



Semantic Analysis of the Sinjab Language in Relation to the Javanese Language in Batang

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Abstract

The Sinjab language is a local slang variety spoken in Batang that reflects the cultural and social identity, as well as the creativity, of the local community. However, it currently faces the risk of extinction due to a lack of documentation and intergenerational transmission. This study aims to identify how the Sinjab language is used in the daily routines of the Batang community and to analyze the semantic meanings of Sinjab vocabulary in Javanese. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method using participatory observation, interviews, and documentation with active speakers of the Sinjab language. Data were obtained from primary sources through direct interaction within the community as well as from secondary sources such as YouTube videos and posts by local communities. The research findings indicate that the Sinjab language possesses a unique lexical structure through word-formation processes such as metathesis, phoneme addition, and borrowing elements from other languages. Sinjab vocabulary exhibits semantic relationships—such as synonymy, antonymy, metaphor, and idiomatic expressions—that are not found in Standard Javanese. Furthermore, observations reveal a significant decline in its use, which is now limited to specific social groups, such as punks or marginalized individuals. This study underscores that documenting and revitalizing the Sinjab language are essential to preserving the continuity of this nearly extinct regional cultural heritage.

Keywords: *Sinjab language, semantics, Javanese language, language preservation, local slang*

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INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a tool for communication but also reflects the social, cultural, and historical identity of a community. In the context of Javanese society, the phenomenon of local slang, such as Sinjab, which has developed in Batang, Central Java, is tangible evidence of social

dynamics and of the younger generation's collective identity. Sinjab reflects adaptation and identity shaped by diverse social interactions, including external cultural influences and shifting societal values (Nugroho & Kusuma, 2023).

Sinjab is the result of a local socialization process heavily influenced by

intergenerational interactions and shifts in the social context. The younger generation's use of this language creates a unique space for identity. This process of interaction also reinforces local values and cultural wisdom embedded in the linguistic elements used in everyday communication. For example, communication in local dialects, as practiced by college students, fosters a strong cultural presence and serves to preserve identity amid modernization (Nugroho & Kusuma, 2023)

However, the Sinjab language now faces the threat of extinction. The decline in the number of active speakers—caused by the limited use of this language in public spaces and a lack of attention to documentation and academic research—highlights the risk of losing an important form of cultural expression. This aligns with the challenges faced in preserving other forms of local culture, which are also threatened by modern values and practices that often conflict with existing cultural heritage (Putra & Yamani, 2023). Therefore, it is important to make efforts to comprehensively document and analyze the Sinjab language, so that its significance can be understood and appreciated as part of Java's cultural richness (Adnyana, 2021).

Furthermore, the interplay between local values and the influence of modernity adds another layer of complexity to linguistic and cultural dynamics. In a broader context, this phenomenon demonstrates how Javanese society adapts to change, enabling it not

only to survive but also to thrive in an ever-changing social landscape, including in the realms of language and communication (Alif et al., 2020; Laili et al., 2021). Language preservation efforts must involve active community participation to ensure that local identity remains alive even amid rapid waves of change (Saleh et al., 2021).

The current phenomenon of Sinjab language use, which is limited to marginalized groups such as punks, pickpockets, and snatch thieves, reflects a significant decline in the language's broader use. In the past, the Sinjab language served as a secret code to avoid being understood by outsiders, particularly during the colonial era; however, today, only a few individuals use it in their interactions. This threatens the language's sustainability (Bangun et al., 2024)

Young people in Batang tend to neglect using Sinjab in their daily lives. This decline can be attributed to the influence of slang and communication increasingly shaped by social media, where foreign languages and contemporary expressions dominate interactions. Studies show that the popularity of slang among teenagers contributes to a shift away from the use of local languages, including Sinjab, which is rich in local meaning (Luthfiyani et al., 2022). Students in schools, for example, are exposed to new forms of language that may not prioritize the regional language (Rohmawati et al., 2022)

