Margins, hubs, and peripheries in a decentralizing Indonesia

edited by

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Theorizing semiotic complexity: Contact registers and scalar shifters

Zane Goebel
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Introduction

Sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology have gone through several cycles of disciplinary boundary maintenance and boundary crossing since the publication of Gumperz’s and Hymes’ (1972) Directions in Sociolinguistics (DIS). As both a boundary forming and boundary crossing project, DIS brought disparate disciplines together to help us understand language in society. Since this work, there has been tremendous growth in most of the disciplines represented in DIS, helping to create and harden new and old boundaries. Along the way there have been a number of renewed boundary crossing efforts as well as many boundary blurring projects, as evidenced in work and synthesis offered by Rampton (1995b; 2006), Duranti (2009), and the collection in Bucholtz and Hall (2008). The study of semiotic complexity is another boundary blurring project that has started to become mainstream (Besnier 2009; Blommaert 2010, 2013, 2015; Blommaert and Rampton 2011; Goebel 2010; Heller 2011; Mertz and Parmentier 1985; Van der Aa and Blommaert 2015). We initially define semiotic complexity as the multiple connections between signs used in encounters (whether face-to-face or mass-mediated) and their relationships with other signs and social practices in other times and places. Following Blommaert (2015) we talk about these other times and places as ‘scales’ noting that in any encounter semiotic relations from multiple scales are also in play.

Understanding semiotic complexity has required multiple theoretical pieces to keep track of a lot of moving parts. Some of these pieces include: enregisterment (Agha 2007a; Silverstein 2003, 2005); chronotope (Agha 2007b; Bakhtin 1981; Blommaert 2015; Lempert and Perrino 2007); value (Blommaert 2010; Bourdieu 1991; Heller 2011; Heller and Duchêne 2012a); imitation (Bakhtin 1981; Lempert 2014; Silverstein and Urban 1996; Tannen 1989; Urban 2001); heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981; Blackledge and Creese 2014); superdiversity (Blommaert and Rampton 2011; Vertovec 2007); indexical selectivity (Blommaert 2013; Noy 2009; Scollon and Scollon 2003); and scale (Blommaert 2010, 2015; Wortham 2006).

What this introduction offers are two meta-constructs that subsume many of these previously established theoretical bits. These constructs are contact registers and scalar shifters. Drawing on Agha (2007), we can initially define contact registers as sign constellations – linguistic and non-linguistic – that emerge through sustained contact between previously established registers. With an intellectual debt to Silverstein (1976), we define scalar shifters as semiotic configurations used to identify scales of participant frameworks with respect to time, space and/or size. Scalar shifters provide a more precise understanding of how people semiotize social order and its relevance to immediate, contextual understanding (cf. Blommaert et al. 2015). Scalar shifters enable interactants and analysts to not only identify how and the degree to which speakers and hearers understand the meaning and function of forms, but also how this understanding is shaped by the wider ‘social order’ across time and space.
The rich data we present in the papers in this special issue, mined from multiple samples within the same national context and crucially across different scales of time and space within that context, enable us to see all these bits working together at the same time and to see patterns at yet another scale. At a time when we are increasingly aware of the blurred boundaries between languages and the socially constructed nature of named languages (N-languages), this book enables the reconceptualization of contact phenomena. In his discussant commentary of earlier versions of these papers, Agha points out that these papers also demonstrate how, as theoreticians, we can avoid a recurring analytical trap, namely the mistake of thinking that the terms used in discourse about complex semiotic phenomena – ‘global’, ‘local’, ‘centre’, ‘periphery’, ‘diversity’, being some current favourites – can themselves do any real analytical work. It is rather these very labels and their use that we analyse here. In addition, the research presented here contributes to sociolinguistic methodology by demonstrating how a comparative historicizing approach makes possible the identification of connections and tensions in the complexity we observe and analyse.

Our empirical focus will be multiple settings in Indonesia where the tension between semiotic sameness and difference is strikingly evident across registers and scales and where the facts of semiotic complexity appear in sharp relief thanks to recent political events that are (re)shaping discourses about centres, peripheries, hubs and margins. Scholars of the humanities and social sciences have, for a long time, been interested in the relationship between centralization and fragmentation and uniformity and diversity (Anderson 1972; Bakhtin 1981). Ben Anderson (1972: 20-21) commenting on power, political life, and history in Javanese aristocratic society notes:

... [T]he Javanese view of history was one of cosmological oscillation between periods of concentration of Power and periods of its diffusion. The typical historical sequence is concentration-diffusion-concentration-diffusion without any ultimate resting point. In each period of concentration new centres of Power (dynasties, rulers) are constituted and unity is recreated; in each period of diffusion, Power begins to ebb away from the centre, the reigning dynasty loses its claim to rule, and disorder appears – until the concentrating process begins again.

The papers in this special issue document a contemporary ebb of power away from previously established centres and the discursive strategies used by speakers to make sense of and capitalize on current fragmentations or to reestablish new centres of power, sometimes linked to those previously established centres and sometimes in opposition to them. By doing so, this special issue’s authors re-establish their own theoretical centre by unifying many disparate theories for conceptualizing language use and change in society.

In focusing on Indonesia, we acknowledge that the nation-state still plays a major role in the social life of its (potential) citizens and that a productive analytic standpoint for the study of language in social life is one that examines connections between language and social life at multiple scales (e.g. Besnier 2009, 2011; Blommaert 2010, 2013, 2015; Heller et al. 2015; Tsing 2005). While there is now a strong body of scholarship on language in contemporary Indonesia (e.g. Arps 2010; Cole 2010; Djenar 2008; Errington 2014; Foulcher et al. 2012; Goebel 2015; Manns 2014; Smith-Hefner 2009; Tamtomo 2012; Zentz 2012), we know relatively little about the inter-relationships between decentralization processes and language in Indonesia. Thus, another aim of this special issue is to fill this gap.

We are sensitive to the different levels of familiarity our readers will have with Indonesia and so before diving into the theoretical discussions that follow, we provide a rudimentary introduction to Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) and its history, which is expanded in the paper by Manns, Cole, and Goebel (this issue) and by all of our contributors as they take up Wallerstein’s (2004) general point about the importance of historicizing events. Indonesia is a relatively new nation, only obtaining independence from the Netherlands in 1949. It is an archipelago nation made up of over 17000 islands and is one of the most linguistically diverse places on the planet. Much of Indonesia’s nation-building efforts have revolved around building unity and managing diversity among a rapidly growing and mobile population. While highly centralized schooling, media, and language planning helped achieve unity, especially from 1966 onwards (Bjork 2005; Dardjowidjojo 1998; Kitley 2000), the
commodification of language in the media (Kitley 2000; Loven 2008; Sen and Hill 2000), regime change in 1998, and the large scale decentralization which began in 2001 all contributed to unprecedented complexity (Goebel 2015). For example, the political and fiscal decentralization of 2001 led to a democratization of the political process on a scale not seen before (Aspinall and Mietzner 2010), rapid territorial fragmentation (Aspinall 2013), ongoing inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts (Hedman 2008), increases in the value of ethnicity (Davidson and Henley 2007), and rapid urbanization that increased inter-ethnic contact (Goebel 2010, 2015).

In the remainder of this introduction we will draw together the work of scholars in this issue and elsewhere to develop our two meta-concepts of contact registers and scalar shifters. The concept of contact registers subsumes enregisterment, participation frameworks, value, imitation, and indexical selectivity, while the concept of scalar shifter subsumes ideas about shifters, timespace scalarity and chronotopes (e.g. Bakhtin 1981; Blommaert 2010, 2015; Herzfeld 1987; Silverstein 1976; Wallerstein 2001, 2004).

Enregisterment, participation frameworks, and value

Enregisterment is a historical process whereby particular semiotic features accrue social and cultural value for a particular population to form a semiotic register (Agha 2007a). Enregisterment occurs at different scales, ranging from two individuals engaged in conversation – that is, a one-to-one participation framework (Goffman 1981) – to a speaker and large audience; that is, a one-to-many participation framework (Agha 2007a). The meanings of semiotic forms used by the participants involved in these frameworks are negotiated (Vološinov 1973 [1929]), often via evaluative commentaries about the appropriateness or normativeness of a particular form. The meaning of signs that are interactionally ratified have not only gained referential meaning, in Silverstein’s (1976) sense, but they have also accrued social value and thus indexical meaning for the constellation of participants involved in the interaction. This social value is one of the indexical meanings that also accrues to the referential meaning.

This process can clearly be seen in the paper by Harr (this issue) who shows how a visiting politician’s use of local vocabulary for specifying location is evaluated as wrong by the elders in the audience. The politician corrects his mistake, thus ratifying the referential meaning of the term offered by these elders. In doing so, he adds indexical value to the term and event in which it is used by acknowledging the value of this term vis-à-vis other terms that were seen as inappropriate. Within this event – which following Agha (2007a) can be seen as an origo speech event (O) – other indexical meanings can accrue to the term, although this may be quite different for each participant (Tannen 1984). Following Agha (2007a) and Bakhtin (1981), some of the papers in this issue refer to this process by which a constellation of signs accrues value and meaning as an emergent semiotic register.

When participants from an origo speech event re-use signs from O in new settings (i.e. O + 1) the same process of enregisterment occurs, although from this point onwards a two-way relationship between signs and the emergent register of which they are part is possible. For example, the use of a sign from a register can invoke the register and/or the personas and settings associated with this register (Agha 2007a). We see this in the papers by Ewing, Djenar, and Cole (this issue) where the use of signs invokes particular enregistered identities, simultaneously enabling distinctions between personas linked to these registers. The outcome of this contact is an emergent semiotic register (Wortham 2006), or more precisely a ‘contact register’. We prefer the latter term because the former terms suggests an ongoing formation process, while the latter leaves open the possibility that the meanings that emerged in an encounter will be not be imitated or drawn upon in subsequent encounters.

Contact registers sit in tension with other registers that are outcomes of similar processes of enregisterment, though some may be the outcome of much larger participant constellations. The investigation and exemplification of various participation frameworks and the scales of these frameworks is a feature of the papers in this issue. For example, Ewing looks at face-to-face interactions within participation frameworks involving just two or three participants (a one-to-one/few
participation framework), while Harr looks at the speeches of political candidates to a group of local villagers, Donzelli examines political campaigns broadcast on the radio, and Zentz and Cole focus on street signage, language policy documents, commodities and their imagined audiences (all one-to-many participation frameworks).

The extent to which a contact register becomes more enduring and thus has more social value relates to the size and longevity of participation frameworks that re-use signs from the origo event, i.e. uptake (Cole and Pellicer 2012). For example, as found elsewhere in the world (Heller 2011), the implementation of school curriculum and representations of models of sign usage in the media were essential for the enregisterment of Indonesian and local languages in Indonesia (Goebel 2008, 2010, 2015). The indexical associations with Indonesian and local languages were quite different, however, with Indonesian becoming associated with modernity, development, education, knowledge, inter-ethnic communication, nationalism, economic advancement, employment opportunities, and urban-ness, while local languages became associated with tradition, co-ethnic communication, territory, and rural-ness. While both registers helped to form ‘heavy’ models of personhood (Blommaert, this issue), most resources were spent on processes that enregistered Indonesian, while few were spent on local languages or varieties of Indonesian (e.g. Bjork 2005; Goebel 2015; Kitley 2000). This inequality of support also helped to enregister a hierarchical relationship or an ‘order of indexicality’ (Blommaert 2010), where Indonesian had more social value than local languages.

Nation-building co-exists with and requires economic processes that can also help to (re)produce registers, while changing their social value and ultimately their semiotic make-up (Heller 2011; Heller et al. 2015; Heller and Duchêne 2012b; Hobsbawm 1992; Wallerstein 2004). Scholarship on language and the market, for example, has demonstrated that the search for profit via niche markets can increase the value of local and minority languages, while also making it hard for the state apparatus to regulate how languages are represented in certain social domains (e.g. the papers in Heller and Duchêne 2012a; Heller et al. 2014; Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2013). The papers by Djenar, Zentz, Goebel, and Cole (this issue) all provide an analysis of how this works in contemporary Indonesia. Djenar, for example, points to how teen lit fills a market niche inhabited by a rising middle-income teenage population with disposable income by using colloquial language in stories about middle-income teenage Indonesians along with colourful covers displaying these same teenagers.

While Heller’s (2011) work highlights the importance of political movements in the revaluation and reconfiguration of particular semiotic registers, the papers by Harr, Donzelli, and Morin (this issue) remind us of other types of profit-seeking. Their work re-invokes one of Bourdieu’s (1991) insights about the relationship between language, the market and profit by showing how political candidates interpret and re-use signs from registers that they are only marginally entitled to use to increase their own social value and potential success in gaining profit from an interaction, in this case political contests.

By paying explicit attention to the ways that enregisterment occurs in and across various participation frameworks such that the products of enregisterment change value, the papers in this issue model an approach to understanding semiotic complexity that synthesizes insights gained from prior work in these areas.

**Imitation and indexical selectivity**

Imitation is part of any process of enregisterment as demonstrated in many of the papers in this issue. Following Lempert’s (2014) comprehensive survey of work on replication, which we won’t try and imitate here, we use ‘imitation’ rather than ‘copy’ or ‘replication’ because it has the sense of signs from some prior context being recontextualized with other signs to form something novel. Imitation presupposes a semiotic register, but it is not a ‘replication as precise copy’ of that register. Typically, imitations have something old, helping to make the imitation recognizable, and something new, helping to make the imitation interesting or desirable (Urban 2001).

Drawing on Agha (2007a, 2011), Cole (this issue) points out that such combinations help produce effects that differ from effects produced by individual components. These effects include the
multiplication of potential audiences and consumers via indexical selectivity or addressivity (Blommaert 2013; Noy 2009; Scollon and Scollon 2003). Indexical selectivity refers to how competence to comprehend sign(s) determines who can interpret or read the intended meaning of sign constellations. As Cole, Zentz, Morin, and Donzelli (this issue) show, the combination of semiotic fragments associated with registers of ethnicity, locality, lifestyle, religiosity, global consumption, era, and so on are used to produce new sign configurations on advertisement billboards, political campaign billboards and radio broadcasts, clothing, and other commodities, while also modelling new forms of cultural diversity. Similar phenomena are observed in political speeches where vocabulary and signs of ‘good governance’, ‘tradition’ and ‘the past’ are combined in political speeches to create new messages (Donzelli, and Harr, this issue). These combinations have the potential of selecting or being read by a wider audience; that is, those who have competence to comprehend some of the signs, though typically not all.

In some cases, there are ‘regimes of imitation’; defined here as ‘politically sanctioned forms of imitation’. In his commentary about earlier versions of the papers presented in this issue, Kuipers (2015) points out that in the current decentralized period, forms of governance from the New Order period have been imitated at the local level; a point also made by the political scientist Hadiz (2010). During Soeharto’s New Order period there was a tendency to bring semiotic forms from the past into the future as a way of creating a sense of timeless-ness or ‘co-evalness’, and political stability. Donzelli (this issue) analyses this aspect of imitation using the case of material artefacts and monuments in the New Order period. This period is then contrasted with the uptake and imitation of decentralization discourses which imitate these earlier discourses by invoking tradition and ritual as a way of determining rights to territory, resources, and political power (Donzelli, and Harr this issue).

As part of multiple and complex processes of enregisterment, regimes of imitation do not go uncontested. Morin’s analysis of political campaign posters in Papua shows how linguistic signs from a register of Indonesian – indexically associated with the state, authority, purity, and development – are combined with fragments of Papuan Malay as a way of resisting these indexical associations. This is achieved through the use of territory and linguistic forms from the formula ‘linguistic form + territory + group = (ethnic)nation’. In this case, Papuan Malay was formerly denied a territory under the New Order and even during a large part of the decentralization period because its economic importance to Indonesia over- rode any possibility for an independent Papuan nation with its own territory, language and group (Kunipers 2015). Zentz (this issue) also shows how this contestation can be multi-scalar with signage in a rural Javanese city contesting local and central government rules about the need for signage that is purely in Indonesian, while also sitting in tension with broader decentralization movements in Java that encourage the use of more local languages (Kurniasih, this issue).

While the above contestations of imitation are often implicit, there are also much more explicit commentaries, which can be a result of unfamiliarity with the new semiotic configuration that is the outcome of imitation. In addition to providing us with evidence about how change is perceived, these commentaries provide us with clues that change is occurring (Blommaert 2013; Inoue 2006; Urban 2001). Forms of imitation that are part of youth practices have always attracted evaluative commentaries (e.g. Inoue 2006; Miller 2004), and as Blommaert (this issue) points out, youth practices are often the target of such commentaries because the new elements used in their imitations are different from normative adult practices and/or are drawn from outside the borders of the nation-state. Such combinations form new ‘light’ identities and contact registers, which apart from requiring more attention from researchers (Blommaert, this issue), can also become heavier and enregistered (Rampton 2011) and ultimately a place where those who inhabit this register evaluate those who imitate it. As a whole, the papers in this issue highlight the importance of focusing on the wheres, whys, whens, hows, and perhaps most importantly the whos, of imitation if we are to understand how indexical selectivity contributes to the emergence and evolution of contact registers and semiotic complexity.
Change, centralization-fragmentation, historicization, and comparison

In the essay ‘Discourse in the Novel’, Bakhtin (1981) emphasizes how forces of decentralization and centralization position the notion of a ‘unitary language’ in a circular relationship with a type of diversity that he refers to as ‘heteroglossia’. As a concept, heteroglossia refers to the multiple voices of a population of language users (Bakhtin 1981: 262-263) and to the variability that this affords in the interpretation of any word or utterance (Bakhtin 1981: 275-279). Movement from heteroglossia towards a unitary language can be observed when we look at dialogues between members of a heteroglossic population where negotiation over the meaning of words used in dialogue produce new situational meanings for these words (Bakhtin 1981: 279-282). In a sense, dialogue itself can lead to the enregisterment of unitary phenomena: in this case, a shared understanding about the meaning(s) of a set of words amongst those involved in a one-to-few participation framework (Goebel 2011, 2015, in press).

As we move from one-to-few to state authorized one-to-many participation frameworks, we often see differences in the way semiotic registers are ideologized. At the nation-state scale, semiotic registers are commonly regimented ideologically as separate languages with neat boundaries (e.g. Alvarez-Cáccamo 1998; Franceschini 1998; Gal 2012; Heller 2007; Swigart 1992). In such settings codeswitching, where it is authorized at all, is enregistered as movement from one neatly bounded unit to another. Typically when regimes of neatly bounded unitary languages are strongly enregistered, the discourses that enregister them aim to regiment language use as the use of pure unmixed languages (Blommaert et al. 2012). But as these regimes weaken and/or as market forces come into play, mixed, heteroglossic language practices gain social value (Goebel 2013, 2015). We can see examples of this in the new semiotic configurations found in the signage, shirts, and television programing discussed by Zentz, Cole, and Goebel (this issue).

Blommaert’s work (2010, 2013, 2015) also alerts us to the possibility that there are normally multiple instances of centralization and fragmentation occurring simultaneously at different scales, both in the sense of territory and participation framework. His work also expands Wallerstein’s point about the importance of history and connection, and Hymes’ (1974) and other scholars’ emphasis on the importance of comparison for understanding complex relationships (Tsing 2005). As elsewhere in the world, oscillation between centralization and fragmentation has been a constant feature of Indonesia and these oscillations have had a variety of relationships with local languages (Goebel 2015).

Morin (this issue) looks at the social value of Papuan Malay (PM) and describes how it was enregistered via missionary work and then through Dutch colonial schooling until Papua was incorporated into Indonesia in 1969. From this time onwards until only recently, PM as a language of the Papuan people was devalued because it was no longer taught in schools. PM sat in tension with an imposed and increasingly centralized register of Indonesian. After regime change in 1998, PM slowly gained social value in several domains, though importantly not in the school system. Unlike other areas of Indonesia where decentralization had encouraged the incorporation of local content including local languages in local school curriculum, Papua was still required to use Indonesian. As Kuipers (2015) points out, this is hardly surprising given that the Freeport mine in Papua provides roughly twenty-five percent of Indonesia’s GDP and thus any moves that would further embolden independence supporters weren’t encouraged.

Morin’s paper (this issue) and Kuipers’ (2015) commentary also strongly highlight the importance of historicizing these oscillations in order to understand current change, while also pointing to the need to focus on centralization and decentralization activities at different scales; in this case scale is both a matter of territorial size and the size of participation frameworks. Zentz (this issue) provides another example of scale and historicization through her account of language policy as it relates to street signage in an urban centre in rural Central Java. She points out that in 2009 one local government sought to have all street signs in Indonesian. This small-scale initiative sits in tension with larger scale phenomena. These include emerging provincial language policies that have encouraged the use of local languages in everyday life since 2003 (Moriyama 2012; Quinn 2012).
At a much larger scale, that of the nation-state, the national language policy encourages Indonesian in bureaucratic life and many other social domains. Language policy at the nation-state scale thus supports the local policy, but sits in tension with the provincial one, which itself is still emergent and contested as Kurniasih (this issue) points out. Kurniasih’s paper provides an account of how responsibility for school curriculum is re-contested in 2013 and partly threatens to re-centralize a curriculum that has been decentralizing since the mid-1980s (Bjork 2005; Kurniasih 2007; Sudarka Mertono 2014). Note that it is only through a comparative historicizing approach that we get to see the connections across cases and gain a sense of the tensions as well as the complexity that exists in a particular context. The papers in this issue explicitly embed their analyses in a perspective gained from tracing change across scales of time and space to demonstrate how doing so gives us a better lens through which to view semiotically complex phenomena.

Cultural and scalar shifters

Processes of centralization and enregisterment also create shifters. The concept of shifters developed by Silverstein (1976) has, among other things, helped us understand how the indexical qualities of place and person deixics enable a shift in participant roles in interaction. Taking up initial discussion by Agha (2015) and Kuipers (2015) about shifters, here we distinguish between two types of shifters, cultural and scalar. We start with cultural shifter, which has been implicitly developed by Herzfield (1987: 154-156) in his discussions of ethnic terms and group labels as they relate to delineating insiders and outsiders. Drawing on all of these previous discussions, we define cultural shifters as:

Signs used to organize units and unitizations of personhood in discourse to enable the identification of relevant participant frameworks with respect to group membership.

Knowledge of these signs or fragmented knowledge of them is crucial for being able to identify insiders and outsiders in interactional contexts. Understanding the semiotic make-up of cultural shifters enables both participants and analysts to understand who or what is indexing a cultural identity and how these identities are negotiated. For instance, in a conversation among friends about work, one participant who self-identifies as ‘Greek’ can shift everyone’s situated interactional identities from a prior interactionally agreed upon shared work identity to Greek and potentially ‘non-Greek’ and/or other individual national identities. In this example the label ‘Greek’ is used as a cultural shifter. But typically shifts are much subtler, achieved through the use of multiple signs associated with the relevant units (and unitizations) of personhood and accomplished over a series of speech situations (e.g. Bucholtz and Hall 2004; Goebel 2010; Rampton 1995a; Wortham 2006; Zimmerman 1998).

The papers in this collection are replete with many examples of the use of cultural shifters in contemporary Indonesia. Djenar (this issue), for example, shows how ‘ethnicity’ as a cultural shifter is not only imitated as part of a teen-lit text, but also imitated to invoke distinctions between insider and outsider, and moral and amoral models of ethnic personhood. Ewing (this issue) shows how cultural shifters used to organize ethnic categories work in face-to-face interaction as university students use different ethnic terms of reference to claim or distance themselves from ethnic group memberships. The papers by Manns and Musgrave and Goebel show how shifters associated with Javanese-ness are used to distinguish ethnic cores from ethnic peripheries.

As an analytic foci, cultural shifters are undoubtedly useful, but as Blommaert (2015) and Agha (2015) assert, it is essential to realize their limitations. Blommaert (2015) points out that conceptualizing chronotopes as personas that are analysable across the ‘traditional’ and ‘horizontal’ focus of sociolinguistics, leaves out the vertical dimensions of these chronotopes. Agha (2015) points out that the denotata of terms such as ‘ethnicity’, ‘global’, ‘local’, ‘youth’, ‘core’, and ‘periphery’ index chronotopic formulations that also have an intrinsic scale. Specific interlocutors use words like ‘local’ or ‘global’ in determinant ways intelligible to those specific interlocutors precisely because they share a
model for interpreting those signs within a given participation framework that relies on a shared scalar understanding of the denotational and indexical range of the term (Agha 2015).

Shared understanding of terms like ‘local’, ‘global’ and ‘youth’, and the delimitation of this understanding, is influenced by participants’ respective trajectories of socialization (Wortham 2006). If participants have grown up together in the same locale, went to the same school, been taught by the same teacher, consumed the same media, experienced the same social and political conditions, and so on, then they will have similar competence to comprehend and perform similar sign constellations; in Bourdieuan terms they will share a similar habitus. In contrast, for participants who were schooled in different schools, in a different era, and so on, then there will be less shared competence. We attempt to capture what Blommaert (2015) terms this ‘vertical’ axis of indexical meaning by proposing a second type of shifter – scalar shifter – which explicitly addresses ‘scale’ while subsuming the concept of cultural shifter. We define scalar shifters as:

Signs used to organize units and unitizations of scale in discourse to enable the identification of relevant participant frameworks with respect to time, space, and/or size.

As with cultural shifters, scalar shifters are typically made up of sign constellations that are linked with particular semiotic registers, but the substitution of ‘cultural’ for ‘scalar’ invites us to ask ‘semiotic registers from which period, from where, as recognized and/or used by which population, and for and/or to what scalar effect?’ People use scalar shifters to move between and across registers functioning at different scales.

Models for the analysis of the use and interpretation of scalar shifters abound in the papers in this issue. The papers by Djenar, Zentz, Manns and Musgrave, Cole, and Goebel provide analyses of the use of scalar shifters to identify the size and distribution of the participation frameworks relevant for the consumption of novels, street signage, internet commentaries, t-shirts, and television advertisements. Donzelli’s and Harr’s papers show how scalar shifters from the three major periods in Indonesia’s history converge in speeches and radio advertisements. The paper by Manns and Musgrave show how signs of Javanese-ness in celebrity tweets figure in acts of ‘distinction’ that help to identify Javanese speakers as ‘old-fashioned’ and Indonesian speakers as exemplars of the modern metropole, rescaling what counts as centre and periphery. Zentz shows how a valued ethnic register from the past is invoked in acts of self-marginalization by students who distinguish their peripheral ethnic register from this valued register of the past. Djenar’s paper shows how signs of ethnicity simultaneously are used to invoke tradition and modernity.

A particularly clear example of the need for the analytical concept of scalar shifter comes through in the paper by Kurniasih who shows how regional autonomy laws that have been historically linked with ethnic registers and tradition are imitated by activists as ‘entitlement to the language of cultural heritage’ as part of their campaign to keep specific ‘traditional’ varieties of Javanese in the contemporary school curriculum. To understand why this issue was important to these groups of demonstrators, we need to take a scalar view in its timeframe guise. In this case, many of those involved in the campaign were socialized during the period 2001-2013 when ethnic languages were linked with legal rights via autonomy laws and to tradition via widespread territorial fragmentation that was often based on claims to tradition (Aspinall 2011, 2013; Bünte 2009; Henley and Davidson 2007).

**Conclusion**

Semiotic complexity is becoming a mainstream intellectual pursuit in linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics. Part of this process seems to be another wave of boundary crossing where fragments of scholarship from across multiple and diverse domains of intellectual inquiry are brought together to help understand this complexity. This introduction has sought to further this project by unifying disparate pieces of already existing theoretical machinery to form two meta-concepts that we hope will be useful for understanding semiotic complexity. Our meta-concept of contact registers – sign
constellations that emerge through sustained contact between previously established registers – subsumes work on enregisterment, participation frameworks, value, imitation and indexical selectivity. Our meta-concept of scalar shifters – Signs used to organize units and unitizations of scale in discourse to enable the identification of relevant participant frameworks with respect to time, space, and/or size – synthesizes work on shifters, timespace scalarity and chronotopes.

In doing so, we build on some productive work that has already begun to connect and synthesize scholarship on semiotic complexity (Blommaert 2013, 2015; Heller et al. 2015; Tsing 2005). Blommaert (2015), for example, points out that in any semiotic encounter complex combinations of histories are invoked ensuring different uptake, (mis)understanding, and ultimately different levels of what Briggs (2005) refers to as ‘communicability’ (Blommaert 2015). These meta-concepts can provide a further means for understanding the complexity around different types of communicability and their interconnections. We suggest that the power of the collection of papers that follow is that they not only provide the descriptive and historical background needed to focus on the intersections but that when taken together they enable us to see patterns at yet another scale.

Acknowledgements

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Indonesia is a relatively new nation, only obtaining independence from the Netherlands in 1949. It is an archipelago nation made up of over 17000 islands and is one of the most linguistically diverse places on the planet. Much of Indonesia’s nation-building efforts have revolved around building unity and managing diversity among a rapidly growing and mobile population. While highly centralized schooling and media helped achieve unity, especially from 1966 onwards (Kitley 2000), the commodification of language in the media (Kitley 2000; Loven 2008; Sen and Hill 2000), regime change in 1998, and the large scale decentralization which began in 2001 all contributed to unprecedented complexity (Goebel 2015). For example, the political and fiscal decentralization of 2001 led to a democratization of the political process on a scale not seen before (Aspinall and Mietzner 2010), rapid territorial fragmentation (Aspinall 2013), ongoing inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts (Hedman 2008), increases in the value of ethnicity (Davidson and Henley 2007), and rapid urbanization that increased inter-ethnic contact (Goebel 2010, 2015).

The papers in this special issue examine the sociolinguistic context of post-reform Indonesia, more than 15 years after the fall of Suharto. Suharto and his New Order government ruled Indonesia from 1966-1998. The New Order sought to control every aspect of what it meant to be Indonesian and to speak Indonesian. In its multiple forms, Indonesian plays a significant role in uniting more than 600 ethno-linguistic groups across the archipelago and the New Order’s language policies played no small role in Indonesian’s success. That said, the seeds for Indonesian as a unifying language for hundreds of ethno-linguistic groups were planted much earlier, and indeed much earlier than the 1928 event that is often cited as the baptismal event for Indonesian. By the time of the 1928 youth congress, approximately 5% of the archipelago already spoke this variety of Malay (Sneddon 2003: 105). Since then, nearly 90 years of language planning and standardization has left a largely Indonesian-literate society in its wake.

Yet, post-reform Indonesia is a topsy-turvy linguistic hub where notions of ‘Indonesian literacy’ and ethnic, national and global languages and identities remain in flux. James Sneddon (2003: 199-203) points out that poor survey design means that true Indonesian literacy may not be known and is minimally over-stated. For instance, speakers of post-Creole Malay varieties across the archipelago might claim proficiency in Indonesian as would some rural villagers who had only encountered Indonesian in school (Sneddon 2003). Perhaps most problematic in the Indonesian context is that official institutional language surveys have often precluded the possibility of bilingualism or multilingualism in the home. In other words, many studies (e.g. Kurniasih 2006; Smith-Hefner 2009) by now have noted a shift toward the national language. Yet, these studies also show that speakers maintain local, ethnic languages, especially in the home and local neighbourhood. For instance, Kurniasih (2006) shows how women in Java lead the shift to Indonesian in their own practices and in
interactions with their children, but also shows that men maintain Javanese through the same behaviour. Goebel’s work (e.g. 2010) demonstrates that migrants within Indonesia often adopt the local, ethnic languages of the neighbourhoods in which they settle rather than using Indonesian, which has historically been posited as an interethnic lingua franca of sorts in the Indonesian context.

The Indonesian case saliently illustrates a rapidly growing area of scholarship on language and superdiversity (e.g. Blommaert 2010, 2013; Blommaert and Rampton 2011) and thusly makes a useful focus for understanding contemporary sociolinguistic processes, and how these processes emerge from historical precedents. The superdiverse nature of contemporary Indonesia is not new but rather the newest manifestation of a historically rich, heterogeneous lingua-scape. Indonesia’s many local, ethnic languages are often typologically similar and this means speakers seamlessly and often subconsciously shift between languages (Errington 1998). Indonesians often view such switching derisively as bahasa gado gado (language salad) but theorists seek to understand how such switching contributes to emerging syncretic systems (Errington 1998). In any case, in line with superdiversity scholars, the Indonesian case problematizes the notion of named language varieties (e.g. ‘Indonesian’, ‘Balinese’), and it is often more useful to think of Indonesians’ linguistic (in)competence in terms of truncated repertoires, which consist of ‘highly specific “bits” of language and literacy values ... that reflects ... fragmented and highly diverse life-trajectories and environments ...’ (Blommaert 2010: 8).

Heteroglossia during Dutch colonial times

Along such trajectories, language and literacy are not ideologically neutral but rather imbued with ideological sameness and difference and consequently semiotic potential (Irvine 2001; Coupland 2007). In Indonesia, as in many places, these samenesses and differences are characterized by tensions between centripetal hubs and peripheries, the latter of which seek to usurp and/or redefine power bases, and the former to maintain power and ‘standards’. Since the 16th century, Indonesia’s political and linguistic history has been defined by the powerful centripetal force of Dutch colonial power and then national authority. When the Dutch arrived in the 16th century, they were both frustrated and awed by the archipelago’s linguistic heterogeneity (Maier 1993; Matauschek 2014). Maier (1993: 48) implicitly conjures notions of registers (and chronotopes) when he writes, ‘[the Indies] represent[,] the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and past, different epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles, and so forth.’ However, Maier (1993) points out that such heteroglossia often falls victim to some hegemonic center, concerned with forcing language and society in a way in which a central, centripetal force gains the upper hand.

The Dutch firstly sat at this hegemonic centre from the 16th century until Indonesian independence in 1949. Dutch attitudes toward the archipelago’s inhabitants were varyingly racist and aloof or well-intentioned but condescending (Robson 2002; Sneddon 2003). Most notably, in terms of language, the Dutch brought to the archipelago Golden Age myths and prescriptive ideologies (Maier 1993) that were utilized to manage diversity and administer a colonial economy. The Dutch remained averse to the locals learning the Dutch language for political among other reasons (the writer Raden Ajeng Kartini once mused sarcastically, ‘Dutch is too beautiful to be uttered by a brown mouth’ (Robson 2002: 29)). However, the Dutch viewed the elevation and imposition of one Malay variety, a literary Malay spoken by the Riau-Johor Sultanate, on the populace as a means for ‘civilizing’ the Indies (Sneddon 2003). While the process of standardizing this variety was uneven across the archipelago (e.g. Moriyama 2005), these practices were central to forming the first links between this Malay variety, education, modernity and development (Robson 2002). From the outset, the Dutch and then Indonesian authorities imbued this Malay variety with authority and implicitly and explicitly marginalized speakers of other languages and Malay varieties (Maier 1993). Nationalist leaders selected this Malay variety to be Bahasa Indonesia (the language of Indonesia) in 1928 and it became the national language at independence.
Developing a language of the nation: the Soeharto era

Standard Indonesian became the authoritative language of the state and perhaps nowhere clearer than during Suharto’s New Order (1966-1998). The New Order sought to centralize and control the Indonesian population under the guise of nationalism. The New Order set out to accomplish this through its Pembangunan (Development) Program. Suharto was Bapak Pembangunan (the father of development) and Standard Indonesian was bahasa pembangunan (the language of development) (Errington 1998: 59). Suharto had an ‘uncompromising stance on language’, calling on Indonesians to use the government-prescribed Standard Indonesian (McDaniel 1994: 251). Suharto and his government promoted this ideology in education, the media and government institutions. Through such practices, links grew between Standard Indonesian and social meanings, such as development, truth, evaluation, objectivity and authority (Errington 1998; Goebel 2010). Standard Indonesian emerged as a semiotic register (SR1, in Goebel’s 2010 terms), and its use could convey these social meanings.

The New Order’s unyielding, top-down vision for the development of a modern state relegated ethnic (and other) identities to a secondary, peripheral sphere. The government encouraged Indonesians to view their national identity first and their ethnic identity second. More so, the New Order sought to control perceptions of the latter through public policy, schooling and commodification. In contrast to one’s ‘modern’ Indonesian self, the New Order sought to define the ethnic as quaint and backwards through public acts like the creation of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (Miniature Garden of Beautiful Indonesia) in Jakarta (Pemberton 1994). Taman Mini is a Disneyland-like park, consisting of traditional ethnic homes and displays of regional, ethnic culture. Taman Mini contributed to the New Order’s desire to commodify and domesticate ethnic culture, within the Indonesian sphere, helping to (re)produce links between ethnicity region, attitude, housing, custom and tourism (Goebel 2010).

Amidst this peripheral, ethnic sphere, a second semiotic register (SR2 in Goebel’s (2010) terms) began to emerge. SR2 functioned in many ways in contrast to Standard Indonesian (SR1). Where the language and ideologies of SR1 were monologic and authoritative, those of SR2 were much more complex. SR2 is largely associated with Languages other than Indonesian (LOTI), ethnicity and region. Within ethnic and regional spheres, SR2 functions to index intimacy, closeness and in-group status (Goebel 2010). SR1 in these intimate ethnic spheres was the language of the ‘other’. More so, as Errington (1998: 3) flags, SR1 was an outgroup without a ‘they’. Standard Indonesian was the language one used in impersonal communications with the ethnic other, but even then only as a last resort. Goebel (2010) points out that intimacy in the ethnic sphere generally requires knowledge of the SR2. However, in decidedly Indonesian spheres, especially official ones, SR2 could carry a sense of backwardness or kampungan (village-ness or hick-ness). Ultimately, New Order ideologies left in their wake a distinction between practices that were either kuno (old, ancient) or maju (advanced) (see Kitley 2000; Sutton 1996), and SR1 and SR2 were often implicated in indexing one or the other.

Regime change, reform and language

The New Order fell in 1998 due to a complex set of factors, including the Asian financial crisis, corruption and student unrest. Indonesia underwent Reformasi, which included ‘one of the most radical decentralization programs attempted anywhere in the world’ (Aspinall and Fealy 2003: 9). In 2001, new decentralization legislation put more political power and fiscal resources and responsibilities into the hands of districts rather than Indonesia’s provinces (Aspinall and Fealy 2003). Since 2001 there has been a rescaling and revaluing of every area of social life. With relaxed media regulations, and less intrusion from the government, the archipelago’s inhabitants were freer to pursue what it meant to be Indonesian and speak Indonesian on their own terms (Clark 2004; Cole 2010). On the one hand, Reformasi led to a sense of confusion and aimlessness. For instance, the film Jelangkung explicitly dealt with the aimlessness and alienation of Indonesian men after the fall of the New Order (Clark 2004). On the other hand, and perhaps more saliently, Reformasi marked a time of opportunity. Jurriëns (2009), drawing on Derks, likens the New Order/post-New Order periods to a mushroom’s
underground mycelium. Denied light, heteroglossic practices during the New Order largely existed suppressed and underground, only occasionally sprouting into the public sphere. However, Jurriëns (2009: 21) writes:

Reformasi can ... be seen as a process, which, by vehemently unleashing the anger and creative energy that had been stored in society for so long, has reversed and undermined social hierarchies in a manner relatively similar to Bakhtin’s carnival.

Artists, writers, undesirables and youth, not necessarily mutually exclusive, have emerged as key agents in defining what it means to be Indonesian and speak Indonesian (Baulch 2007; Cole 2010; Djenar, Ewing and Manns, forthcoming). And this means renegotiating the traditional Indonesian ‘hub’, the emergence of new hubs and tensions with the peripheries at which such hubs are often negotiated. More so, in line with the current special issue, it provides a rich backdrop for investigating semiotic complexity.

Post-reform Indonesia has already undergone significant changes in the valuation of local, national and global languages and cultures. The national language, Indonesian, has been revalued from a policed code to one where it is normal to see fragments of Indonesian being mixed with a number of regional languages in televised representations (Goebel 2015), a situation that was not possible before 1990 (Kitley 2000). This mixing which was formerly stigmatized by the state and by Indonesians themselves and often relegated to ‘private’ social relations has been rescaled to become public with politicians and bureaucrats reusing fragments of local languages to get bureaucratic, religious, and political work done (Aspinall 2013; Goebel 2014; Kuipers 2013). Some of the major regional languages, such as Javanese and Sundanese, have gained social value vis-à-vis Indonesian with major up-scaling efforts occurring in the domains of schooling, the media, and government offices (e.g. Arps 2010; Goebel 2015; Moriyama 2012; Quinn 2012; Rachmah 2006). In many of the outer islands, decentralization has speed up processes of language endangerment and death (e.g. Jukes 2010), while in some places providing a new environment for the revitalization of some local languages (e.g. Sudarkam Mertono 2014), which then potentially set up the conditions for the production of further distinctions and inequality, as in places elsewhere in the world (Heller and Duchêne 2012: 4).

This special issue brings together a series of scholars concerned with the (re-)valuation and/or the (re-)negotiation of social meaning and semiotic complexity in post-reform Indonesia. In a very general sense, these scholars are concerned with what it means to language and/or knowledge (as verbs) in contemporary Indonesia. In semiotic terms, languaging refers to the process through which a speaker/writer exploit a linguistic sign’s historical meaning within an immediate context (Tannen 2007). This special issue’s authors have been concerned with how linguistic meanings perdure and/or get reformulated across and within contexts. Knowledging may be defined as the ‘ability to comprehend or evaluate semiotic fragments that do not normally form part of a person’s habitually used semiotic repertoires’ (Goebel 2015: 9). Social media and communication technologies have had a profound influence on Indonesia and Indonesians. Many scholars have pointed out by now the influence of commodified and mediated landscape on the lifestyle and language choices of everyday Indonesians (e.g. Ibrahim 2007; Gerke 2000; Smith-Hefner 2007). Many of the current issue’s authors have directly engaged with how speakers comprehend, evaluate and language translocal styles.

