

# The Opportunities and Challenges of Teaching Sasak Language in Primary Schools in the Implementation of the 2013 Curriculum

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**Abstract** – The implementation of the 2013 curriculum has caused restlessness for the sustainability of local language teaching because in the structure of the 2013 curriculum there is no local language subject. The local language subject is embedded with Art and Culture, Crafts, and Physical Education subjects. However, it should be seen as a challenge and opportunity for maintaining the local language teaching. In the perspective of implementing the 2013 curriculum, Sasak language teaching challenges can be found in the form of (a) local language is not explicit in the structure of the 2013 curriculum; (b) juridical legitimacy support has not been maximized; (c) there is no regional curriculum on learning Sasak language as a local content; (d) the Sasak language or literature tradition in Lombok is increasingly rare; and (e) The Sasak language teachers in Lombok are not many. Meanwhile, opportunities for teaching Sasak language in the perspective of implementing the 2013 curriculum in term of: (1) Sasak language teaching as local content has long been implemented in elementary, junior high, and even high school; (2) a lot of research results and Sasak language books have been and are being published; and (3) strengthening the character of students can be done through the teaching of local content or Sasak language.

**Keywords** – opportunities, challenges, Sasak language in primary school, and K-13 implementation

## I. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of quality education is important. To be a great nation, the education should be improved and arranged. Indonesia has realized of this phenomenon, so it conducted various efforts to implement quality education. Various efforts have been conducted by Indonesia, with budget allocation up to 20% of the APBN, improvement and issuing the various supporting laws and regulations, improving the quality of educators, and implementing the 2013 curriculum.

Through the implementation of the 2013 curriculum, it is expected that the quality of education in Indonesia will improve and the Indonesian golden generation in 2045 can be realized. It is a very noble desire, however, there is a restlessness for the sustainability of local language teaching, especially in elementary schools.

Since the beginning of the discussion on the implementation of the 2013 curriculum that was delivered to the public, there were various rejections especially from teachers, observers, and activists of local language and literature. In the beginning of 2013, there were rejections of the implementation of the 2013 curriculum in various areas of Indonesia because it was considered to eliminate the local languages. Hermawan from the Indonesian Teachers Action Forum in Bandung stated that one of the points in the 2013 Curriculum that would eliminate the existence of local languages was the elimination of local content subjects. Further, it is explained that this new curriculum will integrate the local language learning into the subjects such as cultural arts, crafts, and sports [1]. On the other hand, the implementation of the 2013 curriculum has caused restlessness for the sustainability of local languages teaching and this should be seen as a challenge and opportunity that can be utilized in order that the existence of local language teaching can be maintained. Therefore, this article presents the results of the study and some thoughts related to the challenges and opportunities of local languages teaching (Sasak language) in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

Methodologically, this research was conducted in three stages, namely (1) the pre-research or proposal preparation, the preparation of research instruments, and the preparation of research tools and materials; (2) data collection and data analysis; and (3) post-research that includes the preparation of research reports. The data were collected through document review and focus group discussion. Data analysis was conducted by following the principles in qualitative research, namely data reduction, data presentation, and verification or interpretation of data. Meanwhile, the method of data presentation was conducted by formal and informal methods [2].

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the explanation above, this paper will try to explain some of the challenges and opportunities for teaching Sasak language in the perspective of 2013 curriculum implementation. However, the 2013 curriculum implementation strategy will be explained first to face the challenges and opportunities for teaching local languages, including Sasak language.

## 1. The 2013 Curriculum Implementation Strategy

The explanation in this discussion is related to the basic things that cause the challenges and opportunities for teaching local languages, including Sasak language. The 2013 curriculum implementation strategy has been agreed and implemented strictly by the relevant institutions (Ministry of Education and Culture) since the beginning of 2013. The description for the form of implementation strategy can be seen in several activities, namely: (1) The implementation of the curriculum in all schools and levels of education began in July 2013 for classes I, IV, VII, and X; July 2014 for class I, II, IV, V, VII, VIII, X, and XI; and in July 2015 for all levels and classes (I - XII); (2) Training of educators and educational personnel, from 2013 - 2015; (3) The development of student books and teacher books from 2012-2014; and (4) Assistance in the form of monitoring and evaluation to find difficulties and problems of implementation and prevention efforts [3].

Nevertheless, several problems were found in the design of the 2013 curriculum implementation strategy. According to some people, these problems are related to two main things, namely the distribution of books and teacher training that has not been distributed [4]. In addition, there are some challenges in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum. According to Wildan [5], the challenges of implementing the 2013 curriculum in terms of: (a) The availability of inadequate educational facilities and infrastructure; (b) Teacher competence in implementing the learning with scientific approach; (c) Teacher competence in teaching KI-3, KI-4 to KI-1 and KI-2; (d) Teacher boredom due to several themes that initially only 2 hours become 4 weeks x 26 hours; and (e) The National Examination System has more cognitive aspects.

