

Properly Javanese: A Case Study of Language Shift in Central Java, Indonesia

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Within the macro context of Indonesia's most recent language policy UU24/2009, which in layman's terms encourages citizens to 'love' their local language, 'use' their national language, and 'study' foreign languages, this paper explores language shift in an individual Javanese-Indonesian university English major's linguistic repertoire (Zentz, 2012; Blommaert & Backus, 2011). I explore through narratives her desire to speak her own local language, Javanese; her guilt for not speaking it 'enough' or 'properly'; and concomitant current, past--and probably future--lack of access to contexts necessary for Javanese fluency. I attribute this individual example of language shift in process to the national institutionalization of modernistic one-nation one-language ideologies that underlie the seemingly multilingual desires written by the state into UU24/2009. In conclusion I will assert that the good intentions both tacit and explicit in the rhetoric of early nationalist leaders and the democratic leadership of the last 14 years aim to encourage Indonesian pluralism both linguistic and cultural; however, these good intentions are undercut by the very models that they function within: state ideologies typical of modernism and the current globalization era (Bauman & Briggs, 2003; Errington, 1998; Makoni & Pennycook, 2006).