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## Research Article

### The Maintenance of Bagongan Language in Yogyakarta Palace

Sulistyawati Sulistyawati\*, Emzir Emzir, and Sabarti Akhadiah

State University of Jakarta, I. R. Mangun Muka Raya, Rawamangun, East Jakarta, 13220, Indonesia

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#### \*Corresponding author:

E-mail:

[rr.sulistyawati@uhamka.ac.id](mailto:rr.sulistyawati@uhamka.ac.id)

#### ABSTRACT

The topic of this research is the maintenance of Bagongan Language in Yogyakarta Palace. The objective of this research is to know the use of the Bagongan language in the Yogyakarta palace, especially as a working language of *abdi dalem*. Bagongan language is known as the language for every *abdi dalem* in the Yogyakarta Palace. The research uses qualitative approach with ethnography method. The ethnographic research procedure in this study are 1) define sub focus, 2) observation and interview, 3) collect data, 4) make notes, 5), analyze data, and 6) make ethnographic reports. The result is (1) Bagongan language is used in the realm of formal office work and correspondence as well as in cultural customs; (2) Internal threatening factors for Bagongan language, namely the weakening of language transmission to the younger generation and externally the situation of bilingualism in the palace; (3) Efforts to preserve the Bagongan language include fostering a sense of pride in the *abdi dalem*, language transmission to the younger generation, Bagongan language festivals, held a *Pawiyatan course* for *abdi dalem*. The Bagongan language needs to be maintained because this language is no longer used in all domains of use in the palace. The Bagongan language is only used in correspondence and traditional palace cultural events.

*Keywords: Language Maintenance, Abdi Dalem, Yogyakarta Palace, Bagongan Language*

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#### Introduction

The Yogyakarta Palace (Keraton Yogyakarta) was ruled by a king who had the title *Sri Sultan* or *Ngarso dalem Sampeyan dalem Ingkang Sinuhun Kanjeng Sultan Hamengkubuwono Senopati Ing Ngalogo Ngabdurrahman Sayidin Panatagama Kalifatullah Hingking Jumeneng Kaping Sedasa* or known as *Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X*. He managed thousands of

*abdi dalem* in the palace. Asri [1] which consist of 1800 people who are in charge of regulating the sustainability of the palace government system. Nowadays, the palace functions as the center of government, the center of culture and its development, tourism activities, scientific activities related to the interests of society, and museum for people who visit the palace [2]. The existence of *abdi dalem* in the palace which

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serene is considered to represent the main duty of humans to maintain and save the world from all forms of damage and it is called as *Hamemayu Hayuning Bawana*.

The *abdi dalem* of palace consist of *abdi dalem Punakawan* and *abdi dalem Keprajan* who become cultural *abdi dalem* for people. *Abdi dalem Punakawan* attends the palace every day, while *abdi dalem Keprajan* attends the palace every 12 days, especially in traditional events (*Caos*) at the palace. The ranks they took were the same, they are *Jajar*, *Bekel Anom*, *Bekel Sepuh*, *Lurah*, *Wedana*, *Riya Bupati Anom* (is *Raden for nobles and Mas for non-nobles*), *Bupati Anom*, *Bupati*, *Bupati Kliwon*, *Bupati Nayaka* (are titled as *Kanjeng Raden Tumenggung-KRT* or *Kanjeng Mas Tumenggung-KMT*) and *Pangeran Sentana*.

Javanese language generally has three basic varieties, named the speech level of *Ngoko*, *Madyo* and *Kromo* [3]. The speech level is the level of Javanese usage which is influenced by the social status or background of the other person they are talking to [4]. Generally, *abdi dalem* recognizes the three variations of the Javanese language, Bahasa Indonesia and the various foreign languages used to communicate. Meanwhile, Bagongan language is known as the language for every *abdi dalem* in the Yogyakarta Palace. The Bagongan language uses the greeting "*Ca*" derived from the word "*Kanca*" which is used to greet everyone in the palace except the king, this word is not used for the king [5].

