

## **THE INFLUENCE OF GEOMORPHOLOGY TO LANGUAGE VARIATION IN THE WESTERN PART OF JAVA, INDONESIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*In Indonesia, the western part of Java Island is known as a place with very diverse culture. There are 3 provinces in this region, namely West Java, Banten, and Jakarta Capital Special Region with more than 40 million populations. Sundanese is a main culture within this region, where focal area is around Bandung City. It is accompanied by 3 other subcultures, i.e. Cirebonese (around Cirebon City), Betawinese (Jakarta City and surrounding) and Bantenese (around Serang City). Geomorphological configuration of the study area is characterized by mountainous to coastal plain areas. It implies to the characteristic diversity of culture for every community including the development of local languages. This paper is aimed to map the relationship of local languages diversity (dialect) with their geomorphological conditions in the study area.*

*Result of the study shows that Sundanese people commonly speak humble in polite manner and live on mountainous to hilly area. The Cirebonese speaks rather Javanese combined with impolite Sundanese and lives on the northern Java coastal plain as transition area between Sundanese and Javanese. Betawinese speak rather impolite and live on the coastal plain around Gulf of Jakarta. Bantenese speak rather impolite and live on coastal plain to gentle hilly area. This result suggests that there is relationship between the characteristics of utterances of people with the nature they live on.*

**Keywords:** Geomorphology, language mapping, sundanese

### **ABSTRAK**

Di Indonesia, bagian barat Pulau Jawa dikenal sebagai tempat yang sangat beragam budayanya. Ada 3 provinsi di daerah ini, yaitu Jawa Barat, Banten, dan Daerah Khusus Ibukota Jakarta dengan lebih dari 40 juta penduduk. Sunda adalah budaya utama di wilayah ini, dimana fokus area di sekitar Kota Bandung. Hal ini diiringi oleh 3 sub-budaya lainnya, yakni Cirebon (sekitar Kota Cirebon), Betawi (Jakarta Kota dan sekitarnya) dan Banten (sekitar Kota Serang).

Konfigurasi geomorfologi dari daerah kajian dicirikan oleh daerah pegunungan ke daerah dataran pantai. Hal itu menunjukkan kepada keragaman budaya khas untuk setiap masyarakat termasuk pengembangan bahasa daerah. Karya tulis ini bertujuan untuk memetakan hubungan antara keragaman bahasa daerah (dialek) dengan kondisi geomorfologinya di daerah studi.

Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa orang Sunda umumnya bertutur kata dengan halus dan hidup di wilayah pegunungan sampai daerah perbukitan. Orang Cirebon berbicara bukan bahasa Jawa bercampur sunda kasar dan tinggal di dataran pantai utara Jawa sebagai daerah transisi antara Sunda dan Jawa. Orang Betawi bertuturkata agak kasar dan tinggal di dataran pantai di sekitar Teluk Jakarta. Orang Banten bertuturkata agak kasar tinggal di pesisir dataran lembut ke daerah perbukitan. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa ada hubungan antara karakteristik ucapan orang dengan sifat mereka tinggal.

**Kata kunci:** Geomorfologi, pemetaan bahasa, bahasa sunda

### **INTRODUCTION**

In Java Island of Indonesia, currently there are two main socio-cultures namely Sundanese and Javanese with tens of millions of inhabitants. These two cultures influence the social life of people who live within and migrate to other parts of Indonesia, along with the development process in this country.

Western part of Java Island is known as a very dynamic place socially with very diverse culture in Indonesia. Administratively there are 3 provinces in this region, namely West Java, Banten, and Jakarta Capital Special Region (DKI Jakarta) with more than 40 million populations.

The main culture in this region is Sundanese, with focal area around Bandung City, which is also known as Pasundan or Parahyangan area. It is

accompanied by 3 other subcultures, i.e. Cirebonese (around Cirebon City), Betawinese (around Jakarta City) and Bantenese (around Serang City). There are also transition and relic areas, which show local dialects in their social life and languages.

Based on the history, there was a massive Hindu's Kingdom once existed in western part of Java Island namely Padjadjaran Kingdom with its capital around Bogor City. Until about five hundred years ago the kingdom existed and administered almost the whole area of western part of Java Island, including Banyumas and Tegal area in Central Java Province now. The Padjadjaran Kingdom practiced the so-called Sundanese culture and life style with its territory ranging from coastal area of Sunda Strait in the west to Citanduy and Cimanuk River areas in the east. Padjadjaran Kingdom is one of Sundanese kingdom on behalf of Sundanese culture and use the Sundanese language in daily life in West Java.

Alongside the northern coast of Java Island that belong to Padjadjaran Kingdom territory, there exist several harbor cities, namely; Banten, Pontang, Cikande, Tangerang, Sunda Kelapa, Karawang, Indramayu and Cirebon. All of these harbors are in the western part of Java. Banten and Sunda Kelapa are the main harbors for Padjadjaran Kingdom.

