

## **Local Language Vitality in Indonesian Tourism Destinations: Tourism-Driven Language Shift and Preservation**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the development and vitality of local languages in four major tourism destinations in Indonesia—Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten by exploring how tourism-driven dynamics contribute to language shift and reshape cultural identity. The research is motivated by the growing dominance of Indonesian and English within tourism spaces, which progressively replaces the communicative functions of local languages and weakens intergenerational transmission, particularly among younger speakers. The primary aims of this study are to map the vitality levels of local languages, identify the key drivers of language shift, and analyze community-based preservation strategies that continue to operate in each region. Employing a qualitative multi-case study design, the research draws on direct observations and in-depth interviews with 32 informants, including local community members and tourism workers. Data were analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify patterns of language use, forms of tourism interaction, and community-led preservation efforts. The findings indicate a consistent pattern across all regions: local languages remain active in domestic and ritual contexts, shift into passive use among younger generations, and become endangered in high-intensity tourism zones such as Kuta-Seminyak, Malioboro, Lembang-Pangandaran, and Anyer-Tanjung Lesung. The shift is driven by tourism communication demands, youth linguistic preferences, industry service norms, and weakening intergenerational transmission. Despite these pressures, strong preservation strategies persist within customary communities, local educational initiatives, and cultural activities. The study highlights the need for a more integrated language preservation strategy involving government policy, the tourism sector, and local communities. The originality of this research lies in its cross-regional comparative analysis that explicitly links tourism activities to the vitality of local languages in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Cultural Identity, Language Preservation; Language Shift, Sociolinguistics; Vitality of Regional Languages.

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini mengkaji perkembangan dan vitalitas bahasa daerah di empat destinasi wisata utama Indonesia—Bali, Yogyakarta, Jawa Barat, dan Banten dengan menyoroti bagaimana pariwisata mendorong terjadinya pergeseran bahasa dan memengaruhi identitas budaya masyarakat. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh meningkatnya dominasi bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Inggris dalam ruang-ruang pariwisata, yang secara bertahap menggantikan fungsi komunikatif bahasa daerah dan melemahkan transmisi antargenerasi, terutama pada kelompok usia muda. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah memetakan tingkat vitalitas bahasa daerah, mengidentifikasi faktor pendorong pergeseran bahasa, serta menelaah strategi pelestarian berbasis komunitas yang masih berjalan di masing-masing wilayah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi multi-kasus melalui observasi langsung dan wawancara mendalam terhadap 32 informan—meliputi masyarakat lokal dan pekerja pariwisata. Analisis data dilakukan melalui analisis isi tematik untuk mengekstraksi pola penggunaan bahasa, bentuk interaksi pariwisata, dan upaya pelestarian yang dilakukan komunitas. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bahasa daerah di keempat wilayah mengalami pola yang serupa: tetap aktif dalam konteks domestik dan ritual, tetapi bergeser menjadi pasif pada generasi muda, dan memasuki zona terancam di kawasan wisata intensif seperti Kuta-Seminyak, Malioboro, Lembang-Pangandaran, serta Anyer-Tanjung Lesung. Pergeseran dipengaruhi oleh tuntutan komunikasi pariwisata, preferensi linguistik generasi muda, norma layanan industri wisata, dan melemahnya transmisi antargenerasi. Meski demikian, terdapat strategi pelestarian yang kuat pada komunitas adat, pendidikan lokal, dan kegiatan

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budaya. Penelitian ini menegaskan perlunya strategi pelestarian bahasa yang lebih terintegrasi antara kebijakan pemerintah, pelaku pariwisata, dan komunitas. Keaslian penelitian terletak pada analisis komparatif lintas-wilayah yang secara khusus mengaitkan pariwisata dengan vitalitas bahasa daerah di Indonesia.

**Kata Kunci:** Identitas Budaya, Pelestarian Bahasa; Pergeseran Bahasa, Sociolinguistik; Vitalitas Bahasa Daerah.

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## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most dynamic sectors in Indonesia's economy and plays a crucial role in shaping the country's social and cultural activities (Pabbajah, 2021). In recent years, the intensity of foreign tourist arrivals has shown a rising trend, reflecting Indonesia's increasingly prominent position as an international tourism destination. National data indicate that from January to September 2025, foreign tourist arrivals reached 11.43 million—an increase of 10.2% compared with the same period in the previous year—with 1.39 million arrivals recorded in September 2025 alone. Most visitors came from ASEAN and other Asian regions, with Malaysia contributing the largest share (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025). This surge in global mobility generates wide-ranging impacts not only in terms of economic opportunities but also in shifting patterns of social interaction, language use, and cultural practices in various tourism destinations.

These developments are evident in major destinations such as Yogyakarta, Bali, West Java, and Banten, although each shows distinct visitation dynamics. In Yogyakarta, for example, foreign tourist arrivals fluctuated monthly—11,320 arrivals in July 2025 and 10,424 in June 2025—yet cumulatively, from January to July 2025, arrivals fell by 12.43% compared with the previous year (Badan Pusat Statistik Yogyakarta, 2025). In West Java, although the total number of foreign arrivals remained relatively low—231 arrivals in August 2025 and 735 in November 2024—data show an increasing length of stay, suggesting more intensive and higher-quality visits (Badan Pusat Statistik Jawa Barat, 2025). Meanwhile, Banten demonstrated a different pattern, with a significant rise in arrivals: 207,019 foreign tourists in December 2024 (up 20.08% from December 2023) and 663,946 arrivals from January to April 2024 (an increase of 38.31% from the previous period) (Fachreinsyah, 2024). These variations underscore the rapid growth of tourism across different regions of Indonesia and the strong pull of these areas for international visitors (Benu et al., 2023; Hassan & Pitanatri, 2025).

However, this intensifying tourism activity produces important sociocultural phenomena that require academic and practical attention, particularly regarding changes in communication practices and the use of local languages. In tourism areas, interactions between local residents and international visitors increasingly rely on Indonesian and foreign languages—especially English—as the primary means of communication. This condition potentially erodes the role of local languages in daily life, especially among younger generations who are heavily involved in the tourism industry (Nath et al., 2024). Reports indicate that in several tourism cities, children and adolescents use local languages less frequently in household and social settings, weakening intergenerational transmission and diminishing the perceived economic value of local languages (Siregar, 2022; Yuli, 2024). With more than 718 local languages spoken in Indonesia, this trend threatens national linguistic diversity and accelerates the loss of local languages that carry significant cultural and historical value (Insani, 2022; Zein, 2020).

This decline has become a critical issue because it does not merely affect cultural identity but also endangers intangible heritage—an essential component of Indonesia's national character (An & Zhang,

2024). In the tourism context, local languages serve strategic functions as markers of identity, cultural attractions, and channels for transmitting values. Yet, the pressures of globally oriented tourism development may weaken these functions. Data from Arcana and Wiweka (2016) and Putri (2019), for instance, show that only around 26% of urban children in Denpasar still actively speak Balinese at home, while competence in *krama* Javanese among teenagers in Yogyakarta has fallen below 30%. Similar patterns appear in the use of Sundanese in West Java and Banten. These findings align with studies showing that in urban tourism spaces, local languages are increasingly rare in public interactions, and their symbolic and communicative roles gradually diminish (Del Soldato & Massari, 2024; Fang & Yao, 2025; Lonardi, 2022; Luangpipat, 2025; Santos Rovira, 2025; Yousaf et al., 2025). Consequently, a deeper analysis is necessary to understand how tourism—while serving as an economic engine—simultaneously accelerates the erosion of local languages and cultures.

Research on language shift and the endangerment of local languages in Indonesia has developed along several major trajectories. First, studies on language endangerment, largely conducted by linguists and anthropologists, reveal that hundreds of Indonesian local languages are endangered or critically threatened due to weakened intergenerational transmission and the dominance of Indonesian in education, media, and public spaces (Huszka et al., 2024; Zein, 2020). These studies typically focus on measuring vitality, categorizing endangered languages, and documenting them before loss occurs. However, this line of research tends to emphasize linguistic and demographic aspects without directly connecting them to tourism dynamics or communication practices in tourism destinations.

