

# **Vowel Phoneme in Javanese Language Wonosobo's Dialect**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research was aimed to discuss the linguistics features, which was vowel phoneme, in Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect. This study was extremely essential to recognize the vowel phoneme in Wonosobo since this regency abut on many regions uttering many dialects, which encouraged Wonosobo to have a mixed dialect. The research design was descriptive qualitative methods because this research analyzed the social complication, which was language phenomenon. After analyzing the data, it was found that vowel phoneme applied were [a], [i] [u], [e], [ə], [o], and [ɔ] with [I], [U] and [ɛ] as allophones.

**Keywords:** vowel, sound, and Javanese language

## **Introduction**

Wonosobo is one of the small Regency in Central Java, which produces rich language variety, and it is sometimes not found in other places. This phenomenon indicates Wonosobo as a unique characteristic language. It is mainly since the Wonosobo's location abuts on Magelang and Temanggung Regency in the east uttering Javanese standard language. However, in the west, Wonosobo abuts Kebumen and Banjarnegara, which the majority of society members speak in Banyumasan dialect. Furthermore, this geographic location encourages more people from other regions to stay in Wonosobo, and in the long term, this way will profoundly influence the language used by the local dwellers. The language variation in Wonosobo sometimes is influenced by standard Javanese, and Banyumasan dialects, on the other hand, the local people also utter

language that is affected by standard Javanese language. In addition, this circumstance sometimes encourages a new language variation as an impact of many dialects in one region.

One of the different Javanese languages Wonosobo's dialect compared to standard Javanese language is in the phoneme vowel used. For example, standard Javanese language usually applies vowel /o/ in many vocabularies such as /opo/, /sopo/, /loro/, however, Wonosobo more often than not uses vowel /a/ like /apa/, /sapa/, or /lara/ in the same vocabulary. Moreover, Wonosobo's dwellers sometimes used the variation of allophone as [U] and [I] in all vowel syllable in a vocabulary, and the example all of which as [sedUIUr], [tUtUp], [wInIh], and [pItIk], and this was indicated as unique sound system in Wonosobo's dialect. According to O'Grady and Archibald, (2016, p.57) "a language's sound into contrastive unit called phonemes", then "the sounds that are assigned to the same phonemes is allophones." From this definition, a phoneme is the smallest unit in a language, while allophones are a part of phonemes<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, Marsono (2019) said allophones is a relation of phoneme which is different from environment distribution<sup>2</sup>. Then, phonemes can differentiate the meaning between one language and others, and in this case, is Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect to others Javanese dialect. Furthermore, it will be also essential to recognize the allophones in the Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect to obtain a vowel characteristic of this dialect.

Moreover, conducting a study about phonemes in the Javanese language Wonosobo dialect will be extremely important to understand how this regency applies phoneme vowel phoneme, because it is quite different rather than other places in Javanese that the dwellers' utter Javanese language. As the smallest component in language, phoneme has an important rule to differentiate the sound when it is sounded. From these problems, there are some questions to be discussed: 1. What vowel phonemes are used in the Javanese Language Wonosobo dialect?

Some previous studies conducted similar topics with this research that had similarities and differences. Firstly, a study by Setyadi (2019) entitled "Fonem Deret Vokal dalam Bahasa Indonesia. Furthermore, the similarity that it was located in the object of the study, which is the vowel phoneme in a language, but the difference is in the object of the language. To be more

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<sup>1</sup> O'grady, W and Archibald, J. Contemporary Linguistics Analysis An Introduction. (Toronto:Pearson, 2016), 57

<sup>2</sup> Marsono. Fonologi Bahasa Indonesia , Jawa dan Jawa Kuna. (Yogyakarta:Gadjah Mada University Press.2016).

specific, this recent research was conducted in the Javanese Language and the previous study is in Bahasa Indonesia. The previous study found that the vowel phoneme in Bahasa Indonesia is /a/, /i/, /u/, and /o/. In addition, this study undertakes Javanese Language Wonosobo's dialect as a new variation on vowel phonemes research. Secondly, the study entitled "Sistem Fonologi Bahasa Lamalera" by Ningsih and Purwaningsih (2013) had a similarity in the object of the study, which was the local language. On the other hand, the differences were in the data to be analyzed. Moreover, the previous study also conducted consonant data, but this current study only focussed on the vowel phonemes system. Additionally, the way of this research to focus on the vowel phoneme was to obtain a detailed study rather than using much data.

