

# THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION: TRANSFORMATION OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE SPECIAL REGION OF YOGYAKARTA

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## Abstract

Yogyakarta is a city historically rich in Javanese traditions and values. With increasing global interaction through information technology, tourism, and cultural exchange, Yogyakarta's socio-cultural landscape is undergoing significant changes. This study analyzes how the Javanese language, as the core of local cultural identity, faces challenges and adapts amidst the dominance of English and standard Indonesian. Shifts in language use, particularly among the younger generation, not only affect the preservation of Javanese dialects and speech levels but also reshape their perceptions of tradition and modernity. Furthermore, this abstract highlights how globalization influences cultural identity through cultural hybridization, where foreign cultural elements assimilate with local practices, creating new forms of expression that sometimes blur the boundaries of indigenous identities. While globalization brings positive impacts such as increased access to information and economic opportunities, there are also concerns about the erosion of traditional values and cultural homogenization. This study concludes that Yogyakarta stands at a crossroads between preserving its cultural heritage and embracing global change, highlighting the importance of adaptive cultural conservation strategies and strong language education to maintain its unique identity.

**Keywords:** *Globalization, Yogyakarta, Language Transformation, Cultural Identity, Javanese Language, Cultural Hybridization.*

## Introduction

Globalization, an inevitable phenomenon, has reshaped the social, economic, and cultural landscapes around the world. This process is characterized by increasing interconnectivity and interdependence between countries, facilitating not only the flow of goods and capital, but also ideas, information, and, of course, culture. In this context, language and cultural identity are two key pillars highly vulnerable to the transformative impacts of globalization. Language, as the primary medium of cultural transmission, plays a crucial role in shaping a society's collective identity. Meanwhile, cultural identity represents the totality of values, beliefs, traditions, and practices that define a group or individual within a community.

Yogyakarta, a city widely known as a center of culture and education in Indonesia, presents a compelling case study in examining the impact of globalization. As a city deeply committed to Javanese traditions yet open to external influences, Yogyakarta becomes an arena where the dialectic between local preservation and global assimilation plays out dynamically. The influx of global information and communication technologies, as well as increased interaction with foreign cultures, has the potential to bring significant changes to everyday language use and the way people articulate their cultural identities.

Yogyakarta holds a unique position with its rich Javanese cultural heritage and strong traditions. The Javanese language, as a key pillar of cultural identity, has been passed down from generation to generation. However, with the rapid development of communication technology, the penetration of global popular culture, and increased interaction with international tourists, concerns have arisen about the erosion of Javanese language use, especially among the younger generation. This phenomenon is not limited to language use but also extends to other aspects of cultural identity, such as performing arts, fashion, cuisine, and local values. The people of Yogyakarta are faced with the dilemma of maintaining their noble traditions while adopting elements of global culture that are considered more modern or practical. This gap creates tension and raises questions about how Yogyakarta's cultural identity will evolve in the future. This research aims to deeply analyze the impact of globalization on the transformation of language and

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cultural identity in Yogyakarta. We will explore how the penetration of foreign languages, particularly English, influences the use and vitality of Javanese, as well as how local cultural practices adapt or even shift amidst global currents. Furthermore, this research will identify strategies implemented by communities and institutions in Yogyakarta to maintain their linguistic richness and cultural heritage amidst the challenges of globalization.

## Formulation of the problem

1. How does globalization influence the use of Javanese among the people of Yogyakarta, especially the younger generation?
2. How do the people of Yogyakarta respond to the influx of global culture in an effort to maintain or transform their cultural identity?
3. What strategies can local governments and communities implement to preserve the Javanese language and Yogyakarta's cultural identity in the era of globalization?

## Writing purpose

1. Analyzing the impact of globalization on the use of Javanese and changes in cultural identity in Yogyakarta.
2. Identifying factors that accelerate or slow down the transformation of local languages and cultural identities.
3. Providing policy and program recommendations that can support the preservation and development of the language and cultural identity of Yogyakarta in the midst of globalization.
- 4.