Second, research in tourism–culture studies shows that global tourism profoundly influences local social practices and identity. Priatmoko et al. (2021) demonstrate that interactions between residents and tourists affect communication patterns, cultural values, and how communities adapt to tourism market demands. Other works highlight how tourism drives cultural commodification and lifestyle changes in tourism areas (Ma et al., 2022; Saputra, 2024; Surata et al., 2024). Yet, these studies seldom examine the direct impact of tourism on local language vitality.

Third, studies on language preservation and linguistic policy emphasize strategies to sustain local languages through education, community movements, and government intervention. Scholars such as Christopher (2023) highlight the importance of community and school engagement. Programs such as local curriculum, language festivals, and digital documentation are seen as effective revitalization tools. However, this body of research often overlooks structural pressures from the tourism industry that shift linguistic preferences in communities with high visitor intensity (Susanto & Alkatiri, 2023; Yuli, 2024).

Fourth, research on language shift in globalization contexts shows that global languages—particularly English—serve as symbols of social and economic mobility. Studies by Lan (2022), Luring et al. (2023), and Liu et al. (2024) indicate that younger generations prioritize English and the national language because these languages provide clearer economic benefits, including opportunities in the tourism sector. While these studies offer insights into the socioeconomic logic behind language shift, they remain general and do not examine the unique sociolinguistic dynamics in Indonesian tourism regions or how tourism-driven multilingual practices shape daily language choice (Sakhiyya & Martin-Anatias, 2023; Ye et al., 2024).

Despite these valuable contributions, most research has treated language shift, tourism, and language preservation as separate fields. Few studies integrate these dimensions into a comprehensive analytical framework. Moreover, little comparative work exists across the major tourism destinations of Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten to map language vitality (active, passive, endangered) and analyze how tourism interactions shape language practices at the community level. This gap underscores the need

for research that examines the relationship between tourism intensity, communication dynamics, and the sustainability of local languages especially through cross-case qualitative approaches that capture the sociocultural variation of each region.

This study aims to analyze the influence of tourism on the development, use, and vitality of local languages in four major Indonesian tourism destinations—Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten. Specifically, it seeks to: (1) map the vitality status of local languages in each region, whether active, passive, or endangered; (2) identify the social, economic, and cultural factors driving language shift in tourism environments; and (3) examine local community strategies to preserve their languages amid the dominance of Indonesian and foreign languages. Additionally, the study formulates strategic recommendations for local governments, tourism stakeholders, and communities to strengthen language preservation within the framework of sustainable tourism development (Saputra, 2024; Surata et al., 2024).

The rationale for this study rests on the urgent need to understand how tourism—while functioning as an economic driver simultaneously exerts linguistic pressure on local languages. Early findings from various studies indicate that intensive interaction with foreign and domestic tourists has shifted local linguistic choices toward Indonesian and English (Lan, 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Siregar, 2022). This pattern aligns with conditions across Indonesia's tourism areas, where local languages transition from active to passive use, and eventually become endangered in high-interaction tourism spaces. This shift is strongest in public service sectors such as hotels, restaurants, and recreational centers—spaces that practically necessitate a standardized code of communication. As a result, the use of local languages becomes confined to internal or domestic interactions, while younger generations lose the prestige, comfort, and functional need to use them in daily life. These dynamics directly weaken intergenerational transmission and accelerate the decline of local languages that hold cultural, historical, and identity value (Susanto & Alkatiri, 2023).

By integrating linguistic, cultural, and tourism dynamics across Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten, this study argues that language preservation cannot be separated from tourism policy design and public communication governance. The findings show that while customary communities—such as the Baduy and Balinese *banjar*—retain strong linguistic vitality, urban and coastal tourism areas face far greater linguistic pressure. Thus, language preservation requires a holistic approach that engages local governments, educational institutions, and tourism industry actors so that revitalization efforts align with inclusive and sustainable tourism development (Addaney et al., 2022; Banguis et al., 2025).

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach to examine the dynamics of local language development and vitality in major tourism areas in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten (Priatmoko, 2021). The analysis focused on three primary units: first, language practices among local communities in tourism settings, such as language choice during daily interactions in tourism zones; second, individuals actively engaged in tourism interactions, namely local residents and tourism industry workers; and third, local languages as cultural artefacts reflected in spoken communication, written signage, public information boards, and tourism promotional materials. Focusing on these three analytical units enabled the study to capture the interconnections between linguistic practices, social actors, and language representation in multilingual tourism spaces (Tien et al., 2021).

Methodologically, the research adopted a multi-case study design because each research site represents distinct cultural and linguistic contexts. This design follows the explanatory multi-case model

proposed by Shi et al. (2020), which allows cross-case comparison to analyze similarities and differences in tourism-influenced language practices. The selection of Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten was based on two main considerations: first, all four are among Indonesia's highly visited tourism destinations; and second, each possesses a strong linguistic identity that is undergoing transformation due to tourism intensity. This qualitative case-study design was considered appropriate because it allows the exploration of naturally occurring language practices and cultural dynamics that cannot be fully captured through quantitative approaches (Cleland et al., 2021; Kelly, 2023).

Data were derived from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained from informants selected through specific criteria: (1) local residents born and raised in the study areas, and (2) tourism workers such as tour guides, business owners, and hotel or restaurant staff with a minimum of two years of experience (Ajayi, 2017; Schneider et al., 2023). The study involved a total of 32 informants—eight from each region. Informants were selected using purposive sampling combined with snowball sampling to ensure that participants possessed adequate knowledge and experience regarding language use in tourism contexts. Secondary data included cultural documents, regional government reports, UNESCO and Ethnologue language vitality statistics, tourism visitation data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), and documentation of signage and public markers that reflect multilingual practices.

Data collection techniques consisted of observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Participatory observations were conducted for approximately two to three weeks in each research site, focusing on indicators such as language choices during transactions, interactions in public spaces (markets, tourism zones, places of worship), community activities, and communication in tourism facilities. Observational notes were recorded using structured observation sheets designed to document verbal and non-verbal linguistic behavior. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all 32 informants using an interview guide covering themes related to language practices, perceptions of language change, and the influence of tourism on local language use. Document analysis was used to collect supporting materials such as photographs of public signage, tourism brochures, local policy documents, and artefacts of language use in tourism spaces (Sejati et al., 2023).

Data analysis followed a multi-stage qualitative procedure using thematic content analysis. The first stage involved data reduction through open coding to identify meaningful units related to language use and tourism influences (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2023). The second stage applied axial coding to group the codes into broader categories and themes, such as patterns of language shift, forms of linguistic marginalization, and emerging community-based preservation strategies (Sun et al., 2025). The third stage used selective coding to develop relationships among themes and construct cross-case conceptual patterns (Wilczewska & Nazarko, 2024). The findings were then presented in matrix form to compare patterns across regions. Credibility was ensured through methodological triangulation (observation, interviews, documentation), source triangulation (diverse informant types), and peer debriefing to minimize researcher bias (Ahmed, 2024; Schlunegger et al., 2024). The final interpretation synthesized findings from the four regions to identify both shared and region-specific patterns in the relationship between tourism and local language vitality.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Status of Local Language Vitality**

The findings reveal that the vitality of local languages across the four major tourism destinations—Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten exhibits diverse patterns but demonstrates a shared tendency

toward the weakening of their communicative functions in tourism spaces. Overall, three major categories emerge: first, active use in domestic and traditional community settings; second, passive use among younger generations and tourism workers; and third, endangered zones where local languages are overshadowed by the dominant use of Indonesian and English. These findings indicate that tourism intensity plays a significant role in shaping local language vitality in the studied regions.

