

Javanese Language and Cultural Identity in the Indonesian Local Curriculum.

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Indonesia has approximately 742 indigenous languages. One of these languages, Javanese, spoken by tens of millions of speakers, is endangered. There are very few teachers who can teach Javanese and inadequate time is allocated in schools for Javanese language learning. Therefore, a challenge remains to the provision of equitable access to education for all students; and achieving the MDG of Universal Primary Education.

Education has the potential to increase human dignity and strengthen national pride and identity. Local languages and rich cultural diversity give an explicitly Asian identity to the nations of Southeast Asia. However, changing ways of life and the increased mobility of people from various ethnic communities, nations, and countries have contributed to an identity crisis within nations. Many of the younger generation have lost their identity and do not understand their own culture because of the influence of modernity and lack of character education. Current education approaches are not promoting identity and character building.

This paper examines ways in which the Javanese language and cultural identity lessons, as local content, can be inserted into the national curriculum in Indonesia, and contribute to the quality of primary education. In addition, the paper explores challenges and obstacles to the preservation of the Javanese language as an indigenous language in Indonesian schools and its impact on character building and sustainable development in the country. The research methods and analysis use literature studies on the Indonesian curriculum - *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) 2006* and interviews. I chose KTSP at the primary school level as my primary materials to design and model an appropriate, adaptable, and dynamic syllabus for local languages and cultural identity teaching at the primary school level in Indonesia.