

# Word Choices as Linguistic Features and *Mantra* Functions in *Mantra Pupuh Dhandhanggula*

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## ABSTRACT

Mantra is a Javanese cultural heritage. Mantra uses the Javanese language. It has unique diction and magic power. This research aims at describing the meaning of word choice, usage, and the functions of mantra. The mantra used in this research is a kind of *pupuh dhandhanggula*. The Mantra in this paper is bounded with the characters of the *tembang* (Javanese traditional song) *pupuh dhandhanggula* with its symbolic dictions. This mantra will be analyzed semiotically for each word, phrase, and sentence. The results of the analysis revealed that the words choices in the mantra have deep meanings. They were pronounced by singing in the middle of the night. The functions of mantra *pupuh dhandhanggula* are believed to provide protection from any troubles and disturbance and ask to be protected from troubles. In addition, it is also believed to increase intelligence and courage to face all challenges, troubles, and dangers.

**Keywords:** Function, mantra, meaning, word choices

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A *mantra* is an early form of Indonesian poetry (Taum, as cited in Nurjamilah, 2015). The word *mantra* is derived from 'man' meaning 'thinking' and 'tra' means 'tool, device', so *matra* means 'device to thing' (Padoux, 2002). The word *mantra* comes from Sanskrit that means holy text or secret text. Meanwhile, the word *japa* derives from the word *jap* meaning 'repeated with voice quietly, mouth trembling, and praying silently. *Japa* means praying by canting word with mouth trembling (Macdonell, 2014). Thus, *japa* constitutes *mantra* repeated, canted tremblingly. With frequent repetition, the power which attaches to the *mantra* is believed to be realized (Walker, 2016).

*Mantra* is called as Vedic hymn, or Hinduism or Buddhist devotional incantation. In the course of time, the word *mantra* is used in verses of Scripture. Mantra, which is in English is called a spell, are disguised syllables, fortunate or lucky words based on some belief and magical attached to the voice. Many fortunate mantras seem without meaning and sufficiently difficult to understand by average people (Walker, 2016). A *mantra* is a poetry form or language composition that is related to the belief in the supernatural world. *Mantra* has typical word art. Its words are selected very

carefully, its sentences are arranged orderly, and its rhythm is as well. The content is taken into account as deep as possible. Accuracy and precision in choosing words, arranging the array or line, and determining rhythm become the most importantly needed things to produce the magical power. A *mantra* that is not spelled properly, lack of words, and wrong rhythm will eliminate the power, will not generate power anymore (Djamaris et al., as cited Hidayatullah, 2018). According to Kosasih (2012), a *mantra* is words or sentences that can bring in magical power, incantation, and charm. *Mantra* is part of occultism in the form of words or voices that frequently does not mean but is considered consisting of supernatural power or power to curse. Language rhythm becomes highly important with the purpose to create magical nuance. *Mantra* is emerging from the result of imagination based on the animism belief.

*Mantra* can appear in the form of *pupuh*, like the object of this research. This research on the mantra in this study is the mantra in the form of *pupuh dhandhanggula*. *Pupuh* is metrical and rhythm in certain *tembang* (Javanese traditional song) (Arianti, 2017). In the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (2016) it is mentioned that *pupuh* is a song tied by the number of syllables in one stanza or couplet, amount of lines or

arrays, and song game. In Java, *pupuh* is also known as *macapat* (Permana, Rifa'i, & Ridwan, 2019). According to them, there are two opinions about the birth of *macapat*. First, *macapat* appeared in the era of Majapahit Kingdom. Second, *macapat* appeared in the spread Islam era, in the 15 century. *Dhandhanggula* is one of the *macapats*.

