



Reports on Ongoing and Past Research Project
The Dictionaries of the Local Languages of Banten

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One of the reasons why Bantenese people would like Banten to be separated from West Java is the awareness that they are historically and culturally different from the rest of the people in West Java. One of the many efforts Bantenese do in identifying and affirming their distinctiveness is the publication of dictionaries of the Bantenese local languages. The dictionaries include (1) *Élmu Basa, Kumpulan Kecap-Kecap, Karangan-Karangan Dialék Sunda Banten*, (2) *Kamus Sunda Pandeglang-Lebak*, (3) *Kamus Bebasan/Undak-Usuk Bahasa Jawa Banten* of A. Mudjahid Chudari, and (4) *Kamus Dialect Djawa Banten Mas Mangoendikaria*.

1. *Élmu Basa, Kumpulan Kecap-Kecap, Karangan-Karangan Dialék Sunda Banten*

Some important publications of local languages of Banten are the works of Mas Mas Mangoendikariya: *Élmu Basa, Kumpulan Kecap-Kecap, Karangan-Karangan Dialék Sunda Banten*, which he wrote during 1920-1923. It was reissued by *Dinas Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata (Disbudpar) Provinsi Banten* in 2014 under the title of *Kamus Sunda Dialék Banten*. The dictionary was a response to the contest invitation performed by the Dutch colonial government. Even though the new title was 'kamus' as the original title, the dictionary contained the explanation for a few important aspects, i.e., how the Banten Sundanese was different from other dialects, the names of regions in Banten, a number of Banten Sundanese songs, and others. As far as Sundanese songs, Mangoendikaria demonstrated that the song tradition was not quite popular in Banten.

2. *Kamus Sunda Pandeglang-Lebak*

The consciousness that Banten Sundanese differs from Priangan Sundanese was materialized by Machsus Thamrin through the creation of the *Kamus Pandeglang-Lebak* group on Facebook in 2001. Currently, the group has more than 1,000 members. The Sundanese vocabularies posted

by the members were collected in a small dictionary *Kamus Sunda Pandeglang-Lebak*.

In the dictionary we would not find what is generally known as the 'polite' vocabulary as the impact of the multi-leveled language. In fact, in the introduction of the dictionary and in the following pages it is stated that Banten Sundanese does not recognize such a multi-leveled language. It must be suspected that the notion of 'polite' vocabulary are really the Sundanese words of Priangan. The possible explanation is that the members of the group are urban people who learnt Priangan Sundanese while they were at school. As urban people, it is necessary for them to communicate in 'good' Sundanese as a proof that they are educated.

Moreover, the dictionary does not provide enough information about, for example, the number of lexis in the dictionary, the kind of the word if it is a noun, a verb, an adjective, etc., as they would normally appear in a standard dictionary. It also does not give examples of how each lexeme is used both in spoken and in written usage. Machsus Thamrin claimed that he had revised the dictionary that was ready to be published by Penerbit Kompas (personal conversation). It has not been confirmed how the revised version looks like.

3. Kamus Bebasan/ Undak-Usuk Bahasa Jawa Banten of

A. Mudjahid Chudari

Published by Dinas Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Provinsi Banten in 2013, the dictionary is a standard dictionary. It has an explanation about Banten Javanese came into existence and about its grammar. In this 552-page dictionary each entry has information concerning the form of the word whether it is a noun, a verb, and adjective, or an adverb. Each entry has also one or more examples of how it is used. Sometimes he pays more attention to certain words by giving more information.

To obtain the data as the source of the dictionary, Chudari took three strategies, namely he made some notes spontaneously when he heard the word or sentence of Banten Javanese was spoken; he asked informants to speak in Javanese of Banten and he recorded the speech, and he referred to some Javanese dictionaries.

Chudari asserts that the polite Banten Javanese (*bebasan*) is not spoken widely in society. In fact, he stated that the Javanese people of Banten area were that there is such a language. However, they seem to be reluctant to speak polite Javanese since they worry that they will make mistakes and are

thereafter deemed to have been impolite. As a result they prefer to speak Indonesian rather the *bebasan* Javanese.

4. Kamus Dialekt Djawa Banten Mas Mangoendikaria

Besides writing *Élmu Basa*, *Kumpulan Kecap-Kecap*, *Karangan-Karangan Dialék Sunda Banten*, Mas Mangundikaria also wrote *Kamus Dialekt Djawa Banten*. The latter was published in 1914 by *Het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*. In the dictionary he recorded the Javanese words of Banten, Javanese songs, and names of popular regions in Banten, and more. In the dictionary he also explains the differences of accents and pronunciation among the Javanese of Banten and other Javanese dialects. His expertise in writing the Sundanese and Javanese dictionaries of Banten was made possible because he was a supervisor of *desa* schools in the regency of Serang.

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