



The Impact of Javanese Language Habituation on Elementary School Students as an Effort to Preserve Regional Languages

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ABSTRACT

Regional languages play an important role in maintaining cultural identity and politeness values in a multicultural society. However, the use of Javanese, particularly the krama variety, has shifted among the younger generation due to the dominance of Indonesian in various social domains, including educational settings. This situation poses challenges in efforts to maintain regional languages, especially at the elementary school level, which is the phase in which students' language habits are formed. This study aims to analyze the impact of a Javanese language familiarization program on improving elementary school students' mastery of krama vocabulary and politeness as part of a regional language preservation strategy. The study used a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The research subjects included the principal, class teachers, and students at Pati Kidul 01 Public Elementary School. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and interactive conclusion drawing. The results of the study indicate that the familiarization program, which is implemented routinely every Thursday, has an impact on increasing the use of krama vocabulary in formal communication in the classroom. Furthermore, there was an increase in students' politeness in terms of speech and attitude, demonstrated through the use of respectful expressions, more refined diction, and changes in nonverbal behavior in interactions with teachers. These findings imply that familiarizing yourself with Javanese can be an effective pedagogical strategy for strengthening communicative competence while supporting the ongoing maintenance of regional languages in formal educational settings.

Keywords: Javanese language, habituation, preserve regional languages

Dampak Pembiasaan Berbahasa Jawa pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar sebagai Upaya Pemertahanan Bahasa Daerah

ABSTRAK

Bahasa daerah memiliki peran penting dalam menjaga identitas budaya dan nilai kesantunan dalam masyarakat multikultural. Namun, penggunaan bahasa Jawa, khususnya ragam krama, mengalami pergeseran di kalangan generasi muda akibat dominasi bahasa Indonesia dalam berbagai ranah sosial, termasuk lingkungan pendidikan. Kondisi ini menimbulkan tantangan dalam upaya pemertahanan bahasa daerah, terutama pada jenjang pendidikan dasar yang menjadi fase pembentukan kebiasaan berbahasa siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dampak program pembiasaan berbahasa Jawa terhadap peningkatan penguasaan kosakata krama dan kesantunan siswa sekolah dasar sebagai bagian dari strategi pemertahanan bahasa daerah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian meliputi kepala sekolah, guru kelas, dan siswa di SD Negeri Pati Kidul 01. Analisis data dilakukan melalui tahapan reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan secara interaktif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa program pembiasaan yang dilaksanakan secara rutin setiap hari Kamis berdampak pada peningkatan penggunaan kosakata krama dalam komunikasi formal di kelas. Selain itu, terjadi peningkatan kesantunan siswa dalam aspek tutur kata dan sikap yang ditunjukkan melalui penggunaan ungkapan penghormatan, pemilihan diksi yang lebih halus, serta perubahan perilaku nonverbal dalam interaksi dengan guru. Temuan ini memiliki implikasi bahwa pembiasaan berbahasa Jawa dapat menjadi strategi pedagogis yang efektif dalam memperkuat kompetensi komunikatif sekaligus mendukung pemertahanan bahasa daerah secara berkelanjutan di lingkungan pendidikan formal.

Kata kunci: pembiasaan, bahasa Jawa, pemertahanan bahasa daerah

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental element in human life, serving as a means of communication and as a means of forming cultural identity. Through language, cultural values, social norms, and knowledge systems are passed down from one generation to the next (Turyani et al., 2024). Language also serves as a symbol of a social group's existence, distinguishing it from other groups (Gulo et al., 2025). In the context of Indonesia's multicultural society, regional languages hold a strategic position as markers of ethnic identity and as a cultural treasure that must be preserved sustainably Putri et al., 2024).

Javanese is one of the regional languages with the largest number of speakers in Indonesia. This language has a system of speech levels or basic etiquette that reflects values of politeness and respect in social relations (Kamal et al., 2023). Through the use of various krama (social etiquette), individuals are taught to respect their elders, maintain humility, and build harmonious social relationships (Natanti et al., 2023). Thus, Javanese serves not only as a means of communication but also as a medium for transmitting cultural values.

