

# The Impact of Social Classes on Javanese Language Variations

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## ABSTRAK

Bahasa Jawa menggunakan tingkat tutur yang unik dan kode tutur yang berbeda, yang mencerminkan kebiasaan kesopanan di Indonesia yang sedikit bervariasi. Aturan kesantunan berbahasa Jawa mengacu pada kesantunan adat masyarakat Jawa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dampak kelas sosial dalam menghasilkan variasi bahasa Jawa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif, studi dokumen, dan wawancara mendalam untuk mengumpulkan data. Instrumen penelitian berupa kuesioner dan transkrip percakapan WhatsApp antara dua orang Jawa, temuan dari penelitian ini adalah kelas sosial tidak akan mempengaruhi penggunaan variasi bahasa Jawa jika lawan bicara berasal dari budaya atau etnis yang berbeda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi dengan gaya "Krama" memiliki persentase variasi bahasa Jawa yang tinggi. Kesimpulannya adalah Pendidikan dan kelas sosial merupakan faktor yang paling sering mempengaruhi variasi bahasa, terutama pada gaya bahasa dengan tingkat kesopanan yang lebih tinggi.

## ABSTRACT

The Javanese language uses unique speech levels and distinct speech codes, reflecting Indonesia's slightly varied customs of politeness. The Javanese phrase politeness rules refer to the customary politeness of Javanese people. This study aims to identify the impact of social class on producing Javanese language variation. It uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach, a study document, and in-depth interviews to collect data. The research instruments are a questionnaire and transcript of a WhatsApp conversation between two Javanese people; the findings of this research are that Social class will not affect the use of Javanese language variation if the interlocutor is of a different culture or ethnicity. The study results show that communication with the "Krama" style has a high percentage of Javanese language variation. The conclusion is that Education and social class are the factors that most often influence language variation, especially in language styles with higher politeness.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics studies language properties, language functions, and language users' characteristics in constant interaction. Language functions and the attributes of language users constantly interact with each other and change the speech community. Each is different and changes the speech community, Although everyday spoken language uses concrete terms to indicate the relationship between processes and participants (Dardjito et al., 2023). Sujarwa et al. (2023), cited Suwito (1983:4), define sociolinguistics as an interdisciplinary study of language problems concerning social problems.

The use of the Javanese language dramatically influences people's social behavior (Sukari et al., 2023). This is especially true when talking to other people. The communication Javanese people use is based on the social level, familiarity, and closeness between the speaker and the listener (Sarila et al., 2023). Being polite in Javanese is a complex linguistic issue. The polite way of speaking is influenced by age, gender, kinship, and social status (Di Leonardo, 1984). The relevant context also influences the choice of words (Masruddin et al., 2023). A Javanese speaker will often speak a different language level when speaking to the same person. Conversely, they will often have the same language level when talking to the same person (Perez et al., 1992).

This research is based on observations of community behaviour and language changes in the social community. Language and strategic competence are involved in verbal communication (Madya et al., 2004). This study aims to identify the impact of social class on producing Javanese language variation. Question research: 1. How can social classes affect language variation? 2. How does education affect the use of language variation.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Javanese language uses unique speech levels and distinct speech codes, reflecting Indonesia's slightly varied customs of politeness. The Javanese phrase politeness rules refer to the customary politeness of Javanese people, according to Gregory & Carroll (2018). The norms are idioms or predetermined phrases that most parents and educators employ while instructing their kids. Language variation is often thought to affect the natural order of things, which is believed to reduce the role of other linguistic phenomena, such as phonology, pronunciation, and morphology, in aiding acquisition (Bakti & Ali, 2023).

According to (Rahayu et al., 2023), Javanese can be categorised into three types according to its level (coarse to fine), which are as follows: "*Ngoko*" is used in casual interactions between acquaintances or individuals of different social classes, such as parents and their kids. "*Madya*" is a relatively harsh and smooth kind of Javanese. It is usually used when conversing with strangers. "*Krama*" is a term for discussions between individuals of different social classes, such as children and parents. Additionally, speeches and other events typically employ it. For example, the "*ngoko*" language can be divided into "*ngoko lugu*" and "*ngoko andhap*". Madya language can be further divided into "*madya ngoko*, *madya krama*, and *madyantara*". Meanwhile, the "*krama*" language can be subdivided into "*krama lugu*" and "*krama inggil*".

## 3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. The study, including the discourse analysis, could be categorized and explained by descriptive qualitative research (Usman & Mujahidah, 2021). The participants were ten people who came from various backgrounds and classes. It uses two techniques for collecting data: study document and in-depth interviews. This data was collected from transcripts of WhatsApp conversations between two people with different backgrounds and socials. This research uses primary data because the data sources come from the conversations of Javanese people. The study was conducted at Dusun Santan, Desa Sumberejo,

Kecamatan Mertoyudan, Magelang, and Jawa Tengah. This method was chosen because it relates to the context of daily conversation in Javanese society and the influence of social class on language variation.

#### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

##### Graphs

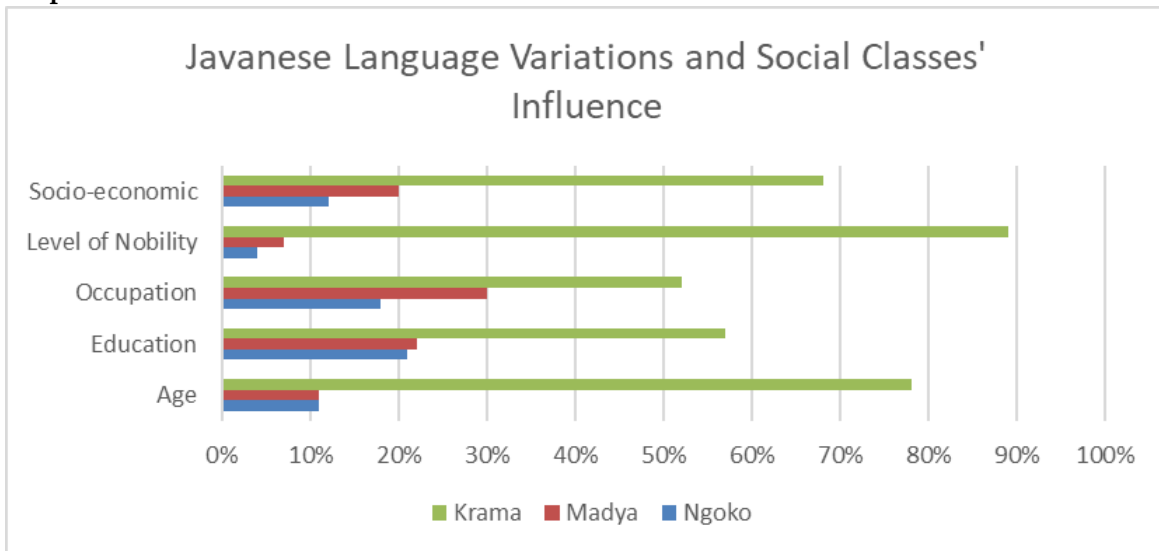


Figure 1. The social class of society influences the use of Javanese language variation.

In Figure 1, data collection involves 10 participants of different ages, education, and economics based on the results of the questionnaire show that communication with the "Krama" style has a high percentage at the level of the speaker's condition at age (78%) this can be interpreted that age affects the use of "krama" such as parents and children, teachers and students, education (52%) can be interpreted that the level of education affects the use of Javanese language levels. The highest percentage is at the Level of Nobility (89%), indicating that Javanese people still uphold the value of one's nobility, such as communication in the "Yogyakarta Palace", "Surakarta Palace", and in certain community conditions.



Figure 2. Transcript of WhatsApp (Chat) conversation with different ages and education.



Figure 3. Transcript of WhatsApp (Chat) conversation with different ages and education

Data 1 shows the reality of communication with a high level of Javanese language, namely "Krama." In the transcript of the conversation (Data 1), communication occurs between two people of different ages, positions, and educations so that more polite language arises (in the Javanese language level "Krama"). Then, Data 2 shows the reality of communication between people of the same age and education. Still, in Data 2, it is also influenced by the closeness or familiarity between the two. Data 1 and 2 are examples of Javanese communication with different social classes.

Language variation in Javanese society is influenced by social class. For example, words of Javanese origin, such as "sowan" (visit), "dhahar" (eat), "pinarak" (stay), "mirsani" (see), "lenggah" (sit), "menghaturkan" (say), "tindak" (go), "rawuh" (come), "tapak asta" (sign)," Respected older speakers or recipients often use these Javanese words out of politeness, the words are part of the 'krama' form in Javanese, which is one of the language levels in communication, in addition to 'ngoko' and 'madya'. The use of these words can reflect the speaker's social status to the listener, the situation in which the dialogue is taking place and the cultural norms of where the conversation is taking place.

The use of "Krama" language in the Javanese language has a high stratum where the use of this language style is often not affected by age, occupation, and education because when someone from Javanese ethnicity meets with the same culture, even though the age, education and occupation are the same, this "krama" language style will be used for the first time communication when meeting each other, or this "Krama" language style will be emphasised in his speech when meeting other people, speeches at Javanese events, and Javanese arts "such as wayang and ketoprak".

The findings of this research are that Social class will not affect the use of Javanese language variation if the interlocutor is of a different culture or ethnicity.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Research shows that language variation caused by social class factors can lead to differences in language use. Variations in speech can be caused by different pronunciations in various places or the influence of speech styles caused by social backgrounds that make it a habit to communicate with higher or more polite language levels. Javanese language variations are also influenced by education, which is due to obtaining speech education, and language styles will be better and structured; in addition to controlling language variations, education also affects attitudes and behaviour towards interlocutors by prioritising age, level of nobility, socio-economic, and job title.

The limitations include the sample size and the settings from which the data were gathered through study documents and in-depth interviews, with the restricted generalizability in this one

case study (Sumekto et al., 2021). Language variety in Javanese culture is heavily influenced by socioeconomic status. Word choice and linguistic proficiency can represent social position and cultural conformity. Thus, Language is crucial for preserving social bonds and cultural identity in Javanese culture. Education and social class are the factors that most often influence language variation, especially in language styles with higher politeness. Therefore, language variation can be affected by education and social class.

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