

# A Preliminary Research: the Unique Javanese-Chinese Dialect Spoken by Chinese Descendants in Malang

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**Abstract**—Malang, as the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest city in East Java—after Surabaya, the capital of the province, is a quite diverse city in terms of languages. As it is City of Education, Industry and Tourism (Tri Bina Cita), it opens and welcomes new comers from many different parts of Indonesia to come for studying, doing business and vacation. Many even decide to stay and settle down. One of those newcomers—Chinese people—apparently did come to Malang even long before Tri Bina Cita was formulated in 1962 and, mostly, they came as traders or laborers. The language they created among themselves obviously; in terms of dialect, has enriched the existing local language, which is dominated by the Javanese. The dialect, Javanese-Chinese which is verbally used by mostly Chinese descendants, is unique for it probably only exists in Malang. As a part of applied linguistics, this sociolinguistics research is a preliminary one which is intended to identify the dialect used by Chinese descendants in Malang. The researchers, as the primary instruments, mostly did library research and used observation and interview as their secondary instruments. The data to be analyzed are in the forms of recorded voices. Thus, the expected results are words, phrases and sentence patterns of the related Javanese-Chinese dialect.

**Keywords**—applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, dialect, Javanese-Chinese dialect

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a country with amazing diversity in culture, Indonesia indeed has uncountable local languages to speak, for instance in Java Island in which Javanese people are the dominant ethnic living there. As a matter of fact, those Javanese people speak different languages and dialects among themselves. The ones who live in East Java Province (as it is seen in Figure 1) use some different vocabulary and dialect from Javanese people who live let us say in Central Java, though in fact they have many similarities. In East Java, especially Surabaya and Malang, the Javanese language used is considered to be less formal and ruder than the other Javanese.



Figure 3. Map of East Java Province seen administratively.

Malang City, indeed, is a big city and even the second largest city in East Java, after the capital of the province, Surabaya. As a matter of fact, in 1962 the City was declared as City of Education, Industry and Tourism, during the *Sidang Paripurna Gotong Royong Kotapraja Malang* and so forth it is called as *Tri Bina Cita Kota Malang*. This motto has made newcomers—from different places and with different purposes—come and visit this City. As a matter of fact, geographically, the City has its own charms to attract people to at least visit it—it has been one of the destinations since long time ago that is why we can find many historical remnants or ruins and even landmarks there.

Another reference about Malang City is stated by de Rooi (1996, p. 65-66). It is mentioned that the City was popular among Dutch people, as a colonial retirement town because of its pleasant climate (cool and shady). Moreover, it has had potential as industrial place as well since 1870 and one of them was cigarette industry (see Fig. 8). These following two sugar factories; PG Kebon Agung and PG Kabet (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3), are the evidence of Dutch landmarks in Malang City.



Fig. 2. Kebon Agung Sugar Factory (1905).



Figure 3. Kabet Sugar Factory (1905).

Apart from Dutch people and their landmarks, apparently, Chinese people were also particularly had interests to come and settle in Java Island centuries ago. Vasanty (1999, 355) in Koentjaraningrat et.al. stated that back in 16<sup>th</sup> century, East

Java and Central Java were the main destinations of Chinese traders coming to Indonesia. This is one of essential recorded evidences of their existence in Java, especially in East Java in which Malang City apparently is included in their either major or secondary concentration areas to visit (see Fig. 5).

It was therefore unavoidable for those Chinese settlers and their descendants to have verbal interaction with the local people. The use of two different languages opened the possibility of creating new adapted language in term of dialect. In line with this, this research is a preliminary one and the purpose is to identify the dialect used by Chinese descendants; hereafter it is Chinese-Javanese dialect, living in Malang. The dialect is a unique one for it combines new vocabulary, Javanese language and a bit of Bahasa Indonesia words.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. A Qualitative Research

As this study is a qualitative research, according to Grave (1996, p. 2) and Ary, et.al (2002, p. 424), the researchers have roles as human instruments or investigators to gather and analyze the data. Meanwhile, according to Bogdan and Biklen (2007, p. 4) in the qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument. Thus, in this study the primary instruments or the researchers acted as human investigators doing library research and conducting observation and interviews for gathering information and recorded data needed to be analyzed. Moreover, as for the secondary instruments, Latief (2010, p. 75) states that human instrument may be equipped with various instruments that it is called as secondary instruments. In line with the title, the subjects to be interviewed were random Chinese descendants living in Malang City.