The development of globalization and the dominance of the Indonesian language in various social domains have led to a shift in the use of Javanese, particularly the krama variety, among the younger generation (Bhakti, 2020). The decline in the intensity of Javanese use in family and social communication indicates a challenge in maintaining regional languages (Baiti & Nuryani, 2022). If regional languages are no longer actively used in formal and informal domains, their vitality can gradually decline.

Elementary schools, as formal educational institutions, play a strategic role in shaping students' language habits. Interactions in the learning process serve not only as a means of transferring knowledge but also as a medium for character formation and communication ethics (Rizkia & Syafruddin, 2025). Character education through habituation has proven effective in fostering politeness and respon-

sibility in students Putri et al., 2025). Habituation is behavior that is carried out repeatedly and consistently so that it becomes part of an individual's action patterns and impacts more lasting behavioral changes (Islami et al., 2022). In this context, the structured habituation of the use of Javanese krama in elementary schools not only supports the preservation of regional languages but also contributes to the internalization of politeness values in students (Natanti et al., 2023).

The successful implementation of habituation programs in schools is also influenced by the readiness and perceptions of teachers as policy implementers at the educational unit level (Nurhalimah et al., 2023). Teachers act as role models in the use of polite language and as facilitators, creating a conducive communication environment. Learning that encourages active student participation also increases their involvement in direct language practice (Rifdah et al., 2023). Ulfa et al. (2025) emphasize that a school culture built through repeated and consistent practice can form lasting positive habits in students.

Numerous studies have addressed Javanese language maintenance in various social contexts. Nafi'ah et al. (2024) demonstrated that the use of Javanese in school interactions reflects contextual language maintenance efforts. Patintingan (2024) emphasized that the use of regional languages in learning contributes to the language's sustainability. Nugraha & Prasetyo (2022) also found that a social environment with consistent communication practices can maintain Javanese language use. However, studies specifically examining the impact of a systematically designed Javanese language familiarization program within elementary school culture on students' language habits are still relatively limited. However, the success of language maintenance is greatly influenced by the consistency of its use in formal education (Educational, 2021).

Based on this background, this study focuses on the impact of a Javanese language familiarization program on improving elementary school students' mastery of krama vocabulary and its impact



on improving students' politeness, both in terms of speech and attitude, as part of efforts to maintain regional languages ??in formal education settings. In line with these issues, this study aims to analyze the improvement of students' lexical competence and politeness through a consistent habituation program implemented in schools. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions. Language maintenance depends on consistent use in the educational domain, while improvements in vocabulary and politeness reflect the development of students' communicative competence (Setyawati & Wibowo, 2024). This research is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to strengthening regional language maintenance strategies in elementary education settings.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach. The descriptive qualitative approach aims to describe in depth the impact of Javanese language familiarization on students' language habits as a form of regional language maintenance without manipulating the research variables. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on understanding social phenomena naturally and contextually, according to real-world conditions. Qualitative research allows researchers to interpret data based on the participants' perspectives and the situations that occur directly (Sugiyono, 2020). With this approach, researchers obtained a comprehensive picture of the implementation of the Javanese language habituation program and its impact on students' language habits in supporting the maintenance of regional languages ??in the formal education realm.

The research was conducted at Pati Kidul 01 Public Elementary School, Pati Regency, Central Java. The research location was selected based on the existence of a Javanese language habituation program, which is routinely implemented as part of the school culture. This program provides a relevant context for examining its impact on students' language habits and its contribution to maintaining the sustainability of the Javanese language.