There are eleven kinds of *macapat* and those have their own annunciation. The eleven *macapats* and its own annunciation are *mijil* (arousing miss, erotical, or full of joy), *kinanthi* (erotical, educative), *asmaradana* (sad, arousing sorrow because of missing), *sinom* (quiet, steady), *dhandhanggula* (flexible, charming), *maskumambang* (gloomy, arousing deep grief), *gambuh* (surge), *durma* (fiery, angry, fierce), *pangkur* (exited, fiery, hard), *megatruh* (gloomy, arousing grief or regret), dan *pucung* (humorous, witty) (Suwanto & Winarni, 2014; Nugroho, 2017).

In *macapat* follows what is called with *paramasastra* (structure). Some of them are *guru gatra* 'number of lines in each stanza', *guru wilangan* 'number of syllables in each line', *guru lagu* 'end voice in each line (rhymes), and *sasmitaning tembang* 'annunciation of the song' (Nugroho, 2017). *Guru lagu* relates to the position of lines with the metrum pattern. These metrum patterns in Javanese culture is known as *sekar/tembang*. Each *sekar* (metrum pattern) has *titilaras* 'tone' based on the *slendro* and *pelog* pentatonical tone. Each *sekar* has various kind of *titilarasa* manner, depending on the *laras*, *patet*, and song (Saputra, 2019).

The studies about spells have already been done previously. Noviana, Gani, and Hamidin (2013) administered research about *mantra Batatah* in Nagari Lubuk Layang, District South Rao Selatan, Pasaman Regency, in West Sumatera. Their findings relate to the composition of the mantra, diction, figurative language (style), and supporting aspects in performing *mantra Batatah*. The structure of the *mantra Batatah* consists of introductory, content, and closing. There is a special characteristic in the diction and figurative language (style). The supporting aspects of *mantra Batatah* consist of (a) performing time are free, (b) performing place is in the yard of the house, (c) event or opportunity to perform when the child is eleven months old or older, (d) the shaman is the one who got an inheritance from generation to generation, (e) pieces of equipment used are: seven floral art, black soil, a carpet or rug, yellow rice, hair oil of lemon, root crops and frankincense, gold ring or dagger or knife, and water, (f) the clothing is: free but polite, and (g) way to perform is sitting cross-legged, sit cross-legged and squat. The process of inheritance of *mantra Batatah* is to provide the requirements specified by the shaman, in the form of potluck money, knife, blade of steel or a seamstress, a white cloth (or shroud).

Saddhono and Hartarta (2013) also have administered research about the spell. Its result is that the spells are a special chain of words, dominated by the Javanese language arranged in such a way in self-suggestive affirmation types. Javanese spell has 3 types of structure: ideal, arbitrary, and unstable. The ideal structure of the Javanese spell is made of the head, body, and foot. Spell structure is 'wrapped' by mystique, magical, mythological, sound, diction, and images formula. Javanese spell for its users is an area or 'sacred room, holy room' which is personal and full of philosophical meaning. The mystery of *laku* (ritual procedure) in spell ritual is psyches or emotion as well as cognitive game, created purposively to achieve the meditative level. There are, at least, 28 kinds of Javanese spell according to its function.

Budiharso (2014) in his research about literal and contextual symbols in Javanese Spell Aji Seduluran had a purpose to understand the meanings of the symbols and the relations among them, and to interpret those symbols, as well, according to the Javanese social and philosophical contexts. Based on their scope the symbols may be grouped into language universal symbols and language culturally bound symbols. The results indicated that the symbols might be classified into three categories; those are spiritual symbols, social and moral symbols, and traditional symbols. The symbols were also proven to be universal.

The difference between this research and those previous other researches is that this research discussing the diction of Javanese spell (*mantra*) in *pupuh dhandhanggula* for protecting ourselves from the disturbances. Furthermore, based on the preliminary overview of the spell in the relation to the language phenomena that have been delivered previously it can be conveyed the purposes of this research are (a) to understand the meaning of words choice (diction) in *mantra pupuh dhandhanggula*, (b) to understand the way how the use of *mantra pupuh dhandhanggula*, and (c) to know the functions of *mantra pupuh dhandhanggula*.

