

The Role of Javanese as a Mother Tongue among Indonesian Learners of German

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ABSTRACT:

In the fourth semester, students of the German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Surabaya are required to master the German language at a level equivalent to B1. To be considered at this level, students must demonstrate proficiency across several language skills: Hören (listening), Lesen und Wortschatz (reading and vocabulary), Schreiben (writing), and Sprechen (speaking). To achieve this, students are equipped not only with linguistic courses but also with pedagogical ones. Furthermore, in alignment with the program's learning outcomes, students are taught speaking skills through the freier Vortrag course. In this course, they learn to present various topics in German, both formally and informally, enabling them to explain different topics and situations effectively. However, during oral presentations, some students were observed to use Javanese words and sentences. This issue is particularly worth to examine further because no research has specifically explored the influence of Javanese as a mother tongue among learners of German to date, especially regarding students' speaking skills. Javanese was chosen as the focus of this study because the majority of students in the German Language Education Study Program at State University of Surabaya are native Javanese speakers and frequently use the language during German speaking classes. Therefore, an in-depth analysis is necessary to understand the influence of Javanese as a mother language among students learning German as a foreign language. Moreover, this study serves as an effort to support the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 4 on Quality Education, through a multilingual approach that also contributes to preserving cultural and linguistic diversity. The researcher analyzed data obtained from observations, questionnaires, and interviews.

Keywords: German language learners, Deutsch als Fremdsprache, speaking skills, mother tongue, Javanese

INTRODUCTION

German as a foreign language, or Deutsch als Fremdsprache (DaF), requires learners to master four language skills: listening (Hören), speaking (Sprechen), reading (Lesen), and writing (Schreiben). These four skills are also supported by the mastery of vocabulary (Wortschatz) and grammar (Grammatik). According to the European Union's Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFR), there are six proficiency levels in German: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2 (Europe, 2020). To improve these four skills, learners of German, particularly university students are trained to use their language abilities communicatively in everyday contexts. Fatina (2022) notes that in learning German, students can improve their skills by using softwares available for smartphones or laptops. Therefore, learners of German as a foreign language are expected to speak the language actively, such as asking questions, answering, and responding appropriately in various situations. For remote learning, interaction can be facilitated through video conferencing platforms, which enable learners to engage in communicative learning and maintain interaction with instructors.

Speaking in German is a productive skill that requires the ability to produce words and sentences with accurate structure and grammar in a short amount of time compared to other language skills. This skill is often emphasized in language curriculum development, from a constructivist perspective, since learners' communicative actions are regarded as the foundation and primary focus of language competence. This highlights the importance of

developing speaking competence in German (Ardiyani & Rofi'ah, 2021; Reichertz, 2017).

The mother tongue plays a crucial role in the process of foreign language learning, shaping students' approaches and competencies. This is due to differences in grammar, vocabulary, and cultural context between the mother tongue and the foreign language. Difficulties in speaking a foreign language may arise from the complexity of the target language's grammar. In such cases, students tend to rely on their mother tongue when facing communication difficulties (Denizer, 2017; Gulyamova, 2024). In line with this, the mother tongue significantly influences the development of learners' proficiency and learning strategies because of the structural and cultural contrasts between the two languages. The first language (L1) can interfere with second-language acquisition, as learners may consciously or unconsciously transfer grammatical structures and other linguistic elements from their L1 when producing the second language (L2) (Nurhadi & Roekhan, 1990).

Based on observations, students in the German Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Surabaya use diverse mother tongues, which are Javanese and Bahasa Indonesia. Students from East Java tend to use Javanese in their daily lives, while those from outside the region more frequently use Indonesian. During presentations, students often mix their explanations in German with Javanese, indicating the influence of their mother tongue on their speaking skills. This phenomenon is worth further investigation, as there has been limited research on the influence of Javanese as a mother tongue on learning German, particularly in speaking skills. Such a study is important because it provides insight into how the mother

tongue, such as Javanese, plays a role in the process of foreign language learning and how linguistic interference can affect students' linguistic competence. Moreover, this research aligns with efforts to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), through a multilingual approach that also promotes the preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity, specifically SDG 11.4 (Anggraini & Nugraheni, 2024; Ratnasari & Nugraheni, 2024; Safitri et al., 2022).