Research subjects included the principal, class teachers, and students directly involved in the implementation of the Javanese language habituation program. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, a sampling technique based on specific considerations according to the research needs (Andriani et al., 2025). These considerations included direct involvement in the program, understanding of the program's implementation, and experience in the practical use of Javanese in the school environment. Selective selection of informants was carried out to ensure that the data obtained were relevant, in-depth, and aligned with the research focus, namely the impact of habituation on students' language habits as an effort to maintain regional languages. Data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation (Putri & Murhayati, 2025). Observations were used to directly observe the practice of Javanese language familiarization in daily communication activities at school, both in the learning process and non-learning interactions. Observations focused on the use of krama vocabulary, student-teacher interaction patterns, and changes in language habits that emerged as a result of the familiarization program. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal and teachers to obtain information on the program's implementation, objectives, supporting and inhibiting factors, and its impact on students' language habits. Interviews were also conducted with several students to determine their experiences, perceptions, and the changes they experienced after participating in the Javanese language familiarization program. Documentation in the form of activity photos, school archives, program schedules, and other supporting documents was used to strengthen and supplement the observation and interview data as evidence of the implementation of regional language preservation efforts in the school environment.

In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument, directly collecting and analyzing data. Therefore, the researcher is actively involved in the observation, interview, and field data recording processes (Jailani, 2023). Data va-

lidity was tested through source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the principal, teachers, and students to ensure consistency in findings regarding the impact of Javanese language adoption. Technical triangulation was conducted by matching data from observations, interviews, and documentation to ensure consistency and accuracy. Furthermore, researchers cross-checked the data with informants (member checking) to ensure interpretations aligned with the participants' intentions.

Data analysis was conducted interactively and continuously from the beginning of data collection until the research was completed. The analysis process followed the stages proposed by Miles and Huberman: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Rahmani et al., 2025). Data reduction was carried out by sorting, simplifying, and focusing data relevant to the research objective, namely the impact of Javanese language familiarization on students' language habits as an effort to maintain regional languages. Data presentation was conducted in a systematic narrative format, making it easier for researchers to understand patterns and relationships among the data. The final stage was drawing conclusions, which was carried out in stages while maintaining data consistency and validity. Through these stages, research findings were obtained that were systematic and scientifically accountable, in line with the research focus.

RESULTS

Based on observations, interviews, and documentation conducted at Pati Kidul 01 Public Elementary School, the implementation of the Javanese language familiarization program demonstrated changes in students' language habits in formal communication within the school environment. The program, which is held routinely every Thursday, has become part of the school culture, supporting the use of Javanese krama. The changes observed were not only evident in vocabulary use, but also in the way students interacted with teachers. The data obtained showed

a trend toward increasing use of language more appropriate to formal situations. In general, the findings of this study can be grouped into two main aspects: (1) increased mastery of krama vocabulary and (2) increased student politeness, both in speech and demeanor.

1. Increased Mastery of Krama Vocabulary

The results of the study indicate that the Javanese language familiarization program had an impact on improving students' mastery of krama vocabulary in formal classroom communication. Before the program was implemented regularly, Indonesian was still the dominant language in interactions between students and teachers. Students generally asked questions and made requests directly without using Javanese honorifics. The use of krama vocabulary in formal situations was not consistently observed. This indicates that before the program was implemented, students were not yet accustomed to distinguishing language use according to formal contexts.

After the familiarization program was implemented every Thursday, changes occurred in students' communication patterns in class. On the day of the program, students began using krama vocabulary when asking questions and expressing opinions. During learning activities, some students begin questions with the phrase "Nyuwun sewu, Ma'am. Kula badhe tanglet...". This phrase is used before conveying an intention to the teacher. This change indicates an increase in the use of krama vocabulary in formal learning situations.



Figure 1
Classroom learning process on Thursday
Source: Researcher Documentation

In addition to the use of opening expressions, vocabulary improvements were also evident in the use of pronouns and other formal vocabulary. Students began using the word "kula" to refer to themselves when addressing the teacher. The word "pripun" was also used in questions to replace the word "bagaimana." The phrase "matur nuwun, Ma'am" began to be uttered spontaneously after students received explanations or assistance from the teacher. This vocabulary use indicates a shift in language habits on the day of the program.

Interviews with students indicated that the familiarization program helped them learn more krama vocabulary. Some students reported that they initially struggled to remember the vocabulary. However, after practicing it weekly, they began to understand and use it more confidently. The class teacher also reported an increase in students' confidence and fluency in using krama Javanese. However, on days other than Thursday, Indonesian remained quite dominant.