## 2. METHODS

Data was collected using the library study method. Zed (2008) stated that library study method or library research is data collection based upon not on observation or interview in the field, but from literature (reference sources). The source of data this research is the book entitled *Ngengrengan Kasusastran Djawa Kanggo para Siswa Sekolah lan Guru* by Padmosoekotjo (2012). The chosen *mantra* is a protective mantra to be spared from a supernatural being such as ghosts, diseases, and other bad things. There are four mantras used in this research. The technique of data collection was by retyping the *mantra* adjusted with a recent Javanese orthographical base. The meaning of the

data, in the form of words, is searched in the Javanese dictionary, i.e. *Bausastra Jawa* composed by S. Prawiro Atmodjo (1998) and *Bausastra Jawa* by Poerwadarmainta, Hardjasoedarma, and Poejasoedira (1939). Both of two Javanese dictionaries become the main sources of word meaning since those dictionaries are considered as the biggest Javanese lexicon and as a reliable source.

Furthermore, data is analyzed using referential-equivalent. This referential-equivalent method refers to the definition proposed by Sudaryanto (1993), that is the way to find a rule of analysis with a determinant tool outside, apart, and not becomes part of the concerned language. The determinant tool meant in this research is the reality pointed out by language and referent language, that is Javanese in mantra shows the context of *Javanese Mouslem*. Bakri (2014) defines *Javanese Mouslem* is the mouslem that has been adapting to the Great Nation's culture and tradition. It creates a combination identity between Javanese culture and Islam to become Islamic religiosity with Javanese flavours. In these terms, a *mantra* isa Javanese ritual but there Islamic teaching within it, for example, believe in the supernatural (genie and devil) as Allah's creature, believe in Allah's characters within *asmaul husna*, and believe in the Prophet's miracles. The presentation of data analysis is short, precise, and clear verbal statement. Thus, the research result in this article will be presented on concise and obvious words.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As a means of communication with God, human, supernatural being, or something, *mantra* has certain functions (Humaeni, 2014). These functions are based on the purpose of the mantra readers. The purpose of the *mantra* readers is visible from the word choice they use. Javanese *mantra* uses the Javanese language in their spelling. Javanese *mantra* in this research is pronounced by being sung. It is caused by the words in the mantra that are composed in accordance with *pupuh dhandhanggula*. It can be seen from the number of *gatra* (lines) and the final voice (*guru lagu*, or *dong ding*) of each line. The number of lines in the mantra that is used *pupuh dhandhanggula* is ten.

Each line in *pupuh dhandhanggula* has a certain provision. The first line consists of 10 syllables and ending with voice *i*. The second line consists of 10 syllables and ending with the voice *a*. the Third line consists of 8 syllables and ending with voice *e*. The fourth line consists of 7 syllables and ending with the voice *u*. The fifth line consists of 9 syllables and ending with voice. The sixth line consists of 7 syllables and ending with voice *a*. Seventh line consists of 6 syllables and ending with voice. The eighth line consists of 8 syllables and ending with voice *a*. Ninth line consists of

12 syllables and ending with voice *i*. The tenth line consists of 7 syllables and ending with voice *a*.

The following is a *mantra* with the purpose to keep away from the disturbances from supernatural beings, to repel diseases, and to become a great person.

#### **Mantra 1**

<i>Ana kidung rumeksa ing wengi,</i>	There is a song in the night
<i>teguh-ayu luputa ing lara,</i>	a gentle and beautiful song to avoid from the disease,
<i>luputa bilahi kebeh,</i>	to avoid from all the sorrow,
<i>jim-setan datan purun,</i>	no genie and demon want to get down,
<i>paneluhan tan ana wani,</i>	no sorcery that is durst,
<i>miwah panggawe ala,</i>	no evil deed either,
<i>gunane wong luput,</i>	witchcraft of wrong people,
<i>geni atemahan tirta,</i>	the fire turns become water,
<i>maling adoh tan wani perak ing kami,</i>	no far thief is durst to approach us,
<i>kemat-duduk pan sirna.</i>	then, the black magic disappears.