In line with this, the use of the mother tongue is still commonly found in classroom interactions in foreign language learning, especially in Southeast Asian countries, including Indonesia (Tupas, 2015). This phenomenon is also observed in the process of learning German speaking skills. Based on the researchers' observations, students use their mother tongues (i.e., Javanese and Bahasa Indonesia). This occurs because Javanese-speaking students who are native speakers and reside in East Java, naturally use Javanese in their daily lives, while students whose mother tongue is Bahasa Indonesia typically come from outside East Java. During presentations, students frequently mix their explanations in German with Javanese. This issue is particularly worth examining further students because no research has specifically explored the influence of Javanese as a mother tongue among learners of German to date, especially regarding students' speaking skills. Javanese was chosen as the focus of this study because the majority of students in the German Language Education Study Program at the State University of Surabaya are native Javanese speakers and frequently use the language during German speaking classes.

METHODS

This study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, commonly referred to as mixed methods, using an explanatory design. This approach and design were chosen because the data were collected through questionnaires, observations, and interviews. The first step in the data collection process involved a qualitative approach through classroom observation. This was conducted to identify Javanese words,

sentences, and utterances used by students while presenting topics in German. Quantitative data were then collected through questionnaires and analyzed using SPSS 22, which was chosen to determine the influence of Javanese as a mother tongue on learners of German. Subsequently, interviews were conducted to identify the factors influencing the use of Javanese in freier Vortrag classes. The interview results were analyzed qualitatively to identify these influencing factors (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2012; Larson-Hall, 2016).

The population of this study consisted of students enrolled in the German Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Surabaya. This population was chosen because the respondents were learners of German as a foreign language. The sampling technique used was purposive random sampling, which allowed for random selection in accordance with the research design (Fraenkel et al., 2012). The sample specifically included learners of German as a foreign language whose mother tongue is Javanese and who were taking the freier Vortrag course.

The data collection techniques used in this study consisted of observation, a questionnaire, and interview. The observation was conducted to identify Javanese words, sentences, and utterances used by students while presenting topics in German during class sessions. In this study, the researcher selected students for interviews based on those who were observed using Javanese during the freier Vortrag course, resulting in a total of 26 participants. The findings should be interpreted cautiously because the sample size was limited to one cohort.

RESULTS

This section discusses the findings from the data analysis conducted in the German Language Education Study Program. The discussion covers: (a) the use of Javanese as a mother tongue when speaking German, (b) students' perceptions of speaking German in the freier Vortrag course, and (c) the results of validity testing, classical assumption testing, reliability analysis, and regression analysis.

3.1. The Use of Javanese as a Mother Tongue When Speaking German

Students whose mother tongue is Javanese were found to use Javanese during freier Vortrag sessions still. To identify the use of Javanese as a

mother tongue, observations were carried out throughout the freier Vortrag course. The findings revealed several Javanese words, sentences, and utterances that were frequently spoken by students, as listed below.

Table 1. Javanese words, sentences, and utterances that were frequently spoken by students

Number	Javanese Words, Sentences, and Utterances	Respondent Code
1	Aduh! Ya apa iki?	R9
2	He! Ya apa rek iki ngerjaknone?	R11
3	Apa rek? Gak krungu?	R13
4	Lho, gak ngono. Ngene lho..	R14
5	Ya apa iki carane?	R15
6	Iyo	R16
7	Hah? Apa?	R17
8	He! Iki maksude apa?	R19
9	Gak ngerti aku.	R21
10	Aku sing endi?	R25

From the observation table containing Javanese words, sentences, and utterances frequently spoken by students, it can be seen that students used Javanese during the freier Vortrag course mainly to communicate with peers for discussion, asking questions, and explaining practice exercises or assignments given by the lecturer.

However, during individual final presentations, two students were still found to have unconsciously spoken in Javanese. The following section presents examples of Javanese words, sentences, and utterances produced by the students.

Table 2. Javanese words, sentences, and utterances produced by the students unconsciously

No.	Javanese Words, Sentences, and Utterances	Respondent Code
1	Duh, apa ya. Lali.	R9
2	Eeh!	R26

From the table above, it is evident that students unconsciously used Javanese expressions. Participant R9 spoke in Javanese as a self-directed remark because they forgot to continue explaining the next sentence. Participant R26 used a Javanese utterance because they were still thinking of the appropriate vocabulary related to the topic being presented. In line with the previous findings, interview responses revealed that students often used Javanese when discussing or asking questions with their peers.

