






## Teachers' beliefs about Javanese learning materials on local wisdom curriculum in Indonesia

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### Abstract

Teachers' beliefs are very influential in the success of learning in the classroom. The teacher is the person who knows best how to successfully use learning materials to achieve learning objectives. This study aims to explore how teachers' beliefs in Javanese language learning materials in the local content curriculum, especially for the Central Java region. The method used in this research is qualitative method. Data obtained by questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Data analysis is carried out by grouping the teachers' beliefs points towards the Javanese language teaching material. The results show that more than 70% of teachers believe that the Javanese language teaching materials contained in the local content curriculum are too difficult for students both in terms of language and content. Meanwhile, based on the FGD analysis of curriculum documents and Javanese textbooks, it is also found that some teaching materials are not in order and are not in accordance with the development of students, thus making students find it difficult to understand the material. This causes the learning objectives of the Javanese language tend to have not achieved maximum results. The results of this study can be a recommendation for stakeholders to evaluate the curriculum.

*Keywords:* Teachers' beliefs; Javanese Language; Javanese Learning; Learning Materials; Local Wisdom Curriculum.

## 1. Introduction

Learning in Indonesia continues to develop, including in welcoming the 21st century. Vito (1989) stated that in order to anticipate the 21st century, the learning model needed is scientific thinking skills, the development of "sense of inquiry", and students' creative thinking skills. In addition, Redhana (2019) explained that in the 21st century, a person must be mastered skills such as creative thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, collaboration and communication, technological literacy, information, and communication.

The implementation of learning in schools is carried out based on the national curriculum and local content curriculum. Article 37 of the National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 states that the local content is a curricular activity which is adapted to the local characteristics and potential of each region (Rahmanto, 2016). In the local content curriculum, character education can be integrated

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by presenting character values which are in accordance with local wisdom from the local area so that students have characters which are in accordance with their environment Wayan (*Syaifuddin*, n.d.). This is also in accordance with Permendikbud No. 79 of 2014 which states that the implementation of local content learning aims to form students' understanding of excellence and wisdom in the area where they live so that they can preserve and develop various advantages and regional wisdom in order to support national development. For the Central Java region, this is reinforced by the Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Jawa Tengah Nomor 4 Tahun 2012 concerning the implementation of Javanese language learning as a compulsory local content subject which is applied in schools ranging from elementary school to high school level (Tengah, 2012).

To be able to achieve the objectives which have been mandated in these various policies, the learning of Javanese language, as formulated in the National Language Politics as an educational function, is intended to pass on noble values in Javanese culture for the purpose of forming the personality of students. In line with this, Sartini (2009) argues that Javanese culture is full of symbols which contain cultural, ethical, moral values which should be passed on to the next generation. Pranoto (2014) also stated that Javanese tradition is full of local wisdom values which are expected to be a character guide for the younger generation.

The various concepts of Javanese language, literature, and culture are packaged in the form of a curriculum which is then revealed in the form of learning materials. The packaging of these materials should be adjusted to the level and age of the child. Latifah (2019) stated that the learning of the local content of the Javanese language of elementary school is seen from the standard content emphasized on various materials such as *unggah-ungguh basa*, Javanese art, Javanese script, puppets, and Javanese heroism figures. The form and substance of the material for the elementary school level is certainly different from the secondary school level. In this case, the teacher is the party who best understands the condition of the teaching materials in the field. Giving learning materials which are too difficult will be a burden for students. Therefore, the teachers' beliefs in the suitability of the Javanese language teaching materials available in the field is needed as a form of reflection from the implementation of a curriculum. In addition, the teachers' beliefs in the quality of teaching materials contained in the curriculum will be the foundation of how a teacher constructs a lesson. Teaching materials which have good quality will greatly help teachers achieve the learning objectives which have been determined.

## 2. Literature Review

Pajares (1992) argues that "beliefs can be conceptualized as an "individual's judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition". The meaning of beliefs can be interpreted as an individual's assessment of the truth or falsity of a proposition. In addition, belief can also be interpreted as a set of interrelated ideas add that belief can be interpreted as a set of conceptual representations which store general knowledge about objects, people, events, and the characteristics of relationships (Hermans, VanBraak, & VanKeer, 2008; McAlpine, Eriks-Brophy & Cargo, 1996). According to Wan, Low, and Li (Bovellan, 2014), teachers' beliefs are described as "a complex set of variables based on attitudes, experiences, and expectations". In other words, the teachers' beliefs have a meaning as the opinion or assessment of a teacher about something. This research on teachers belief refers more to teachers' thoughts about problems such as those that occur in the learning process (Skott, 2015).

