



STRATIFICATION OF JAVANESE LANGUAGE IN RURAL AREAS OF EAST JAVA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR JAVANESE LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe the stratification of Javanese language use in rural communities in East Java and analyze its implications for Javanese language learning. This research is motivated by changes in the use of Javanese by the younger generation, which can weaken the value of polite language in social interactions. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, and data collection was conducted through interviews and observations. Data were obtained from several sources from several villages in East Java. The Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles) was used to study the patterns of convergence, divergence, and over-accommodation in language use. Data analysis was carried out through presentation, drawing conclusions, and reduction. The results of the study indicate that social status, age, and situational context influence the choice of Javanese language speech level. Divergence appears as an expression of the identity of the modern generation, the process of linguistic convergence shows the efforts of young speakers to adapt to societal standards of politeness. This study found that the use of Javanese is a social mechanism for determining closeness, status, and cultural identity, not just a linguistic system. The results of this study demonstrate the importance of learning polite language based on social context in formal education. By using these findings, teachers can create learning models that emphasize the social function of Javanese so that students understand not only the structure of the language but also the values of politeness and respect contained within it.

Keywords: Stratification of Speech; Javanese Language; Society Rural

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is characterized as a heterogeneous nation, with many different ethnicities, cultures, nations, languages, and dialects. The people live close together, with Indonesian as the unifying language. Language and people are inseparable (Santosa et al., 2010). Each community group or individual chooses language as a tool to communicate or interact with others. Indonesian society is a diglossian society, meaning that Indonesian society has two languages, variants, or language codes, used in

society: Indonesian and regional languages. Indonesian is used in official matters and is the national language, while regional languages are used as everyday languages within the community. Both languages have different grammatical rules, vocabulary, and conventions based on existing circumstances and conditions. The pronunciation of a multilingual society's language is determined by several factors and has social significance. Certain (Saddhono, 2007).

Javanese is considered the mother tongue of the people of East Java, Central Java, and

Yogyakarta (Sa'adah & Kurnia, 2024). Each dialect has its own distinctive characteristics. Javanese is one of many regional languages, the most widely spoken in Indonesia. The majority of East Javanese people, especially in rural areas, speak Javanese as their daily language. However, Javanese usage varies across social groups in rural communities. Javanese use can also reflect social stratification within rural communities in East Java (Kholiq et al., 2024). Different social groups may use Javanese in different ways, depending on social status, age, education, and other factors.

The division of society into certain classes and levels constitutes social stratification. Social stratification is based on the fact that there are social strata within a society (Khoiroh et al., 2024). In other words, social stratification in society can be divided into three principal components: economic, political, and certain social positions (Basrowi, 2005:60). Social stratification in group life (society) is caused by several factors, one of which is that people tend to live in groups in safe environments. Group life arises from social needs. The need to befriend others is largely based on similarities, traits, and interests. For example, people who work as doctors or nurses seek friends with the same profession as them, which will provide the same social interaction. In this case, each social group has different languages for communication.

Linguistic diversity is not only caused by heterogeneity, but also by the close social interactions of society. Sociolinguistic studies also examine language, closely related to factors influencing language use, one of which is interaction between communities in rural areas in East Java. Javanese has its own levels of use in interactions with society (Meilawati et al., 2025). Its use is adjusted to the speaker and the specific

conditions and situations. Javanese has various levels of speech used according to the context and social relationships between speakers. These levels are known as "Ngoko," and "Madya/Krama," both of which have variations.

The use of Javanese reflects an individual's social status. People with high social status tend to use the "Krama" speech level, while those with low social status tend to use the "Ngoko lugu" or "Ngoko alus" Javanese speech levels (Setiawan & Insani, 2025). The Javanese language level used can also reflect the social relationships between speakers. Older people or those with higher authority in society often use the "Madya" or "Krama" speech levels when interacting with someone younger or lower in the hierarchy.

The use of Javanese among different social groups in rural communities in East Java. Stratification in Javanese language use can be influenced by several factors such as age, gender, occupation, mutual respect, social status, family background, education, and familiarity, among others. Social stratification is an important factor contributing to the diversity of dialects and vocabulary in Javanese. Javanese in East Java has its own characteristics, such as the use of the prefix (tak-) and the combined suffix (-na) instead of (-ke or -ake).

