



Description of Elementary School Students' Ability to Use Local Letters

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ABSTRACT

Local letters are one part of the nation's cultural literacy. The existence of local letters must be preserved. Various efforts have been made to preserve local letters, one of which is by integrating local letter learning into local content subjects in elementary schools. One of the local letters owned by the Indonesian people is the Satera Jontal letter. Satera Jontal is the original script of the Samawa tribe, one of the major ethnic groups in West Nusa Tenggara. This study aims to determine the literacy ability profile of elementary school students to the local letters of Satera Jontal. The research was conducted at an elementary school in Sumbawa. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative. Collecting data using questionnaires and interviews. The subjects in this study were elementary school students, totaling 17 students. Based on the results of data collection, it can be seen that there are no students who are able to read and write Satera Jontal letters. Students are only able to recognize the shape and name of the Satera Jontal letters but are not able to assemble them into a sentence. The number of students who are able to recognize the letters of Satera Jontal is very few, namely less than 30% of the total research subjects. This kind of condition is a very serious threat to the preservation of local letters. There needs to be a real intervention by related parties so that local letters do not become extinct in the future, one of which is re-teaching local letters into local content subjects.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as an archipelagic country and has thousands of cultural heritages scattered throughout the archipelago. Among the many cultural heritages are the original writings of various regions which can be categorized as Nusantara script. Nusantara script is influenced by immigrants, religion, environment, and so on. Some of the archipelago's scripts are themselves a meeting of several existing Indonesian scripts, so it's not surprising that some of the archipelago's

scripts have a lot in common. Similar to the Sumbawa script "Satera Jontal", according to some literature this Sumbawa script was brought by Bugis Makassar traders (Manca, 1984). Later in its development, the pronunciation and accent changed according to their respective uses and regions so that variations of the jontal satera emerged, namely Ano Rawi (West Sumbawa) and Ano Siyop (East Sumbawa). The results of the writing on the lontars are then arranged in three and are called "bumung". The bumung contains ancestral stories passed down from generation to generation regarding the title of royal descendant, Dea Datu, praise poems (Lawas pamuji), mysticism spells (pangeto), and various life advices (Miller, 2014) (MARLIANA & JAZADI, 2020) (Manca, 1984).

Script is part of the language that belongs to the written language. Local script is a visual symbol system printed on paper or other media (stone, wood, cloth, etc.) to express expressive elements in a language (Rustan, 2013). Another term to refer to letters is letters or the alphabet (Arabic) which is understood as a symbol of sound (phenom) while the sound itself is a symbol of understanding which according to historical records as an outline consists of categories.

One example of a local script is Satera Jontal. The Satera Jontal script is a traditional script from Sumbawa, West Nusa Tenggara. This script is used to write the Sumbawa language (basa samawa) which is spoken on the western part of the island of Sumbawa. The name Satera Jontal comes from the word Satera which means literature, and Jontal which means palm leaf (Marliana & Jazadi, 2020). This name refers to the writing of this script which is traditionally written on palm leaf combs with slashes of embers/charcoal (not using ink). The use of jontal satera changes from time to time. In the past, this script functioned as a means of exchanging old or poetry files. Satera jontal is also used to store stories about the Sumbawa royal family, lawas pamuji (a kind of incantation for mystics and all kinds of advice for life) (FITRAH, 2018) (Esabella, Mulyanto, & Arisandi, 2020) (Hijaz, A., Selim, 2003). These days, this written script doesn't seem to work at all. However, in 2000 there was an attempt to reintroduce Satera Jontal through seminars to the Sumbawa community. This seminar was organized by the Regional Personnel Agency and the Lonto Engal Foundation. It is hoped that this seminar will be the starting point for the reuse of jontal satera in the Sumbawa area.

Since this script was reintroduced to society and taught to primary and secondary schools, however, there has been no remarkable change in the use of this script. The customary law of the Sumbawa Institution known as the Tana Samawa Customary Institution does not use this script. When making invitations, brochures, pamphlets, and advertisements about the agenda in the Sumbawa area, for example, the Tana Samawa Traditional Institute tends to use Latin script rather than satera jontal. Since jontal satera has not been used as a medium for exchanging information for a long time, the result is that many people do not know and understand how to read and write this script. Many people still do not know what satera jontal is, even though the local government has tried to reintroduce this script to the community, especially young people. For example, Satera Jontal is used to write street names in the city of Sumbawa.