## The Urgency of This Topic in the Context of Local Politics

The topic of globalization's impact on language and cultural identity is highly pressing in the local political context of Yogyakarta. The Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) government has a constitutional and historical mandate to preserve and develop Javanese culture. Effective policies addressing the challenges of globalization will not only ensure the continuity of cultural heritage but also strengthen regional autonomy and Yogyakarta's unique identity. Politically, this issue can impact social cohesion and local pride. If cultural identity is weakened, it can impact community participation in development, support for local policies, and even potentially lead to intergenerational or intercultural conflict. Therefore, a thorough understanding of these dynamics and the formulation of appropriate solutions are crucial for Yogyakarta's future stability and progress.

## Methodology

This journal was compiled using a qualitative method by conducting field research through observations at several locations such as the Yogyakarta Palace and the Ulen Sentalu Museum. There, the resource persons explained and answered our needs as researchers, literature on websites, books, and journals, and utilized technological assistance in the form of AI (Augmented Literature Research) for searching, indexing, and initial analysis. AI functions as a facilitator and accelerator in identifying, organizing, and even presenting initial information from various sources. However, in-depth interpretation, critical analysis of the collected data, and the final synthesis of all literature are entirely the result of our thinking and expertise as researchers.

## Content and Discussion



In Yogyakarta, a city rich in culture and tradition, the Javanese language faces serious challenges due to the influx of global languages, especially Indonesian and English, which dominate the education sector, mass media, and other digital technologies. According to Fishman (1991), in his theory of Language Revitalization, the survival of a language depends heavily on the process of intergenerational transmission, particularly within the family and community. Today's youth, growing up in the digital age, are exposed to Indonesian and English content from an early age. As a result, communication patterns are changing. Initial observations and several studies indicate a decline in the active use of Javanese in everyday conversation among teenagers and students. They tend to switch to Indonesian, or even code-switch and code-mix with English when communicating. This is

inconsistent with our findings at the Yogyakarta Palace during our research. The informants we interviewed stated

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that they still strongly use their Yogyakarta language and explained that the language they use is not affected by developments in globalization.



This language is often marginalized in informal situations, such as communication at home with parents or grandparents, and at traditional or religious events. Conversely, formal fields such as education, the workplace, and general communication often use Indonesian. English proficiency is often considered a crucial cultural asset for increasing social and economic mobility. This encourages young people to study foreign languages diligently, sometimes at the expense of mastering their local languages. The most disturbing impact is the erosion of Javanese politeness. Unggah-ungguh, a system of language levels reflecting social hierarchy and etiquette in Javanese culture, is often trivialized in inconsistent or mixed Javanese language usage. When the younger generation is no longer familiar with the use of *krama alus* or *ngoko* (courtesy) appropriate to the situation, this is not

only a linguistic issue, but also a sign of a shift in the understanding and application of Javanese cultural values associated with the language. Despite the challenges of globalization, Yogyakarta residents, who have a strong cultural character, demonstrate various forms of response, ranging from hard work to maintain traditions to creative adaptations that give birth to new cultural forms. One of the most visible responses is the renewal and modernization of traditions. Traditional performing arts such as *wayang* (wayang), dance, and *karawitan* (gamelan) are no longer presented solely in outdated ways. Many young artists are innovating by incorporating modern elements such as digital displays, modern musical arrangements, or stories that are more relevant to current issues. These innovations aim to attract the attention of younger generations and broaden audiences, while demonstrating that traditions can evolve and not be stuck in time.