In this research, it was discussed the way of the sound system, especially for the only vowel phoneme in the Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect. According to Fromkim, Rodman, and Hyams (2014, p.225), "the study on how speech sound form pattern is phonology"<sup>3</sup>. From this explanation, it means that this research that analyzes the vowel phoneme in the Javanese language is a part of phonology, and it explains how a sound is sounded by the human speech organ. Richards and Schmidt (1985 p. 386) explained that "phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a language which can distinguish two words"<sup>4</sup>. It means that the study of the phoneme is located in the small unit, which forms the language. However, "allophone is any of the different variations of a phoneme", and the definition of this means that allophone is a part of the phoneme as a sound variation. Additionally, Yule (2010) said that the difference between phoneme and allophone in the substitution is that substituting phoneme will impact different meanings<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand, allophone substitution will influence only different pronunciation. Besides, the sound produced by the speech organ is categorized by vocoid and contoid. Furthermore, Wijana (2021) explained that vocoid is sound that is produced without any obstacle in the mouth<sup>6</sup>. The example of this sound in vowel sounds such as [a], [i], [I], [u], [U], [e], [ɛ], [o] and [O]. Additionally, Fromkim (2000, p.478) said "vowels are sound in which no such constriction is made; the air flows out of the mouth

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<sup>3</sup> Fromkim, Victoria; Robert Rodman; Nina Hyams, Tenth Edition. *An Introduction to Language*. (Australia: Wadsworth Cengage Learn, 2014), 225

<sup>4</sup> Richards. JC, and Schmidt. *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* Third Edition. (London: Pearson Education, 1985), 386

<sup>5</sup> Yule, George. *The Study of Language*. (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2010),

<sup>6</sup> Wijana, IDP. *Berkenalan dengan Linguistik*. (Yogyakarta: TS Publisher, 2021)

relatively freely and the sound is relatively loud and strong.” It was highly important to understand more about vowel sound, vowel itself based on Fromkim’s definition is the sound that produced freely without any boundaries or obstacles from the human oral cavity.

Furthermore, a contoid is a sound made in the oral cavity with enough obstacles. Additionally, the example of a contoid is all the consonant sounds. Because this research was only focused on vowel sound, this study strongly related to vocoid which is the place to produce vowel sound without any obstacle. According to Verhaar (1996), vocoid is classified into four distinctive categories, based on vowel height, vowel location, lip position, and long sound<sup>7</sup>. Firstly, the example of sound based on height position was [a] in the low position, [ə] in the middle position, and [a] in the high position. Secondly, [a] and [i] is the example of sound in the front location based on the lip position, however, [o] and [ɔ] are located in the back position. Additionally, [ə] and [ʌ] are reported in the central position. Thirdly, [i] is the example of an unrounded sound based on lip position, while [u] is identified as a rounded position. Lastly, [u] is sound in the long vowel.

## Method

This research used in this study was a descriptive qualitative method since this current study was purposed to analyze how vowel sound was used in the Javanese language Wonosobo’s dialect. Additionally, this study did not require any numeration and focused on explanation in the social phenomenon. According to Creswell (1997), quantitative research demonstrates the social and human issue, and the approach of this kind was reasonably required to develop a complex, holistic image, identify words, provide in-depth information, and undertake the research in a natural setting<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, the data in this research was classified as a qualitative method represented in the analysis of linguistics features in vowel phonemes in the Javanese language Wonosobo’s dialect.

The data of the study in this research was a vocabulary, containing vowel phonemes as appropriate data to conduct in the further stages. Therefore, the data source was the researcher who had the natural ability in communicating the Javanese language Wonosobo’s dialect because the

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<sup>7</sup> Verhaar. J.W.W. *Asas-asas Linguistik Umum*. (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1996)

<sup>8</sup> Creswell, John. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Choosing among Five Traditions*. (California: Sage Publication, 1997)

researcher was a native speaker in Wonosobo's dialect. In processing to collect the data, several stages should be taken, namely, 1) Detecting the sound, which had similar sounds as a minimal pairs or nearly minimal pairs, 2) Taking notes all these sounds to simplify in the further stages, 3) Transcribing every vocabulary in phonetics symbol. After obtaining raw material, the following steps were to analyze the data, which requires several stages, 1) Identifying the sound collected whether phonemes or allophones, 2) Grouping every sound in one category, which included in the same phonemes or allophones 3) Explaining how the vowel sound was sounded in the discussion section.