Along these lines, this issue provides a forum for language scholars engaged with Indonesia to explore synergies in their semiotic-focused works. This issue’s authors engage with some of the most critical debates in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. Indonesia provides a rich context for engaging with these debates, so it is arguably no accident the theoretical interests of this special issue’s authors intersect with the most pressing and/or influential issues in post-reform Indonesia. Goebel’s work has varyingly engaged with enregisterment (e.g. 2010) and superdiversity (e.g. 2015). For instance, he (2010) draws on the insights of Agha (2005; 2007) to show how a highly mobile and rapidly urbanizing Indonesian population engages in inter-ethnic interactions and by doing so enregister new, meaningful ways of speaking. Goebel (2015) also examines how Indonesians at home and abroad understand and engage with signs linked to ethnolinguistic groups and use this knowledge to enact
situated identities. This is particularly valuable at a time in which there is a revitalization of ethnic identity resulting in shifting semiotics around voicing and identity, which are key research concerns of Cole (2010, 2014). She draws on this work in the current special issue to develop her notion of the *diverse Indonesian persona* and discussions of how previously marginalized identities have returned to the fore in the marketplace and day-to-day practices.

Youth, globalization and social media are powerful social catalysts in the post-reform era and have provided rich contexts for study by a number of this issue’s researchers. Djenar, Ewing and Manns have been interested in Indonesian youth as catalysts for change across a range of text types, including spoken interactions, online interactions, radio broadcasts, teen lit and comics (Djenar 2012, 2015; Djenar and Ewing 2015; Djenar, Ewing and Manns, forthcoming; Manns 2011, 2014). Much of their work seeks to understand how style and intersubjectivity as a theoretical concepts shed light on perduing meaning within and across these texts types. Zentz (2012, 2014) explores the influence of English in Indonesia, and theoretically how linguistic biographies lead to an expanded linguistic repertoire, influenced by wider, local, national and global factors. Along similar lines, many of this special issue’s authors are concerned with how historical circumstances and local, national and global issues come to bear on local policy and interactions. Kurniasih (2006, 2007) investigates the relationship between language shift and government policy around local language content in school curriculum. Donzelli, Harr and Morin engage with the linguistic ideologies and practices of regional settings beyond the island of Java. Donzelli (2004, 2007) works on the shifting languages of the Toraja highlands of Sulawesi, Harr (2013, 2015) explores language, especially in political/electoral contexts, on the island of Flores and Morin (this volume) focuses on the shifting ideologies around the use of Papuan Malay.

**Conclusion**

The Indonesian context has long served as a source of interest for language scholars. Joshua Fishman (1978) called the imposition of Indonesian on more than 600 ethno-linguistic groups ‘miraculous’. Javanese’s complex speech levels have long served as a source of theoretical interest (e.g. Agha 2007; Errington 1988; Irvine 2001; Silverstein 1976), and the study of Indonesia’s Javanese and Balinese groups led Clifford Geertz (1973) to assert the need for ‘thick’ ethnographic descriptions. In the realm of semiotics, the notion of languaging (referred to above) finds its roots in Alton Becker’s observations about the context-shaping nature of language use in Indonesia. Tannen (2007: 10), reviewing Becker, notes, ‘all languaging is what in Java is called jarwa dhosok, taking old language (jarwo) and pushing (dhosok) it into new contexts.’ Errington’s (1985a, 1985b, 1988) work on language and shifting symbolic meaning led him to argue for the notion of pragmatic salience or rather for why certain linguistic features rise to semiotic prominence over others for speakers and hearers.

This issue brings together scholars working on semiotic complexity in Indonesia, and by doing so to answer the calls to (re)define and (re)imagine the study of language and society in innovative ways. To these ends, it will be of theoretical interest to linguistic and Indonesian scholars alike. Each of this issue’s authors will further develop this paper’s coverage of Indonesia, Indonesian and local linguistic contexts and text types as they relate to the respective author’s theoretical and areal foci. The current paper has served merely to lay the groundwork for Indonesia and Indonesian and how the Indonesian situation lends itself well to explorations of such complexity for the current authors.

**Notes**

1 In 1928, young Indonesian nationalists met and declared one variety of Malay to be a unifying Bahasa Indonesia ‘language of Indonesia’ as a major component of their pledge to unite the archipelago’s many disparate groups within a centripetal national identity.

2 As a concept superdiversity was initially developed by Vertovec (2007) for European contexts where old ideas of diversity were seen as too simplistic to describe complex and ever-increasing social mobility as a result of
'globalization' as well as the ways in which notions of social mobility, personhood, and 'language' have been further complicated with the emergence of social media and communication technology (Blommaert and Rampton 2011). However, others argue that globalization and the diversity that it engenders are a much older phenomenon (e.g. Wallerstein 2004), as evidenced by the Indonesian case (Goebel 2015). These scholars do not necessarily use the terms 'languaging' and 'knowledging' explicitly, but all show a concern with the use, interpretation and shifting meanings of linguistic signs, and what the Indonesian situation can reveal about these processes. For instance, 'languaging' bears close resemblance to what Coupland (2007) calls 'styling' and some scholars in the current work draw on Coupland.

References


Special issue on ‘Margins, hubs, and peripheries in a decentralizing Indonesia’

PART I

Youth and resolving core-periphery tensions
Localising person reference among Indonesian youth
Michael Ewing

1. Introduction

This paper examines first and second person reference among young Indonesian speakers in the city of Bandung. Youth are currently a salient category in Indonesia (Parker and Nilan 2013), and the contemporary language of youth – often labelled bahasa gaul or ‘gregarious language’ – has become the focus of both local popular commentary (BeritaSATU TV 2013; Januar 2014; Tasai 2006) and international academic research (Djenar and Ewing 2015; Manns 2011; Smith-Hefner 2007; Tamtomo 2012). Localising the language of youth is essential in understanding how young people employ language resources in the construction of social meanings (e.g. Bucholz 2002; Manns 2011) and the city of Bandung is a productive site to do this. As the third largest city in Indonesia, a major university city and an important centre for the creative industries, Bandung is home to a thriving youth culture. It is located about 150 km southeast of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, and this proximity means Jakarta exerts a strong cultural influence on Bandung. At the same time Bandung maintains a strong sense of independent identity, grounded in its position as the dominant city of the Sundanese ethnolinguistic region.

The linguistic complexity of Indonesia (e.g. Foulcher et al. 2012; Maier 1993) means that the rapidly changing language of youth displays features of ‘hybridity’ that play a crucial role in the construction of identity through the local deployment of diverse language resources (cf. Pennycook 2010). In Bandung, Rostika (2009) surveyed language attitudes and usage among Sundanese speaking youth and found frequent use of Sundanese and Jakartan particles and grammatical forms when these young people were speaking Indonesian, which she linked to the production of relaxed informality. Such hybridity is also evident in the data examined here. I follow recently emerging approaches in socio-cultural linguistics which view ‘languages’ or ‘dialects’ not as discrete bounded entities objectively existing in the real world, but rather as politically and socio-culturally conditioned ideological constructs (Blommaert 2010; Heller 2007; Jørgensen et al. 2011; Makoni and Pennycook 2007). Such constructs as ‘Indonesian’ or ‘Sundanese’ nonetheless have real-world significance for speakers, in no small part because ideologies associated with them infuse individual linguistic resources with important semiotic resonances. Therefore, rather than talking about an analysis of ‘Indonesian’, I agree that it is, following Blommaert and Rampton, ‘far more productive analytically to focus on the very variable ways in which individual linguistic features with identifiable social and cultural associations get clustered together whenever people communicate’ (2011: 5, emphasis in original).

Person referring terms are an important linguistic resource, and like Indonesian speakers across the country, young people in Bandung access a range of pronouns, kinship terms and names for referring to self and other. In what follows, I first outline resources for person reference used by young Indonesian speakers in Bandung and explore the ideology of person reference as expressed by young
language users themselves. I then look at the use of person reference during spontaneous conversational interaction to show how young people deploy these resources for purposes of social positioning. Bandung’s position as a regional hub sitting in the near periphery of the national capital is crucial in shaping how young people choose to accomplish person reference.

2. Resources and attitudes

Indonesian speakers have access to multiple resources for person reference (Ewing 2005; Sneddon et al. 2010). Like many languages of Southeast Asia, it has an open system of self- and addressee-reference (Enfield 2007; Thomason and Everett 2001), meaning that person referring resources are readily adopted from other languages and that non-pronominal forms such as proper names and kinship terms are commonly used for self- and addressee-reference. Additionally, ellipsis is by far the most common strategy in Indonesian for tracking self and addressee in conversation, as it is in closely related languages (e.g. Ewing 2014 on ellipsis in Javanese); ellipsis is however beyond the scope of the current study. The existence of multiple pronominal forms has long been noted, but as Djenar (2014) points out, earlier accounts claimed that choice of terms was dependent on statically conceived identities for the present study are from a corpus comprising recordings and transcripts of naturally occurring conversations among young Indonesian adults (aged 18–25 years) made in Bandung in early 2014. Eight recordings have been used for this study, comprising three hours of talk. The conversations involve from two to nine speakers and include all-female and mixed female-male groups. At the same time I conducted four focus groups with university students also aged 18–25, about equally distributed between men and women. The discussions ranged around topics of youth, identity and language perceptions.

The linguistic resources for self- and addressee-reference used by young people in the corpus include pronouns associated with formal and familiar registers of standard Indonesian, those associated with colloquial Jakarta Indonesian and Sundanese pronouns, including familiar, coarse and polite forms. Personal names are also used for first and second person reference. In the case of second person reference, personal names are sometimes combined with a kinship-based title, or occasionally, just the kinship term is used without name. Table 1 provides an overview of first person reference use in the corpus, indicating raw frequency and percentage for different reference types. Table 2 provides this information for second person reference types. Note that the characterisations under ‘Associated Social Semiotics’ in the tables are meant to be heuristic, to remind the reader which is which. The social meanings and intertextual resonances of the different reference types are much more complex than a simple label can express. The following summary of focus group discussions and explication of examples from the conversational data aim to illustrate this complexity.
The focus group participants initially discussed youth language in general. They described their speech style as biasa saja, nggak terlalu formal (‘just normal, not too formal’) or santai banget (‘really relaxed’). They also pointed out that unlike (their perceptions of) what their parents’ generation did, today’s youth are more spontan (‘spontaneous’) and even keceplas (‘blurting out’) with their language. For them, this includes using informal language in contexts where formal language might be prescriptively expected. It also includes the notion of mixing languages. One participant said, ‘our speech is all mixed, sometimes Indonesian, sometimes Sundanese, sometimes even combined together’ (kita ngomongnya campur-campur, kadang bahasa Indonesia, kadang bahasa Sunda, kadang juga disatui).

The participants were also happy to discuss the social connotations of pronominal usage in great detail, indicating this is an aspect of language ideology at the forefront of their thinking. Participants consistently labelled usage in terms of matched first- and second-person pairs: aku-kamu, gua-lu, urang-maneh and so forth. They all reported that for young people in Bandung aku-kamu is the most commonly used pair and their interest and commentary was mainly directed to the use of more marked gua-lu. The consensus was that use of gua-lu is strongly associated with Jakarta and generally not appropriate in Bandung: using gua-lu is angkah (‘haughty’) and sombong (‘arrogant’). Not surprisingly, participants originally from Jakarta said that in Jakarta they used gua-lu the most often. For them aku-kamu could be seen either as distancing (kurang deket gitu), or in specific contexts, as very intimate. The latter association is consistent with Djenar’s (2014) finding that in novels, characters from Jakarta who become romantically involved often switch from gua-lu to aku-kamu. One female Jakarta participant said that because of this association with intimacy, even in Bandung she feels uncomfortable using aku with male interlocutors (nggak nyaman kalau bilang aku ke cowok).

For speakers from Bandung, people who use gua-lu are perceived as not wanting to integrate with their friends (nggak menyatu). It was pointed out several times that people need to adjust to the place where they are (menyesuaikan tempatnya). One Bandung person reported that when he used

### Table 1. Frequency of 1st person reference types in corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference type</th>
<th>Associated Social Semiotics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aku</td>
<td>Indonesian, familiar (romantic)</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gua / gue</td>
<td>Jakarta, familiar (coarse)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saya</td>
<td>Indonesian, formal</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urang</td>
<td>Sundanese, familiar</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aing</td>
<td>Sundanese, coarse</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abdi</td>
<td>Sundanese, polite</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE</td>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>386</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2. Frequency of 2nd person reference types in corpus

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Reference type</th>
<th>Associated Social Semiotics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kamu</td>
<td>Indonesian, familiar (romantic)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lu / lo</td>
<td>Jakarta, familiar (coarse)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE + NAME</td>
<td>familiar / respectful</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maneh</td>
<td>Sundanese, familiar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sia</td>
<td>Sundanese, coarse</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TITLE</td>
<td>familiar / respectful</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anjeun</td>
<td>Sundanese, polite</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>167</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
aku in Jakarta he was told it was kaku (‘stiff, awkward’) and he should use gue. Another who came to Bandung from Jakarta said he felt he could not use gua-lu but did not know the Sundanese pronouns, so he started using aku-kamu. Similar to speakers from Malang (Manns 2011), these Bandung speakers said if they did use gua-lu, it would be for humorous effect (bercandaan). It is clear that for speakers from Bandung – similar to findings in Englebretson (2007) for Yogyakarta and Manns (2011) for Malang – gua-lu retains a very strong association with Jakarta and often carries meanings of toughness, being outspoken or associated with (a possibly exaggerated or false) sophistication. Focus group participants’ assertion that aku-kamu is the most common, even the default, pronominal pair used by young speakers in Bandung is born out by the frequency results in Table 1, where nearly 60% of first person references use aku and more than 50% of second person references use kamu. Interestingly, this contrasts markedly from perceptions of Bandung reported from Malang, where Bandung speakers are lumped together with Jakartans and assumed to use gua-lu (Manns, 2011: 137, 276). In the following section I examine how the ideologies around pronoun use discussed here play out in conversational interaction.

3. Person reference in conversation

I have chosen excerpts from three conversations in the corpus to illustrate a number key points. In ‘Blackout’ we see the default use of aku-kamu contrasted with Sundanese pronouns used to index solidarity and personal perspective. ‘Chicken Foot Soup’ illustrates the use of names for reference to self and addressee as well as formal Indonesian saya (‘1s’), options receiving only passing mention in the focus group discussions. Finally, ‘Cream Soup’ looks at a particularly performative speaker who uses a wide range of person reference terms.

3.1 Blackout

The conversation ‘Blackout’ demonstrates the prevalent use of aku-kamu by Bandung speakers. The primary speakers, Salma and Sita, women in their early twenties, almost always use aku-kamu with each other. For Salma, 95% of her first person reference is aku, while for Sita it is 67%. Both women use kamu exclusively for second person reference. This default usage is illustrated in the first four lines of 1. In addition, the common use of ellipsis is illustrated in line 2 where the predicate marah-marah (‘get/be angry’) does not have an explicit subject, but the subject can be clearly understood from context to be second person.

In line 10, Sita uses the familiar Sundanese second person pronoun maneh. Use of a non-default pronoun can alert interlocutors that ‘something different’ is being done (Stivers et al. 2007). To understand what that ‘something different’ is, we can examine what social actions are being undertaken at this point in the interaction. Salma asks why Sita is mad at her (lines 1-2), thus setting up a low-level misalignment between the friends. According to Sita, Salma has been spending too much time with her male friend, Agoy, and so not hanging out with her other friends (lines 3-5). Salma tries to make amends by saying she will do something with Sita. Sita accepts Salma’s offer using the Sundanese maneh (‘2s’). This forms part of a process of realignment between the friends, and the resonance of locality and shared ethnicity evoked by the use of Sundanese here is consistent with the social action being undertaken. This process of realignment is further amplified by the repeated, reciprocal use of colloquial yuk (‘HORT’) in lines 8-9 and 13-14, used to indicated shared agreement.
In 2, Sita uses the familiar Sundanese first person urang. The speakers are discussing the upcoming general election and how they will decide whom to vote for. This excerpt forms a single turn by Sita, which contains a dense clustering of three explicit first person references – an unusual occurrence given the frequency of ellipsis in Indonesian conversation. Here Sita explains she just goes for the candidate with the longest title. The first two pronominal tokens are default aku. The first of these is marked with the Sundanese contrastive topic particle mah, indicating she is talking about her actions in (presupposed) contrast with the actions of others. The second use of aku occurs when she mentions her action, the physical act of puncturing (coblos) the ballot paper to vote. When she expresses the
affective motivation driving her choice – that she just will do whatever comes to mind at the moment of voting – she use a Sundanese phrase with the pronoun urang. This shift from public language – Indonesian – to private language – Sundanese – to express inner thoughts, feelings or reactions, is reminiscent of Errington’s (1998) discussion of shifting between Indonesian and Javanese.

**Example 2 (Blackout 332-337)**

1. Sita: *Pokok-nya*,
   point-DEF

2. *aku* mah,
   IS part.SUN

3. *yang* paling panjang gelar-nya,
   REL most long title-DEF

4. *aku* coblos we,
   IS vote just.SUN

5. .. *kumaha urang* we.
   how.SUN IS.SUN just.SUN

‘The thing is, as for me, I just choose the one who has the longest titles, just whatever I want.’

### 3.2 Chicken Foot Soup

The following examples are from a conversation between five female friends, all students at the same university, who are having lunch in a food court. They are discussing, among other topics, what they want to order. In 3, both Hana and Ratih use *aku* for self-reference. In this conversation, about 40% of self-reference is done with *aku*, another 40% with first name and the remaining 20% with *saya*.

**Example 3 (Chicken Foot Soup 9-26)**

1. Hana: *Aku* tehbelum makan nasi=.
   IS PART.SUN not.yet Eat rice

2. Jadi, so

3. .. *eh yang ga nasi*,
   uh REL NEG rice

4. *aku* .. eliminasi.
   IS elimination

‘I haven’t eaten rice yet. So I’ll eliminate anything without rice.’

5. Ratih: .. *Minum apa bro?*
   drink what bro

‘What are (you) going to drink bro?’

6. Aina: .. *Aku juga mau nasi ah,*
   IS also want rice PART

7. .. *Sop ceker.*
   soup chicken.foot

‘Gosh I want rice to. Chicken foot soup.’

8. Ratih: .. *Boleh bro.*
   can bro

‘Ok bro.’

The use of name for first person reference is illustrated in 4.
Particularly characteristic of this conversation is the use name, kin title or both for all cases of explicit addressee reference. The Sundanese title for older sister, *Teh* is used with name in almost 70% of cases of explicit addressee reference, just the title (usually the full form *Teteh*) in 10% of cases and just name in the remaining 20%. In general these women use *Teh* with name when addressing an older female friend and just the name when speaking to someone younger. This is illustrated in 5, where Rini is the youngest member of the group and 6 where Lela is the oldest.

Finally, tokens of formal Indonesian *saya* ‘1s’ occur more often in this conversation than others in the corpus. Its use is usually stylised, when evoking someone else’s voice or exaggerating the formality of what is said for humorous effect. The latter is illustrated by 7. The speakers had been discussing an academic topic, which facilitated the use of more formal grammatical structures and lexicon. When Rini – who elsewhere uses name for self-reference, as in example 4 – brings the topic back to choosing what to order, she continues in this academic mode, using formal clause structure and formal, distancing *saya*. She uses a laughing voice at the beginning of her statement and finishes with exaggerated lengthening of the final syllable in *makan* ‘eat’, all marking a ludic stance.

The speakers in this conversation can be considered more conservative than many others in the corpus. They come from a university sometimes stereotyped as having a ‘kampungan’ (less than sophisticated) reputation and they tend to be conservatively dressed. This may correspond with their use of Sundanese kinships terms and avoidance of *kamu* ‘2s’. It is also interesting that these women move towards more formal language for humour, while many of the other speakers in this corpus move towards coarseness for humour, as illustrated in the next section. It is through such constellations of person referring strategies that identity arises, embodied through interaction and supported by other semiotic markers.

### 3.3 Cream Soup

During ‘Cream Soup’ three students at a technical collage discuss a marketing assignment in which they plan to sell cream soup. The discussion takes place in a hallway on campus and as many as six other students temporarily join the conversation. The male member of this trio, Bayu, uses the greatest variety of different reference terms of anyone in the corpus. While he is primarily an *aku*-
 user, he uses *aku* in only 50% of self-references. The remaining 50% include Jakartan *gua* and the Sundanese first person pronouns, *aing* (coarse), *urang* (neutral) and *abdi* (refined, only one token).

In the excerpt in 8, when Bayu uses *gua* (‘1s’), it is clearly for humorous effect. Alma corrects Bayu’s mistaken suggestion about how to cook macaroni showing slightly humorous stance with exaggerated lengthening on final syllables of intonation units and the use of the vocative *nak* (‘child’), not normally used between university friends. Bayu’s response raises the humour level with an exaggerated imitation of a Betawi (local Jakarta) accent when saying he has no culinary skills. The use of Jakartan *gua* is an integral part of this humour.

**Example 8 (Cream Soup 441-446)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alma:</th>
<th>Bayu:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>Makroni</em></td>
<td><em>Ma’ap</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>teh</em></td>
<td><em>deh,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>direndem</em></td>
<td><em>sorry</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>dulu=</em>,</td>
<td><em>PART_JKT</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>baru</em></td>
<td><em>Ma’ap</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>only then</em></td>
<td><em>deh,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>direbu=s.</em></td>
<td><em>sorry</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>di-boil</em></td>
<td><em>PART_JKT</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Na=k.</em></td>
<td><em>Ma’ap</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>child</em></td>
<td><em>deh,</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>‘The macaroni should be soaked first and only then boiled, son.’</em></td>
<td><em>Sorry I didn’t know, I’m not a salt fish peddler.’</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples 9a-9d are from an extended excerpt provided in Appendix B. Bayu, Asmita and Alma are discussing their plans to sell cream soup. In 9a Bayu calls out to a friend who is passing by, asking whether she would buy their soup if they go into business. Bayu primarily uses *aku-kamu* with the main interlocutors, but his call to Dian uses Jakarta *lu*. This evokes a strongly assertive stance, consistent with the Sundanese hortative *sok*, compressed grammatical structure and blunt questioning style. When Dian answers she can’t say because she doesn’t know whether the soup is any good, Bayu further pushes her in 9b, reminding her he has helped with her graphic design assignment, using Jakartan *gua*. At the point Dian responds 9c, she and Bayu are using almost entirely Sundanese resources. Indeed Dian uses course first person *aing* – something that was almost always associated with young men by focus group participants – saying she will be held responsible for the quality of Bayu’s work. Bayu ignores this, making a self-deprecating response to Alma, softened by beginning with the familiar (not coarse) Sundanese *urang* in an otherwise entirely Indonesian clause. By the time the discussion has returned to the project 9d, Bayu again uses *aku*. Throughout this example, the modulation between Indonesian and Sundanese incrementally builds and recedes as attention shifts between interlocutors, stances and topics.

**Example 9a (Cream Soup 735-736)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bayu:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Dian</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Dian</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Lu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Kagak?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Be.in.business.SUN</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>Neg</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Be.in.business.SUN</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td><em>Neg</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td><em>Neg</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>103</td>
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<td>104</td>
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<td>105</td>
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<td>106</td>
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<td>107</td>
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<td>108</td>
<td><em>Be.in.business.SUN</em></td>
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<td>110</td>
<td><em>Be.in.business.SUN</em></td>
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<td>112</td>
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<td>116</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>123</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>124</td>
<td><em>Be.in.business.SUN</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125</td>
<td><em>Neg</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Dian if I go into business, come on will you eat some or not?’
Example 9b (Cream Soup 742-743)

Bayu: Gua ngebantuin Gamdes lho ni=h.

Beli lah.

‘I’m helping with the Graphic Design [assignment] right. Buy some.’

Example 9c (Cream Soup 752-757)

Alma: Eman bagus gitu?

Indep good like.that

Is (the drawing) actually good?

Dian: Ké aing di= .. titah

later.SUN 1S.SUN DL.SUN/IND order.SUN

mempertanggung-[jawabkeun kan],

MEN-responsive-APPL.SUN PART

‘I’m going to have to be responsible [for it] you know.’

Bayu: [udah gitu like that Alma mah].

NEG.HORT.SUN

‘Don’t be like that Alma.’

X: .. bingung.

confused

‘Confused.’

Bayu: .. Nggak deng.

NEG PART.GAUL

‘No it’s not.’

Urang .. udah nggak jago gambar.

1S.SUN already NEG champion.SUN/IND draw.SUN/IND

‘I’m not any good at drawing.’

Example 9d (Cream Soup 771-773)

Asmita: .. survai dulu?

survey First

‘Will (we) do a survey first?’

Bayu: Aku mah enang udah.

1S PART.SUN indeed already

‘For me, that’s it?’

Asmita: Udah di-approve gitu.

already dt-approve.ENG like.that

‘Has it already been approved?’

In Example 10a Banyu describes bakso (‘meatball soup’) kiosks in one area of Bandung, claiming Balong Gede is the best. When he asks Asmita if she has tried it, Banyu uses Jakartan lu (‘2s’) combined with blunt question structure similar to that in 9a. At this point in the conversation Banyu controls the direction of talk and his use of lu adds to the performativity of his question. When Bayu uses kamu in his next line, the shift corresponds with a shift from a personal reading of second person reference to a generic reading as he explains how to find Balong Gede. This continues for several lines and includes three generic instances of kamu. As Bayu homes in on Balong Gede, his friends realise he is describing
a kiosk known to sell pork, Example 10b. These young people are Muslim and the friends begin to laugh at Bayu’s ignorance. Bayu demands to know how they know it is pork, using kamu – no longer with a generic reading but as direct personal reference. Having been confronted with the possibility that he had eaten pork (and liked it), Bayu is on the defensive. His question in line 37 no longer has the bravado of his early question in line 4. In this context he falls back on his default addressee reference term kamu. His dismay at the thought he might have eaten pork, and his attempt to deny this, mean he can no longer muster to what it takes for the stylising deployment of lu.

Example 10a (Cream Soup 1177-1180)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bayu:</td>
<td>Yang paling enak tuh Balong Gede.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alma:</td>
<td>Apa?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3    | Bayu:     | Jadi kalau misalnya kamu ke alun-alun=.
| 4    | Alma:     | Itu kan babi Bayu. |

Example 10b (Cream Soup 1209-1217)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Alma:</td>
<td>Itu kan babi Bayu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Asmita:</td>
<td>&lt;@ Bayu tuh, Bayu That</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Bayu:</td>
<td>[Tahu dari Mana kamu]?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Alma:</td>
<td>[@@]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Alma:</td>
<td>[@@@]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Bayu:</td>
<td>[Iya beneran @].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Alma:</td>
<td>[@@@]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Asmita:</td>
<td>[@@]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Bayu:</td>
<td>Nggak=.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Bayu:</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘The best is Balong Gede. Have you ever tried (it) yet or not?’

‘So if for example you go to the city square.’

‘Bayu eats pork.’ (launting)

‘It’s true.’ (launting)

‘No.’
In Bayu’s deployment of lu and kamu we can see how indexical significance arise from the localised moments of interaction and how the quickly changing dynamics of conversation can mean equally quickly changing semiotic resonances of person reference, as he falls back on his default resources when put on the defensive. This can be read as reinforcing his core non-Jakartan – that is Bandung – identity, despite his frequent use of language associated with the capital. In this way we see the meaning of the pronouns arising in part from the semiotic resonance of their perceived provenance in Jakarta, but equally as arising out of their moment-by-moment deployment by interlocutors.

4. Conclusion

These examples have illustrated how young people in Bandung use Indonesian, Jakartan and Sundanese resources for self- and addressee-reference. As demonstrated by the ideologies expressed by speakers about pronominal usage, the perduring means associated with these terms reflect the speakers’ location in Bandung, a regional hub sitting in the (near) periphery of the national hub, Jakarta. These meanings in turn inform the deployment of person reference in conversation, where their immediate meaning and contribution to the construction of stance flexibly emerge from the shifting social needs of face-to-face interaction.

Notes

1 I wish to thank Enung Rostika, Asdit Leonitara, Refdinal Hadiningrat, Alfatihatus Sholihatunissa and Hanni Nurliani for assistance with recordings and transcriptions, as well as Novi Djenar, Howie Manns and Maya Costa-Pinto for their input in the development of this paper.

2 See Appendix A for transcription and glossing conventions.

References


Appendix A: Transcription and glossing conventions

Transcription conventions (following Du Bois et al. 1993)

Asmita: speaker attribution

- line break separate line used for each complete or truncated intonation unit
  - final pitch contour
  , continuing pitch contour
  ? appeal pitch contour
  .. short pause
  ... long pause
  = lengthening of preceding segment
  [ ] speaker overlap
  @ pulse of laughter
  <=@=> laughing voice quality

Glossing conventions

1S first person singular
2S second person singular
APPL applicative suffix
DEF definite enclitie
DI di- P-trigger verbal prefix
EMPH emphatic
ENG English
GAUL Gaul-style slang
HES hesitation
HORT hortative
IMP imperative
IND Indonesian
JKT Jakarta Indonesian
meN meN- verbal prefix
N nasal verbal prefix
NEG negative
PART discourse particle
REDUP reduplication
REL relative clause marker
SI personal article
SUN Sundanese
SURP surprise particle
Appendix B: Full version of Example 9
(Cream Soup 731-755)

1 Asmita:  Eh tapi gimana yah?
           HESSION but how yeah

2   ..(1.3) Laku moal?
     Marketable NEG.SUN
     ‘Uh but how will (it) be huh? Will (it) sell or not?’

3 Bayu:  Laku lah [kayaknya mah].
          Marketable EMPH seems.like PART.SUN
     ‘ Seems like (it) will sell for sure.’

4 Asmita: [target pasar].
          the target market.

5 Bayu:  .. Dian gue pangjualkeun,
          Dian be.in.business.SUN

6   sok lu makan kagak?
     eat NEG
     ‘Dian if I go into business, come on will you eat some or not?’

7 Dian:  .. Ya nggak tahu.
          yeah NEG know
     ‘Yeah (I) don’t know.’

8 Asmita: [Kok nggak tahu].
          NEG know
     ‘How can (you) not know.’

9 Dian:  [enak ngga=k].
          tasty NEG

10 .. enak ngga=k.
      tasty NEG
    ‘Is (it) any good or not? Is (it) any good or not?’

11 Bayu:  Eh, uh

12 gue ngebantuin Gamdes lho ni=h.
          HELP-APPL.JKT graphic design PART this

13   .. Beli lah.
     buy IMP
     ‘Uh I’m helping with the Graphic Design [assignment] right. Buy some.’

14 Alma:  .. <@ Ngancem @>.
          N-threaten
     ‘(He)’s threatening (you).’

15 Asmita:  @@

16 Dian:  Gitulah.
          like.that-EMPH
17 .. Gitulah.
like.that-EMPH

‘That’s how it is. That’s how it is.’

18 Bayu: Eh bagus nih Gamdesna yah.
HE's good this graphic-design-DEF.SUN yeah

19 ... mun hade ditanyakeun moal?
if.SUN good.SUN DI-ask.SUN neg.SUN

20 Bae nya.
doesn’t.matter.SUN yeah.SUN

‘Uh the Graphic Design is good you know. If it’s good will (they) ask about (it) or not?

21 Dian: ... Ulah alus-alus teu-ing.
NEG.HORT.SUN good.SUN-REDUP very.SUN

‘Don’t [make it] too good.’

22 Alma: Emang bagus gitu?
indeed good like.that

Is (the drawing) actually good?

23 Dian: Ké aing di= .. titah
later.SUN 18.SUN DL.SUN/IND order.SUN

mempertanggung-[jawakkeun]
kana],
MEN-responsible-APPL.SUN PART

‘I’m going to have to be responsible [for it] you know.’

24 Bayu: ... [ulah gitu Alma mah].
NEG.HORT.SUN like that Alma PART.SUN

‘Don’t be like that Alma.’

25 X: ... bingung.
confused

‘Confused.’

26 Bayu: ... Nggak denq.
NEG PART.GAUL

‘No it’s not.’

27 Urang ... udah nggak jago gambar.
18.SUN already NEG champion.SUN/IND draw.SUN/IND

‘I’m not any good at drawing.’

28 ... Urang geus teu bisa gambar.
18.SUN already.SUN NEG.SUN can.SUN/IND draw.SUN/IND

‘I’m not any good at drawing.’

29 Tara.
never.SUN

30 Tara ngagambar.
never.SUN N.SUN-draw.SUN/IND

(I)’ve never, never drawn.

31 Alma: ... XXX
‘It’s easy for other people.’

‘All there is [for them] is to just figure it out.’

‘So where are (we) at? Is that it? When will (we) shop, when will (we) do a survey? Will (we) do a survey first?’

‘Has it already been approved by our professor that it has to be cream soup?’
Adolescent interaction, local languages and peripherality in teen fiction

Dwi Noverini Djenar

1. Introduction

Globalisasi has become a familiar term in Indonesian popular discourse. It refers to the inevitable coming of a totalising force that threatens to abruptly change everything, requiring everyone to alter the way they conduct themselves socially, politically, economically, culturally, and linguistically. Like elsewhere, the discourse-on-globalisation (Blommaert 2010: 1) has permeated different areas of Indonesian public life, including government. Towards late 1990s amidst mounting dissatisfaction with the government and the economic uncertainty linked to the Asian financial crisis, various regions took it upon themselves to demand greater political voice and a fairer distribution of resources. Decades of a centralised system that saw profits from resource-rich regions pooled in Jakarta was no longer seen as adequate in meeting the politico-economic needs of the regions. A major change of government in 1998 was followed a year later by the enactment of a new law that would see the regions granted greater autonomy. A major rationale for this decentralisation law is to meet ‘the need to adapt to new internal and external developments’ (perkembangan keadaan, baik di dalam maupun di luar negeri) and the ‘challenges of global competition’ (tantangan kompetisi global). This law marked a monumental shift toward democratisation and has been a catalyst for the development of a more stable relation between the central government and the regions. The law provided a scope for greater political participation and encouraged regions to search for a unique identity in order to compete politically at national level. Meitzner (2013) refers to this situation as a ‘renaissance of local identities.’ Such identities are projected through cultural and linguistic indexes such as use of local languages and traditional attire. This new democratic climate, increased prosperity achieved from strong economic growth in the previous decades, and higher level of education, gave citizens a higher level of mobility, particularly among the younger generation. It was within this context that concerns over the survival of ‘local’ languages and cultures emerged. This paper examines how this societal concern is recontextualised in teenlit, a genre of popular fiction for adolescents.

This paper focuses on three teenlit novels that deal with the language/culture topic to show that the concern for local languages is communicated through layered representations that underscore the experience of localisation as a prerequisite for character transformation. The language champions in the novels are voices from the margins - minor characters who do not evolve emotionally but whose role is indispensible in enabling major characters to have that experience. These characters are indices of the authors’ alignment with the discourse of wong cilik (Javanese for ‘little people’), a discourse that revolves around the plight of marginalised groups. Wong cilik are citizens with little social capital who are subjected to domination. Although they may actively promote their causes, they are inevitably caught in peripherality. The minor characters want to project themselves as global citizens but they do this by forging a uniquely local identity. In doing so, the meaning of their social participation remains localised. The major characters are the ones who have the social capital to go beyond the local.
Through them the meaning of global participation is extended and redefined, from a peripheral aspiration to a more cosmopolitan, confident perspective. In this sense, the minor and major characters are necessarily linked as agents of social processes. Through such processes local identity is renewed and redefined. Whereas it is customary in literary analysis to consider characters as different, individualised subjects, here I argue for an analysis that stresses the continuity between subjects. The sociolinguistics of globalisation provides an appropriate frame for advancing the idea that social agents do not act alone; they are bound to others through spatial embeddedness, language, and shared ideologies.

2. Teenlit and localisation

Blommaert (2010: 79) argues that semiotic globalisation processes do not entail a transformation of the local into a global place. Localities remain local despite translocal influences. How does teenlit as a genre fit this view? In this section I discuss the process of localisation that follow the adoption of the genre from the US. How did teenlit become an Indonesian genre? I argue that the process of localisation has been driven by multiple factors but significantly by criticisms against the genre itself which emerged during the early phase of democratisation. Essentially, critics objected to novels that depict Indonesian teenagers with the lifestyle of middle-class American teenagers. Writers responded to the criticisms in different ways, one of which is by producing novels that deal with social issues, such as the impact of globalisation on regional languages and cultures. The novels discussed here are among these.

The languages featured in the novels are essentially those with which the authors are familiar, either because of their ethnic background, the predominant language spoken in the locality where they are currently based, or both.3 The novel Fairish (2005), which contains dialogue in Betawi, is written by Jakarta-born Esti Kinasih. Esti not only resides in Jakarta but also takes pride in coming from a Betawi background.4 The second writer, Dyan Nuranindya, author of Canting Cantiq (2009; henceforth CC), is also based in Jakarta but comes from a Javanese background. The third writer, Ken Terate, is based in the city of Yogyakarta where she was also born and educated. Like Kinasih and Nuranindya, Terate’s orientation toward her cultural background is strongly reflected in the setting and characters of her novel Pieces of Joy (2011; henceforth PoJ).5

‘Teenlit’ was introduced to Indonesia through translated novels at the end of 1990s. The Princess Diaries series, written by Meg Cabot, were among the early works that were translated. This series helped define the genre for the Indonesian audience. In 2001, the publication of the first Indonesian teenlit novel Eiffel ... I’m in Love provided a momentum for the development of the genre. Budding young writers began producing local novels, encouraged by major publishers who saw that the new genre provided a lucrative market. As noted by Simamora (2005), teenlit filled the gap in a market dominated for many years by didactically written fictional texts and translated Japanese comics. Stories about the lives of urban teenagers written in a colloquial style, packaged as books with brightly coloured covers with images of cheerful looking teenagers, quickly captured the imagination of young middle-class readers. In a relatively short time, teenlit novels became the preferred read among urban teens. At the same time, it invited debates among educationalists, literary figures, and the wider public about what should count as good reading for young people.

The adoption of the genre from the US was not the main point of contestation. Rather, the fact that it led to an assumption among writers at the time that they had to replicate the themes of American novels was. Many works published in the first 2-3 years after Eiffel ... I’m in Love reflect this assumption. These novels bear themes that revolve around a comfortable but unfamiliar world resembling that occupied by middle-class American teenage girls but populated by Indonesian urban teens. The American-inspired themes, coupled with the colloquial style of writing, became the two major points of objections among critics. Fear that the language of literature would be corrupted by the deluge of colloquially written novels, and concern that young people would be preoccupied with ‘foreign’ lifestyles depicted in them, dominated public debates about the genre. Thus objections to the
genre were expressed in terms of concerns not only about language but also morality (see Djenar 2012).

The theme of language/culture is explored in the three novels through characterisation and plot rich in cultural and spatial semiotics (cf. Blommaert 2010: Chapter 3). It is represented most explicitly through the speech and conduct of minor characters and more broadly through those of major characters. In a sense, the novels can be taken to represent the author’s participation in their community’s discourse-on-globalisation. In Indonesia, and indeed elsewhere, the concern over the survival of local cultures and languages has been motivated, on the one hand, by greater awareness of the accessibility of English and its increased use among speakers. The rapid increase in the use of English has caused anxiety as well confidence. Educationists fear that the use of English would hamper the proper acquisition of standard Indonesian among the young. Debates about whether or not bahasa gado-gado ‘mixed language’ should be encouraged regularly surface in public discourse. In terms of local languages, the realisation that many members of the younger generation speak in colloquial Indonesian but lack knowledge of their parents’ ethnic/local language have sparked concerns that local ways of doing things, including using language, may become obsolete. This concern comes not only from parents but also young people themselves, as seen for example in blogs and online forums. Thus at the same time as people enjoy having greater political participation afforded by the autonomy law and increased social capital linked to knowledge of English, there is a sense that they have to continue preparing for globalisasi – something which, in public imaginary, is yet to come rather than something ongoing.

The representations of youth interaction in the novels are local in multiple senses. First of all, the novels are Indonesian-language novels about characters culturally and linguistically grounded in Indonesia, though having translocal influences. Second, in terms of locality, the social issues raised are anchored in settings centred around two main regions known as the origin of the languages/cultures highlighted – the Jakarta region as the home of Betawi culture and Yogyakarta as the centre of Javanese culture. Though the preservation of language/culture issue is shared by local groups across Indonesia (and globally), the maintenance of Betawi and Javanese are of most concern to the respective language communities. Third, though spatial mobility is highlighted, with the characters' movements are predominantly interlocal and revolve around main cities in Java.

The minor characters portrayed as the torchbearers of local cause in the novels carry various indices of identity drawn from both local/ethnic and ‘global’ elements of style. For example, one character speaks in Javanese, dresses in Javanese traditional attire but sings effortlessly in English, another speaks in Betawi but prefers his ethnic name to be pronounced in English. In teenlit novels, translocal influences are thus a given, a starting point from which the process of localisation begins. At metapragmatic level, the adoption of the genre from a foreign source itself represents a process of localisation. At the story-world level, both the minor and major characters are urban citizens who have been exposed to translocal influences. The stories begin with them having had such influences. But the minor characters are also deeply local in world-view and stances. They are the symbolic vehicles by which major characters experience the local. Through the experience, these characters develop as individuals. Thus the novels begin from ‘global’ and proceed to ‘local’, rather the other way around.