In rural communities, Javanese is highly respected and used in daily communication. This communication can be either spoken or written (Pratiwi & Insani, 2025). Besides being used to communicate with other people, Javanese is also used to convey behavior through speech. Javanese society highly respects social status. Differentiation in Javanese speech can be interpreted as a form of respect or honoring someone of higher rank, and can also indicate how familiar someone is with another person.

Previous research has examined the diversity and dynamics of Javanese language use across various social domains and its relationship to education. Research by Nurhayati, Sariono, and Asrumi (2022) found that language variation in East Java is influenced by social factors and the age of speakers, and demonstrated that changes in phonology and lexicon reflect social changes in society. Meanwhile, research by Permatasari, Wardarita, and Musyarofah (2022) examined how Javanese is maintained in the fields of religion and education in Banyuasin Regency. The results showed that the use of Javanese in both fields remains strong and does not face significant obstacles. The findings suggest that educational institutions and community religious practices can help maintain the existence of the Javanese language.

Furthermore, Musyarofah et al. (2025) examined the use of Krama Inggil Javanese in instilling politeness values at Purwoyoso 04 Elementary School in Semarang. This study showed that students' politeness and etiquette could be improved by frequently using Krama Inggil Javanese. However, this study also found that internal factors, such as students' interest in learning, and external factors, such as unsupportive family and social environments, could contribute to difficulties.

Research by Irawan, Ahyar, and Mahsa (2024) examined how the multilingual community of Cot Girek District, North Aceh, continues to use Javanese. The results showed that Javanese people in the region strive to preserve their language through various means, such as family learning, language training, and the use of technology and social media. This study suggests that positive attitudes toward regional languages can help Javanese survive beyond its native region.

Azila and Febriani (2021) examined the use of speech levels in traditional market communities and found that language stratification reflects the social structure of traders and buyers. In Talang Sebaris Village, Seluma Regency, Yani, Suradi, and Sari (2023) also examined how the younger generation uses Javanese. They identified five main approaches to preserving Javanese: the role of the family, arts and cultural activities, the formation of preservation communities, the use of digital technology, and integration into formal and non-formal education. This study demonstrates that maintaining Javanese in the modern world requires collaboration between families, schools, and the community.

Based on previous research, it can be concluded that research on the Javanese language focuses more on aspects of language maintenance, lexicon variation, and character learning through Javanese. However, most of this research has not deeply examined the stratification of Javanese language use that arises from differences in social groups in rural East Java, and how these findings can be used to support our understanding of the language.

Therefore, there is a research gap that needs to be filled through this research, namely that there is not much research that connects the social aspects of rural communities with Javanese language learning methods that focus on the values of politeness, etiquette, and respect between generations.

Two main aspects of this research are novel. First, it focuses on the stratification of Javanese language use in rural East Java, a situation that has never been studied comprehensively and contextually. Second, it not only describes the type of stratification but also relates its findings to real-world issues in Javanese language learning in

schools, particularly in strengthening teacher education. Therefore, this research provides theoretical benefits for the advancement of sociolinguistic research and practical benefits for regional language education.

The purpose of this research is to determine how and when Javanese is used within various social groups in rural East Java. To examine the social factors that influence variations in Javanese language use in rural communities. And to explain how the analysis of Javanese language stratification impacts Javanese language learning in schools, particularly in the instilling of politeness, respect, and polite language etiquette in students.

METHODS

Researchers use qualitative descriptive methods. Creswell (2008) defines qualitative research as an approach to understanding central phenomena. To understand the main symptoms, researchers will interview subjects, asking general and broader questions. Information or data received is in the form of words or text. The data is then analyzed. This analysis contains results in the form of descriptions. Researchers will capture the deeper meaning of the data and explain it with previous research. The final result of qualitative research is a written report. (Conny R, 2010).

