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Goebel, Z.M.; Manns, Howard

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Chronotopic relations and scalar shifters

by

Zane Goebel[©] (University of Queensland)

Howard Manns[©] (Monash University)

z.goebel@uq.edu.au

howard.manns@monash.edu

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Chronotopic Relations and Scalar Shifters¹

Zane Goebel (University of Queensland) and Howard Manns (Monash University)

Abstract

Using discursive data from Indonesia, this paper discusses a semiotic configuration we refer to as “scalar shifters” (Goebel, Cole, & Manns, 2016) and how we see these shifters as linking different chronotopes from different communicative events. Drawing upon Agha (2007), we think of chronotopes as relationships between sign constellations that have become socially valued through imitation in authorized one-to-many participation frameworks (e.g. schools and the mass media). We also see chronotopic relations as involving the use of and recognition of a sign from one chronotope in another communicative event and the subsequent reconfiguration of this sign and the chronotope that it invokes. In this sense, chronotopes are always “under construction”. Our concept of “scalar shifter” builds upon discussions of scale, shifters, tokens and types, processes of register formation, while offering some more empirical meat to these discussions. We define scalar shifters as signs used and recognized in communicative activity that organize units and unitizations of scale while also function to identifying relevant participant frameworks with respect to timespace, and/or size.

Introduction

This paper offers a potential answer to one of the four questions posed by the panel organizers, namely: “How are different scales interconnected in and through chronotopes?” In line with the definition offered in the panel abstract, we see chronotopes as constantly fluid semiotic constellations that emerge within a communicative activity. We see figures of

personhood and the activities and spaces such figures inhabit as part of this emergent constellation. This process of chronotopic configuration, which is closely related to processes of enregisterment, clarified in detail in Agha (2007), occurs through the imitation of semiotic fragments from other chronotopes. These semiotic fragments, which we refer to as “scalar shifters”, connect one chronotope with another. In some of his earlier conceptions of scale Blommaert (2010: 34-35) points to how certain words and the relationships of these to co-occurring deictics engender scale shifts when recounting the below discussion between a tutor (T) and a PhD student (S):

S: I’ll start my dissertation with a chapter reporting on my fieldwork.

T: We start our dissertations with a literature review here.

When taken as a whole, Speaker T’s talk functions as a scalar shifter that engenders a scale-jump from an emergent situated understanding of dissertation writing held by S to social practices beyond the current interaction and with reference to wider, social normativities. Blommaert (2015), though not using the term scalar shifter, also points out how the phrase *once upon a time* invokes a timeless narrative that might create expectations in a reader, of fantasy and adventure. We propose here that examining the semiotic forms which enable such “frame” (Goffman, 1974; Tannen, 1993) shifts or scale-jumps provides a useful empirical focus for understanding the role that such jumps play in organizing chronotopic relationships. In explicitly treating the formation of scalar shifters as something in need of further explanation, we further develop our earlier work on scalar shifters (Goebel et al., 2016). We do this in the current paper by examining how social actors utilise semiotic forms that trigger scale-jumps, and how the uptake of these shifters can reconfigure such triggers. It is our contention in this paper that it is impossible to ignore the relevance of scalar

shifters to social actors, and what is relevant to the social actor becomes relevant to the analyst concerned with providing an account of discourse and social relations.

Scale and chronotope

Scalarity and chronotope have received more sustained attention from linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists than shifters (e.g. Blommaert, 2010; 2013, 2015; Blommaert, Westinen, & Leppänen, 2015; Canagarajah & De Costa, 2016; Carr & Lempert, 2016; Clonan-Roy, Wortham, & Nichols, 2016; Lempert, 2012; Lempert & Perrino, 2007; Smith & Thompson, 2016; Wortham, 2006). Wortham's (2005, 2006) early work on scale built on Lemke (2000), who saw developmental time as well as the idea of interdiscursivity as important components of scale. In contrast, Blommaert's (2005, 2008, 2010) early work on scale built on Wallerstein's (2001) ideas to include time, space, and interactional activity. The combination of time, space and interactional activity produced scale-specific normativities around language practices and those involved in such practices; similar in many ways to Agha's (2007) idea of semiotic register. More recently, scale has been conceptualized as an emergent discursive phenomenon which always involves comparison, such as size, height, category, group, and so on (Carr & Lempert, 2016).