The theme of language/culture preservation is not a new in Indonesian literature however. The theme of the survival of batik raised by Nuranindya in CC, for example, was also the main theme of an acclaimed novel by Arszeno Atmowiloto (1986). What is new in teenlit is the way in which this theme is packaged within the broader context of globalisation, linking the local city of Yogyakarta to Indonesia and the world rather. It presents a solution to the local issue by projecting outward beyond the local rather than looking inwardly into Javanese culture itself that Atmowiloto’s novel promotes. Whereas Atmowiloto’s characters end up having to admit that the traditional batik industry and its associated Javanese philosophy can no longer serve modern times, the protagonist in Nuranindya’s novel recognises the value of this cultural heritage and that knowledge gives her the confidence to look and move beyond Yogyakarta and Indonesia. The protagonist can realise her dream of studying fashion design in Paris precisely because she has had an internship at a local boutique, working under
the tutelage of a respected batik designer. Thus the experience at local level is what enables one to move beyond it. The next section discusses in more detail how this local-to-global trajectory is woven into this and the other two novels.

3. Adolescents and the preservation of local languages and cultures

Teenlit novels are written in a style that draws on both colloquial and standard varieties of Indonesian in ways that depart from their older counterparts (see e.g. Iskandar 1977; Nockzee 1992). Whereas in older novels colloquial language is largely reserved for dialogue, teenlit writers also use it in narration, making the writing conversation-like. As some describe it, teenlit language is ‘spoken language which is written’ (see Tasai 2006; Gunawan 2006). The authors are likewise described as those who ‘write the way they speak’ (Kusmarwanti 2005). The themes too have been described in numerous blogs and book reviews as sederhana (‘simple’), and ringan (‘light’). But these descriptions belie the complex and layered representations of young people and the languages and cultures they embody. The layering is indicated through a range of semiotic indices, ranging from personal name, the languages the characters have knowledge of, their socioeconomic background, level of spatial mobility, and ideological orientation. Minor characters from an ethnic group whose social cause is advanced are presented as ideologically heterogeneous, suggesting not only the contested nature of ethnicity and ethnic causes but also the plurality of the voices that advance them. This in turn reflects the diversity of adolescents as a social group.

3.1 Betawi and the plight of a minority group in Fairish

Fairish (Kinasih 2005) is essentially a love story. The story is told from the point of view of a main character, Irish (short from Fairish), a quiet, plain-looking girl, student of a high school in the capital Jakarta. Another main character, Davi, is a newcomer to the school. Davi’s good looks create fierce competition among the girls in Irish’s class. These girls try all sorts of tricks to vie for his attention, but arrogant and belligerent Davi took to Irish precisely because of her quiet demeanour and ordinary looks. Through her calmness Irish helps Davi deal with his trauma caused by a car accident in which his previous girlfriend was killed. Being with Irish helps Davi overcome his guilt of being the driver of that car. The story tells of the gradual forming of relationship between the two.

In Fairish, the language/culture preservation issue is highlighted through two minor characters of Betawi background, Udin (whose full name is ‘Chaeruddin’) and Ucup, two students from the same class as Irish and Davi. Though both characters are Betawi and come from a low socio-economic background, they are presented as two ideologically different individuals. Udin is a champion for Betawi language and culture, while Ucup is a boy who wants to be a non-Betawi. Udin’s mother sells homemade lunches for a living and Udin helps her by taking orders from his friends and delivers the food to school, whereas Ucup does little except annoy his friends. When Davi arrived at his new school, Udin was absent due to typhoid fever – an illness often associated people from the lower socio-economic stratum. While we are informed about Udin’s background, not much is known about Ucup’s. The little we know comes from the speech of another character, Metha, as shown in (1).

1 Daripada elo! Jauh-jauh dari kampung hijrah ke Jakarta, eh begitu lahir namanya Ucup lagi Ucup lagi! (Kinasih 2005: 7)

But look at you! You came all the way from the kampung to Jakarta, and the name you automatically got at birth was Ucup, yes it’s Ucup!

Udin is close to Irish and is a respected class member. He speaks Betawi and demands that his friends reciprocate. His insistence on speaking this language is a form of activism, aimed as he says, to ‘slow down the currents of the globalisation’.
Ucup, by contrast, prefers to have his name pronounced as ‘Yuwkap’ – the Indonesian spelling of the English pronunciation of ‘U-cup’ – and does not answer to ‘Cup’, a common vocative for ‘Ucup’. Ucup’s attitude, according to the narrator, is a result of *pengaruh globalisasi* (‘influence of globalisation’) and *arus globalisasi* (‘current of globalisation’) echo the discourse-on-globalisation in Indonesia. Both phrases suggest that participation in the globalisation processes is not a matter of choice but a case of being swept along an unfamiliar path (cf. Tsing 2009: 60). The differences between Udin and Ucup show the diversity in local responses to this process.

The contrast between the Betawi characters is a contrast between preferred and dispreferred ideological positions respectively. Udin is the preferred Betawi identity: feisty, socially active, and proud of his cultural heritage. This identity is communicated through several indices: possession of a full name, family, and his friendship with Irish. Ucup on the other hand, is known only by his nickname and has a precarious relationship with others, as indicated in (1). Both characters do not play a significant role in the latter part of the novel, but they are important in facilitating localisation. At the beginning of the story Udin is the person Irish took refuge in when Davi treated her carelessly. For Davi, Udin is a bridge to Irish. Through him, his experience of the local is made possible. When Udin takes orders the day he is back from his absence, Davi responds in Betawi, much to everyone’s surprise. In doing so, Davi signals to the group that he is now one of them. Davi’s connection with Udin thus marks an important part in the development of his character. Udin is his door to the ‘local’ culture and to Irish.

### 3.2 Batik heritage and global resonances in *Canting Cantiq*

*CC* is a novel with a strong message about the preservation of *batik* as an Indonesian heritage. The message is packaged as a story about a teen girl, Melanie, who comes from a wealthy background and who, due to family misfortune, is forced to move from the capital Jakarta to Yogya in Central Java. Her interaction with Javanese-speaking young people in Yogya leads to a career success in *batik* design and the realisation of her dream to study fashion design in Paris. Saka is the first person who introduces her to the Javanese world.

Unlike Udin in *Fairish* who struggles to maintain his ethnic heritage, Javanese youth in *CC* are portrayed as confident about the survival of their language and culture. Unlike Udin who explicitly says his purpose in speaking Betawi is to guard it against obsolescence, Saka in *CC* does not have to justify his use of Javanese language. He uses this language to speak to Melanie, whom he knows is not from the local area. Melanie encounters Saka at her grandfather’s house in Yogyakarta when she arrives from Jakarta. Saka is one of the student boarders there. Her description of him is given in (3).


> ‘He looks like a good guy. His manner is gentle and very polite. His clothes look classically old fashioned. With a *lurik* shirt, thongs, and hair tied with a rubber band to a ponytail. ‘I’m Saka,’ he introduced himself in Javanese’

For your information, Udin only serves customers who speak in Betawi. To *slow down the currents of globalisation*, he says (katanya), eh, he says in Betawi (katenye). Also to prevent traditional values from disappearing. Those who pretend to be westerners like Yuwkap, will definitely not be served.'
The description portrays Saka as a cosmopolitan Javanese young male: soft-spoken like stereotypical Javanese but unconventional in physical self-presentation. Saka cleverly blends tradition with modernity by pairing traditional lurik with a flip-flop and ponytailed hair. He introduces himself in krama, the high register of Javanese. The first person kula in (3) is a humbling pronoun, but Saka’s use of this pronoun to a stranger from Jakarta whom he knows is unlikely to speak Javanese, is an indication of self-confidence. It is also a symbolic act of inviting Melanie to adapt culturally to Yogya and Javanese culture. Later in the story, Melanie’s positive impression of Saka grows stronger when she hears him play the guitar and sing articulately in English.

Like Udin, Saka is a minor character. He is only one among several people who befriends Melanie. But he is ideologically important. Saka embodies a modern Javanese youth identity. This is shown through several indices. First, his name means ‘pillar’ in Javanese, suggesting he is of strong character. Second, he is local to the city of Yogyakarta – a city known as a centre of Javanese culture and youth activism. Third, he does not shy away from showing off his cultural roots. Melanie’s experience in meeting him marks the beginning of a process that leads to her self-transformation. Through interaction with Saka and other Javanese characters, Melanie gradually sheds the smug superiority that comes from being a wealthy Jakartan and learns to appreciate another culture. Thus for her, being open to local influences lead to future opportunities. These come in the form of an internship at a prestigious batik boutique, followed by a scholarship to a Paris design school.

3.3 Youth and Javanese language in Pieces of Joy

Like CC, PoJ (Terate 2011) deals with the question of Javanese identity. The difference is, whereas in CC this identity is highlighted through contrast with a Jakartan cosmopolitan identity, PoJ contrasts two Javanese identity positions: preferred and dispreferred identities. Like Fairish, the juxtaposition of different identities highlights the heterogeneity of an ethnic group.

PoJ is told from the point of view of Joy, a girl from Bandung (West Java) who goes to school in Yogya. The novel opens with her meeting Stink, the dispreferred character. Stink’s unlikeable character is indicated through several semiotic indices. First of all, his name is not a flattering one for a young man though being an English word, it may sound like the name of a rock singer. Second, he is a university drop-out who works as attendant a comics and DVD rental shop called ‘Utopia’, and supplements his income by busking in the main streets of Yogyakarta. Third, Stink wears a batik shirt and a choker, and talks to his friends in ngoko, the low register of Javanese. Joy falls for Stink because his easy-going temperament. Her description of him is shown in (4).

(4) Tapi dia beda. Dia aneh, urakan, cuek, tapi lucu, manis, dan perhatian banget. Kalau kamu sudah mengenalnya sih. (Terate 2011: 9)

‘But he’s different. He’s strange, wild, couldn’t care less about what others think, but also funny, sweet, and really caring. When you get to know him that is.’

Joy’s infatuation with Stink is short-lived however. His unpredictable behaviour makes her realise that his carefree lifestyle does not suit her. As she becomes ambivalent toward him and eventually initiates a breakup, Joy meets Ronal, son of her father’s friend who studies geology at the prestigious Gajah Mada University. She then begins to reorientate herself toward study and look to possibilities after high school. The novel ends with her developing a close friendship with Ronal.

Like Stink, Wening is also Javanese and a close friend of Joy’s. However, unlike Stink, Wening is the embodiment of a ‘good’ Javanese. Her name means ‘calm’ in Javanese, and she is described by Joy as pendiam, sederhana, dan cenderung minder ‘quiet person, down to earth, and tends to be introverted’ (2011: 10) – stereotyped characteristics of Javanese women. From Wening Joy learns about the different registers of Javanese and their social meanings (2011: 28-29), and it is through her that Joy comes to appreciate what is culturally preferred and what is dispreferred in Javanese culture. This knowledge enables Joy to recognise that Stink is not the kind of person for her. This realisation in
turn enables her to understand her own mistakes and develops as a character. Meeting Ronal in this sense marks the new phase of her life.

4. Discussion

In all three novels, the issue of language/culture preservation is conveyed through the construction of the local. Only the champions of local cause are given indigenous names: Udin and Ucup in *Fairish*, Saka in *CC*, and Wening in *PoJ*. The other characters, including the protagonists, have (adapted) English names (Fairish, Melanie, Joy, Stink, Ronal) reflecting both the genre’s roots and the contemporary orientation toward English as a new cultural resource in Indonesia. Local characters – the language champions or the dispreferred characters – are characterised by low mobility. While the main characters such as Davi in *Fairish*, Melanie in *CC*, and Joy in *PoJ* all come from outside the locality, the local champions remain in the locality throughout. The main characters undergo self-transformation through localisation but also have the social capital to chart a future trajectory beyond the local.

The use of indigenous names and the rendering of relevant dialogues in local languages give local flavour and create an air of authenticity. These are also a political act. To include Betawi or Javanese in a genre dominated by colloquial Jakartan Indonesian is to make a point about the value of these languages and the cultural heterogeneity of the speakers. This act can be understood in different ways. One may interpret it as the authors wanting to say that young people too are concerned about the ‘currents of globalisation’, and that youth from minority groups can own their social struggle rather than being struggled for. Alternatively, one can also interpret it as a didactic message, namely that young people should care about maintaining local cultures and languages and get directly involved in the efforts. Either way, it remains that the local characters are represented as socially peripheral. At one level this representation could be considered as not being commensurate with the importance of the cause, and that it only reinforces the peripherality of marginal voices. By incorporating Betawi and Javanese in the novels, the authors in effect emphasises the minor status of those languages vis à vis Indonesian and English. However, at another level one can argue that the representation is ‘quasi-mimetic’ (Fludernik 1996: 13) – it approximates real life in Indonesia where some ethnic groups are indeed a minority, and that even a large ethnolinguistic group such as the Javanese is not free from concerns about language loss. By having minor characters as language champions, the novels stay true to the small, peripheral scale of the voices of *wong cilik*.

5. Conclusion

Teenlit is peripheral and localised in several senses. Though the genre links Indonesian writers and readers to their counterparts in the US and other parts of the world such as the UK and Australia where teenlit novels are published, the link is essentially unidirectional. English language novels are imported to Indonesia and read either in original or through translation, while Indonesian novels are basically read by local audience because of the language in which they are written, a situation not dissimilar to that concerning the Tanzanian novel discussed by Blommaert (2010: Chapter 3). Many Indonesian novels have been translated into English, but teenlit novels being of a pop genre, do not attract the interest of literary translators. Indonesian teenlit thus remains peripheral in global fiction market.

Teenlit is also peripheral in another sense. Within Indonesia itself, teenlit writers are considered as commercial writers, not as writers of *sastra* ‘Literature’ and hence are peripheral in the literary world. At story-world level, the inclusion of local languages such as Betawi and Javanese and their speakers may signal a renewed interest in ethnic identity and draw attention to the plight of marginal people. However, it also highlights Hobsbawm’s (2007) point that globalisation deepens the

Nevertheless, it is useful to remember that teenlit is read by middle-class Indonesians. They are social agents who have the resources to take local issues at a broader level, either nationally or beyond it. In this sense, raising the language preservation issue in the novels could well be as a strategic move.

Notes
1 Undang-Undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1999: 1.
2 I use ‘local’ for what others commonly refer to as ‘regional’ or ‘ethnic’ languages and cultures, to align with the focus of this paper.
3 This is not necessarily the case for other writers however. Sitta Karina, for example, includes Spanish-speaking characters in her novel Lukisan Hujan (‘Images of Rain’) though she herself cannot speak this language. When asked about this, she revealed that for that novel, she engaged the services of a translator (interview with the author, January 2011).
4 Betawi refers to the people indigenous of Jakarta as well as to their language.
5 Information about the authors’ background is from interviews I conducted between December 2010 and January 2011.
6 Kampung can refer to a village or an urban village. Here Jakarta refers to the metropolitan centre, while kampung is the periphery where Ucup comes from.
7 The language ‘Betawi’, also referred to as Jakarta Malay, is spoken by some 5 million people around the Jakarta region and is classified as ‘threatened’ (Lewis et al. 2015). http://www.ethnologue.com/language/bew, accessed 28 April 2015.
8 Batik was inscribed by UNESCO as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009. The author mentioned that CC was inspired by it (interview with Dyan Nuranindya, 2011).
9 Lurik is Javanese handwoven fabric, typically featuring stripe motif.

References


1. Introduction

In this paper, I will provide three brief examples of syncretism between languages defined as Indonesian, Javanese, and English, with a focus on the former two. The examples below are based on my own recent examinations of linguistic landscapes (O’Connor and Zentz forthcoming; Zentz forthcoming); communicative repertoires (Zentz 2014), and language in education policies in Central Java, Indonesia (Zentz 2015; Zentz forthcoming). These examples combine to demonstrate that ‘modern’ approaches to language that treat language as contained and singular entities rarely capture the realities of language use on the ground, which is generally informed by much more fluid and long-term histories than language policies can, or are intended to, account for.

The data in this article are a selections of data that I collected for an ethnographic study during the 2009–2010 academic year, when I was a teacher-researcher in the undergraduate English Department (ED) of a medium-sized private Christian university, here abbreviated CJCU, in a small city I call Betultujuh in Central Java, Indonesia. Eight fourth-year undergraduate English majors were my focal participants, and these eight represent a common range of religious, ethnic, and geographic characteristics of the students at CJCU. In the table below, the term ngoko represents the informal and most commonly used register of the Javanese language. It is frequently opposed to kromo, the higher register of the language, which we will encounter later on.

Table 1. Focal group participant biographic information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Primary language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angelo</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Semarang</td>
<td>Indonesian/ngoko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satriya</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Betultujuh</td>
<td>ngoko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayu</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
<td>Christian-Mennonite</td>
<td>Rural outside of Betultujuh</td>
<td>ngoko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dian</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Rural outside of Betultujuh</td>
<td>ngoko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nisa</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Betultujuh</td>
<td>ngoko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novita</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Chinese/Javanese</td>
<td>Christian-National Church of Indonesia</td>
<td>Betultujuh</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dewi</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Semarang</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lidya</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Chinese/Dutch/Javanese</td>
<td>Christian-Charismatic</td>
<td>Semarang</td>
<td>Indonesian/ngoko</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.1 Language policies and the indeterminacy of language practices

As is well understood by now, language policies are frequently based on ossified and idealized definitions of particular ‘languages’ rather than on the slippery indeterminacy of language-in-use (Moriarty 2014; O’Connor and Zentz forthcoming). The definitions of language that de jure policies are based on in turn inform language use in public spaces, where ‘language displays ... communicate [ ] a message, intentional or not, conscious or not, that affects, manipulates or imposes de facto language policy and practice’ (Shohamy 2006: 111). Thus, I treat language policies as informed by and formative of language use on the ground.

Recognizing the ‘indeterminacy of language-in-use’ is not to say, though, that ‘languages’ dissolve into chaotic or unorganized substance. Rather, I prefer to examine language as instances of linguistic performativity, or ‘languaging’ (Pennycook 2007), in which linguistic and communicative resources derived from multiple codes and multiple speech communities are assembled meaningfully in order to accomplish communicative goals. To question the existence of ‘Indonesian’ and ‘Javanese’ in Betultujuh as unproblematically bounded entities then is not to suggest that linguistic landscapes and language use in general consist of linguistic free-for-alls. Even where language mixing is the rule, there are many local constraints on the forms that linguistic hybridity can take in (Huebner 2006).

Betultujuh, with an estimated population of 175,000 in 2010 (BAPPEDA 2010), is a small, landlocked city in a slightly elevated location in Central Java. The town is majority Javanese, but it is also one of the most diverse cities on Java. The presence of the highly esteemed CJCU attracts students from all over the archipelago who unite through a common Indonesian language. The university’s Christian presence on an island that is otherwise 95% Muslim has also allowed a Chinese ethnic minority to grow in the city to a larger degree than in the surrounding areas.

2. Syncretic linguistic landscapes

In Betultujuh, a history of national language policies attempting to enforce only Indonesian on public signs of any sort may easily lead their readers to assume that most signage actually is ‘purely’ in Indonesian. In this sense, the national language policy is fully successful in exerting its top-down influence: most of the signs can in fact be considered to make use of the Indonesian language. However, I argue that Indonesian language policy is also not successful in actually making all of the signs Indonesian. Its success is rather in leading people to believe that they are, particularly at first glance. As I began to review at greater length the many pictures I took of signs in Betultujuh during my time there, it became apparent to me that any simple, ‘language by language’ analysis – which signs use what languages – would not be possible. The more I investigated the words used on many signs, the more I noticed that syncretic, or bivalent (Woolard 1998; Woolard and Genovese 2007) if not trivalent words were pervasive. These are words that can actually pass as being a part of more than one language system at a time.

In Central Java and specifically in Betultujuh, the Javanese ethnicity and language dominate in daily talk despite its higher level of diversity. There is minimal international immigration, but there is substantial intranational immigration. While there is some segregation among these ethnic groups, all still share the national language, and those involved at the university and its surrounding boarding houses engage in much interethic contact. In signage, then, most of the immigrants to Java, being of Indonesian nationality, are expected to be able to understand what the signs say. Additionally, these immigrants often come to understand a basic set of Javanese vocabulary words in a community where the informal language of communication is often Javanese. The Indonesian government has tried numerous times, most recently in 2009, to require that signs be in Indonesian only, except where a local word is absolutely necessary. That is to say, despite some syncretism on these signs, they can in large part be officially considered Indonesian, despite which ‘separate language’ any word actually originates in, which is often unclear. The pictures below are from a selection of pictures I took in the 2009-10 academic year and they are concentrated around what I consider the ‘commercial zone’ of
Betultujuh: the area most concentrated in stores and selling/buying activities, with the highest concentration of pedestrian activity, and with the longest history of Chinese ethnic presence.

The first sign at hand appears outside the local Avon store, as seen at the top of the front window in Image 1. To the left of the store name, there is a banner advertising ‘OXyGNdw’.

![Image 1: Avon store with OXyGNdw](image1.jpg)

Based on the pictures that accompany the brand, we can imagine that this product is a water drink with added oxygen. The super- and sub-scripted ‘y’ and ‘e’ letters evoke some combination of chemical and mathematical notation, perhaps signalling, for those who recognize this, scientific knowledge possessed by the producer of this drink, as well as some aesthetic playfulness, perhaps to attract attention among a wider swathe of potential consumers. The ‘dw’ ending on the word Oxygen, as we read further, stands literally for ‘drinking water’; however, it is a clever play on words because the word *dewe*, pronounced like the individual letters, is actually a Javanese word for ‘alone’ or ‘independent’. While it is not recognized as an Indonesian word in any dictionary I have consulted nor in my regular Indonesian conversations, *dewe* is a word that I frequently encountered while living in Betultujuh, and thus the reader might be expected to know the word even if they are not a long-term resident of the town nor a native Javanese speaker. Perhaps it is the case that this play on words also might draw in a reader unfamiliar with English ‘oxygen’ and the English pronunciation of ‘dw’ by signalling, in a local language, that this product might enhance independence or the strengthening of the body.

Not far from the Avon store, a strip of furniture stores appear. English is quite common in furniture advertisements (see Images 4 and 5), and this is in contrast to other signage in the area. For
instance, in Image 3, a sign I saw directly under the sign in Image 4 is handwritten in a more formal Indonesian and says:

NEEDED.
WORKER: WOMAN
EXPERIENCE

Store of Rich Sources

Image 3: Employment advertisement

It is suggested in the language choice here that useful professional or formal communication, which in this context can be expected to mostly take place among people of Javanese ethnicity, switches to Indonesian language, at least in writing. This also indicates a general level of ‘buy-in’ among local residents to the national and official Indonesian language, as reflected in the choice of Indonesian and not Javanese in an informal handwritten sign. The strictly Indonesian language choice here reflects the fact that Javanese is increasingly not seen in writing; it might simply be people's expectation by now that any written sign should not be in the language that they speak daily, but in Indonesian, the language of written and formal communication. The Dreamline banner (Image 4) above the handwritten sign, and the American Pillo store sign to their right (Image 5), are largely in English, excluding the store’s officially documented name, street address, and telephone number in the bottom third of the sign in Image 5.

Image 4: Dreamline furniture banner
On the American Pillo sign, *Toko Sumber Jaya* translates as something like ‘store of rich sources’. The Indonesian word *jaya* is, in Javanese, *joyo*, though not necessarily always spelled with two ‘o’s. There is frequent alternation from ‘a’, pronounced /a/ in Indonesian, to a Javanese pronunciation of /ɔ/ or /o/, which can be written ‘a’ or ‘o’; thus, Javanese *jaya* can be written in Javanese as *jaya* or *joyo* and still pronounced *joyo* (/dʒɔjo/) in Javanese. Additionally, a Javanese speaker reading Indonesian might very well say /dʒɔjo/ despite the ‘jaya’ spelling. According to two dictionaries I have consulted and two friends from Betultujuh whom I asked about some of these pictures, *toko* and *sumber* are bivalent: they are a part of both Indonesian and Javanese lexicons, though it took my friends some conversation and second-guessing themselves and each other to come to this conclusion (I address the English upper portion of the sign elsewhere [O’Connor and Zentz forthcoming; Zentz forthcoming]).

The local synchronic ‘snapshots’ that we take in linguistic landscape studies are ubiquitously rooted in diachronic, historical processes, which create local meanings. Important to this analysis and to working toward defining a more well-defined framework for analysing linguistic landscapes, two concepts are essential to keep in mind:

1) Mobility, across both space and time, is part and parcel of all linguistic landscapes, whether it be people or texts that move. Here, the historical intermingling of Javanese and Indonesian often makes it impossible to tell where one language ends and the other begins.

2) One factor that might be truly defining of ‘globalization’ is that the blurry definition of what ‘a language’ is and where one language ends and another begins is now clearly evident, due to technologies of signage and to ubiquitous mobility across socially, economically, and politically defined borders. In the case of Indonesia, the transfer of English as a symbol of wealth, prosperity, and independence, is a regular fact of linguistic landscapes despite the language’s categorization as ‘foreign’ to Indonesia.

Returning to the top-down effects of language policies, it is clear to see particularly in the blending of Javanese and Indonesian language forms, that language becomes what policy makers wish it to be; that is, everyday acts of producing and interpreting language are deeply influenced by top-down legislation. Javanese-Indonesian syncretism is widely understood to be just Indonesian when many people look at these signs. Only a diachronic component that brings in these languages’ historical overlap can bring us to understand how very unclean the borders between languages are, and how borderlessness between defined languages is rooted in sociopolitically and economically influenced worldwide and historical movement, of texts, of semiotic registers, and, of course, of people. We now turn to the notion of ‘communicative repertoires’ in order to see how these histories and policies affect contemporary young adults’ language use.
3. Syncretic Repertoires

The images in the above section briefly reflect the local language ecology, which I have sketched below in Table 2, based on research participant Satriya’s descriptions of his language use in multiple contexts locally.

Table 2. Languages and their practices in Betultujuh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Javanese (ngoko)</td>
<td>informal interactions among locals (born and raised in Java or residing in Java long enough to have learned it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javanese (kromo)</td>
<td>local/pan-Javanese ceremonies surrounding death, birth, pregnancy; younger to elder talk, ideologically cited as ‘the Javanese language’, ‘no one speaks it anymore’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javanese Indonesian</td>
<td>younger generations’ peer communication, local, place-based performance of Indonesian educated identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Indonesian</td>
<td>Chinese intra-ethnic communication where Javanese is not used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other dialects of Indonesian</td>
<td>interethnic communication locally where Javanese is not a choice or where context (e.g., classroom) requires Indonesian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized Indonesian</td>
<td>translocal performance of Indonesian identity, schools, elite education, television performances, churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>communication with foreigners, in English Department or English classes elsewhere, performance of mobile, elite identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Arabic</td>
<td>Muslim prayer at home and at the mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multiple languages indigenous to other islands (Torajanese, Batak, etc.)</td>
<td>intra-community talk among migrants to Java (for education, work)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Satriya had learned to regard ‘his Indonesian’ as locally and ethnically marked in a way that placed his accent and vocabulary low on a nationalized scale of language value (see Blommaert 2010 and Zentz, 2014 for discussion of scale). This was made apparent to him beyond time spent with his girlfriend, who was from another island in Indonesia and would frequently tease Satriya for speaking Indonesian with a medhok, or ‘country bumpkin’, accent. In one class essay, Satriya described an interaction he had had with debate competitors from Jakarta and other respected universities on Java. He expressed that the non-Javanese, elite university students he encountered at this regional debate competition did not want to ‘get close with’ him and his other Javanese peers. As he wrote:

Text 1: ... their accent is still close to my Javanese accent...

Even though [the other Javanese debaters] speak Indonesian I feel easier to get close with them compared to other debaters from [Universitas Indonesia, in Jakarta], [Indonesian State College of Accountancy, in Jakarta], and UGM [Universitas Gadjah Mada, in Yogyakarta]. At that time, I felt that students from Jakarta and UGM do not want to close with my friends and me from [CJCU]. I think that the main reason why I can easily get close to them compared to other universities from Jakarta is because their accent is still close to my Javanese accent so it makes our communication easier although all of us speak using Indonesian.

(Satriya, Sociolinguistics Essay, 9 November 2009)
Satriya scaled not only these other students’ language, but also the students themselves, the universities they attended and the larger cities from whence they hailed, higher than his Javanese, smaller-university and smaller-town, peers. The translocal Indonesian language did serve to unify participants in an ‘Indonesian space’ beyond their separate localities; however, within this space, a Javanese variety of Indonesian united Javanese students under a sort of ‘pan-Javanese’ identity that Satriya felt was scaled lower than students from larger cities and bigger, more prestigious schools. Furthermore, Satriya assumed that these students, in their elite positions, must have held a certain disdain for himself, his Javanese peers and the Javanese dialect of Indonesian that they spoke.

As he progressed through his English studies at CJCU, Satriya accumulated new communicative resources and combined them in novel ways across languages. With his expanding communicative repertoire, he found himself resituating his language use locally by using multiple communicative resources across defined ‘languages’, and in the following text, using any and every code and communicative resource available to him to reach his goals:

### Text 2: ... if I use Indonesian my initial intention somehow is not fulfilled yet

Nowadays, I use Indonesian more often than my Javanese because I spend almost of my daily activities with the people who talk Indonesian. For example, when I talk to my college friends, my girlfriend, and my debate students, I use Indonesian. When I teach my students at [the high school] Debate club, I speak English as a medium of instruction but when they do not understand what I mean I change it into Indonesian. I feel being benefited if I use English or Indonesian rather than Javanese to them, because they will obey and follow all my instructions. However, I sometime do not like the gap which exists between teacher and students when I use English, or Indonesian. Therefore, I talked to some of them using Javanese, especially to my students who were prepared for [regional debate] competition. I talk to them using both Javanese and Indonesian to make them more cheerful and more relax. Sometimes, I make code-switching between Indonesian to Javanese because if I use Indonesian my initial intention somehow is not fulfilled yet. Further, I do not feel comfort when I have to speak Indonesian because many of my friends and students said that my Indonesian is so ‘Medog’ (has a strong Javanese accent), so I sometimes switch my Indonesian to Javanese in order to make me comfortable and my interlocutor get my point instead of laughing at me. However, Indonesian has given me a lot of benefit in my social interaction. For example, I can get closer to my friends who dominantly speak Indonesian. Then, I also found that I used Indonesian in purchasing something in more modern market such as mall, shops, and stores, whereas I know that the sellers can speak Javanese, and they know that I can speak Javanese too.

(Satriya, Sociolinguistics Essay, 9 November 2009)

For Satriya, Indonesian was just a language of circumstance, garnering little affective attachment and even a sense of being demeaned for being his Javanese self in Indonesian. At the same time, there was strong instrumental motivation to use it – even to use it more than any other language he spoke – as it was the common academic and inter-ethnic Indonesian language, and even the language of higher-classed activities such as mall-going despite the fact that his interlocutors also spoke Javanese. Satriya maintained a strong pride in being Javanese, however, and although he felt devalued in a national space because of it, his medhok masculinity actually helped him to feel more secure within this national atmosphere when he was able to display along with evidence his higher education (this I explain more elsewhere, see Zentz 2014). He wanted to use English and the communicative resources he had gained in English spaces in his life; he had to use Indonesian; but he would remain fully, proudly, Javanese and medhok while using them all.

### 4. The protection of local languages: Muatan Lokal

After the very monolingualizing and monoculturalizing regimes of Sukarno and Suharto from 1949 to 1998, it was not until Indonesia’s Reformation period, beginning in 1998 with social, economic and
political upheaval, that President Habibie’s (previously Suharto’s Vice President) national government undertook to restore the nation’s emphasis on the pluralism underlying its one unifying language:

Persatuan dan kesatuan yang dibangun itu tidak pernah dimaksudkan untuk meniadakan kemajemukan masyarakat. Kemajemukan masyarakat sama sekali bukan merupakan kendala atau hambatan bagi persatuan dan kesatuan.

(Republika Online, 1998a, cited in Foulcher 2000: 400)

The unity and one-ness we are building is never intended to deny the plurality of our society. Social plurality in no way represents a restriction of or an obstacle to unity and one-ness.

(iband.: 405)

Keith Foulcher points out that never before, throughout both the Sukarno and Suharto regimes, had such an emphasis on pluralism been described by an Indonesian president in commemoration of the Sumpah Pemuda, or Youth Congress, the early 20th century independence movement. In light of Suharto’s departure, ‘the call for greater openness was part of a widespread rejection of the New Order’s emphasis on conformity, standardization and centralization in the interests of a de-centred and localized social and political pluralism’ (Foulcher 2000: 400). In addition, though, Habibie’s and the national government’s call for decentralization may not only have been a direct rejection of New Order centralized policies, as it also fits well with calls for language preservation that started as early as the 1980s (Bjork 2004) and became globally popular throughout the 90s (Cohn and Ravindranath 2013; Zentz forthcoming).

Despite initial decentralization legislation in 1994, under international pressure to do so, the national government began more genuine attempts to decentralize after 1998. Muatan lokal, or local content courses, were the educational component to this (Bjork 2004). Provinces are given priority over what their own muatan lokal (local content) curricula look like. The national Department of Education’s National Ministry of Education Regulation (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional) 22/2006 requires two hours per week of muatan lokal study, the content of which is left to the discretion of province level governors:

Muatan lokal merupakan kegiatan kurikuler untuk mengembangkan kompetensi yang disesuaikan dengan ciri khas dan potensi daerah, termasuk keunggulan daerah, yang materinya tidak dapat dikelompokkan ke dalam mata pelajaran yang ada. Substansi muatan lokal ditentukan oleh satuan pendidikan.

‘Muatan lokal is curricular content intended for the development of competencies that are tailored to the region’s characteristics and potential, including regional specialties that cannot be grouped into course subjects already available. The substance of muatan lokal will be decided by the educational department.’

(Department of Education 2006)

Central Java’s own prescription for muatan lokal, as described in Resolution by the Governor of Central Java (Keputusuan Gubernur Jawa Tengah) 423.5/5/2010 (see Appendix), presents a curriculum for the teaching of Javanese language to students throughout primary and secondary schooling. It draws out goals for students to become conversant in both ‘literary’ and ‘nonliterary’ forms of expression in Javanese, and it aims for them to understand the Javanese syllabary writing system. These are positive aims toward the maintenance of this regional language; however, the curriculum written in Resolution 423.5/5/2010 presents a syllabus that looks much like language education programs that reify and stereotype cultures, and that early language planners endorsed (see Alisjahbana 1971, 1974; Moeliono 1986). Students I asked about these courses ubiquitously referenced their all-around uselessness and even discouraging effects. Additionally, while these muatan lokal classes were legislated at two hours per week, students regularly told me they attended just one hour per week in school (Smith-Hefner [2009] corroborates these claims).
In my experiences talking to both high school and English Department students, *muatan lokal* classes had a reputation as immensely boring and as a place where students who daily speak Javanese go to get told they cannot speak it. The result has been a reification of a pre-modern or ‘proto-national’ (Errington 2008) local ‘high’ culture, placed in the past and out of touch with today’s youth, who, as research participant Nisa once stated, learn that they can ‘no longer’ speak it. It seems that one thing these courses do effectively teach is something not written into the curriculum: a feeling of nostalgia, consisting of ceremonial poetry (*geguritan*); a culturo-religious mythology through *wayang kulit* (leather shadow puppet shows largely based in a local hybrid form of Hindu and Muslim mythologies that is now often associated with superstition and backwardness); music practices with *gamelan*, a central instrument in *wayang* performances; and learning the Javanese script mentioned above, now largely limited to symbolic purposes. Students generally come out of the classes able to write their own and others’ names in it, but nothing else.

Further, the *muatan lokal* curriculum has eliminated the lower register of Javanese, *ngoko*, which is still most Javanese speakers’ primary language of communication (see Table 2 above), from the field of languages by not including it past Grade One. Ngoko is thus legislatively placed outside of the scope of ‘the Javanese language’; it is portrayed instead as a children’s version of it – something to be grown out of. Based on the written curriculum and on student reports, it seems that Javanese classes are teaching little about a living culture, and this is reinforced through the quite limited resource allocation that these local content courses receive as well as through national discourses, policies, signage, and media, which communicate only through the national language.

Despite the overwhelmingly poor reception of *muatan lokal* classes among students, though, it still seemed enough, according to some of the people I spoke with, to keep the Javanese language alive and well:

[Today at the] Depdiknas (Department of Education), I met with Pak A, director of [X] section of the Depdiknas Semarang. I asked him about the laws that are put out by his office and he said that SBI [International Standard Schools] stuff comes from national, *muatan lokal* comes from a Surat Keputusan Gubernur [Governor’s Decree] concerning *muatan lokal*. He said that the point of *muatan lokal* is for people to appreciate local culture...He mentioned at one point that Japan has a good culture of maintaining respect for their own culture. This is one thing that *muatan lokal* is there to promote – what’s called Etika in Indonesian, sopan-santun in Javanese...

(Fieldnotes, April 11, 2010)

The goal of *muatan lokal* was clear, and Pak A’s faith in it seemed certain. *Muatan lokal* in Java will be enough to uphold the Javanese ‘ethic’. Moreover, many of the same students who had taken and generally been bored in their own *muatan lokal* classes had just as much faith that these classes would maintain and preserve Javanese culture and language as did Pak A. In the following group conversation, Dewi, Ayu and Dian all explain why Javanese is not under threat (translation follows original):

**Text 3: It’s not possible for local languages to be left behind**

**Dewi:** kalau bahasa local ditinggalkan juga nggak bisa, ya? soalnya pakai- sekarang mulai dari SD sampai SMA itu anak dapat pelajaran di sekolah dapat pelajaran bahasa jawa. jadi kalau ditinggalkan nggak mungkin.

**Ayu:** terus misalnya di rumah diajari bahasa jawa, secara simple, seperti saya, dulu saya waktu kecil belajarnya bahasa jawa kromo. dari kecil saya tahu kromo. tapi setelah saya masuk sekolah, as long kindergarten and elementary school uh, i forget my kromo and then I switch into ngoko sampai sekarang. jadi saya itu sudah lupa kromonya karena like TK itu saya sudah interact sama teman-teman dan teman-teman pakai javanese semua. dan saya ikut-ikutan pakai bahasa indonesia, sudah nggak pernah pakai yang kromo lagi.

**Lauren:** okay. so what language will you use with your children at home?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ayu:</th>
<th>home?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dian:</td>
<td>at home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren:</td>
<td>at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dian:</td>
<td>javanese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren:</td>
<td>javanese?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dian:</td>
<td>javanese. I think I agree with Ayu. If we teach bahasa Indonesia and English in fact uh, their grandmother and father speak in javanese, the children will be able to adapt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren:</td>
<td>okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dian:</td>
<td>kan bisa sendiri gitu lho.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren:</td>
<td>okay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Translation (original Indonesian in italics, English in plain font)

**Dewi:** it’s not possible for local languages to be left behind. because they use- now starting from elementary to high school kids get studies at school get javanese language studies. so it’s not possible for it to be left behind.

**Ayu:** then for example at home I was taught javanese, in a simple way, like I, first when I was little I learned javanese kromo. from when I was little I knew kromo. but after I entered school, as long kindergarten and elementary school uh, I forget my kromo and then I switch into ngoko until now. so I like already forgot kromo like at kindergarten I already interacted with friends and my friends all used javanese. and I joined in using Indonesian, already I never used kromo again.

| Lauren: | okay. so what language will you use with your children at home? |
| Ayu: | home? |
| Dian: | at home? |
| Lauren: | at home. |
| Dian: | javanese. I think I agree with ayu. if we teach bahasa indonesia and english in fact uh, their grandmother and father speak in javanese, the children will be able to adapt. |
| Lauren: | okay. |
| Dian: | you know they can do it on their own like that. |
| Lauren: | okay. |

(Lidya, Ayu, Dian, Dewi, Interview 4, May 20, 2010)

This conversation is framed with students’ statements that Javanese will not be lost. Dewi, herself a descendant of Javanese royalty who was raised in an urban environment and claims to speak only Indonesian, starts out by explaining that it is not possible for Javanese to be lost because it is taught in muatan lokal courses. The excerpt closes with Dian’s claim that her future children’s Javanese proficiency will be guaranteed as they will speak Javanese with only their grandparents, and Indonesian and English with her and her future husband. However, right in between these two statements Ayu, in what seems to be her attempt to agree with Dewi and Dian – that muatan lokal classes are enough to maintain Javanese – contradictorily tells us all the story of how, from the moment she started going to school she shifted her own language use away from the high register kromo (which a child of that age would not be expected to speak much of anyway) and into ngoko and Indonesian. Amid their very own strong claims in many of the conversations we had over the year to language loss or shift toward Indonesian (see Zentz 2015), these three students maintain beliefs that Javanese will not be lost because it is being safeguarded in the same muatan lokal classes that, by reputation, do not teach students to speak Javanese, and because their children will speak the language with only their grandparents. Furthermore, Ayu demonstrates well – even if unintentionally – how the community fabric through which kromo would be learned no longer exists. She claims that she was learning kromo before she started her schooling, but as soon as she started leaving home and spending her days at school, those moments where she might have learned kromo decreased, peer pressure to use other forms of language increased, and her kromo faded away.
Angelo, on the other hand, did not provide a convincing case that *muatan lokal* would keep Javanese in use. While he did speak *ngoko* in daily conversation with many of his friends, he claimed that before he started school he never had seen Javanese script, and that his family’s use of *kromo* was not fluent. In comparison to his exposure to English, which I will not discuss here, his learning of Javanese felt forced, ‘useless’, and unwelcome.

**Text 4: I didn’t feel interested**

Angelo: dari awal itu udah nganu- jadi pelajaran bahasa jawa waktu kecil, yang pertama kali aku dapat itu udah nggak enak.