In Bali, the vitality of the Balinese language shows a stark contrast between traditional communities and densely touristic areas. Field observations in Kuta, Legian, and Denpasar show that Balinese is actively used in domestic contexts and cultural activities, particularly among adults aged 35–60, with approximately two-thirds of daily conversations conducted in Balinese. However, in tourism zones such as Kuta and Seminyak, the use of Balinese drastically drops to less than one-fifth of all observed interactions. Interviews with tourism workers indicate that Balinese has shifted into an internal language used among relatives or colleagues during breaks, whereas interactions with tourists occur almost entirely in Indonesian or English (Rahim et al., 2023). Younger generations, particularly those aged 15–25, show passive competence: they understand Balinese but rarely use it due to social environments that demand Indonesian (Agung et al., 2020; Miksic, 2023). This pattern marks the early signs of weakening intergenerational transmission.

In Yogyakarta, the vitality of Javanese especially the *krama* and *krama inggil* registers—has declined significantly in urban tourism areas such as Malioboro, Tamansari, and Prawirotaman. Observations show that most interactions between vendors and visitors begin in Indonesian, even in Javanese-speaking areas. *Ngoko* Javanese is still used among young vendors in internal, informal interactions, but it is rarely used in customer-facing situations. *Krama* appears symbolically in cultural activities, such as during Kotagede heritage tours, but is quickly replaced by Indonesian or English throughout the tour (Putra & Wijayanti, 2022). Three clear patterns of vitality are visible: active use in families and traditional communities; passive understanding among youth who rarely produce *krama*; and endangered zones along tourist corridors where Javanese is almost entirely absent from service interactions (Pepinsky et al., 2024). These trends demonstrate the weakening communicative function of Javanese, which historically indexed social hierarchy and politeness (Elika & Nurhayati, 2024).

In West Java, Sundanese displays similar dynamics. Observations in Lembang Floating Market, Kawah Putih Ciwidey, Pangalengan, and Pangandaran show that Sundanese is actively used only in internal communication among local residents, while interactions with tourists occur almost entirely in Indonesian. Conversations related to services very rarely involve the Sundanese language, indicating that Indonesian has become the dominant lingua franca in public tourism spaces (Halimah & Abdillah, 2021). Interviews with young tourism workers in the Dago–Puncut area reveal that although they understand Sundanese well, they rarely use it because Indonesian is perceived as more “neutral” and “professional.” In coastal Pangandaran, the shift is even more visible: Sundanese is replaced by Indonesian when serving visitors from outside Java, while English is used for international tourists. Mapping of language vitality reveals a tripartite pattern: active use in rural communities around Ciwidey, passive use in the urban Bandung–Lembang corridor, and endangered use in Pangandaran and the Cirebon tourist corridor where Sundanese is nearly absent in service interactions.

In Banten, the vitality of Sundanese particularly the Banten dialect varies significantly depending on cultural contexts and tourism intensity. In the Baduy region, Sundanese remains extremely strong and is used in almost all communicative activities, both domestic and ritual. Community members consistently stated that they “always use Sundanese, even when interacting with visitors,” reflecting language resilience shaped by strict cultural norms (Kusuma, 2023). However, the areas surrounding Baduy display

different dynamics: external tour guides commonly use Indonesian to mediate communication, indicating an outer layer of linguistic change. In Sawarna, Carita, and Tanjung Lesung, Sundanese is used only among local residents, while the majority of service-related interactions occur in Indonesian or a mixture of Indonesian and English, particularly in the surfing and hospitality industries. In Tanjung Lesung, Sundanese is nearly endangered because it is rarely heard in public interactions, reflecting the linguistic pressure generated by large numbers of visitors from Greater Jakarta (Borrero et al., 2020).

Across all regions, a general pattern emerges: local languages remain active in domestic, ritual, and traditional community settings; shift to passive use among younger generations who understand but rarely speak them; and become endangered in tourism-intensive corridors where Indonesian and English dominate service interactions. The findings consistently demonstrate that the higher the tourism intensity in a particular space, the lower the level of active local language use. This suggests that local language vitality in Indonesian tourism destinations is shaped by a combination of economic demands, linguistic preferences of younger generations, and evolving public communication norms influenced by tourism.

**Table 1. Comparison of Local Language Vitality Across Four Tourism Destinations**

Aspect	Bali (Balinese)	Yogyakarta (Javanese)	West Java (Sundanese)	Banten (Banten Sundanese)
Active Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High in banjar communities and customary villages (two-thirds of daily conversations).</li> <li>Dominant among adults aged 35–60.</li> <li>Used in rituals and domestic interactions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High within families and traditional communities.</li> <li><i>Krama/krama inggil</i> actively used only with elders and in ritual contexts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High in rural communities (Ciwidey, Pangalengan).</li> <li>Still active in local markets and family interactions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extremely high in Inner and Outer Baduy.</li> <li>Used entirely in daily activities and rituals.</li> </ul>
Passive Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth aged 15–25: understand but rarely speak Balinese.</li> <li>Used only in limited peer interactions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth aged 15–30: understand <i>krama</i> but cannot produce it.</li> <li><i>Ngoko</i> used only among close friends.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth aged 18–30: understand Sundanese but prefer Indonesian at work.</li> <li>Sundanese used only with relatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Sawarna and Carita, youth understand Sundanese but rarely use it except with local peers.</li> </ul>
Endangered Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kuta, Legian, and Seminyak: interactions conducted in Balinese are very rare.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Malioboro, Prawirotam an, Tamansari show near-total shift to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pangandaran and Cirebon: Sundanese is rarely heard in service interactions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tanjung Lesung and Anyer: Sundanese seldom used in</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism services use Indonesian/English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indonesian and English.</li> <li>• Javanese appears only in short greetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear dominance of Indonesian and English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• public services.</li> <li>• Rapid shift toward Indonesian and English.</li> </ul>
Driving Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International tourism (Kuta-Seminyak).</li> <li>• Standardized hotel/café services (English).</li> <li>• Youth social environments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse visitor profiles.</li> <li>• <i>Krama</i> perceived as impractical.</li> <li>• Indonesian viewed as safer and more universal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High diversity of domestic tourists.</li> <li>• Service professionalism (“Indonesian is more neutral”).</li> <li>• Visitor mobility from outside Java.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dominance of visitors from Greater Jakarta.</li> <li>• Indonesian as the hospitality norm.</li> <li>• Influence of non-local tour guides.</li> </ul>
Intergenerational Transmission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents report that children respond in Indonesian even when spoken to in Balinese.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban Yogyakarta children respond in Indonesian even when addressed in <i>krama</i> or <i>ngoko</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many children reply in Indonesian despite parents speaking Sundanese.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children in Lebak-Pandeglang often answer in Indonesian although their parents use Sundanese.</li> </ul>
Vitality Category	Active → Passive → Endangered (clearly stratified along tourism zones).	Active in families → Passive in youth → Endangered in urban tourism areas.	Active in rural areas → Passive in urban areas → Endangered in tourism corridors.	Strongly active (Baduy) → Passive (Sawarna/Carita) → Endangered (Anyer/Tanjung Lesung).

Overall, the findings show clear differences between domestic spaces and tourism spaces regarding the use of local languages across Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten. Local languages remain actively used in families, customary communities, and ritual activities, especially among older generations. However, once individuals move into tourism-heavy zones, the use of local languages declines sharply and is replaced by Indonesian and English. This pattern is consistent across all regions: Balinese use drops in Kuta and Seminyak; Javanese, especially *krama* and *ngoko*, diminishes in Malioboro; Sundanese weakens in Lembang and Pangandaran; and Banten Sundanese shows extreme contrasts between its strength in Baduy and its weakening in Anyer-Tanjung Lesung. In every location, younger generations prefer Indonesian in daily communication, even when they fully understand their local language. These findings

illustrate how tourism generates social and economic pressures that reduce the use of local languages in public interaction.

The collected data reveal four major patterns consistently present across all research sites. First, local languages remain strong in traditional communities—such as Bali’s banjar, Yogyakarta’s cultural kampungs, rural villages in Ciwidey, and especially the Baduy in Banten. In these spaces, local languages continue to serve as primary markers of identity and social life.