The duty of *abdi dalem* is to use the Bagongan language as well as to introduce culture to the people [6]. In reality, *abdi dalem* prefer to use the Javanese *Kromo* language which they think shows more politeness to their interlocutors [6]. The hierarchical form of verbal interaction using Javanese language in *abdi dalem* is influenced by vertical and horizontal relationships between speakers and their interlocutors in accordance with social status in the palace which is influenced by rank, dignity, position and age factors [5].

Language has a function as a mark of self and group identity in a flexible manner and it is also mark the existence of race, gender, religion that represents itself [7, 8], language is the key of identity of society contacts [9, 10]. Language

shift can also occur due to changes in collective language choice as a result of the ecological mismatch of language resulting from the transformation of the political, economic and social communities of the people they speak. Language shift is the effect of one language being preferred over another, language shift must involve two languages, the presence of a backward language and a substitute language. It is as stated by Heinrich as follows:

*"In the most general terms, language shift denotes changing collective language choices as a result of the unsettling of language ecologies due to transformations of the political, economic and social ecology of their communities. Since language shift is the effect of one language becoming preferred to another one, language shift inevitably involves two languages, the retreating and the replacing language". oleh [11].*

Language shift is also caused by the shrinking number of speakers, thus threatening the realm of language use and the increasing number of cases of code mixing and code switching in that language [12]. Talking about code mixing and code switching, then we can differentiate between the two. There are 2 types of code switching which are generally distinguished from one another. In situation switching (situational switching). Language extinction will not occur if the speech community cares and is willing to use language according to the realm of use and has a positive attitude towards the language they master. According to Mark Janse that "*Language death is defined by Campbell as "the loss of a language due to gradual shift to the dominant language in language contact situations [13].*

The problem statement in this study is that the Bagongan language is no longer used in all domains of the language it uses, there are many elderly *abdi dalem* so that there is a concern that the Bagongan language will disappear if it is not used by younger *abdi dalem*. The ages of the *abdi dalem* are mostly over 60 years. Besides that, the *abdidalem* prefers to use the Javanese language *Kromo*Inggil to communicate with older *abdi dalems*. Based on the above problems, it is necessary to maintain Bagongan language. By paying attention to the linguistic situation and the existence of social stratification in the *abdi dalem* environment, the

researcher wants to see the use of language by *abdi dalem* of the Yogyakarta Palace in this openness era.

## Methods

This research used a qualitative approach and focusses on exploring the maintenance of the Bagongan language in *abdi dalem* environment of Yogyakarta Palace. The participants of this study were a number of *abdi dalem* who were in the Yogyakarta Palace environment, especially in *Kawedanaan Hageng Punakawan Widya Budaya*.

The research steps used by the researcher were 1) conducting observations and interviews about the use of the Bagongan language in *abdi dalem* environment; 2) conducting observations and interviews about inhibiting and supporting factors of the use of Bagongan language in the Yogyakarta Palace; 3) matching the results of observations and interviews to be classified in the results and it can be used to know the use of the Bagongan language in the Yogyakarta Palace environment.

## Results and Discussion

### *The Social Situation of the Yogyakarta Palace*

The Yogyakarta Palace as a gathering place for thousands of *abdi dalem Punakawan* and *abdi dalem Keprajan* with various different social backgrounds, caused the situation to become multicultural. They came from Sleman, Magelang, Kulon Progo, Kota Gede and others. In addition, there are also those that have been located for generations around the palace, for instance in Panembahan, Mantrijeron, Jogokarjan, Patehan, Siliran, Patangpuluhan, Nyutran, and other areas.

The Yogyakarta Palace recognizes the kinship system of blood ties or marriage. The son of the first generation of the king, Kanjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati Anom, Kanjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati, Gusti Raden Mas, married to Gusti Pangeran Haryo, if Gusti Raden Ajeng married, it become Gusti Raden Ayu etc. Various stratifications or social coating in the Yogyakarta Palace environment will have an influence on the use of language, because it often makes the *abdi dalem* to use one of the languages they master, because they think there

are other languages that are more polite to use in the Yogyakarta Palace.