## **Finding**

In this study, the researchers found vowel phonemes used in Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect, which was [a], [i], [u] [e], [ə], and [o]. To illustrate this case, initially, the researcher looked for the vocabulary identified as minimal pair, then recognized whether phonemes or allophone. In addition, 'A minimal pair consists of two words that differ by only one segment in the same position' (O'grady and Archibald 2016, p.58)<sup>9</sup>. Recognizing minimal pairs in vocabularies will be extremely significant to prove whether these vocabularies were phoneme or allophone. But, sometimes, it can be difficult to find minimal pair because of gaps in language vocabulary, then the researcher relied on near-minimal pair, which was almost the same as minimal pair.

### **Phonemes [a]**

Vowel phoneme [a] can be categorized as a phoneme because it had a meaning that can be replaced by others vowel. Additionally, it can be seen in this following example in the following minimal pairs;

- (1) [a] and [ə]→[wetan] 'east' and [wətən] 'traditional calendar'→/a/ and /ə/
- (2) [a] and [u]→[lara] 'sick' and [luru] 'looking for'→/a/ and /u/
- (3) [a] and [ɛ]→[gapan] 'will do something' and [gepeŋ] 'flat'→/a/ and /e/
- (4) [a] and [e]→[ladheŋ] 'knife' and [ledhəŋ] 'plumbing'→/a/ and /e/

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<sup>9</sup> O'grady, W and Archibald, J. Contemporary Linguistics Analysis An Introduction. (Toronto:Pearson 2016), 58

The use of phoneme [a] in the Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect was observed in the initial, middle, and final of the sound. To illustrate this case, there were examples of the phoneme [a] in various positions, datum 6 in the initial, datum 7 in the middle, and 8 in the final sound:

- (5) [aməh] 'soft', [atis] 'cold', [añəs] 'cold', and [atos] 'solid'
- (6) [omah] 'house', [madhan] 'eating', and [lare] 'children'
- (7) [teka] 'coming', [səga], 'rice', and [luŋa] 'go'

### **Phoneme [i]**

Vowel [i] as a phoneme can be identified in several vocabulary that found in analyzing the data, namely:

- (8) [i] and [u]→[mili] 'flow and [milu] 'follow'→/i/ and /u/
- (9) [i] and [a]→[mati] 'die' and [mata] 'eye'→/i/ and /a/
- (10) [i] and [ɛ]→[pit] 'bicycle' and [pet] 'picking something, sometimes in the garden'→/i/ and /e/
- (11) [i] and [ɔ]→ [atis] 'cold' and [atəs] 'solid'→/i/ and /o/
- (12) [i] and [u]→[tiru] 'imitate' and [turu] 'sleeping'→/i/ and /u/

The phoneme[i] is identified in several position, such as the example in datum 13 in the initial location, datum 14 in the middle and 15 in the final location:

- (13) [ilan] 'lost, [idae] 'if', [ilo?] 'something good to do', and [idər] 'circle, usually for activity in trade',
- (14) [biyUŋ] 'mother', [sika?] 'pig', [sirah] 'head', [gigal] 'fall, usually for goods' [tinda?] 'go', and [jidor] 'I do not care'
- (15) [mari] 'recovery', [sudi] 'will', and '[legi] 'sweet'

As a variation of the [i] sound called allophone, it is found [I] in several example, namely:

- (16) [I] and [o]→[sIsIr] 'comb' and [sosor] 'bite, usually bitten by animal'→/i/ and /o/
- (17) [I] and [a]→[mIIIh] 'choose' and [malah] 'exactly'→/i/ and /a/
- (18) [I] and [e]→[pItIk] 'chicken' and [tetek] 'breast'→/i/ and /e/
- (19) [I] and [o]→ [gIIIŋ] 'grind' and [goloŋ] 'fall, usually for human'→/i/ and /e/

In the position of the sound, the allophone of [I] is found in the initial and middle position of several vocabulary, like:

- (20) [IsIh] 'still',
- (21) [wIt] 'tree', [wIsUh] 'wash', [sIIIh] 'borrow', and [tagIh] 'bill'.

### **Phoneme [u]**

The following phoneme is [u], which is identified in several vocabularies in Javanese language Wonosobo dialect, such as;

- (22) [u] and [ə] → [ŋulən] 'west' and [ŋəlon] 'accompany for sleeping, usually for children' → /u/ and /ə/
- (23) [u] and [o] → [dulaŋ] 'feed' and [dolan] 'play' → /u/ and /o/

The variation of this phoneme [u] was recognizes in some position as other phonemes, such as in the initial position in datum 24, in middle sound in 25, and the final sound in datum 26.

