulary that are classified as older or archaic when compared to standard Javanese. To illustrate, the word referring to "water" is still commonly pronounced as *banyu* in the Ngapak dialect, while in some variants of Standard Javanese, the pronunciation of this word is beginning to show variations or even influenced by Indonesian. *Banyu* means water, in ngapak is common standard, in standard Javanese is common, and standard, in Indonesian influence is native Javanese. If air is mean water, in ngapak is not used, in

stadard Javanese is pure Javanese, In Indonesian influence is Indonesian word, may appear in code-switching. Similarly, the term for "Father," which in the context of Ngapak still often uses bapa', is different from Standard Javanese which tends to use the form bapak or rama which is considered more contemporary.

2. Development and simplification in standard Javanese, the standard Javanese language shows evolution through lexical innovation and simplification at the phonological level. Simplification at the phonological level is refers to changes in the sound system of language or dialect that make pronunciation easier, more regular, or more uniform. For example, there is a change in the sound of the vowel “a” to “o” in closed syllables in some words, as seen in the pronunciation of Mr, which sometimes becomes bopo. On the other hand, a number of fundamental vocabularies undergo replacement with more common words or according to the standards of the language, a phenomenon that is influenced by the process of standardization of the language itself. Standardization of the language refers to the process by which a particular variety of a language is selected, codified, and promoted as the accepted norm for official, educational, and formal use.
3. The impact of Indonesian language on Ngapak dialect, although the Ngapak dialect is known for its tendency to retain old forms, the influence of Indonesian language can still be observed, especially in the realm of everyday vocabulary. An example is the use of the word fish which replaces the word iwak. This phenomenon indicates the interaction between languages that also affect the development of vocabulary in the Ngapak dialect, especially among the younger generation and in the formal education environment. The statement that Indonesian vocabulary replaces traditional Ngapak words "especially among the younger generation and in formal education" is practically true but not absolute. While Indonesian influence exists, traditional Ngapak vocabulary like "iwak" remains widely used, supported by local education and strong cultural identity. More nuanced research and data are needed to fully assess the extent of Indonesian influence on Ngapak vocabulary.

4. The impact of social interaction on word use, in Ahmad Tohari's view, users of the Ngapak dialect often feel pressure to change their way of speaking when interacting with Standard Javanese speakers. This is done to avoid the impression of speaking rudely or showing a lower social status. In social pressure on Ngapak speaker's topic, means Ngapak speakers often adjust speech to avoid negative social impressions when speaking with Standard Javanese speakers. And the resulting language change is the replacement of Ngapak vocabulary with Standard Javanese or Indonesian words in formal/official contexts. As a result, a number of typical Ngapak vocabularies slowly began to be replaced by word equivalents from Standard Javanese, the prestige, standardized form of Javanese based on Central Javanese dialect, used in formal settings and education or even Indonesian, especially in official situations and in educational settings.
5. Variations in Word and sentence structure, in addition to differences in vocabulary, the Ngapak dialect also maintains a distinctive morphological and syntactic arrangement. For example, the use of particles and the formation of verbs in Ngapak tend to be simpler or different patterns compared to standard Javanese. The illustration is the frequency of occurrence of particles-ees as a higher emphasis in the conversation Ngapak language.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This diachronic approach results in significant phonological differences between the two dialects including:

1. Preservation of the vowel " a " in Ngapak, which is consistently preserved in various positions of the word, both on open and closed syllables. Whereas in standard Javanese it tends to change the vowel "a "to" o" in closed syllables.
2. The change of vowel "a" to "o" in standard Javanese is known as vowel lowering or vowel shift which is characteristic of Central Java and Yogyakarta dialects. This change occurs mainly in closed syllables, so words ending in consonants tend to have the vowel "o".

3. Differences in the “r” consonant system, in which the Ngapak dialect tends to maintain the pronunciation of the consonant “r” with a clearer and stronger articulation, especially in the initial and middle positions of words. Whereas in standard Javanese, the pronunciation of “r ” sometimes undergoes softening or even disappearance in some contexts. Furthermore, this diachronic approach also results in differences in intonation and rhythm between the two dialects, Ngapak dialect has a flatter intonation and slower speech rhythm than standard Javanese which tends to be shriller and faster. This affects the listener's perception of the characteristics of both dialects.