During the freier Vortrag course, students are required to speak German in class. Through this process, they are expected to develop fluency in

German at a level equivalent to B1. However, regarding students' perceptions of speaking German in this course, the findings show that many students still face difficulties when speaking German. Based on the interview results, several respondents reported experiencing difficulties in speaking German during freier Vortrag sessions. These included respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21. Respondents 5, 9, 10, and 25 did not provide further explanation regarding their speaking difficulties. Respondents 7 and 17 stated that they did not face any particular difficulties in speaking German, while respondent 23 mentioned not experiencing any difficulties during the freier

Vortrag course. Respondent 24 indicated that speaking German in class was “not too difficult.” In summary, the findings show that 22 respondents experienced difficulties speaking German during Freier Vortrag, 2 respondents did not specify whether it was difficult or easy, 1 respondent stated no difficulty, and 1 respondent reported that speaking German in class was not too difficult.

From the interview excerpts above, it can be seen that students used Javanese during the freier Vortrag course when interacting with their peers. The ten examples provided by the students were related to discussions within the freier Vortrag class, while two examples referred to topics outside the course context. The interviews also revealed instances of students mixing Indonesian with Javanese in their conversations.

Based on the words and sentences produced during freier Vortrag sessions, the use of Javanese showed no sense of hesitation, as the utterances were directed toward peers rather than the lecturer. Students spontaneously spoke in Javanese while communicating in German during class. In addition, several students mentioned that they resorted to Javanese because they were unable to recall the appropriate German expressions at that moment and were accustomed to speaking Javanese with their classmates.

3.2 Students' Perceptions of Speaking German in the Freier Vortrag Course

During the freier Vortrag course, students are required to speak German in class. Through this process, they are expected to develop fluency in German at a level equivalent to B1. However, regarding students' perceptions of speaking German in this course, the findings show that many students still face difficulties when speaking German.

In line with the previous findings, interview responses revealed that students often used Javanese when discussing or asking questions with their peers. The following excerpts illustrate students' statements and examples of Javanese words, sentences, and utterances they frequently used:

(1) During the discussion, sometimes it's like... in B1 Netzwerk, there might be a story like that when discussing it, sometimes the word *Reisen* is mixed with Javanese words like 'mlaku'. (R2)

(2) I think so, but it seems like... suddenly it's like... we're discussing in class, then suddenly *kayak... apa ya?* Like that. (R5)

(3) Usually when we discuss something, we also need a situation where we really have to be in sync, so maybe words that we usually say to friends slip in, like for example 'opo sih iku catetane' (what is that note?), in Javanese. When we are discussing something, when we don't understand and we ask spontaneously, 'iku jawabane sing bener yang mana' (which is the correct answer?). Actually, that language is a mixture of Indonesian and Javanese. (R7)

(4) For example, like when you want to ask a peer a question but you don't know how, like “kon ate nandi”. When discussing, “iki piye, selanjute itu gimana.” (R9)

(5) On the topic, usually during presentations, when explaining about... if, for example, my friends don't understand, “jadi begini rek...” so that we can explain, “wes pokoke gini.” (R10)

(6) Like this... “wingi ana PR apa?” Another example is like, “mari pelajaran Freier Vortrag awakdewe nek kantin ta? Nengdi?” like that. We have discussed it before, during group discussions, asking questions like, “Aku bagian ngerjakno opo rek?” (R13)

(7) Most often, personal pronouns, such as *koen*, *aku*, *pean*. (R14)

(8) Okay. “Eh iki endi ya? tugase sing endi?” like that, Ma'am. (R15)

(9) Maybe if, for example, I'm nervous about going up front with my friend, ma'am. But I immediately correct myself. For example, if I say... I should say “ja,” but I slip and say “iya” instead, ma'am. (R16)

(10) I usually use the word “what” a lot, like “apa” is used very often, like “apa, iyo” when I should say “iya”. (R17)

From the interview excerpts above, it can be seen that students used Javanese during the freier Vortrag course when interacting with their peers. The ten examples provided by the students were related to discussions within the freier Vortrag class, while two examples referred to topics outside the course context. The interviews also revealed instances of students mixing Indonesian with Javanese in their conversations.

Based on the interview results, several respondents reported experiencing difficulties in speaking German during freier Vortrag sessions. These included respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, and 21. Respondents 5, 9, 10, and 25 did not provide further explanation regarding their speaking difficulties. Respondents 7 and 17 stated that they did not face any particular difficulties in speaking German, while respondent 23 mentioned not experiencing any difficulties during the freier Vortrag course. Respondent 24 indicated that speaking German in class was “not too difficult”.