Figure 2
Students of Pati Kidul 01 Public Elementary School engaged in group activities while communicating in Javanese on Thursday

Documentation of learning activities shows students engaging in group discussions using krama Javanese on Thursday. In this situation, students attempted to adapt their language use to the formal learning context. Although not all students were using krama perfectly, there was a visible trend of improvement compared to before the program was routinely implemented. In general, the Javanese language familiarization program had an impact on improving students'

mastery of krama vocabulary in the school environment. There was a trend of increased use of krama vocabulary compared to before the program was routinely implemented.

2. Improvement in Student Politeness

The results of the study indicate that the Javanese language familiarization program not only improved student mastery of krama vocabulary but also improved students' politeness in interactions with teachers. The politeness referred to in this study encompasses two aspects: politeness in speech and politeness in attitude. These changes were evident in both formal communication in the classroom and in daily interactions within the school environment. The habit of using Javanese krama on Thursdays influenced how students conveyed their intentions and how they behaved towards teachers. In general, improvements in student politeness were evident through changes in verbal communication patterns and nonverbal behavior.

a. Improved Politeness in Speech

The results of the study indicate that the Javanese language habituation program impacted changes in students' politeness in formal classroom communication. Before the program was implemented regularly, students tended to speak directly without using opening expressions or forms of respect in Javanese. Expressions such as "Ma'am, I'd like to ask a question" or "Ma'am, may I go to the back" were often used without prefixes. This communication pattern indicates that language use did not fully reflect the differences between formal and informal situations. After the program was implemented every Thursday, changes were observed in the way students conveyed their intentions to teachers.

On the day of the program, students began prefacing questions or requests with the phrase "Nyuwun sewu, Ma'am" before conveying the main topic of their conversation. This use of this phrase became a habit in formal classroom interactions. Furthermore, students began using greetings such as "Sugeng enjing, Ma'am" when

entering class in the morning. Students' word choice became more refined than before the program was consistently implemented. This change indicates an increased awareness of using more polite language.

Interviews with students indicate that they understand that there are different rules of speech when using Javanese krama. Several students stated that when speaking to teachers on Thursdays, they must use more polite language. They also felt they should not speak directly without a prefix of respect. The class teacher reported that the students' sentence structure had become more structured and less rushed. This indicates a change in the students' speech habits during the habituation program.

Initially, they struggled to remember the vocabulary. However, after practicing it each week, they began to understand and use it more confidently. The class teacher also reported an increase in students' confidence and fluency in using Javanese krama. However, on days other than Thursdays, Indonesian was still quite dominant.

Furthermore, students appeared more careful in their word choice when speaking to teachers. They no longer used informal pronouns in learning situations. During question-and-answer sessions, students waited their turn to speak and asked questions in more complete sentences. This change was more evident on Thursdays than on other days. In general, the Javanese language familiarization program had an impact on improving students' politeness in the school environment.

b. Improved Attitude and Politeness

In addition to changes in speech, the Javanese language familiarization program also impacted students' attitudes and behaviors when interacting with teachers. Before the program was implemented regularly, some students still spoke in a fairly loud tone of voice and sometimes interrupted the teacher. This behavior was evident in learning situations when students asked questions or responded spontaneously. After the program was implemented consistently, changes occurred in the way students communicated.

Students began to demonstrate a more orderly and controlled demeanor when speaking in class.

Based on observations, students spoke in a lower tone of voice when using krama Javanese. They appeared more careful in expressing their opinions and no longer interrupted the teacher's explanations. Students also waited more orderly in waiting their turn to speak before asking questions. These changes indicate an increased awareness of maintaining good behavior during the learning process. This behavior appeared more consistent on the days of the program.

This change in behavior was also evident when students interacted with teachers outside of class. When passing teachers on the school grounds, several students paused and said "Nyuwun sewu, Ma'am." Some students also bowed slightly as a sign of respect. This behavior was not consistently observed before the program was implemented. After the program became routine, this behavior began to become a habit on Thursdays.



Figure 3
 Students demonstrate politeness by shaking hands with teachers before entering the school environment.