The spirit of preserving the Satera Jontal script in the world of education is inversely proportional to the traditional group. In today's world of education, the preservation of jontal satera is very concerning. This is because Satera jontal is no longer included in learning at school, especially in elementary school. So there are a lot of young people or the younger generation today who don't know what satera jontal is. Of course, this becomes a problem if the Satera Jontal script becomes extinct. In addition to preventing the extinction of local characters, the use of the Satera jontal script also has several functions in everyday life. Let alone in the world of education, in everyday life there are so many young people and even parents who don't know or can't read this jontal satera. As the next generation, we should be ashamed if this ancestral culture becomes extinct. The extinction of these local scripts cannot be separated from the role of the younger generations who are no longer able to read and write in these local scripts. This is certainly a concern for us between the government and the community. Thus, the introduction of the Sumbawa script to the younger generation must be carried out.

This study aims to determine the literacy ability profile of elementary school children to the Sumbawa script "satera jontal". The results of this study are expected to be a starting point in developing the literacy skills of elementary school students towards local scripts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted in September 2020 in Lampok Village, Brang Ene District, West Sumbawa Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. The subjects in this study were students of SDN Lampok class VI. Respondents in this study amounted to 17 people consisting of 11 women and 6 men. Sampling is done by taking all members of the population or called the saturated sampling technique. The saturated sample technique is a sampling technique using all members of the population as a sample (Ratnasari & Budiyanto, 2016) (Sugiyono, 2013). One reason is that the population is relatively small or less than 30 people. This kind of research sampling technique aims to make generalizations by minimizing the level of error in drawing conclusions. Another term for saturated sample is census, where all members of the population are sampled.

This research uses qualitative research, with data collection methods through interviews. The interview method is a meeting conducted by two people to exchange information or an idea by means of question and answer, so that it can be reduced to a conclusion or meaning in a particular topic. The interview method was chosen because the researcher was able to ask more in-depth questions to the informants. In addition, the timing and place of the interview can also be adjusted and scheduled. Because it uses qualitative research, of course it will produce qualitative data or in the form of words/descriptions/sentences, although it does not rule out the existence of quantitative data/numbers. The indicators seen in this study include, 1) the ability to read the jontal script; 2) the ability to write jontal satera; and 3) the ability to mention the satera jontal script; 4) the ability to recognize symbols or letter shapes from satera jontal.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data collection was carried out at one of the elementary schools in West Sumbawa. There are five main indicators used to collect data through surveys. The results of the survey can be presented in table 1, while the results of the interviews are presented in the form of sentence descriptions. The following is a tabulation of the survey results data

TABLE 1. Tabulation of survey results

Aspect	Indicator	Total (%)
Recognizing character symbols	Can recognize the symbol of the Satera Jontal script	29,4%
Saying the name of the character	Can say the name of the Satera Jontal character	29,4%
Reading characters	Can read sentences in the form of jontal characters	0%
Writing characters	Can copy letters/ words in jontal satera script	0%
Copy characters	Can write letters/words in the satera jontal script	5,9%

Based on table 1, it can be seen that none of the 17 students are able to read and write jontal script. In the indicator of the ability to copy characters, only 5.9% or 1 student is able to copy the form of the chrontal script; while those who are able to mention the reading of each symbol of the jontal script are 29.4% or 5 students. In the indicator of recognizing the shape of the letters, only 5 students were able to recognize the shape / symbol of the jontal satera or as much as 29.4%. Based on the results of interviews, students have only ever heard the word satera jontal, but have never studied it. After knowing the low literacy skills of the characters, the researchers conducted another in-depth interview about the causes of these problems.

The results of in-depth interviews with research subjects resulted in the finding that the introduction of the Jontal script was only carried out by each student's parents. The Satera Jontal script is no longer taught at the elementary school level. What's more, the lack of parents who

know the script makes character recognition still hampered. The result is that not all students know the local Sumbawa script. In addition, there is a lack of awareness from the community about the importance of local characters. Whereas the younger generation as the driving generation and the generation of change should be more familiar with their own culture in order to develop their local script.

The existence of language as a medium of knowledge is realized if a language does not lose its character. Language is not present without history, language cannot be sterilized from the reality that is its reference. That is, to be able to become the language of science, the first thing to do is to build a passion for language research to create a 'science community' in the field of language. Transferring knowledge in language by juxtaposing it with the term technology transfer is only a mode of diversion from helpless scientists, who have lost the subject of language (Saidi & Iwan, 2011). To be blamed in this case is not only the government that does not preserve these characters, but also all the people and all of us who have a responsibility to preserve them. As the saying goes "if not now when then, if not us who will". We should instill this saying in our minds. So that it creates awareness within us to invite people to preserve and develop it.

In Sumbawa, this jontal satera script is almost or even no longer used in interacting in everyday life. Which causes people to forget their own culture. In addition, people who have only heard of it, will increasingly not know the original culture. According to one opinion, regional languages are considered the languages of the uneducated and the poor (Giri, 2018) (Rahayu, Resnani, & Kustianti, 2019) (H. P. Widodo & Fardhani, 2013). This perception seems to be the main reason why many people do not want to use this local language/character. Actually, in studying jontal satera it is very easy, but it's just that we are rarely introduced to or see jontal satera in everyday life. If only this jontal satera still has an existence in people's daily lives, maybe this script will not become extinct and will be maintained. So, how do you grow and instill a sense of pride in the community towards the use of this jontal satera script.