In the example of *mantra 1* above, there are words like *lara*, *bilahi*, *jim-setan*, *paneluh*, *panggawe ala*, *guna*, *maling*, dan *kemat-duduk*. Those words sequentially have meaning 'disease', 'sorrow' or 'vanquished', 'genie-demon', 'sorcery', 'evil deed', 'withchcraft', 'thief', and 'black magic'. Those words symbolize disease, evil, and sorrow. Those words are, sequentially, followed by words *luputa* (avoided from), *datan purun* (no want to), *tan ana wani* (no brave to), *luput* (avoided from), *adoh* (far), and *sirna* (gone). Besides, there are phrases/sentences *geni atemahan tirta* (fire becomes water) that has the meaning 'be extinguished' and *teguh-ayu* meaning 'strong and beautiful'. Word choices in the example of *matra 1* indicate that those words are not just ordinary words. Word choice in this *mantra* is performed as a prayer in order to be avoided from diseases and evil deeds.

This *mantra* physically is *pupuh dhandhanggula*. This *mantra* is pronounced in order to be constantly strong physically and have a beautiful face. The marker that that *mantra* is pronounced in the mid-night is the choice of the words *ing wengi* meaning 'in the mid-night'. The marker that that *mantra* is pronounced by being vocalized also can be seen from the words choice *kidung* meaning song/ballad.

This example of *mantra 1* above contains word choices which are especially pronounced by singing in the middle of the night. It is carried out since in Javanese culture it is believed that the night, especially

mid-night, is the time of relaxation. At that time, usually people are in sleeping time. It is when people are not alert. That time, disease and evil deed usually can be paralyzing. Based on this word choice it can be concluded that someone who evil possessed, got sorcery, and others can encounter psychical and physical illnesses. They are not made of fire but live with long sorrow. People who encounter such a thing will be suffered since their physic dan psychic are disturbed.

The one who is sick for the demon-possessed or got witchcraft usually its physical is damaged. If its face is originally beautiful or handsome and the body is good-shaped changes into dirty, ugly, and unpleasantly to look at. Besides they are sorrow, their family is also in a stew. How so powerful the bad effect from the evil deed and the sorcery, so Javanese people fortify themselves by pronouncing this *mantra* before they get to sleep.

### **Mantra 2**

<i>Sakeh lara apan samya bali,</i>	Many sorrows will return
<i>sakeh ama pan samya miruda,</i>	many dangers died down,
<i>welas-asih pandulune,</i>	the sympathy comes into the eyesight,
<i>sakehing braja luput,</i>	all weapons are missing,
<i>kadi kapuk tibaning wesi,</i>	like cotton falls into iron,
<i>sakehing wisa tawa,</i>	all poisons are tasteless,
<i>sato galak tutut,</i>	the wildness becomes tame,
<i>kayu aeng lemah sangar,</i>	weird wood becomes haunted soil,
<i>sanging landhak guwaning wong lemah miring,</i>	porcupine cage is the cave of sloping land people,
<i>myang pakiponing merak</i>	The swish of peacock wings.

In the example of *mantra 2*, there are words *lara*, *ama*, *braja*, *wisa*, and *sato galak*. These words sequentially mean ‘sick’, ‘pest’, ‘weapon’, and ‘wild animals’. Besides that, there is word *landak* (porcupine) as metaphore from ‘something containing poison’. These words symbolize disease, disaster, and death. These words are sequentially followed by words *bali* (return), *miruda* (died down), *luput* (missing), *tawa* (tasteless), and *tutut* (tame). Besides, there is the phrase *kadi kapuk tibaning wesi* that has the meaning ‘weakened’. There is also phrase *kayu aeng lemah sangar* that has the meaning ‘harmed weird thing’, and metaphor *myang pakiponing merak* that has the meaning ‘pushed over kindness’. The word choice in the example of *mantra 2* shows that words that are used are not simply ordinary. Word choice in that *mantra* is performed as a prayer in order to be avoided from disease and disaster.