Antonietti & Giorgetti (2006) in their research suggest that teachers have a duty to manage the student learning process. Therefore, it is very important to know the beliefs or opinions of the teacher regarding the problems which arise in the field so that it can help us to be able to create good learning and as expected by the teacher. In line with this, Thompson (1984) also stated that, "research on

teachers' beliefs acknowledged the significance of the teacher's thinking". More specifically, teachers belief is seen as a filter related to opinion as well as a curriculum changer add that teachers' beliefs, especially regarding language learning, has been shown to have an effect on students' beliefs and views about success and how they learn language, as well as teacher teaching practices in the classroom (Allen, 1996; Bryan, 2012; Grossman, Wilson & Shoulman, 1989; Kagan, 1990; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Patterson, Doppen & Misco, 2012; Reichert & Purta, 2019).

Teachers have a contribution to the success of their students and sometimes the influence of teachers on students' competence in learning languages can be very large (Dufya, 2003). Teachers belief have a great influence in shaping active teaching methods and will produce students' language skills (Ismail, 2002; Wang, Charoenmuang & Knobloch, N. A., dan Tormoehlen, 2020). Teachers can make decisions about teaching in their classrooms based on the beliefs they have about language teaching and learning and have a considerable impact on goals, procedures, roles, and students (Farrel, 2013; Harste & Burke, 1997; Kumaravadelua, 2012; Kuzborska, 2011; Jack C. Richards, Gallo, & Renandya, 2001). Similar statements were also made by (J. C. Richards & Rodgers, 2001) and (Badi'atul Azmina, E. F., & Drajadi, 2018) which confirms that teachers who have beliefs about language learning can help them get a specific approach to language teaching. (Elyas, Alhashmi & Fang, 2020) that the research on individual differences was deemed important to be explored further in language classroom teaching in order to understand the needs and goals of learners. In some situations, students' cognitive and affective factors cannot be observed directly because these factors have an important role in the language acquisition process. Based on this, this research aims to find out how the opinions and beliefs of teachers on the teaching materials of Javanese language learning which is contained in the local content curriculum.

### 3. Method

The method used in this study is a qualitative method. Qualitative research is research that uses a naturalistic approach to seek and find an understanding of phenomena in a specific contextual setting (Moleong, 2017). Data collection techniques used are questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). In the FGD, an in-depth document analysis was also carried out in the form of local content curriculum documents of the Javanese language from elementary to high school levels and Javanese language textbooks used in schools. Respondents to the questionnaire were 56 elementary school teachers and Javanese language teachers at the junior and senior high school levels in Central Java. Meanwhile, the FGD was attended by 230 teachers consisting of elementary school teachers and Javanese language subject teachers at the junior and senior high school levels in Central Java. The statements contained in the questionnaire instrument have been validated by experts. The statement submitted contains 16 points which can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Questionnaire Instrument

No	Teacher Opinions Regarding Teaching Materials
1	In my opinion, my students find it difficult to master the material in the curriculum.
2	In my opinion, there are some materials that are too difficult for my students.
3	In my opinion, the material in the curriculum has not been sorted from easy to difficult, from simple to complex.
4	In my opinion, the available teaching materials are not in accordance with the needs of students.

5	I often create additional material to complement the material in the textbook.
6	Students often have difficulty in understanding the material available.
7	I think it is necessary to simplify the material in the textbook.
8	In my opinion, the material in the curriculum is less contextual to the daily lives of students.
9	In my opinion, it is very necessary to reconstruct the curriculum so that the material given to students is more sequential and according to student needs.
10	So far, I need to bridge students' understanding of the Javanese language because of the incomplete material in the textbook.
11	In my opinion, the material in the curriculum needs to be added with material that is contextual to students' daily lives.
12	In my opinion, the variation of Javanese language material in the current Javanese language curriculum is good.
13	In my opinion, the material in the curriculum has been arranged according to the grade level appropriately.
14	I feel the need to hold discussions with the experts regarding the levels of Javanese language material in the curriculum.
15	In my opinion, the material in the curriculum is not in accordance with the cognitive development of students.
16	In my opinion, the material presented is less meaningful and contextual.

The results of data collection through the distribution of questionnaires were analyzed and the meaning concluded to find out how they actually believed in the Javanese language teaching materials available in the field. The results of the questionnaire analysis will be discussed in FGDs and supplemented with curriculum analysis and Javanese language textbooks. The final stage of the data analysis of this research is drawing conclusions about how teachers believe in the existing Javanese language teaching materials.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

From the results of the questionnaire analysis and FGD, four core problems were obtained related to the teachers' beliefs in the Javanese language learning material. As for what is meant by the 4 cores, they include: a) the provision of material which is classified as difficult; b) the material in the textbook is incomplete; c) the provision of materials which have not been sequenced and not in accordance with the needs of students; d) the provision of material is less contextual to the daily life of students. The discussion of the four cores is as follows.