Lauren: u-huh.

Angelo: udah nggak enak, jadi dipaksakan harus bisa menulis jawa, dipaksakan harus tahu bahasa krama, terus bahasa gini, gini, gini itu jadi nggak suka.

Lauren: ya. okay.

...  

Lauren: okay. tetapi juga ada exposure bahasa jawa?

Angelo: sangat minim.

Lauren: okay.

Angelo: sangat minim. karena di keluargaku nggak ada yang bisa bahasa jawa one hundred percent. termasuk yang sampai aksara Jawanya dan sampai, termasuk bahasa krama-kramanya yang ini itu nggak ada yang seratus persen bisa. dan itu memang aku pertama kali belajar itu murni baru, sangat bener-bener baru.

Lauren: okay

Angelo: diperkenalkan dengan huruf jawa baru. dan aku nggak merasa interested, merasa, ‘useless lah belajar ini semua.’ so, I learned that not because I want to but because I have to.

Translation (original Indonesian in italics, English in plain font)

Angelo: *from the beginning already-so javanese classes when I was little, from the very first time it already didn’t feel good.*

Lauren: u-huh.

Angelo: *it already didn’t feel good, so I was forced, had to be able to write in javanese, forced to know kromo, forced in language this, this, this like that so I didn’t like it.*

Lauren: yeah. okay.

...  

Lauren: okay. *but there was also exposure to javanese?*

Angelo: *so minimal.*

Lauren: okay.

Angelo: *so minimal. because in my family nobody can speak one hundred percent javanese. including javanese script and kromo that’s like this or like that, nobody can one hundred percent. and that the first time I studied it pure, it was truly really new.*

Lauren: okay.

Angelo: *introduced to new javanese script. and I didn’t feel interested, I felt, ‘well this is useless studying all of this.’ so, I learned that not because I want to but because I have to.*

(Angelo, Interview 2, November 27, 2009)

Javanese class was just a drag, forced, and a place where a good student like Angelo went to get bad grades.

By relegating the only institutionally ratified speaking of Javanese to a two-hour maximum per week language class modelled on ‘Culture with a big C’ classes that are actually taught through the primary medium of Indonesian (National Law 24/2009 Article 29 requires this, Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional, n.d.) and that consist of a cultural essentialization that scholars of language
teaching take increasingly critical views of (see Block 2007; Canagarajah 2008; Kramsch 2009; Pennycook 2001), the government has created more contexts where Indonesian becomes the primary acceptable mode of communication and high Javanese a language of the past. Other forces such as nationalized media accumulate to work against Javanese's maintenance: toward the elimination of kromo, toward more spaces for local syncretism between ngoko and Indonesian, and toward a Javanese dialect of Indonesian becoming the widely preferred mode of daily communication (see also Cole 2010). In school-based attempts to preserve local cultures based on modernist language ideologies, state ideologies about learning language do not necessarily lack an understanding that there are connections between language performance and cultural ways of interacting; it seems, however, that their attempts to preserve these cultural fabrics function under an assumption that cultures can be upheld by the same institutions and materialities that exclude them instead of by the entire community fabrics that previously upheld them.2

5. Conclusion

In nationalism, and especially in 50 years of extremely and punitively centralized national governmentality (from 1949-1998), material and ideological resources are wholly dedicated to the national language, ensuring its spread and survival often at the expense of others. Language shift is rapidly taking place, both in Java and throughout Indonesia more broadly (J. Bertrand 2003, Cohn and Ravindranath 2013; Florey and Bolton 1997; McConvell and Florey 2005; Ravindranath and Cohn 2014).

All of the students who participated in my study at CJCU have enjoyed great access to the resources that make them proper Javanese-Indonesian citizens. They are highly educated and thus have lived daily since childhood through institutionalized interactions that consist in large part of the Indonesian language and of learning the proper Indonesian citizenship behaviors that lead to school success. On the other hand it seems that they have had little access to the daily interaction-based resources that an individual would require in order to attain the levels of proficiency and ‘correctness’ required of what at least older generations assume to be proper Javanese young adults of their social location within their home communities.

In the three brief study excerpts above, we have seen evidence that it is not simply that kromo language is disappearing and that Indonesian and ngoko are syncretizing; rather, it is the community interactions that are and were spaces where kromo would be spoken and passed on to younger generations are decreasingly coming to pass; informal interactions are increasingly influenced by nationally and media-dominant Indonesian; and signage is ideologically and often linguistically Indonesian-dominant. Each speaker's linguistic repertoire is constructed in proportion with the spaces where s/he spends time and the amounts of time that they spend there: Formal interactions have moved to the space of institutions like the Indonesian-medium public school, formal conversations in nationalized media take place in Indonesian, and pop culture prestige takes place in a multi-ethnic (yet Javanese dominant) national Indonesian speaking community. The entire linguistic ecology of Central Java, one which for centuries has been quite fluid, multi- and poly-lingual, continues to shift since nationalism, which, despite recent decentralization, continues to work in favor of (multiple, syncretized dialects of) Indonesian and less use of local languages.

Notes

1 For this percentage I made my own calculations based on numbers available at the website of Badan Pusat Statistik (n.d.).

2 Though the nuances of language use in prior eras are just as complicated (see Anderson 1966; Bertrand 2005, Zentz forthcoming). In the interest of chapter length, his information cannot be expounded upon.
Research Resources Cited


References


**Appendix**

Keputusan Gubernur Jawa Tengah No. 423.5/5/2010

LAMPIRAN I
KEPUTUSAN GUBERNUR JAWA TENGAH
NOMOR : 423.5/5/2010
TANGGAL : 27 Januari 2010

STANDAR ISI MATA PELAJARAN MUATAN LOKAL (BAHASA JAWA) SD/MI DAN
STANDAR KOMPETENSI LULUSAN MATA PELAJARAN MUATAN LOKAL
(BAHASA JAWA) SD/MI

A. STANDAR ISI MATA PELAJARAN MUATAN LOKAL (BAHASA JAWA) SD/MI
meliputi :

1. Kelas : I (Satu), Semester: 1 (Satu)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>STANDAR KOMPETENSI</th>
<th>KOMPETENSI DASAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>MENDENGARKAN</td>
<td>1.1. Mendengarkan dan membedakan berbagai bunyi/suara dan atau bunyi bahasa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mampu mendengarkan dan memahami berbagai wacana lisan, melalui mendengarkan berbagai bunyi/suara atau bunyi bahasa, dan tembang dolanan.</td>
<td>1.2. Mendengarkan tembang dolanan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>BERBICARA</td>
<td>2.1. Memperkenalkan diri menggunakan kalimat sederhana dengan ragam bahasa tertentu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mampu mengungkapkan gagasan dan perasaan secara lisan melalui memperkenalkan diri, menyapa, menjawab saapaan sesuai unggah-ungguh.</td>
<td>2.2. Menyapa dengan kalimat sederhana dan santun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3. Menjawab saapaan sesuai unggah-ungguh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>MEMBACA</td>
<td>3.1. Mengeja huruf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mampu mengeja huruf, membaca suku kata, kata, dan kalimat sederhana dengan nyaring.</td>
<td>3.2. Membaca suku kata dan kata.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.3. Membaca nyaring kalimat sederhana dengan lafal yang tepat dan lancar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>MENULIS</td>
<td>4.1. Menulis huruf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mampu menulis huruf, suku kata, kata, dan kalimat sederhana dengan huruf lepas.</td>
<td>4.2. Menulis suku kata dan kata.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.3. Menulis kalimat sederhana.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Translation of Resolution by the Governor of Central Java No. 423.5/5/2010

ATTACHMENT I
Resolution by the Governor of Central Java
Number: 423.5/5/2010
Date: 27 January 2010

CONTENT STANDARDS FOR LOCAL CONTENT COURSE TOPIC (JAVANESE LANGUAGE)
ELEMENTARY/MADRASSAH AND GRADUATION STANDARDS FOR LOCAL CONTENT COURSE TOPIC
(JAVANESE LANGUAGE) ELEMENTARY/MADRASSAH

A. CONTENT STANDARDS FOR LOCAL CONTENT COURSE TOPIC (JAVANESE LANGUAGE)
ELEMENTARY/MADRASSAH consist of:

1. Class: I (One), Semester: I (One)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Competency Standard</th>
<th>Base Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>LISTEN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Able to listen and understand various oral discourses, through listening to various sounds/voices or language sounds, and dolanan (children’s play) songs.</td>
<td>1.1. Listen to and differentiate various sounds/voices and language sounds. 1.2. Listen to dolanan (children’s play) songs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>SPEAK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Able to produce ideas and feelings orally through introducing oneself, asking, and answering greetings in accordance with unggah-ungguh (Javanese customs).</td>
<td>2.1. Introduce oneself through the use of simple sentences in the proper Javanese register. 2.2. Greet with simple and polite sentences. 2.3. Answer greetings in accordance with unggah-ungguh (Javanese customs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>READ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Able to write letters, read syllables, words, and simple sentences aloud.</td>
<td>3.1. Write letters. 3.2. Read syllables and words. 3.3. Read aloud simple sentences with precise and fluent pronunciation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>WRITE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Able to write letters, syllables, words, simple sentences with free-standing letters.</td>
<td>4.1. Write letters. 4.2. Write syllables and words. 4.3. Write simple sentences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indonesia, its youth and ‘light communities’
Jan Blommaert

Comments on the panel ‘Margins, hubs and peripheries in decentralizing Indonesia’ (part 1), Conference on ‘The Sociolinguistics of Globalization’, Hong Kong University 5 June 2015.

All of the papers in this part of the panel focused on youth language and the sometimes problematic ways such ‘new’ forms of speech clash with strong nation-state institutional cultures of standardization. Over and beyond this general focus, three points merit deeper engagement; let me review them briefly.

1. Youth language, universally, is an example of how societies (in spite of often very strong homogeneistic self-imaginations) in effect contain numerous ‘niches’ developing at different speeds, occupying specific spatiotemporal arenas, and operating along specific normative frameworks projected onto behavioural scripts in which specific forms of language are part of what counts as accepted/acceptable behaviour. It was Cicourel who stated that what people effectively do when they do the work of interpretation is to try and make sense of situations by reading social structure into it. I shall have more to say on social structure in a moment, but the point can already be made that social structure is manifestly plural: different structures interact and intersect, triggering often unbalanced confrontations of normative frames – what is ‘meaningful’ and therefore socially and politically expectable – with often unexpected outcomes.

2. Furthermore, the papers all showed how such confrontations of different normative frames represents the experience of change. Indonesia, like any other place on earth, changes fast as an effect of globalization (and, in this case, also because of momentous national political shifts), and the on-the-ground experience of such change often takes the shape of conflictual discourses of normativity (again projected, concretely, into behavioural scripts encompassing specific forms of language usage). These normative frames provide a sense of ‘order’ (recall Cicourel’s idea bout understanding as reading social structure into situations), and it is the clash of different ‘orders’ that creates the sense of insecurity, anguish and destabilization we often see and encounter in data on people’s actual social experiences. In our own jargon, it is the immersion in a polycentric social environment that constitutes the baseline experience of macro-changes triggered by globalization. It is the encounter with not one single, transparent and hegemonic social structure, but with multiple structures in competition over spaces, membership and socially ratified meaningfulness with the potentially threatening effect of reclassification, that constitutes the lived experience of ‘change’ for many.

3. But even more importantly, what are these contrasting and conflicting ‘orders’ like? In order to answer this question, we need a distinction between nation-state and globalized forms and
representations of ‘community’. Remember that, in the tradition of Durkheim, Weber and Parsons, the nation state was typically a local, ‘thick’ community – a community in which people shared vast amounts of resources through common backgrounds, institutional governmentality and socialization.

The papers in this panel, however, showed invariably ‘light’ communities often tied together by shared ‘niched’ practices (Goffman’s ‘Encounters’ can also inspire us here). These light communities, remarkably, are local – see the emphasis on locally grounded youth vernaculars in the papers here – but translocally infused and framed, which is why they are often seen and decried as ‘westernization’ while strictly local vernaculars and indexicals are used. The new globalized order, thus, with its intense physical and virtual mobilities, appears to stimulate and even privilege the formation of ‘light’, local communities whose orientation is not towards the nation-state but towards ideals and imageries drawn from the wider world, and involving specific spaces of deployment, specific actors and specific codes of meaningful practice. To return for a moment to the issue of structure: the ‘light’ communities represent a ‘light’, flexible, volatile and fast-moving structure, interacting with and often only perceptible from within ‘thick’ and slower-moving structures. Our disciplinary traditions have consistently emphasized the ‘thick’ structures, while ‘light’ ones tended to be dismissed as insignificant or superficial.

I’m afraid we can’t afford this any longer. The tremendous importance of ‘light’ communities, and the fact that for those inhabiting them they often experientially, emotionally and socially prevail upon the traditional ‘thick’ communities of family, religion, ethnicity or nationality, is perhaps the most pressing theoretical and descriptive issue in the study of globalization nowadays. From practices and their performers and performing conditions, over the kinds of communities they generate, to specific modes of social structure they propel: this to me sounds like a research program of considerable interest. The papers in this session provide excellent and substantial food for thought in this direction.

Links
The conference program, including the panel lineup and the abstracts, can be accessed via
http://programme.exordo.com/slxg2015/

https://www.academia.edu/10789675/Commentary_Culture_in_superdiversity

https://www.academia.edu/8403164/Conviviality_and_collectives_on_social_media_Virality_memes_and_new_social_structures_Varis_and_Blommaert_
Special issue on ‘Margins, hubs, and peripheries in a decentralizing Indonesia’

PART II

Nostalgia and (re)centring the local in public spheres
Recentring the margins?
The politics of local language in a decentralizing Indonesia

Adam Harr

Abstract

One unexpected consequence of Indonesia’s regional autonomy legislation has been a widespread and heterogeneous ‘revival of tradition’ in regional politics (Davidson and Henley 2007; Vel 2008). Relatively unnoted within this revival is the emerging importance of local languages in some district level elections. People who had been accustomed during the New Order to being addressed by politicians in the Indonesian language found themselves addressed by district executive (bupati) candidates in local languages that index local ethnolinguistic identities. Drawing data from the first election of a district executive in the central Florinese district of Ende in 2008, this paper argues that in some cases the revaluation of local languages in electoral politics results from the intersection of the decentralized territoriality of the Indonesian state with local ‘semiotic ideologies’ (Keane 2007) that are constructed in terms of ‘centres’ and ‘margins’ (Tambiah 1973; Fox 1997; Kuipers 1998). I close by considering whether speakers of local languages are empowered by this revaluation.

Introduction

In the wake of regional autonomy reforms, observers have described in Indonesia’s new regional politics a ‘revival of tradition’ (Davidson and Henley 2007; Tyson 2010; Vel 2007; Von Benda Beckman and Von Benda Beckman 2011) or ‘renaissance of local identities’ (Mietzner 2014). This paper considers how the rhetoric of tradition and localness was performed by politicians in the run-up to the first direct election of a Bupati in central Flores, and how these performances were part of the revaluation of a ‘local language’ (bahasa daerah).

When I arrived to begin fieldwork in central Flores in 2006, a revival of tradition was evidently well underway, and was spoken of as a revival of ‘adat’ (Tsing 2009). As a newcomer, I generally explained myself by saying that I had come to study ‘Lio language and culture’ (bahasa dan budaya Lio). My interlocutors would nod knowingly and remark to a bystander, ‘He wants to study Lio adat’ (Dia mau belajar adat Lio). I was told that I had arrived in central Flores at a good time for my purposes, because many villages were ‘reviving’ (angkat kembali) aspects of adat that had lain dormant for some time, and I was told that this revival had started, maybe, in the early 2000s. Since these same people also told me that adat practices had weakened since the early 1970s, I initially assumed that the boot heel of the New Order had pushed adat practices down, and that with the boot heel removed at the end of the twentieth century, it seemed that those same practices would spring back up like trampled grass. As time passed, however, and as the first direct election of Bupati of Ende district approached, I witnessed and heard numerous stories of prospective Bupati candidates who were funding ancestral rituals and the (re)construction of adat architecture. Prospective candidates
were infusing their resources and their prestige into ritual practices and places at the same time that they sought legitimacy in these practices and places. More than a ‘natural’ resurgence, adat practices that had been ignored or suppressed in New Order politics were being actively bolstered by post-New Order politics as a new class of local politicians sought the privileged status of ‘native sons’ (putra daerah).

In the idiom of contemporary American electoral politics, local identity had become crucial to the construction of a candidate’s ‘Message’ (Silverstein and Lempert 2012). As Michael Silverstein and Michael Lempert show, political ‘Message’ is not a message – not a count noun – but a kind of semiotic space the politician inhabits. Message in this sense is the ‘politician’s publicly imaginable ‘character’ as it is presented to the electorate’ (Silverstein and Lempert 2012: 10). Message is not a set of truth claims; it is an autobiographical aura that politicians indexically project and invite others to project upon them.

One way in which post-New Order politicians inhabit the Message of local-ness is by addressing their constituencies in so-called ‘local languages’ (bahasa daerah). ‘Local language’ is, of course, not a stable, independently existing category, but is, rather, shaped by history, ideology, and the influence of missionaries, scholars, and bureaucrats. But my use of the phrase here is intended to reflect the usage that I encountered in central Flores. There, people who had been accustomed during the New Order to being addressed by politicians in the Indonesian language found themselves addressed by Bupati candidates in local languages that index local ethnolinguistic identities. Local languages have clearly been revalued in the era of OTDA, and this revaluation is ‘creatively indexed’ (Silverstein 1976) each time a candidate invokes a local language. I argue that these performances of local identity and local language are moments when vital sociopolitical relations become publicly visible, and I will show how these performances raise the possibility of unpredictable interactions between politicians and their publics.

**Language and marginalization**

This decentralizing moment is certainly not the first time Indonesia’s languages have been revalued by the shifting territoriality of the state. In Language, Identity, and Marginality in Indonesia (1998), Joel Kuipers offers a detailed historical and ethnographic picture of the processes by which poetic, ritual registers of a Sumbanese language were devalued as ‘marginal’ during the colonial period and New Order. The full breadth of Kuipers’ argument is beyond the scope of this paper; however, I wish to highlight Kuipers’ careful attention to the ways in which Sumbanese language ideologies connect language and place. These linguistic ideologies and practices are part of what constitute Weyewa ancestral villages as ‘exemplary centres’ (Geertz 1968; Tambiah 1985). Kuipers shows the ramifications of the forced integration of these exemplary centres into a bureaucratic territorial logic defined by boundaries rather than centres. This is a territorial logic that is governed by a principle of ‘hierarchic inclusion’ (Kuipers 1998: 23). Such a territorial logic entails ‘a system of nested spatial groupings in which the ones below were totally included in the ones above’ (Kuipers 1998: 38). In such a nested system, ‘ritual performers [who] were once accustomed to enacting the history of their domain as the centre of the world ... now needed to see their discourses as a sub-species of a larger, more authoritative discourse that issued from a colonial metropolis’ (Kuipers 1998: 38). This hierarchial territorial logic was maintained through Suharto’s New Order during which time Indonesian served as the encompassing language of politics (Errington 1998; Keane 2003).

In sum, Kuipers reveals the fine-grained sociolinguistic consequences for a people oriented to ritual centres when those ritual centres become parts of a bureaucratic backwater. I suggest that in the inaugural elections of district executives across many parts of Indonesia, the situation Kuipers describes was, in a limited sense, inverted: bureaucratic backwaters became political centres and the languages and ritual centres located therein took on new values.
Politics of the local in Kabupaten Ende

To illustrate, I turn to the first-ever election of a Bupati in Ende regency, which is currently one of eight regencies on Flores island in eastern Indonesia. In the 2008, election of Bupati, residents of Ende regency were suddenly in a position to imagine themselves as voting citizens in a territory whose boundaries were intimately familiar and roughly isomorphic with ethnolinguistic borders (Von Benda-Beckman and Von Benda-Beckman 2011). At the same time, seven candidates for Bupati were forced to decide how to attract this newly constituted electorate.

Ende district has a total population of around 230,000, and the population is divided into two self-identifying ethnolinguistic groupings: the Endenese and the Lionese. My own ethnographic perspective is very much rooted in extended participant-observation in the lives of people who identify themselves as Ata Lio. This is a designation claimed by approximately 170,000 people – just under ¾ of the district. As Eriko Aoki (2004) reminds us, Lio people participate in a number of intersecting transnational linkages, so that ‘Lio’ is only one of several situational self-identifications an individual might claim. For present purposes, however, it serves as a useful simplification.

Almost all Lio people participate to some degree both in Catholic sacraments and in ancestral rites. Ancestors are sometimes described as intercessors between the living and God. As one informant, a prominent member of the Catholic Church, put it: ‘Where is God? But I can show you the graves of my father and his father.’ Ancestral rites pay homage to the dead, who gave to the living an ordered, habitable world. Indeed, life as we know it was made by those who came before us, and for this the living are obliged to carry forward ancestral rituals. As Ende regency held its first ever election for Bupati, these rituals were, in many instances, propelled by a new kind of aspiring politician.

One candidate began funding rituals in his mother’s home village as early as 2002. In 2006, when he staged the lavish, week-long secondary reburial of his father in another village, the events were widely and approvingly seen as the beginning of his political campaign – a way to get his name buzzing on lips and tongues as the banded, honking funeral motorcade wound way across central Flores. When the official six-week period of his campaign began in October 2008, the candidate’s eldest son and campaign manager were possessed by a pair of ancestral spirits who constructed an altar at an especially ‘potent’ (Allerton 2013) mountain-top point on the Lio sacred landscape. At campaign events, the son and campaign manager, under ancestral influence, regularly issued oracular pronouncements in an archaic poetic register of Lio that required translation by the candidate’s youngest son. In this way, the candidate was able to inhabit a Message of spatio-temporal ‘precedence’ (Fox 1997): his campaign controlled an ancestral variety of Lio that was understood to be prior to, and therefore hierarchically superior to, contemporary polycentric varieties of Lio.

This candidate’s campaign way by no means unique. At least four of the seven 2008 Bupati candidates staged or funded large-scale adat events. Against this backdrop of revivalism, I turn to one prospective candidate’s failed attempt to use tokens of locality to garner the support of one segment of this constituency.

The Vice Bupati learns his place

The Vice Bupati was three hours late, and several hundred residents of Koanara were left waiting by the road in the afternoon heat. After a week of round-the-clock hubbub in which crews constructed a stage and vast bamboo and tarp enclosure, amassed hundreds of chairs and arranged them into rows, sliced garlic cloves and shallots by the pound, and slaughtered and cooked several pigs and a cow, preparations were finally complete for the inauguration of the new kepala desa (‘village head’) by the Vice Bupati. The Vice Bupati, along with the Bupati, had been selected by Ende’s Regional People’s Representative Assembly (DPRD) before democratizing reforms were passed. Now it was 2007 and many believed that the Vice Bupati had his sights set on campaigning for Bupati the next year.

The inauguration ceremony had been scheduled for 11 o’clock, but at 2 o’clock the Vice Bupati still had not arrived. Now and then an SMS conveyed news of his whereabouts in a nearby village, and
folks looked at their watches, shook their heads, and went back to chatting or playing cards. In a moment of piqued frustration, the man who had tirelessly spearheaded the preparations cried out, ‘Oi! We’re little people!’ (Kami ata lo’o)².

All complaints were set aside, however, when a spout of dust from the Vice Bupati’s convoy of SUV’s appeared at the far end of the road. Village leaders dressed in slacks and tailored ikat blazers converged on the Vice Bupati’s vehicle for handshakes before the Vice Bupati was ushered to an arch of banana fronds that had been raised to serve as a portal into the village. Encircled by hundreds of watchers, the entourage ambled up Koanara’s stony thoroughfare to the bamboo-framed, tarp-covered enclosure that had been constructed for the day’s events. There was space under the impressive rectangular enclosure for six hundred or more seats, all facing a sizeable stage. On the stage, two blocks of elevated seats had been arranged for VIPs: ceremonial leaders (mosa laki) sat in one group stage left; civil servants, local medical staff, and the Catholic priest sat in another block stage right. At the head of the stage, a flower-strewn table and special high-backed chair had been arranged for the Vice Bupati. With countless pockets of watchers gathered in windows and doorways at the edge of the enclosure, the Vice Bupati looked out wearily on a crowd of nearly a thousand.

After performing the official inauguration of the village head, the Vice Bupati’s main order of business before the obligatory meal was a ‘speech’ (sambutan), which began with formal greetings to all present from himself and the Bupati. The Vice Bupati then immediately launched into an account of his busy day to that point, saying that he had already been to three functions similar to this one in other villages. Following is a rough transcript of this small section of his speech, in which the ‘monologic discourse’ (Bakhtin 1981) of a formal speech is momentarily transformed into a dialogue between politician and public. For this reason, I have organized the transcript in turns at talk. Of particular importance are the Vice Bupati’s misuses of directional terms in the first and third turns at talk. These mistakes are corrected by members of the audience in the second and fourth turns at talk.

### Fragment from the installation of Kepdes Koanara

1. **Vice Bupati:** 
   
   *Sore ini saya sudah di tiga tempat.*
   
   ‘This afternoon, I’ve been to three places.’

   **Neabuga aku mena Demulaka**
   
   ‘This morning, I was *mena*³ Demulaka’

2. **Audience:**
   
   *Ghale.*
   
   ‘*Ghale.*’

3. **Vice Bupati:**
   
   *Ghale?*
   
   ‘*Ghale?’*

   [points in the direction of Demulaka]

   *Ghale.*
   
   ‘*Ghale.*’

   *Saya melantik duapuluh-delapan orang Badan Permuyawaratan Desa.*
   
   ‘I installed twenty-eight members of the Village Assembly.’

   [2 second pause]

   *Jam satu neanea …*
   
   ‘At one o’clock this afternoon …’
This segment shows the Vice Bupati confronting the polycentricity (Blommaert 2010) of a ‘local language.’ The Lio language is part of a dialect chain that extends across central Flores and also includes the Ngada, Nage, Keo, and Endenese languages (Fox 1998). The Lio language itself is locally understood to encompass at least four distinct varieties, each named for its first person singular pronoun: bahasa neku, bahasa aku, bahasa ahu, and bahasa ja’o. At a finer grain, each village seems to have its own lexicon of obscenity. This can be tricky, since words that are quite obscene in one village are often commonplace terms in a neighbouring village. Perhaps the most granular level of variation in the Lio language is its system of directional terms.

Although Lio directional terms encode a set of geocentric coordinates that are relatively stable across the area, the application of these coordinates is a matter of highly localized convention, in some instances particular to an individual household but more generally subject to conventions determined at the village level. The directional system was certainly the first and most persistent puzzle that I encountered in speaking Lio, but my friends told me that they, too, felt confused and uncomfortable in new places because they didn’t know how to apply directional terms. The anthropologist Eriko Aoki, who has conducted ethnographic research in central Flores for over thirty-five years, reports a story that was told to her of a man who was gored by a water buffalo because he misinterpreted a directional term in a neighbouring area (Aoki 1996: 139). The Vice Bupati’s mistake was not so serious, but it nonetheless carried repercussions.

In referring to his morning activities, the Vice Bupati consistently flubs the directional terms that are obligatory before a place name of reference. When he misuses a term, members of the audience correct him, first mildly, then more forcefully. Significantly, the corrections came from Koa’nara’s ceremonial leaders, seated stage left. Crucially, after being corrected the first time, the Vice Bupati checks his next directional usage with the audience before committing to it. As he checks whether he is using the correct directional term, he bobs his head in a way that reflexively indexes a submissive stance. When I later showed this video footage to friends who had not been present at the event, his head bob provoked laughter and the exclamation that ‘he’s humbled!’ (kai mea!). In performing in a local language, the Vice Bupati’s monologic speech was ruptured, and he opened himself to an unplanned and disadvantageous dialogue with the audience.

By invoking his official functions elsewhere, the Vice Bupati indicated his mobility, that his executive powers transcended any particular village; but in doing so, he draws on linguistic resources that are intrinsically not mobile, in the sociolinguistic sense elaborated by Jan Blommaert (2005, 2010).
He situated himself as the centre of several villages’ activities, such that the activities in Koanara were but a small part of his plans for the day. In other words, his rhetorical retracing of his steps was, in Kuipers’ terms, an act of hierarchical encompassment – or would have been had he not gotten lost along the way. In using the wrong directional terms, the Vice Bupati did more than misspeak. He failed to speak from where he was, because to speak in Lio is to indicate the proper deictic relationship with places that lie elsewhere.

The Vice Bupati’s gaffe in the Lio language exposed him to the possibility of being publicly corrected – that is, for the public to correct him. Using local signifiers subjected him to local linguistic norms. This was a visible display of a new indexical order in which politicians would periodically be subjected to public evaluation based on local criteria. To be clear, I’m not suggesting that this minor linguistic gaffe was a watershed moment in Endeneses politics, much less Indonesian politics. I merely suggest that this moment and many more like it in Ende district and districts across Indonesia were moments when a new indexical order was made manifest in publicly accessible signs.

Of course, there would have been no gaffe if the Vice Bupati had spoken only Indonesian, as I am told had been typical of political rhetoric in central Flores during the New Order. Though a native speaker of Lio, the Vice Bupati was evidently not accustomed to using Lio in his speeches. When he became a prospective candidate for Bupati the next year, the most common dismissive criticism I heard was that ‘he doesn’t know how to talk’ (kai gare bebo). Ultimately, he was unable to garner sufficient party support to submit himself as an official candidate in the election.

Conclusion

Drawing on theoretical and ethnographic insights from Kuipers (1998), I have proposed that, in at least some cases, the post-New Order ‘revival of tradition’ results from the intersection of the decentralized territoriality of the Indonesian state with local language ideologies that value language varieties in terms of ‘centres’ and ‘margins’. Drawing further inspiration from Blommaert (2010), and Bakhtin (1981), I have proposed that regional politicians’ rhetorical performances in ‘local languages’ raise possibilities for new, unpredictable forms of dialogic interaction between politicians and their polycentric publics. These proposals, alongside arguments and evidence put forth by other papers in this panel, point to a sociolinguistic terrain on which the Indonesian language and the Indonesian state no longer offer the cardinal coordinates.

Notes

1 This paper was prepared for a symposium titled ‘Margins, Hubs, and Peripheries in a Decentralizing Indonesia’ at The Sociolinguistics of Globalization Conference held at the University of Hong Kong, 3–6 June 2015. I am grateful to Zane Goebel for organizing such an excellent symposium and to all the other participants for their many stimulating contributions.
2 All Lio words appear in bold italics. Indonesian appears in plain italics.
3 Mena refers to the left hemisphere relative to an uphill-downhill (ghela-ghawa) or upstream-downstream (gheta-lau) axis, assuming a downhill (ghawa) or downstream (lau) orientation. Following is a list of matched pairs of core directional terms:
   - Gheta/Lau: Upstream/Downstream
   - Ghela/Ghawa: Uphill/Downhill
   - Ghale/Mena: Right/Left (from POV of facing either lau or ghawa)
   - Gheta/Ghale: Sunrise-ward/Sunset-ward
4 Ghale has different directional meanings at different scales. At a relatively near scale, ghale means ‘to the right’ if facing either ‘downstream’ (lau) or ‘downhill’ (ghawa). At a relatively distant scale, ghale means ‘towards the sunset,’ i.e. ‘West.’ For people in Koanara, Demulaka is ghale in the near-scale direction.
References


Crossover Politics: Spatiotemporal images of the nation-state and the vintage aesthetics of the margins in post-Suharto political oratory

Aurora Donzelli

Abstract

This paper draws on Bakhtin’s (1981) insights on the organic interconnectedness of time and space, what he called ‘chronotope’, to explore how new styles of political oratory may produce fundamental re-articulations of the spatiotemporal representation of the nation-state in contemporary Indonesia. In the late 1990s, a global financial crisis impacted Indonesia’s economy. The New Order regime led by President Suharto came to an abrupt closure after three decades of authoritarian rule and Indonesia underwent a major transition from state-led development to a decentralized system managed through neoliberal policies (Peluso et al. 2008). Drawing on audiovisual data recorded in a peripheral region of upland Sulawesi, I examine the re-articulation of the interplay between speech forms and forms of political rationality that followed this institutional shift. My analysis focuses on the emerging aesthetics of ‘the vintage’ and ‘the peripheral’. I discuss how the usage of regional language (Toraja) and the deployment of formulas of anticolonial rhetoric are currently used to craft novel spatiotemporal forms of collective belonging and convey enhanced oratorical agency. Indeed, besides undermining the authority of bureaucratic Indonesian, the deployment of linguistic ‘pastness’ and the celebration of locality allow an aesthetic re-articulation of the New Order’s chronotopic representation of the nation-state as a spatial entity capable of ‘vertically encompassing’ local communities (Ferguson and Gupta 2002) and existing in the immobile synchronicity of an eternal present (Pemberton 1994). At a more general level, through framing political discourse as a site for examining the shifts in the politics of locality and temporality in our contemporary changing world, this case brings the focus on situated communicative interaction to bear on the study of the zones of cultural friction (Tsing 2005) underlying the global processes of late capitalism.

Introduction: Global frictions and local crossovers

To pop music aficionados the term ‘crossover’ immediately evokes the blending and fusion between different genres or ‘sounds’. As Dyer (2004: 64) points out, ‘[…] a cross-over star is one who appeals to more than one musical subcultures; one who, though rooted in a particular tradition of music with a particular audience, somehow manages to appeal, and sell, beyond the confines of that audience.’ Paul Roberson, who, according to Dyer (2004), was the pioneering epitome of black crossover artist, managed to combine a markedly ‘black’ image with popularity amongst both white and black audiences. Pat Boone adapted tunes originally composed and recorded by African-American musicians and made them popular among the mainstream white public, while Elvis Presley’s success owed much to his notorious cover versions of to his notorious cover versions of blues and gospel classics. As these few examples of musical go-betweens suggest, the idea of crossover is inherently
paradoxical. On the one hand, it presupposes a consistency between specific ‘cultures’ and their expressive forms; on the other hand, it allows the possibility of crossing cultural and aesthetic boundaries. On the one hand, it assumes ideals of stylistic purism and cultural atavism; on the other hand, it celebrates syncretism.

The focus of this article is not U.S. pop music, but contemporary Indonesian political discourse. However, as we will see in the following pages, the cultural and aesthetic paradoxes of crossover music can offer interpretative guidance through the unlikely intersections between local and exogenous discursive genres, political cultures, and styles for the presentation of the self that have emerged in the Toraja highlands of Sulawesi where I have been doing intermittent long and midterm fieldwork since 1997. During the last fifteen years, the Toraja highlands (and Indonesia at large) have experienced the pervasive diffusion of global political idioms and transnational ideologies, which oftentimes stood at odds with the established patterns of political practices and speechmaking (see Donzelli 2004, 2007a). How can we gain an understanding of the sociolinguistic transformations engendered by Toraja increasing involvement in transnational global processes?

Drawing on the notion of enregisterment (Agha 2003, 2005, 2007), an emerging literature on the sociolinguistic underpinning of the spreading of global models of democracy (see for example, Bate 2004; Cody 2009a, 2009b; Hull 2010; Jackson 2013). This literature has exposed the semiotic associations between modes of speaking and the formation of publics around bundles of political ideologies and practices, revealing the operations of the ‘cultural structuring of voices’ associated with social groups’ (Irvine 1990: 130). While this literature has been invaluable in demonstrating how fine-grained analyses of actual language use are needed to capture the local nuances taken by global processes, its focus on an analytics of diacritic oppositions may not be always suitable to interpret the zones of friction, ambiguity, and misunderstanding that according to Tsing (2005) characterize unequal cultural encounters in the global South. I argue that the fuzzy and paradoxical logics of generic crossovers may provide an additional model for understanding the linguistic outcomes of political transformations, in which different registers, genres, and ‘fashions of speaking’ (Whorf 1956: 158) overlap, producing ambiguous, contradictory, and unstable constellations of speech forms and political practices.

Following the 1998 demise of President Suharto’s New Order regime, Indonesia has become the stage of a rampant ideology of transnational neoliberal democracy. Epitomized by emphatic appeals to ‘transparency’ and ‘good governance’, this new ideology emerged as the discursive leitmotiv underlying the structural implementation of a radical program of decentralization, which was warmly endorsed by transnational neoliberal agencies such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank.

While at first sight Post-Suharto public discourse seems pervaded by a hegemonic ideology of transnational neoliberal democracy that leaves little room for local interpretations, a closer look reveals a more complex picture. I engage this complexity by offering an account of crossover forms of intertextuality produced through an emerging aesthetics of ‘the vintage’ and ‘the peripheral’. Drawing on audiovisual data recorded in Toraja between 2001 and 2006, this paper examines the aesthetic and discursive crossovers engendered by ‘global encounters across difference’ (Tsing 2005: 3) resulting from of the spreading of the global idioms of transnational neoliberal democracy that accompanied the end of the Suharto’s New Order regime and the beginning of the Reform Era (I: Era Reformasi). The focus of my analysis concerns the shifts in the spatial and temporal (i.e. chronotopic) representations of the Indonesian nation-state in the early years of the post-Suharto Reform Era.

One of the Reformasi hallmarks has been the structural implementation of a radical program of decentralization, commonly referred to as regional autonomy (I: otonomi daerah or otoda). When, in May 1998, pressed by the socio-economic and political turmoil triggered by the Asian financial crisis and fuelled by the students’ demonstrations and the communal conflicts that were sweeping the country, Suharto resigned, the newly appointed president Habibie took strong decentralizing measures. Indeed, the new legislation on regional autonomy (Law 22 and 25 of 1999), issued in May 1999 and implemented at the beginning of 2001, aimed at devolving most of state functions to the
sub-provincial level (cities and regencies). The central government only retained a few functions such as defense, foreign relations, etc.

A widely shared representation of post-Suharto Indonesia has been centred on a narrative of increased popular participation through administrative decentralization (see for example, Antlöv 2003; Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Syaikhu Usman 2002). However, far from uniquely consisting in a process of power transfer from the central government to local administrations, regional autonomy set off a new mode of political power characterized by multilateral agreements between transnational financial agencies, traditional local authorities, and sectors of governmental and non-governmental organizations. Central to this new political landscape have been moralizing appeals to transparent ‘good governance’, the emergence of new idioms and models of political discourse, and the outsourcing of state governance functions to multi-scalar coalitions of transnational agencies and semi- or non-governmental institutions.

How have cosmopolitan political idioms and transnational moral ideologies been re-contextualized and transformed in a relatively remote area of upland Indonesia? What forms of political crossover have emerged from the frictional encounters between traditional Toraja speechmaking and global political ideologies and discourses? In what follows, I will show how aside from the spreading of a global rhetoric of neoliberal good-governance, early Reformasi political discourse in Toraja exhibited a novel aesthetics of ‘the vintage’ and ‘the peripheral’. Through concrete examples drawn from situated interactions, I will show how this vintage aesthetics of the margins produced a discursive subversion of the hierarchized vertical space frozen in a perennial present, which characterized the consolidated templates for community imagination during the New Order.

Through this analysis, I seek to highlight the production of a number of discursive crossovers: between neoliberal transnational scripts and rhetorical elements of 1940s and 1950s anticolonial rhetoric, as well as between the New Order scalar politics of vertically nested levels of power and identity and the multiscalar and rhizomatic assemblages that have been characterizing forms of governance and group membership in post-Suharto Indonesia. By showing how larger discursive formations such as the New Order’s cultural politics of Time and Space can be redefined through situated instances of communicative interaction, this paper centres on political discourse as a crucial site for examining the shifts in the politics of locality and temporality that have been developing in Indonesia since the millennium. This analysis of how discursive genres shape humans’ imagination of their belonging in specific configurations of space-time may contribute to advance the understanding of globalization, an elusive notion, which I propose to imagine as a chronotope of a progressively shrinking space and ever accelerating time.

A time suspended between the ‘no longer’ and the ‘not yet’

When, at the beginning of the new millennium, I moved to Toraja in order to conduct my doctoral fieldwork, I was confronted with the discursive epiphany of a new ‘Era’. A sense of this new temporality resonated in the emphatic announcements concerning the arrival of a new political paradigm, a time of democracy and transparency that marked a drastic rupture with the authoritarian times of Suharto’s repressive regime.

Interestingly, the celebration of the advent of a new political phase was often coming from Toraja civil servants and politicians who were busy figuring out how to preserve their seats, in spite of the demands for a political renewal of local administration. This apparent paradox is well illustrated by the enthusiastic proclamation made by a local politician who was well known for his strong association with Golkar (Suharto’s political party), of which he had been a representative in the national parliament for many decades. In spite of his political allegiances, speaking during a state-sponsored meeting (I: rapat) that took place at the beginning of 2003, the man stressed the trope of epochal transformation⁵:
At the same meeting, another member of the local political establishment celebrated the advent of a grass root form of democracy in which the major decisions would be taken by the civil society. As it was often pointed out at the time of my fieldwork in the early 2000s, the radical discontinuity with the New Order here is framed as a shift from a top-down to a bottom up from of political rationality:

In a paradigmatic realization of the awkward, unexpected, and unstable encounters between global, national, and local forces that Tsing (2005) spoke about, the political conjunction in which I conducted my fieldwork was marked by the unprecedented interplay of people and ideological repertoires. A new emphasis on the ‘civil society’ (Hedman 2006; Salemink 2006) – a common buzzword within international development agencies – animated seemingly paradoxical encounters among a heterogeneous assortment of political actors. Village elders, NGO activists, Jakarta-based journalists, and local members of the previous conservative political establishment engaged lively discussions about indigenous political institutions, pre-colonial administrative boundaries, and the new political rationality of ‘good governance’ advocated by transnational financial institutions (Hadiz 2004; Robison and Hadiz 2005).