The subjects of this study were young Javanese-speaking residents living in rural East Java, aged 13 to 25. The suitability of the subjects' characteristics to the focus and objectives of the study was used to select this age range through purposive sampling. This age group was chosen because it is considered to represent a transitional generation in rural Javanese society, situated between the influences of language modernization and traditional communication patterns. They are people who are still pursuing formal education,

either in secondary school or university, and actively participate in village society. Therefore, this age group is most likely to exhibit changes in the use of different Javanese speech levels, such as ngoko, madya, and krama, in various social contexts.

In collecting data, researchers used qualitative methods with direct observation and question and answer (interview) techniques. Observation is a data collection technique carried out through direct observation, which involves recording the subject's condition and behavior. Interviews are activities carried out with the aim of obtaining data through verbal or direct communication in a structured manner. The questions asked by the researcher are structured or prepared before conducting the interview, but it does not rule out the possibility that ideas or questions will emerge during the interview. Data analysis can be carried out when all data has been collected, starting from observation and interviews. After that, the data is identified and formed into a written report. Miles and Huberman explain that interactive data analysis techniques are data analysis techniques that go through a series of processes, namely data acquisition, data reduction, data presentation, and inference. (Abdussamad, 2021).

Researchers used data validity tests to ensure the validity of the data. They employed technical triangulation, which ensured data credibility by comparing interview results with observations and other documents, such as literature and field notes. This triangulation was conducted to ensure that information from various sources was consistent with each other (Abdussamad, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Division of Javanese Language Speech Levels

Language is a tool used by society to express individual intentions, desires, and feelings. One language that has levels of speech is Javanese, where the use of Javanese is adapted to the person being spoken to (Saddhono, 2013 in Nurjayanti). The Javanese spoken by the community is reflected in different verbs, nouns, and adjectives. Dwidjosusana stated that the levels of Javanese spoken are as follows:

Javanese Language Details	
Level	
Ngoko	Rough
	Lugu
	Andhap
Ngoko Andhap	Wredhakrama
	Kramantara
	Mudhakrama
Krama	Innocent
	Middle
	Inggil
	Kedhaton or
	Bagongan
Krama Madya	Madya ngoko
	Madyantara
	Madyakrama

However, this division is not suitable for Javanese, because this division is too theoretical and a bit artificial for today's era.

Ekowardono, et al. (1991:6-7) divides Javanese into two levels, namely Ngoko and Krama.

Javanese Language Details	
Level	
Ngoko	Lugu
	Antya basa

Krama	Lugu
	Andhap

In contrast to Poedjosoedarmo, et al (1979:13), who divides the level of Javanese language proficiency into three levels as follows:

Javanese Language Details	
Level	
Krama	Mudhakrama
	Kramantara
	Wredha karma
Madya	Madya Krama
	Madyantara
	Madya ngoko
Ngoko	Antya language
	Antya basa
	Ngoko lugu

Social Factors That Influence the Level of Javanese Language Speaking

A factor influencing the level of Javanese spoken is a person's social status. A person's social status can be determined by their occupation, education, and income. If someone has a high social status, those communicating with them will use Krama Javanese. Conversely, if someone has a low social status, they will use Ngoko Javanese.

Situational factors include the person you're talking to, the language you use, who you're talking to, the time you're talking, the place you're talking, and the specific topic you're discussing. The person you're talking to depends on who you're talking to. If you're chatting with parents or someone older, you'll use Javanese Karma. Conversely, if you're talking to a peer, you should use Javanese Ngoko. When

communicating/speaking in formal settings, you'll use Bahasa Indonesia. Javanese Krama, such as when hosting a program that requires the use of Javanese. At school, they must use Javanese Krama, and when playing with friends, they can use Javanese Ngoko.