## 2. The Challenges of Teaching Sasak Language in the 2013 Curriculum Implementation Perspective

Some of the challenges of teaching Sasak language in the perspective of implementing the 2013 curriculum are as follows.

### a. Local language is not explicit in the 2013 curriculum structure.

In terms of the 2013 curriculum structure, the local language subjects (including Sasak language) are categorized as local content subjects that are in an unclear position. In the 2013 curriculum structure, the local content subjects are integrated in the subjects such as arts, culture, crafts and sports. In addition, the allocation of time is relatively minimal and this makes the local content subjects (Sasak language) difficult to find the place.

In the elementary curriculum structure, local content subjects are placed in the component group B which consists of two subjects, namely 1) Cultural Arts and Crafts; and 2) Physical Education and Sport. According to Nuh [6], the subjects of Cultural Arts and Crafts (including local content) were given in Class I to Class III with 4 hours of study, while for Class IV to Class VI were given the allocation time of 5 hours of study. Furthermore, subjects of Physical Education, Sports and Health (including local content) were given in class I to class VI in 4 hours of study [7].

This context indicates that the local language or local content (including Sasak language) is difficult to find a place in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum. In addition, the subjects combined with local content/local language will not necessarily be accepted if the allocation of time for the subject should be shared with local content/local language, including Sasak language.

### b. The support for legal legitimacy has not been maximized.

In this case, the purpose of supporting juridical legitimacy is the existence of laws and regulations or regional regulations that support the implementation of local language or literature. The followings are the legal basis for the implementation of local language teaching according to Wibawa [8].

- Youth Pledge in third point which implies that the Local Language and Literature are the national cultural treasures that must be maintained and developed by the state.
- 1945 Constitution Chapter XIII Article 32 (2) states that the state respects and maintains local languages as national cultural treasures.
- Law on National Education System No. 20 of 2003 article 33 paragraph (2) states that the local languages can be used as a language of instruction at the beginning of education if necessary in the delivery of certain knowledge and/or skills.
- Law on National Education System No. 20 of 2003 article 37 paragraph (1) Primary and secondary education curriculum must contain (a) language subjects and (b) local content. In the explanation of article 37 paragraph (1), it is stated that the language study material includes Indonesian, local languages, and foreign languages.
- The Education Unit Level curriculum is mandated by Law No. 20 of 2003 and RI Government Regulation No. 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, in which in KTSP it is explicitly stated that one of the subjects is Local Content in the form of Local Language and Literature as Local Content which has a positive influence on the preservation and development of local languages and literatures and has a real influence on the formation of national identity.
- Republic of Indonesia Government Regulation Number 32 of 2013 concerning Amendment to Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards, Chapter XIA on Curriculum, Articles 77B, I, J, K, and N which explicitly mentions local languages as local contents.
- The IKADBUDI Conference (Association of Indonesian Regional Cultural Lecturers) recommended that local languages should be taught from elementary, junior high, high school and vocational schools.

However, in the NTB province (including Lombok) there is no regional regulations which explicitly states that local language teaching is required as local content or retention of local languages, literature and culture. Other

regions already have the juridical foundation, for example: 1) Central Java Regional Regulation No. 9 of 2012 stating that Javanese Language, Literature and Literacy continue to be studied, developed and preserved; 2) Regional Regulation of West Java Province No. 5 of 2003 concerning the maintenance of Language, Literature and Regional Script; 3) Regional Regulation of Bali Province No. 3 of 1992 concerning Development of Language, Literature, and Balinese Script; 4) Decree of the Governor of Central Java No. 423.5/5/2010 concerning the Curriculum of Javanese Language Subjects for the levels of elementary school / elementary special school/Islamic elementary school, junior high/junior high special school/Islamic junior high school of public and private; 5) Decree of the Governor of East Java Province No. 188/188 /KPTS/013/2005 concerning learning Javanese in elementary, junior high, high school and vocational schools; 6) Sundanese Language Congress I - IX and Sundanese Culture International Congress I and II decided that Sundanese is required to be taught in kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, high school and vocational school; and 7) the Bali Language Congress I - VI recommending that Bali Language must be taught in elementary, junior high, high school and vocational schools [9].

Thus, in NTB province (including Lombok), there is no regional regulations that support the retention of teaching local language (Sasak language) as the local content, especially in the 2013 curriculum implementation.

c. There is no regional curriculum on local language learning/local content (especially which has adapted to the demands of the 2013 curriculum).