**Neoliberal good governance and the Era Reformasi**

In the post-Suharto political landscape, ‘good governance’ quickly gained ground as an all-encompassing term that defined the advent of new political era and incorporated a wide array of political notions, becoming a discursive banner that condensed all that was new and good about the Era Reformasi: decentralization, regional autonomy, grass root democracy, transparency, fight against corruption, power to civil society, and, last but not least, the revival of cultural traditions and the revitalization of allegedly autochthonous traditional political systems.

Omnipresent in the numerous reports on governance reform that proliferated in Indonesia in the early 2000s (Partnership for Governance Reform 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005), ‘good governance’ had been a discursive mantra in the IMF headquarters since the mid-1990s (Camdessus 1998; World Bank 1996, 2006). As Ong (2006: 3) pointed out, a centrepiece of neoliberalism is constituted by the implementation of a new ‘technology of government’ aimed at recasting ‘governing activities as nonpolitical and non-ideological problems that need technical solutions.’ In this light, ‘good
governance' was particularly well suited for the neoliberal project in that it implied a departure 'from a hierarchical to a network mode of governance' (Fairclough 2005: 1) and a gesturing towards a form of political management based on horizontal and egalitarian relations rather than on vertical ones. Furthermore, contrary to traditional political qualifications (i.e. left, right, liberal, conservative, radical, etc.), 'good governance' entailed a technocratic value free approach to politics, thus allowing a 'denial of social conflict' (Hadiz 2004: 3).

This is nothing new. Since its inception, through a military countercoup, Suharto’s authoritarian regime had been characterized by the impositions of great limitations to party politics, by the ideological attempt at erasing politics as a legitimate realm of action and discussion, and by the heightened power of bureaucratic and military technocrats in charge of promoting stability and economic growth. Political control during Suharto’s regime strongly discouraged open political discussion, corroborating a negative and suspicious attitude towards all things political. Writing in the 1990s, Webb Keane (1997a: 2) highlighted how politik in Indonesian was a word usually loaded with negative connotations and equated to ‘self-interested intrigue and factionalism’ (see also Crystal 1974). A common expression I have often heard, during the 2000s, when my interlocutors intended to express their suspicions and criticism towards the real aim of someone’s argument or actions was berbau politik (I: “it smells politics”), implying the presence of disguised self-interests.

However, while the denial of social conflict and the technocratic/managerial approach to political power had been one of the key features of the New Order (Emmerson 1983, 1987; Hill and Shiraishi 2007; MacDougall 1976; Robison and Hadiz 2005), the transformations triggered by the demise of Suharto’s authoritarian rule also entailed novel forms of political rationality. This new rationality, in turn, marked a clear disjuncture with previous chronotopic materialization of the nation-state.

**Chronotopes of the nation-state**

Developed in his analysis of the novel and borrowed from Einstein’s relativity theory, Bakhtin’s (1981: 84) notion of chronotope points to the ‘intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are intrinsically expressed in literature.’ Derived from the Greek χρόνος (‘chronos’) time and τόπος (‘topos’), place, the chronotope is an organic textual union of time and space and a key device of literary production and analysis.

Such ‘inseparability of space and time [...] has an intrinsic generic significance [...]’. It is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions [...] (Bakhtin 1981: 84-85). Indeed, chronotopes shape ‘the logic by which events unfurl, their syntax, the rhythmic quality of plausible actions and counter-actions’ (Lemon 2009: 837). For example, in the adventure-time of the Greek romance, ‘the action of the plot unfolds against a very broad and varied geographical background’ leaving ‘no trace in the life of the heroes or in their personalities’ (Bakhtin 1981: 87-90). The generic chronotope of the Greek romance designs a specific configuration of agency and a structure of events pivoting around the force of chance. Its plot unfolds in an ‘abstract expanse of time’ (Bakhtin 1981: 99) through ‘turns of fate’, that is, ‘short segments that correspond to separate adventures’ generally introduced ‘with specific link words: “suddenly”, “at just that moment”’ (Bakhtin 1981: 91-2).

This literary form departs from other chronotopic models. The idyllic chronotope, for example, evokes a ‘little spatial world’ which ‘is limited and sufficient unto itself’ and contains a potentially limitless ‘sequence of generations’ (Bakhtin 1981: 225). In the idyllic chronotope,

the unity of place brings together and even fuses the cradle and the grave [...] childhood and old age […], (thus uniting) the life of the various generations who had also lived in that same place, under the same conditions, and who had seen the same things. This blurring of all the temporal boundaries, made possible by a unity of place, also contributes in an essential way to the creation of the cyclic rhythmicalness of time so characteristic of the idyll. (Bakhtin 1981: 225)
Outside the literary realm, chronotopes are key discursive devices for the production of collective forms of national subjectivities (Eisenlohr 2004; Kelly 1998; Lemon 2009). In his seminal work on nationhood, Benedict Anderson (1991[1983]) highlighted the key role of print-capitalism in producing the ‘particular form of temporal regimentation’ (Eisenlohr 2004: 85) underlying the structures of co-feeling and collective consciousness necessary for the existence of national imagined communities. Anderson (1991[1983]) claims that print-capitalism ‘mediated depictions of diverse happenings across disperse territories, calibrating them into a homogeneous “here-and-now”’ (Lemon 2009: 837). While the synchronizing practice of newspaper-reading enabled people who had never met to imagine themselves as members of the same community, the mass consumption of ‘new literary genres, such as the realist novel’, promoted new modes of experience based on the chronotope of ‘empty, homogeneous time’ (Eisenlohr 2004: 84).6

My argument here is that the political transformations of the Era Reformasi had remarkable effects on the New Order’s chronotopic representation of the Indonesian nation-state. Indeed, the anticipatory temporality of the new Reform Era and the new emphasis on bottom up and decentralized forms of political rationality destabilized the New Order national imagination. Specifically, it undermined New Order chronoptic representation as a vertical spatiality capable of synchronizing diachrony and erasing the differences between past, present, and future (Pemberton 2004).

Bureaucratic Indonesian and the discursive production of verticality

In their seminal paper on the need to develop an ethnographic approach to neoliberal governmentality7, Ferguson and Gupta (2002: 981) argued that:

> discussions of the imagination of the state have not attended adequately to the ways in which states are spatialized. [...] Through what images, metaphors, and representational practices, they ask, does the state come to be understood as a concrete, overarching, spatially encompassing reality?8

In Indonesia, a crucial site for the elaboration of State imaginary ‘through routine bureaucratic practices’ (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 981) has been the development, during the New Order, of Indonesian formal political speech, a register that, following Goebel (2014), I will call bureaucratic Indonesian9. Used primarily during state sponsored-meetings (I: rapat), bureaucratic Indonesian is characterized by a distinctive prosody (i.e. a certain intonation pattern and a flat tone of voice), a series of morphological and syntactical aspects (such as a prominence of hypotactic constructions on paratactic ones, an expanded use of prefixes and suffixes in verbal and nominal morphology, an abundance of fully fledged relative/‘yang’ construction), a specific lexical register (made of acronyms and words referring to the bureaucratic domain), as well as stylistic features (such as formulaic ways of asking permission to speak and specific honorific opening structures).

Quite consistently throughout the archipelago, during the over three decades of Suharto’s authoritarian regime, Indonesians became accustomed to linking this linguistic variety with State officials and civil servants. Well versed in bureaucratic Indonesian, the to ma’perenta (T: the people from the government), as they are indiscriminately called in Toraja, were perceived as the exemplary representatives of the authority of a centralized and militaristic government and as the executors of its top-down policies. Seen from the standpoint of recent linguistic anthropological scholarship, bureaucratic Indonesian constitutes a semiotic register, that is, a bundle of indexical relations that connect repertoires of speech forms with particular social practices and stereotypical ‘social types’ (Agha 2005: 38). Indeed, during the New Order, bureaucratic Indonesian has become ‘enregistered’ (Agha 2003), that is, endowed with the socially recognized semiotic capacity of evoking the ‘state’s institutional presence’ (Errington 1995: 214).

In addition to being indexical of a bundle of semiotic connections of registers, social types, cultural meanings, and social spaces, bureaucratic Indonesian partakes in the linguistic production of
material icons of verticality. Indeed, the very syntax of bureaucratic Indonesian has been a key resource for the production of the spatiotemporal representation of power and polity during the New Order. Let’s see for example how, through the performance of a formulaic honorific opening, the State is spatialized through a series of decreasingly inclusive circles of authority and territorial scales.

The excerpt (3) below, which was performed at a funeral that took place in the village of Marinding in December 2002, is emblematic of the stylistic requirement according to which, during official meetings and ritual occasions, speakers are expected to commence their speech through the performance of an honorific address in which all the authorities and the notables need to be mentioned according to a sequential order that iconically corresponds to their respective hierarchical relations. In spite of the traditional occasion, which may have required the use of Toraja ritual speech (i.e. the regional formal register used in public occasions), the grandchild of the deceased couple in whose honour the funeral was celebrated opened his speech with a typical rapat-style Indonesian structure:

(3) Grandchildren’s speech – Ne’ Kombong Funeral [Marinding, December 28, 2002 – Tape 20]

1. Selamat pagi dan salam sejahtera bagi kita sekalian.
   Good morning and prosperous peace to us/you all
2. Yang saya hormati Bapak Kepala Desa Kandora bersama aparatnya.
   I express my honor to the village head of Kandora and his apparatus
   I express my honor to Mr. the priest of the parish of Buale’ along with its presbytery
4. Yang Terhormat Bapak-bapak Tokoh Masyarakat,
   To the honored Gentlemen, the notables of the community
5. Tokoh Agama, Tokoh Pemuda,
   (To) the religious authorities, the representatives of the youth
6. Bapak-bapak Ibu dan hadirin sekalian
   (to) all the Gentlemen and the Ladies who are present

The sequential order through which the different individual and collective subjectivities are honorifically addressed in Excerpt (3) configures the audience as a hierarchically regimented and functionally organized social entity. The different groups of the civil society and the local religious leadership are vertically encompassed within the secular authority of the village chief. Furthermore, the structuring of the audience presented in this excerpt resonates with the model of society underlying Suharto’s Golkar party. According to the Golkar model, a compound abbreviation of the terms golongan karya (I: functional groups), the Indonesian society was divided into populist and political groupings (the youth, the women, the religious leaders, etc.) that played ‘a large part of organizational life during the New Order’ (Hadiz 2011: 3).

Moving from the ritual context of a funeral ceremony to the more secular setting of a state sponsored meeting we can gain a clearer insight into the manufacturing of what Ferguson and Gupta (2002) called ‘vertical encompassment’. In Excerpt (4), we can see how similar but even more sophisticated architecture in the opening performed by an executive official of the local municipality (Asisten I Tata Praja) at a village meeting I attended in February 2003. Here we may see again how the register’s addressing conventions are being deployed to produce an icon of the State’s mode of power. The top-down order of the honorific formulas used to address the audience iconizes the operations of the centralist state apparatus, producing ‘an imagined topography of stacked, vertical levels […] of power’ (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 983):

455. Yang kami hormati
[to the one] that we respect

456. bapak anggota dewan perwakilan rakyat daerah, Tana Toraja
Mr. Member of the Regency legislative council [Highest ranking official at Regency legislative level] of Tana Toraja

457. yang kami hormati bapak Camat Mengkendek
[to the one] that we respect Mr. District Head, together with his apparatus [District chief at the sub-Regency level]

458. bersama aparatnya,
and his staff

459. eh saudara Asisten Hukum
Eh fellow Legal Assistant [Executive official at the Regency level]

460. saudara kepala Inforkom
Fellow Head of the Information and Communication Agency

461. selaku tim pemantau kabupaten
[operating] in the capacity of the Regency monitoring team

462. di kecamatan Mengkendek ini yang saya cintai dan saya hormati,
here in the district of Mengkendek that I cherish and respect

463. bapak-bapak eh
Gentlemen of eh...

464. kalangan dan tokoh adat
the group of traditional leaders [Distinguished members of the civil society]

465. bapak-bapak, ibu-ibu partai politik
Ladies and gentlemen of the political parties

466. para tokoh wanita
To the women representatives

467. tokoh pemuda
The youth representatives

468. eh... tokoh profesi...
The representatives of the professional groups...

469. bahkan seluruh segenap pemuka masyarakat
and moreover [to] the whole community of leaders of the civil society

470. yang saya banggakan dan saya hormati
For whom I feel pride and respect

Like a diagrammatic icon of a nested structure of vertical hierarchical relations, this formulaic opening effectively conveys a material topography of progressively decreasing scales of authority and territoriality. The syntactic order of the words is at the same time symptomatic and generative of the state-sponsored authority underlying the hierarchical relations between the participants.

Such discursive construction of a centralist political imaginary was paralleled by the New Order’s bureaucratic and administrative structure, which revolved around a highly vertical and scalar mode of power. For example, the paperwork procedure that foreign researchers needed to undergo
during the New Order in order to apply for a research permit (I: *ijin penelitian*) from the Indonesia Institute of Science\textsuperscript{11} (I: *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia*, shortened as LIPI) clearly reflected a mode of spatializing the State that combined a very centralist structure with a capillary network of control at every sub-level of local authority. Obtaining a research permit required a long bureaucratic pilgrimage on behalf of the researcher, which started in the Jakarta administrative headquarters and proceeded through a series of visits to progressively lower level offices where the researcher had to report (I: *melapor*) and turn in the paperwork s/he had been provided with in the previous office. The spiral of letters was always issued in an organized progression from centre to periphery. The central office within the National Department of Home Affairs would, for instance, issue a letter to its corresponding branch at the Provincial level, the National Police Headquarters in Jakarta would provide a letter to be delivered to the Provincial Police station, and so forth downwards through the hierarchical ladder of authority.

Thus, the vertical encompassment underlying the New Order mode of power was characterized by a high degree of congruency between forms of governmentality and administrative structures. These were organized through a funnel-like structure of progressively decreasing levels of power and inclusion\textsuperscript{12} with the central state (I: *negara*) at the top, followed by the province (I: *propinsi*), and by the lower levels of the regency (I: *kabupaten*) or, in urban areas, the municipality (I: *kotamadya*)\textsuperscript{13}, the district (I: *kecamatan*), the rural (I: *desa* or conglomeration of few villages), or urban (I: *kelurahan*), zonal conglomeration, the village (I: *kampung*), and the village section (I: *dusun*).

**Chronotopes of verticalized space and synchronized time**

We saw how in the New Order’s markedly autocratic framework, the State had been represented as hierarchically encompassing ‘its localities’ through its being situated practically and metaphorically *above* society (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 981). Such a model provided a strong sense of vertical space, but what about time?

Discussing a type of literary work that appeared towards the end of the Middle Ages, Bakhtin (1981: 156) pointed out the ‘strong influence of the medieval, otherworldly, vertical axis.’ In these works, of which Dante’s *Divine Comedy* is emblematic, Bakhtin (1981: 156) saw the production of a ‘vertical world’ whose ‘temporal logic’ consisted in ‘the sheer simultaneity of all that occurs.’ In this ‘Dantesque vertical chronotope’, Bakhtin (1981: 157-158) saw the attempt ‘to deny temporal divisions’ and ‘synchronize diachrony’. In such a world, ‘structured according to a pure verticality’ temporal divisions are erased so that ‘[e]verything that on earth is divided by time, here, in this verticality, coalesces into eternity, into pure simultaneous coexistence’ (Bakhtin 1981: 157).\textsuperscript{14}

This combination of extreme spatial depth and erasure of temporal divisions resonates with Pemberton’s (1994: 155) assertion that the New Order was founded on a ‘peculiar sense of temporality’, that is, a way of imagining national time as anchored in a temporal aesthetics of presentness created through the conflation between past and future. Centred on an idea of ‘cultural inheritance’ (Pemberton 1994: 154), the temporal aesthetics of the New Order revealed the attempt at erasing ‘the difference between past, present, and future, and thus flatten [...] time – [...] and the extraordinary violence of the New Order’s own origins – into a continuously presented present’ (Pemberton 1994: 155, my emphasis).

According to Pemberton (1994), this aesthetic structure of temporality is epitomized in the cultural theme park constructed in the early 1970s by Suharto’s wife, Ibu Tien: *Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (I: The Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park). Inspired by a visit to Disneyland, the cultural theme park wanted by Ibu Tien Suharto contained, among other things, a miniature representation of the archipelago, smaller replicas of Indonesia’s famous religious buildings and ancient monuments, an outdoor performance arena, a revolving theatre, and 26 pavilions devoted to representing the traditional architectural styles of each of Indonesia’s provinces.

*Taman Mini* monuments departed from the temporal logic that commonly animates the monuments’ memorizing function. Indeed, rather than operating as material signs pointing to past
events that, through the monument’s durability, could be commemorated for by future ‘posterity’, Taman Mini monuments expressed the ‘obsession with connecting the past and the future in the form of a present’ (Pemberton 1994: 155-156). This politics of temporality was, according to Pemberton (1994), operationalized though the specific type of indexical-iconic regimentation in which the relationship between replica and original was conflated, or, better said, reversed. The replicas of the customary houses (rumah adat) of each of Indonesia’s provinces and the miniature replicas of ancient monuments were meant to exceed their sources, thus allowing the visitor to gain a better grasp of the entirety of the original.

Through a semiotic and aesthetic reversal, the reproductions of material artifacts emblematic of temporal depth and geographic distance operated a scalar reduction of the nation-state spatiotemporal magnitude. In this sense, Taman Mini presented a peculiar re-articulation of semiotic relationship of iconic reproducibility: its miniaturized version of the Borobodur was not an icon standing for the great Buddhist temple of central Java, presumably dating back to the ninth century – that is, it was not a sign of ‘another place’ and ‘another time’ (Pemberton 1994: 157). In fact, Taman Mini’s Borobodur miniaturized replica aimed at exceeding its original by allowing the visitor to gain a better grasp of the entirety of the original temple, which, due to its gigantic scale, may not be fully experienced. In a similar manner, the replicas of traditional houses were meant to exceed their original counterparts, presenting a stylized and a-temporal representation of ‘temporarily inhabitable customary spaces’ (Pemberton 1994: 159). The aim of Taman Mini houses was to allow each visitor to experience a virtual encounter with her regional place of origin, and at the same time, a partial forgetting of the original homeland.

In a way similar to the diagrammatic icons of vertical encompassment realized through the honorific openings described above, the miniaturized space of Taman Mini afforded a perception of the Indonesian nation-state through the illusion of a ‘pure simultaneity’ (Bakhtin 1981: 157).

**Chronotopic reformation and the vintage aesthetics of the margins**

In the early 2000s, the modes of discourse that had shaped the political practice and imagination during the over three decades spent in the frozen present-ness of the Suharto’s regime were suddenly shaken by the advent of the Reformasi.

In spite of what turned out to be major continuities with the political practices, social networks, and patrimonial elites of the Suharto’s era (see Robison and Hadiz 2005), the Reformasi marked important aesthetic discontinuities with the New Order’s cultural politics. To put it simply: from the point of view of time, the sense of anticipation triggered by the collapse of 32 years of authoritarian regime and the beginning of the new age of reforms posed fundamental challenges to the New Order’s way of imagining time as an immobile present. From the point of view of space, the New Order’s centralist and verticalized framework was at odds with the ongoing implementation of regional autonomy and called for the development of new modes of discourse that could aesthetically account for the new emphasis on ‘civil society’.

As mentioned earlier, during the early 2000s, Toraja public discourse gestured toward a political temporality of imminence and towards the need to shift from a ‘top-down’ to a ‘bottom up’ form of governance. The Reform Era appeared as an ‘almost present future’, suspended between the announcement of the Reform’s imminent arrival and the ascertainment of its decentralizing effects. The anticipatory character of this new time of beginning was at odds with the New Order’s protracted elevation of verticality and erasure of historical depth and futurity. Thus, the crumbling of the New Order’s forms of chronotopic imagination triggered by the collapse of the authoritarian regime and the beginning of this new age of reforms posed an aesthetic problem for Indonesian political actors and speech makers: Somewhat unexpectedly, they found themselves searching for a new poetics of the possible in order to imagine the emerging political present. How did political actors deal with this new hybrid mixture of imminence and actuality, which seemed to be hazily lingering between the ‘no longer’, the ‘just started’, and the ‘not yet?’ Through what discursive images and representational
practices did they voice the decentralizing reforms endorsed by the neoliberal advocates of structural adjustment (IMF, World Bank, and Asian development Bank) and multilateral institutions?

I argue that an appeal to a temporality of ‘pastness’ and to the value of linguistic locality played a key role in the reorganization of the main tropes of New Order political discourse. The aesthetic re-articulation of the New Order’s chronotopic representation of the Indonesian nation-state entailed a revival of formulas of the nationalistic and anticolonial rhetoric of the 1940s and 1950s and new expressions of local pride through the deployment of regional languages in contexts where bureaucratic Indonesian would be expected.

In order to give you a sense of this discursive semiotics of ‘the vintage’ and ‘the peripheral’ let me provide you with a visual shortcut. The two pictures below (Image #1 and #2) show the façade of the sub-district ‘leadership’ council of Indonesia Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P).

Image 1. PDIP sub-district regional branch, façade (Photo by the author, June 2013)

The key emblems of the party stand out: the national colours the Indonesia’s flag, red and white, the party’s logo, the wild bull’s head, the Javanese banteng, symbolizing democracy by deliberation, one of the five principles of Indonesia’s national philosophy (i.e. Pancasila), but also combativeness, given its angry look, pictures of the party’s leader Megawati Sukarnoputri, displayed in Muslim and ‘Westernized’ outfits to appeal to the Muslim and non-Muslim segments of the electorate, and of course, last but not least, black and white portraits, presumably dating back to the 1940s, featuring Sukarno, who was not only Megawati’s father, but also the most famous leader of the country’s anticolonial struggle and the father and first president of Indonesia.

Image 2. PDIP sub-district regional branch, façade detail (Photo by the author, June 2013)
Vintage aesthetics: Indexing the past to envision the future

As conveyed by the images above, the stylization of the national anticolonial past represents an important semiotic resource to produce a metanarrative of fracture vis-à-vis the Suharto’s regime. During the Reformasi, making intertextual references to the Sukarno years has gained a subversive flair.\(^7\)

To achieve a better grasp of the temporal and stylistic crossovers produced by the revival of this vintage temporality, let me examine a 2002 radio announcement for the law on the freedom of press, sponsored by Indonesian Coalition for Freedom of Press and the Partnership for Governance Reform of Indonesia, a multilateral organization emblematic of the transnational assemblages of political actors that characterize the new political landscape of post-Suharto Indonesia.\(^8\)

The announcement is conveyed in the form of a pidato (I: oration) and clearly resounds with the glorious tradition of anticolonial and nationalistic rhetoric embodied by Sukarno. Before delving into the lexical and grammatical aspects of this Excerpt (5), it is important to underline the complex web of meta-references created through the sonic and material characteristics of the ad. The clip starts with the loud background noise of an assembled crowd, which is quickly interrupted by the piercing sound of a megaphone feedback squeal.

In her ethnography of the interplay between FM radio and the emerging of democratic publics in contemporary Nepal, Laura Kunreuther (2013: 15) invites to ‘take seriously the materiality of voice – its sounds and how these sounds are linked to particular persons.’ As it seems to me, the dense sonic materiality of this ad is crisscrossed with a meaningful web of indexicalities and political allusions. The carefully chosen sound effects (i.e. the noise from the crowd and megaphone distortions) are evocative of the very practice of public assembly, its association with the large rallies of the early post-Independence days and their emancipatory political significance. These noises thus become indexical of democracy and popular participation. Furthermore, the rich sonic texture of the ad’s beginning materializes another indexical reference to the vintage temporality and to the elevation of linguistic past-ness via gesturing towards ‘radioaurality’, which during the Sukarno years constituted the ‘dominant mode of political communication’ (Strassler 2009: 75).\(^9\)

These indexical connections with the glorious days of pre-New Order times are made even more explicit by lexical and stylistic features typical of the Sukarno’s speechmaking style. For example, the speech opening line saudara-saudari sekalian (at line 1, used in place of the longer honorific openings typical of the New Order Indonesian bureaucratic and political speech), the direct oratorical style, as well as certain lexical items (marked in boldface), such as the word rakyat (I: people, line 3), are clearly reminiscent of Sukarto’s anticolonial speeches:

In a paradigmatic realization of the discursive crossovers discussed earlier on, the appeal to the repertoire of anticolonial rhetoric is juxtaposed to the global ideology of ‘good governance’, expressed through a profusion of references (marked in boldface) to the ‘aspirations’ (line 6) of the civil society.
(line 20), the call for the abolition of corruption (line 16), and the promotion of greater ‘transparency’ and accountability on the part of the government (line 40).

5. Mereka dianggap pengamat\footnote{They \textit{the people} were considered observers}  
6. tanpa aspirasi\footnote{without aspirations}  
7. yang siap melaksanakan program apa saja yang disusun oleh pemerintah.\footnote{ready to execute whatever program that had been compiled by the government.}  
8. Bukan hanya itu, \footnote{But not only that,}  
9. pemerintah juga menutup rapat akses publik [\ldots]\footnote{the government also prevented the people from accessing official political meetings [\ldots]}  
10. Akhirnya\footnote{Eventually}  
11. pemerintahan berjalan tanpa kontrol\footnote{governance ran without control}  
12. yang berarti\footnote{which thus meant that}  
13. maka merajalela Korupsi Kolusi dan Nepotisme\footnote{Corruption, Collusion, Nepotism broke out, the national debt swelled,}  
14. maka hilanglah kepercayaan kepada pemerintah.\footnote{with the result that \textit{the government’s credibility faded away.}}  
15. Dan pemerintah juga tidak mempedulikan kehilangan kepercayaan itu.\footnote{And the government did not even care about the disappearance of its credibility.}  
16. Oleh karena itu hal mendasar yang harus dilakukan\footnote{Therefore the main thing that should be done}  
17. adalah memperkuat kedudukan masyarakat\footnote{is to reinforce the position of the \textit{civil society} with respect to the state.}  
18. dihadapan negara.\footnote{[\ldots]}  
19. Mari kita dorong terwujudnya peraturan daerah transparansi dan partisipasi publik\footnote{Let’s support the creation of regional regulations, \textit{transparency} and \textit{public participation}}  

Speaking from the margins and redrawing the ideas of the local  

Closely related to the vintage aesthetics of the temporal and discursive crossovers examined above, Toraja political discourse of the early 2000s was marked by a new appeal of linguistic regionalism. In a highly multilingual context such as Indonesia, the juxtaposition between local and national languages has long constituted a key locus for the production of language-mediated forms of community belonging (see, among the others, Cole 2010; Errington 1998; Goebel 2002, 2007, 2008, 2014; Keane 1997b, 2003; Kuipers 1998, Smith-Hefner 2009). During the New Order, in addition to the verticalized spatiality and the synchronized diachrony described earlier, the manufacturing of vertical encompassment was also produced through a language ideology that established Indonesian (I: \textit{Bahasa Indonesia}) as a ‘transcendent metalanguage’ (Keane 1997b) endowed with the political-
semitic capability of containing Indonesia’s local languages (I: bahasa daerah). Indeed, Indonesian enregisterment as the country’s national language was achieved through its promotion as the standard medium of communication in official contexts such as the school and the government and through its characterization as the language needed for interethnic communication across the archipelago (see, for example, Cole 2010; Keane 1997b, 2003; Kuipers 1998; Goebel 2008).

Indonesian’s status as a ‘no-one’s first language,’ that is, a language lacking an original community of native speakers (Errington 1998: 53), was key in reproducing a top-down articulation of the relation between the language of the nation and the hundreds of local codes spoken natively in the country. The ideological erasure of Indonesian’s connection to localized forms of belonging and the parallel foregrounding of the connection of non-national languages to ethnicity, intimacy, and peripherality, engendered an ideological sociolinguistic regimentation in which regional languages were localized and demoted to a position of semantic and socio-economic marginality (Kuipers 1998).

Locally referred to as basa toraya (T: toraja language) or basa solata (T: the language of our friends), or basata (T: our language), Toraja, like many other Indonesian regional languages (see for example Keane 1997b, 2003), had developed during the New Order a strong indexical connection to a sense of ingroupness, functioning as a sociolinguistic embodiment of the intimacies of the immediate community. At the same time, during the New Order, in Toraja, as in most of Indonesia, especially outside Java, the use of the regional language within institutional settings had been highly stigmatized as a marker of backwardness and illiteracy (Donzelli 2002, 2004, 2007c).

However, the corpus of linguistic data I collected in the early years of the Reformasi reveals how forms of vertical encompassment ideologically mediated through a hierarchized relation between local and national language were at the time reversed through an emergent aesthetics of linguistic marginality. By this I mean a series of indexical and discursive practices aimed at subverting the powerful regimentation of Indonesian as a code endowed with the political-sematico-pragmatic capability of encompassing regional languages.

An example of such practices was the proud display of ethno-linguistic identity through explicit metapragmatic comments in which speakers would introduce a switch to the local language in contexts where Indonesia was the expected choice. This practice is apparent in example (6). Here we may see how a self-aware switch to the Toraja language interrupted and subverted the regime of discussion based on the use of bureaucratic Indonesian. In this excerpt drawn form an official meeting (I: rapat), the speaker begins his speech with a metapragmatic statement (line 1). The statement is followed by the performance of a typical ‘mekatabe’ (lines 2-5), that is, the formulaic deferential opening of Toraja oratory, where we may observe a highly consistent deployment of formal Toraja (marked in italics), with no Indonesian interference.


1. Eh lama’basa basata bangmo aku saba’torayaki’
   Eh I will just speak our language because we are Toraya

2. Eh kuku’ tabe’
   Eh I say tabe’ (excuse me)

3. lako olo mala’bi’ita sola nasang la’biraka
   To us all honorable and respected [people]

4. lako to diona to maparenta
   To those from below [that is] to the government officials ((referring to the fact that the government representatives were coming from the Regency capital of Makale, geographically located in a lower valley within the highlands))

5. tu rampo lan alla’ta sola nasang
   Who came in among us all
The metapragmatic statement (at line 1) framed the switch to the local language not only as a deliberate move, but also as tautological consequence of the speaker’s membership in the Toraja speech community, which he further authenticated through the display of competence in the genre of traditional Toraja speechmaking. Through this discursive move, the speaker not only conveyed a sense of enhanced oratorical agency – which Bauman (1993) would call a ‘breakthrough into performance’ – but he also mobilized a ‘chronotope of community’ (Eisenlohr 2004: 81) different from the spatiotemporal forms of national subjectivity that had been characteristic of the New Order.

The excerpt was extracted from a longer meeting held in the district of Saluputti, where several local officials gathered to discuss the political project of constituting the independent Regency of Western Toraja. The meeting had the formal official atmosphere typical of the rapat, but it was also deeply imbued with the rhetoric of decentralization and regional autonomy. In this context, the speaker’s proud statement provided a tautological assertion of ethno-linguistic membership (‘I will speak Toraja, because I am Toraja’). In this way, he materialized a fusion between a temporality of immanence (i.e. the here and now of the context of performance and the almost present future of the Reform Era) with a traditional structure of addressivity (i.e. the mekatabe’ honorific address) that underscored the irreducibility of a local form of belonging grounded in a radically other elsewhere (i.e. a distinctive community) and ‘elsewhen’ (i.e. a distinctive ancestral past projected towards the independent future of regional autonomy).

Excerpt (7) offers another example of the constellation of indexical and discursive practices aimed at subverting Indonesian’s ideological regimentation as the encompassing code within which regional languages were deemed incorporated during the New Order. Here, while speaking in Indonesian during another rapat, the chief of the village where I lived between 2002 and 2003, framed his complaint for not having been paid his salary as a local official for 14 months by switching, after a long 7 second pause, to Toraja and quoting a Toraja saying (at line 1850). The switch did not only mark the ‘subversive’ violation of bureaucratic Indonesian code consistency, but it also materialized an appeal to a distinctive form of political rationality, embodied by Toraja societal values, which are presented again as irreducible to be culturally and linguistically translated into Indonesian. Toraja is italicized and Indonesian is in roman, CAPITALIZATION indicates higher volume.


1847. EMPAT BELAS BULAN SAYA TIDAK PERNAH MENDAPATKAN HONOR
*I HAVE NOT RECEIVED MY HONORARIUM FOR 14 MONTHS*

1848. pernahkah saya menagih kepada masyarakat
[But] have I ever reproached the villagers

1849. bahwa saya tidak dishonor?
*For not having been paid?*

[7 secs.]

1850. kada-kada Toraya Kumua to meapi tu disaroi
[According to] the Torajan saying, [even] the one who helps us lighting the fire [in our stove] receives compensation

[2 secs.]

1851. na kusanga yate kupogau’ te tannia mora to meapi manna
*And I think that what I have done it is much more than lighting the fire*

1852. yanna tomale meapi
*If we go [to another house to ask for] fire (to light our stove/hearth)*

1853. paling tidak ma’nasuk’ sola ke ba’tu tunu dua’ raka
*at least (we would offer to) cook together or we would roast some cassava*
This excerpt exemplifies another interesting crossover between different genres and alternate forms of community belonging. Embedded within a larger discursive unit in bureaucratic Indonesian, the Toraja proverb triggered a shift in code and genre. More specifically, the proverb as a genre mobilized a representation of the local community through a ‘bucolic-pastoral-idyllic chronotope’ (Bakhtin 1981: 103), corresponding to a spatiotemporally self-enclosed community where space and time are romanticized through the affective frames of idyllic domesticity and through a ‘blend of nature time (cyclic) and the everyday time’ (Bakhtin 1981: 103).

Furthermore, certain prosodic features such as the higher volume (at lines 1847 and 1855-1856) and the long pauses (at lines 1850 and 1851) augmented the affective charge of the generic and linguistic shift further consolidating its capacity to express the speaker’s personal and political indignation. The violation of the discursive regime that prescribed the use of bureaucratic Indonesian as the un-marked linguistic standard operated as a diagrammatic icon (or a synecdoche) of the heightened sense of oratorical agency and political radicalism aimed at challenging the status quo through a ‘groupness affirming act’ (Silverstein 2003: 593). The shift marked an appeal to local popular wisdom and local norms of reciprocity (i.e. even the man who helps us light the fire expects something in return), presented as morally and logically superior to the political rationality of the bureaucratic State apparatus.21

Crossover politics

Central to the New Order’s political imagination was the production of ‘a taken-for-granted spatial and scalar image of a state that both sits above and contains its localities, regions, and communities’ (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 982). This centralist framework was reproduced through discursive chronotopes of verticalized space and synchronized time and through a language ideology in which sociolinguistic diversity was regimented and reduced under the assertion of Indonesian’s political-semiotic capability of encompassing the archipelago’s local languages.

While existing analyses of the post-Suharto era have been mostly concerned with a political analysis of regional autonomy reforms (see the great work done by Davidson and Henley 2007; Henley and Davidson 2008; Li 2001; Nordholt and Van Klinken 2007; Roth 2007, among the others), I advocated the need for a linguistic and aesthetic level of analysis. Key to this analysis has been the exploration of the unsaturated negotiation between generic models and their textual realizations (Briggs and Bauman 1992). More specifically, I foregrounded the notion of crossover as useful tool that can help us make sense of the fuzzy ambiguity underlying the ‘cross-cultural and long-distance encounters’, which constitute the ‘frictions’ (Tsing 2005: 4) underlying global processes of late capitalism.

The examination of linguistic transformations within democratic processes is at the centre of recent linguistic anthropological literature on the co-articulation between discursive genres and political meanings and practices (see for example, Bate 2004; Cmiel 1991; Cody 2009a, 2009b; Hull 2010; Jackson 2013). In spite of their profound differences, these studies share a focus on the semiotic relevance of diacritic oppositions and indexical relations (i.e. modes of semiotic signification based on contiguity or causality). Whether in contemporary urban Madagascar (Jackson 2013), post-
revolutionary (Cmiel 1991) or WWII America (Hull 2010), or twentieth-century Tamilnadu (Bate 2004), this literature shows how broad systems of cultural diacritic meanings (e.g., marked vs. unmarked, rational vs. emotional, aristocratic vs. popular, cultivated vs. spontaneous, etc.) are mapped onto subsystems of oppositions that organized distinctions in registers and ways of speaking and models of the moral person. This important literature establishes semiotic correlations between modes of speaking and culturally and historically constructed ‘social attributes [...] such as gender, class, caste, and profession’ (Agha 2005: 39).

This semiotic framework – based on an understanding of linguistic signs as pointing towards (i.e. ‘indexing’) broader horizons of significance – resulted in an incredibly productive technology for the analysis of the cultural construction of language and the linguistic construction of culture. Through this perspective we have become more aware of how people’s ideas and beliefs about linguistic varieties (i.e. *language ideologies*) partake in constructing culturally and historically specific models of humanity (see the seminal work by Kroskrity 2000; Schieffelin et al. 1998; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994). However, the emphasis on the association of certain ‘linguistic varieties with typical persons’ (Irvine and Gal 2009: 403) does not always completely saturate our understanding of the linguistic underpinning of globalization. The frictional encounters of different publics, practices, and the misunderstandings generated through the ‘heterogeneous, contingent, unstable, partial, and situated assemblages’ of late capitalism (Collier and Ong 2005: 12) may at times ripple the orderly logic of semiotic associations. It seems to me that the notion of crossover can further our understanding of the misunderstanding and interruptions that propel the transnational circulation of global discourses of neoliberal democracy.

**Conclusions: Chronotopes of the global**

How can we achieve an understanding of the impact of globalization on the sociolinguistic orders that structure people’s everyday life and forms of collective membership? In this paper, I tried to highlight how Bakhtin’s (1981) insights on the organic interconnectedness of time and space can be applied to the examination of the sociolinguistics of globalization.

At the turn of the millennium Indonesia’s transformation from state-led development to a ‘decentralized regime dominated by neoliberal policies’ (Peluso et al. 2008: 377) has opened the country to new configurations of global flows of money, ideas, and idioms. As a result, Indonesia experienced the increased circulation of a transnational discourse of neoliberal democracy and the implementation of an IMF-driven set of structural reforms. Drawing on the analysis of situated interaction, this paper aimed at exploring how these global processes impacted the sociolinguistic construction of the Indonesian nation-state that was hegemonic during three decades of authoritarian regime. This analytic endeavour triggers a broader question: How can the microscopic study of face-to-face communication shed light on phenomena whose scale seems to require an analytics based on a global perspective?

Emerged in the early 1970s, as a result of the popular circulation of pictures of the planet Earth taken by space explorers, the notion of globalization has mobilized two (main) opposite and yet related modes of analytical investigation (Marcus 1995; Robinson 2007; Sklair 1999). One, grounded in the tradition of world-system theory, has encouraged scholars to embrace a broader scale in order to advance the understanding of the contemporary global interconnectedness. The other trajectory, stemming from the ethnographic interest in fine-grained descriptions of the particular has originated a body of work concerned with accounts of the local (and at times subversive) incarnations of the global.

Departing from these two major approaches, this paper suggested a different tactics to understand and describe globalization. Rather than framing globalization as an analytic concept that can be used to understand specific processes happening in the world, I proposed to view globalization as something quite similar to the Bakhtinian chronotope, which is both a discursive process and a
semitic artifact. In this light, we may conceive globalization as a chronotope, whose most popular current representation is that of a progressively shrinking space and ever accelerating time.

Commenting in 1971 on the sight of our terraqueous planet he could grasp from the cosmos, Apollo XIV astronaut Edgar Mitchell is reported to have said: ‘It was a beautiful, harmonious, peaceful-looking planet, blue with white clouds, and one that gave you a deep sense...of home, of being, of identity’ (Skilair 1999: 154). Following the astronaut’s words and Bakhtin’s (1981) insights, I suggest that ‘the local’ and ‘the global’ do not have any precise referential value. In other words, they do not qualify any specific process, nor can they be understood as referring to any inherent scale. Rather, they denote spatiotemporal and language-mediated configurations (i.e. chronotopes) of collective belonging that can be actualized through specific (and often recurrent) discursive acts, of the kind I examined in the previous pages.

Notes

1 Acknowledgements: This paper was originally presented as part of a panel on ‘Margins, hubs, and peripheries in a decolonizing Indonesia’ organized by Zane Goebel for the Symposium on Sociolinguistics of Globalization held in Hong Kong, in June 2015. I thank Zane, the participants in the panel, and the discussants Joel Kuipers, Asif Agha, and Jan Blommaert for the comments and the invaluable intellectual stimulus they offered on that occasion. The ethnographic data presented in the following pages were collected during my fieldwork in Toraja, which was conducted under the sponsorship of the Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia and Universitas Hasanuddin in Makassar. My research would not have been possible without the help, friendship, and insight of my Toraja interlocutors, who assisted me at different stages of my fieldwork. A special acknowledgement goes to Ben Sherak for the valuable feedback he provided on a revised version of the paper. I am grateful to the University of Milan (Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca) for funding my doctoral fieldwork (2002–2003, and 2004) and to the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology for awarding me two postdoctoral grants (SFRH/BPD/40397/2007 and SFRH/BPD/21059/2004), which allowed me to conduct two additional periods of fieldwork and data analysis in 2005-2006 and 2007.

2 Following Briggs and Bauman’s (1992) famous analysis of intertextuality, generic purity and hybrid crossover productions should not be seen as absolute entities, but rather as dynamic outcomes within a continuum of ongoing negotiations between minimizations and maximizations of ‘the distance between texts and genres’ (Briggs and Bauman 1992: 149).