Results of Interviews with Sources from Various Circles and Villages in East Java

The source's experience in using Javanese in everyday life:

"I can learn to speak more politely, especially to my elders." (EF Interview, May 22, 2025)

"I feel like when I use Javanese, my speech is more controlled and I can be more polite to my elders." (SH Interview, May 22, 2025)

"I use Javanese every day, both in the village and on campus. But even on campus, I might have to adapt to my friends because not everyone understands Javanese." (Interview with MN, May 23, 2025)

"Using Javanese in everyday life is a characteristic of most Indonesians, especially those living on the island of Java. Using Javanese in everyday life is a factor in its ease of pronunciation (easy to understand)." (AF Interview, May 22, 2025)

Some Differences in the Use of Javanese Between the Older and Younger Generations in Village Communities

The older generation typically uses polite Javanese when speaking to younger people, but sometimes younger people's speech isn't as refined as their elders, perhaps because they don't yet know the proper language or simply use more refined language. I often encounter younger generations using Ngoko Javanese. As younger generations, we should also be able to speak more politely to older generations, such as using Krama language when communicating. This is due to the influence of the environment, media, and

education that differ between the generations. The older generation typically continues to use Javanese in communication, whether with family, friends, or the surrounding environment. The Javanese used by the older generation tends to be thicker with a distinctive accent and vocabulary, because they are accustomed to using the language since childhood and have undergone a process of language absorption and development that is different from previous generations.

Meanwhile, the younger generation tends to be more influenced by a more modern environment, media, and education. The Javanese spoken by the younger generation may be more diluted and influenced by the Indonesian or other regional languages they hear or learn in school. However, differences in Javanese between the older and younger generations are not always detrimental. The younger generation may have a broader vocabulary and be accustomed to a more diverse language, while the older generation has unique characteristics and characteristics that the younger generation may lack.

The Use of Javanese is Influenced by Education Level and Social Status in Everyday Communication

Education level and social status also influence individuals in using Javanese, whether Krama or Ngoko. If someone speaks to someone of higher education and social status, they use Krama Javanese when speaking. This is because people believe that speaking Krama Javanese can be more respectful, and they also play an important role in society. Both influence this; when someone has a higher level of education, they will know how to respect someone by being careful with their words. As for social status, often people with lower social status are more careful in using Javanese, especially with people of higher

social status. Education level and social status are not always our benchmarks in language. An individual's education level and social status can influence the use of Javanese in everyday life. Javanese has different levels of language depending on the situation and who is being spoken to. Krama Javanese is basically used by someone with a high level of education and social status, such as officials, academics, or high professions. Meanwhile, Ngoko Javanese is generally used by people with a lower level of education and social status, for example, traders or motorcycle taxi drivers.

Changes in the Use of Javanese in Village Communities

Some interview results from several sources:

"The changes in the use of Javanese itself haven't had much of an impact because they're very minor. Perhaps there have been some changes with the replacement of Javanese with Indonesian, but people here still use Javanese more often." (Interview with MN, May 23, 2025)

Nowadays, the use of Javanese is rare, especially among young children who speak Indonesian. Language use can reflect the community in a region. Changes in Javanese language use can affect a community's cultural identity. If Javanese is no longer widely used in society, this can lead to the loss of Javanese cultural characteristics and threaten the existence of cultural identity. In this case, changes in Javanese language use can affect how Javanese people perceive themselves and how others perceive Javanese culture. This change can lead to cultural mixing and create a more inclusive and dynamic cultural identity. In this context, changes in Javanese language use can be part of a natural process of cultural evolution and can strengthen

the cultural identity of a community group. Therefore, it is important to understand that changes in Javanese language use can affect a community's cultural identity and this is also part of the dynamic and ever-changing process of cultural development.

Reasons Why the Use of Javanese is Still Considered Important in Village Communities

If we cannot speak Javanese, we as Javanese people will be at a disadvantage and could even be said to be "Javanese people who can't speak Javanese." In village life, people who can speak Javanese krama are considered respectful to others. The use of Javanese is important, especially in villages where Javanese is also always used. Especially when communicating with elders, manners must be used. The use of Javanese is still considered important in society, especially in the Javanese region of Indonesia, because Javanese is a language rich in meaning, values, and culture, and its use often reflects the identity, pride, and sense of solidarity of the Javanese people. Javanese is part of the identity and cultural heritage of the Javanese people, as well as an effort to maintain the existence and continuity of the Javanese language as one of Indonesia's important cultural assets. The use of Javanese is considered a symbol of respect for others. Social Discrimination Against Those Who Are Less Proficient in Javanese in Village Society

Based on the results of interviews with several residents, it can be seen that in the Kisik village community, Bungah District, Gresik Regency, there is no social discrimination against those who are less proficient in Javanese, because the village community itself is aware of it, and it can be said that if they speak Javanese but still make mistakes or errors, it is still normal because they are still learning to master the language. In

Sumberteguh village, Kudu District, Jombang Regency, social discrimination against those who are less proficient in Javanese is rare, but it does occur. This often happens to small children whose parents teach them Indonesian. Local residents will argue like "wong Jawa wae kok gaya bicara bahasa Indonesia" meaning "why are Javanese people speaking Indonesian?"