Continuing with his conceptualization work on scale, Blommaert (2015) links scale with the idea of chronotope originally developed in Bakhtin's (1981: 84-258) essay "Forms of time and of the chronotope in the novel". Blommaert (2015) points out that conceptualizing chronotopes as personas that are analyzable across the 'traditional' and 'horizontal' focus of sociolinguistics, leaves out the vertical dimensions of these chronotopes. What is meant by this vertical dimension is how (signs from) a semiotic configuration of personhood developed in another timespace (i.e. scale) can be reused and recognized as part of meaning-making activity at another scale. Cutting at this dimensional issue from another

angle, Agha (2015) points out that the denotata of descriptors/categories index chronotopic formulations that also have an intrinsic scale. Specific interlocutors use words 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). Similarly, ideas about what constitutes debate in a Tibetan monastery relies upon scaled connections between setting, participants, and ways of speaking in a way that requires analysts to recognize and explore the scalar dimensions of debate when trying to understand what is going on in such encounters (Lempert, 2012).

Taking inspiration from this line of thinking and work by Hanks (1992), Silverstein (2003), Wortham (2006), Agha (2007), and Blommaert (2015), we agree that as analysts, we should not assume that communicative activity only involves one scale. As many of these scholars point out, communicative activity involves complex connections between semiotic resources from different scales where the meaning of any sign emerges as it co-occurs with other forms in ongoing discourse. In the case of our Blommaert's (2010) example noted earlier, the deictic, "here" can only find a referent via reference to the other sign and text fragments within the ongoing interaction. For example, where the interaction is happening (in an academic office or somewhere on a higher degree-granting university campus), who is speaking, and when. In this case, participation moves from a one-person participation framework ("I") to a multiple person participation framework ("we" and "our"). The use of the deictic, "here", points back to the "I", and disambiguates the meaning of "we" and "our" as potentially including the addressee to excluding the addressee, while also indexing a potential large participation framework (every academic working at the institution). Even so, part of this talk "starting dissertations", "chapters", "fieldwork" and "literature reviews"

require background knowledge to interpret, which S apparently is yet to hold, but which T has acquired in another time and place.

Shared understanding of descriptors, such as starting “dissertations”, “chapters”, “fieldwork” and “literature reviews”, and the delimitation of this understanding, is thus 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 Bourdieusian (1984) 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. Scale thus refers both to how signs in use widen or narrow the range of potential referents as well as the outcome of discursive processes that increase or decrease a sign’s potential for uptake. In what follows, we attempt to understand this process with reference to work on shifters.

Shifters

The concept of shifters developed in Silverstein (1976) has, among other things, helped us understand how the indexical qualities of place and person deictics enable a shift in participant roles in interaction. However, with the exception of Herzfeld’s (1987: 154-156) discussion of cultural shifters – defined as ethnic terms and group labels used for delineating insiders and outsiders – the idea of shifters hasn’t had much uptake. It is also unclear from Herzfeld’s work how and why such ethnic terms and group labels emerge to become available to facilitate shifts in participant roles. Taking up on 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 shifter 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. Recognizing 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 identifiers for citizens of one country or another. 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. Agha, 2007; Goebel, 2010; Wortham, 2006).

As an analytic focus, cultural shifters are undoubtedly useful, but as our summary of work on scale above highlights, it is also important to realize their limitations, especially their limited ability to capture what Blommaert (2015) terms this ‘vertical’ axis of indexical meaning. We thus propose a second type of shifter – scalar shifter – which explicitly addresses ‘scale’ while subsuming the concept of cultural shifter. We define scalar shifter as:

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

As with cultural shifters, scalar shifters are typically made up of sign constellations that have been enregistered – that is, become recognizable for a particular population – but the substitution of “cultural” for “scalar” invites us to ask “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 as illustrated above with reference to Blommaert’s (2010) example of *I/we* shifting.

How might a beginning analyst identify scalar shifters. One means for understanding how different scales are “interconnected in and through chronotopes” is to focus on those instances in which scale-jumping invites explicit/implicit metapragmatic commentary, especially as a result of incongruent role alignment. Agha (2007) notes that the co-occurrence of semiotic resources may invoke voices or chronotopes that are incongruent with the context. Many contexts unfold with interactants using a series of congruent semiotic resources that invoke identifiable chronotopes. A doctor who says ‘how are we feeling today?’ to a patient invokes a chronotope of doctor-patient interactions, and by doing so guidance on how such interactions will proceed (see Agha, 2007: 53-54). However, other interactions entail the use of semiotic resources that are incongruent with context. A non-doctor uttering ‘how are we feeling today?’ to a hungover friend invokes the chronotope of the doctor-patient interaction in a manner incongruent with the immediate context (e.g. friends), and thusly likely does so with a sense of irony. The hungover friend might respond to this by rejecting the use of this chronotope (e.g. responding ‘piss off’) or perhaps by playing along (e.g. saying ‘doc, I think I’m dying’).