The lack of intergenerational transmission is also a key factor in the threat of extinction facing the Sinjab

language. Without adequate teaching and documentation, knowledge of this language will not be passed on to the next generation. Several studies indicate that unexpected shifts in language and language behavior among young people also affect the existence of local languages (Luthfiyani et al., 2022). In this context, it is important to involve young speakers in preserving this linguistic heritage so that the value and existence of the Sinjab language can be maintained, just as with the preservation of other regional languages (Putri et al., 2023)

Ultimately, the challenges facing the Sinjab language reflect broader issues related to identity and cultural heritage in Indonesia. Efforts must be made to revive communication in the Sinjab language, as it is not only a tool for communication but also a symbol of the community's history and identity that must be valued and preserved amid rapid change (Malawat, 2023)

In the context of preserving local languages and cultures, the study of the Sinjab language is crucial given its role not only as a means of communication but also as a symbol of resistance, solidarity, and creativity within the local community. Especially for the younger generation in Batang, understanding and using the Sinjab language can be a crucial step in fostering a love for their region's cultural heritage and strengthening their identity (Faridah, 2023; Rohana et al., 2024). This language, with its rich history as a means of communication among groups to challenge external powers, must be documented and

analyzed to revitalize its function in modern society.

The urgency of this research lies in the fact that the Sinjab language is part of an intangible cultural heritage that is being eroded by cultural homogenization and the dominance of the national language. Efforts to document and analyze the meaning of this language will not only reintroduce the Sinjab language to the wider public but also contribute to the preservation of other regional languages and cultures (Inun, 2022; Rohana et al., 2024). In a broader context, regional language revitalization programs must integrate local wisdom and develop regional language-based learning materials (Yanti et al., 2022) so that the Sinjab language can be utilized in educational and everyday communication contexts, particularly among young people (Budiono & Noviani, 2024)

Furthermore, by raising public awareness and pride in the Sinjab language, this study is expected to lay a strong foundation for the development of local content programs. The implementation of policies supporting the teaching of regional languages in schools—as has been done in several other regions in Indonesia—has proven successful in strengthening the use of local languages in daily life (Mita et al., 2023; Wagianti et al., 2022). Additionally, collaboration among various stakeholders—including the government, communities, and educational institutions—is essential to creating an ecosystem that supports the preservation of

endangered regional languages (Ramadhan et al., 2020; Taryono et al., 2025)

In this study, the focus will be on the analysis of semantic meaning, which is essential for understanding language dynamics, particularly in the context of the Sinjab language. Semantics, as a branch of linguistics, concerns the study of meaning, which Palmer (Aminuddin, 2001, p. 15) describes as the ability to “interpret” or assign meaning. As an essential element of language, semantics plays a vital role in conveying meaning from utterances to other language users (Li & Siew, 2020). Chaer (2005:2) explains that the term “semantics” derives from the Greek word “sema,” meaning “sign” or “to signify,” underscoring the importance of language in conveying meaning through signs recognized by society (Khalid, 2020)

Various previous studies have touched upon the existence of the Sinjab language but have not examined its meaning in depth. (Sriatun and Arimi, 2023) conducted a study titled “A Study of the Emergence of Sinjab Slang in the Batang Urban Area,” which applied sociolinguistic theory and found patterns in the formation of Sinjab slang that deviate from the rules of standard Javanese grammar. The classification of semantic relationships in Sinjab slang includes synonyms, antonyms, polysemy, metaphors, and euphemisms. Additionally, two supplementary functions of Sinjab slang complement its primary functions: slang used for mockery and slang

used to praise, involving synonyms, antonyms, and metaphors.

A subsequent study titled “Influence of Societal Factors on the Emergence of Language Variants: The Study of Indonesian Language Use in Javanese Society (Atmawati, 2018) focused on the fact that Javanese speakers often mix Javanese krama vocabulary into Indonesian conversations as a form of respect.

Another study conducted by Luthfiar Laeis (2012), titled “The Use of Sinjab Language in the City and Regency of Batang,” noted that the Sinjab language is used to discuss confidential topics and foster intimacy within specific social groups. This language is used in very specific contexts and is influenced by the conversational situation and the relationships among the participants.