Source: Researcher Documentation

The habit of shaking hands with teachers in the morning also shows a significant change. Students appear more orderly in queuing to shake hands with teachers before entering class. They demonstrate a more polite attitude by bowing slightly when shaking hands. Teachers reported that this change has been more visible since the Javanese language habituation program began to be implemented regularly. In general, the Javanese language habituation program has had an impact



on improving students' politeness in everyday interactions at school.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings presented, the Javanese language habituation program at Pati Kidul 01 Public Elementary School has shown a significant impact on students' language habits in formal communication. This impact is evident in the increased mastery of krama vocabulary and the improvement of students' politeness, both in terms of speech and attitude. In this section, the research findings are analyzed by linking them to theories of language acquisition, communicative competence, linguistic politeness, and the concept of regional language maintenance. This analysis aims to explain the significance of the findings and their contribution to strengthening Javanese in formal educational settings. Therefore, this discussion will be outlined according to the two main research focuses.

1. Increased Mastery of Krama Vocabulary

The increased use of krama vocabulary found in this study indicates that regular language familiarization can strengthen students' lexical competence in formal communication contexts. The use of vocabulary such as *nyuwun sewu* (excuse me), *kula* (excuse me), *pripun* (excuse me), and *matur nuwun* (excuse me) is no longer sporadic, but is beginning to be consciously used in interactions with teachers. This finding indicates a shift from the use of common language to krama vocabulary in formal learning situations. Lestari et al. (2025) explain that vocabulary mastery develops optimally through direct communication practice in meaningful contexts. Thus, Javanese language familiarization provides an interactive space that allows for the active and repeated use of krama vocabulary.

These changes not only indicate an increase in the number of vocabulary items students are familiar with, but also an increased ability to use vocabulary productively in appropriate situations. Taufiqurrohmah & Hasbullah (2020) state that

mature vocabulary mastery is characterized by the ability to actively use words in communicative contexts, not simply understanding their meaning receptively. Furthermore, the frequency of language use in social interactions plays a crucial role in strengthening mental representations of vocabulary (Ningrum et al., 2024). Implementing habituation sessions every Thursday provides students with the opportunity to consistently repeat and internalize krama vocabulary. This repetition process strengthens students' memory and fluency in using krama vocabulary.

The shift in pronoun use from informal to krama forms also demonstrates students' growing linguistic awareness of the Javanese speech system. Karuniawan et al. (2025), using the concept of communicative competence, asserts that language ability encompasses appropriate language use according to social norms. In this study, students began to be able to differentiate between language used in formal relationships with teachers and informal relationships with peers. This indicates that the increase in vocabulary is not merely quantitative but also reflects the development of students' communicative competence. Thus, getting used to speaking Javanese helps shape students' sensitivity to the norms of language use in certain social contexts.

From a language preservation perspective, increasing the use of krama vocabulary in the school environment has broader implications. Taryono et al. (2025) stated that the vitality of a language is largely determined by its presence in various social domains, including education. Educational (2021) also emphasized that language preservation depends on the consistency of its use in formal domains. This finding aligns with Annisa et al. (2024), who stated that language use in specific social contexts strengthens the language's vitality within its speaker community. Furthermore, Setyawati & Wibowo (2024) emphasized that language sustainability is influenced by attitudes and practices of consistent language use. Therefore, increasing mastery of krama vocabulary in this study not only impacts individual student

competency but also contributes to strengthening the vitality of Javanese in formal educational settings.