### B. Sociolinguistics

To deal with the issue on dialects, the authors start with the definitions of sociolinguistics or micro-linguistics (Wardhaugh, 2006: 13) as the main core of the discussion on the dialects. So what is sociolinguistics and what does it concern with? One definition is that sociolinguistics as the study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and the effects of language use on society while Wardhaugh (2006, p. 13) states that sociolinguistics is concerned with investigating the relationships between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and of how languages function in communication. Meanwhile, Holmes (2013, p. 22) mentions about what sociolinguists study (a study between language and society), what they are interested in (why we speak differently) and what they are concerned with (identifying the social functions of language).

Thus, it can be concluded that sociolinguistics is a study that connects people and social factors that mainly include languages they use. This study primarily discusses one of sociolinguistics variation that is dialect, which is included in a variety or a form of a language used by speakers of a certain language including dialects, accents, registers and styles; in this case is Chinese descendants in Malang. It is obvious then. If the discussion primarily talks about dialects, the researchers have

to deal with variety too or at least mention that dialects are part of variety.

### C. Dialect

But what is dialect? Two different dictionaries; Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary and Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture define dialect as the form or variety of a language used or spoken in a part of a country in which its grammar, words, and pronunciation are probably different from other forms of the same language. Meanwhile Holmes (2013, p. 140) states dialects as linguistic varieties which are distinguishable by their vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Furthermore, she also states that it is for the speech of people from different social, as well as regional, groups may differ in these ways. From those three definitions of dialect above it can be concluded that the discussion on dialects involves three main aspects of a language that is words or vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar of a spoken language in certain region or social group and certain ethnic groups.

How does a dialect in certain region or certain ethnic group arise? Rickford (162-163) in McKay and Hornberger (1996) mentions five factors that cause or create regional dialects arise and one of them is the influence of geography itself. Those five factors are political boundaries, settlement patterns, migration and immigration routes, territorial conquest, and language contact and as for this study, the most possible three factors which cause a regional dialect (Javanese-Chinese dialect) arise in Malang City are settlement patterns, migration and immigration routes, and language contact.

## III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

East Java Province has more than 34 million inhabitants and besides Madurese, Tengger, Samin and Osing ethnics, Javanese people predominantly live there. Chinese, Indians and Arabs are other ethnic groups that give significant diversity to East Java. Thus, various dialects undeniably occur among those diverse inhabitants of this province.

It is obvious that, as stated by Rickford, migration and immigration routes is one of factors that cause the regional dialect – in this study is the Javanese-Chinese dialect in Malang City. Thus, the discussion on this part covers history of Chinese descendants in Indonesia, Chinese descendants in Malang and as well as Javanese-Chinese dialect. Moreover, it also covers explanation about the migration and immigration routes of Chinese or *Tionghoa* people to Indonesia in the 16<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century. They spread all over the country; Sumatera (Medan, Pekanbaru and Palembang), Kalimantan (Pontianak), Sulawesi (Makassar and Manado) and Java Island (Semarang, Bandung and Surabaya).

Another factor, the settlement pattern, is the second factor that causes the regional dialect for this study. It is apparently that *Tionghoa* people, they chose coastal areas, primarily northern coast of Java Island, for their first settlement since they mostly were traders and at that time the only possible transportation means were ships to reach the ports in the northern coast of East Java, such as Tuban and Gresik. According to Vasanty (355) in Koentjaraningrat et.al. (1999), the existence of Chinese people in Indonesia especially in Java

Island was begun from their arrival in the northern coast of Java Island back in the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century for big trading cities or towns were mostly in the coastal areas.

The last factor, language contact, is the main cause a regional dialect arise on this study. After the migration and immigration are done the settlement pattern happens. A long with it, language contact occurs and then regional dialect arise. The following discussions show how those three factors above becomes the factors that cause the Javanese-Chinese dialect arise in Malang City.

#### A. Chinese Descendants in Indonesia

The existence of other ethnics, in Indonesia generally and East Java specifically, cannot be separated from the history of their arrival. Once Chinese people came to Indonesia as traders and nowadays have spread all over big cities in Indonesia such as Jakarta, Medan Surabaya (including Malang), Manado and Pontianak. Another quotation mentions that Chinese people who lived in southeast coasts made Southeast Asia as their main destination for trading. It is also stated there that they decided to stay and marry the local people. However, many of them returned to their home in China to continue their business.

Other source, an article written by Mariska Tracy (2016) mentions that *Tionghoa* or Chinese people immigrated to countries in Southeast Asia in 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries; including Indonesia, and they mostly were from Hokkian, Hakka, Kanton, Tiochiu and Hainan ethnics. The main purpose of their visit was for trading, however, many of them finally decided to stay, marry and mingle with local people. According to Tracy, from those five ethnics, two ethnics mostly live in Java Island; that is Hokkian and Hakka ethnics.

