

The Role of *Ubrug* Theater as a Media for Maintaining to the Local Language of Banten

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the results on the role of the *Ubrug* theater as a defense media for the local language of Banten. This research uses a qualitative paradigm with descriptive analysis method. The approach used is multidisciplinary, including history, linguistics, and sociology. Participants in this research involved resource persons from studios or *Ubrug* communities in Banten, particularly in Serang City, as well as students and the general public. Technique data collection is done by means of observation, interviews, and documentation. The data obtained were analyzed with triangulate. The results of the research prove that the *Ubrug* theater uses the local language of Banten in the dialogues in its performances. The *Ubrug* theater performance using the local language of Banten, in Serang Javanese and Banten Sundanese, is an effort to maintain the regional language as well as to preserve the regional theater arts in Banten Province.

Keywords: Regional theatre, *Ubrug*, Banten regional language maintenance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional theater or often known as folk theater has a role as part of religious life and traditional culture in society. In Indonesia, there are various kinds of traditional theaters with their own uniqueness and characteristics, such as Longser from West Java, Lenong from Betawi or Jakarta, Ketoprak from Central Java and Ludruk from East Java. Not only these four areas, Banten Province which was formed twenty years ago also has traditional theater or folk theater.

Banten is one of the provinces that has many types of arts, one of the regional arts of Banten which is a type of folk theater, namely *Ubrug*. *Ubrug* art is a form of presentation in which there are elements of music, dance, theater, and fine arts. [1].

Ubrug is a community comedy show that has natural acting skills for ritual and entertainment purposes without a script or standard text. The panjak or nayaga and sinden who are in charge of accompanying *Ubrug*'s performance are on the left side of the front of the stage. The placement aims to facilitate communication between the dancer and the puppeteer. The panjak sit by holding the traditional musical instruments [2].

Ubrug is a noble heritage of the people of Banten as a result of creativity, taste, and initiative that had grown

and developed in its time. Efforts to present the track record of *Ubrug*'s "kemonesan" have been written by Mahdiduri and Yadi Ahyadi in a book entitled *Ubrug: Spectacle and Guidance (An Prefix to Know Banten Traditional Performing Arts)* published by the Banten Provincial Education Office in collaboration with the NimusInstitute [3].

Ubrug has a function as a tool or media in the process of ritual events, such as harvest parties, weddings and others. *Ubrug* is also a means of public entertainment by providing jokes and jokes that entertain the public. In addition, *Ubrug* is also a traditional communication tool, which functions as a communicator in conveying information in an easily digestible regional language. Language becomes the spirit in the *Ubrug* show. In the *Ubrug* show, the local language is used, namely the Java language, Serang and Sunda Banten.

Banten society is a multicultural society consisting of many ethnic groups (tribes). Therefore, there are various regional languages that are still alive and used by most of the people of Banten. However, most of the regional languages used by the people of Banten are still dominated by the Javanese Banten language and the Sundanese Banten language, two languages that have

historical value and become the cultural identity of the Banten people.

Geographically, Banten is divided into two regions. First, the southern region known as 'Bansel' (South Banten) is an area of terraced rice fields and mountains with dense forests. Generally, in this area the livelihood is farmers. The language used is Sundanese. Included in the Bansel area are Pandeglang and Lebak districts. Second, the northern region has a low topography with lots of flat rice fields and a long coastline. This area is known as North Banten which is now starting to turn into an industrial area and also a beach tourist destination. In general, the people of North Banten use the Banten dialect of Javanese (BJB) as their daily social language. Included in this area are Serang district, Serang city, and Cilegon city. As for the districts of Tangerang, Tangerang city and South Tangerang city, although administratively they are included in the province of Banten, geographically and culturally they tend to be closer to Jakarta [4].

Historically, the Banten Javanese language began to be spoken at the time of the Banten Sultanate in the 16th century. Maulana Hasanuddin son of Sunan Gunung Jati, the second Sultan of Cirebon, attacked Banten Girang and conquered it [5].