A subsequent study was conducted by Winarti et al. (2024), titled “Analysis of the Formation Process of Sinjab Slang in Batang Regency.” This study found that the formation of vocabulary in Sinjab slang is not arbitrary but follows specific linguistic patterns. The results of the data analysis show that the process of Sinjab slang formation is dominated by metathesis (phoneme shifting), either in its pure form or in combination with other phonological processes.

Observations conducted in Batang revealed that the Sinjab language was once widely used in the community's social life, even during the Dutch colonial period. This language was used as a code or secret so

that the colonizers could not understand it. Currently, the language is used only by certain groups and has lost its function as an everyday language. The younger generation is almost entirely unfamiliar with the Sinjab language, except in the context of covert communication. This phenomenon underscores the urgency of this study as an effort to document and revitalize. This study is expected to introduce the Sinjab language to the academic community and the general public, and to revive awareness of local culture amid the rapid influx of global influences. Therefore, this study aims to determine how the Sinjab language is used in community communication in Batang and to examine the semantic meanings of Sinjab vocabulary compared with their equivalents in Javanese.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to examine the forms of Sinjab language use in community communication in Batang and to analyze the semantic meanings of Sinjab vocabulary in comparison with their Javanese equivalents. This approach was chosen because it provides a deep understanding of linguistic phenomena within the community's natural social and cultural context.

This is a field study. The research is exploratory in nature, aiming to describe linguistic phenomena, particularly regarding the forms of usage and semantic meanings found in the Sinjab language.

This study uses two types of data sources: primary data, consisting of observations and interviews with Sinjab speakers in Batang; and secondary data, obtained from documentation such as videos from the Ngopot Mboo YouTube channel and posts from the Postingan Wong Mbatang community, as well as from previous research.

Techniques Data using Participatory Observation, in which the researcher directly observes the use of the Sinjab language. The observation is conducted with the researcher's active involvement in the speakers' social environment, noting the forms of speech acts that arise, and documenting them through field notes and audiovisual recordings. The researcher also obtained data

from previous research; the YouTube channel "Ngopot Data " was analyzed using a qualitative interpretive approach with comparative semantic analysis. The stages of analysis included: (1) Data reduction, which involved filtering data relevant to the focus of the study, namely the usage patterns and meanings of Sinjab vocabulary; (2) Categorization and classification, in which the identified vocabulary was grouped into thematic categories (e.g., nouns, interrogative words, adverbial phrases, numerals, and pronouns) and compared with their equivalents in Javanese; and (3) Drawing conclusions, where the findings were used to answer the research questions and formulate conclusions regarding the

semantic characteristics of the Sinjab language and its differences from Javanese. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, a source triangulation technique was used by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, member checking was conducted by requesting clarification from informants to ensure the accuracy of the interpretation of meaning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Sinjab Language Use in Daily Communication

Based on observations and interviews, the Sinjab language is currently spoken only by certain social groups, such as punk communities and marginalized individuals, and only in closed communication contexts. This shows a shift in function from what was originally a tool of intergenerational communication and resistance against the colonizers to a limited, closed code. This finding is in line with the research of Sriatun & Arimi (2023), who stated that the use of Sinjab slang deviates from standard Javanese grammar and has additional functions, such as ridicule and praise. However, this study reinforces that these deviations are not only lexical but also social, as their use is now limited to certain groups.

In everyday life, the use of Sinjab is more prevalent in the vocabulary of simple nouns and activities (see Table 2). For example, the words *jangkrik* (hour), *deswang* (water/drink), *ngaspan* (eating), and *mbarut* (sleeping). These words are used in informal

conversations between peers who already know each other, especially when discussing things that outsiders don't want to know. This confirms Sinjab's early function as a secret language that still survives, albeit on a very limited scale.

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the researcher obtained the following data.