"There's no discrimination regarding language here, so it all depends on the individual's preference for which language they choose to use." (EF Interview, May 22, 2025)

There is no discrimination in the Karang Dagangan village of Bandarkedungmulyo, Jombang. However, in some areas, there may be social discrimination against those who are less proficient. They consider Javanese to be essential for preserving the culture and identity of a region or community. Therefore, those who are not proficient are considered less connected and even disrespectful of local culture and traditions. In Ngumpakdalem village, Dander District, Bojonegoro Regency, there is no discrimination against those who are less proficient in Javanese.

Rural Community Communication Strategies in Interacting with Various Social Groups

Rural communities use different communication strategies when interacting with different social groups. Here are some communication strategies used by rural communities to interact with various social groups.

Face to face communication: Face-to-face communication is a form of communication that is predominantly relationship-oriented. Villagers often communicate directly, or face-to-face, because it's more comfortable, avoids misunderstandings between speakers, and

provides more freedom and allows for strengthening ties with others.

Friendly and polite approach: Rural communities often adopt a friendly and polite approach when interacting with different social groups. Mutual respect and empathy are essential to creating a harmonious and respectful environment.

Building trust: Effective communication requires trust. Rural communities can build trust by respecting differences and maintaining the secrets and privacy of the social groups they interact with. They can also demonstrate an openness to learning and understanding the views and values of those groups.

Looking for common ground Rural communities can seek common ground between their social groups and those of other groups. This could include shared values, similar interests, or shared challenges. By finding common ground, they can build better bridges of communication.

Using inclusive language: In communication, the use of inclusive language can help reduce inequality and strengthen mutual respect. Rural communities can use non-discriminatory language and be mindful of the use of words or phrases that might offend different social groups.

Building dialogue Open and constructive dialogue is essential for communicating with diverse social groups. Rural communities can foster discussions that involve listening to each other, understanding each other's perspectives, and finding solutions to emerging problems together.

Using social media and technology: Technology, including social media, can be an effective tool for communicating with diverse social groups. Rural communities can utilize online platforms to network, share stories, and hold discussions involving diverse social groups.

Using Javanese Speaking When Interacting

Javanese speech has levels depending on who you're speaking to and the context. Javanese language has two levels: Ngoko (slang) and Krama (slang). Ngoko itself is further subdivided into two: "Ngoko Lugu" and "Ngoko Alus." The basic form of Javanese speech is Ngoko Lugu. This form of speech is used when speaking to people of the same age or younger, as well as to someone of high standing. The same. Such as conversations between parents and children, superiors and subordinates, and peers. There is also Ngoko alus, which is the second level of Javanese speech. Ngoko alus is used in communication with people who are close, but still have a sense of respect or awkwardness between each other. Such as interactions between colleagues at work. Then there is Krama, a form of Javanese speech divided into two, namely Krama Lugu and Krama Alus. Krama Lugu is a Javanese speech that is one level higher than ngoko alus. Krama lugu is used in communication interactions between elders (in age), or those of higher authority or position, and friends who are not yet close. For example, a young person in a village might use "krama lugu" when speaking to his parents or a respected village elder. They will use polite language, using more respectful words such as "Kulo" (I) and "Sampeyan" (you), and avoid using harsh or inappropriate words. Krama alus is the highest level of Javanese speech. In the context of rural communication, the use of "krama alus" is often seen in interactions between residents and traditional figures, village leaders, or other respected individuals within the community. For example, when someone speaks to a respected village leader, they will use "krama alus," using polite and respectful language.

