

# Phonological Structure of the Babasan Language of Serang Banten, Indonesia

Agus Sulaeman<sup>1,\*</sup>, Goziyah<sup>2</sup>, and Frimadhona Syafri<sup>3</sup>

## ABSTRACT

This research aims to describe the Babasan language of Serang Banten, which is related to the phonological aspect in terms of its structure, namely the vowel aspect and the consonant aspect. Regarding data acquisition, researchers collected data using the interview method to obtain data. The interview method recognizes three ways, namely: (1) asking questions, (2) direct recording, (3) recording. Researchers conducted direct interviews with informants or respondents who met the criteria and took direct notes to obtain data. In the data analysis method, the distributional or collection method is used where the researcher analyzes the data using determining tools such as the language in question. This method is usually used to analyze language speech. Meanwhile, in presenting data, formal and informal methods are used. From the results of this research, it can be concluded that in the free language of Serang, there are phonemes in each word or sentence, which can be grouped into vowels and consonants.

**Keywords:** Babasan language, Banten, phonology.

Submitted: September 01, 2023

Published: February 19, 2024

 10.24018/ejlang.2024.3.1.112

<sup>1</sup>Department of Malay-Indonesian, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Indonesian Language Education, Muhammadiyah University, Indonesia.

<sup>3</sup>Department of English Literature, Semarang State University, Indonesia.

\*Corresponding Author:  
e-mail: sultanwahyu13@gmail.com

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is an arbitrary, conventional sound system used by humans as a means of communication. Language is seen as a distinctive and unique means of communication by each user. If you pay close attention to the use of a language to interact with citizens, it is not the same as the language used by other residents. Language variations can be in the form of differences in a person's speech from time to time and differences from one place to another by paying attention to the pronunciation and intonation of the different words spoken by the speakers. So, it is clear that there are very many language variations. One of Indonesia's many cultural riches is the rich variety of regional languages. Javanese is one of the regional languages in the archipelago, which is still alive and developing in society as a link in communication with each other in daily life. Every scientific activity certainly has an object. Likewise with linguistics, which takes language as its object because there are other disciplines that make language its "side" object, so it is better to talk about what language is so that it can be understood and studied with linguistic approaches to its object, and how it differs from other disciplines towards language.

According to Chaer (2010, p.11), language is a system, meaning that language is formed by a number of components that have a fixed pattern and can be adopted. From the meaning of Chaer, it can be concluded that language is a system. That is, there are certain differences in each region, but even though the languages are different, they still use the same pattern using the national language, namely Indonesian. According to Kushartanti (2009, p. 3), language is defined as a sound sign system that is agreed to be used by members of certain community groups in working together, communicating, and identifying themselves.

Language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols used by members of social groups in communicating as the most prominent differentiator because, through language, each social group feels itself as a unit that is different from other groups. Therefore, language is very beautiful when combined with various languages in other regions. With language, we can understand different social groups that use that language.



Phonology consists of two words from Greek, namely *phone*, which means a sound, and *logos*, which means order, words, or knowledge, also called sound or sound system. However, the sounds referred to in this case are phonology, not sounds in general, but language sounds that are able to distinguish meaning in spoken or written language used by humans. The sounds studied in phonology are also called phonemes. According to Chaer (2010, p. 1), etymologically, the word phonology comes from a combination of the words *fon*, which means sound, and *logi*, which means science. As a science, phonology is usually defined as a part of linguistic studies that studies, discusses, and analyzes language sounds produced by human speech organs.

According to Muslich (2010, p. 2), the main object of linguistic study is spoken language, namely language in the form of speech sounds. The study of speech sounds is investigated by a branch of linguistics called phonology. According to phonology, these speech sounds can be studied from two points of view: (1) speech sounds are seen as mere language media, no different from objects or substances. Thus, *sound-buni* is considered a raw material, such as stone, sand, and cement as raw materials for building a house. Phonology that looks at the sounds of words is usually called phonetics. (2) speech sounds are seen as part of the language system. Speech sounds are the smallest language elements that are part of the structure of words and which also function to differentiate meaning.

According to Verhaar (2010, p. 19), the field of phonetic studies focuses on the analysis of language sounds without looking at the relationship with the meaning of the word, while phonemic studies focus on analyzing the function of each sound as a differentiator of word meaning (Gani & Fitriyah, 2011, p. 3). Phonetics, as part of phonology, focuses on the analysis of language sounds, such as:

- 1) Studying each language sound produced by the human speech apparatus,
- 2) Studying the process by which these language sounds occur,
- 3) Classifying these sounds into vowel sounds (vocoids), consonants (contoids), and procedural sounds (pauses, rhythm, sound intonation),
- 4) Describing the sounds of the language in phonetic form as a recording of the speaker in written form.

In books on phonetics and linguistics in general, various symbol systems that are used to represent language sounds are found. It is clear that the standard spelling for this is inadequate because it does not fully reflect the sound of language in any language. However, letters of the (Roman) alphabet may be used for some (Verhaar, 2010, p. 19).