Table 1. Examples of Sinjab Sentences

Example s of Sinjab Sentence s	The Meaning of Using the Javanese Language	Purpose and explanation
<i>mbangkut</i> <i>padung</i> <i>mbo</i>	<i>tuku rokok</i> <i>bolo</i>	The vocabulary is used as a means of communication to buy cigarettes at the stall, where the word "mbangkut" has the meaning of "buy," padung has the meaning of "cigarette," and "mbo" is an additional sentence as a greeting of "lombo," which means the word "bolo" / friend.
<i>Engkak</i> <i>mbungkut</i> <i>sambo</i>	<i>Aku tuku</i> <i>bakso</i>	The vocabulary has a context to tell a friend that he bought meatballs.
<i>Kasmat</i> <i>mbangkut</i> <i>mpos</i>	<i>Mangkat</i> <i>tuku apa</i>	The vocabulary is used in the context of asking the other person a question. <i>Kasmat</i> , in the sense of leaving or departing, can also mean "leaving"; buying here means

		"buying," and mpos means "opo/apa" (what). So, in conclusion, the sentence has the context of "what do you want to buy"	
<i>Enggak wungkis gawe disen milangkas</i>	<i>aku wis gawe desain limalas</i>	The vocabulary is used in context to inform the interlocutor that he has made 15 designs.	
<i>metas mbakut metas mbakut ngaspan</i>	<i>metu, metu, metu, mangan</i>	The vocabulary is used in the context of explaining to the interlocutor that he is an activity: he is told to go out to buy something, then to go out again to buy food.	
<i>tromole rongkak lanjan mbo</i>	<i>motore ga jalan/mog ok bolo</i>	This vocabulary is used to explain to the interlocutor that he told his friend his motorbike was not running/breaking down.	
Below is an example of the semantic meaning of Sinjab vocabulary compared with its equivalent in Javanese.			
Table 2. Comparison of the semantic meaning of Sinjab vocabulary with its equivalent in Javanese			
Category	Sinjab Words	Javanese Words	Meaning of Indonesian
<i>Tembung Aran/ Nouns</i>	<i>jangkrik</i>	<i>jam</i>	hours
	<i>cemung</i>	<i>omah</i>	home
	<i>yangkos</i>	<i>kaos</i>	t-shirt
	<i>kanjet</i>	<i>jaket</i>	Jacket
	<i>wungko ng</i>	<i>uwong</i>	People
	<i>loncom</i>	<i>celana</i>	Pants
	<i>deswang</i>	<i>banyu</i>	Water
	<i>padung</i>	<i>udud</i>	Cigarette
	<i>tromol</i>	<i>monor</i>	Motor
	<i>candik</i>	<i>adik</i>	Sister/br other
	<i>jenang</i>	<i>anak</i>	Son/dau ghter
	<i>esbeh</i>	<i>bapak</i>	Father
	<i>siwut</i>	<i>ibu</i>	Mother
	<i>yambu</i>	<i>mbaky u</i>	Older sister
	<i>cangkan g</i>	<i>kakang</i>	Older brother
	<i>lombo</i>	<i>bolo, konco</i>	Friend
	<i>treweng</i>	<i>weteng</i>	Stomach
	<i>trombil</i>	<i>mobil</i>	Car
	<i>deswang</i>	<i>wedang</i>	Drinks
	<i>yangka m</i>	<i>pitik</i>	Chicken
	<i>hamit</i>	<i>dhuwit</i>	Money
	<i>sapar</i>	<i>pasar</i>	Market
	<i>ngaspan</i>	<i>manga n</i>	Eating
	<i>ndeswan g</i>	<i>ngombe</i>	Drink
	<i>mbarut</i>	<i>туру</i>	Sleen
	<i>ngendog</i>	<i>ngomo ng</i>	Talk
	<i>lanjan</i>	<i>jalan</i>	Roads
	<i>kasmat</i>	<i>mangk at</i>	Go
	<i>longgek</i>	<i>golek</i>	Search
	<i>mlingsi</i>	<i>adus</i>	Bath
	<i>mbanyu t</i>	<i>nyamb ut gawe</i>	Work
	<i>mbarut</i>	<i>туру</i>	Sleep
	<i>mbangk ut</i>	<i>tuku</i>	Buy
	<i>wangge</i>	<i>gawe</i>	Make/w ork
	<i>lendhok</i>	<i>ndelok</i>	See
	<i>rundung</i>	<i>durung</i>	Not yet
	<i>wungkis</i>	<i>wis</i>	already