In what follows, we provide some examples of the analysis of scalar shifters and the scale-jumping that they engender with the hope that this invites further discussion as to their utility in understanding the role that these shifters play in organizing discourse and social life. We start by focusing our attention on a series of individual contexts in which scale-shifting draws explicit/implicit commentary among social actors. In doing so, we shed light on the relevance of scale-shifting to social actors (and by consequence the relevance of scalar shifters). We then focus our attention on the emergence of a single scalar shifter (“efficiency”), and examine how its use across contexts invokes chronotopic formulations, and what the explicit/implicit uptake of these formulations tell us about how chronotopes are linked across scales.

Scalar Shifters: Youth interaction in Malang, East Java

This section focuses on how the incongruent use of scale-shifting in interaction invites metapragmatic commentary, and review what the metapragmatic commentary tells us about the value (or rather valuation) of scale in the Indonesian context. We examine scale-shifting and metapragmatic commentary in a study of youth language in Malang, which is an urban area located more than 600 kilometres east of the capital city of Jakarta. Malang has traditionally been a Javanese-speaking area but there has been a shift among young people in recent years to the national language, Indonesian (Manns, 2011; Smith-Hefner, 2007, 2009). In general, youth friendship groups in Malang will favour either the Malang variety of Javanese, the Malang variety of Indonesian or a mix of both. This is determined by a range of factors, including the ethnic composition of the friendship group, the language skills of its members, the degree to which the friendship group is traditional- or modern-leaning, and so on. Malang dubs itself an ‘education city’ and a significant number of young people from outside of Java come to Malang to study, and many choose to stay. Manns (2011) sought to

understand language shift among young people in Malang, with a particular focus on the social indexicalities of ethnic, national and global languages. This section reviews two extracts in which scale comes to the fore in conversations among Malang youth.

Our first example comes from an interaction between a pair of female nurses in their early 20s, who favour Indonesian in their conversations but also include a mix of Malang Javanese. Nina is from the city of Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, but has lived in Malang for some time and her job at the hospital requires knowledge of Malang Javanese. Nina and Dita's relationship includes a lot of good-natured banter and this banter generally features shifts into Malang Javanese. In the following exchange, Javanese Dita pokes fun at Banjar Nina for her weight, and this triggers a series of scale-jumps beyond the colloquial Indonesian-Malang Javanese they typically use.

Excerpt 1: Alien language and New Order ideologies

- 1 Dita: Hey, **sampeyan nggak ngukur klambi a?**¹
'Hey, didn't you get measured for clothes?'
- 2 Nina: Nggak, tetap deh, ukuranku kayak dulu.
'No, there's no doubt my measurements are the same as always'
- 3 Dita: Kok gitu?
'How is that possible?'
- 4 Nina: Huh? Munyak wak Dita ini. Munyak benar benar. Kenapa geram kamto?
'Huh? I'm tired of you Dita. Really tired. Why do you insist on getting me riled up like this?'

¹ Indonesian language appears in normal font, hyper-formal Indonesian appears in italics, Javanese is bolded, and the Banjar language is underlined.

5 Dita: Aduh, **ojo** ngomong bahasa planet. *Kita sedang membudidayakan bahasa Indonesia dengan baik dan benar* ok?

‘Whoa, don’t use alien language. We are cultivating the Indonesian that is good and correct, ok?’

6 **Ojo, ojo gae rekaman...**

‘Don’t, don’t (do this) for this recording...’

7 Nina: [begins to sing]

8 Dita: **Nyanian maneh. Wes cukup.** Eh, jangan, jangan, **sak kaset iki, gae rekamane, awak dewe toh.**

‘Singing again. Enough already. Eh, don’t, don’t, for this cassette, for this recording, just do your own thing!’

Lines 1-2 unfold as a casual Question-Answer dyad in a mix of Indonesian and Javanese. The mixing of Javanese and Indonesian is unremarkable here as these are the registers these friends use together. Dita asks Nina (in Javanese) whether she’s been measured for her clothes, and Nina responds that she is the same size she has always been (in Indonesian). However, Dita cheekily feigns surprise in line 3 and this leads to a series of scale-jumps in the interaction. In line 4, Nina switches to the Banjar language (underlined) and here we see our first jump in scale. The use of the Banjar language invokes a chronotope of Banjar language, culture, practices, and features. Nina is familiar with these signs having grown up as a Banjar speaker in the geographically distant Banjarmasin. Invoking a Banjar participation framework in a Malang setting may or may not be problematic for a Malang co-participant. Dita has grown up in Malang and her trajectory of socialisation had led to minimal contact with Banjar participation frameworks, mostly through her friendship with Nina. In sum, Dita may or may not understand Nina’s utterance in line 4.