According to Achmad and Alek (2012, p. 26), the field of linguistics that studies the speech sounds of language is called phonology. Phonology is divided into phonetic and phonemic. In general, phonetics can be explained as a branch of phonology that studies the sounds of language without paying attention to whether these sounds have a function to differentiate meaning or not. Meanwhile, phonemics is a branch of phonology that studies the sounds of language by paying attention to the function of these sounds as differentiators of meaning.

According to Chaer (2013, p. 4), phonology is divided into two parts, namely phonetics and phonemics. *Phonetics* is defined as a branch of phonology that studies language sounds without paying attention to their status, whether the language sounds can distinguish meaning (words) or not. Meanwhile, *phonemics* is a branch of phonological studies that examines the sounds of language by paying attention to their function as differentiators of word meaning.

According to Muslich (2010, p. 1), phonology studies speech sounds. The term phonology comes from the combination of the words *phone* and *logic* (Gani & Fitriyah, 2011, p. 2). *Phone* means language sounds, both vowel sounds and consonant sounds. *Logic* means knowledge, methods, and thoughts. In linguistics, phonology is one of the subfields that study the sounds of language, both in the languages of advanced societies and in societies that are still simple (primitive) in all their aspects.

In its study, the science of phonology can be divided into two fields of study, namely phonetics and phonemics. Phonetics is a branch of linguistics that examines the “physical” basis of language sounds. There are two basic “physical” aspects, namely, the aspect of the speech organs and their use in producing language sounds and the acoustic properties of the sounds that have been produced. According to the first principle, phonetics is called “organic phonetics” because it concerns the organs of speech, or “articulatory phonetics” because it concerns the articulation of language sounds. According to the second basis, phonetics is called “acoustic phonetics” because it concerns language sounds from the point of view of sound as air vibrations.

Chaer (2013, p. 25) says that phonemics examines language sounds that can or function to differentiate the meaning of words. For example, the sounds [l], [a], [b] and [u] and [r], [a], [b] and [u]. When compared, the difference is only in the first sound, namely the [l] sound and the [r] sound. Thus, it can be concluded that these two sounds are different phonemes in Indonesian, namely the /l/ phoneme and the /r/ phoneme. According to Sulaeman et al. (2018), phonetics is the study of speech sounds. It is the linguistic field of pronunciation (production) of word sounds, or phonetics is the sound system of a

language. Thus, it can be concluded that phonetics is the science of language which discusses the sounds of language produced by the human speech apparatus, as well as how these sounds are produced.

The free language is called Serang Javanese (Jaseng) or Banten Javanese language, which is a Javanese language that has experienced acculturation with Banten Sundanese culture. Most of the language is the same as the original Javanese, but the words in the original Javanese end in /o/, while in the Javanese, the attack ends in /e/. According to Istimurti (2013, p. 54), the Banten dialect of Javanese is the (regional language) used by the majority of the people of the Regency and City of Serang. Saraswati (2000, p. 25) revealed that the Javanese dialect of Banten or Serang Javanese is spoken in the northern part of Serang Regency and the western region of Tangerang Regency. The Banten dialect of Javanese can be divided into two levels, namely the free level (krama) and the rough level. Apart from differences in level, there are also differences in the pronunciation of the phoneme /a/.

Sulaeman (2013, p. 12) explained that the Javanese language in Banten began to emerge in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, influenced by the Javanese languages of Solo, Demak, and Yogyakarta. Javanese in Banten began to be used in regional government centers until it became the official language of the palace. Therefore, there was a rapid influence in Banten, especially North Banten. So, indirectly, the palace has formed a Javanese-speaking community. Even when the palace no longer existed, the Banten Javanese language continued to develop. So, based on the opinions of the experts above, it can be concluded that the Banten dialect of Javanese is the language used by the majority of Banten people.

The Javanese language in Banten initially emerged from the influence of the Javanese languages of Solo, Demak, and Yogyakarta. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Javanese language in Banten began to be used in palaces or government centers, and indirectly, this influenced the development of language in Banten society. Gradually, the Javanese language in Banten was formed into the language of the heart, namely Javanese, the Banten dialect. The Banten dialect language has two levels, namely, the level of the fine variety (free) and the low variety. Apart from that, the Banten dialect of Javanese has two different pronunciations for each phoneme /a/, which changes to /e/. In line with the opinions of the experts above, Sobarna et al. (2004, p. 8) stated that according to the history of the Javanese language, the Banten dialect generally does not directly come from the Solo, Demak and Yogyakarta dialects of Javanese. This language entered the Banten region when the Banten Sultanate was founded by dignitaries from Demak as sovereign. At that time, the Sultanate of Banten established very close relations with areas with a Javanese socio-cultural background so that various aspects of Javanese culture, such as politics, statehood, kinship, religion, trade, and language, colored Banten's various government systems.

The area, which is a maritime route for inter-island trade links, also influences the language contact that develops in the Banten region. At first, the Javanese language used in Banten was thick with the Solo dialect of Javanese, then, shifting due to the influence of other languages, the Cirebon dialect of Javanese language greatly influenced the existence of the language used in the Banten region. It can be said that the Banten dialect of Javanese is a language that has great influence from the Banten dialect of Javanese and the Cirebon dialect of Javanese, which at present the Cirebon dialect of Javanese is identical to the Banten dialect of Javanese.