At that time, the language spoken in Banten was no different from the Cirebon language, which had not yet been foreign vocabulary, as it is now, the vocabulary of still (introduced tomaler), wanting (ayun), only (saos), going home (mantuk), me (us), and (kelawan) is a vocabulary in the Cirebon language that still survives and is used in Banten, but the foundation of the Banten language is not only from the Cirebon language, the sentence patterns are also colored with a mixture of the Sundanese local language [6].

Banten Javanese or Javanese dialect of Banten is spoken in the northern part of Serang Regency, Serang City, Cilegon City and the western part of Tangerang Regency. This dialect is considered an ancient dialect as well as many Sundanese and Betawi influences. This language may not affect the southern part of Banten such as Pandeglang Regency & Lebak Regency which still use Kanekes & the Language Sundanese language original which is the native language of the Banten Regional Language [6].

There are two levels of Javanese in Banten. Namely the level of freedom (krama) and standards. In the Javanese dialect of Banten (Java Serang/Jaseng), the pronunciation of the letter 'e', there are two versions. Some are pronounced 'e' only, as in the word "Ape". And also there is a pronounced 'a', as in the word "What". Areas that pronounce 'a' are the sub-districts of Kragilan, Kibin, Cikande, Kopo, Pamarayan, and their eastern regions. While the areas that pronounce the 'e' are the districts of Serang, Cipocok Jaya, Kasemen,

Bojonegara, Kramatwatu, Ciruas, Anyer, and the other side of the west [6].

The Serang region, Banten is also an area with a bilingual community. The mother tongue of most Serang residents is a regional language, namely Javanese Banten dialect (BJB) or Serang Java, while their second language is Indonesian (BI). Some also establish kinship or interact directly with ethnic Sundanese so that they can speak Sundanese, but there is a different dialect in Sundanese in West Java, which is called Sunda Banten [7].

Examples of different vocabulary/dialects in Indonesian, Standard Banten Javanese (Java Serang), and Smooth Bantenese Javanese (Babasan) (see table 1).

Table 1 The differences vocabulary of standard Banten and smooth Bantenese

Indonesian Language	Standard Banten Javanese /Jaseng	Smooth Bantenese Javanese/Babasan
Ada	Ana	Wenten
Anak	Anak	Pecil
Apa	Ape	Nape
Bagaimana	Kepremen/Premen	Kepripun/Pripun
Baju	Kelambi	Kelambi
Bangun	Tangi	Tangi
Barat	Kulon	Kulon
Bawa	Gaweu	Bakte
Begitu	Mengkonon	Mengkoten
Beli	Tuku	Tumbas
Belum	Durung	Dereng
Berapa	Pire	Pinten
Bertemu	Kependak	Kepetuk
Besar	Gede	Gede
Bisa	Bise	Bangkit
Dan	Lan	Kelawan
Dari	Sing	Saking
Datang	Teke	Rawuh

The origins of the Banten kingdom came from the combined army of Demak and Cirebon which succeeded in seizing the northern coastal area of the Pajajaran Kingdom. However, the Java-Banten language began to look different, moreover, the area where the surrounded by areas where language was spoken waste Sundanese languages were spoken and Betawi. This language became the main language of the Sultanate of Banten (freedom level) which occupied the Surosowan Palace. This language is also the daily language of the people of Banten Lor (North Banten).

In the structure of *Ubrug* theater performances, especially in the Serang Regency and Serang City areas, the Serang Javanese language (Standard), while in the Pandeglang and Lebak districts the Banten dialect is used in Sundanese. The regional language is used at the opening, Boodoran and continued when the story plays are played until the end of the show. The local language is the soul of the *Ubrug* show, it is an introduction for the community to be able to enter the story and be part

of the show. Because the language that is delivered in the performance is the everyday language used by the surrounding community.

The use of regional languages in community arts activities is a step in maintaining the existence of *Ubrug* theater arts and regional languages. Because local languages and arts are important things that must be preserved in people's lives and are a relic of wealth from their ancestors that must be maintained. The purpose of writing this article is to analyze the use of the Banten regional language in *Ubrug* theater performances.

2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative paradigm with a descriptive method. Descriptive method is done by describing the facts which are then followed by analysis. Field techniques are used to find research primary data, while literature is needed to find supporting data for research [8].

Descriptive research is to collect data based on the factors that support the object of research, then analyze these factors to look for their role [9].