<i>Tembung Andharan/Ad jectives</i>	<i>ngasmin</i>	<i>main, a pik</i>	Good/nice
	<i>pangik</i>	<i>ayu</i>	Beautiful
	<i>gedong</i>	<i>gedhe</i>	Large
	<i>wunto</i>	<i>tuwo</i>	Old
	<i>nengko m</i>	<i>enom</i>	Young
	<i>mengka k</i>	<i>akeh</i>	Lots
	<i>lincik</i>	<i>cilik</i>	Small
	<i>cengel</i>	<i>angel</i>	Difficult
	<i>rembat</i>	<i>berat</i>	Heavy
	<i>rohis</i>	<i>murah</i>	Cheap
<i>Tembung Ganti/ Pronouns</i>	<i>engkak</i>	<i>aku</i>	I am
	<i>wongke</i>	<i>kowe</i>	You
	<i>wendhe</i>	<i>awake dhewe</i>	We
	<i>mpos</i>	<i>sapa</i>	Who
	<i>mpos</i>	<i>apa</i>	What
	<i>iyik</i>	<i>iki</i>	This
	<i>wungki</i>	<i>kuwi</i>	That
	<i>mengka k</i>	<i>akeh</i>	Lots
<i>Tembung wilangan/nu mber words</i>	<i>enjis/ njis</i>	<i>siji</i>	One
	<i>rengkon g</i>	<i>loro</i>	Two
	<i>letung</i>	<i>telu</i>	Three
	<i>ketapan g</i>	<i>papat</i>	Four
	<i>milang</i>	<i>lima</i>	Five
	<i>trengke m</i>	<i>enem</i>	Six
	<i>ketipung</i>	<i>pitu</i>	Seven
	<i>wolu</i>	<i>wolu</i>	Eight
	<i>ngos</i>	<i>sanga</i>	Nine
	<i>saklup</i>	<i>sepuluh</i>	Ten
	<i>sewelas</i>	<i>sewelas</i>	Eleven
	<i>rengkon gkas</i>	<i>rolas</i>	Twelve
	<i>milangk as</i>	<i>limolas</i>	Fifteen

	<i>rengkon glup</i>	<i>rongpul uh</i>	Twenty
	<i>kenyet</i>	<i>seket</i>	Fifty
	<i>sakwes</i>	<i>sewu</i>	One thousand
	<i>rengkon gwes</i>	<i>rongew u</i>	Two thousand
	<i>milangw es</i>	<i>limang ewu</i>	Five thousand
<i>Tembung Katrangan/k ata keterangan</i>	<i>sengok</i>	<i>sesuk</i>	Tomorrow
	<i>rumbi, rumbas</i>	<i>mburi</i>	Back
	<i>rongkak</i>	<i>ora</i>	No
<i>Tembung Pitakon/kali mat tanya</i>	<i>mpos</i>	<i>sapa</i>	Who is it
	<i>mpos</i>	<i>apa</i>	what
	<i>rimpo</i>	<i>pira</i>	How many
	<i>kasmat ndi</i>	<i>menya ng endi</i>	Where to go
	<i>rimpe</i>	<i>piye</i>	How
	<i>Iyik jangkrik rimpo?</i>	<i>saiki jam pira</i>	What time is it now

The Process of Word Formation in Sinjab

These findings are in line with research by Winarti et al. (2024), which found that vocabulary formation in Sinjab slang is not arbitrary but follows specific linguistic patterns. Data show that Sinjab's vocabulary is formed through three main processes: metathesis (phoneme transfer), phoneme addition, and borrowing from other languages.

- Metathesis: An example of a *tromol* (from a motor), in which the sequence of the /o/ and /r/ sounds changes. This process is also found in *candika* (dikadik) and *longgek* (golek). Another example is: *cemung* (from *omah*) - metathesis occurs with the change of /o/ to /e/ and /h/ to /ng/.

Immediately *padung* (from *udud*) - there is a change of /u/ to /a/ and /d/ to /ng/.