3 The notion of ‘enregisterment’ has been key in furthering the understating of the relation between speech norms, social meanings, and linguistic features. Through processes of enregisterment, ‘distinct forms of speech come to be socially recognized (or unregistered) as indexical of speakers attributes by a population of language users’ (Agha 2005: 38). Enregisterment entails the dissemination, solidification, normalization, and stabilization – across a group of speakers- of semiotic indexical relations connecting speech repertoires, cultural meanings, and social types.

4 For example, Cmiel (1991) examined the struggle that took place, towards the end of the eighteenth century, between the neoclassical tradition of American oratory and the new populist rhetoric of the ‘middling styles’. The former was associated with the neoclassical humanistic ideal of the ‘unified soul’ of the cultivated gentleman (Cmiel 1991: 14), the latter was emblematic of a new ideology of professionalism based on the ‘compartmentalization of the professional expert, endowed with specific ‘skills’ and capable of combining the refined and the vulgar, as prescribed by the new demand of mass democracy (Cmiel 1991: 13). Analyzing political speechmaking in Tamil emergent democracy, Bate (2004) described a similar, though specular, shift within the relation between oratorical genres and models of the ideal political/moral subject. He showed how, in 1940s and 1950s Tamilnadu, orators increasingly abandoned the common register (koccaittamil) to embrace a more refined and literary register, called centamil. The use of this archaized and literary language was evocative of the ancient Dravidian civilization and of the Tamil (Dravidian) nationalist struggle against the politicians of the pan-Indian Congress Party (Bate 2004: 340) who, in spite of their being mostly high caste Brahmans, lacked verbal dexterity in centamil. The cultural logic of this intriguing oratorical shift revolved around the existence of oppositional semiotic associations between verbal aesthetics and political values and subjectivities. Hull’s (2010) analysis of American technologies of speech aimed, during WWII, at implementing democratic ideologies reveals a similar cultural logic based on a binary ‘opposition between democracy and autocracy’ (Hull 2010: 258).

5 In transcribing my data, I followed intonation units. Lines’ numbers correspond to the integral transcription of the speech event.
As Eisenlohr (2004: 84) effectively explicated, ‘[t]his new form of experiencing time as linearly moving forward and measurable by clock and calendar provides an abstract yardstick on which otherwise disparate and disconnected events can be conceived as linked by virtue of simultaneity relative to such an axis of time. Anderson argues that this way of conceiving time also enables modern subjects to imagine a national community as progressing forward through history, in a manner somewhat analogous to characters in a novel, whose disparate lives and actions are connected by virtue of being locatable on the same temporal measure of an unfolding plot.’

A term that Foucault (1982) used to refer to a meta-form of political technology aimed at governing the conduct and the experience of individual human beings.

‘Because state practices are co-implicated with spatial orders and metaphors, an analysis of the imaginary of the state must include not only explicit discursive representations of the state, but also implicit, unmarked, signifying practices. These mundane practices often slip below the threshold of discursivity but profoundly alter how bodies are oriented, how lives are lived, and how subjects are formed’ (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 984, my emphasis).


According to Peirce (1974[1931]: 2.277) diagrammatic icons are ‘those which represent the relations […] of the parts of one thing by analogous relations in their own parts.’

This procedure had been established by the decree of the President of Indonesia no. 100/1993.

This administrative structure derives from the colonial system of Netherlands Indies: Reglement op het Beleid der Regering van Nederlandse Indie (Stb 1855/2) whose decreasing levels of hierarchical inclusion comprised: Gewest (later renamed Residentie), Afdeling, Onderafdeling, District and Onderdistrict (see Kaho 1988: 21).

It should be noted that in Indonesia the difference between ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ areas is conceptualized and materially reflected in two different administrative systems. Urban areas are thus organized in municipalities (kotamadya), which are administrated by a mayor (walkikota). Whereas, rural areas are divided into kabupaten (regencies) and are administrated by a bupati (who thus corresponds to the function played by the mayor in urban places) (cf. 2003; Crystal 1971: 124).

As Bakhtin (1981: 157) further explains, temporal divisions ‘have no substance here; they must be ignored in order to understand this vertical world; everything must be perceived as being within a single time, that is, in the synchrony of a single moment; one must see this entire world as simultaneous.’

As Bakhtin (1981: 157) pointed out: ‘[o]nly under conditions of pure simultaneity - or, […] in an environment outside time altogether - can there be revealed the true meaning of ‘that which was, and which is and which shall be’: and this is so because the force (time) that had divided these three is deprived of its authentic reality and its power to shape thinking. To ‘synchronize diachrony’, to replace all temporal and historical divisions and linkages with purely interpretative, extratemporal and hierarchicized ones-such was Dante's form-generating impulse, which is defined by an image of the world structured according to a pure verticality.’

As Cole (2010: 6-7) points out, ‘[t]his shift can be quickly grasped by comparing the oft-used Soeharto era phrase Persatuan dan Kesatuan (Unity and Integrity) […] with the many public statements on the significance of Indonesia’s diversity made by […] Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, including democracy’s true and ultimate strength lies in its diversity […]’.

On the subversive effect of the replacing of Suharto’s face with that Sukarno and Megawati’s face on the 50,000 rupiah bill in the aftermath of Suharto’s resignation, see Strassler (2009).

Most of the discursive material that substantiated the political debates during at least the initial phases of the decentralization process in Indonesia and in Toraja originated from agencies such as the Partnership for Governance Reform in Indonesia. The Partnership was founded in Jakarta in January 2000 by a set of transnational agencies: UNDP [United Nations Development Program], World Bank, and ADB [Asian development Bank]. It originated as collaboration between the international community (which comprises international development agencies as well as foreign – mostly North American, European, and Japanese-donors) and local actors (namely the Government of Indonesia, local NGO leaders, as well as the private sector) in support of governance reform.

Indeed, as Strassler (2009: 76) pointed out, Sukarno, who used to call himself ‘an extension of the people’s tongue’, ‘spoke to and for his people via the radio in a deeply resonant and powerfully affecting voice.’ Drawing on Shiraiishi (1997: 91), Strassler (2009: 75) pointed out how ‘the transition from the Sukarno years (1945-1965) to the Suharto regime (1966-1998) coincided with a technological shift in the dominant mode of political communication from radioaurality to televisuality.’
By this I refer not only to Indonesian’s ideological association with ideas of socioeconomic development and prestige, but also to its embeddedness within an ideology of un-native-ness and superior denotational transparency and functional effectiveness (Errington 2000).

Goebel (2008) and Cole (2010), whose ethnographic research has been centered in Java, point out the recent emergence of a pattern of identity enregisterment in which the use of a regional language among speakers of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds is aimed at producing a sense of ‘adequation’ (Goebel 2008), a denaturalization of the ideological primordialist connection between language and ethnicity, and what may be called an enregisterment of local cosmopolitanism, something that Cole (2010: 3) described as the enregisterement of the persona ‘diverse Indonesian’. My analysis of the performances of ethnolinguistic Toraja difference presents both continuities and disjunctures with respect to these recent works on the relationship between Indonesian and ‘Languages other than Indonesian’ or ‘LOTI’ (Goebel 2008). On the one hand, these performances depart from what described by Cole (2010) and Goebel (2008) as they attempt at renaturalizing the primordialist link between language and identity. On the other hand, they resonate with the aesthetics of local cosmopolitanism that transpires from Cole (2010) and Goebel’s (2008) analyses of Indonesian-LOTI code-switching.

References


Marginalizing and revaluing Papuan Malay: The impact of politics, policy and technology in Indonesia

Izak Morin

Abstract

This paper takes a historical look at the movement and (re)valuation of standard Indonesian (SI) and Papuan Malay (PM) in Papua. Drawing inspiration from work on language ideologies and using a range of historical texts, signs, media footage, and lived experience I argue that in recent years PM has moved from the peripheries to new, more central domains, such as the media. This revaluation sits in tension with another process (promises of a massification of education in villages) that will facilitate the continued movement of SI into the peripheries, especially social domains formerly inhabited by the voices of PM and regional languages. I start by looking at how PM emerged through contact between Malay speaking people and Papuans before then looking at the role of missionaries in the mid-1800s in marginalizing this emergent variety through its replacement with Standard Malay (SM). I then go on to argue that the implementation of the powerful political decrees by the first Indonesian President Sukarno paved the way for SI to move easily into the Land of Papua in 1969. With Papua under Indonesian control SI began to replace SM, while continuing to place PM in a marginal position. Even after decentralization nothing much changed in terms of language policy as it related to the language of schooling, but ambiguities in a number of government decrees laid open an avenue for the revaluation of PM through its increasing use in the media on the internet.

1. Introduction

This paper considers how Papuan Malay (PM) emerged and how it has been historically marginalized and revalued. I explore a variety of texts, graphics and recordings to examine how they figure in language ideological debates. These debates have to do with the status and role of the Standard Malay (SM), PM, Standard Indonesian (SI), regional languages, and English in a context where these languages are the object of revaluation processes. In Section 2 I explore the role of politics, policies and technological advances which have contributed to the revaluing of PM. For centuries, PM was primarily an oral language, but in recent years it has entered other social domains, including the mass media and the internet. In so doing, I highlight the discursive features and strategies employed in politics and policies to define, manage and legitimate PM, SI, English, and regional languages in Papua.

2. Trajectory of PM

PM is a mixture of Papuan languages and Malay. The former refers to Austronesian and Non-Austronesian languages with ‘a total of 307’ (Pusat Bahasa Provinsi Papua dan Papua Barat 2014). The
latter relates to the trading Malay used before the Dutch arrival and SM during the Dutch occupation from 1828 to 1962 including the Christian and Catholic missions. Following this, SI has come to contact with PM since 1969 up to now with between 1,100,000 to 1,200,000 potential speakers (Kluge 2014: 6). This contact ultimately produced a creole language (Ashcroft et al. 2000: 18) that was a product of colonialization and which became used in every interaction, while also becoming an ideological construction (Acheraiou 2011: 1).

While the exact origins of PM are unknown, we do know that Malay traders travelled from the islands of Tidore and of Seram for trading purposes since the 14th century (Haga 1884; Rowley 1972; Bosh 1995; Van Oldenborgh 1995; Overweel 1995; Goodman 2002; Van der Eng 2004). Following what we know about trade and contact and the formation of pidgin and creole languages (Mufwene 2008), it is likely that regular contact amongst a particular group helped form what was later categorized as PM by Christian missionaries.

The Protestant and Catholic missionaries came in different periods and at different parts of the island. Meteray (2012: 31-32) indicates that in 1855 the Christian missionaries, C.W. Ottow and J.G. Geissler, arrived in the northern part of West Papua and began their religious and education mission in Mansinam, Manokwari. Following this, in 1898 Catholic missionary Le Coq d’Armandville arrived in Fakfak the south western part of West Papua for the similar purpose. Meteray (2012) asserts that the Teacher Training School together with a boarding house built in 1925 by the Protestants was the first nursery of a cross-pollination of various languages and cultures of Papua.

From 1948 to 1961, the Dutch government collaborated with the Protestant and Catholic education to promote SM as a language of instruction (Kijne 1954). SM was compulsorily used in teaching-learning process, while the Dutch language was only taught as a subject at high schools. PM served as a bridging language between SM, Dutch, and local vernaculars. However, the crucial role of PM and indigenous languages were recognized by the headmaster of the Protestant school in Miei, which I have translated as follows:

At schools it is mandatory to teach standard Malay as a common language. The conferences decided that the outside regions, like Biak and Wondama, should use standard Malay at church as well, as long as it can be translated by the interpreter. And, of course, the native speaker teachers may use their own languages if they work in their own regions, and also may use the common standard Malay, and the Moluccas Malay [PM] which has been well-known in the coastal regions (Kijne, 1954 emphasis added).

Kijne’s statement suggests that PM and SM were increasingly common in a number of social domains. Meteray (2012) points out that the 13 years-old students from different regions came together to study at this school in July each year. During this schooling period, SM was obligatory in classroom activities while SM and PM were used together when doing agricultural and carpenter work during their leisure time. Meteray adds that Kijne’s well-designed SM teaching materials embedded local indigenous knowledge and culture so these materials were not only used by the Protestant schools in the North but also the Catholic’s in the South.

3. Political decrees and decentralization policies in Indonesia

This section examines how Indonesia fits into the situation in Papua. The Japanese occupied Indonesia in 1942 and their surrender on the 15th of August 1945 paved the way for two Indonesian elites, Soekarno and Hatta, to proclaim Indonesia’s independence on the 17th of August 1945 (Vickers 2005). This proclamation was later accompanied by a constitution which among other things repeated a well-known ideology about nation-states (Hobsbawm 1992), namely that they are one territory and one people with one language. Indonesia’s proclamation of independence did not hinder the Dutch’s return to Indonesia in 1946 where they resumed their administration and education activities. Meteray (2012) reveals that from 1946 to 1961 the Papuan politicians formed eight political parties to prepare a new independence nation-state of West Papua (see also Alua 2000/2006; Antoh 2007). At the same time,
ex-Indonesian political prisoners living in West Papua encouraged some Papuan leaders to join Indonesia.

Meteray (2012) follows Yoman (2010), Antoh (2007), Ramandey (2007), and Alua (2000/2006), to note that the Papuan parliament was formed on April 5, 1961 and on December 1, 1961 West Papua declared a newly-born nation with an anthem *Hai Tanahku Papua* [Hey my land of Papua], a flag (the morning star), and a motto (one people, one soul), but no named national language (though the proclamation was in PM). The lack of a mention of a national language is an important point because its absence did not fit common perceptions of a nation-state found not only in Indonesian but in other parts of the world. On December 19, 1961 Indonesian President Sukarno declared war against the Dutch in Papua and formed a special military commando called 'Tri Komando Rakyat' [the People Triple Commands] with the well-known acronym TRIKORA under the command of General Suharto. In this declaration TRIKORA was seen as necessary to defend Indonesia’s independence and to frustrate the Netherlands attempts to build a puppet nation. In doing so, they did not recognized Papua’s earlier claims to independence, perhaps in part due to that lack of a language of the nation state.

This decree raised tensions between the Netherlands and Indonesia from the end of 1961 to late of 1962. On October 1, 1962 the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) arrived in West Papua. On December 31, 1962 the Dutch flag was pulled down and the Indonesian flag was raised beside the United Nations flag. On May 1, 1963 UNTEA handed over the administration of West Papua to Indonesia in order to manage a referendum called the Act of Free Choice in 1969. The outcome, though to this day hotly contested with claims of interference by US capital interests, was the incorporation of Papua as West Papua into Indonesia. Among other things, what stand out with the Papuan claim to independence and the subsequent annexation by Indonesia is marginalization of PM.

These political moves also ultimately facilitated the mobility of SI from the centre to a newly formed periphery helping to further marginalize PM. SI replaced SM as the language of schooling because it was promoted as the only national language in West Papua. In addition, all Papuan-based teaching materials developed in SM were replaced with SI materials. Typically, Jakarta-based authors wrote the textbooks without considering the cultural aspects of Papuans so the students found difficulties understanding some of these materials and at the same time the use of SI as the language of instruction produced some language difficulties for students. This situation made most Papuan teachers more determined that PM should be used in classroom activities regardless of the state-sponsored slogan ‘Gunakanlah Bahasa Indonesia Yang Baik dan Benar’ [Please Use Good and Correct Indonesian]. This situation continued until regime change in 1998 and until intervention by Indonesia’s fourth president, Abdurrahman Wahid or Gus Dur as he was locally known.

Determined to ease the unstable political situation in West Papua, Gus Dur reconciled with Papuans through three historical manoeuvres in 2000. These manoeuvres included changing the provincial name of ‘Irian Jaya’ [victorious hot land] into ‘Papua’ [black and curly], providing two million rupiah for the Second Papuan Congress in November 2000, and allowing the Papuans to raise their Morning Star flag on December 1, 2000 in Jayapura (Jakarta Post November 15, 2006). In the congress PM was promoted as a language of communication among Papuans (Ramandey 2005: 86). In the following year, Indonesia’s fifth president, Megawati Soekarnoputri, issued the Special Autonomy Law (2001/21), and indicated that this was a way forward for solving political problems in Papua, which included a continued separatist movement (Antoh 2007: 187; Yoman 2010: 32).

In Article 58 of the Special Autonomy Law SI was named as the national language and SI and English were recommended as the languages of instruction at all levels of education, while regional languages were stated as optional languages of instruction. Within this article there was not mention of PM which helped to continue to marginalize it. This marginalization was also assisted with recourse to the widely held nation-state ideology that often equated a territory with a language and a people (e.g. Indonesia and Indonesians, France and French, England and English) because while there was now a recognized territory with a flag, its national language continued to be Indonesian.

Although the special autonomy law was issued in 2001, it was not successfully implemented because of continued political conflict between Jakarta and West Papua (MRP report 2013). In 2010 Papuans staged a rally and symbolically returned the Special Autonomy Law to the government arguing...
that it had failed due to the lack of political will from the central government (Jakarta Post June 19, 2010). This rejection also indirectly points to a failure in implementing Article 58. Indeed, my own experiences of how this pseudo language policy was implemented suggest that there was little implementation in schools throughout West Papua.

As a response, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) formed ‘Unit Percepatan Pembangunan Papua dan Papua Barat – UP4B’ [Unit of Acceleration of Development in Papua and Papua Barat – UP4B] in 2011 (Jakarta Post October 30, 2011) to elevate the Papuans’ welfare and education situation, which were mostly under the national poverty line and below defined education standards (Jakarta Post January 12, 2012). A presidential regulation (2011/65) that was issued as part of these efforts (especially Articles 3 and 6) highlighted the need to increase the availability of teachers and facilities, especially in the peripheries of two of the three newly formed provinces of Papua and West Papua.

Language did not appear to be seen as an important issue in this reinvigorated approach to education in the peripheries and these initiatives were abandoned after the Indonesian Institute of Sciences researcher, Chayo Pamungkas, advised the new president-elect Joko Widodo, to disband the UP4B unit. The reasons given was that activists and analysts had deemed the unit a failure, especially in the area of promoting fruitful and peaceful dialogues between the central government in Jakarta and Papua (Jakarta Post Sept 8, 2014). It is also the case that during his election campaign for president, Joko Widodo promised to promote education, health, and human rights, and to allow foreign government humanitarian organizations, journalists, and NGOs to come to West Papua, reversing some of the policies of the previous SBY government (Jakarta Post June 6, 2014; The Diplomat August 19, 2014). In the domain of local Papuan politics, Papuan Malay was also not gaining any ground. In the Third Papuan Congress, conducted from 17-19 October 2011, for example, attendees declared a self-government and called their new nation the Federal Republic of West Papua (Jakarta Post October 18, 2011, October 21 and 23, 2011 and March 17, 2012). Unlike the second congress, PM was not recommended as their preferred national language (Kluge 2014).

In sum, in the domain of political discourse PM had little social value from 1969 to present with SI continuing to be ideologized as the language of Papua and a language that was to reach the peripheries of Papuan society. English also seemed to be gained social value through the suggestions that international agencies would have unrestricted access to Papua. In other social domains, however, the trajectory of PM was quite different and the same decentralization laws that had resulted in Papua being granted special autonomy and the continued deference to SI in political discourses, gave more leeway to PM, as discussed below.

4. Papuan Malay in other social domains

In this section, I focus on other domains of the Papuan linguistic landscape, especially after the fall of the Soeharto regime in 1998. I will pay particular attention to broadcasting legislations and the use of PM in YouTube, television, film and signage. After the main decentralization laws came into effect in 2001 other decentralization policies also began to appear. The 2002 law (no. 32) about broadcasting, especially Articles 37 and 38 stipulate the following:

Article 37: The main language in implementing broadcasting programs must be good and correct Indonesian Language.

Article 38: (1) Local language can be used in implementing local-load broadcasting programs, when necessary, to support certain program items.

(Author’s translation)

In 2004 another law (Law 32) about Regional Governance was produced. Chapter I, Article 1 (points 5 and 6) describe the rights, authorities, and responsibilities of the regional government:
Article 1
5. Regional autonomy is the rights, authorities, and responsibilities of the autonomy region to arrange and manage its own governance and local people affairs according to the regulations of the law.
6. Autonomy region, then called region, is a legal-based community unit with the regional boundaries which has the authority to arrange and manage the governance and local community affairs according to its own initiative based upon the people's aspiration within the system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

(Author’s translation, emphasis added)

In effect this law increased the value of PM in the Special Autonomy Law and Broadcasting Law through the phrases local people affairs and the people's aspiration which in effect implicitly invited the use of PM in schooling, radio and television broadcasting. The film law introduced in 2009 (Law 33, Articles 1 and 3) further reinforced this invitation as can be seen below:

Article 1, 3: National culture is all systems of values, thoughts, norms, acts, and creativities of the people of Indonesia throughout the archipelago being practiced through their lives as part of community, nation, and state.
Article 3, e. to flourish and conserve the national culture values.
Article 3, f. to make the national culture known by the international world.

(Author’s translation)

A number of radio and television broadcasters took up this invitation, including Program Pro 1 National Radio of Jayapura and TopTV which broadcast news in PM and programmed the stand-up comedy ‘Kapala cuci mayat’ [The head washes the body] where much of the dialogue was in PM. Interestingly, the minister for telecommunications, Yusuf Iskandar, visited Jayapura in 2008, watched TopTV and proceeded to demonstrate some familiarity with PM, as in the following comment made on July 25:

[...]. Interestingly, the terms pace-mace (folks) are used almost at the beginning of each sentence without a pause as if the news reader is having a dialogue with his/her listeners and not just informing an event. [...]. Besides, other words such as ‘paetua’ (SI: bapak; English: Sir, Mr), ‘su’ (SI: sudah; English: already), ‘dong’ (SI: mereka; English: they), ‘tong’ (SI: kita; English: we), ‘bilang’ (SI: mengatakan; English: say), and so forth are also used. TOP TV has begun a step to globalize, represent the word 'pembangunan’ [development], that is, develop the people of Jayapura and Papua [...].

(Author's translation)


There were also four films produced during this period that represented the use of PM in various contexts including the films Denias (a person’s name) released in 2006, Melody Kota Rusa (The Melody of Deer City) released in 2010, Di Timur Matahari (To the West of the Sun) released in 2012, and Cinta dari Wamena (Love from Wamena) released in 2013. In addition, government institutions used PM fragments in their public signage. Figure 1 is a billboard with a request from the Governor and Vice Governor of Papua to involve people in one of their programs. Note the use of PM form kitong (we) instead of the SI form kita and rame-rame (together) instead of the SI form bersama-sama. Similarly, in Figure 2 the Mayor of Jayapura and famous Papuan soccer players are encouraging everyone to have an electronic identity card. The second personal pronoun of PM ko (you in singular) is used instead of the SI form kamu or anda. And, the expression of KO TRA KOSONG [lit. you not empty] (You are somebody) is used instead of Anda tidak kosong in the SI form. Lastly, the request Ayo...! Urus tempo [lit. come...! manage tempo] (Come and get one as quick as you can) means Ayo...! Mengurus secepatnya in the SI form.
Boas (and others):

1. Kalau **ko** Punya KTP-Elektronik **Ko tra**  
If you own an electronic ID card

2. **kosong**  
**You are somebody**

3. Ayo...! **Urus tempo**  
Come [and] **get one as quick as you can**

In Figure 3 the traffic police department of the Provincial Police (POLDA) places this reminder using PM in a busy street close to the traffic lights to remind drivers to obey the traffic law. Instead of using the SI form *Kalau lampu merah sudah menyala mohon saudara berhenti* they prefer using the PM form *Kalo lampu merah, pace mace stop kah...!!* [lit. if light red, male female stop please] (If the red light is on please make a stop).
Other public sites through which PM is widely spread include electronic media, such as website and YouTube that can be noticed in Figure 4 and Figure 5 respectively. Figure 4 is an advertisement in website of Bank Papua (www.bankpapua.com) to encourage people to pay their electrical bill at this bank. Note the use of PM form kitorang (we) instead of the IS form kita. Meanwhile, figure five is the hip hop Papua for Jokowi-JK during their presidential campaign was published on June 29, 2014 on Youtube and watched by 26,000 viewers (Latest accessed on May 1, 2015). It is a mixture of PM, SI, and English suggesting that those three languages are now moving around the Land of Papua. Below is the transcript of PM fragments used in this song.

**Figure 4**

Kini ... Kitorang Bisa bayar Tagihan Listrik disini Now...we can pay the electricity bill here.

**Figure 5.** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kMGZNuOSoQ&feature=player_detailpage

In the Soeharto era PM was far more marginal and during the subsequent period of decentralization then it became revalued as something that can be displayed in public media and something that can be seen all over the places. Such displays, particularly the video, would not be happened during the New Order era.

5. **Conclusion**

PM emerged initially as a trade language and its social value increased with the arrival of missionaries who used it in their missions. While it had some social value during the late stages of the Dutch colonial period and indeed until 1969, this value decreased as Papua was incorporated into the Indonesian state. Form 1969 until around 2010, SI ideologically replaced PM in its former domains (e.g. schooling), especially in political discourses of the Jakartan and Papuan elite. Even so, the decentralization laws that came into force in 2001 and a number of subsequent laws relating to regional governance and film
making helped engender a climate where PM gained more social value. Fragments of PM could regularly be found in the domains of television, radio, film and signage. While in everyday village contexts local languages continue to be used the continued push for equity and in some case independence for Papua has helped to further increase the social value of PM, especially as it is seen as a language of the state.

6. References


Special issue on ‘Margins, hubs, and peripheries in a decentralizing Indonesia’

PART III

(Re)centring and (re)configuring diversity through shifting signs
The material force of signs and the reconfiguration of superdiverse identities

Deborah Cole

Abstract

This study investigates a value project to create and promote a commodity register to formulate a ‘diverse identity’ as emblematic of the city of Jogjakarta, Central Java. It takes as its data the products of a popular souvenir company, Aseli Bikinan Dagadu Djokdja, which was launched by a group of architecture students from Gadjah Mada University in 1994. The company’s history spans the final years of Soeharto’s centralized government, the reformasi era of decentralization, and the present. The signs produced for sale on t-shirts, stickers, key chains, and other souvenirs provide rich data for advancing a materialist theory of signs that sees them ‘as material forces subject to and reflective of conditions of production and patterns of distribution, and as constructive of social reality…having real effects in social life’ (Blommaert 2013: 38).

The analysis of these data reveal the ways that patterns of production and consumption contribute to the (re)creation of ethnolinguistic hubs and peripheries. Further, it clarifies our understanding of the complex dialogic and heteroglossic processes by which signs are emplaced in the linguistic landscape, select their audiences for uptake, and participate in the enskillment and knowing of those who read and make use of them. Most importantly, the analysis helps us to make sense of the ways that the superdiversity of contemporary globalization contributes to formulations of identity categories that conflict with chronologically prior or geographically distant formulations and valuations of similar personae.

Introduction – Redefining diversity

The fight against racism cannot possibly succeed unless a true acceptance of diversity is taken as the starting point of any perspective on society. In fact, diversity has to be taken so seriously that its locus is no longer any type of group, but the individual—where any individual can belong to many different types of rarely coinciding groups at the same time. (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998/2002: 192, emphases in original)

This is a paper about diversity, about how we might take diversity seriously, and about how we may rid ourselves of the notion that diversity can be located within groups. I want to begin with what I believe is our current working definition of diversity, both within the social sciences and in everyday discourse and suggest an alternative definition that more closely aligns with Blommaert and Verschueren’s insistence that we locate diversity in the individual – a definition that will also better represent the data to be presented below.

We typically work with a conception of diversity that looks something like this.
Diversity 2: The coming into contact of many different types of personae and/or semiotic registers within a particular context or semiotic field.

A visual example of the way this concept of diversity appears in social science discourse can be seen in Rampton et al. (2015: 2-3) where three different pie charts show the increasing influx of national identities into Ostend over the span of two decades.

![Figure 1](image1.png)

![Figure 2](image2.png)

![Figure 3](image3.png)

So as better to locate diversity within the individual, I draw heavily on Agha’s theories of semiotic behaviour and propose this revised definition of diversity.

**Diversity 1:** The performance and recognition of multiple contrary to stereotype diacritics by single individuals to index a previously un-stereotyped identity or a many-in-one persona.²

Some visual examples might clarify how these two definitions differ. These examples come from the family card game ‘Set’.³ Sets are made by identifying features on three different cards. There are four feature categories – colour, shading, number, shape – and each feature category as three possible specifications.
All of the images above are examples of *sets* in the game: A *set* is defined as three cards which have the same specification on all three cards for any feature category (in Figure 7, the colour feature is specified as red on all three cards, and the shape feature is specified as squiggle for all three cards) or which have different specifications on all three cards for any feature category (in Figure 7, we have different specifications for number: one, two, and three). If we scan vertically in Figure 8, we see three sets – similar to the one above – specified the same for shape and shade, but differently for number. There are also three horizontal sets, specified the same for number, but differently for colour and shading. Let us call these six sets, stereotypical sets.

**A STEREOTYPICAL SET contains at least one matching diacritic:** There is at least one feature category for which the diacritic on all three cards is the same.

There are four more sets in this image, none of which meet our criteria for a stereotypical set. Before reorganizing the cards to make them easy to see, I want to draw your attention to one you can identify by scanning diagonally from the lower left corner to the top right corner. In this set, the specifications for all three feature categories are different (purple, green, red; solid, shaded, empty; squiggle, diamond, oval; 1, 2, 3). Let us call this type of set a ‘diversity set’.

**A DIVERSITY SET contains no matching diacritics:** For each feature category, all three diacritics are different.

In Figure 9 we see the same nine cards from the previous image, but arranged so that three of the diversity sets can be scanned vertically and one diversity set can be scanned from the lower left corner to the upper right corner.
Now to make the connection to human identity categories: Let a ‘set’ represent an identity persona composed of a particular constellation of diacritics performed/perceived at a particular moment in time. Figures 4 through 7 will thus represent four distinct personae. In Figure 8, let’s identify three personae scanning vertically. What we have been calling group-level diversity is exemplified by these sets. Notice that in the arrangement of the personae in Figure 8, we can easily identify recognizable types of individuals together in the same semiotic field: The purple, solid, squiggle type, the green, shaded, diamond type, and the red, empty, oval type. Notice too how in scanning this way, each individual persona appears to represent a group – the diacritics are repeated, matching each other, easily constituting a recognizable category. If you were playing this game, you could easily say and understand the sentence, ‘Pass me the red ovals.’

Individual level diversity is exemplified by diversity sets in Figure 9. Notice here how no individual or persona is clearly representative of a group. And notice how you can’t easily name the set by calling out stereotyped diacritics. Note too that each ‘diversity set’ persona is configured using all 12 of the available diacritics in a unique way. And that the co-presence of three ‘diversity set personae’ in the observable semiotic field of the photograph resists our ability to stereotype, that is to see matching features across individuals on correlated cards. (In fact it is hard for many people first learning this game to even recognize diversity sets. Though sometimes after you get playing they’re the only ones you can see.) I have labelled our revised definition ‘diversity’ to convey that it is our primary type of diversity – and it is in this sense that we will be viewing and talking about diversity below.

**Emergent effects and emplaced emblems – Materialist semiosis**

Utterances are social, because signs function as connectors between senders and receivers and because utterances produce a model of the social occasion in which they occur. Put another way, utterances enable senders and receivers to interpret the social relations between them as an effect of the utterance itself. These effects can be stereotypical (as visualized in Figure 8, above) or emergent (as in Figure 9, above). Stereotypical effects result from previously emergent effects that have become enregistered over time, and they model (or sketch) previously enregistered relations between social personae. Stereotypical effects are produced by indexical congruence. Emergent effects, on the other hand, are produced by indexical non-congruence. The co-occurrence of signs that have not been previously enregistered suggests a new social persona and sketches an unfamiliar social relation between senders and receivers. The alignment between the sender and receiver of a non-congruent indexical is thus also emergent, negotiated in the process of sending and receiving signs (Agha 2007: Chapter 1).

We can more easily talk about stereotypical effects and enregistered semiotic processes because of their durability in time and space, their ability to be recognized by senders and receivers, and by the fact that stereotypical effects can be identified metadiscursively by the set of senders and receivers that recognize them. Emergent effects happen just as regularly as stereotypical effects, but are more difficult to talk about because they happen quickly and fleetingly (what Agha calls *evanescence*), because they are produced and perceived by senders and receivers that have no metadiscursive vocabulary or habitus with which to recognize them, and because emergent effects are inputs to a
semiotic chain that may or may not lead to their eventual enregisterment. The properties of emergent
effects make them perhaps more difficult to study, but we have two facts about them working in our
favour: 1) They are highly palpable to interactants when they occur, i.e. we notice them and care about
them when they are happening, and 2) They are organized in ways that we can describe and
understand.

The difference, then, between stereotypical and emergent effects is not so much a matter of
type, but a matter of when and where in the history of a social speech chain a particular utterance
occurs.4 Because utterances that produce emergent effects are non-stereotypical, it is perhaps easy to
assume that they are secondary, or exceptional to stereotypical ones. But in fact, utterances producing
emergent effects are primary, because it is from emergent effects that all stereotypical (i.e.
enregistered) effects, personae, emblems, and registers originate and solidify over time. Additionally,
utterances producing emergent effects are primary because they always have the potential to
reconfigure stereotypical ones to produce further emergent effects.

We need several more definitions to continue.

**EMBLEM:** ‘a thing to which a social persona is attached...involv[ing]... (1) a perceivable
thing, or diacritic; (2) a social persona; (3) someone who can read that persona from
that thing’ (Agha 2007: 234).

**TEXT LEVEL INDEXICALITY:** ‘the co-textual organization of signs that together formulate
effects that differ from any effects associated with text-segments that occur as its parts’
(Agha 2007: 24).

Since we will be working with object signs that have been formulated as commodities, we will also
need the following definition.5

**CONFIGURATIVE OBJECT SIGN:** ‘the performance of otherwise familiar commodity tokens in
contextually non-congruent styles’ (Agha 2011: 47)

To work with our data, we also need the term *emplacement* from geosemiotics.

**EMPLACEMENT:** The placing of signs in space, creating a sign’s spatial scope and turning
space into a non-human ‘actor’ in sociolinguistic processes’ (Blommaert 2014: 32).

It will be important for us to keep at the forefront of our minds that signs are physical and that all
semiotic processes are material. Signs are produced, perceived and enregistered by real people in
interactions through time and in space, i.e. by human conduct. Further and contrary to our lay
understanding, signs select their addressees – the particular modalities and diacritics of a sign giving
it a *semiotic scope* that ‘reach(es) and select(s) different audiences’ (Blommaert 2014: 43). Because
signs appear in a physical space, they also have *spatial scope*, reaching audiences that can perceive
them and not audiences that cannot. How and where signs are emplaced in a landscape defines
*identities* (Blommaert 2014: 47). For example, Blommaert’s analysis of the visible signs in the city of
Oud-Berchem (2014) invites and enables us to read the history of spaces and the histories of people in
spaces from the signs emplaced therein: When an Albanian poster goes up in a neighbourhood, we can
infer that Albanians now live there (2014: 77-78).

The data we examine below will stretch our understanding of the emplacement and selectivity
of signs. With respect to emplacement, our configurative sign objects (CSOs) typically appear on t-
shirts, hats, and other wearable souvenirs. Unlike the signs in Oud-Berchem, these CSOs are not
generally emplaced in fixed areas, and their producers have little to no ability to determine the
particular, historically shaped landscape in which their messages will be conveyed. Rather the sign
makers emplace their CSOs on the bodies of consumers and the bodies of those to whom their
consumer’s give gifts. Though the process we will analyse is typical of the speech chain type ‘mass
communication’ in that a single sender communicates to multiple receivers, it is atypical in that message moves through the landscape on the sender’s body. Thus our understanding of emplacement will also have to account for mobility.

With respect to selectivity, our CSOs select their addressees, but not by selecting a stereotyped or enregistered category of readers/receivers, i.e. recognizable identities. Rather, these signs generate a category of addressees through tropic usages of multi-channel sign configurations that produce emergent effects through text level indexicality. These CSOs makes use of previously enregistered emblems of identities by combining diacritics from differing emblems of contrasting stereotyped social personae into new configurative object signs. As the CSOs move through time and across space, they formulate both an emergent social persona – the diverse orang Jogja – and a set of emergent receivers able to read this persona, which is to say they ‘formulate [their] indexical selectivity’ (Agha 2011: 44) on the fly. Thus, will see that selectivity can also be emergent. These data will help us to get a better handle on emergent effects more generally because these CSOs have a feature that is atypical of emergent emblems: Their evanescent character, rather than appearing and fading permanently (as in speech), appears, fades, then recurs repeatedly for different receivers.

Data – Dagadu’s commodity formulation

An unintended outcome of processes of enregisterment that occurred between 1966 and 2009 ... is that Indonesians can now also index their Indonesian-ness by knowing about or even speaking fragments of the ethnic ‘voices’ (Hill, 1995) of other Indonesians [Goebel 2015: 229].

Aseli Bikinan Dagadu Djokda is a souvenir company in Jogjakarta, a city located near the southern coast of central Java. The company was launched by a group of architecture students from Gadjah Mada University in 1994. It produces and sells mostly t-shirts, but also a variety of other items including hats, bags, stickers, key rings, mugs, and decks of playing cards. The target market is Indonesian tourists, who in a time honoured Indonesian tradition are socially required to bring back oleh-oleh (souvenirs) for their family, friends, neighbours and co-workers when they go on a trip. Every town, no matter how small, produces something, typically some kind of snack, for just this purpose. Dagadu takes advantage of these social conventions by producing non-edible commodities emblazoned with a dizzying array of configurative sign objects to represent the city of Jogja and its people. What is for sale at Dagadu is not so much the items themselves (the t-shirts, for example, are all made of the same high quality cotton, in only a couple of styles, in a series of standard sizes), but the configurative sign objects representing Jogja. When you shop for an item at Dagadu, you are quite literally shopping for signs.

The dizzying array of signs for sale is organized, however, into a clear set of categories, the CSOs conveying one or more of these themes.

Themes conveyed by the CSOs sold by Dagadu

- Jogja is a great place to vacation: You can relax there.
- People in Jogja are friendly: They will make you smile and laugh.
- Jogja has a rich cultural history.
- People in Jogja are educated and care about social issues.
- People in Jogja are technologically savvy.
- Jogja is home to a diverse population: Diversity is celebrated in Jogja.

People who purchase Dagadu products align themselves with 1) People can afford such products, 2) People who have been to Jogja or know someone who has, 3) People who identify with the aesthetic and social commentary promoted by Dagadu, and 4) People who are interested in expanding their ‘visual repertoire’ (Blommaert 2014) by decoding familiar diacritics in contextually non-congruent styles. On all of the items for sale at Dagadu, familiar diacritics are configured in contrary to
stereotype organizations to do at least one, if not all, of the following: 1) Draw on readers’ recognition of diacritics belonging to other company’s well enregistered brands and logos, 2) Create a configuration of diacritics that conveys one or more of their themes, and 3) Create a *plesetan* (pun, riddle, wordplay) that the reader must solve.

![Figure 10. Javanese consonants, Dagadu for beginners, and Dagadu’s logo](image1)

The company name itself is a kind of riddle, referring to a language game (*Bahasa Walikan* or ‘reverse language’, also known as Jogja slang), which is based on the visual organization of the Javanese alphabet. The twenty consonants are typically arranged in four rows of five. Children learn the letters in this order, aided by the fact that the pronunciation of the letters in this order sounds like words that make a story. *Bahasa Walikan* works by exchanging sounds from the first row with the corresponding sound in the same column on the third row and doing the same for the second and fourth rows. (Dagadu produced a ‘Dagadu for beginners’ shirt as part of their children’s line that demonstrated this process – second image in Figure 10.) Da-ga-du is the reverse language version of ma-ta-mu, which means ‘your eye’, and the company’s logo is also an eye. Though the phrase ‘matamu!’ is an expletive that can mean ‘Watch where you’re going!’ or ‘What the fuck are you looking at!’ the use of *Bahasa Walikan* has been found to signal adequation between speakers (artsonline). Figure 10 presents the orthographic symbols for the Javanese consonants in the order described so the reader can create *Bahasa Walikan* codes for himself. The third image has the Dagadu logo ‘hidden’ in a kind of Rorschach.

Examples illustrating the characteristics of Dagadu CSOs described above are presented in the Figures 11 through 16.

![Figure 11. Recontextualized brands](image2)

![Figure 12. Jogya is relaxing (Yogya For Rest & ‘Relaxing District’)](image3)
Let us linger briefly on the examples that focus on Jogja’s diversity. The first image in Figure 16 tropes on Indonesia’s national motto Bhinneka tunggal ika (Old Javanese, taken from an ancient poem urging tolerance between Buddhists and Hindus), which means ‘unity in diversity’. In the CSO, the replacement of ika with Djokdja (in the Dutch spelling) changes the meaning to ‘Jogja is unity in diversity’. (Note the visual representation of diversity in the image.) ‘Never ending Jogja’ (in the second image) was the city of Yogyakarta’s official slogan during the Reformasi era. Djokdja rupa-rupa means ‘Jogja is varied’. In the third image, the fragment kost in Kostmopolitan means ‘board’ as in a place to rent/let. The various speech bubbles represent Indonesian speech in non-standardized spellings – in the style people use to write texts or post in social media. They include comments about the electricity being out (lampune mati – Indonesian with a Javanese suffix) and a request to borrow a book ‘C’mon, lend me a book’ (pinjam buku, dong, where ‘dong’ is an emphatic marker in slang Indonesian).
Having seen a sample of CSOs that formulate Dagadu’s commodity register, let us return to the definitional and theoretical issues of diversity, and emergent selectivity that we introduced in previous sections. As we do, we will heed Blommaert’s advice about the importance of ethnography to the work of understanding semiotic activity. Dagadu CSOs select ‘diverse’ consumers and readers in at least four senses. First, the wide variety of diacritics used in the configuration of Dagadu signs selects different people who have varied histories and experiences with diverse signs and diverse registers. This point should be obvious from the array of examples presented in Figures 11-16 above. Second, the wide variety of diacritics selects for diverse, individuals, i.e. those individuals who are familiar with multiple, varied semiotic and commodity registers. This point can be verified by examining Figures 11-16 as well: Someone who knows Javanese, English, and Indonesian is more likely to be able to decode more of those examples. Someone who knows Dutch spelling conventions has an advantage too. Third, individual CSOs select a diverse array of consumers/readers, because consumers only need be familiar with a fraction of the diacritics arranged together in a particular CSO to be compelled to purchase, wear, and spread the CSO to a wider range of receivers. And finally, and perhaps following from the third, because Dagadu products select consumers/readers who need only be familiar with a fraction of the diacritics in any given CSO, they select for multiple readers, or a team of readers who together bring the necessary experience and familiarity with stereotypes to the task of decoding the signs. Let’s turn to two more examples that illustrate the third and fourth points.