Whether or not Dita understands is irrelevant here, as in line 5 she chooses two scalar moves which index a refusal to take-up the Banjar framework in this Malang-based conversation. First, Dita demands that Nina not speak ‘alien language’, which in this instance we may consider a scalar shifter. By attaching the label ‘alien language’ to the Banjar language features in line 4, Dita denies the language a time or space within the Malang, Indonesian or indeed earthly context. In essence, and through a metapragmatic commentary that identifies the use of scalar shifters, she has rendered the Banjar language invisible across these contexts. Next, Dita switches into hyper-formal Indonesian and quotes an oft-repeated dictum of proponents ‘proper’ Indonesian from an earlier political regime (the New Order) through her “we are cultivating the Indonesian that is good and correct”.

The selection of this widely circulating and hyper-formal Indonesian idiomatic expression serves multiple scalar functions, which need to be unpacked here. To a certain degree, the first function is not unlike the application of ‘alien language’ above. The use of this hyper-formal expression invokes New Order ideologies that marginalise or even ‘erase’ ethnic participation frameworks in inter-ethnic interactions. Of course, in Malang, Dita is happy to communicate with Nina in Indonesian and Javanese, and Goebel (2010) shows us how non-Javanese migrants to Javanese areas tend to use Javanese where they can. However, Nina’s attempt to introduce a Banjar participation framework into a Javanese conversation is seemingly rejected through the selective invocation of lingering New Order ideologies. It is worth noting, in light of our discussion of scale, that such ideologies would be considered anachronistic at the time of this conversation, and consequently this utterance is scalar on a number of levels.

The use of this hyper-formal idiomatic expression invokes another scalar shift, which is subtle in line 5, but becomes fully realised in lines 6 and 8. Earlier in this recording, Nina and Dita focused their attention on the recording device and performed for the device

(including singing). In methodological terms, never mind the observer's paradox, it was the observer's nightmare. Dita and Nina are aware that there are no constraints on the style of language they use in the recording, but they are also aware that the wider study was largely concerned with youth Indonesian. Dita's use of the hyper-formal Indonesian idiom seeks to stymie any attempts by Nina to sabotage the recording (and at a larger scale the transcript, or rather the labelling of this transcript as 'naturally occurring data'). Dita begins to make this point in line 6 but to no avail as Nina has already begun to sing. The recording at this point begins to unravel as both participants have moved their attention to the recording process, and at this larger scale of sharing this transcript with you, our audience, Dita's attempt to salvage 'naturally occurring data', by appealing to New Order ideologies sadly fails.

The use of scalar shifters also comes to the fore in the second extract in which another group of participants become aware of the recorder, and of the study's wider concern with Indonesian. Such awareness suggests that as with the above the labelling of the extract as 'naturally-occurring data' becomes problematic. However, as with the above, the extract is quite revealing in terms of scale. It was noted above that the language choice of youth friendship groups in Malang is influenced by a number of factors, including language preference and skills. In this extract, six East Java youth are hanging out at a local food stall, which serves *bakso* 'meatballs'. In contrast to Dita and Nina above, who use a mix of Malang Javanese and Indonesian, this friendship group almost exclusively uses Malang Javanese. One participant, Putri, has reminded them in the earlier text of the Indonesian focus of the study (much to the later horror of Howie). This leads to a series of jocular turns² through which participants engage in scale-shifting, and offer metapragmatic commentary on the relevance of chronotopes (and the scalar qualities of such chronotopes, as they relate the

² See Djenar, Ewing, & Manns (2018) for a discussion of this example in relation to language play in youth interaction more generally in Indonesia.

current interaction). As with extract 1 above, this exchange contains multiple vertical levels, and scalar shifts, which must be teased apart.

Excerpt 2: Speak Indonesian? Here? This isn't London.

- 1 Beni: Emang kenapa, nggak ada yang bisa bahasa Indonesia?
'Why is that, (is it because) no one can speak Indonesian?'
- 2 Risky: **Ho-oh.**
'Yeah.'
- 3 Ririn: Sudah terbiasa pake bahasa Jawa,
'We're used to speaking Javanese.'
- 4 Soalnya disini kan reflectionistnya seperti ini.
'because here you see this is how it is.'
- 5 Risky: Nah, bahasa Indonesia seperti ini.
'Well, Indonesian sounds like this.'
- 6 Veni: *Harusnya sebagai...*
'Actually as...'
- 7 Putri: Sudah terbiasa bahasa Inggris. Halah.
'We're used to speaking English. C'mon.'
- 8 Nila: **Mari ngene Putrinya³, lek ngomong onok sumbok'o sumbok'o.**
'After this, it's the Princess, when she speaks she uses 'if', 'if'.'
- 9 Veni: Kan kita hidup di London gitu lho?
'You know, we're living in London, aren't we?'
- 10 Yani: **Heh, bakso-e gak teka-teka.**
'Hey, the meatballs are taking a long time.'