The importance of developing and preserving local scripts, especially the Sumbawa script 'satera jontal' is so that the original Sumbawa culture does not become extinct. This is intended for the sustainability of local cultures in Indonesia. As stated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 11 of 2010 concerning Cultural Conservation in the fourth point which states that "cultural heritage in the form of objects, buildings, structures, sites, and areas need to be managed by the government and local governments by increasing community participation to protect, develop, and utilize cultural heritage". One study stated that there were several factors or obstacles in the preservation of Satera Jontal, one of which was the lack of tools as a medium for introducing the Satera Jontal script to the public (Nurhayati, 2019) (Arisandi, 2018). This is one of the innovations to introduce the Sumbawa script so that it is better known to many people, not only for Sumbawa people but also known by other regions and even other countries. As we know that in this modern and sophisticated era, the use of technology can be said to be quite efficient for the development of local characters.

In addition, there is also a previous study conducted by Wahyudi with the title Android-Based Satera Jontal Literacy Learning Application. Along with the increasingly rapid development of technology, every educational unit is required to use technology or apply the use of technology in the teaching and learning process (Talkah & Muslih, 2021) (RUBIANTICA, SUTOMO, & SUHARDI, 2021) (Wahyudi, 2016). For this reason, this application was developed so that it can be used in the teaching and learning process in schools. Although there has been an application for recognizing the Satera Jontal script, there are several things that become obstacles or obstacles in the preservation process. This is in accordance with a study which stated that the inhibiting factors in the process of preserving local scripts were, local scripts were difficult to learn so that children quickly got bored because they were not able to learn them; the lack of teachers who are able to teach local characters; the use of characters that are almost non-existent in everyday life; lack of literature, facilities, and media in the development of local scripts; and the difficulty of inviting

others to like and learn scripts and convince about the importance of local scripts (Purnami, Wisnu, Made, & Wisnu Parta, 2020) (A. Widodo, 2020).

The use of technology as a medium for developing literacy for the younger generation is very important. In the use of learning media in developing this character, it must be unique and interesting so that students will not get bored easily. Apart from being a means of preserving characters, it is also a means to improve technological capabilities so that they are not left behind and can compete with others. As the demands of the industrial revolution 4.0 era, one of which is that everyone is required to master information and communication technology. This should also be used as an event for the general introduction of the satera jontal script. If more and more people preserve and more and more people are interested in learning this script, then gradually this jontal satera script will be increasingly known to people and will not become extinct. Preserving jontal satera so that it can be used in daily life is the most difficult challenge for all parties. To regenerate this, it is necessary to socialize the Satera Jontal script to the Sumbawa people in particular. After the introduction is done, it will be a little easier in the future development.

With the preservation of local characters in the future, it is intended to be able to improve and improve students' literacy skills. Thus preventing the extinction of local characters for future generations. There are at least 5 basic reasons why language or script is important, including that humans need diversity, one of which is cultural and linguistic diversity. Moreover, the Indonesian nation is known as a diverse country and it is because of this diversity that Indonesia is called a country rich in diversity. In addition, the script is important because it serves as an identity, historical archive, genealogy of the nation, and is interesting. The script is said to be interesting because each blood has its own character with its own uniqueness as well. As residents of Sumbawa, in particular, we should be proud of our culture. Because not all regions have it. This sense of pride must be shown by preserving and introducing the script to be known by other nations.

Literacy culture must be cultivated in the lives of Indonesian people, because mastery of literacy can open horizons, broaden horizons, and understand the world in a wider scope. Currently, the literacy culture in Indonesia is quite alarming. Especially in the current pandemic era, it requires everyone to use technology to seek information and knowledge. The literacy crisis is a sad and worrying situation for the Indonesian people. This literacy crisis will result in the loss of the identity of a region and even a nation. For this reason, this literacy must be grown.

CONCLUSION

From the results of the research above, it can be concluded that the literacy ability of the Sumbawa script is very concerning. This is caused by many factors, such as the absence of introduction or learning of letters in schools, the absence of efforts to socialize/preserve this script, difficulties in writing and recognizing letters or writings of the satera jontal script, as well as the displacement of local culture with foreign cultures. To overcome this problem, of course, the introduction and development of the Sumbawa script must be carried out to the community and to the youth. One of the most important efforts that must be made is to re-teach local characters into learning in elementary schools. Therefore, all parties must of course support each other and work together to preserve the local script.

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