This research involved the theater community in Serang City, such as the Cantel Group in Walantaka District, Serang City and Banten. In this research, observations and interviews will be conducted with resource persons who are leaders or members of the community.

Data collection techniques were carried out by observation, interviews, and documentation. During this pandemic, data collection techniques use technology or digital media, such as the use of the ZOOM application in activities workshop aimed at students or the general public presenting material about *Ubrug* performances, and presenting resource persons from the community or theater studios.

The data obtained through interviews in this research were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis. The results of interviews with informants are described thoroughly. Interview data in research is the main data source that becomes the material for data analysis to answer research problems and is strengthened by documentation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The Use of Javanese Serang and Sundanese Banten in the *Ubrug* Performance



Ubrug Mang Cantel (<https://1001indonesia.net>)

Figure 1 *Ubrug* performance.

Before the 20th century, Indonesian was familiar with folk dramas which were told or performed in open places such as rice fields, fields, yards, beaches, crossroads, in fields, and in the yard [10].

Likewise, *Ubrug's* performances (Figure 1) can be staged anywhere, because *Ubrug* performs stories from the daily lives of its people, and using everyday language. This art is located in the Banten area, using a mixed language of Sundanese, Javanese, Indonesian. This theater uses the accompaniment of gamelan salendro with gongs. Besides that, the theater performers dress according to the situation of the story that is close to everyday life [11].

This *Ubrug* theater troupe is usually called by people who have a celebration. The playground is in the field. With torch lighting (patromaks) in the middle of the arena [12]. The presentation of the *Ubrug* theater performance, begins with the process of reciting khadorot by providing riungan/offerings, to honor the spirits of the ancestors and great-grandchildren around the venue. After that, you just enter the staging structure, which starts with the Tatalu or the sounds of musical instruments to invite the audience and signify that the performance will start soon. Followed by Lalaguan, namely Sinden starting to sing, then Lalagean or Nandung, namely dancers dancing dances, which are usually played by girls. Then it goes to Bodoran, which is the entry of one of the main characters who brings jokes, followed by story plays, namely the delivery of stories by the players.

Below are examples of the use of the Regional Language of Banten, Java, Serang, Sundanese, dialect of Banten and Indonesian. When the actor opens the show. An example of a dialogue quote is when one of the characters opens and greets the audience.

- Example of opening dialogue in Javanese Serang (Standard)

*Actor : “Assalamualaikum dulur dulur...”

*Audience : “Walikumsalam Mang”

*Actor : “*Apa kabare? uwis pada mangan durung?*”

*Audience : “*Alhamdulillah. Mang uwis.*”

*Actor : “*Mangan karo apa kuen?*”

*Audience : “*Karo jering, tumis godong dangder, iwak asin.*”

- Example of opening dialogue in Sundanese Banten (Rough)

*Actor : “*Assalamualaikum semuanya*”

*Audience : “*Walikumsalam mamang*”

*Actor : “*Kumaha kabarna? Ges pada dahar ncan?*”

*Audience : “*Alhamdulillah mang, ngges*”

*Actor: “*Dahar jeng naon yeuh?*”

*Audience : “*Jeng jengkol, tumis daun dangder, jeung lauk asin*”

- Interpreted in Indonesian.

*Actor : “*Assalamualaikum semuanya..?*”

*Audience : “*Walikumsalam Mang.*”

*Actor: “*Bagaimana kabarnya? Sudah pada makan belum?*”

*Audience: “*Alhamdulillah sudah.*”

*Actor: “*Makan sama apa?*”

*Audience: “*Makan sama jengkol, tumis daun singkong sama ikan asin*”

Below is an example of a dialogue quote in the middle of the staging, that is, in the play or the core story. A story about an arrogant rich man.