³ Nila is teasing Putri by punning. *Putrinya* can be interpreted as 'the Putri we know' or 'the Princess'.

Eh, salah. Baksonya nggak dateng-dateng deh.

‘Oops, I messed up. The meatballs are taking a long time, or whatever.’

The extract begins with Beni taunting his friends by implying that they aren’t speaking Indonesian because they don’t know how to. In what follows, the notion of place and the relevance of scalar shifters and chronotopes come to the fore. Ririn quickly rejects Beni’s suggestion by pointing out (in Indonesian) that the issue is not language ability but rather the context. Ririn points out that in the current context (and among this group of friends) they are used to speaking Javanese. Ririn thusly sets out Javanese as the ‘appropriate’ language *disini* ‘here’, and moreover does so in Indonesian, and in doing so invokes chronotopic meanings associated with this register (e.g. truth, authority, see Goebel, 2010). This leads to Risky in line 5 briefly using Indonesian to show off his ability in Indonesian (if for a moment invoking a school or other national context in which it was acquired), and to demonstrate that ‘this is how Indonesian is spoken’. Veni arguably seeks to ‘upscale’ the prescription of ‘correct’ Indonesian in the following line by using hyper-formal Indonesian to further prescribe how Indonesian *harusnya sebagai* “it must be spoken like...”.

Veni is interrupted in line 7 by Putri who recycles Ririn’s description of the current context or rather *disini* ‘here’. Where Ririn defines the current context as ‘Javanese speaking’, Putri invokes the chronotope of English-speakers in the current context, suggesting that the current interlocutors are ‘English speakers’ rather than ‘Javanese speakers’. Putri’s recycling of Ririn’s words and the replacing of Ririn’s *bahasa Jawa* ‘the Javanese language’ with *bahasa Inggris* ‘the English language’ serves as a scalar shifter that comments on the ongoing interaction. Putri’s use of a scalar shifter here is clearly ironic and might be for one or more purposes. First, Putri might be suggesting that indeed Indonesian, and its associated chronotopic formulations, is incongruent with the immediate context. In

other words, if they are speaking Indonesian, they might as well be speaking English, as both are foreign or rather incongruent with this inter-ethnic interaction among friends. However, Putri is actually the one who was imploring the group to speak Indonesian earlier in the text. Therefore, we might also consider that Putri is mocking her friends for making such a big deal out of speaking Indonesian in this context, by pointing out that Indonesian language interactions aren't as foreign as English interactions. In line 9, Veni takes up Putri's point on English as the appropriate language for *disini* "here" by redefining here and suggesting *kita* "we" are living in London. Consequently, regardless of Putri's somewhat ambiguous stance, Veni uses the London/English comparison to hint at the incongruence of Indonesian to the current context, and that it is more natural to be speaking Javanese

The incongruence of Indonesian with the current context is also highlighted by Yani who observes in Javanese that the meatballs are taking a long time to arrive line 10. Yani quickly corrects herself by repeating the same observation in the Indonesian language in line 11. She also uses the discourse marker *deh*, which serves a wide variety of functions in Indonesian, but may be most accurately described among young people as indexing a distanced or blasé stance (equating somewhat to the English whatever) (Djenar, Ewing, & Manns, 2018). Therefore Yani is resigning herself, albeit ironically and/or begrudgingly, to the use of Indonesian in the current interaction for the recording. A final note on scalar shifters here may be made in reference to Blommaert's (2015) notion of scale and recognisability. The rhetorical move by Nila in line 8 would likely make little sense even to a fluent Indonesian-Javanese speaker. Nila here is continuing the earlier discussion (line 1, 5-6) about Indonesian language abilities. Of the co-present interlocutors, Putri's Indonesian abilities are perhaps most in question here, and are a frequent jocular topic of conversation. Putri is a heavily accented speaker of Indonesian, and has a few linguistic quirks, including the frequent use of Javanese lexical items like *sumbok'o* 'if' when she is speaking

Indonesian. Therefore, to a certain degree, line 8 may be considered a scalar shifter pointing to shared trajectories of socialisation, with which Howie as a researcher was unfamiliar until it was brought to light (or recognisability) through interviews with Putri and her friends, and now has been scaled up to a level of recognisability to you the reader.