### *Linguistic Situation in the Yogyakarta Palace*

*Abdi dalem* generally come from the Javanese area. They master the various levels of Javanese (*Ngoko, Madyo, Kromo*), speak Indonesian and English or other languages. They also understand that there is a Bagongan language that must be used in the palace environment. Language is a part of culture, people have to determine the language use and involve user society in every social levels. Language speakers will construct their cultural knowledge in the form of a knowledge system (cognitive system) to interpret their speech behavior and social behavior.

Base on the results of interviews the informants, the Bagongan language is still used in the communication of the *abdi dalem* of the Keraton of Yogyakarta especially in written language that found in official correspondence in palace. Moreover, in the traditional cultural events, the Bagongan language is still used, for example in the Ngabekten (the tradition of Sungkeman Idul Fitri) in the Yogyakarta Palace. After all the invited guests gathered, the Sultan Hamengkubuwono X declared that he had started the tradition, then the *abdi dalem* who would be realized, as following dialogue:

- P1: Assalamualaikum Wr. Wb. "**Konco-konco** Dhawuh Timbalan Dalem Kepareng maju chaos bekti"  
 P2: "**Henggeh** sendhiko"  
 P1: "**Kanca-kanca** Dhawuh Timbalan Dalem kepareng mundur"  
 P2: "**Henggeh** sendhiko"

The Bagongan language was also used by the committee and the court in the presentation of Abdi Dalem's Serat Kekancangan, represented by the daughter of Sultan Hamengkubuwono X (GKR. Condrokirono) in his speech:

Assalamualaikum Wr. Wb.

Dinten **puniki** para abdi dalem punakawan lan abdi dalem keprajan keraton Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat ingkang samisowan lan marak wenten ing kagungan dalem bangsal Kesatriyan keraton Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat sampun nampi paring dalem kekancangan enggal.....

...Mekaten ingkang saged **maniro** haturaken, ing wasana kanti nyeblak alhamdulillahirabbil Allamin. **Maniro** hanutup Pisowanan **puniku**. Matur nuwun, Wassalamualaikum Wr. Wb.

In the dialogue of the Ngabekten tradition and remarks from the Yogyakarta Palace, the use of Bagongan language are found. The words are *konco*, *henggeh*, *puniki*, *pekeniro*, *maniro*, *puniku*, which are inherent in the mix of Javanese Ngoko-Kromo. The meaning *Konco* is a form of familiar greeting for friends, regardless of the rank and title of the *abdi dalem* who attended the *Caos Bekti* ceremony. Those who attended the Ngabekten tradition were noble (high) *abdi dalem*, namely the *abdi dalem* in the court of Regent Anom to the royal families (Sentana Ndalem). It means that in the context of Bagongan language, differences in social status can be avoided by using the “*Konco-Co*” greeting. In addition, during the graduation for the *abdi dalem* at the Ksatriyan ward, GKR. Cendrokirono uses the word Bagongan *maniro* (me) which does not differentiate his status from other *abdi dalem* with different social stratification. She does not use the word *kulo* (me) in the Javanese Kromo. It can be concluded that she wanted to occupy the same position as other of the *abdi dalem*.

During the observation to the environment of the Yogyakarta Palace, the researcher did not find the *abdi dalem's* oral conversations using Bagongan language. According to the informants, the word “**konco-co**” usually be avoided by the *abdi dalem* in speaking. The use of the word is disrespectful, very taboo, and violates politeness when it used to address someone who is older, have higher title, rank and position than the speaker. The *abdi dalem* often replaces the word “**konco-co**” with the title name of the person they are talking to, such as *Kanjeng* or calls them *Romo* (father). The informants admit that the sense element of the word *Kanjeng* in Kromo Javanese feels more polite, respect, have a high sense of value and more appropriate for older people in the Yogyakarta Palace. This can be seen in the following dialogue:

- P1: Sugeng enjing **Kanjeng**, badhe nyaosake serat, *Kanjeng*?  
P2: Monggo **Ca**?

- P1: Serat soko sopo?  
P2: Serat saking Tepas Dwara Puro **Kanjeng**?  
P1: Oh, nggih, suwun.