This example of *mantra 2* consists of chosen words that is especially pronounced by singing it. It is in line with the physical typologically is *pupuh dhandhanggula*. Based on word choice in that *mantra* can be concluded that someone would become strong; avoided from illness, poison, dangerous deed, wild animal, and various disturbances. These all bad things will return to the place where it comes from. These all evil deeds and influences do not work properly. It would be paralyzed and do not have power to the *mantra* enunciator. All evil things are lost and brushed aside by kindness. Nonetheless, this *mantra* is pronounced with the intention to obtain mercy. All evil intention falls on its own. In this *mantra* is the illusion that something solid becomes soft, a poisoned thing becomes insipid, something malignant becomes gentle, and something deep and dark becomes light. The rest is kindness and beauty.

### **Mantra 3**

<i>Pagupakaning warak sakalir,</i>	In the cage of peacock,
<i>pan winaca ing sagara asat,</i>	that is not read in the dry ocean,
<i>temahan rahayu kabeh,</i>	then it becomes safe for anyone,
<i>dadya sarira ayu,</i>	then it makes beautiful body,
<i>ingideran pra widadari,</i>	which is surrounded by angels,
<i>rineksa malaekat,</i>	which is guarded by saints,
<i>sakathahing rasul,</i>	(by) all prophets,
<i>pan dadi sarira tunggal,</i>	that is united in the body,
<i>ati Adam utekku Bagendha Esis,</i>	Adam’s heart is my brain, Your Mightiness Sis,
<i>pangucap Nabi Musa</i>	the remark of Prophet Moses.

Example of *mantra 3* is also *pupuh dhandhanggula* in accordance with physical characteristics in the form of *gatra* (number of syllables) and *guru lagu* (final voice in each line). This *mantra* is pronounced by singing it. In this example *mantra 3* there are words *rahayu*, *ayu*, *widadari*, *malaekat*, *rasul*, *sarira tunggal*, *Adam*, *Bagendha Esis*, and *Nabi Musa*. These words sequentially have meaning ‘safe’, ‘beautiful’, ‘angel’, ‘saint’, ‘prophet’, ‘unite’, ‘Moses’, ‘Your Mightiness Is’, and ‘Moses’. These words are preceded by words *temahan*, *dadya*, *ingederan*, *sakathahing*, *dadi*, *ati*, and *pangucap*. These words sequentially mean ‘certain’,

'become', 'surrounded', 'plenty', 'become', 'heart', and 'remark'. Besides, there are phrases *pagupakaning warak sakalir* (cage of all peacock) and frasa *pan winaca ing sagara asat* (unreadable in the dry ocean). Both phrases are metaphors that sequentially means 'all house condition is sturdy' and 'unreadable clearly'. Word choice in this example of *mantra 3* shows that words used are not ordinary words. Word choice in this *mantra* is aimed as a prayer to ask for protection and become smart people.

This example of *mantra 3* contains word choice that becomes prayer in order for the house got *mantra* would be sturdy and light. The ones who stay in that house are always safe, healthy, and have good look. It seems that the ones are guarded by angels, saints, and prophets. This *mantra* is also aimed at the ones who stay in that house have patience like Prophet Adam and brain smartness like Mightiness Sis. Nevertheless, this *mantra* is used to glorify someone. In Javanese culture, health, salvation, physical perfection, brain intelligence, and the ability to speak full of caring softly and politely are important to be owned by anyone.