Then, the Banten dialect of the Javanese language continued to develop as the level of social communication increased, which led to the emergence of language variations in the Banten dialect of the Javanese language. It is a variety of language used by most ordinary people and is used every day. In contrast to the above, the Javanese language variety, the Banten Liberan dialect (high/fine variety), is rarely used by the public. There are quite a few free language speakers because only a few people can understand and use the free Javanese language. The free language is rarely used. The Serang Free Javanese language is usually only used for certain situations and certain people during weddings, recitations, and meetings of community leaders. Then, it is used when talking to teachers, *kiyai*, or community leaders. This free language is considered a refined language and is considered higher than the usual Serang Javanese or what is commonly called "Jaseng". The following are examples of Javanese (low/coarse variety) and Free Javanese (high variety). The existence of these language variations makes the Javanese dialect of Banten increasingly develop and find its independence as the Jati language of the Banten region. Istimurti (2013, p. 56) emphasizes that although the Javanese Banten dialect has many similarities with Javanese, there are differences between the two dialects, especially in spoken songs (Sundanese: *Lentong*), pronunciation, and some of the vocabulary.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Emzir (2016, p. 2), qualitative methods are research methods that use inductive reasoning methods, and it is believed that there are many perspectives that will be expressed. This means that qualitative research with a descriptive design

provides careful information about the circumstances of the symptoms that occur through certain individuals or groups.

According to Sukmadinata (2011, p. 52), research methods are a series of methods or activities for carrying out research that are based on basic assumptions, philosophical and ideological views, questions, and issues faced. Qualitative research procedures produce descriptive data in the form of written or spoken data in language communities. Thus, researchers do not use numbers in collecting data and in providing interpretation of the results. In research, the place or research location is a characteristic of the research. This research was conducted in the Muhammadiyah University Tangerang classroom.

The main thing that needs to be prepared in this research is the preparation of the instruments. According to Arikunto (1992, p. 185), instruments are tools used in data collection. The instrument or tool used in this research is in the form of questions. In collecting data, researchers used the interview method. The interview method is a method used for geographical research in the Serang Javanese language or the Serang Free language. According to Ayatrohaedi (1983, p. 34), the interview method recognizes three methods, namely (1) asking questions directly to the source, (2) direct recording, and (3) recording. Researchers use descriptive qualitative research methods because, in this research, they analyze the phonological structure of free language. This form of research analyzes and describes phonology, especially in the spoken language of Serang Banten. Therefore, the use of this qualitative descriptive method is suitable for reviewing and analyzing data objectively based on real facts found and then explained descriptively by analyzing the content.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the research that has been carried out, analyzing the phonological structure of the Liberan Serang Banten language, the researcher conducted an interview with the Binuang Serang Banten Community, and the results of this research findings are classified in Table I.

TABLE I: STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE LIBERIAN LANGUAGE OF SERANG BANTEN

No.	Babasan language	Meaning in English	Information
1.	Ngih	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word 'yes' in the KBBI means to agree.</li> </ul>
2.	Katuran	Please	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word 'please' in the KBBI indicates a command word.</li> </ul>
3.	Wastaqula	My name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the KBBI, the word 'name' means the word to mention.</li> <li>• The word 'I' in the KBBI means the person who speaks.</li> </ul>
4.	Seniki qula	Now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the KBBI, the word 'now' indicates time.</li> </ul>
5.	qula asline wong Serang	I am originally from Serang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the KBBI, the word 'original' means no mixture, pure or pure.</li> <li>• In the KBBI, the word 'Serang' means the capital city of Banten/Regional Province.</li> </ul>
6.	Male millet	Follow man	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the KBBI, 'follow' means accompanying someone on a journey or doing something as someone else is doing.</li> <li>• Meanwhile, the word 'man' is a non-standard form of husband.</li> </ul>
7.	Qula seniki dado mahasiswa sareng Ibu rumah tangga	Now I am a student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word 'I' in the KBBI means the person who speaks.</li> <li>• In the KBBI, the word 'now' indicates time.</li> <li>• In the KBBI, the word 'student' means a person studying at a university.</li> <li>• The word 'while' in the KBBI has the meaning of a connecting word to mark simultaneous events or actions.</li> </ul>

### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, the conclusion is that language is an arbitrary, conventional sound system used by humans as a means of communication. Language is seen as a distinctive and unique means of communication by each user. If you pay close attention to the use of language to interact between citizens, it is not really the same as the language used by other citizens. Language variations can take the form of differences in a person's speech from time to time and differ from one place to another by paying attention to the pronunciation and intonation of the differences in words spoken by the speakers. The free language is called Serang Javanese (Jaseng) or Banten Javanese, which is a Javanese language that has experienced acculturation with Sundanese Banten culture. Most of the language is the same as the original Javanese language, but the words are in the original Javanese language.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher would like to express his thanks and appreciation to the following parties who have made this article possible. Postgraduate Director of Muhammadiyah University, Tangerang, all colleagues, and friends. Hopefully, this research can be useful for those who focus on education and literary studies or other fields.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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