Chronotopic relations and scalar shifters: the case of “efficiency”

In this section, we want to look at how a word, “efficiency”, becomes part of a larger semiotic configuration or chronotope that is linked with ideas of good governance and the figures of personhood that practice good governance. As a reforming dictionary tragic, a quick examination of the most comprehensive Indonesian-English or Indonesian-Indonesia dictionaries shows that “efficiency” wasn’t an entry in the late 1980s in what were considered the most authoritative dictionaries, one of which was produced by the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1991; Echols & Shadily, 1992). However, in the second edition of the government sponsored dictionary published in 1991 efficiency became an entry under the word *kinerja* (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1991). Under this entry it was defined as *sesuatu yang dicapai* “something that has been achieved”; *prestasi yang diperlihatkan* “an evidenced achievement” *kemampuan kerja (tt peralatan)* “efficiency (of equipment)” (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1991: 503). By 2004, the word *kinerja* had become ubiquitous in discourses of good governance within the Indonesia public service. Here I will trace this word from one origin, in this case discourses of good governance emanating from the IMF and World Bank. I then follow its uptake across multiple contexts including the central Indonesia public service, local and national newspapers, and eventually in interviews with civil servants in Semarang. In doing so, I will argue that each recontextualization of this word added to an emergent semiotic configuration of an ideal model Indonesian public servant who was not just efficient

but an exemplar of all of the other practices invoked by this term. In this sense, the word efficiency not only became a link between emergent chronotopes of good governance, but it had also become a scalar shifter; one that invoked other practices associated with good governance.

On the 21 January 1998, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, Michel Camdessus, gave an address “The IMF and Good Governance” to Transparency International, in Paris (Camdessus, 1998). This address linked transparency and good governance (GG) to economic success and the increasing imperative of the IMF to play a role in encouraging GG as a way of ensuring donor countries got lasting value from the funds they provided. Part of his argument about creating an environment for prosperity for fund-receiving countries was recontextualized from an earlier annual meeting of the IMF in September 1996 that adopted a *Declaration on Partnership for Sustainable Growth*. This declaration included the following: "promoting good governance in all its aspects, including ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption" (Camdessus, 1998: no page numbers). Of note here, is how GG includes efficiency, accountability, tackling corruption and the public sector. In doing so, each of these descriptors can potentially be recontextualized to invoke the whole. While here there are no specific actors being mentioned, just those who are imagined to inhabit a public sector in places such as Korea, Thailand and Indonesia, by 1999 some of these ideas had received uptake via two new laws introduced to the Indonesian parliament. Law 28 was about good governance, and another, Law 31, was a remake of a long list of anti-corruption laws (Assegaf, 2002: 127).

By 2001 these ideas had also received uptake by the World Bank and had been written into Indonesia-specific reports about the need for new poverty reduction efforts that involved attention to issues of good governance (World Bank private sector development unit East

Asia and Pacific region, 2001). In doing so, this report imitated much of the content of earlier IMF statements. Among other things, in order for Indonesia to become a modern market economy, there was a need to fight corruption in the public administration, the need for the state to withdraw from ownership of public utilities, while strengthening its oversight role (p. i), as well as a need for good governance in the legal system (p. 30). In other places in the report, the public service was seen as being of poor quality and efficiency (pp. 16-17). In recontextualizing several signs of good governance, this new semiotic configuration was now beginning to be linked to more specific areas of Indonesian life, including those responsible for public utilities and the law.

The emergent semiotic configuration of practices of those engaging in good governance received further uptake within the Indonesian government in the early 2000s. Rohdewohld (2003) points to a series of reports by the State Minister for Administrative Reform that listed corruption, inefficient and ineffective mechanisms, and lack of structured supervision and accountability procedures as serious shortcomings. Below is an example taken from a policy document issued by the Minister for Administrative Reform in 2002. This short excerpt provides a number of examples of the imitation of IMF and World Bank discourses and its local uptake by one senior minister.

Excerpt 3: scale shifting in memos

1	...dalam rangka menumbuh-	Within the framework of developing
2	kembangkan etos kerja aparatur,	civil servants work ethic, moral
3	tanggung jawab moral dan guna	responsibilities and to increase the
4	meningkatkan produktivitas serta	productivity and service
5	kinerja pelayanan aparatur kepada	outcomes/efficiency of civil servants
6	masyarakat, dipandang perlu	dealing with the public, it is seen as

7	mengembangkan nilai-nilai dasar	necessary to develop basic principles of
8	Budaya Kerja Aparatur Negara secara	work culture [for] civil servants in an
9	intensif dan menyeluruh pada jajaran	intensive and encompassing way
10	aparatur penyelenggara negara.	amongst the ranks of the nations' civil servants.