This phenomenon supports the findings of Sriatun and Winarti (2024) that metathesis is the dominant pattern in the formation of Sinjab slang. This metathesis pattern suggests that Sinjab speakers systematically modified phonology to create secret codes that were not easily understood by outsiders. This corroborates the findings of Sriatun and Arimi (2023), who found that the formation of Sinjab slang deviates from the standard Javanese grammar rules.

- b. Addition of phonemes: For example, *yangkkampit* (chicken), which adds the prefix *yang-* and the *-pit* suffix to the root word. This shows the speaker's creativity in devising variations that sound foreign yet retain a phonological connection to the original word.
- c. Borrowing from other languages: The words *rumah* and *kaos* are of Indonesian origin, and *jaket* is of English origin, but are pronounced with the local pronunciation. This shows that Sinjab is not completely autonomous, but rather absorbs elements from outside as part of the social dynamics of its speakers.

These processes enriched the lexical structure of Sinjab and distinguished it significantly from Standard Javanese, both in terms of sound and form.

Analysis of the Semantic Meaning of Sinjab Vocabulary Compared to Javanese

Semantic analysis shows that Sinjab vocabulary has unique meaning relationships

that are not always directly commensurate with those in Javanese.

a. Synonyms and antonyms

Some Sinjab words have synonyms in Javanese, but with different nuances of meaning. Example:

- 1) *Bolo* and *lombo* both mean 'friend', but *lombo* refers more to a close friend or close friend, while *bolo* is more common.
- 2) Antonyms also appear, for example, *kasmat* (going) as opposed to *teka* (coming) in Javanese, but in Sinjab, there is no direct equivalent for 'come', which indicates a semantic gap in the vocabulary system.

b. Metaphor and Idiom

Some Sinjab expressions are metaphorical; for example, *treweng* in Javanese and *weteng*, which literally means 'stomach' but in certain contexts can be interpreted as 'feeling' or 'desire'. The idiom *mbarut* (sleep) is also often used to express 'rest' in general, not just physical sleep. This shows that the Sinjab language not only transfers lexical meaning but also presents cultural meanings not found in standard Javanese.

c. Differences in Contextual Meaning

The word *deswang* appears twice in the table: as a match for 'water' and 'drink'. This indicates that Sinjab does not strictly distinguish between objects and processed products, unlike the Javanese language, which distinguishes between *banyu* and *wedang*. These findings confirm that Sinjab semantics are more pragmatic and depend

on the conversational context rather than on formal categorization.

The decline in the number of active speakers, the lack of intergenerational transmission, and the dominance of social media are serious threats to the sustainability of Sinjab. This study supports Luthfiyani et al.'s (2022) statement that the influence of foreign languages and modern slang shifts adolescents' use of local languages. However, rich semantic findings—such as metaphors and idiomatics—suggest that Sinjab has irreplaceable cultural value. Therefore, revitalization efforts are not enough to document vocabulary; they must also introduce the meaning and context of their use through formal education and local digital content.

Collaboration between the government, the community, and academia is urgently needed. For example, the development of Sinjab-based local-content materials in schools or the creation of educational videos on platforms such as *YouTube* (e.g., those on the *Ngopot Mboo* channel). Thus, Sinjab can be revived as part of the Batang cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Sinjab is a local slang variety unique to Batang Regency, reflecting the cultural identity and linguistic practices. The use of Sinjab has declined significantly and is now limited to a relatively small community. Semantic analysis shows that although many Sinjab words have equivalents in Javanese, they often exhibit

distinctive shifts in meaning, highlighting the language's uniqueness and complexity.

These findings indicate that Sinjab is more than a linguistic variation; it constitutes an important element of the local community's intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, systematic documentation, preservation, and revitalization efforts are essential to maintaining its existence. Such efforts should involve collaboration among researchers, educational institutions, local communities, and government agencies. Furthermore, engaging younger generations through educational programs, community activities, and digital media is crucial to ensuring that Sinjab remains relevant and continues to be transmitted amid ongoing social and cultural change.

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