The diachronic approach also implies phonological differences in language change between the two, which are as follows:

1. The tendency to retain the old sound system in the Ngapak dialect, the fact that the Ngapak dialect retains the vowel sound /a / and the more pronounced pronunciation of consonants consistently suggests that this dialect has a more conservative nature at the phonological level. This condition provides clues that the Ngapak dialect may be closer to the form of the ancient Javanese language (proto-Javanese) before the change in vowel and consonant sounds that later coloured the development of Standard Javanese. In other words, the Ngapak dialect seems to keep traces of an earlier pronunciation in the history of the development of the Javanese language.
2. Emergence of Sound System Updates in standard Javanese, the phenomenon of vowel changes and consonant softening that occur in standard Javanese is a consequence of the language evolution process that is influenced by various complex factors, including the social dynamics of the speakers, the geographical conditions of the region where the language is used, and interaction with other languages. This process of change often aims to facilitate the articulation of sounds and accelerate the flow of communication in an increasingly broad and diverse social context. This phonological innovation is one of the distinctive features that distinguish standard Javanese from other dialects.

3. Implications for mutual understanding between dialect speakers, fundamental differences in sound systems between the Ngapak dialect and Standard Javanese can pose challenges in communicating and understanding each other, especially for younger generations who may be less exposed to or unfamiliar with the unique characteristics of the Ngapak dialect. Therefore, efforts to preserve the Ngapak dialect are very important so that its rich phonological characteristics and become part of the linguistic heritage are not lost to be eroded by time and the influence of other languages. Special attention is needed to maintain the continuity of this dialect as part of the cultural and linguistic wealth of Indonesia.

Based on the findings of the previous analysis, it can be concluded that the Ngapak dialect and Standard Javanese have a very close family relationship, considering that both are branches of the same Javanese language family. Nevertheless, both have taken different paths of development over time, influenced by a complex set of factors such as the geographical conditions of the speaking region, the social dynamics of the people, as well as the interaction with other different languages.

1. The historical relationship reflected in the vocabulary, the preservation of archaic or ancient vocabulary in the Ngapak dialect provides a strong indication that this dialect has a more conservative nature in maintaining elements of older languages. This also leads to the possibility that the Ngapak dialect is closer to reconstructing the form of ancient Javanese (proto-Javanese) than to standard Javanese, which has undergone a process of standardization and various lexical and phonological innovations. This conclusion is in line with principles in historical linguistic theory, which hold that dialects that tend to be more conservative generally retain the original features of the parent language over a longer period of time.
2. The dynamics of changes that make up the differences, The Standard Javanese language, as a widely used language variant in formal, administrative, and educational contexts, undergoes a process of simplification of the structure and standardization of vocabulary and grammar. This process aims to facilitate

effective and efficient communication among different groups of speakers with different dialect backgrounds. On the other hand, the Ngapak dialect, whose use is more predominant in the sphere of local and informal communication, tends to retain its unique distinctive features. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the Ngapak dialect is also not completely isolated from external influences, especially from the Indonesian language, which has an important role in the life of the nation and state.

Discussion

The impact of social factors and the education system, the inclusion of the influence of the Indonesian language into the vocabulary of the Ngapak dialect is a reflection of the ongoing social and cultural changes in the community of its speakers, especially in the context of formal education and exposure to Indonesian-language Mass media. This phenomenon presents challenges as well as opportunities in efforts to preserve regional languages. The challenge is how to maintain the unique identity of the Ngapak dialect in the midst of globalization and the dominance of the national language. The opportunity lies in the ability of regional languages to adapt to the times without losing their cultural roots, for example through innovations in the use of language in the digital sphere or through revitalization in education and communities. Thus, the preservation of regional languages requires strategies that are adaptive and involve various parties, including governments, speaking communities, and educational institutions.

The findings from the diachronic qualitative analysis reveal significant phonological and lexical distinctions between the Ngapak dialect and Standard Javanese, reflecting their divergent historical trajectories and sociolinguistic contexts. These differences are not merely linguistic curiosities but embody deeper cultural and social dynamics that shape language use and identity among Javanese speakers. Phonological Conservatism vs Innovation, is the preservation of the vowel /a/ in Ngapak and the clearer articulation of consonants such as /r/ underscore the dialect's conservative nature. This retention of archaic phonological features suggests that Ngapak functions as a living repository of proto-Javanese phonology, offering valuable insights into the historical development of the Javanese language.