(Menteri Pendayagunaan Aparatur Negara, 2002: 1)

While the above memo does not explicitly note good governance, it does imitate and metapragmatically comment upon a whole host of practices that have been linked to the idea of good governance. The need to develop “basic” principles of a work culture rather than say “intermediate” or “advanced” principles (lines 7-8) is a metapragmatic value statement that helps builds links to other chronotopes of good governance that were about deficit. It does this by reflexively valuing and reconfiguring five emergent constructs that are also linked with chronotopes of good governance. The listing of these five constructs – “work ethic” (lines 1-2); “civil service” (lines 2 and 8); “moral responsibilities” (line 3); “productivity”; and “service outcomes/efficiency” (lines 4-6) – and the metapragmatic commentary about value links them while also reconfiguring earlier ideas of good governance to become ideas of good governance within the Indonesian civil service.

In addition to receiving uptake in administrative circles in Indonesia, ideas about good governance also received uptake by politicians and the mass media. Some of the political campaigns run during the nation’s first ever direct presidential election and during ongoing district election campaigns were run on an anti-corruption platform (Tomsa, 2012). Decreasing surveillance and censorship in the mass media that had started in 1999 (Kitley, 2000) also enabled ideas around good governance to be imitated on a larger scale in the Indonesian media, including local provincial papers (Goebel, 2017). By mid-2003, for

example, the primary concern of these stories revolved around the lack of good public services, accountability of public servants, their need to be politically neutral, and their propensity to be involved in corruption and collusion.

In looking at these stories, I started to notice regular instances of imitation and iconization; that is, a generalizing phenomenon where there is a lack of deictic anchoring about who and where and/or the use of universal and particular selective deictics (Goebel, 2017). Elsewhere, I have defined the co-occurrence of these two features with instances of quotations and instances of authorization by powerful figures as “interdiscursive hubs” (Goebel, 2017). If chronotopes can be thought of at all as finished products, then such hubs are scale-specific ones that then provide the semiotic material for subsequent imitation. As with the enregisterment of the semiotic constellation associated with *pembangunan* “development” in the 1980-1995 period (Heryanto, 1995), these stories can be seen as an imitation of ideas around development, but with a revised focus on the idea of good governance. Ideas of development and good governance became linked to each other, both within and across stories helping to continually reconfigure an emergent chronotope of good governance and the personas that inhabited this semiotic configuration. Below I have chosen just one of these stories that was published on the 16th June, 2003 because it has a number of features that demonstrate what I mean by interdiscursive hub.

Excerpt 4 Civil servants, efficiency, absenteeism, and motivation

1	Lebih dari 13.000 pegawai negeri sipil (PNS)	More than thirteen thousand civil servants
2	di lingkungan Pemerintah Kabupaten	(PNS) from within the regional government
3	(Pemkab) Karanganyar akan	(Pemkab) of Karanganyar will be tidied
4	ditertibkan....."Kalau tidak orang daerah asli	up...."If you are not a local or a friend, [then]
5	atau kerabat dekatnya, PNS tidak bisa naik	a civil servant can never be promoted causing

<p>6 jabatan pada jenjang yang lebih tinggi, 7 sehingga terjadi pengkotak-kotakan. Oleh 8 karenanya, hal itu perlu dibenahi," 9 tandasnya....“Para pejabat untuk benar-benar 10 memahami peran dan fungsinya masing- 11 masing sehingga beban tugas yang menjadi 12 tanggung jawabnya akan berhasil dengan 13 baik.... Pengembangan sistem dengan 14 memberikan penghargaan dan hukuman bagi 15 staf yang berprestasi dan bermasalah atau 16 mangkir juga perlu untuk meningkatkan 17 motifasi kerja," tandasnya. "Kami akan 18 membuat evaluasi terhadap kinerja para 19 pejabat dan staf masing unit kerja guna 20 mengetahui seberapa jauh tanggung jawab 21 mereka dalam melaksanakan tugasnya," 22 tandas dia</p>	<p>[them] to be boxed in. Because of this, this is a matter that needs to be tidied up” he said firmly. “By having a deep understanding of their respective roles and functions, senior civil servants work responsibilities can be successfully carried out. “The development of a system of rewards and punishments for staff who do well and perform poorly or are regularly absent without leave also need to increase their motivation to work”, he said firmly. “We are going to evaluate the efficiency of senior civil servants and their staff in their respective departments so that we understand how responsible they are in undertaking their duties”, he firmly said.</p>
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(Source: G8-78, 2003)

The number of bureaucrats (13000) on line 1 helps to generalize the claims that follow about the characteristics of civil servants (*pegawai negeri sipil* or *PNS* for short). The deictic anchoring to a place, Karanganyar, coupled with the continued use of *PNS*, and the use of *para* “a classifier for human groups”, and *staf* “staff” without the use of particular selective deictics helps to imply “all” *PNS*, *pejabat* (senior civil servants), and staff, working in Karanganyar regency, rather than just some. In a sense, *para* and *staf* function as a type of universal selective deictic. The story is also characterized by quotations (lines 4-9, 9-18, and

19-23) made by a relatively powerful figure, the area head of human resources. The citation of a powerful figure, was common in many of the stories, and more generally seems to add authority to the text.