Second, younger generations across all regions tend to possess only passive competence: they understand the language but rarely use it in daily conversations. They prefer Indonesian because they perceive it as more universal, modern, and suitable for social interaction and employment in the tourism sector. This trend is evident in interviews with Balinese youth, young workers in Yogyakarta, café employees in Bandung, and young residents of Sawarna in Banten.

Third, highly touristic zones function as epicenters of language shift, where local languages are almost entirely absent from service interactions. These areas include Kuta–Seminyak in Bali, Malioboro in Yogyakarta, Pangandaran in West Java, and Tanjung Lesung in Banten. In these places, Indonesian and English dominate completely due to communication demands from domestic and international visitors.

Fourth, intergenerational transmission is weakening across all regions. Many parents report that their children prefer to answer in Indonesian even when addressed in the local language. This suggests that local languages are no longer the primary language of family communication among younger generations—an indicator of long-term decline in language vitality.

Taken together, these four patterns show that the vitality of local languages in the studied regions is uneven: strong within traditional communities, weakening among youth, and severely threatened in tourism centers. These findings highlight an urgent need for context-sensitive and tourism-integrated strategies for language preservation.

### Language Shift Drivers

The findings indicate that language shift in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten is driven by a set of relatively similar factors, although each region expresses these factors differently depending on its social characteristics and the intensity of tourism. Overall, three primary drivers consistently shape the shift: first, communication demands in the tourism sector; second, changing linguistic preferences among younger generations; and third, institutional norms within the tourism industry that prioritize Indonesian and English. These three forces operate simultaneously, producing recurring patterns of language shift across all regions.

The first driver concerns communication demands in tourism. In Bali, Yogyakarta, and coastal areas of West Java and Banten, the strongest pressure comes from the need to communicate effectively with both domestic and international tourists. Observations in Kuta and Seminyak show that tourism workers initiate interactions in English when interacting with foreign tourists, while Indonesian is used with domestic visitors. A similar pattern is also observed in Yogyakarta, where street vendors in Malioboro initiate conversations in Indonesian, even when speaking with fellow Javanese speakers. In Pangandaran and Sawarna, young tour guides automatically shift languages depending on the origin of the visitor, and Sundanese is used only in highly limited contexts. In Tanjung Lesung, English has become part of the service *lingua franca* (a common language used for communication between people who have different native languages). These consistent patterns show that the service orientation of tourism directly suppresses the use of local languages, particularly in economic interaction spaces.

The second driver concerns shifting linguistic preferences among younger generations. Across all four regions, young people display a strong tendency to adopt Indonesian as their primary language, while local languages are relegated to informal or domestic contexts. Balinese youth aged 15–25 report that they understand Balinese but feel “uncomfortable” speaking it because their social environment predominantly uses Indonesian or English. In Yogyakarta, students and young workers describe *krama* as “impractical,” while *ngoko* is used only among close friends. In Bandung, café workers in the Dago–Puncut area say they prefer Indonesian because it is perceived as more modern and professional. A similar trend appears in Banten, where young workers in Sawarna, Carita, and Anyer report using Sundanese only with local peers. These preferences show that local languages are losing their “functional value” and are being replaced by languages considered more relevant to urban life and tourism.

The third driver involves institutional norms and service standardization within the tourism industry. Language shift is reinforced by unwritten policies in the tourism sector that prioritize Indonesian and English as service standards. In Bali, hotels and restaurants operate with an English-based “operational language,” rendering Balinese irrelevant in professional contexts. In Yogyakarta, tour guides in Kotagede use *krama* only as an opening greeting, while the entire tour is delivered in Indonesian or English. In West Java, café employees in Ciwidey and Lembang note that management encourages the use of Indonesian to ensure consistent service for all visitors. In Banten, hotels and restaurants in Carita–Anyer follow the same pattern because most visitors come from Jakarta or other regions. This situation demonstrates how tourism institutions systematically push local languages to a peripheral position because they are not part of standardized service communication.

The fourth driver involves tourist heterogeneity and social mobility. The more heterogeneous the tourist composition, the stronger the pressure to use languages that everyone can understand. Bali receives international tourists from various countries; Yogyakarta attracts domestic visitors from outside Java; Pangandaran and Anyer draw large numbers of visitors from the Greater Jakarta area; and Sawarna is heavily frequented by surfing enthusiasts. This diversity makes local languages less effective as tools for public communication. As a result, Indonesian and English become the preferred choices. This indicates that multilingual social environments in tourism structurally push local languages out of public spaces.

The fifth driver concerns weakening intergenerational transmission. Across all research sites, tourism influence extends into the household and affects intergenerational language transmission. Parents in Denpasar, Yogyakarta, Bandung, and the districts of Pandeglang and Lebak express similar concerns that their children rarely use local languages in daily conversations. Although parents continue using Balinese, Javanese, or Sundanese at home, children tend to respond in Indonesian. A parent in Lebak described the situation clearly: “*In our house we speak Sundanese, but the children always reply in Indonesian. Maybe because school and work use Indonesian.*” (Interview, April 10, 2025). Similar findings emerged in Denpasar, where parents reported that their children feel more comfortable answering in Indonesian even when addressed in Balinese. These patterns show that the dominance of Indonesian in education, media, and tourism-related work reduces the practical value of local languages for younger generations. Thus, language shift is no longer merely situational but has reached a structural level, signaling weakening mechanisms of long-term language reproduction.

**Table 2. Comparison of Language Shift Drivers Across Four Tourism Destinations**

Drivers	Bali	Yogyakarta	West Java	Banten
1. Tourism communication demands	English used with foreign tourists; Indonesian with domestic tourists; Balinese used only during staff breaks (Kuta-Seminyak).	Malioboro vendors initiate conversations in Indonesian even with fellow Javanese speakers.	Vendors and guides in Pangandaran and Lembang prefer Indonesian due to mixed visitors; Sundanese appears only in limited internal contexts.	In Sawarna-Carita-Tanjung Lesung, Indonesian and English dominate service interactions; Sundanese used only among local residents.
2. Youth linguistic preferences	Youth (15-25) understand Balinese but feel uncomfortable using it; they prefer Indonesian-English.	<i>Krama</i> is seen as impractical; <i>ngoko</i> restricted to close friends; Indonesian remains the primary language.	Young workers in Dago-Puncut choose Indonesian because it is seen as modern and professional.	Youth in Sawarna-Anyer use Sundanese only with local peers; Indonesian dominates daily interaction.
3. Tourism service norms & standardization	Hotels and restaurants enforce an English “operational language”; Balinese is not used in service.	Kotagede tours use <i>krama</i> only as an opening; all explanations given in Indonesian/English.	Café management in Lembang-Ciwidey encourages Indonesian for service consistency.	Hotels and restaurants in Carita-Anyer use Indonesian as the service standard due to predominantly Jakarta-based tourists.
4. Heterogeneity of tourists	High influx of international tourists → pressure to use English.	Dominated by domestic visitors from outside Java → Indonesian considered most accessible.	Pangandaran and Lembang receive national visitors → Sundanese becomes less effective.	Anyer-Tanjung Lesung frequented by Greater Jakarta tourists → Indonesian becomes the main <i>lingua franca</i> .

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5. Weakening intergenerational transmission	Children frequently respond in Indonesian even when spoken to in Balinese (Denpasar).	Urban children in Yogyakarta respond more naturally in Indonesian than in <i>krama/ngoko</i> .	Parents report that children use Indonesian more often (Bandung, Pangalengan).	Parents in Lebak–Pandeglang state: “ <i>We speak Sundanese at home, but the children respond in Indonesian...</i> ”
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Overall, the data indicate that language shift in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten does not occur abruptly but is triggered by a set of interrelated factors. Across all regions, Indonesian and English have become the primary choices in tourism interactions because they are perceived as more practical, more widely understood by visitors, and aligned with industry service standards. Tourism workers in Kuta, Malioboro, Lembang, and Anyer routinely begin conversations with tourists in Indonesian or English, while local languages appear only in restricted contexts such as internal staff communication or family settings. Young people in every region express that although they understand the local language, they rarely use it because Indonesian feels more neutral and modern. In addition, unwritten policies in the tourism sector—such as the expectation to use Indonesian or English in hotels, restaurants, and service areas—further reduce the presence of local languages. At the household level, parents report that their children increasingly respond in Indonesian even when spoken to in a local language. These findings demonstrate that tourism pressure not only shapes public communication but also transforms language practices in private and domestic spaces.