##### *The provision of material which is classified as difficult*

The first point on the core of the teachers' beliefs in the Javanese language teaching material is the provision of difficult material. 55.1% of the answers to the questionnaire distributed to teachers stated that their students had difficulty in mastering the material in the curriculum. This is reinforced by the results of the answers from the teachers which showed that 71.4% of teachers agreed that there were some materials which were too difficult to give to students.

The difficulties experienced by students based on the results of the questionnaire were difficulties in understanding the language used in the teaching materials. As many as 85.1% of teachers admit that the language used in teaching materials is too difficult and too high for today's children who are unfamiliar with Javanese. They are more accustomed to using Indonesian in their daily life so it is very difficult to understand the substance of the material. This is in accordance with the results of Puspitasari (2017) research which states that the difficulty of the Javanese language greatly affects the learning of Javanese in schools, mainly due to the lack of vocabulary mastered by students.

From the results of the analysis of Javanese language textbooks, it is also concluded that the substance of the material presented is too difficult for students. For example, the Javanese language textbook for grade I elementary school presents material which requires children to be able to read fluently. There is a discrepancy between the material in the textbooks and the conditions in the field where many first grade elementary school students are not yet skilled at reading. There is a phase which is passed in the Javanese language textbook for grade 1 elementary school, namely the phase of teaching children to read step by step. The readings available in Javanese language textbooks in the field are constructed in long sentences, both in reading and practice questions. Not to mention the language barrier because today's children are more accustomed to using Indonesian than Javanese. So, when they are going to face Javanese language lessons, children who are just learning to read find it very difficult, so parents are forced to participate in learning (teaching their children) and even do their homework.

Basically, the preparation of the material should be done by paying attention to students' thinking abilities or in other words considering the cognitive level of students according to their age development. It is intended that students get material that is weighty but also not too difficult or can be said to be in accordance with the level of thinking. Khoiruzzadi & Prasetya (2021) state that the provision or provision of materials (materials) which are adapted to the level of students' cognitive development can help students think and form knowledge.

Furthermore, Adnyani (2021) also states that the provision of material to students should be adjusted to the age level of students so that students can focus more on learning and are easy to understand. Difficult material will make students burdened and do not like the lesson. The long-term impact is that the learning objectives will not be achieved.

#### *The material in the textbook is incomplete*

The second point on the core of the teachers' beliefs is that the material in the textbook is incomplete. The use of textbooks aims to provide convenience to students and teachers in studying the materials in learning. However, it will be a problem if the textbook contains incomplete material. In line with this, 93.9% of the answers from teachers stated that during learning, teachers had difficulty bridging students' understanding of the Javanese language material so they needed to spend more time, money, and energy to find and create additional material due to the incomplete material in the textbook. This is done so that the Javanese language learning material becomes comprehensive so that it is easier for students to accept the material presented by the teacher. Furthermore, based on questionnaires and FGDs, it was shown that 89.8% of teachers often created additional material to complement the material in the textbook. Akbar (2021) stated that the variety of materials provided by teachers can make students unboored in listening to the material delivered.

In line with this, Nirmalita, Santoso & Winarsih (2020) stated that textbooks have an important role in learning because books are one of the mandatory references for schools and agencies, so that books must undergo updates which are adjusted to the current curriculum. Some additional information was also obtained that some schools only use Student Worksheets in learning Javanese. Determining the

use of LKS as a guide for providing Javanese language subject matter which contains material summaries, worksheets, teaching grammar, word lists, and various other tasks, is not suitable for language learning for children. Based on the results of (Chang & Noveriana, 2018) research, the use of this worksheet is not in accordance with the advice of experts regarding language learning materials for children which should be active and interactive.

*The provision of materials which have not been sequenced and not in accordance with the needs of students*

The third point on the core of the teachers' beliefs is the provision of material which has not been sequenced and has not been in accordance with the needs of students. 57.1% of teachers stated that the teaching materials in the curriculum have not been sorted from easy to difficult and also the available materials are not in accordance with the needs of students. The material given to students would be better presented in sequence and adapted to the needs of students. The presentation of material based on Permendikbud No. 24 of 2016 for low grades starts from material that is concrete which will later expand to material which is abstract but in reality it is not so. Some abstract material has preceded concrete material so that the order of presentation of the material is not sequential.