In summary, the findings show that 22 respondents experienced difficulties speaking German during Freier Vortrag, 2 respondents did not specify whether it was difficult or easy, 1 respondent stated no difficulty, and 1 respondent reported that speaking German in class was not too difficult.

3.3. Validity, Classical Assumption, Reliability, and Regression Analysis Results

To determine the results of the validity test, classical assumption test, reliability test, and regression analysis, the data were analyzed using SPSS 22. The four results are presented as follows.

3.3.1 Validity Test

The validity test was conducted to determine whether the items in the research instrument accurately measured the intended variables. In this study, the validity test was applied to items related to the influence of Javanese as a mother tongue on German language learning. The validity testing used the Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique, which compares the calculated correlation coefficient (r -count) with the critical value from the correlation table (r -table) at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. A question item is considered valid if the r -count value is greater than the r -table value (r -count > r -table), indicating a significant correlation between the item and the total score. The results of the validity test for all items are presented in a table to show which items were deemed valid and therefore suitable for inclusion in the data analysis of this study.

Table 3. The Result of the Validity Test

Variable	Question Item	r-count	r-table	Remarks
Javanese as Mother Tongue	Item 1	0,890	0,380	Valid
	Item 2	0,743		
	Item 3	0,887		
	Item 7	0,785		
	Item 11	0,841		
	Item 13	0,708		
	Item 14	0,850		
	Item 15	0,763		
	Item 17	0,868		
	Item 18	0,717		

German Speaking Skills	Item 19	0,804	0,380	Valid
	Item 20	0,782		
	Item 21	0,889		
	Item 22	0,905		
	Item 4	0,870		
	Item 5	0,916		
	Item 6	0,835		
	Item 8	0,732		
	Item 9	0,809		
	Item 10	0,731		
	Item 12	0,801		
	Item 16	0,799		
	Item 23	0,892		
	Item 24	0,606		
	Item 25	0,951		

Based on the validity test results using the Pearson Product Moment correlation and comparing the calculated r-count value with the r-table value of 0.380 at a 5% significance level, all items across both variables were found to be valid. For the variable Javanese as a Mother Tongue, all fourteen items (Items 1, 2, 3, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22) had r-count values ranging from 0.708 to 0.905, all exceeding the r-table threshold. Similarly, for the variable German Speaking Skills, all eleven items (Items 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, 23, 24, and 25) showed r-count values between 0.606 and 0.951, also greater than the r-table value. These results indicate that all questionnaire items in this study

possess good validity and are suitable for further analysis.

3.3.2 Reliability Test

The reliability test was conducted to measure the consistency and stability of the research instrument when used repeatedly. In this study, reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. An instrument is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.60. The higher the alpha value, the greater the internal consistency of the items within a variable. The following section presents the results of the reliability test for each variable included in this study.

Table 3. The Result of the Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Comparative Value	Remarks
Javanese as Mother Tongue	0,961	0,60	Reliable
German Speaking Skills	0,947	0,60	Reliable

Based on the reliability test results, all variables in this study showed Cronbach's Alpha values

above 0.60, indicating that the instruments used had a very high level of internal consistency. The

variable Javanese as a Mother Tongue obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.961, while the variable German Speaking Skills had a value of 0.947. Since both values are far above the minimum threshold of 0.60, all items in each variable were declared reliable and suitable for further analysis in this study.

3.3.3 Classical Assumption Test (Analysis Prerequisites)

The normality test aims to determine whether the residuals in the regression model are normally distributed. Residual normality is one of the classical assumptions that must be met in

regression analysis. If the residuals are not normally distributed, the conclusions drawn from the model may be inaccurate. In this study, the normality test was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) method. The decision criterion for this test is based on the significance value (Asymp. Sig). If the Asymp. Sig value is greater than 0.05, the residuals are considered normally distributed. Conversely, if the Asymp. Sig value is less than 0.05, the residuals are considered not normally distributed. The following section presents the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) normality test conducted in this study.

Table 4. The Result of the Classical Assumption Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		27
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	2.83376393
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.124
	Positive	.124
	Negative	-.075
Test Statistic		.124
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}

Based on the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.200. Since this significance value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), it can be concluded that the data are normally distributed. This means that the distribution of data across the tested variables meets the normality assumption and is suitable for further parametric statistical analysis.