In the dialogue above carried out by *abdi dalem* of the rank of non-aristocrat who spoke to Deputy II Pengageng at the KHP. Widya Budaya, it can be seen that P1 (first person) as a *abdi dalem* that have low rank does not use the word “*Konco*” at all eventhough it is justified as a greeting word in the Bagongan language. He replaced it with the word “*Kanjeng*” according to the rank of his interlocutor. Eventhough the superior of P2 (second person) has used the word “*Co-Konco*”, but the next communication that uses is the greeting word *Kanjeng* as a rank title. The following dialogue conducted by two *abdi dalem* of the same rank as *Kanjeng Raden Tumenggung* who is of noble blood from the common people (*Kanjeng Mas Tumenggung*) :

- P1: **Kanjeng**, kulo ngaturaken bu Sulistiyawati nyaosi angket.  
P2: Oo, ..... **henggeh-henggeh**, matur nuwun.  
P1: **Puniki** sekang UNJ Jakarta.  
P2: Oh, sekang Jakarta nggih, tebih mlam-pahipun.  
P1: Inggih **Kanjeng**.

The dialogue by the two keraton *abdi dalem* conducted like *Kanjeng* (the regent) shows that Bagongan language is used in the communication by using *henggeh* (yes), *puniki* (this) and the rendering of Java Ngoko *nyaosi*, *mangaturaken*, *sekang*, and by not using *dipunngaturake* that sounds more polite. The use of the word *Kanjeng* always occurs from P1 and the title *Kanjeng Mas Tumenggung* who is not noble people indicating that *abdi dalem* (high) has not been able to abandon the value for using the word “*Konco-Co*” and eliminating social stratification.

Similar in the conversation between the two Pengageng who were both of royal blood, all of them held the title *Kanjeng Raden Tumenggung* but had 14 years old difference, with the office of Pengageng II and Vice Pengageng. In the dialogue, the frequent greeting is *Romo* instead of the word *Konco* that means friend. After it was clarified to the person, he said that

the value of civility should be expressed in language as well as in talking to someone that we respect. The value of language cannot be lost and changed so easily, as it relate to the norms of civility in Java culture.

P1: Romo, materi sesuk pukul songo, nggih?

P2: Setengah sewelas, setengah sewelas demugi jam kalih welas.

P1: Oo.. Setengah sewelas demugi kalih welas, anumaterinipun kalih nggih?

P2: Inggih kulo meniko, kalih Grebeg. Hah rumiyin kulo piyambak, mboten rampung mboten wonten wedalipun. Opo meniko mundut, wedal dipuntambah, lha kok teseh sami

P1: Kulo inggih matur, nah ning sak jam kaleh materi, yo menopo? Inggih, growal-growal?

Considering at some cases found in this study, we can state that Bagongan language is still used in formal situations in the office. Additionally, the Bagongan language has always been used in official correspondence in the office of Yogyakarta Palace. Here is an example of a service letter in Yogyakarta Palace:

“Wiyose, **Maniro** KRT. Pujaningrat Pengageng Kawedanaan Hageng Sri Mandawa Karaton Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat sapuniki ingkang dados Kersa Ndalem Ngarsa Dalem-Sampeyan Inkang Sinuwun kakersaake handhawuhake: (Respectively, I am KRT. Pujaningrat as Pengageng KHP. Sri Mandawakeraton Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat now did command that Ngarso dalem Sampeyan Inkang-Sinuwun wanted)”

The service correspondence in Yogyakarta Palace's circumstance uses the word Pengageng to draw the same position between office leaders in Yogyakarta Palace's circumstance. In the other hand, word konco (friend) appears as a formal greeting in Bagongan Language, without intending to show the way of power but dealing with the official situation in the mail.

### **Needing Efforts to Maintain Bagongan Language in Yogyakarta Palace's**

Seeing the social reality that the Bagongan language is rarely used orally by the *abdi dalem* in daily communication in the palace

environment, but Bagongan language is still used in correspondence service, tradition and cultural events, as well as for formal work. Currently, the palace has not given sanction or punishment to *abdi dalem* who does not use Bagongan language. According to the one of informant, the use of good language is best with the self-consciousness of the *abdi dalem*, even if there is only moral sanction. The role of Pengageng or leader in the office has been crucial to developing the love and courage of *abdi dalem* to use spoken Bagongan language in the palace [14].