The following Fig. 2 shows the routes that Chinese people took for trading and apparently Southeast Asia was their main destination. It also shows there the routes taken by Chinese people for trading in Java Island hundred years ago. As we can see, cities like Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang and Surabaya are their major concentration (dark pink), while cities or towns around those cities, for an example Malang City in East Java which is considered as the secondary concentration (light pink).



Fig. 4. Chinese Routes in Southeast Asia.

#### B. Chinese Descendants in Malang City

In modern time though migration and immigration activities still happen, however the purposes are somewhat different from what happened in the 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. As the second biggest city in East Java, Malang was visited and will always be visited by numbers of people with different purposes such as for studying, doing businesses and having vacation. This makes Malang as a destination of people from various places and different ethnics to meet and mingle. It is obviously that one of those ethnics is Chinese people. In the past, they took northern coastal areas of Java Island and made settlement pattern. But it has changed; they tended to do their business in the towns and cities, where then, they mostly settled and lived such as in North Sumatera, Bangka-Belitung, West Kalimantan and South Sulawesi.

These *Tionghoa* or Chinese people obviously did a settlement pattern in the towns and cities, besides being mingled with the local people. The significant evidence is China Town or *Pecinan* area and its shrine which exist among local cultural life and can be found in almost every big city in Indonesia; e.g., Jakarta, Semarang, Surabaya and Malang, and as well as around the world like in Australia, United States, Canada, Singapore and Japan. China Town usually is a business center for Chinese descendants. This is also applied in Malang that is the one on Jl. Pasar Besar. The area is an only one way lane, which on both sides are occupied by Chinese descendants' shops, from gold jewellery shops, drug stores or pharmacies up to textile shops.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the City of Malang developed fast along with the establishment of the business center that is *Pasar Besar* and the *Klenteng* or Shrine called *Eng An Kiong* as the religious center of Chinese descendants, as stated by Suwardono and Rosmiayah (1996, p. 20). Furthermore, they also state that the *Eng An Kiong* Shrine (as it is seen in Fig. 6) was built back in 1904 by a Chinese Luitenant called Kwee Sam Hway. It is believed that he was from Sumenep, Madura Island.



Fig. 5. Eng An Kiong Shrine in Malang City.

The existence of Buddhist Shrine called *Klenteng Eng An Kiong* (on Jl. Laksamana Martadinata) not very far apart, cheers up the Malang City. Apart from a place for praying, this Shrine also a place for preserving Chinese cultures; one of them is *Po Te Hi* or *Wayang Titi* performance. These Chinese puppets are similar with



Javanese shadow puppets but with a different story and language to tell.



Fig. 6. *Po Te Hi* or *Wayang Titi* Performance at *Eng An Kiong* Shrine Malang.

Besides China Town, there is another business center, which is located in the western part of it. With its distinctive surrounding, this area, which is called *Pecinan Kecil* or Little China Town, gives us Chinese culture atmosphere. The old houses there will give a you certain notion that recalls you back to the past times. The existence of Bentoel Historical Museum (on Jalan Wiromargo) completes the Chinese culture view down there.



Fig. 7. Bentoel Historical Museum in Malang City.

Farani (2002, p. 55) describes the museum which is located on Jalan Wiromargo No. 23 as the embryo of the Bentoel cigarette factory which was established by Ong Hok Liong back in 1930. This shows that cigarette or *kretek* industry did exist in the City (de Rooi, 1996: 66). Besides, it is as an evidence that Chinese descendants moved (from Bojonegoro to Malang) and dwelled in Malang City for generations.

Although they already have blended their life and even their ancestors' culture with the local people but they still preserve their language and traditions. One of those rich traditions is the annual celebration of *Imlek* or Chinese New Year. For the language, as the result of the blending traditions between local Javanese and Chinese descendants is the Javanese-Chinese dialect.



Fig. 8. Chinese New Year celebration in Malang City.

Last factor, language contact, it relates to a social and linguistic phenomenon which occurs or happens when speakers of different languages or different dialects of the same language interact with one another. This eventually leads to a change of language in terms of alternative pronunciations, grammatical structures, and vocabulary. This explains why the language that the Chinese descendants in Malang use is unique.

### C. Javanese-Chinese Dialect

This dialect, Javanese-Chinese dialect, is unique because it probably exists in East Java and mostly in the city of Malang. It actually involves Javanese and Indonesian languages and then it creates a new language which then the authors call as Javanese-Chinese dialect. In relation with this the researchers know, even are aware of, that these data obtained are very limited to be able to be called as a new finding on sociolinguistics. However, the researchers intend to introduce this unique dialect in this preliminary linguistics research. Since it is spoken daily, it is apparently this dialect is just the same with other languages but, for the researchers, it is socio-linguistically very interesting and worth to be studied.