For example, the material for the second grade of elementary school starts with material on Pandawa puppets, continues with material on daily activities, and in the next chapter it turns out to discuss again the Pandawa puppets. When it is viewed from the level of affordability of knowledge, the theme of daily activities is more concrete and closer to the child's life rather than the Pandawa puppet. The material is considered jumping because it prioritizes abstract things for most students, such as wayang or puppets, rather than material about daily activities that can be reached by the imagination of students. Piaget (1959) stated that elementary school children are still in the concrete operational stage. This confirms that for elementary school children the material given should start with concrete material first. Concrete here means that they can be sensed and are in their cognitive range.

Another irregularity is in the material at the high school level. Where the material at the level of class X, XI, and XII is considered to have jumped in difficulty. In class X students obtain pranatacara material, in class XI students obtain sesorah material, and in class XII students obtain wewaler material. Whereas the material sesorah and wewaler should be given before the material pranatacara because sesorah and wewaler are part of pranatacara. To master the pranatacara material, students must already have knowledge of sesorah and wewaler and the skills to make sesorah and wewaler. This irregular arrangement will certainly make it difficult for students because the foundation of previous skills has not been mastered. The impact that may arise is that students feel burdened to master a higher competency when the previous competency has not been mastered. Therefore, continuous learning or the learning continuum is important.

For a high grade level, it may only cause a little problem because they are able to think abstractly, but for a lower level, of course, students need material which is more relevant to the things they face in everyday life. For example, for the lower grade elementary school level, knowledge of the names of animals is no longer needed today. More relevant is the introduction of basic Javanese skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Furthermore, as many as 93.9% of teachers also feel the need to hold discussions with experts related to the grading or ordering of Javanese language material in the curriculum so that the content of the material is in accordance with what is needed by students (contextual). Contextual refers to the relationship between the material being studied and the application of the material in real-life contexts (Berns & Erickson, 2001; Hudson & Whisler, 2007). Contextual material will be very useful for

students to face various challenges and events in real life (problem solving) so that students will really feel the benefits of learning Javanese. This type of material will be able to connect physiological functions in brain memory in the form of concrete actions on how to apply that knowledge (Hudson & Whisler, 2007).

*The provision of material is less contextual to the daily life of students.*

The fourth point from the core view of the teacher is the provision of material that is less contextual to the daily lives of students. 59.2% of teachers consider that the material in the curriculum is less relevant to students' daily lives. Providing material which is relevant to students' daily lives can help students relate the material to real-life situations so that it is more actual. Relevant material can also encourage students to be able to apply it in their lives. Studying relevant material will make students have concrete background knowledge and imagination so that it is easier to construct knowledge. Learning which presents material like this leads to meaningful learning. (Fauzi & Didi Suryadi, 2020) stated that learning according to students' needs will result in more meaningful learning. Meaningful learning leads to activities of producing, organizing, uniting, and integrating student experiences to draw conclusions and apply the knowledge gained (Mayer, 1998). Experience becomes the basis of knowledge to understand new information so that their learning process becomes easier. Meanwhile, the knowledge provided by the teacher becomes a complement and reinforcer so that it can get into memory more permanently (Karpicke & Grimaldi, 2012). Therefore, 89.8% of teachers agree that the material in the curriculum needs to be added with relevant and meaningful material in accordance with students' daily lives. Islamiati & Fasha (2021) state that providing contextual material with everyday life can help students relate it to their daily activities so that students are easier to understand the material provided by the teacher.

From the various problems which have been described above, it can be seen that the aspect of teacher's belief is very significant to describe the actual condition of Javanese language teaching materials in schools. Based on the questionnaire data, 83.7% of teachers agree that curriculum reconstruction or curriculum rearrangement is carried out according to theoretical concepts and taking into account the development and needs of students. Teachers' beliefs will greatly influence the actions and decisions which a teacher will take in carrying out learning (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). It is also very important to know the teachers' beliefs about the Javanese language learning material in the local content curriculum, because it can reflect the implementation of the 2013 curriculum which has been proclaimed by the government.

## **5. Conclusions**

The role of the teacher as the spearhead of learning is undeniable. The qualified teaching materials can support the teacher's role to maximize learning. Therefore, the teachers' beliefs in the teaching materials used in learning needs to always be analyzed. Materials which according to the teacher are not suitable need to be evaluated and revised so that in the future they do not become obstacles to the implementation of learning.

The implications of the results of this study should be input and consideration for evaluating the content of the Javanese language curriculum at all levels of education. The preparation of Javanese language material from elementary school to high school needs to be rearranged in a coherent and sustainable manner.

The results of this study can also be a suggestion for various parties who participate in making the textbook. The formulation of the material contained in the curriculum should be truly adapted to the needs and development of students so that Javanese language learning can achieve tangible results and

is no longer a scourge for students. Good teaching materials will really help teachers to maximize learning in the classroom.

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