![Figure 17. Beware of Gombal Manning: Fractional familiarity](image)

I purchased the t-shirt with the CSO pictured in Figure 17 because of my familiarity with three diacritics: 1) The index to global warming accomplished through the graphic of the earth on fire and the similar arrangement of letters between the phrase ‘global warming’ and ‘gombal manning’, 2) The phrase, ‘so what gitu loh?’, and 3) The fact that ‘conference’ was part of the text. I deduced after having purchased the item that the overall reference was to the UN Bali Climate change conference in December 2007. I had no idea what ‘gombal manning’ meant, but I started wearing the shirt anyway. And I started asking my friends about it: ‘Apa, sih, artinya gombal manning? I got some hemming and hawing, some well … it kind of means …’ and finally I got a straight answer: ‘Gombal manning is Javanese, and it basically means more bullshit.’ (This was perfect for me as I’m hoping to become afflicted with Tourette syndrome in my old age!)

This CSO selected me. It selected for an English speaker who attends conferences, a person who claims to care about the issue of global warming, and an Indonesian speaker, who had not only used the phrase, ‘so what, gitu loh?’ but had engaged in an extended conversation with my professional Indonesian language instructor on its usage, pronunciation, and popularity in contemporary public discourse. At the point that I purchased the shirt, I had not yet interpreted all of its diacritics: I hadn’t realized the connection to the UN climate change conference, nor did I understand the Javanese. From these latter facts, we can see that this CSO’s selectivity was in fact emergent. I didn’t throw away the shirt or stop wearing it once I understood all the diacritics. In fact, I was more motivated than ever to show it off. But even without the knowledge that I didn’t understand some of the diacritics, it should be clear from your own experience with the several Dagadu CSO’s presented in this text that Dagadu’s selectivity emerges: It takes a period of time to process the meaning of the various diacritics and decide whether or not a particular CSO is ‘for you’. (We should note that the CSO on this shirt must
have also selected other buyers with different experiences and histories: There are certainly a limited number of English speaking linguists visiting Jogjakarta at any given time.)

Figure 18. Collaborative decoding

One more example will solidify the point that Dagadu CSOs are emergently selective and select for collaborative diverse decoders. I had seen the CSO in Figure 18 in the card deck I own many times, but I had ignored it. It hadn’t selected me for uptake and I was baffled by it. The parts I understood were ‘Jogja’ and ‘loecoe’\textsuperscript{10}, the latter because I was familiar with Dagadus’s inclination to use the old Dutch spellings for the sounds /u/ and /dʒ/ (‘oe’ and ‘dj’, respectively). A couple months ago this image was on a screen in my office while I was talking with a graduate student, and I suddenly figured out the ‘Champoeng’ part: ‘oh, it’s kampong!’\textsuperscript{11} I exclaimed. He responded with something like ‘Oh, yeah, the soccer logo.’ ‘Soccer, really?’ I replied. ‘I didn’t know what that was.’ I had to do a quick online search to realize I had seen the image before, but it wasn’t a sign I was particularly familiar with. I now know, thanks to my collaborative decoder, that this CSO uses the images, type, and spatial configuration of the UEFA Champions league.

Summary

As we can see from the examples above, Dagadu uses text-level indexicality to create emergent semiotic effects. In the process, the makers of Dagadu work to enregister a ‘diverse Jogakartan’ social persona. Much like in the ‘diversity sets’ we saw above, the emblems of this persona involve ever-changing diacritics, with the only thing that all its emblems have in common being indexical non-congruence. Contrary to stereotype effects thus become the unifying aesthetic. And the person who would read, interpret, or recognize such emblems must continuously decode the shifting, varied diacritics that, regardless of their form, index the same diverse\textsuperscript{12} persona.

Dagadu’s commodity formulation, then, seeks not so much to constrain the form of its CSOs, as it does to organize the thinking of persons who see and read them on the bodies of its consumers (and bodies of the beneficiaries of its consumer’s generosity). As the CSOs travel on human bodies, reaching audiences well beyond the city of Jogja, they enregister a commodity formulation that is less about the consumer wearing them (who that person is, who he aligns with, how she should be perceived, etc.) and more about who the producers of Dagadu are, who they align with (the people of Jogja and its visitors), and how the reader should construe diverse conduct. The ownership phase of a Dagadu commodity thus contains an advertising phase within it, but not so much for Dagadu products, but for the personae and registers indexed by their products’ CSOs. And the owner of a Dagadu product does not just own ‘a prosthetic extension of [his] social self’ (Agha 2011: 33), he has expanded his visual repertoire and incorporated more diacritics for the performance of a diverse, identity. Further, by wearing the product in public spaces, he carries the potential for repertoire expansion to others.
Seeing through Dagadu – On doing togetherness in the era of superdiversity

It is the relationship of commodity formulations to their outcomes that matters...not the characteristics of extractable metonyms. (Agha 2011: 49)

The configurative sign objects produced by Dagadu provide us with a visual, reflexive model of important elements of our semiotic theories. Having been exposed to Dagadu's commodity register, we can now ask whether or not we will allow ourselves to be selected by these signs. Superdiversity is being enregistered in social science discourse to help us solve long-standing problems that are potentially intensifying under conditions of contemporary globalization. Our theories have responded well, with relevant, useful, tools to analyse complexity.

But many of the social problems we have hoped to address remain inadequately addressed. I suggest that this is not so much because we haven't gotten it right theoretically – in fact I believe we have – but because we have certain tendencies in focus that cause us to preferentially articulate particular ends of conceptual spectra more clearly than others, and pay more attention to examples illustrating one side of particular sociolinguistic processes than to examples illustrating its balancing counterpart. And this despite the fact that we know these preferences exist, have pointed them out to ourselves repeatedly, and have stated our need to retune our theories (examples include Bucholtz and Hall (2004), Irvine and Gal (2001), and Arnaut and Spotti (2014)). A list of some of these well-known preferences are repeated below.

- monolingualism over multilingualism
- diverse groups over diverse individuals
- the referential function of language over all other functions
- complete competence over partial competence
- distinction over adequation (and by extension, difference over sameness)
- durable language forms over evanescent forms
- fixed languages and communities vs. mobile ones
- language form over language function
- production over construal
- contextual invariance over contextual change

The reasons for our focal propensities are varied, but are often the result of our particular socio-historical trajectories (like our ideological predisposition towards monolingualism as the basic linguistic state, noted by Dorian (2010) and Silverstein (1998)). But in other cases, as in our preference for durable vs. evanescent forms and effects (noted by Agha 2011), our biases may be motivated by practical concerns. The Dagadu data presented here can help us to consider ways to retune several of these preferences, which is necessary for the continued accuracy of our understanding of semiotic processes.

One way to begin this retuning is to tweak our concepts that refer to the prototypical or basic state of language and semiotic behaviour more generally. For example, we now know very clearly that language is prototypically acquired and used in multilingual contexts by diverse individuals who have partial competence in many languages and styles, as Blommaert (2010) has clearly articulated (not by diverse ‘groups’ with ‘complete’ competence in a ‘single’ language). Goebel has provided a key for this retuning by offering a definition of semiosis that takes the kinds of data presented here as basic.

SEMIOSIS: ‘the appropriation and reuse of a sign or set of signs from one context in another context’ (Goebel 2015: 203).

I hope to have contributed to this retuning by working with a definition of diversity that focuses on the individual, by paying attention to indexical non-congruence rather than indexical congruence, and by
examining emblems with emergent properties that nonetheless have a kind of durability, albeit a mobile one. In writing about the perception of signs, Agha has pointed out that advertisements are ‘effective if the reader can recover at least one’ possible cohesive narrative indexed by it (Agha 2007: 31). Dagadu signs demonstrate how this is true of communicative acts more generally, helping to debunk our myth of perfect referentiality and complete understanding as the natural, typical results of semiotic behaviour. Further, these data bolster Blommaert’s recent observation (2014) that sign readers can be highly tolerant of inconsistencies and deviations from previously enregistered forms, standards, and stereotypes.14

Scholars working in Indonesia in the post-Soeharto era of decentralization have collectively noted and examined shifts in the valuation of previously marginalized languages and identities (e.g. Goebel 2002; 2008; Smith-Heffner 2009). The diacritics that indexed local languages and ethnic identities, which had been previously kept separate from state enregistered emblems of Indonesian national identity, emerged and were re-arranged into new emblems of national identity that celebrated Indonesian diversity. The national motto, ‘unity in diversity’, was retuned to focus on diversity over unity, as citizens began “‘doing unity in diversity’ in a different way than authorized by the state’ (Goebel 2015: 9). The behaviours in which this shift has become enregistered has involved a focus on sameness despite highly salient, recognizable, stereotyped differences (Cole 2010). Goebel’s work on how this is done in the production and perception of popular television shows has required the retuning of the concept of conviviality to account for the fact that Indonesians are being convivial in a habitual way, habitually using ‘particular semiotic features that help in establishing common ground among strangers’ (Goebel 2015: 10). He calls this ‘the doing of togetherness’.

And this insight, has led to his re-definition of superdiversity in a diverse, Indonesian key.

SUPERDIVERSITY: ‘A setting constituted by strangers from multiple backgrounds who never share the same language but only some semiotic fragments. These fragments are used in interaction to build common ground as part of efforts to create convivial social relations.’ (Goebel 2015: 8)

Dagadu may have just the visual representation we need to accompany this retuning.

‘Negara Adi Canda’: Super Power Jokes
‘Ramah bersahabat kiat Jogja hebat’: Gracious friendliness – Jogja’s secret (to being) fabulous

Figure 19. Supel Power (Sociable Power)
Notes

1 Paper prepared for The Sociolinguistics of Globalization Conference, 3-6 June 2015, Hong Kong.
2 I have laid the groundwork for just this type of definition in previous work on the enregisterment of a ‘diverse Indonesian persona’ in Indonesian poetry performances during the Reformasi era (Cole 2010). An abundance of other behaviours in a variety of Indonesian contexts confirming the need for such a revised definition have been well-studied and analysed by Zentz (2014) in Jogjakarta and Goebel in Java more broadly (2011, 2015).
3 A dealer turns over nine cards and the players look for sets in the cards, calling out ‘set’ when they identify one. Having identified a set, the player takes the set and more cards are laid down. The player who identifies the most sets wins.
4 Tropic utterances are by definition, then, contrary to stereotype and produce emergent effects. And though utterances are stereotypically spoken, they need not be as utterances are regularly configured of multi-channel signs.
5 Emblems can also be emergent or stereotypical. And we can see from the definition of text level indexicality that this term refers in particular to emergent effects. All of these definitions and processes can be transferred to the discussion and analysis of the semiotics of commodities, as Agha has demonstrated (2011), because a commodity is simply an object sign that ‘we treat as commodity’. We treat any given object sign as a commodity when it comes under a commodity formulation that mediates ‘a relationship between perceivable signs that formulate them and those they formulate’ (Agha 2011: 25).
6 Dagadu’s registered trademark and company name is Aseli Bikinan Dagadu Djokdja (Genuine Dagadu Djokdja product). The company lost ‘Dagadu’ as their company name when, shortly after it was founded, someone else trademarked the name and began selling Dagadu t-shirts at popular tourist shopping areas around the city at lower prices. You can still buy Dagadu products that are not made by the company I am describing here. The story of this process, the ‘fake’ products, and the social inequalities that story would ask us to address merits a paper of its own.
7 Image source http://blog.dagadu.co.id/matalalu/
8 Pesinden are a singers for Javanese wayang (puppet show) who sit on the floor with their legs tucked under them for between six and seven hours during the duration of the performance. Lesehan means to sit on the floor. Many restaurants and eateries offer lesehan seating.
10 The first image tropes on Yahoo messenger. The second tropes on the commodity register of the Johnson & Johnson insecticide product ‘Baygon’, aka Raid – Insecticide: Joke: delightful: funniness guaranteed
11 KFC image source: http://www.kfcugm.itgo.com. Jagonya Ayam is KFC’s marketing slogan in Indonesia. It means ‘Chicken Expert’ or ‘Chicken Wizard’. ‘Jogja berhati nyaman’ (Image Source: https://sejutatutorial.wordpress.com/2013/06/11/aku-ingin-jogja-berhati-nyaman/) is a slogan for the city Jogja that means ‘Jogja has a pleasant heart’. Dagadu puts a traditional Javanese hat (blangkon) on Colonel Sanders and combines the two iconic phrases into ‘Jogja is pleasant’.
12 lucu adj. funny, cute
13 kampung n. village, town
14 Referring to the reading of signs in Oud-Bercham, Blommaert notes: ‘Audiences display a quite remarkable elasticity and tolerance when it comes to understanding misspellings’ (2014: 81).

References

On the Internet, no-one knows you’re from Suroboyo: Ethnic identity from the digital margins to the mainstream core

Howard Manns
Simon Musgrave

Abstract

This paper examines the evolving nature of language and identity in post-Reform Indonesia by investigating the use of language variation to instigate and resolve ethnic-national tensions in online forums. We show how language variation emerges against the backdrop of the semiotic registers already established in Indonesia by examining a discussion of ethnicity begun on Twitter and continued in the online forum Kaskus. These discussions often entail the strategic elevation of the ethnic self and the strategic denigration of the ethnic other and we illustrate how language variation is implicated in either strategy. Language, of course, is not ideologically neutral and while Kaskus may appear to be a topsy-turvy sociolinguistic hub, Standard Indonesian continues to voice ‘authority’ thus maintaining its New Order role as a unifying force. However, this authority is undermined by the informal and casual nature of thesemiotic register associated with Kaskus as well as the often tongue-in-cheek use of ethnic languages which invokes linguistic peripheries within this space. We conclude that the internet provides yet one more periphery through which New Order ideologies of language become ‘re-imagined’ and ‘de-naturalized’ in the post-Reform era (see Goebel 2008). Thus, through the internet, the local, ethnic self may explore and resolve tensions around what it means to be a member of the wider, Indonesian community.

The development of Indonesia as a single nation encompassing hundreds of different ethnolinguistic groups has been extensively discussed (e.g. Anderson 2006; Errington 1992, 2000; Keane 1997). The current panel discusses Indonesia and its languages in terms of centres and peripheries and comes in the wake of research that frames language issues in the post-Reform era in terms of semiotic registers and enregisterment (Goebel 2008, 2010; cf. Agha 2005). New Order discourse positioned (or enregistered) the Indonesian language (semiotic register 1 (SR1)) to modern, national spheres and the path to modernity and the wider global community unequivocally went through this sphere. In contrast, ethnic languages became enregistered to ‘traditional’, ethnic spheres (semiotic register 2 (SR2)). The New Order sought to define ethnic identity as quaint and backwards (the antithesis of the forward-looking, modern state) through public acts like the creation of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah ‘Miniature Garden of Beautiful Indonesia’ in Jakarta (Pemberton 1994). Taman Mini is a Disneyland-like park, consisting of traditional ethnic homes and displays of regional, ethnic culture. Taman Mini contributed to the New Order’s desire to commodify, domesticate and enregister ethnic culture, within the Indonesian sphere, as having links to region, attire, housing, custom and tourism (Goebel 2010: 18; see also Triastuti and Rakhmani 2011 for discussion of Taman Mini as a metaphor for regional blogospheres in Indonesia).
However, there has been a revalorization and rediscovery of ethnic identity in the post-Reform era. Indonesians are largely free to explore and discover concepts like youth, gender and ethnicity outside the bounds of draconian New Order discourse (Clark 2004; Cole 2010) and, since the latter part of the New Order, online contexts have been important in opening up new spaces for political discussion (Hill and Sen 2002; Lim 2012). At first glance, these contexts show continuities with New Order discourse and behaviour. For example, Merlyna Lim, an Indonesian academic currently based in Canada, blogs in Indonesian¹ and in Sundanese². The subject matter of the two blogs differs in a way that is consistent with Goebel’s account of the semiotic registers available to Indonesians as do aspects of the language used. There is some overlap in topic, and language, but notably for Lim, discussions of politics take place in Indonesian (SR1), and discussions of music in Sundanese (SR2). This firm distinction between the SR1 and SR2, and their respectively associated contexts is reflected across a number of similar sites and blogs.

We will argue here that this idealized distinction between the SR1 and the SR2 does not persist across all contexts, online or otherwise. This becomes clear when this New Order distinction becomes elevated and promoted above other possible realities in the online world. In what follows, we firstly review attempts by a Jakarta-based celebrity to denigrate and marginalize a regional hub and its language users through his Twitter account. This celebrity’s vision we show is largely a continuation of New Order discourse, and a firm distinction between the SR1 and SR2. However, we also review the online backlash to this celebrity and his Tweets, and, in doing so, we show (as Goebel (2010) has elsewhere) that a third semiotic register (SR3) emerges. This SR3 allows both a de-naturalization of the monologic ideologies imposed on everyday Indonesians by the New Order and a re-naturalization of alternative ideologies. We close by reviewing why this marginalized SR3 is critically relevant in a contemporary Indonesia, where outside of Jakarta, ethnic selves are once again moving from the periphery to the core.

1. Constructing development and modernity in the Jakarta mould: Kei Savourie’s Jakarta-centric vision

Kei Savourie is a Jakarta-based, celebrity relationship consultant. On January 13, 2013, in a series of tweets to 20,000 followers, Savourie characterized Surabaya as a city with an identity crisis, unable to choose between traditional Javanese culture and modernity. In these tweets, Savourie sets out his view of an open and inclusive Indonesian society. In fact, although set out in Jakarta Indonesian, and with a Jakarta-centric ‘mould’ for modernity, his views echo New Order discourse about ethnicity, language and progress. This becomes manifest in Savourie’s first tweet:

(1) Kei Savourie @KeiSavourie 7 Jan
Janganan jadi global dan berbahasa Inggris, ngomong bahasa Indonesia yang baik aja gak bisa. Gimana mau maju?
Bentangkan

Translation: You can’t become global and speak English without speaking good Indonesian. How do you expect to expect to advance?

Here Savourie asserts that it is not possible to become a globally-oriented, English speaker if one cannot even master baik ‘good’ Indonesian. In other words, the path to the global and progress passes through Indonesian. He clarifies this point in a later retweet when someone asks him if Indonesian really is necessary for wider global engagement: Yah nasional dulu lah, sebelum global ‘Yeah, first national, then global’. Savourie links the mastery of baik ‘good’ Indonesian to maju ‘progress’, and this may be understood as a modified view of New Order discourse. The New Order had an unyielding vision for the Indonesian language and its speakers. In New Order discourse, good and correct Indonesian served as the foundation for perkembangan ‘development’ and kemajuan ‘progress’. In working toward
development and progress, Suharto and New Order agents insisted that Indonesians speak *Bahasa Indonesia yang Baik dan Benar* ‘Indonesian that is good and correct’.

Manns (2014) among others has argued that the focus on ‘correct’ Indonesian has become less of a concern for post-Reform youth. Post-Reform youth and media outlets have become more focused on the Indonesian that is *baik* ‘good’, in this case meaning appropriate to context. Savourie clarifies this point in the series of tweets that follow. Most relevant to the current discussion, he makes explicit links between SR1 and SR2, and what he believes to be the appropriate contexts for their use.

(2) Kei Savourie @KeiSavourie 07 Jan
Kaio mau jadi modern, ya harus terbuka. Nah gimana mau terbuka kalau di kantor, di sekolah, di mall, ngomongnya Jowo?
Berlangsung
Translation: If you want to be modern, you know, you have to be open and outward looking. [And] when you’re in the office, the school or the mall, you speak Javanese?

In this tweet, Savourie posits that a modern society must be *terbuka* ‘open, outward looking’. This is not possible in Savourie’s view if Javanese (SR2) is spoken in the *kantor* ‘office’, *sekolah* ‘school’ or *mall* (seemingly in his view SR1 spaces). The use of ethnic languages like Javanese in national spaces excludes those who do not understand these languages:

(3) Kei Savourie @KeiSavourie 4 Mar
Gak ada yg salah dengan medok Jowo. Tapi itu nunjukin semangat kesuksesan dan eksklusisme, gak cocok di era modern.
Translation: There’s nothing wrong with Javanese. But it strongly indexes ethnicity and exclusivism, [and] this isn’t appropriate in the modern era.

In this tweet, Savourie clarifies that he is not opposed to Javanese. He literally says *medok Jowo* ‘strong Javanese accent’, but clarifies in a later tweet he is referring to the Javanese language rather than accent. Savourie feels that the Javanese language is a strong index of ethnicity and exclusivism, and thus not compatible with modernity. Once again, in doing so, Savourie invokes New Order discourses about ethnicity, which positioned national identity first and ethnic identity second, and also posits a hierarchy of languages (Javanese < Indonesian < English) along which an Indonesian can move towards openness and modernity.

Savourie does not go so far as to suggest Javanese as a ‘condition’ to be abandoned or left behind, but rather as a language whose use should be relegated to certain contexts. Savourie makes reference to the Central Javanese cities of Yogyakarta (Jogja) and Surakarta (Solo) to make this point:

(4) Kei Savourie @KeiSavourie 16 Mar
Kaio emang kayak Jogja dan Solo yang emang sengaja pengen lestarin budaya Jawa, ya justru mlaah harus medok.
Translation: If you’re really like Jogja and Solo, and you’re truly concerned with preserving Javanese culture, then you have to speak Javanese.

For Savourie, people in places like Jogja and Solo need to use Javanese because such people are concerned with the preservation of Javanese culture. Herein lies Savourie’s issue with Surabaya, and what he labels its *krisis identitas* ‘identity crisis’:

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He professes to be confused and seemingly annoyed by the *benturan* ‘collision’ of cultures in Indonesia’s second largest city. On the surface, Savourie seems sufficiently impressed with Surabaya’s malls, fashions and lifestyles, but he finds the use of Javanese incompatible with these modern practices:

He flags that his brain is unable to *terima* ‘receive’ this contrast. ‘Receive’ in this case overlaps with its oft-used English meaning (e.g. Received Pronunciation), wherein it means ‘accepted in the most polite circles in society’ (cf. Hughes, Trudgill and Watt 2005: 3). In the Indonesian case, the meaning of ‘receive’ is broader, meaning a person’s view of what is accepted or appropriate in any context, not merely ‘polite circles’.

Links between language and context, and what is received or not received are at the core of Savourie’s critique of Surabaya and its *krisis identitas* ‘identity crisis’. For Savourie, Indonesian identity and the Indonesian language (SR1) belong in modern, national spheres. More so, the path to modernity and the wider global community path is through these spheres. In contrast, Javanese identity and the Javanese language belong in ‘traditional’, ethnic spheres (SR2). And the two spheres are incompatible. Savourie’s issue with Surabaya (and more accurately its Javanese speakers) is its attempt to bridge these two spheres. To these ends, Savourie makes what is perhaps his most damning assessment of Surabaya and its residents in the post-Reform era: *sok sokan* ‘they are pretending, putting on airs’.

Savourie argues that Surabaya is not as modern as Jakarta, and consequently its speakers are merely *sok modern* ‘pretending to be modern’. Surabaya is not as traditional as Jogja, and so its speakers are *sok Jowo* ‘pretending to be Javanese’. *Sok sokan* ‘pretending’ is highly problematic for post-Reform youth, who value the *asli* ‘authentic’ (Boellstorff 2004; Manns 2011), Boellstorff, focusing on the Indonesian context, has argued that post-colonial discourse by its very nature is derivative. Consequently, social practices in a post-colonial society like Indonesia entail a struggle from the *palsu* ‘false, derivative’ to the *asli* ‘authentic’. By labelling Surabaya residents *sok sokan*, Kei firmly positions them within the realm of the *palsu*. Indonesia in *asli* terms, at least as far as Savourie is concerned, entails a firm distinction between SR1 and SR2. The views of a single individual, even a public figure, would be unremarkable were they not shared by many others. And a series or replies and retweets suggest that Savourie’s views are shared by a number of Indonesians. However, there was also a vociferous online backlash, and this suggests that the monologic New Order vision for language and identity, was by no means universally shared and warrants further exploration.
2. De-constructing the Jakarta vision and constructing a ‘Surabaya’ mould

2.1 De-constructing the Jakarta mould

A number of internet sites debated and critiqued the tweets of Savourie and his followers. A majority of users on these sites (many of them claiming to be Surabayans) rejected their views. In the discussions that followed, two prevailing themes emerged. Firstly, in contrast to Kei Savourie’s vision for an open and inclusive society, a competing mould for a modern Indonesia clearly emerges. Savourie’s arguably New Order-influenced perspective positions ethnic languages in ethnic spaces (SR2), and Indonesian in modern spaces (SR1). Conversely, many internet users and a few bloggers argue that a society which is truly terbuka ‘open, outward looking’, accepts, acknowledges and even celebrates diversity. Thus, for these speakers, the rigid links between SR1 and SR2 and their respective contexts breaks down. Along these lines, a second prevailing theme emerges in the critique of Savourie and his followers. Language, or more accurately, languages, are critically important in the critique of Savourie’s Jakarta mould. This is both the case the variety of languages used to critique the Jakarta mould, but also in the discussion of another mould: one we label here a Surabaya mould.

This becomes particularly salient in reviewing four discussion threads on the Indonesian site Kaskus. Kaskus is Indonesia’s third most popular social networking site (after Facebook and YouTube). Most relevant to the current discussion, there are a number of open forums for the discussion of contemporary issues, and Savourie’s tweets became a focus in four threads. On the whole, Kaskus contributors do not want to accept the position which Kei gives to Jakarta. Firstly, several speakers make the common point that Jakarta is a place distinct from its surroundings; it is on Java but not necessarily of Java:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Extract</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>rasanya Jakarta itu pulau tersendiri. Bukan pulau jawa</td>
<td>Jakarta feels like its own island. Like it’s not on the island of Java.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cocote wong goblok gak usah dirungokno. Mosok omongzan gak formal karo konco dewe kudu nggawe bahasa indonesia. Opo kudu nggawe “loe–gue”?</td>
<td>This person’s an idiot and shouldn’t be listened to. Does he really think it’s appropriate to use Indonesian in informal situations chatting with my buddies? Would it be right to use ‘loe–gue’?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dialek atau logat itu ga menentukan suatu regional untuk menjadi metropolitan. Lebih baik ngomong aku kamur, sampeyan, kon dll dengan medok daripada harus gue elo sepanjang hari (apalagi harus dengan intonasi yang sok hipster).</td>
<td>That [Jakarta] dialect or accent isn’t something that determines whether a regional place becomes a ‘metropolitan’ city. It’s better to use aku, kamur, sampeyan, kon, with a strong accent rather than being forced to use gue or elo all day (more so being forced to do so with a pretend hipster intonation).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondly, several contributors reject characteristic features of informal Jakarta language. As has been shown in other studies (Manns 2011, 2014), the use of the Hokkien-derived pronouns gue and elo is an obvious target. Note in the second extract here the questioning of the authenticity of the hipster, and by implication, Jakarta mould:

In this thread, there are also several contributions which point to the enduring Betawi influence in Jakarta linguistic repertoires:
Jakarta truly isn’t part of Java even if it’s on Java, society there is already mixed, It seems like the Betawi language has already been swept aside (there are still borrowings like bang ben), But there are a lot of people in Jakarta who still have Betawi accents I have a Javanese friend, and he speaks like he’s in a Betawi neighbourhood.

Really, what are the standards for what constitutes modern and ‘sociable’ language? Jakartan language and using lu gua lu gua? That’s totally a regional language, too, for the Betawi, and it’s been influenced and mixed with a number of regional cultures.

Thus several lines of argument are deployed via various linguistic strategies to show that Jakarta has more in common with Surabaya than Kei wishes to acknowledge. Establishing this position complements other strategies which are used to express the value of what is distinctive about Surabaya, to which we will turn in the next section.

2.2 Constructing the Surabaya mould
Kaskus contributors construct an alternative, positive version of local identity, but it is noticeable that this is done almost entirely from within SR1. We note two exceptions to this generalisation. Firstly, in his tweets, Savourie uses a vowel switch from a to o (Jawa → Jowo) as an indexical sign for the Javanese language and culture. Whereas Savourie used this switch to critique Surabaya, defenders of Surabaya make the same vowel shift indexical of their identity and loyalty. For example in one Kaskus thread devoted to the topic, the starting post in the thread immediately extends this usage to the name of the city: Suroboyo. The first response is written primarily in Javanese but with many vowel substitutions even where standard Javanese uses a: obo, boso and so on. As the thread develops, the use of Javanese, and specifically of Javanese with vowel substitution, is characteristic of many of the responses which reject Savourie’s criticisms. This linguistic choice represents an act of identity (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985) within the context of this debate, and we would suggest that the explicit indexing of ethnolinguistic identity here aligns this use of language with Goebel’s SR2. Secondly, there are some emotive strategies used to reject Savourie’s view, and these do shift into SR2. In fact, the most emotive rejection of Savourie’s perspective comes through Javanese, especially the frequent use of the East Javanese word jancok ‘fuck’. However, a majority of the logical discussion, engagement and deconstruction of Savourie’s viewpoints take place through SR1. This suggests that, even in the post-reform society, the national language exerts a powerful centralising force to the extent that discussions which might be seen as undermining its role can only appropriately be carried out using it. This is not to underestimate the importance and, in some cases, the sophistication of the arguments brought forward; but we note that there do seem still to be limits to what can be achieved using the resources of registers other than SR1.
There are a number of posts in the various threads we have examined which advance a position in favour of bilingualism, but in which the origin of the speaker is not revealed:

(13)

dia ngiri gan dr balita orang jawa tu dah bisa 2 bahasa bilingual, basa indo ama jawa

*He's missed the point that from childhood the Javanese can already speak two languages and are bilingual. They speak Indonesian and Javanese.*

- Juancok

In other cases, a mixture of Javanese (in this example, pie) and Indonesian is used in making this point:

(14)

krisis identitas? mungkin iya, tapi kalau harus meninggalkan bahasa daerah buat ke arah modern, jangan deh. ntar orang daerah belajar bahasa jawanya ke orang bule, pie to

*Identity crisis? Maybe, you know, but, if moving towards modernity means leaving behind your regional language, I say don't do it? Later, folks in the regions will be studying Javanese alongside foreigners, and how will that feel?*

- deltarex

These sentiments are also linked to the comments which contest the notion of what *terbuka* should mean in this discussion. Savourie equates modernity with openness, and our discussion of the extensions of this idea showed that it was closely linked to the assumption of a hierarchy of languages. Against this, Kaskus contributors put forward a view that openness has to apply in multiple directions, towards the international and modern world, but also towards the local and traditional:

(15)

Halah orang gak jelas. Surabaya sekarang itu kan hasil alikuturasi dari bermacam2 budaya. Dan budaya yg terbuka itu adalah budaya yg bisa menyerap budaya asing tanpa harus saling berbenturan. Lihat aja banyak budaya loakal juga hasil alikuturasi budaya asing.

*God, this person doesn’t make sense. Surabaya, you know, has become acculturated with a mix of cultures. And a culture that is open is a culture that absorbs foreign cultures without any conflict. Look at lots of local cultures that have become acculturated with outside cultures.*

- polkmn

This position implies, we suggest, a view of languages as separated perhaps in their functions, but not evaluated hierarchically.

There is one part of the construction of the Surabaya mould which is linked less closely to SR1. Savourie laments the lack of a distinctive ambience in Surabaya; the use of (local) Javanese is asserted as a special characteristic against this, and this point is made in both Javanese and in Indonesian:

(16)

Cuk nguyuhe ndodok ae ape mrotes wong suroboyo medok. Justru boso Suroboyoan iku wes dadi ciri khas.

*Fuck, I piss on this dude squatting, and protest the idea that Surabayans are 'accented'. It's just that Surabaya Javanese is our special, defining feature.*

- retardation

(17)

riset gak penting dan dangkal,surabaya mau dipaksa gmn ya tetep medok, justru itu ciri khas nya.

*His research is unimportant and shallow. Surabaya should be forced to act if we’re derided for our accent? It's just our special, defining feature.*

- bangtoyib
These posts also contest the negative evaluation of medok as a categorisation. This point is taken further by another Kaskus contributor who delinks the notion of medok from its association with accent:

| (18) | Memangnya kenapa kalau logat daerahnya medok? Justru itu menunjukan jati diri dan kekhasan daerahnya. | Really why should a regional accent be considered medok? It's just indexing your own heart, and your regional distinctiveness. | - blackdoors | - blackdoors |

These ideas about the distinctiveness of accents are also reflected by comments which talk about accommodation when moving from one city to another:

| (19) | aku kuliah nag jogja yo ngurangi misuhku | I studied in Jogja, yeah, and I tried to swear less. | - majapalAvante | - majapalAvante |
| (20) | aku yo wong suroboyo sing kuliah jogja, kok-cokanku yo rodok ilang. Hehehe | I'm a Surabayan who studied in Jogja, and I was forced to stop saying 'fuck'. Hehehe. | - remajajelata | - remajajelata |

One contribution in the different medium of a blog post makes this point amongst others. Devi Eriana in a post titled *Antara medok & megapolitan* sets out a very nuanced response to Savourie’s criticism which is written throughout in bahasa yang baik dan benar. There is a single use of the vowel substitution in the passage where the author acknowledges that she is herself from Surabaya:

| (21) | Kebetulan saya orang Jawa Timur, saya lahir di Surabaya yang besar di Surabaya dan Malang. Saya paham betul dengan pergaulan dan bahasa sehari-hari yang digunakan oleh orang-orangnya. Mayoritas kami menggunakan bahasa Jawa dengan logat *Suroboyoan* yang kental. | Truly I am East Javanese. I was born in Surabaya, which is the bigger of Malang and Surabaya. I am truly familiar with the every day language and socializing of its people. Most of us use Javanese with a thick Surabaya accent. | (our emphasis) |

We read this use of the indexical vowel shift as ironic; it is presented as a token of the author having a *logat yang kental* but it comes in a piece of writing which presents a detailed account of how the author’s accent changed in different circumstances. This in turn is part of a sophisticated view of multiculturalism, multilingualism and the relation of local culture to modernity. Eriana’s post demonstrates that it is not necessary to make a straightforward linguistic act of identity when contributing to this debate and also that it is possible to use the resources of Goebel’s SR1 in putting forward a position which does not entirely embrace a nationalist ideology.

### 3. Conclusion

The discourse which we have analysed in this paper richly exemplifies the revaluation of languages and the creation of new relationships between hubs and margins in Indonesia today. In his account of language shift on the island of Sumba, Kuipers characterises that process thus:
these new features make sense in relation to an historical and ideological shift that I call ‘marginalization,’ in which highly valued verbal resources are reinterpreted, drawing on spatial idiom, from whole to partial, from trunk to tip, from ‘total’ to ‘local’: i.e. from center to margin. In a country like Indonesia, an aspiring Asian ‘tiger’ where ‘modernization’ of language culture and economy is central to political legitimacy, space (e.g. centers and margins) is a modality through which the contradictions and disruptions of change are normalized, naturalized, and neutralized: ideologized. (Kuipers 1998: 4)

It may seem strange to speak of marginalization in relation to a language with tens of millions of speakers, but we suggest that the discursive strategies deployed by Kei Savourie and his supporters fit very closely with what Kuipers describes. The Javanese language is a highly valued resource, but in Savourie’s discourse it is brought into conflict with an idea of modernity and this confrontation is depicted as having a specific spatial location, the city of Surabaya. That city is seen as a margin in comparison to the megapolitan Jakarta.

We have also shown though that the process of marginalization is resisted strongly by some participants and that these speakers in turn revalue the linguistic resources at their disposal in order to accomplish that goal. Supporters of Javanese as spoken in Surabaya make the use of that language central in the forums where they defend their position. The semiotic register associated with national discourse, Indonesian with a tendency towards a more formal variety, is available to these people and is used for some purposes, but their identity is expressed primarily through the use of Javanese in something much closer to Goebel’s SR2.

An additional level of complexity is present because online communication is still peripheral within the overall language economy of Indonesia. Although a forum such as Kaskus can be seen as more central within the field of CMC, it has characteristics which clearly set it on the margin in relation to language which is baik dan benar. This status allows a greater degree of flexibility within that marginal space which has been configured, which in turn allows for the possibility of the creation of new peripheries which treat Kaskus itself as a centre. This allows the Kaskusers we have discussed to enregister, at least temporarily, Javanese (even a specific representation of Javanese) as an alternative to the semiotic register of Kaskus. As Gal observes in relation to the emergence of standard versions of regional languages:

Creating a standard register in a regional language recreates the particular/universal distinction within the category of the particular, making some regional linguistic forms doubly particular. The nonstandard regional forms sound like the local forms of an already particular language. More hierarchies are created within what was thought to be a unified regional form. (2012: 30)

Treating one peripheral code as central in a particular context immediately opens the possibility for another code to be treated as peripheral in relation to that centre, and that is what we have described in the use of (Surabaya) Javanese in Kaskus forums.

All of these reconfigurations are taking place in an environment where medok is a category which is only observable if a speaker chooses that it should be visible. Many participants choose to assert a medok Javanese identity in these forums, but it is not the only strategy adopted. Equally, those adopting what we characterise as the Jakarta mould can choose whether (or to what extent) they project an identity as gaul or alay. These possibilities allow for the re-imagining of New Order ideologies of language in the post-Reform era (see Goebel 2008) and, through the affordances of CMC, the local, ethnic self may explore and resolve tensions around what it means to be a member of the wider, Indonesian community.

Notes

1 Celoteh si Mer http://merlyna.blogspot.com.au/
2 Hariring kuring https://dayeuhkolot.wordpress.com/. Professor Lim also has an English language blog: Merlyna’s Bits of Bytes http://merlyna.org/.
1. To be precise, Savouries seems to distinguish between language and culture at this point; he uses *Jowo* in references to language but talks of *budaya Jawa*. To the extent which Javanese in turn is established as a centre in the forums suggests that there will be marginal variants appearing with Javanese usage. Our analysis has not extended to this level of detail as yet.

2. Special Issue.

3. http://www.kaskus.co.id/thread/5106a35e0a75b4ac7c000000/founder

4. http://www.kaskus.co.id/thread/5106a35e0a75b4ac7c000000/founder

5. To the extent which Javanese in turn is established as a centre in the forums suggests that there will be marginal variants appearing with Javanese usage. Our analysis has not extended to this level of detail as yet.

References


Local activism versus recentralization: The case of Javanese in municipal offices in Central Java

Yacinta Kurniasih

Abstract

Since 1995, the Central Java Government has designated Javanese as a compulsory school subject within the provinces of East and Central Java (Kurniasih 2006). The initial implementation of local content curriculum (muatan local or MULOK as it is locally known) by the New Order Government in 1995 was enhanced in the early 2000s by new regional autonomy laws. Since then, within Java and some other parts of Indonesia, regional or local languages have enjoyed strong support from both the school community and the local government. Provincial governors have been actively involved in formulating and implementing school curriculum in their provinces' regional languages, which were then promoted as part of a regional identity. In 2013 however, centralization forces re-emerged through the introduction of a national curriculum, which threatened the continued support for regional languages. This evoked strong reactions from school, local communities, and at least five governors (West Java, East Java, the Special District of Yogyakarta, Bali and Central Java). This paper will present some reactions from local community groups, as well as local government in these provinces that was widely reported by Indonesian media. I will argue that despite some flaws and documented unsuccessful stories with regards to its implementation, local content curriculum (LCC) has an important role in generating support and concern about the survival of regional languages among the members of these communities and within the local government in Indonesia.

1. Introduction

This paper focuses upon Javanese valuation projects by examining local reactions to the national curriculum. I show that a decade of decentralization has provided regional communities with a strong sense of ethnolinguistic identity. Data used for this paper is from an on-going study on regional language/s programs in Indonesia, which, among other things, looks at policy of local governments and community participation. Firstly, I will start with a brief discussion of the relationship between national building and language centralization before taking a look at these types of processes in Indonesia. Secondly, I will examine a number of reactions from the community and local government toward the introduction of the 2013 national curriculum, especially the exclusion of regional languages from the curriculum.

Thirdly, I will focus on a series of gubernatorial regulations that were released in response to the national curriculum, together with an account of the activism that emerged within the governor’s office, and its municipalities in Central Java. Of particular interest will be the Gubernatorial Regulation No.57/2013 on the Javanese language, which foregrounded rights under decentralization laws by specifying that Javanese was to be spoken during informal occasions within schools and
government offices. The Governor of Central Java further amended this regulation in 2014, making it compulsory to speak Javanese once a week during both formal and informal occasions in municipal offices. The new regulation also stated that Javanese must be taught in schools as a separate subject for a minimum of two hours per week for each grade.