3.3.4 Linearity Test

The linearity test was conducted to determine whether there is a linear relationship

between the two variables, which are Javanese as a Mother Tongue and German Speaking Skills. The decision criterion for the linearity test is as follows: if the probability (significance) value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), the relationship between the two variables is considered linear; conversely, if the significance value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), the relationship is considered nonlinear. The following section presents the results of the linearity test conducted in this study.

Table 5. The Result of the Linearity Test

	Sig.	Keterangan
Deviation from Linearity	0,861	Linier

Based on the results of the linearity test, the Deviation from Linearity significance value was 0.861. Since this value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), it can be concluded that the relationship between the two variables is linear. This indicates that there is no significant deviation from the linear pattern, and therefore, the data meet the linearity assumption required for linear regression analysis.

3.3.5 Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test was conducted to determine whether there was an inequality in the variance of residuals across observations in the regression model.

Table 6. The Result of the Heteroscedasticity Test

Variable	Sig.	Remarks
Javanese as Mother Tongue	0,227	Homoscedasticity

Based on the results of the Glejser test, the significance (Sig.) value for the variable Javanese as a Mother Tongue was 0.227. Since this value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), it can be concluded that there is no indication of heteroscedasticity. Therefore, the data meet the homoscedasticity assumption, indicating that the residuals are evenly distributed and the regression model is suitable for use.

3.3.6 Regression Analysis

The regression analysis in this study aimed to determine the extent to which the variable Javanese as a Mother Tongue influences the variable German Speaking Skills. A simple linear regression approach was used, as the model involved only one independent variable and one

Heteroscedasticity can affect the validity of statistical tests because it leads to inefficient estimations. In this study, the Glejser test was used to detect heteroscedasticity.

In the Glejser test, the absolute residual values are regressed against the independent variable. The decision criterion is based on the significance (Sig.) value: if Sig. > 0.05 , it can be concluded that no heteroscedasticity is present; conversely, if Sig. < 0.05 , it indicates the presence of heteroscedasticity. The following section presents the results of the Glejser heteroscedasticity test conducted in this study.

dependent variable. This analysis was conducted to model the influence between the two variables while examining both the direction and strength of the relationship. Before performing the regression analysis, a series of classical assumption tests were carried out, including normality, linearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. The results showed that the residuals were normally distributed, the relationship between Javanese as a Mother Tongue and German Speaking Skills was linear, and there were no signs of heteroscedasticity. Thus, the regression model used in this study met all the basic assumptions required for linear regression analysis. The following section presents the results of the simple linear regression analysis conducted in this research.

Table 7. The Result of the Regression Analysis

Variabel	Regression Coefficiency	Std. error	t-value	p-value
Intercept	3,354	4,514	0,743	0,464
Javanese as Mother Tongue	0,609	0,082	7,445	0,000
R-Square	0,689			

Based on the results of the linear regression analysis presented in the table, the regression equation illustrating the influence of Javanese as a Mother Tongue on German Speaking Skills is as follows:

$$y = 3,354 + 0,609x + e$$

Based on the linear regression equation, the constant (intercept) value was 3.354, indicating that if the variable Javanese as a Mother Tongue is equal to zero, the predicted baseline value of the German Speaking Skills variable would be 3.354. The regression coefficient of 0.609 suggests that for every one-point increase in the Javanese as a Mother Tongue variable, the German Speaking Skills variable increases by 0.609 points. This indicates a positive relationship between the two variables: students who reported stronger reliance on Javanese also tended to report better German speaking performance.

The t-test was used to determine whether the independent variable had a significant individual effect on the dependent variable. The analysis showed that the variable Javanese as a Mother Tongue had a t-value of 7.445 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is smaller than 0.05, this finding indicates that Javanese as a Mother Tongue has a statistically significant effect on German Speaking Skills.

The coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to assess how much the independent variable explains the variance in the dependent variable. The analysis yielded an R^2 value of 0.689, meaning that Javanese as a Mother Tongue explains 68.9% of the variation in German Speaking Skills. In other words, the regression model demonstrates a strong explanatory power, though 31.1% of the variation is influenced by other factors not included in this study.

From these findings, it can be concluded that Javanese as a Mother Tongue influences German-speaking skills. This influence is positive, meaning that the use of Javanese as a mother tongue can support the acquisition of German as a foreign language, particularly in the development of speaking proficiency.

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings discussed in the previous section, this part elaborates on the Javanese words and sentences that appeared when students presented topics in German, as well as

the factors influencing the use of Javanese during speaking-skill learning activities. The following section describes the Javanese words and sentences that emerged during students' freier Vortrag presentations and the factors that influenced their use.