From the data analysis, four major patterns consistently emerge as drivers of language shift across all regions. First, communication demands in tourism create strong pressure to use languages that are universally understood. In major tourism centers such as Kuta, Seminyak, Malioboro, Pangandaran, and Anyer, service interactions occur almost entirely in Indonesian or English. This displaces local languages from public domains and relegates them to internal or family settings.

Second, younger generations show significant shifts in linguistic preference. They understand the local languages but do not consider them relevant for work or social interaction in tourism areas. Indonesian is viewed as “safe,” “modern,” and “professional,” leading to its automatic use in daily communication. As a result, local languages are used only in informal situations or when interacting with family elders.

Third, the tourism industry imposes communication norms that do not accommodate local languages. Hotels, restaurants, cafés, and travel agencies in all regions implement service standards based on Indonesian and English. These norms narrow the functional space of local languages and position them as unsuitable for service communication, even in regions that are strong cultural centers.

Fourth, language shift is strengthened by weakening intergenerational transmission. Many families report that children respond in Indonesian even when addressed in Balinese, Javanese, or Sundanese. This phenomenon appears consistently in Denpasar, Yogyakarta, Bandung, Pandeglang, and Lebak. Educational practices, media exposure, and tourism-based employment reinforce Indonesian as the primary language of children’s daily lives, causing local languages to lose their natural role as the first language.

Based on these four patterns, it can be concluded that language shift is driven by systematic and mutually reinforcing mechanisms: tourism communication pressure, youth linguistic preferences, industry service norms, and weakened transmission at home. The findings demonstrate that tourism does not merely influence language use in public spaces; it also reshapes the structure of language use within families and communities. Without intervention, these conditions may accelerate the decline of local language vitality in Indonesia's major tourism regions.

### Tourism Interaction Patterns and Language Choice

The findings show that interaction patterns within tourism spaces shape relatively similar language-choice configurations across the four regions studied—Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten despite their distinct sociocultural contexts. Overall, these patterns reflect consistent forms of linguistic accommodation influenced by three primary factors: the type of tourists being served, the nature of service interactions, and the roles of workers in the tourism industry. In almost all public service situations in tourism areas, Indonesian and English function as the two dominant codes, while local languages are used mainly in internal or non-formal interactions.

In Bali, this pattern appears clearly in high-density tourism zones such as Kuta, Legian, and Seminyak. Observations indicate that tourism workers automatically initiate conversations in English when interacting with foreign visitors and switch to Indonesian when serving domestic tourists. Balinese surfaces only in internal communication among workers or among local residents outside service contexts. The majority of service interactions in hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops are conducted in English or Indonesian, while Balinese is only occasionally heard and is almost never used in communication with tourists (Rahim et al., 2023). This situation gradually pushes Balinese out of the public tourism sphere and relegates it to a “backstage” language used only in non-service settings.

In Yogyakarta, similar patterns of language shift appear along major tourism corridors such as Malioboro and Prawirotan. Observations indicate that the majority of vendors and tourism workers initiate interactions in Indonesian, even when speaking with fellow Javanese speakers. *Ngoko* Javanese is still heard in internal conversations among young vendors but consistently shifts to Indonesian when communicating with customers. Meanwhile, *krama* is used symbolically to project “cultural politeness,” though only at the beginning of an interaction before it is replaced by Indonesian or English—as seen among Kotagede guides who deliver their entire tours in Indonesian for accessibility (Putra & Wijayanti, 2022). This pattern demonstrates that in urban tourism contexts in Yogyakarta, Javanese functions more as a symbolic identity marker than a practical communicative tool.

In West Java, tourism interaction patterns similarly position Sundanese as a secondary language. In Lembang, Ciwidey, and the Dago–Punclut area, café workers, tourism vendors, and guides almost always initiate interactions with visitors in Indonesian, while Sundanese appears only in internal conversations among local workers. In Pangandaran, Sundanese is still used when serving local visitors from Bandung or Priangan, yet interactions with visitors from outside the region occur almost entirely in Indonesian. When serving foreign tourists, young guides often combine Indonesian with simple English phrases such as “go straight,” “careful,” or “ready boss.” These patterns show that Sundanese has been compressed into internal and informal functions, while Indonesian has become the dominant *lingua franca* in tourism spaces.

In Banten, the contrast in interaction patterns is stark between the *adat* (customary) areas and the coastal tourism zones. In Baduy Dalam and Baduy Luar, residents use Sundanese (Banten dialect) exclusively in all interactions—whether with fellow residents or with visitors—because strong cultural

norms discourage linguistic accommodation. However, once outside the customary zone, interaction patterns shift sharply. In Sawarna, Carita, and Tanjung Lesung, Indonesian becomes the primary language used with visitors, while Sundanese is limited to communication among local residents or in informal settings. In these coastal areas, young tourism workers even employ basic English when interacting with foreign tourists, as expressed by a 19-year-old surf worker: “*With friends I use Sundanese. But with tourists I have to use Indonesian or a little English.*” (Interview, April 18, 2025). This statement illustrates how tourism interactions promote flexible language use that no longer prioritizes local languages.

A cross-regional comparison reveals three consistent interaction patterns. First, service interactions overwhelmingly prioritize Indonesian or English, making local languages rarely used in public spaces. Second, local-language use is maintained almost exclusively within internal or community-based interactions, but it does not form part of the service ethos in tourism environments. Third, the type of visitors present in a location significantly affects language choice: the more heterogeneous and the larger the proportion of non-local tourists, the lower the likelihood of local-language use in service encounters. These patterns indicate that language choice in tourism contexts is not merely an individual preference but an adaptive response to the socioeconomic structures of tourism spaces.

These findings thus affirm that tourism interaction patterns significantly diminish the communicative function of local languages. Local languages remain as markers of identity but no longer serve as primary tools of economic communication. If this trend continues, local languages risk experiencing deeper marginalization, especially in urban tourism centers characterized by intense multilingual interaction.

**Table 3. Tourism Interaction Patterns and Local Language Choices in Four Tourism Destinations**

Region	Interaction Context	Language Chosen	Field Findings	Implications for Local Languages
Bali	Service interactions in hotels, restaurants, tourist shops (Kuta, Legian, Seminyak)	English (for foreign tourists), Indonesian (for domestic tourists)	Most interactions between local residents and foreign tourists begin in English; the Balinese language is rarely used.	Balinese is pushed out of the public sphere and survives mainly in domestic and ritual domains.
	Interactions among local workers	Balinese (limited), Indonesian	Balinese appears only during breaks, not in public service interactions.	Balinese becomes a “backstage” language.
Yogyakarta	Vendor–tourist interactions in Malioboro	Indonesian	Vendors initiate conversations in Indonesian even when the buyer is Javanese.	<i>Krama/ngoko</i> declines in public spaces.
	Tour guide interactions in Kotagede	<i>Krama</i> (symbolic), followed by Indonesian/English	<i>Krama</i> is used only as a greeting; the rest of the	Javanese becomes a cultural symbol rather than a

	Interactions among young vendors	<i>Ngoko</i> (internal), Indonesian (for service)	tour is delivered in Indonesian. “ <i>Ngoko</i> is only for close friends; with customers we immediately switch to Indonesian.”	practical medium. Javanese survives mainly in non-service domains.
West Java	Trade interactions in Lembang, Ciwidey, Punclut	Indonesian dominant, Sundanese limited	Most interactions use Indonesian; the Sundanese language only appears among local residents.	Sundanese is marginalized in tourism services.
	Guide interactions in Pangandaran	Sundanese (for local tourists), Indonesian (for visitors from outside Java), English (foreign tourists)	“If the visitors are from Bandung, we use Sundanese; if they are from outside Java, we directly use Indonesian.”	Flexible language choice → Sundanese unstable in service settings.
	Interactions among café workers	Sundanese internally; Indonesian for customers	Young workers state that Indonesian feels “more neutral and professional.”	Motivational shift among youth toward Indonesian.
Banten	Interactions in Baduy Dalam & Luar	Sundanese Banten	Residents report consistently using Sundanese, even with tourists.	Very strong vitality; language unaffected by tourism pressures.
	Guide interactions outside Baduy	Indonesian	Non-Baduy guides use Indonesian when explaining to tourists.	Outer layers experience rapid language shift.
	Service interactions in Sawarna, Carita, Anyer, Tanjung Lesung	Indonesian (dominant), English (partially), Sundanese (minimal)	Surf worker: “With tourists I use Indonesian or a bit of English.”	Sundanese nearly absent in coastal public spaces.