As a logical consequence because there are not many local regulations for the retention of teaching local content (local language of NTB) after the 2013 curriculum was implemented. It also becomes the challenge because there is no local curriculum regarding teaching local languages according to curriculum demands.

d. The tradition of local language/literature (Sasak) in NTB is rarely found

Cultural acculturation is fast, no time limit, distance, even generation makes the preservation of local culture more difficult. Currently, local cultural activities are increasingly marginalized by the appearance of modernist cultures so the Sasak language or literary traditions is rarely found in Lombok. Moreover, the younger generation is very rarely involved in the preservation of local culture. In fact, there has been a considerable shift in the speech acts of the younger generation of Sasak alus languages [10].

e. Sasak language teachers are still few in number

The small number of Sasak language teachers is caused by the teaching of Sasak language which has not shown consistency, both in terms of juridical and practical and the lack of motivation from Sasak people to teach Sasak language so that the availability of Sasak language teachers in NTB province are little.

3. Sasak Language Teaching Opportunities in the 2013 Curriculum Implementation Perspective

Sasak language teaching opportunities in the perspective of implementing the 2013 curriculum are as follows.

a. The teaching of Sasak language as a local content has long been implemented at elementary, junior high, even high school levels.

One of the opportunities for the preservation of the Sasak language teaching that should be maximized is that Sasak language becomes the language of instruction at the elementary school level (especially in early grades) even to high school. It has been conducted since 2006 through a local content in the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP). Sasak people believes that the application of cultural values such as giving Sasak language lessons, wearing traditional Sasak tribal clothes in daily life, giving traditional lessons, and others can maintain the cultural values from the negative currents of globalization and westernization [11].

In the KTSP implementation, almost all schools at the elementary to junior high school level in Lombok have implemented teaching Sasak language as the local content. There are textbooks in Sasak local content, as follows: (1) Local Content of Gumi Sasak Class 1 and Class 2 made by Bahri, et al. [12] and [13]; (2) Local Content of Gumi Sasak Class 3 and Class 4 made by Sudirman, et al. [14] and [15]; (3) Local content of Gumi Sasak Class 5 and Class 6 made by Ratmaja, et al. [16] and [17].

b. Many research results and Sasak language books that have been and are being published

Many research results and Sasak language books that have been and are being published by related institutions such as the Regional Government, NTB Language Office, NTB Dikpora Office, University Mataram, NGOs, and so on should be seen as an opportunity to preservation the teaching local language of NTB province (specifically Sasak language). In this case, it is necessary to consider the use of all these results to support the teaching of Sasak language in the perspective of 2013 curriculum implementation.

Based on the results of the study mentioned above by Aridawati, et al. [18], Regional Government of NTB[19], and Mahsun [20] on the Sasak language as local content, Sirulhaq [21] also stated that all studies related to the preparation of the standard dialect of the Sasak language in order that it can be used easily as a local content of the Sasak language in schools.

c. Strengthening the character of learners can be done through the teaching of local content/Sasak language

One of the advantages of the implementation of the 2013 curriculum is balancing between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor so that the strengthening the values or the character of students become the main target. According to Nora [22], the main characteristics of the 2013 curriculum is the existence of character education in the form of attitudes to accept and respect religious, cultural, racial and ethnic differences. According to Megawati [23], character education is an effort to educate children to be able to make decisions wisely and practice it in their daily lives so that they can make positive contribution to the

environment. Meanwhile, Gaffar [24], explained that character education is a process of transforming the values of life to be developed in one's personality so that it becomes one in the behavior of that person's life.

In character education, there are 3 values that become behaviors / characters, first, values related to ourselves (in the form of: honest, hard work, firm, patient, tenacious, cheerful, determined, open, visionary, independent, brave, responsible, disciplined, etc.), second, values related to other people/other creatures (in the form of: helping others, tolerance, smiling, being generous, being able to work together, being communicative, caring, being fair, etc.), and third, values related to divinity, in the form of: sincerity, faith, piety, etc. [24].

In implementing the 2013 curriculum, there are several characters to be developed, namely religious, honest, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creative, independent, democratic, curiosity, national spirit, love of the motherland, respect for achievement, friendship, communicative, peace-loving, likes to read, care about the environment, care about social, and responsibility [6]. It should be viewed as an opportunity to preservation the Sasak language teaching in developing the character of students in elementary schools because the Sasak language has role and function as the basic motivation for the values of local wisdom in the family and society. Therefore, the role of teaching local languages should be explored maximally by implementing various Sasak language/literature texts in socio-cultural activities and the values of Sasak local wisdom must be prioritized. If possible, it should be designed as material that can be used in learning Indonesian, Social Sciences, or other fields of study.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

To preserve local content of teaching Sasak language, efforts and thought from Sasak teachers, researchers, observers, and language activists are needed as a concrete step to maintain the teaching of local language content so as not to diminish or eliminate the Sasak language because the implementation of the 2013 curriculum gives little room for the growth and development of local language teaching.

The concrete steps that can be taken to maintain the Sasak language teaching after the implementation of the 2013 curriculum include: 1) formulating local regulations related to local language teaching; 2) necessity to design and implement the local curriculum for Sasak language content that is adapted from the demands of the 2013 curriculum; and 3) necessity to arrange supporting facilities including the creation of textbooks (teacher books and student books) for Sasak language learning.

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