4.1 Javanese Words and Sentences Appearing During the Freier Vortrag Course

Based on the research results presented in the previous section, it was found that students continued to use Javanese when presenting their German-language assignments in the freier Vortrag course. The Javanese used belonged to the ngoko register. According to Setyawan et al., (2024) Basa Jawa ragam ngoko lugu is the variety of Javanese most commonly used by native Javanese speakers. From the interview excerpts discussed in the results chapter, it can be seen that students unconsciously used Javanese as their mother tongue when interacting with peers. Javanese-speaking students spontaneously uttered Javanese words and sentences during freier Vortrag sessions. The Javanese expressions used by the students did not convey a sense of formality or restraint (ewuh pakewuh). This may be because they were accustomed to speaking Javanese in daily interactions with classmates. Moreover, the mother tongue can help students express ideas and understand classroom content more effectively (Cabansag, 2016).

In line, Denizer (2017) argues that grammatical difficulties experienced by foreign language learners often affect their speaking skills. In this context, the mother tongue also plays an important role. For example, when speaking a foreign language such as German, students still tend to use their mother tongue, in this case Javanese, when asked to speak in German. Denizer (2017) further notes that the greatest impact of mother tongue interference can be observed in speaking skills as a linguistic ability and in grammar as a language domain. Beyond its effect on second language learning, this interference also influences learners' performance, often leading to errors, particularly during unprepared speech or when translating

messages from the mother tongue into the target language. Learners may therefore struggle with pronunciation, sentence structure, and the use of articles.

Differences in collocation between German and Javanese can also make it difficult for students to speak German fluently. As mentioned by several students during interviews, when they found it difficult to explain something in German, they would spontaneously switch to Javanese. In addition, students encountered challenges in understanding German grammar, especially when applying grammatical knowledge to speaking tasks. Consequently, in terms of information processing, students were still operating under controlled processing, which led them to spontaneously use Javanese (i.e. their mother tongue) as a natural response (Fatina et al., 2021).

In relation to information processing in foreign language learning, Keck & Kim (2014) explain that when students learn a new language, their cognitive resources for linguistic ability are limited. As a result, they must devote considerable attention to recalling and selecting the appropriate words and phrases to communicate meaning. However, this level of effort is unnecessary when speaking in the mother tongue, since information processing occurs automatically. This happens because, from early childhood, students have been immersed in an environment where Javanese is used, allowing their linguistic system to naturally form grammatical patterns based on their mother tongue (Saville-Troike, 2006:33).

According to Keck & Kim (2014), foreign language learners possess a different kind of competence from native speakers because their language competence is shaped by two interacting systems: the language already mastered and the language being learned. This dual influence results in a unique form of multicompetence, which shares similarities with, yet differs from, native-speaker competence. Learners of a foreign language may approach near-native proficiency as their developing

multicompetence grows toward a higher level of linguistic ability.

From these perspectives, it can be seen that students, as foreign language learners, can achieve a relatively high level of proficiency. To facilitate peer understanding during communication, they often insert Javanese words, phrases, or sentences. Based on the regression analysis results discussed earlier, Javanese as a Mother Tongue was found to influence German Speaking Skills positively. This positive influence suggests that Javanese can assist in mastering German as a foreign language, particularly in speaking skills.

Kamariddinovna (2024) further notes that foreign language communicative competence refers to proficiency that encompasses linguistic, phonological, and sociocultural knowledge, skills, and abilities, enabling learners to adapt their speech behavior across various communicative contexts, such as everyday interactions, academic, scientific, business, political, and sociopolitical settings. This competence includes linguistic competence, which involves grammatical and syntactic formation according to language rules, as well as speaking competence. Educational competence plays a crucial role in acquiring linguistic and communicative competence, promoting independent language learning, and developing high-quality foreign language communication skills. Thus, it can be concluded that students still used Javanese when presenting their German-language assignments in the *freier Vortrag* course. The variety of Javanese used was *basa Jawa ngoko*. The Javanese spoken by the students did not reflect any sense of formality or restraint (*ewuh pakewuh*). This situation often led learners to make errors, particularly during unprepared speech or when translating messages from their mother tongue into the target language. Moreover, students experienced difficulties with pronunciation, sentence structure, and the use of articles. These challenges arose because Javanese had been the language used in their environment since childhood, and the differences in collocation between German and Javanese

caused their language processing to naturally follow mother tongue grammatical patterns.