The overall findings indicate that tourism interactions in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten create language-use patterns that differ substantially from those found in everyday community life. In tourism service contexts—such as transactions in hotels, restaurants, souvenir shops, recreational areas, and urban tourist corridors—Indonesian and English appear as the dominant languages. Local languages surface mainly in internal conversations among local residents, particularly during breaks, informal peer interaction, or within the household domain. For example, in Bali, workers in Kuta and Seminyak almost always begin conversations with foreign tourists in English and switch to Indonesian when interacting

with domestic visitors. A similar pattern is also observed in Malioboro, Yogyakarta, where vendors predominantly use Indonesian for interactions even when their customers are Javanese. This pattern continues in Lembang, Pangandaran, Sawarna, and Anyer, where Sundanese or Sundanese Banten is used only among local workers. Even in Banten, where the Baduy community maintains strong linguistic vitality, the use of Sundanese decreases drastically outside the customary area and nearly disappears in tourism service interactions. These data clearly illustrate that tourism spaces generate communication forms prioritizing accessibility and efficiency over local-language preservation.

Across all findings, four major patterns explain how tourism shapes language choices in public interactions. First, Indonesian and English function as the primary service languages in all tourism destinations. In Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten, tourism workers automatically use Indonesian for domestic visitors and English for foreign tourists. This preference does not reflect rejection of local languages but addresses practical needs—local languages are not universally understood by visitors—thereby restricting their use to informal, internal settings.

Second, local languages undergo “functional compression,” meaning they remain in use within local communities but no longer serve as service languages. Workers consistently employ Indonesian when interacting with tourists, even when those tourists are themselves native speakers of the local language. This demonstrates that local languages no longer operate as public communication tools in tourism spaces.

Third, tourism drives a shift in which local languages become symbolic rather than communicative. In Yogyakarta, for instance, *krama* is used merely as an opening greeting by Kotagede guides before being replaced entirely by Indonesian. In Bali, Balinese remains active in rituals and communal activities but rarely appears in economic interactions. A similar pattern is evident in West Java and Banten, where Sundanese is present in festivals and community events but is not dominant in service interactions.

Fourth, the diversity of tourists strongly influences language choice. The more heterogeneous the visitor demographics—as seen in Kuta, Malioboro, Pangandaran, and Anyer—the lower the likelihood that local languages will be used in service encounters. Conversely, culturally homogeneous areas such as Baduy Dalam and Luar maintain consistent use of local languages because the community strongly regulates linguistic boundaries.

These four patterns show that tourism creates a new communication structure that prioritizes Indonesian and English. Local languages remain alive but occupy increasingly narrow spaces and are pushed to the periphery of public communication. If these patterns continue, local languages face the risk of losing their communicative functions and surviving only as cultural symbols.

### Community-Based Strategies for Local Language Preservation

The findings indicate that despite the substantial pressure tourism places on the vitality of local languages, communities in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten continue to implement various preservation strategies that reflect their respective socio-cultural contexts and degrees of cultural resilience. Although these strategies are not yet strong enough to counterbalance the dominance of Indonesian and English in tourism spaces, they demonstrate the presence of cultural and institutional resources that can be further developed to strengthen linguistic sustainability.

In Bali, language preservation strategies rely heavily on the strength of customary communities through rituals, *banjar* activities, and everyday cultural practices. Balinese remains actively used in religious ceremonies, *banjar* meetings, customary rituals, and family interactions. Customary activities that almost never employ Indonesian constitute the strongest foundation for the protection of Balinese. In

several *banjar* in Denpasar and Badung, informal practices such as using Balinese in public announcements, dance rehearsals, and ritual discussions reinforce the status of Balinese within the cultural domain. Parents also attempt to introduce Balinese to their children at home, although many acknowledge that children often respond in Indonesian. Nonetheless, the strength of rituals and customary institutions makes Bali a region with relatively robust foundations for language preservation compared to other urban tourism areas.

In Yogyakarta, language preservation is expressed mainly through symbolic strategies rooted in culture and education. Varieties of Javanese—especially *krama* and *krama inggil*—are maintained through customary ceremonies, traditional arts, and intergenerational interaction within families. In Kotagede, for instance, tour guides use *krama* as an opening greeting to convey respect and cultural politeness, even though they subsequently shift to Indonesian during the explanatory portions of the tour. This practice illustrates that *krama* continues to be preserved as a symbol of identity. Schools in Yogyakarta also continue to offer local content courses in Javanese, providing formal space for students to learn linguistic structures and communicative ethics. Parents likewise attempt to maintain *krama* at home, although children increasingly respond in Indonesian. Javanese revitalization in Yogyakarta is thus anchored in education and cultural awareness, even as active use in everyday interactions remains limited.

In West Java, the strongest preservation of Sundanese is found in rural communities such as Ciwidey and Pangalengan, where Sundanese remains the primary language of daily life. Cultural activities such as *pencak silat* (traditional Indonesian martial art), customary rituals, and village meetings frequently employ Sundanese, thereby reinforcing intergenerational transmission. The inclusion of Sundanese as a local content subject in schools also supports formal preservation; however, its effectiveness diminishes in urban areas such as Bandung–Lembang, where Indonesian dominates tourism interactions. Cultural communities in Cirebon and Priangan organize Sundanese festivals, storytelling competitions, and workshops on Sundanese script to foster linguistic pride among young people. Nonetheless, tourism-driven demands for Indonesian and English make preservation strategies significantly stronger in rural areas than in urban tourism zones.

Banten exhibits the most contrasting spectrum of language preservation strategies. In Baduy Dalam and Baduy Luar, the Bantenese Sundanese dialect is preserved almost entirely. The Baduy social system, which discourages excessive modernity including the use of communication technologies ensures that Sundanese remains inseparable from daily life and identity. Residents affirm that they “always use Sundanese, even when interacting with visitors,” demonstrating linguistic resilience sustained by strict customary norms. In coastal areas such as Sawarna, Carita, and Anyer, language preservation occurs through cultural activities such as traditional arts training and the use of Sundanese within households. However, the high intensity of tourism significantly reduces its presence in public spaces. Community efforts to prevent language shift therefore rely primarily on household practices and community events that continue to maintain communication in Sundanese.