How to Maintain the Use of Javanese in Rural Communities in East Java

Several ways to maintain the speech/use of Javanese in rural communities in East Java:

By always using Javanese when speaking, but we also have to see who the person we are talking to is, because by looking at the person we are talking to, we will be able to understand whether he knows what we are talking about or not, the important thing is not to confuse the person we are talking to.

It must start from the family environment.

Parents can model the use of Javanese for their children. Another way is through the school environment. It's best not to eliminate Javanese language learning from schools, and teachers can designate a specific day for the entire Javanese language. There are ways to maintain the use of Javanese, one of which is by getting used to communicating in Javanese. Perhaps it could start with simple things, starting from the smallest circle, such as family, village community, etc. The point is, we as the younger generation should not feel ashamed if we use Javanese. Create a Javanese language community, where the community requires us to speak Javanese, or we can teach/provide insight to the younger generation so that we are proud and must preserve the Javanese language.

Teaching Javanese language education in schools. Schools can be the primary medium for preserving Javanese in rural areas. One option is to include regional language lessons, particularly Javanese, in the curriculum from elementary to high school.

Strengthening cultural identity. A crucial factor in supporting the use of Javanese is strengthening the nation's cultural identity. This can be achieved by introducing Javanese culture and traditions to

the younger generation, for example through arts and cultural performances, wayang puppet shows, and cultural exhibitions. By strengthening cultural identity, it is hoped that the community will grow in pride and maintain the use of Javanese as part of their cultural identity.

With the help of technology. It is possible to increase the use of common languages in rural areas. One way is by developing Javanese media such as radio, television, and social media. This way, people can more easily access information in the target language and continue to cultivate the habit of using the language in their daily lives. Preserving the use of Javanese in rural areas requires the cooperation of all stakeholders, including the government, community, and educational institutions. Maintaining the use of Javanese aims to strengthen cultural identity and respect the diversity of Indonesian languages.

Relationship with Communication Accommodation Theory

Howard Giles (1973) in his Communication Accommodation Theory explains that to achieve certain social goals in the communication process, individuals must change the way they speak to their interlocutors. Convergence, divergence, or over-accommodation are some examples of adjustment. These three strategies emerge clearly in the daily lives of people in rural East Java, especially among the 13-25-year-olds who were the subjects of the study.

First Convergence: According to Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, Coupland & Coupland, 1991), convergence is a communication strategy in which a person adjusts their speech to suit their interlocutor to create similarity, familiarity, and social harmony. This process is neither complete nor automatic;

speakers will simply change some aspects of their interlocutor's speech style, depending on their social perceptions and the purpose of the interaction. The phenomenon of convergence in Javanese language use in rural East Javanese communities is clearly visible in the efforts of young speakers to adapt their speech style (ngoko or krama) to their social status, age, and social relationship with the person they are speaking to. As shown by the interview results:

"You can learn to speak more politely, especially to your elders." (AF Interview, May 22, 2025)

"I feel that when I use Javanese, my speech is more controlled and I can be more polite to older people." (SH Interview, May 22, 2025)

Both quotes show sociolinguistic awareness among the younger generation, they change their language style from ngoko to krama as a way to accommodate language and society. The convergence in this research includes the use of language as a strategy to respect and adapt Javanese cultural values, by emphasizing the importance of politeness (verbal etiquette).

According to Giles (1991), a person's perception of how others communicate. Young speakers in villages learn to read social situations, when they speak to elders, they feel the need to use krama alus to avoid being considered rude, and when they speak to peers, they use ngoko lugu to maintain good relations. Thus, convergence helps to keep intergenerational relationships cordial and respectful.

Furthermore, this phenomenon can be explained in an educational context. Convergence practices can be used as contextual teaching materials in Javanese language learning to instill polite language in schools. To help students understand when and to whom certain language is

used, teachers can use real-life examples of conversations from rural life, such as the difference between krama alus and ngoko. Therefore, learning Javanese is not only about linguistics but also about building socio-cultural skills that are essential for character.

Second Divergence: According to Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 1991), divergence is a communication strategy in which speakers demonstrate differences verbally and nonverbally rather than adapting to others. While convergence aims to achieve social closeness, divergence is a way to assert one's identity, social status, or membership in a particular group.