#### **Mantra 4**

<i>Napasku Nabi Ngisa linuwih,</i>	My breath is the ultimate Prophet Isa's breath,
<i>Nabi Yakup pemiarsaningwang,</i>	Prophet Jacob in my sight,
<i>Yusup ing rupaku mangke,</i>	Josef in my future face,
<i>Nabi Dawud swaraku,</i>	Prophet David my voice,
<i>Jeng Suleman kasekten mami,</i>	Your Excellency Solomon my supernatural power,
<i>Nabi Ibrahim nyawa,</i>	Prophet Abraham my soul/life,
<i>Idris ing rambutku,</i>	Idris in my hair,
<i>Bagendha Li kulitingwang,</i>	Your Mightiness Li my skin,
<i>getih-daging Abu Bakar Umar nenggih,</i>	blood- flesh Abu Bakar Umar,
<i>balung Bagendha Usman.</i>	The bone of Your Mightiness Usman

This example of *mantra 4* is also a *pupuh dhandhanggula* in accordance with physical characteristics in the form of *gatra* (number of syllables) and *guru lagu* or *dong ding* (final voice in each line). This *mantra* is also pronounced by singing it. In the example of *mantra 4*, there are words related to Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Those words comprise *Nabi Ngisa* (Prophet Isa), *Nabi Yakup* (Prophet Jacob), *Nabi Yusup* (Prophet Josef), *Nabi Dawud* (Prophet David), *Jeng Suleman* (Your Excellency Solomon), *Nabi Ibrahim* (Prophet Abraham), *Idris* (Idris), *Bagendha Li* (Your Mightiness Li), *Abu Bakar Umar*

(Abu Bakar Umar), and *Bagendha Usman* (Your Mightiness Usman). These words are sequentially followed by words *linuwih* (ultimate), *pemiarsaningwang* (my sight), *rupaku mangke* (my future face), *swaraku* (my voice), *kasekten mami* (my supernatural power), *nyawa* (soul/life), and *kulitwang* (my skin). Special for Prophet Muhammad companions; Abu Bakar, Umar, and Umar are sequentially preceded by words *getih-daging* (blood-flesh) and *balung* (bone). The word choice in this *mantra* is aimed as prayer in order to become a desired man.

This example of *mantra 4* contains word choice that becomes prayer in order for the one who got *mantra* would be an ultimate man, like Prophet Muhammad and his companions. It is hoped the one who got *mantra* would be won: breath that is able to live the life like Prophet Isa's breath, hearing acuities like Prophet Jacob's ears, face handsomeness like Prophet Josef's face, and sonority voice like Prophet David's voice. Besides, it is hoped that the one who got *mantra* would get supernatural power like Prophet Solomon's supernatural power, long life like Prophet Abraham who long-lived, beautiful hair like Prophet Idris's hair, and bright clean skin like Ali, have a warrior soul like Abu Bakar and Umar, and have a strong bone like Usman. Nonetheless, this *mantra* is destined for man. Man marker is the use of the name Prophet Yosef. Man that is pronounced in this *mantra* is hoped to incarnate as a coveted man, a strong man, handsome, brave, gallant, agile, and sacred. In Javanese culture, a man is hoped to be a pride figure and able to protect his family. It is not only good looking and perfect physical, but a man also hoped to own a reassuring soul and to have the courage to face all challenges and danger.

Based on this analysis result, it is found that words in this *mantra* used certain categories as magical power. Verbs, adverbs, and adjectives to reject evil power. Pronouns like *-ku*, *wang*, and *mami* addressed to ourselves to refer the target.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Javanese *mantra* is a cultural heritage in Indonesia. Its existence is still perceived recently. Javanese *mantra* uses unique, exotic, and esthetical Javanese language, but it can bear high magical power. Javanese *mantra* can use *pupuh* as a means of delivery, as the using of *pupuh dhandhanggula* in this research. This *mantra* using *pupuh dhandhanggula* notices the determined *pupuh* patterns. Meaning, *pupuh dhandhanggula* must follow the given *guru gatra*, *guru wilangan*, and *guru lagu*.

Words choice in *mantra* could be denotation, connotation, metaphor, and antonym with certain categories as the magical power. The use of *mantra* with *pupuh dhandhanggula* is sung it in the middle of the night. The function of *mantra* with *pupuh*

*dhandhanggula* is as the protector from disease and evil deed (mantra 1 and 2), asking protection from interferences and becoming smart people (mantra 3), and courage to face all challenges, dangers, and interferences (mantra 4).

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