2. Valuation and centralization

Languages are always valued and ordered as part of nation-building processes (Blommaert 2010). As nation-states emerge, the crucial infrastructures of schooling, mass media and the bureaucracy all help to centralize, standardize and circulate the language of the nation state (Bakhtin 1981; Bourdieu 1991; Goebel 2015a, 2016, in press; Hobshawm 1992). Often this language sits within a hierarchy of valued languages, with the language of the nation state or English sitting at the top and minority and ethnic languages sitting below these prestige languages (Blommaert 2010). As pointed out in the second paper in this special issue, these hierarchies are not fixed, and are constantly reconfigured as part of social change more generally. This has been the experience of Indonesia, especially with the decentralization of education that began in earnest in 2001.

3. Indonesian, regional languages and local content curriculum

According to Bjork (2003, 2005), local content curriculum (LCC) is a major ‘flagship’ of the Indonesian decentralization reform movement within education, which aims to promote the localization of educational methods and curricula for communities and schools. The introduction of LCC lead to a significant shift in the Indonesian curriculum and its renewal. LCC was one of a long list of decentralization projects embraced by the Indonesian government in the 1980s and 1990s (Bjork 2003: 198). LCC legislation from the Indonesian Ministry of Education specifically prescribes proportions of the curriculum to be developed at a local level (Bjork 2003). The LCC actually predated Indonesia’s Federal Law No.22 of 1999 Local Government, which stated ‘the authority to implement and manage education shall be transferred from national government to local district/municipal government’ (Purwadi and Muljoatmodjo, cited in Young 2010: 43).

LCC is a separate subject area and course from the Indonesian national curriculum, which sets a list of compulsory subjects for schools across the country. LCC provides facts and concepts derived from students’ communities. Topics covered include culture and humanities, art, crafts, architecture, theatre and fashion, historical/ significant events and inhabitants of the area, geographical facts, science, resources and industries in the area, and local/regional languages (Kurniasih 2006; Young 2010). The local content subjects to be taught in schools are categorized into *wajib* ‘compulsory’ and *pilihan* ‘optional’ (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional 2000). Early and more recent studies examining LCC (Bjork, 2003, 2005; Kurniasih, 2006, 2009; Sudarkam Mertono, 2014; Young, 2010; Yuyun, 2014)2 highlight some problems, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Focusing too much on individual schools to implement the policy.
2. Lack of communication between the local government (LCC policy maker) and the school community.
3. Lack of support for the school.
4. Lack of trained or qualified teacher for the LCC subject.
5. Lack of teaching material.
6. Most schools ended up teaching subjects which were previously being taught and ‘re-labelling’ them as LCC subjects.
7. Educators who were assigned to teach LCC subjects other than the regional language were not equipped to develop new curricula, design original lesson plans, or familiarize themselves with the instructional design.
Common to many schools was the implementation of regional language curriculum, which was considered to be an ‘obvious’ choice to be the local content compulsory subject for most provinces or districts in Indonesia. The next section of the paper will briefly discuss regional language programs across Indonesia based on 1999 census.

4. Regional Language/s at school across Indonesia

After Indonesian was declared the language of unity in 1928 by the Indonesian Youth Nationalist group, and after its official adoption in the 1945 constitution as the national language of Indonesia, the process of ‘Indonesianisation of Indonesia’ by the central government has been considered to be one of the biggest and most successful stories of ‘linguistic centralization’ (Dardjowidjojo 1998), helping place it at the top of the language hierarchy by the 1990s (Goebel 2015b). During the period between 1945 to the 1990s regional languages received some attention in school curriculum, but focused attention did not occur until the 1980s with the introduction of local content curriculum (LCC).

Since Indonesian independence in 1945, the national curriculum has undergone several changes, namely in 1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006 and 2013. In the time since the 1975 National Curriculum was introduced, regional languages continued to be offered as an elective subject at schools across Indonesia until the introduction of the 1994 local content curriculum by the central government. Depending on the commitment of the regional government, the teaching varied from region to region, with some regions opting to teach one hour per week, and others for two hours or more- mostly with an unqualified teacher. The national curriculum of 1975 is a key period, because there was a government institution authorizing the use of regional languages in schools. In doing so, this increased the social value of regional languages, which prior to this had only constitutional recognition in 1945, but no mechanisms which could add institutional substance to this ideal.

With the introduction of the LCC in 1994, most regional languages became an important part of local content curriculum for years 1–9, and they were no longer taught as a separate (elective) subject at school. According to the 1999 census on regional language teaching at school in Indonesia, which was carried out in 20 provinces, 15 provinces chose to teach regional language as a LCC subject. These are listed in Table 4.1.

| 4. Lampung    | 5. West Java     | 6. Central Java  |
From 1994 to 1999, the social value of regional languages further increased, although this valuation project was still centrally determined. In most of these provinces, regional language/s of each province were taught in years 1-9 which varied from district to district depending on the area and its languages, along with the availability of teaching material and teachers. Table 4.2 lists fifteen of Indonesia’s (then twenty-seven provinces) and the regional languages taught in these provinces. In some provinces, such as Aceh, North Sumatra, West Java, West Kalimantan, North Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, and Southeast Sulawesi, there is more than one regional language recognized, and adopted as local content curriculum.

Table 4.2 Provinces and the regional languages taught at schools as LLC subject (Rosyidi 1999: 73-74)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Language/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Aceh</td>
<td>Acehnese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Aceh</td>
<td>Gayo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>North Sumatra</td>
<td>Batak Mandailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>North Sumatra</td>
<td>Batak Toba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>North Sumatra</td>
<td>Batak Angkola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>North Sumatra</td>
<td>Batak Simalungan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>North Sumatra</td>
<td>Batak Karo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>North Sumatra</td>
<td>Malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Bengkulu</td>
<td>Rejang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Lampung Javanese</td>
<td>Lampung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>West and Central Java</td>
<td>Sundanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>West Java</td>
<td>Cirebon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>West Java</td>
<td>Indramayu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Central Java, East Java and Special District of Yogyakarta</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>East Java</td>
<td>Madurese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>West Kalimantan</td>
<td>Dayak Simpang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>West Kalimantan</td>
<td>Dayak Kanayatan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>South Kalimantan</td>
<td>Banjarese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>East Kalimantan</td>
<td>Kutai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>North Sulawesi</td>
<td>Tombulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>North Sulawesi</td>
<td>Tonsawang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>North Sulawesi</td>
<td>Mongondow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>South Sulawesi</td>
<td>Buginese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>South Sulawesi</td>
<td>Makasarese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>South Sulawesi</td>
<td>Mandar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>South Sulawesi</td>
<td>Toraja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Southeast Sulawesi</td>
<td>Tolaki</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Southeast Sulawesi</td>
<td>Muna</td>
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<td>29.</td>
<td>Southeast Sulawesi</td>
<td>Wolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Bali</td>
<td>Balinese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In areas where regional languages have a large number of speakers, such as Bali, East Java, Central Java, West Java and the Special District of Yogyakarta, the local government (governor) went further by making it a compulsory subject for years 10-12. Three provinces in Java, East Java, Central Java and the Special District of Yogyakarta established the Dewan Bahasa Jawa (DBJ) ‘Javanese Language Council’ to collaborate in developing policy and curriculum for the Javanese program at schools in these provinces. DBJ has been the driving force for the teaching of regional languages and culture at school, and the council is closely associated with the Javanese national congress5, which was established in 1991.
In the period from 1999 onward, Indonesia experienced major social, political and economic change. Ideologies of ethnicity, which links to regional language, played a very important role in this period of change. As pointed out by Goebel (2015a: 123), in a number of regions in Indonesia decentralization has helped to strengthen association among region, language, and ethnic social type, while reconfiguring existing language hierarchies. Regional languages were being used more and more in social domains, and thus increased in social value. This process was largely driven by local concerns rather than by the centre. As we will find out in the next section of this paper, the change explains the reactions by regional leaders and members of these communities, and an attempt by the central government to ‘push aside’ regional language in the now defunct 2013 National Curriculum. The introduction of the 2013 National Curriculum has been seen as a move back towards centralization – in this case one that threatened to severely devalue regional languages.

5. The introduction of the 2013 National Curriculum and its reactions

The 2013 Indonesian national curriculum was introduced by the minister for culture and education by the previous government under Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY)\(^6\). This curriculum was considered a desperate political attempt by SBY’s government to assert and consolidate their power for the benefit of his own political party. The introduction of the curriculum received hostile reception from school communities, educators, activists and local governments. The central government was heavily criticised for rushing to introduce undeveloped curriculum, knowing that it only had one year until the 2014 election. The reaction toward the introduction of the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia has been noted as the worst in its history so far\(^7\).

Coleman (2014) reported that there were not enough studies to prepare and introduce the new curriculum. More reports were also coming from teachers about the difficulty in implementing the curriculum. The curriculum incorporated some new and ‘interesting’ elements, such as ‘intelligence’ and ‘creativity’, but these have not yet been fully integrated with each other (Coleman 2014). Within the 2013 curriculum there was also an almost absence of context about Indonesia and its languages and no reference to pre-existing materials or LCC. There were many different reactions towards the 2013 curriculum (mostly rejection), which have been reported in the mainstream media, seminars, and social media since the end of 2012, when the public hearing commenced.

One of the strongest reactions and criticisms toward the introduction of the 2013 curriculum came because of the ‘absence’ of regional languages. Provinces and districts with large numbers of regional speakers, such as the Special District of Yogyakarta, Bali, and West Java, initiated public protests to express their disappointment in the strongest possible way. The following are some public protests against the 2013 curriculum, as reported widely in Indonesian media. These protests came from areas with long histories of LCC.

In Bandung, hundreds of Sundanese language and culture supporters came to Gedung Sate to stage a protest to reject the 2013 curriculum for not including regional languages in January 2012 (Plate 5.1). The protesters listed 4 demands: 1) Rejecting the planning to introduce the 2013 curriculum without respecting and including regional language as a supporting element for national language; 2) Demanding that Sundanese should be taught as a subject in 2013 for years 1-12; 3) Demanding government to be consistent and in line with the 1945 Indonesian Constitution, as well as Education Law, No 20, 2003: 3) Requesting that the governor of West Java issue a decree stating that regional language becomes a compulsory subject at school (Solihin 2012).
Plate 5.1 Demonstrating against the new national curriculum in West Java (Source: Solihin 2012)

Students from the Language and Arts Faculty, Yogyakarta State University, staged a protest about the abolition of Javanese as a local content subject in the 2013 curriculum (Plate 5.2). Prior to this, the Javanese Teachers Association in the Special District of Yogyakarta ran several public discussions, demanding that the regional leader act. The governor responded by issuing a gubernatorial regulation which requires all schools in the province to teach Javanese as a compulsory subject for at least 2 hours per week (Kurniawan, 2012).

Plate 5.2 Students demonstrating against the national curriculum in Central Java (Source: Kurniawan 2012)
In Bali, hundreds of academics and university students staged a demonstration in front of the local parliament building (DPRD) in Denpasar in late December 2012 (Plate 5.3). The plan to ‘merge’ regional language into Arts subjects is considered to be a threat to the life and survival of all regional languages in Indonesia, especially language minorities. The protesters demanded that regional languages must be retained as a compulsory subject at school in all levels (Hasan 2012). Note too, that demonstrators in this photo and in Plates 5.1 and 5.2 were also wearing ethnic dress.

Plate 5.3 Faculty demonstrating against the national curriculum in Bali (Source: Hasan 2012)

On the 7th of January 2013, a protest organised by a forum for regional languages in Jakarta was held in front of the parliament building in Jakarta. The protesters demanded that regional language subjects should be included in the 2013 curriculum as separate subjects. The protesters were mainly young people from different universities across Java. It is important to note that this young generation of Indonesians had, in one way or another, participated in the education system) during the period of 1999-2013 where their regional language had gained social status. It is thus unsurprising that this group reacted strongly against moves to get rid of their language from the curriculum (Basuki 2013).

Plates 5.4-5.5 Students demonstrating against the national curriculum in Jakarta (Source: Basuki 2013)

In addition to an educated public, many of whom were socialized in a system where LLC had been part of their everyday experience, local political figures also reacted against the 2013 national curriculum.
6. Central Java: A case study of local activism

This section will briefly discuss how a local politician reacted to the 2013 national curriculum in the province of Central Java. It is primarily based upon my interview and conversations with academics from the State University of Yogyakarta, the State University of Semarang, and from school teachers in Yogyakarta. One politician, the governor, actively voiced his concern about the introduction of the 2013 curriculum by publicly supporting the regional language in schools, in his municipalities, and the wider community. Elected democratically as a governor in 2013, Ganjar Pranowo was the first local leader to issue Gubernatorial Regulation ‘securing’ Javanese as a regional language to remain a compulsory subject at schools in all levels in his province. His decision was then followed by other local leaders in Java, and other parts of Indonesia. It is important to note that Central Java has the largest number of speakers of Javanese compared to the other two provinces where Javanese is widely spoken.

In some ways, the governor has taken a leadership role in formulating language policy since helping defeat the 2013 national curriculum. Some of these regulations include the Gubernatorial Regulation No. 57/2013. This regulation encourages the use of Javanese in religious sermons, neighbourhood meetings, within bodies charged with protecting and promoting traditional/custom, and other community organisations meetings. This regulation also proposed that one day per week be dedicated as Javanese day, where everyone is ‘required’ to speak Javanese and dress up in Javanese ‘traditional’ clothes.

Plates 6.1 and 6.2 suggest that many follow this regulation. Note the use of the blangkon (‘hat’), batik (‘wax dyed motif’) shirts, and sarong (‘pants’) on the men and kebaya (‘blouse’) and sarong for dresses for the women. Both photos were taken by Kurniasih on 14/04/15. Plate 6.1 is taken the front of the regional taxation office of Semarang, while Plate 6.2 and the other is taken in front of the Tugorejo hospital in Semarang.

Plates 6.1-6.2 Wearing traditional dress to municipal offices in Central Java

This regulation also included compulsory Javanese language programs at school for all levels, for 2 hours per week, the running of a competition on Javanese literature to be run by the local government for the school and Javanese community in general, and the use of Javanese script alongside Indonesian for street sign and municipal offices, as in the sign located at the front of the municipal office of the water department in Surakata, Central Java (see Plate 6.3). Gubernatorial Regulation No. 57/2013 was later expanded through a new regulation, Gubernatorial Regulation No. 55/2014. This new regulation increased the social domain of the previous regulation to include the use of Javanese in all municipal offices in Central Java Province (35 regencies/cities) in both informal and formal settings once a week.

The new regulation also stipulated that Javanese could be used in meetings and this did not need to be the polite honorific krama variety. These new regulations also now explicitly acknowledge regional varieties of Javanese, including Javanese used in Banyumas, Tegal, and Pekalongan.
Thursday was also regimented as a dedicated day for the use of Javanese throughout the province, with teachers, students and school staff being required to participate in Javanese Day. Indonesian was still to be used, but only to produce written reports or documents from meetings. The governor himself led by example and was reported giving speeches in Javanese on different occasions. He is also actively used social media to engage directly with his constituents using Javanese, Gaul Indonesian, formal Indonesian and ‘Gaul’ English. As an example of a new style of governing within the social-media era, he has instructed every municipal office in the province to set up a twitter account. The account is used to communicate between the governor, his municipal offices and the constituency.

Plate 6.3 A sign in Indonesian and Javanese script at a municipal office (Photo: Andre Nurdianto, 01/04/2016)

7. Conclusion

The evidence which has been presented above in the form of press reports shows several things: firstly, the policy of teaching regional languages has found approval within the public domain, and cannot be reversed without evoking a strong reaction in the form of demonstrations. Secondly, the insistence on maintaining the teaching of regional languages comes from a broader segment of society, including academics, students, and political figures. Where students are concerned, I suggested that over fifteen years of emphasis on the local, both language and culture helped engender a sense of normalness and value to regional identities, a type of habitus if you like (Bourdieu 1991), which when challenged via efforts to recentralize curriculum, met strong opposition. This suggests that the original policy was in some way a success in increasing the social value of the regional language (Goebel 2015; Bourdieu 1991).

It also seems the case that the successive regulations issued by the governor of Central Java for the use of local languages on certain days have been well received. The reports of the use of Javanese language and Javanese dress are relevant to semi-formal situations, such as the office, and in this way represent a top-down implementation. Further study will have to be made to determine how these regulations are regarded and put into effect from the bottom-up in non-formal situations inside the office, as well as outside the office (e.g. in the street, in the market, or at home). It would be especially
interesting to see whether the type of shift to Indonesian reported by Smith-Hefner (2009) may be in reversal.

Notes

1 This is a revised version of a paper presented at the symposium ‘Margins, Hubs, and Peripheries in a Decentralizing Indonesia’ convened by Zane Goebel at the Sociolinguistics of Globalization conference in Hong Kong, 3-6 June, 2015. In addition to thanking the audience for their generous feedback, I would like to thank Zane Goebel, Stuart Robson and Howie Manns for their help with my paper. All errors and misinterpretations are my own.

2 All these studies focused on the implementation of LCC at school, but only Kurniasih’s works focuses on regional language as a compulsory subject of LCC.

3 Five provinces did not choose their regional language as LCC subjects: West Sumatra, South Sumatra, Jakarta, West Papua, and East Nusa Tenggara.

4 Yogyakartan and Surakartan varieties of Javanese were adopted as the ‘standard’ for Central Java, East Java and Special District of Yogyakarta. The reaction toward 2013 curriculum and regional language status also evoked a debate about the inclusion of local dialect such as Surabaya-Javanese, Malang-Javanese, Banyumasan-Javanese, Tegal-Javanese and so on in school curriculum as LCC subject for the local school.

5 The congress is held every five years and each province has its turn to host the congress.

6 SBY’s government ended in 2014.

7 As soon as the new government came to power, the minister of education announced the ‘cancellation’ of 2013 curriculum on the 4th of December 2014.

8 It also needs to be kept in mind that there are different varieties of Javanese spoken in the area, with some varieties increasing in social value as reported in Goebel (2015b).

9 He is known as ‘Gubernur Twitter’ (Governor of Twitter) with more than 559K followers (by 25th February, 2016)

10 Based on my observation so far, the governor uses the account to refer any complaint, inquiry, problem reported by the constituent to the specific municipal office (hospital, education, road-work, water, electricity and so on).

References


Abstract

From 1968 to 1998 the bureaucracy, the education system, and the media became key to centralization and language standardization efforts in Indonesia. During this period these processes helped create versions of the familiar formula of language plus person plus territory equals nation and ultimately an ideology that Indonesian and ethnic languages were unitary languages. Those who spoke state-authorized versions of Indonesian and ethnic languages become Indonesian citizens and members of ethnolinguistic cores residing in Indonesia’s peripheries. While this process was pushed along by the marketization of ethnic languages on television in the early 1990s, marketization also challenged the ideology of unitary languages through the modelling of mixed languaging practices. The constant tension between centralization and fragmentation is the central focus of this paper which shows how ethnolinguistic identity and mixed languaging practices were modelled on Indonesian television. My focus is 400 hours of footage recorded in 2009 which shows that mixed language practices were modelled across all television stations, most genres, and most timeslots. This co-occurred with other semiotic content that anchored this practice to territory; helping produce older unitary formulas of personhood. As with the early 1990s, this tension appears to be a reflex of the seeking of niche markets (fragmentation). Yet the copying of the sell-well format of representing ethnolinguistic cores created another round of market saturation and of seeking new markets, this time in the peripheries of established ethnolinguistic peripheries.

Introduction

In this paper I tease out the tensions between the centralization and fragmentation of ideas about language as a unitary phenomenon as modelled on Indonesian television. I will focus on some of the semiotic features that have assisted the move between centralization and fragmentation. I will argue that territory continues to play a key role in changing the social value of mixed languaging practices. In doing so, I will examine some of the antecedents of these changes which have essentially centralized some peripheral ethnic languages while also reconfiguring ideas about the make-up of language in the imagination of those who produce television programing.

I take much of my inspiration from some of the common themes to be found in the work of Bakhtin (1981), Hobsbawm (1992), Bourdieu (1991), Foucault (1978), and Wallerstein (2001) and those who have taken up these ideas in the broad field of sociolinguistics (e.g. Blommaert 2010; Blommaert, Leppänen, and Spotti 2012; Heller 2011; Heller and Duchêne 2012b; Kelly-Holmes 2010; Kuipers 1998; Pietikainen and Kelly-Holmes 2013). I will be especially concerned with ideas about pride and profit, purity versus impurity, normality versus abnormality, orders of indexicality, centres
of normativity, and polycentricity. After looking at these ideas, I briefly look at the development of the ideology of language and ethnicity in Indonesia, before turning to television representations of peripheral ethnic languages.

**Core–periphery tensions**

In recent years, ideas about the relationship between language and political economy has received increasing interest from sociolinguists (Blommaert 2010; Heller 2011; Heller and Duchêne 2012b; Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2013). Common to many is the intellectual inspiration offered in the work of Wallerstein (2001) and Bakhtin (1981). My point of departure in this paper are four of the themes that emerge in sociolinguistic extensions of these works, namely the fluidity of cores and peripheries; closely related to this is the fluidity of notions of unitary and fragmented languages; the inter-relationship between the two and how this fluidity can be explained by taking a historical view of the political economy in which such fluidity occurs; and the recursive use of the semiotic features that constitute the ideology of unitary languages – that is, languages that are associated with ideologies of nationalism such as one nation, one territory, one people, and one language.

In line with Wallerstein’s (2001) work, many of the discussions point out that cores and peripheries are quite fluid, with cores becoming peripheries and vice-versa. For example, under specific economic and political conditions rural areas as exemplars of peripherality can become a type of core of authenticity through heritage tourism (e.g. Heller 2013; Jaffe and Oliva 2013; Pietikäinen 2013; Pujolar 2013). Typically, this reconfiguration occurs in multiple settings so that with any core or centre of normativity there are multiple peripheries (e.g. Blommaert 2010; Heller 2011). Within peripheries there are also multiple centres of normativity – i.e. polycentricity – that also become hierarchically ordered as reconfiguration occurs (e.g. Blommaert 2010; Heller 2011). This hierarchically ordering is often tightly related to ideas about purity, order, and normativity (e.g. Blommaert et al. 2012; Heller 2013; Kuipers 1998; Pietikäinen 2013; Pujolar 2013). Often these centres of normativity have what Silverstein (2003) describes as ‘higher order indexical relations’ with dress, performance, housing, and so on so that the presence of one sign could point to ethnicity, gender, class, authenticity, etc. Agha (2007) refers to this constellation as a semiotic register.

In semiotic terms these reconfigurations typically are a recursion of a familiar unitary ideology of the nation-state and contain semiotic features relating to territory, linguistic form and social type (e.g. Gal 2012; Heller 2013; Jaffe and Oliva 2013; Pietikäinen 2013; Pujolar 2013). In the peripheries of Finland, for example, cores of Sami-ness are to be found in multiple sites through performances of locals wearing clothing emblematic of Sami-ness and speaking fragments of Sami language (Pietikäinen 2013). Even so, in these same sites, and resonating with Bakhtin’s (1981) ideas about heteroglossia and double voicing, some performances also contain new elements that may not be Sami, but are represented as such (Pietikäinen 2013).

The third common theme to all of this work is the importance of taking a multiple time-scales approach time when understanding the relationship of reconfiguration processes to reconfigurations in the political economy. For many of these studies, the reconfiguration of peripheral areas occurs during economic downturn and as governments move between ideologies of national identity or pride and the need to pay for government services through the seeking of profit (Heller 2011, 2013; Heller and Duchêne 2012a). Again taking inspiration from the work of Wallerstein (2001), the main idea is that as enterprises’ profits dwindle due to the saturation of the market (e.g. as more enterprises copy sell-well products and services), and as cheap inputs are increasingly unavailable, enterprises seek niche markets. One way of doing this is commodifying language and culture. In doing so, languages of the peripheries gain social and economic value, in Bourdieu’s (1991) sense, though as noted earlier, some varieties from the peripheries are more socially valued than others.

The fourth theme is the relationship of replication to continuity and change and the scale of change. Most studies focused on a particular setting and thus change seems to refer to local change, yet studies of the role of imitation or replication in change suggest the need for one-to-many
participation frameworks (e.g. schools and the mass media) to move an emergent local core to one that becomes core in a larger territory (Agha 2007; Urban 2001). Put in terms of work on enregisterment (Agha 2007), for semiotic forms to become widely recognized, they need to be replicated on a large scale. This is achieved through replication as precise copy, imitation, and through commentaries on these replications and imitations (Agha 2007; Lempert 2014; Urban 2001). In the following sections I take up each theme starting with a brief historical look at the formation of ethnicity as a category in Indonesia and its relationship with political economy.

Managing diversity to form cores and peripheries in Indonesia

A series of inter-related processes underpinned by the seeking of profit during the nineteenth century helped the Netherlands become a core with an Indonesian periphery (for recent summaries of the scholarship on this period see Goebel, 2015, in press). The diversity management efforts of missionaries, colonial administrators, school teachers, medical personal, local elite, and scholars helped to establish ethnolinguistic peripheries made up of speakers of Sundanese, Javanese, Balinese, etc. in the then Dutch East Indies (e.g. Errington 2001; Moriyama 2005; Stoler 1995a, 1995b). As elsewhere in the world these practices helped to naturalize or enregister the idea of nation as linked to territory and language, as in the familiar semiotic formula of one people, one language, one territory, one nation. These ideas co-occurred with prescriptivist and moral ideologies that language was pure and not contaminated with unauthorised fragments. The upshot of this was that the literary Malay of the colonial publisher, balai pustaka, became an emerging standard and the language of the elite who inhabited the cores of the Dutch East Indies, while particular varieties of local languages became part of an emerging ethnolinguistic core that was distinguished from impure, non-normative and immoral languages of the ethnolinguistic peripheries.

During the late colonial period a whole host of new infrastructures were introduced, including infrastructures of surveillance or governmentality (e.g. census, schooling), communication (e.g. radio and print media) and transportation (e.g. trams, railways, petrol driven transport, etc.). These infrastructures along with the social activities and organizations that came with them or emerged with their help also reproduced ideologies about peripheral ethnolinguistic identity (e.g. Cohen 2006; Dick et al. 2002; Elson 2008; Errington 1998a; Mrázek 2002; Stoler 1995b; Suryadi 2006). Ideas about ethnolinguistic identity were largely reproduced under the Japanese occupation during World War 2 and after Japan’s surrender when a group of elite Indonesians declared independence in August 1945 (e.g. Elson 2008; and the papers in Reid et al. 1986).

Following a five year war with the Dutch who tried to re-colonize Indonesia (Anderson 1972; Kahin 1970[1952]), Indonesia had a number of periods of nation building. The first 1945-1966 can be brutally characterized as one of ideological struggles over communism and Indonesian style democracy, and sustained political dialogue and military action to form a unitary state by halting independence movements in the peripheries, including areas outside of the big cities in Java and the islands outside Java (e.g. Elson 2008; Kahin 1970[1952]; Legge 1961). During this time there was only moderate investment in other important nation-building infrastructures, such as schooling (e.g. Bjork 2005) and limited investment and success in language planning activities (Dardjowidjojo 1998). While the formula of one nation, one people, one territory, and one language was imitated in much of the political discourses in the centres of the cores and peripheries and written into the Indonesian constitution, it wasn’t until regime change in 1966 that this ideology was imitated on a massive scale.

The massification of education, a reinvigorated government sponsored internal migration scheme, heavy investment in transportation and communication infrastructure, the commodification of ethnicity, strong efforts to centralize the bureaucracy, and equally strong efforts in the area of language planning and standardization all contributed to the imitation ideas about one nation, one territory, one people and one language in the period between 1966 to 1998 (e.g. Adams 1984; Alisjahbana 1976; Bjork 2005; Dardjowidjojo 1998; Dick et al. 2002; Jones and Hull 1997; Kitley 2000; Nababan 1991; Sullivan 1992). To oversimplify this period what emerged was a core where
there was the national language, Indonesian, and in the peripheries there were ethnic language cores (bahasa daerah). To extend this a little, we can say that standard Indonesian (bahasa Indonesia baku) was at the top of the linguistic hierarchy, vernacular varieties of Indonesian had co-equal value with some ethnic languages (e.g. Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese). These were followed by other increasingly marginalized or dying ethnic languages (e.g. Florey 1990; Kuipers 1998). At the bottom of this hierarchy are stigmatized mixed languages (Errington 1998b) and each of these cores had higher order indexical relations with dress, car number plates, monuments, architecture, and performance (e.g. some of the papers in Hooker 1993; Parker 2002).

Imitating pride to make profit

While pride in pure Indonesian and pure ethnic languages was a feature of government efforts, the television industry imitated features of the semiotic formula of territory, language and people for profit. The deregulation of Indonesian television from 1990 onwards enabled four new commercial television stations (ANTEVE, RCTI, SCTV and TPI) to compete with the government broadcaster, TVRI (Kitley 2000; Sen and Hill 2000). While this market expansion was initially driven by a few economically and politically powerful people (Kitley 2000: 230-231), the rising cost of inputs caused by foreign currency fluctuations and negative evaluations about programming by audiences quickly saturated this new market and engendered moves to increase market share (Loven 2008; Rachmah 2006). This was done by looking for new niche audiences in the ethnolinguistic peripheries via local content programming, which included the use of fragments of local languages, as in the now famous si Doel Anak Sekolah ‘Doel an educated lad’ (Goebel 2008; Loven 2008; Rachmah 2006; Sen and Hill 2000).

The success of local content programming encouraged other producers to imitate the format of local content (Loven 2008; Rachmah 2006). This co-occurred with ongoing political and fiscal decentralization that started in 2001 which produced a period of intense change that increased the social value of ethnicity and ethnic languages in Indonesia (e.g. the papers in Davidson and Henley 2007). To get votes in political contests candidates used ethnic languages in speeches (Aspinall 2011), parents and academics pressured schools to teach ethnic languages (e.g. Arps 2010; Sudarkam Mertono 2014), and political figures and bureaucrats made regular calls for the use of ethnic languages as the language of the office (e.g. Moriyama 2012). These efforts all contributed to the formation of ethnolinguistic cores within Indonesia’s peripheries. In the following section I provide an example of the emergence of a centre of normativity in the Sundanese speaking periphery within the social domain of television.

Reproducing unitary languages

In this section I provide one example of the imitation of the unitary language ideology in a television soap that I recorded as part of a larger data base of television recordings that I made in 2009 while in rural Cirebon, West Java (discussed in more detail in Goebel 2015). Ten of the commercial broadcasters were Jakarta-based, while one was local. I recorded each station for a minimum of a day, and often up to four days when broadcast reception was good. These recordings were made starting at around five in the morning and usually finishing at one the following morning. Thus, while my data was not a perfect sample, nevertheless, it does provide enough data to point out some patterns of broadcast content and representational practices. What I wish to emphasize here is that the sell-well genre of local content soaps of the early nineties onwards has been imitated across a wide range of genres. Some of the common semiotic features used to reproduce ideas of language as emblematic of ethnic identity included explicit commentaries about place by a narrator or newsreader, the use of subtitle-like texts that state place, the subtitling of talk, the presence of a community of speakers
whose speech also requires subtitles, the use of maps, and the use of a range of signs that have higher order indexical relations with ethnic languages (e.g. dress and car number plates).

The following extract has many of these semiotic features. This is because it is the start of a new serial which typically need to follow more general principles about serial production, such as the scripting of semiotic features to help quickly create a setting (Richardson 2010). Extract 1 is taken from Episode 1 of the soap *Jiran*. This particular interaction occurs at the very start of this episode and is set in a market place surrounded by greenery and mountains, all of which point to a rural setting. Jiran is working carrying the shopping of wholesalers and customers in the market. Sundanese is in bold, Indonesian is in plain font, and italics indicate ambiguous forms that can be classified as either Sundanese or Indonesian.

**Extract 1.** Soaps, signs of place and local languages (Source: Jiran, Sorayaintercinefilms, broadcast on Indosiar)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male client 1</th>
<th>1 atos rapih neng .</th>
<th>[You’re] already done Younger Sister?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiran</td>
<td>2 iya.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male client 1</td>
<td>3 tah ieu nya (giving Jiran money) (5.0)</td>
<td>Here is [your pay].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiran</td>
<td>4 nuhun (16.0) (while walking towards next customer who arrives in a van with a D number plate visible)</td>
<td>Thanks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiran</td>
<td>7 akang (0.5) mau dibawakan . barangnya = Older brother, can I carry your goods for you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male client 2</td>
<td>8 oh tiasa atuh neng tiasa . eh antosan nya = Oh of course [you] can Younger Sister, yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 yeuh bayaran anu ayeuna neng . (gives money) dua rebu . tah ku angkat</td>
<td>[you] can. Eh, wait a moment OK, Here is the payment for now Younger Sister, two thousand (rupiah). Here, Older Brother will give you one more thousand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiran</td>
<td>12 ditambihan deui sarebu (0.5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiran</td>
<td>13 nuhun kang = Thanks Older Brother.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male client 2</td>
<td>14 dieu deui nya . sok atuh angkut barang = Younger sister, don’t forget to come back here tomorrow OK. Please take the goods, be careful OK Younger Sister OK.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 barangna . hati hati nya neng nya</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the actual language being used, which directly indexes Sundanese ethnic identity, most of the signs represented here have higher order indexical relations with Sundanese ethnic identity and the language of the ethnic other. For example, the talk here and indeed the rest of the interaction that occurs in the market is subtitled, helping to signal ethnolinguistic otherness. The talk is also linked to territory by the presence of a number of small vans and trucks that all have a highly visible ‘D’ preceding a series of numbers on their vehicle’s number plate. This prefix is the one used for Bandung and surrounds which have long-term associations with Sundaneseness. The anchoring of this dialogue to region and implicitly to Sundaneseness is also reinforced through the occurrence of other dialogues in this setting which are also subtitled. This suggests a community who all speak the same local medium. Note too that there are few Indonesian forms (plain font).
Representing and normalizing mixed languaging practices on television

Apart from documentary type genres aimed at children, the imitation of ideologies of purity tended to be rare in my data base. What was much more common was a type of stylized alternation where linguistic fragments of an ethnic language were used across a range of genres, including talk shows and soaps. In this section, I will look at just one example of this practice drawing on the same soap discussed in Extract 1. In the episode that I recorded in August 2009, none of the explicit signs found in Extract 1 were present. In this setting, Jiran’s husband (Pendi) is at a telephone exchange trying to call Jiran while speaking to himself and to the service officer. As with Extract 1, Sundanese is in bold, ambiguous forms are in italics, and Indonesian is in plain font.

**Extract 2.** Stylized alternation anchored to Sundanese locales (Source: Jiran, Sorousaintercine Films, broadcast on Indosiar)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pendi</th>
<th>Telephone booth attendant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>eh. gancang atuh subhan di angkat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>teleponna . heeh ini mah darurut . sia teh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>jeung noan tidak angkat telepon . aing teh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>lagi butuh uang untuk kimoterapi si putri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>(dials another telephone number)(12.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ah sarua waé . sengaja apa si subhan teh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>(1.0) tidak mau angkat telepon dari urang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>(3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ah si brengsek mah si subhan . si jiran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>mah sama waé (2.0) di sini mah lagi perlu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>uang banyak buat bayar kimoterapi si putri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>belum buat makan . belum buat kartu uh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>(slams down telephone) (3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>(stands up) atuh kang . jangan di banting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>banting teleponnya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>ieu mah telepon blegug. teu bisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>nyambung nyambung .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>telepon sananya yang blegug. telepon sini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>teh . bener semua . ini telepon baru semua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>akang . huh dasar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike Extract 1, here there is a lot of alternation between Sundanese and Indonesian. Both participants orient to this type of alternation and there is no medium repair, which implies that this type of alternation is habitual. The semiotic features used to anchor this episode to territory continue to include linguistic form, as was the case for Extract 1, but there are no subtitles. Here, the talk and setting are contrasted with the prior Malaysian setting primarily by way of participants being involved (e.g., Jiran, the sultan, his other wives, and servants) and the subtitles that go with the dialogue that is represented as occurring in Malaysia (and contains Malay and English mediums). In a sense, the medium being used in the telephone booth is anchored to place by a movement to a rural setting together with the movement from subtitled to no subtitles.

When compared with the talk of clients 1 and 2 in Extract 1, this talk seems much more stylized insofar as it presupposes that the use of fragments or ‘just enough’ (Blommaert and Varis 2011) linguistic forms will be sufficient to invoke a change in place. In a sense, we are also getting a glimpse
of the producer’s and actors’ perception of their imagined audience’s competence to comprehend. In other words, we can suggest that the success of such stylized alternation is dependent on the imagined audience’s knowledge of the voices of widely circulating Sundanese stereotypes.

While Extract 1 represents a clear case of the appropriation of a language from one centre of normativity in the periphery via the well-known semiotic formula of nationalism, Extract 2 only uses some of this formula. It is also the case the Extract 1 neatly imitates the well-known ideology of pure languages, while Extract 2 starts to contest this ideology. In a sense, within one television serial multiple centres of normativity are modelled. While this practice is a continuation of the representational practices of the early nineties, it seemed to be much more common in the programming I recorded in 2009. For example, over the three-week period that I recorded, there were the following soaps that had these types of representation: dramas set in Indonesian and Malaysia: Tangisan Isabela (Isabela’s Tears) and Amira [a woman’s name] (Indosiar) and Maharani [a woman’s name] (TPI); the comedy Suami-Suami Takut Istri (Husbands Afraid of Their Wives) (TransTV); the dramas Bunda (Mother) and Dimas dan Raka [two men’s names] (TPI) and Inayah [a woman’s name] (Indosiar).

In addition to helping normalize mixed language practices in the social domain of television, we can also imagine that the ubiquity of this practice in the one-to-many participation framework of television could create new centres of normativity. For example, the imitation of mechanisms that anchored dialogue to territory could help create one where an Indonesian public could (mis)recognize whole dialogues and whole serial as emblematic of Sundaneseness, as found in written responses to this serial (e.g. Goebel 2013, 2015), and to other television content more generally (e.g. Loven 2008; Rachmah 2006). Even so, other centres of normativity were also emerging during this period as speakers of peripheral languages of the periphery started to lobby for and receive recognition (e.g. Arps 2010; Surya 2006). In the last section I will give just one example of this.

In search of new markets: Representations of peripheral languages of the periphery

As I worked though my recordings another illustration of recursion jumped out at me, this time one which helped further fragment language ideologies while creating another new centre of normativity. In this case, we could see non-core languages of the ethno-linguistic periphery, such as local varieties of Sundanese and Javanese, being represented and used in television programming, especially comedy skits and advertisements. This programming seems to follow the same market logic that has been in play since the early 1990s: as core languages of the periphery are imitated by all programming market saturation occurs. In turn, saturation required the use of peripheral languages of the periphery to reach new markets, as in the case of the following cigarette commercial (Figure 1 and Extract 3).
In this commercial we have three men apparently stranded on a deserted island and thirsty when a genie bottle washes ashore. After on the men opens the bottle, the genie appears and offers to grant them a wish. The Javanese-ness of this commercial and its audience is initially presupposed and anchored to a pre-existing core within a periphery (Yogyakarta and Solo varieties of Javanese) through the representation of the genie’s dress (especially the hat, blangkon), and his pronunciation of beri ‘give’ (line 2) using the voiced consonant mb. The Surabayan-ness is presupposed through the use of one linguistic token, rek ‘friend’ (line 4), which is associated with the type of Javanese spoken in Surabaya, East Java. Indonesian is in plain font, Javanese of the core is in bold caps, and Surabayan is in bold underline.

**Extract 3.** Representing peripheral languages of the periphery: Surabayan Javanese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genie</th>
<th>(laughs and gestures with right hand) aku MBeri tiga permintaan</th>
<th>I’ll GIVE you three wishes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castaway 1</td>
<td>aku mau pulang (then disappears)</td>
<td>I want to go home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castaway 2</td>
<td>sama (then disappears)</td>
<td>[Me] too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castaway 3</td>
<td>sepi rek . aaa aku pengen mereka MBalik</td>
<td>It’s quite [Why aren’t you here] friends, [I know], I want them TO COME BACK [here].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Sound of gamelan and then castaway 1 reappears with a water container and castaway 2 reappears with a pillow before gesturally chiding castaway 3 for his stupidity)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

In this paper I have taken much of my inspiration from the work of Wallerstein, Bakhtin, Hobsbawm, Bourdieu, and Foucault and the interpretations of this work by those working in the areas of the sociolinguistics of globalization, especially Blommaert’s (2010) work on polycentricity and centres of normativity and the work scholars looking at the relationship of political economy to language and the reconfiguration of core–periphery relations (e.g. Heller 2011; and the papers in Heller and Duchêne 2012b; Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2013). My point of departure was the representation of peripheral languages in Java, and how semiotic features associated with old ideologies that link language to territory and group have been recursively used as television broadcasters and the producers of television content seek new niche markets. I argued that these efforts (re)producing multiple centres of normativity – i.e. polycentricity – within the emerging ethnolinguistic peripheries of Java.

While the imitation of sell-well formats was an example of the core appropriating peripheral ethnolinguistic identities for profit, much of the programming only contained fragments of these ethnic languages. In representing this type of mixing this programming helped to reconfigure models of language that were based on notions of purity, although the ubiquity of this format along with the continued anchoring of dialogue to territory suggests the normativization of a new semiotic register. It also seemed the case that this seeking of niche market continued to saturate the market to the extent that peripheral languages of the peripheries also started to be used in much of the programming. Even so, as this programming also utilized semiotic features that anchored these peripheral languages of the periphery, they too can be expected to become centres of normativity which over larger time scales may also have quite different semiotic configurations in the social domain of television to the
peripheries that they are modelling. Following this logic we can also expect a continuation of this ethnolinguistic fragmentation.

**Note**

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