- In the Java language Attack (Standard)

*Actor 1: “*dadi uwong kuh, aja pelit, ngko sira susah gelati kokon ning sape?*”

*Actor 2: “*kita mah uripe moal susah. Ora kaya sira. Harta kita wakeh!*”

*Actor 1: “*Astagfirullah., muji sira kuh. Laka sing digawa mati, harta sira kuh titipan.*”

*Actor 2: “*yawis sih, urip mah masing-masing bae. Sira kuh ai ora digai tulung ning kita wis merana mabur.*”

*Actor 1: “*Yawis, karep sira bae. Assalamualaikum!!!*”

- In Sundanese Banten

*Actor 1: “*jadi jalema ulah sok pelit, ngkena lamun ker susah menta tolong ka saha?*”

*Actor 2: “*hirup aing mah moal susah. Henteu doang sorangan. Harta aing mah loba!*”

*Actor 1: “*Astagfirullah., coba istigfar. Didunia iyeu eweh nu dibawa paeh, harta eta titipan.*”

*Actor 2: “*Nya ngges sih, hirup mah masing-masing bae, ges sih ari teh ditulungan ku aing dia kaditu lempang.*”

*Actor 1: “*Nya ges kumaha sia bae . Assalamualaikum!!!*”

- Meaning in Indonesian.

*Actor 1: “*Jadi orang itu gak boleh pelit, nanti kalau kamu susah siapa yang nolong?*”

*Actor 2: “*hidup saya mah gak akan susah. Gak kayak kamu. Harta saya banyak!*”

*Actor 1: “*Astagfirulla, muji kamu itu. Gak ada yang dibawa mati, harta kamu itu cuma titipan.*”

*Actor 2: “*Yaudahlah hidup masing-masing saja. Kamu itu sudah gak ditolongin sama saya juga. Sana pergi.*”

*Actor 1: “*Yaudah, terserah kamu. Assalamualaikum!!!*”

- Examples of staging final dialogue quotes.

*(In Serang Javanese) *Mastermind: “*iku tadi pemetasan sing judule “Si Sombong”. aja ditiru ya dulur-dulur, jadi wong aja sombong, aja pelit. Soale harta iku titipan sing gusti Allah SWT.*”

*(In the language of Banten (Rough) *Mastermind: “*nah eta tadi pemetasan nu judulna “Si Sombong”. Ulah sok ditiru nya para penonton, ulah jadi jalema sombong, pelit. Soalna harta eta titipan ti gusti Allah SWT*”

*(In Indonesian) *Mastermind: “*Itulah tadi pementasan yang berjudul “Si Sombong” jangan ditiru ya para penonton, jangan jadi manusia sombong apalagi pelit. Karena harta yang kita miliki itu hanya titipan dari Allah SWT.*”

On the theatrical staging of *Ubrug*, using the everyday language used by the community. The division of the use of Javanese or Sundanese language, according to the area where *Ubrug* is staged. For example, in the Pandeglang area, *Ubrug* uses the Sundanese language, but in the Serang Ciruas area, Walantaka uses the Serang Javanese language. In terms of the performance, it is a little different, if in the Bojonegara area of Serang regency, it usually uses silat patingtung as an opening before entering the bodoran or story play.

3.2. Maintenance of the Regional Language of Banten

Regional Language Defense Language maintenance (language maintenance) is related to the problem of attitude or assessment of a language, to continue to use the language in the middle of other languages [1]. There are three characteristics of language attitudes formulated by Garvin and Mathiot as follows. 1. Loyalty to the language that encourages the community of a language to defend its language, and when necessary to prevent the influence of other languages; 2. Pride of language that encourages people to develop their language and use it as a symbol of identity and community unity; 3. Awareness of language norms that encourage people to use their language carefully and politely; and is a factor that has a very large influence on the action that is the activity of using language. These three characteristics are the characteristics of a positive attitude towards language. Conversely, when the three characteristics of language attitudes have disappeared or weakened from a person or a group of members of the speaking community and the lack of passion or encouragement to maintain language independence is one of the signs that language loyalty begins to weaken and can continue to be lost altogether [13].

One of the political decisions produced by the Language Politics Seminar in 2000 was to determine the function of the regional language as: (a) a symbol of regional pride, (b) a symbol of regional identity, (c) a means of communication in the local family and community, (d) means of supporting regional culture and Indonesian language, (e) supporting regional literature and Indonesian literature. In addition, in relation to Indonesian, regional languages serve as: (a) supporters of the national language, (b) medium of instruction in primary schools in certain regions at the beginning level to facilitate the teaching of Indonesian and other subjects, and (c) resources language to enrich the Indonesian language, and (d) in certain circumstances can serve as a complement to the Indonesian language in the implementation of government at the regional level [14].