**Table 4. Community-Based Strategies for Local Language Preservation in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten**

Region	Main Preservation Strategies	Examples of On-the-Ground Practices	Strengths & Challenges
Bali	1. Preservation through <i>banjar</i> institutions and customary rituals. 2. Use of Balinese in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balinese used in <i>odalan</i> and <i>ngaben</i> ceremonies.</li> <li><i>Banjar</i> announcements and customary meetings</li> </ul>	Strengths: Strong customary traditions, cohesive <i>banjar</i> structure. Challenges: Balinese

	ceremonies, customary meetings, and family communication. 3. Strengthening local language through traditional arts.	conducted in Balinese. • Dance training and ritual preparation use Balinese.	rarely used in tourism services; young people use it less in daily life.
Yogyakarta	1. Formal education (local content in Javanese). 2. Symbolic reinforcement of <i>krama</i> in cultural and tourism settings. 3. Family-level efforts to maintain <i>krama</i> .	• Kotagede tour guides use <i>krama</i> as an opening greeting. • Schools teach Javanese as local content. • Cultural ceremonies continue to use <i>krama/krama inggil</i> .	Strengths: Strong Javanese cultural base; educational support. Challenges: <i>Krama</i> is rarely used in daily interaction; youth prefer Indonesian.
West Java	1. Preservation through rural communities (Ciwidey, Pangalengan). 2. Sundanese cultural activities (storytelling, <i>pencah silat</i> , Sundanese script). 3. Teaching Sundanese in schools.	• Sundanese remains dominant in Priangan villages. • Sundanese language festivals and children's storytelling events. • Customary activities and Sundanese script workshops.	Strengths: Rural communities still actively use Sundanese. Challenges: Urban and tourism areas (Lembang, Pangandaran) rely almost entirely on Indonesian.
Banten	1. Strong linguistic resilience in the Baduy community. 2. Family-based efforts in coastal areas to maintain Sundanese. 3. Local cultural activities (arts, ceremonies, village events).	• Baduy Dalam and Baduy Luar consistently use Bantenese Sundanese in all contexts. • Families in Sawarna/Carita maintain Sundanese at home. • Village events still employ Sundanese.	Strengths: Extremely strong vitality in the Baduy community. Challenges: Coastal tourism reduces Sundanese use in public spaces.

The findings show that efforts to preserve local languages in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten rely on community-based, cultural, and educational strategies, even though each region demonstrates distinct socio-cultural characteristics. In Bali, preservation depends primarily on the strength of *banjar* institutions and customary rituals, where Balinese remains actively used in ceremonies, *banjar* meetings, and family communication. In Yogyakarta, preservation occurs mainly through formal education (local content in Javanese) and the symbolic use of *krama* in cultural and tourism activities. In West Java, Sundanese remains strong in rural communities and is reinforced through cultural activities such as storytelling, *pencah silat*, and school-based instruction. Meanwhile, in Banten, the Baduy community exhibits the strongest preservation, using Bantenese Sundanese consistently in all aspects of daily life. Outside the Baduy area, coastal families and local communities attempt to maintain Sundanese through cultural practices and home interactions. Overall, language preservation in these regions persists due to the commitment of customary communities, the support of local educational institutions, and the continuity of cultural practices transmitted across generations.

These patterns reveal four major dynamics that explain how communities in the four regions maintain their local languages. First, language preservation is most effective when supported by strong customary communities. This is most evident in the Baduy (Banten) and Balinese *banjar*, where traditional social structures maintain the local language as the primary medium of communication. In such contexts, the local language is not merely a cultural symbol but an inseparable part of everyday life governed by customary norms.

Second, formal education plays an important but not yet fully effective role. Yogyakarta and West Java have local language curricula in schools, yet daily use remains low, particularly in major tourism centers. This indicates that education can strengthen linguistic knowledge but does not automatically ensure the public use of local languages.

Third, cultural activities and traditional arts serve as meaningful vehicles for language preservation. Sundanese language festivals, children's storytelling, Balinese dance rehearsals, and the use of *krama* in Kotagede tours demonstrate that cultural practices provide visible spaces for local languages. However, these uses tend to be more symbolic than functional.

Fourth, preservation is weakest in coastal and urban tourism centers. In Pangandaran, Anyer, Kuta, and Malioboro, Indonesian and English dominate public interaction. Language preservation in these areas relies on families and rural communities rather than tourism institutions. This indicates that tourism not only accelerates linguistic change but also narrows the public space for local languages.

These patterns demonstrate that the sustainability of local languages still depends primarily on traditional communities, cultural practices, and local education. However, current efforts remain insufficient to counter the structural pressures of tourism, which standardizes the use of Indonesian and English. The findings suggest that local language preservation requires more integrated strategies aligned with tourism policy—not merely community-based efforts.

## DISCUSSION

This study finds that the vitality of local languages in Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten is steadily weakening, particularly in tourism areas characterized by dense multilingual interaction. At the level of traditional communities—such as *banjar* in Bali, cultural villages in Yogyakarta, Sundanese rural settlements in West Java, and the Baduy community in Banten—local languages remain vibrant and actively used. However, in high-intensity tourism zones such as Kuta–Seminyak, Malioboro–Prawirodaman, Lembang–Pangandaran, and Anyer–Tanjung Lesung, local languages are marginalized, with almost all service-related interactions conducted in Indonesian or English. Young people across all regions display passive competence: they understand local languages but rarely use them in daily communication. In addition, intergenerational transmission is weakening because children tend to respond in Indonesian even when spoken to in their local language. Overall, these findings demonstrate a strong relationship between tourism intensity, language choice, and the declining communicative function of local languages.

Language shift occurs through three primary mechanisms. First, communicative pressure within tourism settings. Tourism spaces demand efficiency and accessibility, requiring tourism workers to ensure that both domestic and international visitors can understand the information provided. As a result, Indonesian and English emerge as the most effective choices, while local languages—although culturally significant—lack the communicative reach needed in tourism contexts. Second, shifts in linguistic preferences among younger generations. Young people favor Indonesian, which they perceive as more modern, inclusive, and professional. Social pressures from schools, media, and tourism-related

employment reinforce the view that local languages are less relevant for social mobility. Third, institutional norms within the tourism industry. Hotels, restaurants, cafés, and travel agencies systematically normalize the use of Indonesian or English as part of professional service standards. These norms shrink the communicative space for local languages and relegate them to informal, non-service contexts.

The study aligns with, yet extends beyond, four major strands of existing research. First, research on language endangerment (Huszka et al., 2024; Zein, 2020) highlights weakened intergenerational transmission and the dominance of national languages. The present findings reinforce this trend but add an important nuance: tourism functions as a structural force that accelerates language shift in public spaces. Second, studies on culture and tourism (Priatmoko, 2021; Saputra, 2024; Surata et al., 2024) argue that tourism influences local identities and lifestyles. This study contributes an additional dimension by showing that tourism directly reshapes linguistic practices, not merely cultural expression. Third, research on language preservation and policy (Christopher, 2023; Yuli, 2024) emphasizes the role of education and community initiatives in maintaining local languages. The present research reveals that although these strategies are essential, they remain insufficient when confronted with the structural pressures produced by the tourism industry. Fourth, studies on language shift in the context of globalization (Lan, 2022; Luring et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2024) show that young people choose national and global languages to pursue social mobility. This study confirms these tendencies but highlights a distinctive context: tourism dynamics transform language shift from an individual preference into an economic and professional necessity.

Taken together, this study fills a significant research gap by integrating three dimensions—tourism, language use, and cultural preservation—within a comparative multi-regional framework across four major tourism destinations, a scope rarely addressed in previous scholarship.

Historically, local languages in Bali, Java, Sunda, and Baduy have served as the foundation of ethnic identity and as the primary medium for transmitting values, customary norms, and cosmology. However, the findings of this study show that tourism flows have triggered a process of *language commodification* a transformation in which language shifts from being a cultural tool to becoming an economic commodity used to generate value within the service and tourism industries. This shift is evident in Kuta–Seminyak, Malioboro, Lembang–Pangandaran, and Anyer–Tanjung Lesung, where Indonesian and English dominate interactions because they are considered more marketable and effective for reaching tourists, while local languages have been pushed into domestic or symbolic functions. This pattern is consistent with Holborow’s (2018) argument that language in service economies is treated as an *economic resource*, as well as with Manan et al. (2023), who demonstrate that the dominance of global languages reduces the social value of minority languages. Similar phenomena appear in studies on heritage tourism, where local languages are aesthetically displayed but no longer used as communicative tools—for example, the rise of pseudo-language performance among the Naxi community in China (Zhang & Xie, 2025). In the Indonesian context, local languages are undergoing functional devaluation and shifting into symbolic cultural markers, while Indonesian–English gain economic value, reflecting a societal transformation from traditional communicative systems toward the modern linguistic marketplace of tourism (Barruga, 2025; Bruzos, 2023). Thus, language shift in tourism zones is not merely a change in interaction patterns but a historical phenomenon marking the reorientation of linguistic value within society.