4.2 Factors Influencing the Use of Javanese in Students' German Speaking Skills Learning

Based on the research findings discussed in the previous section, several factors were identified as influencing the use of Javanese in students' learning of German speaking skills. These factors can be categorized into cultural, affective, and cognitive backgrounds.

4.2.1 Cultural Background

From a cultural background perspective, it can be identified that the students involved in this study were of Javanese ethnicity. They regularly used Javanese in daily communication and lived in the city of Surabaya, which is predominantly populated by Javanese communities. This is because Surabaya is located in East Java (Prayitno & Basundoro, 2015). According to Khimmataliev et al., (2025) language is closely linked to identity and learner development. Language teaching practices can reflect cultural values and incorporate innovations that promote inclusivity, participation, and early literacy. Such practices help shape learners' cultural identity through the use of Javanese as their mother tongue.

The findings of this study reveal that students who have acquired and used Javanese as their mother tongue and daily language tend to spontaneously use Javanese when explaining or asking questions to their peers during freier Vortrag sessions. This demonstrates that the use of the mother tongue in foreign language learning supports SDG 4 (Quality Education), which emphasizes lifelong learning opportunities. Through this process, students engage in continuous learning of both their mother tongue and the German language, applying them in everyday contexts (English & Carlsen, 2019).

Furthermore, Ahmini & Benkhallouq (2025) suggest that intercultural pedagogical practices can help reduce educational disparities by providing equal opportunities for all students, regardless of cultural background, to achieve academic success and personal development.

This aligns with the regression analysis results in this study, which indicate that Javanese as a Mother Tongue has a positive influence on students' German speaking skills.

According to Cakir (2006), cultural awareness among students can help them develop critical thinking skills. This is evident in the words, phrases, and sentences students use when communicating with peers during the freier Vortrag course. The complexity of linguistic concepts needs to be properly defined and structured; likewise, the principles of inclusivity, equality, and sustainability must be explored in depth to achieve the goal of quality education. Therefore, enhancing linguistic awareness; both in Javanese and in German, is essential for promoting sustainable educational development (Rada, 2022).

Based on the above statements, it can be concluded that Javanese as a Mother Tongue has a positive influence on German speaking skills. The use of Javanese in the freier Vortrag course stems from its role as the language of daily interaction and from the students' residence in Surabaya, a city largely dominated by Javanese ethnicity. The incorporation of the mother tongue into German language learning supports SDG 4 (Quality Education), emphasizing lifelong learning that allows students to continually develop both their mother tongue and German, applying them meaningfully in daily life to foster sustainable educational growth.

4.2.2 Affective Factors

From an affective perspective, students who spontaneously used Javanese when giving explanations or asking questions to their peers during the freier Vortrag course demonstrated a high affective filter. As shown in the research findings, particularly in the interview data, students expressed that they found it difficult to explain ideas in German and therefore felt more comfortable using Javanese. This aligns with Krashen's (1982: 31) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which states that affective variables such as anxiety, self-motivation, and low self-confidence can create an emotional barrier that prevents learners from optimally processing second or

foreign language input. When students have a high affective filter, their foreign language acquisition can be hindered. Consistent with this, students interviewed in the study reported continued difficulty in speaking German. Fatina et al., (2021) found that students often perceive German as a difficult language to learn, which can obstruct the intake of linguistic input provided by instructors. Such perceptions can trigger an affective filter, limiting language learning progress. Furthermore, the use of the mother tongue among students can indicate comprehension of what is being discussed with peers. This may occur because students experience difficulty constructing sentences or fear speaking in the target language (Kayaoğlu, 2012). According to Butzkamm (2003), students should not be afraid of making mistakes in language learning. The use of the mother tongue can, in fact, support learners in conveying messages communicatively and in developing their overall competence. In the freier Vortrag course, students are trained to speak German through paired dialogues, individual presentations, and interviews. Ahmed et al., (2024) explain that dialogue activities in Deutsch als Fremdsprache (DaF) help students practice interaction and communication effectively in German. Consequently, such practice allows students to become more accustomed to speaking German in everyday contexts. Thus, it can be concluded that students who spontaneously used Javanese when explaining or asking questions to their peers during the freier Vortrag course exhibited a high affective filter. This was mainly due to their perception that German is a difficult language to learn, which can hinder the intake of input provided by instructors. However, the mother tongue can actually help students express their messages more communicatively and foster the development of their German language competence. Therefore, students should not fear making mistakes during the learning process.