The use of the Banten regional language in the staging of *Ubrug* theater is an inseparable thing. Because language is the introduction of the message that will be conveyed by the actors or performers in a staging *Ubrug*. Serang Javanese and Banten Sundanese will not be able to be separated in the staging of *Ubrug*. Because the language in the staging of *Ubrug* becomes the spirit to liven up the atmosphere. Dialogue, improvisation, and interaction between actors, musicians, and songs sung by Sinden, using the Javanese language of Serang or Sundanese Banten, become the attraction or characteristic of the staging of *Ubrug*. See figure 2 below.



Source: (<https://m.merdeka.com>)

Figure 2 Nandong Process in *Ubrug* Theater

This indicates that the staging of *Ubrug* as a means of entertainment and as a medium of defense of the regional language of Java Serang and Sundanese Banten. As long as *Ubrug* still survives and is still enjoyed by the people of Banten, automatically the Javanese language of Serang and Sundanese Banten, will not become extinct. Therefore, the interest of the younger generation to preserve it must be continuously increased with the activities that make *Ubrug* and the local language not forgotten.

Although today, the use of Indonesian language is more dominantly applied in daily life, due to the existence of public spheres such as universities, housing complexes that contain residents from outside the region, and formal schools. Making some of the younger generation start reluctant to speak the Banten region with the assumption that the Javanese language of Serang and Sundanese Banten is a "rough" language. But it must still be introduced and its existence must not be lost. Therefore, the role of *Ubrug* theater is very important in preserving the regional language of Java Serang and Sunda Banten, through the staging of *Ubrug*, the younger generation and the community can be interested in speaking the local language and keep it from extinction or loss, so that it can be preserved to the next generation.

Language preservation generally aims to preserve a culture that serves as the identity of a group or community, to make it easier to identify community members, and to bind a sense of brotherhood among communities. Thus, language preservation occurs when a language community still maintains the use of its language [15].

The preservation of the language of the Banten region through traditional arts, especially *Ubrug* can continue to be done by providing the widest possible space for the development and preservation of *Ubrug* in Banten. *Ubrug* is one of the traditional theaters of Banten that is still alive and has the potential to grow and survive in today's digital society. This is supported by the use of local language used by the players, both

during pranks and plays. The use of the local language strengthens the character of *Ubrug* as one of the identities of the people of Banten who are open, egalitarian, ceplas ceplos, and relaxed.

The preservation of the Serang Javanese language in the *Ubrug* show has a positive impact on the preservation and development of the regional language. During the prank and acting sessions, the local language was well explored with the help of the charming gestures of the actors. In fact, some of the vocabulary used in staging is vocabulary used only by some speakers in certain areas, or old vocabulary that is rarely spoken. In addition, *Ubrug* can also be a medium for learning regional language and literature for the younger generation, as well as a media for community service information.

The use of language in the staging of *Ubrug* is an activity to preserve two regional treasures, the first is to preserve the art of *Ubrug* as a regional theater in Banten, and to preserve the regional language, namely Javanese Serang and Sundanese Banten. In the *Ubrug* theater performance, it contains a message moral that comes from everyday life, for example in the dialogue quote above, about an arrogant and stingy figure. *Ubrug* can also be a medium of moral cultivation. Through the messages inserted in every conversation between the players, the expected character education instilled from an early age to the younger generation and children who watch the show *Ubrug*. For example, the theme of the story is about devotion to the parents, help each other, and the spirit in achieving the ideals.

4. CONCLUSION

The preservation of the regional language of Banten, namely the Javanese language of Serang and Sundanese Banten can be done together with the preservation of the art of regional theater, namely the *Ubrug* theater. Through the staging of *Ubrug* theater that uses the local language, it can be a medium in maintaining the Javanese language of Serang and Sundanese Banten. In addition to entertainment because it has an element of Bodoran, *Ubrug* staging contains social value, and education. The moral message conveyed in the stories of everyday life can be a reflection of life packaged in the form of engaging performances.

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