- (24) [untu] 'teeth', [udəl] 'navel', [unjar] 'fish', and [ujare] 'according to'
- (25) [muyen] 'visiting a newborn baby', [gandul] 'papaya', [paʔpuŋ] 'take a bat, usually for children', and [suwe] 'long time'
- (26) [saru] 'impolite', [sinau] 'study', [milu] 'follow',

Furthermore, the allophones of [u] as a variation of [u] sound, which was [U], was found in these data:

- (27) [U] and [e] → [ajUr] 'broken' and [ajer] 'melt' → /u/ and /e/
- (28) [U] and [a] → [kembanŋ] 'condition of the stomach that full of the wind, and sometimes it is indication of the fever' and [kembanŋ] 'flower' → /u/ and /a/
- (29) [U] and [e] → [biyUŋ] 'mother' and [biyen] 'past' → /u/ and /e/
- (30) [U] and [ə] → [midUn] 'down' and [mudhəŋ] 'understand' → /u/ and /ə/

The allophone of [U] was identifiess in many daily vocabularies, especially in the middle of sound such as, but it was not found in others position.

- (31) [Undur-Undur] 'a kind of insect',

(32) [MbərUh] 'I don't know', [sesUk] 'tomorrow', [adUs] 'take a bath' [bakUl] 'seller', [gəlUt] 'fight', [gUmUn] 'amazed', [jUkUt] 'take over', [lemUd] 'mosquito', [sedUlUr], and [mUrUp] 'light up'

### Phonemes [e]

Javanese phoneme /e/ is another kind of phoneme which usually used in the Javanese conversation, here the examples of these phoneme:

- (33) [e] and [u] → [sesUk] 'tomorrow' and [sUsUk] 'cash back' → /e/ and /u/
- (34) [e] and [ə] → [enteŋ] 'mild' and [antəŋ] 'calm' → /e/ and /ə/
- (35) [e] and [u] → [edan] 'crazy' and [udan] 'rain' → /e/ and /u/
- (36) [e] and [a] → [keli] 'float' and [kali] 'river' → /e/ and /a/

The position of this phoneme [e] was found in all positions, which were in the initial sound (37), middle position (38), and the final sound (39).

- (37) [eman] 'love', [eram] 'very', [egen] 'still', [elin] 'remember', [enel] 'difficult', [eto? - eto?] 'pretend'
- (38) [amben] 'divan', [jote?] 'disgusting', [kakean] 'too much' [beñu] 'water', [mbeyar] 'pay', and [njejan] 'snacking', [beli] 'go home', [teyeŋ] 'can',
- (39) [budhe] 'aunty', [sakdoŋe] 'necessarily', [ŋgore] 'really, usually for asking', [dheke] 'you', [prige] 'how' and [gawe] 'make'

Phoneme [e] had one allophone, which was [ɛ], and the example of this allophone was explained in the following:

- (40) [ɛ] and [o] → [dədəl] 'destroy, usually for clothes' and [dodol] 'sell' → /e/ and /o/
- (41) [ɛ] and [ə] → [kəri] 'left behind' and [kəri] 'amused' → /e/ and /ə/
- (42) [ɛ] and [ə] → [gəger] 'stormy' [gəgər] 'back' → /e/ and /ə/

The distribution of allophone [ɛ] was located in the initial and middle sound only, and there was no found the final position.

- (43) [ɛnto?] 'a kind of bird' and [ɛle?] 'bad'

(44) [məri] ‘envy’, [sləgəh] ‘do not want’, [bəbə?] ‘duck’, [kabəh] ‘all’, [lərən] ‘rest, and [jeləh] ‘disgusting’

### Phonemes [ə]

The sound of [ə] in Javanese language system was independently phoneme, not allophone of [e], because between [ə] and [e] had a different meaning.

(45) [ə] and [a]→[ləgi] ‘sweet’ and [lagi] ‘continue doing something’→/ə/ and /a/  
 (46) [ə] and [a]→[wətəŋ] ‘stomach’ and [wetan] ‘east’→/ə/ and /a/  
 (47) [ə] and [ɛ] → [gəndəŋ] ‘crazy’ and [gandəŋ] ‘coupled’→ /ə/ and /e/  
 (48) [ə] and [ɔ]→[əməh] ‘no way’ and [aməh] ‘soft’→/ə/ and /o/

The position of [ə] phoneme was found in the initial and middle sound, and the location of them were in datum 49 for initial example, and datum 50 for middle sound.