Socially, tourism creates new interactional spaces that demand standardized codes of communication, causing local languages to lose their social function as community-bonding instruments and to shift into purely domestic languages. This study shows that in Kuta–Seminyak, Malioboro, Lembang–Pangandaran, and Anyer–Tanjung Lesung, young people rarely use local languages in public

interaction because Indonesian and English are perceived as more modern, professional, and prestigious. This reflects the concept of *linguistic prestige*, in which certain languages gain higher social value due to economic, educational, or status-related factors (Herk, 2015; Nagy, 2018). In Bali, for example, young tourism workers prefer Indonesian–English because Balinese is perceived as less suited to tourism service ethos. In Yogyakarta, *krama* is no longer considered practical or prestigious among the youth. In West Java and Banten, Sundanese is used almost exclusively in internal interactions even though young people understand it well. These patterns reinforce (Eriksson & Nordlander, 2023) argument that urban centers create prestige hierarchies that marginalize local varieties in public spaces. Thus, language shift in tourism settings is driven not only by communicative necessity but also by the erosion of social prestige associated with local languages, which no longer function as symbols of modernity or social competence for younger generations.

Ideologically, the dominance of Indonesian and English in tourism spaces demonstrates how economic power shapes linguistic hierarchies that position local languages as subordinate because they are perceived as having low economic value. Field observations clearly illustrate this: in Kuta–Seminyak, Malioboro, Lembang–Pangandaran, and Anyer–Tanjung Lesung, service interactions occur almost entirely in Indonesian–English, while Balinese, Javanese, Sundanese, and Bantenese Sundanese are pushed into domestic or ritual contexts. This aligns with the concept of *linguistic hegemony*, in which dominant languages acquire ideological legitimacy and symbolic power, suppressing minority languages (Canagarajah & Ben Said, 2011; Mustapha, 2014). In Yogyakarta, for instance, *krama* appears only as a token of politeness before being replaced by Indonesian; in West Java, young workers choose Indonesian because it is seen as more “professional”; and in coastal Banten, Sundanese is nearly absent from public services. These patterns reflect the hegemony of national and global languages operating through economic institutions such as tourism, consistent with Scott and Venegas (2017), who argue that modern social systems often produce discriminatory and unequal linguistic practices. In this context, local languages are reduced to cultural symbols without strategic communicative function, demonstrating how economic power—mediated through tourism—drives the internalization of monolingual ideologies that prioritize dominant languages and erode the social position of local linguistic systems.

In terms of its functional contribution, this study provides significant insights into the relationship between tourism and the dynamics of local language shift in Indonesia. Empirically, it demonstrates how tourism interactions—through service communication patterns, tourist heterogeneity, and industry norms—create systematic linguistic pressure on local languages. It also offers a comprehensive cross-regional mapping of four major tourism destinations—Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten—an approach rarely found in Indonesian sociolinguistic research, thereby providing richer comparative perspectives on variations in local language vitality. The findings further confirm that tourism’s impact extends beyond economics and actively shapes the linguistic landscape and cultural expressions of local communities, particularly among younger generations. Moreover, the study highlights contrasting dynamics among traditional communities, urban tourism centers, and coastal tourism zones, providing new insights into how cultural strength, community structures, and external pressures interact to determine the sustainability of local languages.

Although this study shows that communities employ various strategies to maintain local languages, it also identifies clear dysfunctions that reflect language policy failure within tourism contexts. Language preservation efforts across the four regions appear fragmented and disconnected from the structure of the tourism industry, resulting in symbolic initiatives—such as ritual expressions, *krama* greetings, or language festivals—without restoring the communicative function of local languages in public space. This

aligns with global findings indicating that language policies often fail when they do not match actual social practices and economic realities (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2018; Mufwene, 2023). In urban and coastal tourism zones, the absence of structural intervention allows Indonesian and English to dominate, pushing local languages out of the service economy. This mirrors international patterns in which language preservation policies are ineffective when not integrated with strategic sectors such as education, tourism, and public services (Kaplan et al., 2011; Spolsky, 2019). Thus, tourism industry norms prioritizing Indonesian–English reinforce the dysfunction of local language dissemination in public spaces and reflect weaknesses in policy frameworks intended to protect linguistic sustainability.

Based on these identified dysfunctions ranging from fragmented language preservation efforts, dominant symbolic-based programs, lack of structural interventions in urban and coastal tourism areas, and the strong influence of industry norms that marginalize local languages a more strategic and comprehensive policy action plan is required. First, integrating local languages into tourism services is essential. Local governments and tourism actors can train tour guides to incorporate local languages into tour narratives and encourage hotels, restaurants, and tourism information centers to use local-language greetings to restore the communicative function of local languages in public settings. Second, culturally grounded tourism standards should be developed through policies requiring bilingual signage (local language–Indonesian) and mandatory inclusion of local-language segments in tourism festivals, ensuring that local languages function beyond symbolic display. Third, revitalizing intergenerational transmission requires linguistic parenting programs encouraging parents to maintain local languages at home, complemented by public campaigns promoting the cognitive benefits of regional–national bilingualism. Fourth, strengthening local language education involves shifting school-based curricula from theoretical instruction to conversation-based learning and creating immersion programs between schools and traditional communities. Fifth, community-based linguistic tourism models—such as sustained language practices in Baduy and Balinese *banjar*—can serve as prototypes for “tourism linguistic models” that position local languages as integral parts of the tourism experience rather than cultural decoration. These action plans are designed to address the dysfunctions identified while reinforcing the integration of local languages into the broader tourism ecosystem in a sustainable manner.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the vitality of local languages in the four major tourism destinations—Bali, Yogyakarta, West Java, and Banten faces significant pressure due to the intensity of tourism and shifting communication patterns in public spaces. The main findings show that local languages remain active within domestic settings, ritual practices, and traditional communities, yet they have shifted toward passive use, especially among younger generations who prefer Indonesian and English in everyday interactions. In high-tourism zones such as Kuta–Seminyak, Malioboro, Lembang–Pangandaran, and Anyer–Tanjung Lesung, local languages have entered an endangered stage because their public communicative functions have been replaced by national and global languages. Furthermore, weakened intergenerational transmission reinforces the decline of local languages, transforming them from active communicative tools into cultural symbols with limited functional relevance.

In terms of scholarly contribution, this study provides new insights into the relationship between tourism and language shift in Indonesia through a cross-regional comparative approach. Unlike previous research that typically separates studies on language shift, tourism, and cultural preservation, this study integrates all three dimensions into a single analytical framework that reveals both shared patterns and localized variations. Empirically, the study produces a systematic mapping of local language vitality

(active–passive–endangered) and identifies structural (tourism service norms), social (youth linguistic preferences), and communicative (tourist heterogeneity) drivers of language shift. The study also highlights that community-based preservation strategies such as *banjar* institutions in Bali, cultural villages in Yogyakarta, rural Sundanese communities in West Java, and the Baduy community in Banten constitute important cultural assets but remain insufficiently integrated into tourism development. As such, this study offers a conceptual contribution by advancing a framework for understanding tourism-driven language shift in Indonesia’s multilingual context.

Nevertheless, this research has several limitations. First, it does not quantitatively measure intergenerational decline in local language competence; thus, the analysis relies primarily on qualitative indications from observations and interviews. Future studies could incorporate language proficiency assessments or sociolinguistic surveys to provide more detailed statistical insights. Second, the study is limited to four tourism regions and does not include other contexts, such as border regions, industrial zones, or emerging tourism villages, which may demonstrate different linguistic dynamics. Third, this research does not assess the long-term effectiveness of various preservation strategies. Subsequent studies would benefit from longitudinal approaches to examine how community, school-based, and tourism-sector interventions influence language vitality over time. Despite these limitations, this study provides a strong empirical and conceptual foundation for understanding language shift in tourism destinations and serves as an important basis for developing more comprehensive and context-sensitive local language preservation policies.

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