The history was successive and noted Islam religion spread on the northern coast of Java Island conducted by Fatahillah, which was a commander from Samudera Pasai Kingdom in Sumatera Island. He preached down Islam religion until Demak area in Central Java, and later Fatahillah with his followers preached down Islam until Banten area. Along the Islamic preaching in the northern coast of Java Island, the inhabitants used the mixture of Javanese and Sundanese languages as consequences of preaching communication process across two different cultures. This situation on

the coastal area had created a subculture of Sundanese that differ from its main culture on the mountainous area, which is thought to be a pure Sundanese.

Historically, the diversity of Sundanese culture was then enriched by the coming of the European (Dutch) merchants for the first time to Banten and Sunda Kelapa harbors. This point is marked as a start of colonialism era in Indonesia and put the wide area around Sunda Kelapa harbor (then known as Jakarta Special Capital Region) to be a melting pot for cultural diversity in Indonesia until now.

### **Objective**

The language condition as a consequence of cultural diversity is interesting to be researched both in geographic and in socio-linguistic points. Based on the differentiation of the socio-linguistic characters, the authors have tried to analyze the distribution of language characteristics with geomorphological aspects that develop in this region. This paper is aimed to map the relationship of local languages (sub-cultures) with their geomorphological conditions in the study area.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Socio-linguistic Condition**

According to Mackey (1972), language in the society has internal and external function. Internal function of language consists of the usage of language not for colloquial (non-communicative) purpose such as for praying, counting, etc. External function describes the language usage according to the environment for communication purposes. This depends on each area and purpose to correspondence such as at the communities meeting, the market, the school, mass media and so on.

Ardiwinata (1984) described that in general, there are two types of utterance in Sundanese language, i.e.

the polite (delicate, respectful) and the rude (intimate, impolite, disrespectful) utterances. The polite utterance type is used by society that communicate using Sundanese language as local language at home, in a mosque, church, working place and entertainment place. While the rude type is used in an intimate environment (between close friends and families), anger and for subordinate social strata.

Prawiratmadja (1977) in his report of the Sundanese culture described that Sundanese language consists of nine dialects. These dialects, named by the cities of spoken inhabitants are; Bandung dialect, Banten dialect, Cianjur dialect, Purwakarta dialect, Cirebon dialect, Kuningan dialect, Sumedang dialect, Garut dialect and Ciamis dialect. He did language research project and Indonesian literature of West Java region based on the geography of Sundanese dialect including the dialect of Sundanese border of West and Central Java and also around the Southern part of Central Java.

Ayatrohaedi (1975) reported the result of his research on the geography of Sundanese dialect in Banten district between the years 1976 to 1977. His research described about language that related to geography of Sundanese dialect in each region in general and specific point of view. In Serang Regency, there are three local languages which are spoken by the people i.e. Sundanese language, Javanese language and Indonesian language. Sundanese language is spoken in south Serang (hilly to mountainous area), while Javanese language is used in the northern Serang (coastal area). In the central part of Serang, people speak Sundanese language and Javanese language bilingually. Indonesian language is spoken in all over Serang Regency.

## **Geomorphology of**

### **Western Part of Java**

Geomorphology (physiography) is a branch of geology to study the general configuration of the Earth surface (American Geological Institute, 1999). This branch of earth science classified the earth surface based on the landform and altitude of the land. The mountainous area is characterized by volcanoes or mountains with altitude more than 1000 meter above sea level (masl). The hilly area is characterized by hills and ranges with altitude less than 1000 masl. The coastal plain is flat area near to the sea level (0 masl).

Geomorphologically the study area consist of mountainous area in the central part (west to east), including Bandung, Cianjur, Sukabumi, Bogor, Lebak, Garut, Kuningan and Tasikmalaya, with the south border is coast of Indian Ocean. The northern part consists of hilly area to coastal plain of Java Sea, including Cirebon, Bekasi, Jakarta, Tangerang and Anyer. The western part consists of hilly area to coastal plain of Sunda Strait, including Serang, Pandeglang and Lebak in Banten region.

Within the study area, several big rivers used to be a transportation means by the people long time ago. The rivers flow from the mountains to coastal area and generally served as contact line or border of subcultures. The Cisadane River delineates Banten and Jakarta region. The Cisanggarung and Citanduy Rivers deliniate the West and Central Java, thus become an arbitrary border of Sundanese and Javanese Cultures.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Any kinds of languages on the world have variation or differentiation in their existence. This variation exists in many aspects of language, such as the difference of utterance of people from time to time, also the difference that lies from place to place as well as the difference of level to utter.