How can be this Javanese-Chinese dialect unique and different? It combines new vocabulary (words or phrases), Javanese language and a bit of Bahasa Indonesia words. The researchers listed words and phrases taken from the recorded data. The following Table 1 shows the language forms of words and phrases, Table 2 shows that the list of vocabulary are commonly used by Chinese descendants and Table 3 shows the sentences which use Javanese-Chinese dialect.

TABLE I. LANGUAGE FORMS: WORDS/PHRASES

No.	Language Forms	Forms	Examples in Words/Phrases
1.	Possessive Pronouns	- e (-nya)	<i>Tiket-e</i> <i>Mbesok-e</i>
		- ne (-nya)	<i>Pegawe ne</i> <i>Pembantu ne</i>
2.	Prepositions	<i>ndik (di)</i>	<i>Ada ndik kantin</i>
		- e (untuk)	<i>Tempat-e</i>
3.	Suffix	- o (lah)	<i>Nyoba-o</i>
		- no (kan)	<i>Tak gituk-no</i>
4.	Conjunctions	<i>lek</i> <i>(jika/kalau)</i>	<i>Lek tempat-e pacaran...</i>
		<i>sing (yang)</i>	<i>Sing beli</i>
5.	Pronouns	<i>de-e (dia)</i>	<i>De-e itu</i>
		<i>kon (kamu)</i>	<i>Kon gak onok...</i>

**TABLE II. VOCABULARY: WORDS/PHRASES**

No.	Words / Phrases	Javanese	Bahasa Indonesia	Javanese-Chinese Dialect
1.	<i>Ae</i>	✓	<i>Saja</i>	-
2.	<i>Gitu</i>	-	<i>Begitu, Itu</i>	✓
3.	<i>Liak</i>	-	<i>Lihat</i>	✓
4.	<i>Gini</i>	-	<i>Ini</i>	✓
5.	<i>Wes</i>	✓	<i>Sudah</i>	-
6.	<i>Gak</i>	✓	<i>Tidak</i>	-
7.	<i>Piro</i>	✓	<i>Berapa</i>	-
8.	<i>Kon</i>	<i>Kowen</i>	<i>Kamu</i>	✓
9.	<i>Mek</i>	✓	<i>Hanya</i>	-
10.	<i>De-e</i>	-	<i>Dia</i>	✓
11.	<i>Sing</i>	✓	<i>Yang</i>	-
12.	<i>Pisan</i>	✓	<i>Juga</i>	-
13.	<i>Mek</i>	✓	<i>Hanya</i>	-
14.	<i>Sukak</i>	-	<i>Suka</i>	✓
15.	<i>Mbesok</i>	-	<i>Besok</i>	✓

**TABLE III. EXAMPLES: SENTENCES**

No.	Bahasa Indonesia	Javanese-Chinese Dialect
1.	<i>Kamu akan membuat apa?</i>	<b>Kon</b> kate nggawe opo?
2.	<i>Kalau dia itu dipanggil...</i>	Kalo <b>de-e</b> itu dipanggil...
3.	<i>Pembantunya itu juga orang Cina</i>	La pembantu <b>ne</b> itu jugak Cino
4.	<i>Dia bilang ya memang di rumah...</i>	Dia bilang ya memang <b>ndik</b> rumah...
5.	<i>Setengah semester kemudian akhirnya membatik</i>	Setengah semester kemudian akhir- <b>e</b> mbatik
6.	<i>Di perpustakaan lihat-lihat video video itu...</i>	<b>Ndik</b> perpustakaan <b>liak-liak</b> video video iku...
7.	<i>Kalau kamu dulu apa saja kegiatanmu...</i>	<b>Lek kon</b> biyen opo <b>ae</b> kegiatanmu...
8.	<i>Lho kalau ketinggalan ya...</i>	Lho <b>lek</b> ketinggalan yo..
9.	<i>Kamu cobalah Bun...</i>	Kon nyoba- <b>o</b> a Bun...
10.	<i>Di rumah dia seperti itu</i>	Di rumah kayak <b>gitu</b> dia

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, on this study three factors that influence and even cause or create the regional dialect are migration and immigration routes, settlement pattern and language contact. Although the purposes of migration and immigration were different and there was a change in settlement pattern, however regional dialect still arise. This happened in Malang City; which is known as City of Education, Industry and Tourism (*Tri Bina Cita Kota Malang*) with its Javanese-Chinese dialect. It is socio-linguistically a unique dialect combining Javanese language, Bahasa Indonesian and new words or phrases.

This study is a preliminary research and has some drawbacks, however the authors hope it can be used as a reference for further research in the similar sociolinguistics area.

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