(49) [əri] ‘thron’, [əndhas] ‘head’, [əñoŋ] ‘I’, [ənteni] ‘wait’  
 (50) [kandhəl] ‘thick’, [dələŋ] ‘look’, [gəlis] ‘hurry up’, and [kəndhəl] ‘intrepid’

### Phoneme [o]

(51) [o] and [i]→[cowe?] ‘a kind of kitchen stuff’ and [ciwe?] ‘very easy to cry’→/o/ and /i/  
 (52) [o] and [a]→[loro] ‘two’ and [lara] ‘sick’→/o/ and /a/  
 (53) [o] and [e]→[pədhot] ‘break’ and [pədhet] ‘calves’→/o/ and /e/  
 (54) [o] and [a]→[coro] ‘cockroach’ and [cara] ‘way’→/o/ and /a/

The location of [o] phonemes was identified in all position, all of which can be seen in the following example, 53 for initial sound, 54 for middle example, and the final sound in 55.

(55) [obah] ‘move’, and [ora] ‘no’  
 (56) [abot] ‘heavy’, [logor] ‘fall, usually for leaf’, [takon] ‘ask a question’, and [wadon]  
 ‘woman’ [cok] ‘often’  
 (57) [mayo] ‘come on’

## Phoneme [ɔ]

The following phoneme was [ɔ] which was identified in several vocabulary found in Javanese language, namely:

(58) [ɔ] and [a]→[kətən] ‘seen’ and [kətan] ‘a kind of traditional food’→/o/ and /e/

(59) [ɔ] and [i]→[rɔsɔ] ‘strong’ and [risih] ‘disgusting’→/o/ and /i/

The position found in this phoneme was identified only in the initial and middle sound, which was illustrate in datum 58 and 59 respectively.

(60) [ɔyət] ‘root’, and [ɔməŋ] ‘tak’

(61) [alən] ‘slow’, [cɔkɔt] ‘bite’, [cɔlən] ‘steal’, and [uwəŋ] ‘person’

## Discussion

After analyzing the data, it was found that the phonemes in Javanese language Wonosobo’s dialect were [a], [i] [u], [e], [ə], [o], and [ɔ]. Additionally, [U] and [ɛ] were identified as allophones of [u] and [e] successively. Furthermore, the position of the phoneme [a] was identified in all positions, which were in the initial, middle and the final sound such as [aməh], [omah], and [sega]. The use of phoneme [a] in all positions indicated that this phoneme was often used in the Javanese language Wonosobo’s dialect. Similarly, phoneme [u] was also reported in all the location [initial middle and final sound] such as [ilar], [sirah] and [mari]. In contrast, the allophone of [u], which was [U] was found in the initial and middle sounds such as [mbərUh] and [sedUlUr]. The application of allophone [U] was found in many vocabularies, which means that local people in Wonosobo often sounded [U] in the position of the oral cavity in almost close. Then, [e] was identified as a phoneme with [ɛ] as its allophone. The example of the former was identified in all positions [initial, middle, and final sound like [eram], [enəl], and [dheke]. However, the location of the letter was merely reported in the initial and the final sound such as [elek] and [bebək]. The following phoneme found in the Javanese language Wonosobo’s dialect was [ə], which was constituted in initial and middle sounds like [əri] and [gəlis]. Furthermore, [o] was reported as the further phoneme in the Javanese language system, which was found in all positions such as [obong], [abot], and [mayo]. On the other hand, the phoneme of [ɔ] was only identified in the initial and middle position, for example [ɔyət] and [alən]. From this result, there

were many variations of the position phoneme in the Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect, regardless of all positions or only a part of the location.

## Conclusion

The phonemes used in Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect were [a], [i] [u], [e], [ə], [o], and [ɔ]. Additionally, [ɪ] and [ɛ] was identified as allophones as sound variations of the phonemes. The distribution of all phonemes in the Javanese language Wonosobo's dialect were in various position. The unique vowel of this dialect was located [e] with [ə]. Furthermore, between [e] and [ə] had a distinctive meaning that cannot be replaced each other, for example, [gəgər] 'back' and [gəgər] 'amazed'. Similarly, local people in Wonosobo often sounded the phoneme [u] to [U], because there were many allophone [U] found in vocabularies such as [gandhUI], [gəlUt], [kIdUI], and [mUrUp].

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