Furthermore, cultural communities are also growing stronger. Various arts groups, studios, and enthusiasts of Javanese culture are thriving in Yogyakarta. They actively conduct training sessions on various arts, such as batik, gamelan, and Javanese dance, and regularly hold cultural performances and discussions. These communities play a significant role in transmitting cultural values to their members, especially children and adolescents, who may not receive sufficient exposure in their families or schools. Interestingly, the use of digital media is also a crucial strategy in efforts to preserve culture. Rather than viewing it as a threat, many individuals and communities in Yogyakarta are utilizing platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok to promote local culture. Vlogs

about traditional food, batik tutorials, educational content on Javanese script, and even Javanese parodies are all creative ways to reach a wider audience, especially the younger generation. Furthermore, the renewal of traditional clothing is also evident. Batik and kebaya, once often considered formal and outdated attire, have now been modified into fashionable and contemporary everyday wear. Our guide also explained that Yogyakarta and Surakarta batik differed in their time. Yogyakarta batik tends to feature larger motifs, while Surakarta batik tends to feature animal-like motifs. Traditional batik for weddings and everyday wear is heavily influenced by Islam and Europe. Batik fabrics called *kemben*, typically worn as undergarments or even as everyday wear, have become more revealing. European cultural influences, such as the addition of feathers to the designs, have also been adopted.





Local designers are innovating, creating patterns and cuts that appeal to young people, making the use of batik and kebaya a trend. While there is also a "return to the roots" movement emphasizing the importance of preserving authentic traditions in response to concerns about identity erosion, overall, the people of Yogyakarta demonstrate an ability to adapt while maintaining their cultural core. Protecting the Javanese language and Yogyakarta's cultural heritage amidst the rapid influence of globalization requires a comprehensive approach, involving collaboration between local governments, educational institutions, and the community. Some steps that have been implemented or could be implemented include:

- a) **A More Comprehensive Curriculum Integration:** Javanese should be taught not only as a stand-alone subject, but also needs to be thematically integrated into other subjects, such as history, art, or science with the use of Javanese vocabulary.
- b) **Language Immersion Program:** Inviting specific schools or study groups to implement an immersion program, where Javanese serves as the primary language of instruction for some or all learning activities. This will familiarize students with using Javanese in academic and everyday contexts naturally.
- c) **Teacher Skills Improvement**
- d) **Creating Interactive Learning Applications:** Creating mobile applications that not only present dictionaries or basic materials, but are also equipped with game elements, interactive narratives, and dialogue simulations at various levels of difficulty.
- e) **Creative Digital Content Development:** Encourage and support local content creators to create YouTube videos, podcasts, short films, or music in Javanese that suit the interests of the younger generation (such as comedy, culinary vlogs, and art tutorials).
- f) **Digitalization and Standardization of Javanese Script:** Encourage the creation of digital fonts of Javanese Script that are easy to access and install, and promote their use across various digital platforms, including in writing street names and public announcements.
- g) **Cultural Integration in the Tourism Industry:** Developing a tourism sector that not only offers tourist attractions but also provides immersive experiences in Javanese culture and language. Examples include short Javanese language courses, traditional arts training, or performances that involve tourists.
- h) **Family Function** It is important to reaffirm the role of the family as the primary guardian in the transmission of language and cultural values.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Globalization has had a significant impact on language and cultural identity in Yogyakarta. The Javanese language faces challenges due to the dominance of Indonesian and English, especially among the younger generation, leading to a decline in active usage and the erosion of "unggah-ungguh." However, the people of Yogyakarta are adapting by innovating traditional arts, strengthening cultural communities, and utilizing digital media for cultural promotion. Yogyakarta sits at the intersection of cultural heritage preservation and global change, emphasizing the importance of adaptive conservation strategies and strong language education.

To preserve the Javanese language and Yogyakarta culture, collaboration between the government, education, and community is needed. Recommendations include a more comprehensive integration of the Javanese language curriculum, language immersion programs, teacher skill development, the creation of interactive learning apps, the development of creative digital content in Javanese, the digitization of the Javanese script, the integration of culture into tourism, and a re-emphasizing of the role of the family in transmitting the language and its cultural values.

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