Based on explanation above, it needs various efforts to realize that the Bagongan language is always used by the *abdi dalem* and fosters their love for the Bagongan language. Bagongan as a special language for *abdi dalem* in the Yogyakarta Palace needs to be preserved so it does not become extinct. Moreover, this language is inherent in the Javanese speech level. The efforts that have been made by the palace so that the Bagongan language is used by all of *abdi dalem* as follows: 1) Efforts to strengthen the concept of the philosophical importance of Bagongan language to the *abdi dalem* in the palace, 2) Providing training/courses in Javanese culture to all of *abdi dalem* called Pawiyatan, 3) Incorporating Bagongan language material in the implementation of various courses in the palace environment, 4) Creating and maintaining the existence of the Bagongan language so that it is used by *abdi dalem* in communication at the palace, 5) There is a need for a conversation competition or writing stories in Bagongan language, 6) It is necessary to fully develop Pangageng to support the use of the Bagongan language in the palace.

First, efforts to strengthen the concept of the philosophical importance of Bagongan language to the *abdi dalem* in the palace, especially as the *abdi dalem* of their culture, they must really carry out the rules “Pranatan Sowon/ Marak Lan Basa Bagongan Selebeting Karaton Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat” (Regulations against and basa Bagongan in the Ngayogyakarta Keraton Hadiningrat), regarding the use of the Bagongan language for all *abdi dalem* in the Yogyakarta Palace, except for Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono that uses the Javanese Ngoko language.

Second, the palace has organized Pawiyatan courses for the *abdi dalem*, every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 AM to 2 PM. This activity is carried out alternately for all *abdi dalem* Puna-kawan and *abdi dalem* Keprajan for free. The materials provided in the training include the Sabda Tama, the philosophy of the palace, the character of the satria, the agility of the *abdi dalem*, the grammar of the Bagongan language, the chapter of Hajad Dalem, fashion and so on to sesembatane religions and cultures. In the Pawiyatan event, a person who delivered the material usually used Bagongan language.

Third, inserting Bagongan language material in various courses organized by the palace. It must be done continuously in various training activities, so the Bagongan language becomes a frequently heard language that is eventually used by the *abdi dalem*. As a Pengagengat KHP Widya budaya, it needs to be done to realize the importance of using the Bagongan language in the Keraton for *abdi dalem*.

Fourth, the role of Pengageng is necessary to create and maintain the existence of Bagongan language, so it can be used by *abdi dalem*. Pengageng should always remind the *abdi dalem* to always use the Bagongan language on various occasions in the Yogyakarta Palace. Without the interference of Pengageng in paying attention to the *abdi dalem* using the Bagongan language in the palace, then equitable use of Bagongan language is difficult to achieve.

Fifth, the efforts for the development of Bagongan language need to be done by holding routine activities in the form of oral storytelling competitions using the Bagongan language, or writing competitions using the Bagongan language. It is important to raise awareness in the *abdi dalem* that they must master the Bagongan language as cultural courtiers in the Yogyakarta Palace.

Sixth, the participation of all parties within the palace is necessary to always support the Bagongan language to be used on various occasions in the palace, in accordance with applicable regulations. Bagongan language is actually a democratic language, which does not care about the status and social background of its users.

## Conclusion

Based on discussion above, several important things can be concluded: *First*, the Bagongan language is still used by *abdi dalem* for formal work in the Yogyakarta Palace. *Second*, nowadays the Bagongan language is still used in official correspondence between offices and cultural in the Yogyakarta Palace. *Third*, efforts to strengthen the concept of the philosophical importance of Bagongan language to the *abdi dalem* in the palace, especially as the *abdi dalem* of their culture. *Fourth*, the palace has organized *Pawiyatan* courses for the *abdi dalem*. *Fifth*, the efforts for the development of Bagongan language need to be done by holding routine activities in the form of oral storytelling competitions using the Bagongan language, or writing competitions using the Bagongan language. *Sixth*, the participation of all parties within the palace is necessary to always support the Bagongan language to be used on various occasions in the palace environment, in accordance with applicable regulations.

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