In contrast, Standard Javanese's vowel lowering and consonant softening represent natural linguistic innovations driven by social interaction, ease of articulation, and the demands of a wider communicative context. These phonological changes facilitate faster, more fluid speech, which is advantageous in formal and diverse social settings. Social Dynamics and Language Standardization, the evolution of Standard Javanese is closely tied to processes of language standardization, which aim to unify diverse dialects under a common linguistic norm to promote mutual intelligibility and social cohesion. This standardization, however, comes with trade-offs, including the simplification of phonological systems and lexical replacement, which may reduce the linguistic richness found in regional dialects like Ngapak.

The social prestige associated with Standard Javanese, especially in education and administration, exerts pressure on speakers of regional dialects to conform, potentially accelerating dialect leveling. Implications for Mutual Intelligibility and Language Identity The phonological and lexical differences identified pose challenges for mutual understanding, particularly among younger generations who may have limited exposure to Ngapak features. This situation risks the gradual erosion of dialectal knowledge and the loss of unique cultural expressions embedded in Ngapak speech. Language is a core marker of identity, and the distinctiveness of Ngapak contributes to the cultural diversity of Java and Indonesia at large. Therefore, preserving this dialect is not only a linguistic imperative but also a cultural one. Influence of Indonesian and Language Contact, the incorporation of Indonesian vocabulary into Ngapak, especially in formal education and media exposure, reflects broader sociolinguistic shifts in Indonesia. While this influence can be seen as a threat to dialect purity, it also represents the dynamic nature of language as it adapts to changing social realities. The challenge lies in balancing adaptation with preservation, ensuring that Ngapak remains vibrant and relevant without losing its distinctive features. Educational and Policy Considerations, the study highlights the critical role of education and language policy in either supporting or undermining dialect preservation. The use of Ngapak in local schools, such as in Cilacap, is a positive step toward maintaining linguistic diversity. However, formal curricula and media predominantly favor Standard

Javanese and Indonesian, which may unintentionally marginalize regional dialects. Policymakers and educators should consider integrating dialect awareness and appreciation into language education to foster pride and competence in local speech forms. Contribution to Historical Linguistics and Cultural Heritage, by demonstrating that Ngapak retains features closer to proto-Javanese, this research contributes valuable data to historical linguistics and the reconstruction of ancient Javanese. Moreover, it reinforces the importance of dialect studies in understanding language evolution and cultural continuity. The preservation of Ngapak is thus vital not only for contemporary communication but also for safeguarding Indonesia's intangible cultural heritage.

Thus, diachronic qualitative analysis of the Swadesh wordlist between Ngapak dialect and Standard Javanese language shows that Ngapak is more conservative in maintaining the original vocabulary and Phonology, while Standard Javanese experiences innovation and simplification. These differences are influenced by historical, social, and language contact factors. The diachronic qualitative analysis of the Swadesh word list combined with phonological and sociolinguistic data provides strong evidence that Ngapak is a more conservative dialect, preserving original phonological and lexical features of proto-Javanese. In contrast, Standard Javanese reflects innovation and simplification driven by social dynamics, language standardization, and contact with Indonesian. This study enriches the understanding of the changing dynamics of the Javanese language and confirms the importance of preserving local dialects as part of Indonesia's cultural heritage.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully reveals the historical linguistic evolution and familial relationship between Ngapak dialect and Standard Javanese language through diachronic analysis approach that utilizes Swadesh word list as the main instrument. The results clearly show that the Ngapak dialect retains a large number of ancient, refers to linguistic features—both phonological (sound system) and lexical (vocabulary)—that originate from earlier stages of the Javanese language,

often called proto-Javanese or Old Javanese, and phonological and vocabulary forms that have undergone updates or simplifications in standard Javanese. One of the distinguishing characteristics of Ngapak is the consistency of the pronunciation of the vowel / a / and the emphasis on the end of the word, which differs significantly from the vowel change to / o / That is common in standard Javanese. In addition, the ngapak dialect also shows uniqueness in vocabulary that is closely related to the cultural identity of the people of Banyumas and the surrounding region. Furthermore, this study also identifies the influence of Indonesian language on Ngapak dialect vocabulary, especially in the social and educational spheres, which indicates the dynamics of language change due to multilingual interaction and modernization processes. In the phonological aspect, the Ngapak dialect shows a tendency to maintain a more conservative articulation of consonants and vowels, as opposed to standard Javanese which underwent phonological innovations to facilitate communication in various regions. These findings underscore the urgency of preserving the Ngapak dialect as an important element of cultural heritage and local identity, while contributing significantly to mapping linguistic kinship in the Javanese language family more thoroughly. This research also paves the way for further research that utilizes technology to support efforts to preserve regional languages and deepen the study of historical-comparative linguistics in Indonesia.

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