

Urban dynamics

An impression of Surabaya's sociolinguistic setting

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the sociolinguistic situation in the city of Surabaya, by presenting an impression of various phenomena unique to Indonesia's second largest city. A surprisingly little amount of linguistic research has heretofore been carried out on this subject, whereas it transpires from this study that enough intriguing and unique things can be found in this Southeast Asian metropolis, both among its Javanese majority as well as its Madurese and Chinese inhabitants. Due to the lack of earlier relevant publications, this research is largely based on the results of several fieldwork trips, which included the pleasant activities of watching television, interviewing people and making excursions in and around Surabaya to experience how languages are used in daily life. Additionally, concepts such as "language mixing", "slang" and "attitudes towards language" are involved and considered very significant in disentangling the role and function of language in an urban setting.

KEYWORDS

Urban social environment, Javanese language, Surabaya, linguistics, language contact, slang, and Indonesian media.

The *arek Surabaya*, inhabitants of the East Javanese capital Surabaya, proudly refer to their city as *Kota Pahlawan*, the City of Heroes. In this city, the Indonesian revolution started in 1945. In this city, the Indonesians for the first time convinced the world of the seriousness of their struggle for independence. This city, home to approximately three million inhabitants of mainly Javanese, Madurese, and Chinese origin, became Indonesia's biggest harbour and second city in size and population. Nowadays, it has developed into a metropolitan centre of economics, trade, but also culture. In relation to

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