2. Improving Student Politeness

The improvement in student politeness in this study was analyzed through two main dimensions: (a) politeness in speech and (b) politeness in attitude. These two aspects are interrelated and demonstrate that familiarity with Javanese influences not only word choice but also students' social interaction patterns. Changes in verbal aspects reflect students' ability to adapt language to formal contexts, while changes in attitudes indicate the internalization of etiquette values. Therefore, the discussion of student politeness will be outlined based on these two dimensions.

a. Improved Spoken Politeness

The improvement in politeness in students' speech indicates that familiarity with Javanese influences how students convey meaning in formal communication. The use of expressions such as "nyuwun sewu" (excuse me) before asking a question reflects the application of politeness strategies in hierarchical relationships between students and teachers. Azmi (2022) explains that politeness is an effort to maintain harmonious social relations through the selection of appropriate speech forms. In the Javanese cultural context, the use of krama (graceful) forms signifies respect for higher-ranking conversation partners (Kamal et al., 2023). Thus, changes in students' speech demonstrate an adjustment of language to prevailing social norms in the school environment. In addition to the use of opening expressions, improvements in verbal politeness are also evident in the choice of more refined diction and the use of greetings such as "sugeng enjing." Cate (2020) states that pragmatic competence includes the ability to adapt the form and manner of language delivery to the social context and relationships between speakers. This finding indicates that students are beginning to understand the social function of using krama language as a form of respect. Dani et al. (2025) emphasize that

politeness in speech acts is related to the ability to manage interactions so that they remain harmonious and in accordance with norms. Therefore, changes in students' word choice and sentence structure reflect the development of pragmatic awareness in formal communication.

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From an interpersonal communication perspective, nonverbal elements such as intonation, facial expressions, and posture play a crucial role in conveying meaning and respect. Rahayu et al. (2025) stated that body language and physical posture are integral parts of the interpersonal communication process. The findings of this study indicate that students not only change their word choice but also adjust their attitudes when interacting with teachers. These changes are evident in the habit of speaking more softly and waiting their turn before speaking. This demonstrates an awareness of managing behavior during the communication process.

Increasing politeness can also be understood through social learning theory. Irama & Risal

(2024) explain that behavior is formed through observation, imitation, and reinforcement in the social environment. In the context of this study, teachers serve as models for polite language and behavior, while the practice of polite behavior every Thursday serves as a form of consistent reinforcement. Jasmana (2021) emphasizes that character education is formed through repeated practices in daily school life. Thus, changes in student attitudes are the result of an ongoing social learning process.

Furthermore, fostering polite behavior through language familiarization also strengthens a school culture that supports positive values. Ulfa et al. (2025) stated that a school culture built through consistent practice can form lasting positive habits in students. These findings indicate that a Javanese language familiarization program not only impacts language skills but also the ongoing development of students' character. Therefore, the improvement in politeness in this study demonstrates that maintaining regional languages can go hand in hand with strengthening cultural values and social ethics in formal educational settings.

Overall, this study demonstrates that a Javanese language familiarization program implemented systematically and consistently in elementary schools not only maintains the use of regional languages but also simultaneously improves students' lexical competence and politeness. These findings complement the research by Nafi'ah et al. (2024) and Patintingan (2024) that highlighted the use of regional languages in school contexts. However, this study more specifically emphasizes the impact of structured familiarization on improving students' vocabulary and verbal and nonverbal politeness. Furthermore, the results of this study reinforce Educational's (2021) view that language maintenance depends on consistent language use in the educational domain. Thus, the novelty of this study lies in its confirmation that habituation to Javanese language can be an integrative pedagogical strategy that not only maintains the vitality of regional languages but also sustainably

shapes students' polite character in elementary school settings.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research and discussion, the Javanese language habituation program, implemented regularly at Pati Kidul 01 Public Elementary School, has impacted students' language habits in formal communication contexts at school. This impact is evident in their increased mastery of krama vocabulary and their politeness, both in speech and demeanor. Students demonstrated improved skills in using krama vocabulary contextually, such as using respectful expressions, appropriate pronouns, and more refined forms of speech in interactions with teachers. Furthermore, changes were also evident in students' attitudes, who became more orderly, spoke with a slower intonation, and displayed respectful gestures in daily interactions. The findings of this study indicate that systematic and consistent Javanese language habituation not only contributes to improving students' communicative competence but also supports efforts to maintain regional languages in formal education settings. By making Javanese part of the school culture, its use becomes more structured and sustainable. Therefore, Javanese language habituation can be understood as an integrative pedagogical strategy for strengthening lexical competence, linguistic politeness, and developing polite character in elementary school students.

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