Mackey (1972) mentioned that the branch of language knowledge (linguistic), which specifically learns language variations in all aspects, is called dialectology. This branch of language knowledge can be divided into two terms, i.e. geography dialect and socio-linguistics. Geography dialect learns about language variations based on local difference in a language distribution area (local language differences) and Socio-linguistics learn about language variation based on society's pattern.

In this research, we overlay the geographic map containing geomorphologic information on the distribution of dialectologic characters in the study area. We attempt to analyze the relationship between the utterance of Sundanese language and its subcultures with the landform characteristic of the area where the people live.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The geomorphology of western part of Java Island is predominated by mountainous to hilly land (see Figure.1). Many volcanoes and rivers exist in this area, which create fertile soil and abundant fresh water. The center part of this region is known as Parahyangan or Pasundan land.

The main culture of this region is Sundanese. Sundanese people in Parahyangan or Pasundan commonly speak humble in polite manner. They are well known for their hospitality. Currently, Bandung City serves as the center of this culture. Since the Dutch colonial era, this city is also known as *Parijs van Java* (literary means the Paris City of Java Island) because of its scenic beauty, sincere and hospitality of its inhabitants. Sundanese people generally live as farmer (rice field, plantation, fruits & vegetables), honorable (nobleman, educated people) and officials.

The northern part of study area geomorphologically consists of coastal plain of Java Sea. This area is a good

place for the transportation line because of its flat landform as well as the availability of supported material to build the infrastructures. In the study area, this type of landform is widely distributed from Cirebon City in the east to Anyer City in the west. This condition created a lively business atmosphere for traders and merchants, along with the existence of harbors since Padjadjaran Kingdom era.

Historically, many of the inhabitants on the northern coast of West Java are descendant of Javanese troops of Sultan Agung from Mataram Kingdom in Yogyakarta who fought the Dutch colonialism in Sunda Kelapa or Jakarta area hundred years ago but they lost the battle. Since then, along the coastal plain of Java Sea become a home for some troop's member who did not come back to Yogyakarta. The influence of Javanese culture (i.e. language) into Sundanese inhabitants along the coastal plain is discussed as follows.

Cirebonese speaks rather Javanese combined with rather impolite Sundanese (Suryadikara, 1974, in Prawiratmadja, 1976). They live on the northern Java coastal plain as transition area between Sundanese and Javanese culture. The landform around Cirebon city is relatively plain with less fertile soil. Therefore, they generally live as fisherman, fish and saltpond farmer as well as merchant or trader. Culturally the Cirebon area is the territory of the Kingdom of Cirebon, which then divided into 2 powers, i.e. Kasepuhan and Kanoman.

Betawinese speak rather impolite Sundanese combined with Javanese. They live on the coastal plain around Gulf of Jakarta along the Ciliwung and Cisadane Rivers. Geomorphologically, this area consists of river delta, which has fertile soil and abundant fresh water. Therefore, many of Betawinese previously work as farmers (rice field, fruits and vegetables, plantation, fishpond), as well as fisherman and merchants. Previously, Prince

Jayakarta, who maintained and developed the Betawinese culture, administered the region around Gulf of Jakarta.

Along with the availability of good transportation infrastructure such as big harbor and roadway, trading and merchandising become a dominant business from time to time. This condition attracted visitors from many places to live and blend their previous life style and culture with indigenous inhabitants here. It has created a unique blend among many cultures (melting pot). Recently this region becomes the Indonesian capital.

Bantenese speak rather impolite Sundanese and Javanese. They live on coastal plain to gentle hilly area. 75 % of the area located on altitude between 0 – 100 meter above sea level and widely situated in east and northern part, while the hilly area situated in west and southern part. Previously, Banten was administered by the Kingdom of Banten with its well-known Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.

Ayatrohaedi (1978) mentioned that the majority of people in Serang Regency (as representation of Bantenese) speak Javanese language (60%) and 40% speak Sundanese language. The inhabitants, whose mother tongue is Javanese, live in the northern Serang (mainly coastal plain) and the inhabitants, whose mother tongue is Sundanese, live in the southern part of Serang (mountain to hilly land).

## **CONCLUSION**

The Sundanese main culture is developed on mountainous to hilly landform where fertile soil and abundant fresh water but less connectivity characterizing the region. This environment implies to the soft culture of Sundanese, i.e. humble, polite and soft-spoken language, because of the kindness of nature. It also implies to maintain the "purenness" of culture.

The subcultures on the study area are developed on hilly to coastal plain where less fertile soil but good connectivity characterizing the regions. This implies to the impolite and rather hard-spoken because of less kind of environment to live, as well as the "penetration" of Javanese culture to the inhabitant's local language because of the historical influence.

The society who lives on the coastal area shows different characters and customs from the society who lives on mountainous to hilly area. The characteristic and custom of spoken language are different between one and another area related to the place they live. This result suggests that there is relationship between the utterances of people with the nature they live on.

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