4.2.3 Cognitive Factors

From a cognitive perspective, the process of incorporating information into cognitive processing can be understood through

experiences of social interaction and corrective feedback, both from peers and instructors. This reciprocal interaction serves as a stimulus source in language learning (Saville-Troike, 2006:111). In cognitive processing, students who engage in dialogues, presentations, and interviews in German learn through the feedback and interactions they experience with classmates and lecturers. This information processing occurs through shared mechanisms of perception, memory, categorization, and generalization. The differences in processing arise from the learners' prior knowledge of language and linguistic structures, which shape their perception and understanding of the new language (Lightbrown & Spada, 2021:155). Furthermore, Manolopoulou-Sergi (2004) states that motivation emerges as an important predictor of individual variation in foreign language learning outcomes, alongside aptitude and learning style within cognitive processes. Learners' motivation can influence how they process German language input at the input, central processing, and output stages. In this study, Javanese functions as a cognitive resource that German language learners consciously or unconsciously use to help manage and organize linguistic input in order to produce speech as effectively as possible. The cultural features embedded in the use of Javanese can be utilized effectively in teaching German. Hence, foreign language mastery can be seen as a developmental process in which Javanese serves as a contributing factor that supports the acquisition of German (Yadav, 2014). With this in mind, speaking practice requires sequential processing in learning German as a foreign language. Each linguistic element and piece of information received and to be conveyed is labeled individually and then connected within a sentence structure, making speech essentially analytical. In this cognitive process, students first formulate their intended message in Javanese, their mother tongue, before expressing it in German. When they find it difficult to articulate their thoughts in German, they revert to expressing them in Javanese instead. At this point, the role of mother tongue (i.e., Javanese) influences students' cognitive processes in developing German speaking skills (Vygotsky,

1978:33). In line with that statement, Van et al., (2025) argues that the use of the mother tongue (L1) can support both students and lecturers when needed. From the explanations above, it can be concluded that the process of incorporating information into cognitive processing is shaped by experiences of social interaction and corrective feedback, both from peers and instructors. Students' learning motivation also affects how they process German language input at the input, central processing, and output stages. In this study, Javanese functions as a cognitive resource that German learners, consciously or unconsciously, use to help manage and organize German language input to speak as effectively as possible. Therefore, the role of Javanese as a Mother Tongue can significantly influence students' cognitive processes in the development of their German speaking skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings presented in the results section, it can be concluded that students still used Javanese when presenting their German-language assignments in the freier Vortrag course. The variety of Javanese used was basa Jawa ngoko. Javanese-speaking students spontaneously produced Javanese words and sentences during class. The Javanese expressions used did not reflect any sense of formality or restraint (*ewuh pakewuh*), as students were accustomed to speaking Javanese in daily interactions with their peers. This habit sometimes led learners to make errors, particularly during unprepared speech and while translating messages from their mother tongue into the target language. Additionally, students experienced difficulties with pronunciation, sentence structure, and article usage. These challenges stemmed from their early linguistic environment, where Javanese was the dominant language, as well as from differences in collocation between German and Javanese, which caused natural language processing to follow mother tongue grammatical patterns. From a cultural background perspective, the use of Javanese in the freier Vortrag course is attributed to students' daily use of the language

and their residence in Surabaya, a city largely populated by Javanese speakers. The use of the mother tongue in German language learning supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by fostering lifelong learning through the continued development of both the mother tongue and the foreign language. From an affective perspective, students who spontaneously used Javanese when explaining or asking questions to their peers during freier Vortrag displayed a high affective filter. This was influenced by their perception of German as a difficult language to learn, which could inhibit the intake of linguistic input. However, the mother tongue proved helpful in enabling students to express messages communicatively and develop their German language competence. Therefore, students should not fear making mistakes in the process of learning and speaking German. From a cognitive perspective, the process of incorporating information into cognitive processing is shaped by social interaction and corrective feedback from peers and instructors. These interactions support students' development in processing German language input at various stages (i.e. input, central processing, and output). Thus, the role of Javanese as a mother tongue significantly influences students' cognitive processes in developing their German speaking skills.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The study was conducted in compliance with the ethical principles outlined in the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki for research involving human participants. All participants were fully informed about the objectives of the study and provided their informed consent before participation.

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DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal

relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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