While divergence does not necessarily imply conflict, it is a strategy for maintaining one's original linguistic identity and strengthening social boundaries. Interviews with several informants indicate that they frequently use Indonesian or ngoko outside the home, particularly in Javanese contexts:

"I use Javanese every day, both in the village and on campus, but even on campus, I might have to adjust to my friends because not everyone understands Javanese." (MN Interview, May 23, 2025)

This excerpt demonstrates a type of adaptive divergence in which conscious young speakers choose to assert a modern, egalitarian, and contextual identity by eschewing traditional speech norms, known as krama. They don't intend to violate norms, but rather to conform to the new social norms prevailing at school or among their peers.

This phenomenon indicates a shift in the linguistic values of the younger generation in rural East Java. The older generation views the use of krama as a sign of respect and politeness, while the younger generation prioritizes equality in

communication and linguistic efficiency. In other words, divergence is not simply a rejection of culture; it is a process of negotiating linguistic identity between modernity and tradition.

Giles (1991) explains from a theoretical perspective that divergence occurs when speakers do not feel the need to accommodate or want to maintain social distance. In this study, there are two ways to look at it:

- a. The younger generation shows a modern identity by using ngoko or Indonesian.
- b. Parents use krama alus as a sign of high social status and authority.

These two groups interact with each other, and the resulting communication dynamics demonstrate how language functions as a symbolic tool to demonstrate social differences. This divergence does not lead to social division; instead, it demonstrates the cultural ability of rural communities to balance new and old values.

The phenomenon of divergence has significant implications for Javanese language teaching. It is crucial for teachers to understand that young students' tendency to use ngoko or Indonesian is not a rejection of regional languages. Rather, it is an indication of the need to communicate across generations and cultures. Therefore, in teaching Javanese, these elements must be taken into account. For example, the social functions of each speech level (ngoko, madya, and krama) must be taught, and students must be given the opportunity to express their identities without sacrificing politeness. With this understanding, teachers can develop Javanese language learning that is more contextual, flexible, and in line with the communication realities of the younger generation because divergence reflects the sociolinguistic dynamics of rural communities that continue to change over time.

Third Over-Accommodation: According to the Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 1991), over-accommodation is a communication behavior where someone adjusts too much to their conversation partner, giving the impression of being unnatural or even condescending. Even if done with good intentions, such as wanting to be polite or respectful, the conversation partner may perceive it as excessive, insincere, or artificial, which hinders communication.

In the context of Javanese language use in rural East Java, there is a phenomenon of over-accommodation, demonstrated by young speakers who attempt to use *krama alus* (a polite manner) without understanding the context or vocabulary. These attempts often create an awkward, humorous, or even misleading impression rather than helping people speak. According to one source:

"...the use of krama alus is often wrong, sometimes it's even funny when friends hear it" (MN Interview, May 23, 2025).

This statement represents a clear example of over-accommodation. The young speaker is trying hard to be polite, but due to her language limitations and unfavorable social circumstances, communication is disrupted. According to Giles (1991), over-accommodation can cause interlocutors to feel unequal, as if one person is "assuming a superior role" and the other "is perceived as inferior or incompetent."

This can occur in everyday village life, such as when children try to speak formally in a quiet setting or use excessive *krama alus* (affectionate language) with their peers. Such styles can be perceived as "dry" or "unnatural" rather than polite. This demonstrates that linguistic politeness depends on context: the

situation, social relationships, and perceptions between speakers.

The impact of over-accommodation on education is also significant. Some students become insecure in speaking Javanese due to fear of making mistakes when using polite manners. They may also avoid formal conversations or feel Javanese is too difficult to learn. Ultimately, this reduces their desire to learn the local language. This aligns with Giles' explanation that over-accommodation can lead to negative attitudes toward speakers.

Therefore, teachers must understand that language politeness is not solely measured by how polite the words are, but by the context. To help students understand when convergence is necessary and when over-accommodation is necessary, teaching polite language should be accompanied by situational exercises. Situational exercises such as conversation simulations can be conducted at home, at school, or in public spaces. Furthermore, teachers can emphasize the idea that using good language is better than using bad language. This method will build students' confidence and encourage them to learn Javanese without fear of making mistakes.

Completing the research Musyarofah et al., (2025) At SDN Purwoyoso 04 Semarang, the focus was on the use of Javanese *Krama Inggil* to instill politeness values in elementary schools. The results showed that students preferred learning Javanese and did not receive support from their families and communities. However, this remains difficult to implement. Javanese is used as a tool for character building in formal educational contexts. In addition, a case study of Javanese speech levels (*ngoko*, *madya*, and *krama*) in urban society was studied by the research. (Bagus Wahyu Setyawan et al., 2024) The research results show

that social factors such as age, social status, social distance, and conversational context influence the use of different speech levels. Ngoko language is used between equal speakers in informal situations and to show respect, while krama language is used in formal situations and to show respect. According to this research, manners in Javanese function as a sign of politeness and social respect. Unlike this study, which uses Giles' Communication Accommodation theory as its theoretical foundation, this study examines how social processes and intergenerational relations influence speech level choices in rural settings.

This contrasts with the first study, which focused on implementation in formal educational institutions, and the second study, which examined speech variation in urban communities. Furthermore, the results of this study indicate that linguistic convergence (the use of krama (respectful terms) toward elders or community leaders) is particularly strong in rural areas due to social norms emphasizing harmony and respect. However, there is also divergence among the younger generation, who prefer to demonstrate their modern identity by speaking ngoko (language) or Indonesian in informal interactions. This suggests that Javanese language stratification in rural areas is not merely a linguistic phenomenon, but rather a socio-communicative mechanism used to regulate status, proximity, and identity.

Thus, this study does not reject the results of previous research, but complements and expands the scope of the analysis. Compared to the two previous studies, which emphasized politeness and variations in speech levels, this study adds a theoretical and functional dimension, namely how communication accommodation processes (convergence,

divergence, and over-accommodation) shape social interaction patterns in rural communities. Compared to previous studies, the application of this study's findings to Javanese language learning is based on social context.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the use of Javanese depends on the speech level appropriate to social status and situational factors. Understanding and respecting speech levels in Javanese is an important part of effective and polite communication in Javanese society. The use of Javanese in everyday interactions reflects an awareness of the importance of speaking politely, respecting elders, and maintaining cultural identity. Although adjustments in Javanese use occur depending on the social context, Javanese remains an integral part of Indonesian society. There are differences in the use of Javanese between the older and younger generations. The older generation tends to use refined and formal Krama Javanese, while the younger generation may have less mastery of Krama Javanese and more often use Ngoko Javanese or Indonesian in informal situations. This difference is influenced by the different environments, media, and education between the two generations.

Despite these differences, it is important to respect and maintain the values of politeness, namely the rules of etiquette in the Javanese language. The younger generation needs to learn and understand these values and respect Javanese in everyday interactions. To preserve the Javanese language, it is crucial for the younger generation to continue learning and using Javanese properly. Furthermore, efforts can be made through education, the environment, and the media to introduce and increase understanding and

appreciation of Javanese. Therefore, Javanese can continue to live and become an important element of cultural identity for the Indonesian people, especially on the island of Java.

Rural communities use different communication strategies when interacting with different social groups. The following are some communication strategies used by rural communities to interact with various social groups: face-to-face communication patterns, a friendly and polite approach, building trust, seeking common ground, using inclusive language, establishing dialogue, and using social media and technology. Some ways to maintain the use of Javanese in rural communities in East Java include always using Javanese when speaking, starting from the family environment, teaching Javanese language education in schools, and strengthening cultural identity with the help of technology.

Results This research has a significant influence on Javanese language learning and character education. First, the results show that understanding of Javanese language stratification (ngoko–madya–krama) can be used as contextual teaching material to teach politeness and good communication in schools. Second, communication accommodation theory can help teachers and students understand how to adapt language to social situations and interlocutors. Third, schools should create Javanese language learning models based on social practices, such as conversation simulations across ages and contexts, so that students not only memorize the language but also understand its social functions. Therefore, the findings of this study not only provide an overview of the dynamics of Javanese language use in rural areas but also provide an empirical basis for developing Javanese language learning

that is relevant, communicative, and based on local cultural values.

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