The quotations also often function as metapragmatic evaluative commentaries about the characteristics of this group of civil servants. For example, we find out on lines 4-8, that for this group, it seems difficult to get promoted without some sort of nepotism (either being a local or a friend of the person doing the promoting). Of interest here too is the emerging definition of *kinerja* “efficiency” (line 20), which is linked to the need for civil servants and senior civil servants to understand their responsibilities (lines 9-13), presupposing that they currently do not. Here *kinerja* not only acts as a potential semiotic connection to emergent chronotopes from other scales, but its co-occurrence with several evaluative metapragmatic commentaries enables it to become a scalar shifter invoking chronotopes of good governance while reconfiguring them.

For example, civil servants characteristic of not understanding their role is linked on lines 14-24 with other ideas about civil servants as being good at their job (*berprestasi*), problematic (*bermasalah*), a group who is regularly absent without leave (*mangkir*), a group who are required to increase their motivation to work (line 18), and a group whose efficiency needs to be evaluated via the extent that they take on their responsibilities (lines 20-23). Of note too, is that here and in the other stories the voice of the quoted civil servant is typically Indonesian. The quoting of someone else (represented) as using Indonesian, helps engender a scalar shift that links exemplary models of Indonesian speakership that have a long history in language development policy in Indonesia (Moeliono, 1986) with exemplary figures of bureaucratic personhood. In subsequent months through to February 2004 semiotic partials of these chronotopes of good governance were imitated. While there were some positive characteristics mentioned in some stories during this six-month period, typically most of the

characteristics that were imitated and laminated onto this chronotope of good governance and the efficient personas that inhabited them were negative and emerged through explicit commentaries about deviant behavior.

If we examine the imitation of the term *kinerja* in face-to-face talk in government offices, in this case in interviews about language practices and its relationship with other social practices in a government office, we continue to see the emergent nature of the chronotope of good governance as part of situated negotiations over work practices more generally. The interviews I look at were gathered during five months of fieldwork in a provincial level government department in Semarang, between September 2003 and February 2004. My observations from early September onwards guided the types of questions I asked in arranged recorded interviews. Even so, typically my questioning was primarily unstructured and done on the fly as answers often created more questions, which I would ask as an interview proceeded. Interviews were typically carried out in the afternoon and often involved two or three interviewees at a time. On many occasions, those being interviewed would need to take a phone call or leave the interview temporarily, and on just as many occasions, those who happened to be near the interview event would join in.

Excerpt 4 is from an interview I recorded with Pak Agus and Pak Mugi during the afternoon of the 15th of October 2003. Both are career civil servants having served for periods of over twenty years. Although younger, Pak Agus is Pak Mugi's boss via his structural rank of sub-section head. This bit of talk occurs thirty minutes into the interview and after we had been talking about visiting etiquette and directness in encounter. This bit of talk starts after I ask whether it is time to wrap up the interview because others in the office are starting to go home. To facilitate readability, I will only present basic interview transcripts.

Excerpt 5 Efficiency and the role of communication

Pak Agus

7 Ini kan paling ada pekerjaan yang belum The [friends here now] right, at the most
8 selesai, selesaikan. Temen temen itu kan have work that isn't yet finished. [So they]
9 ada pekerjaan belum selesai. Jadi finish it. These friends right, have work
10 istilahnya kalau budaya kerja di PNS ini, that isn't yet finished. So the term if [we
11 memang, artinya kurang anu pak, kurang are talking about] work culture is less than,
12 ah kurang, kurang bisa, kurang bisa apa what is it, Pak, not enough, not enough, not
13 namanya, di, diapanamanya istilahnya able to be what is it called, to be what is it
14 dipaksakan gitu called the term, to be forced, you know.

Zane

15 Heeh, heeh. Yes, yes.

Pak Agus

16 artinya memang, ketergantungan ini pada, That means that indeed it depends on, on
17 pada pekerjaan dan volume pekerjaan. the work and the volume of work.

Zane

18 Heeh, heeh. Yes, yes.

Pak Agus

19 Sehingga, ini juga akan mempengaruhi With the result that this also will influence
20 tadi. Cuma yang yang, sebetulnya yang [what we talked about] earlier. But that
21 perlu di, diperbaiki itu adalah, untuk which, that which needs to be, be fixed is
22 kinerja, itu adalah satu tadi komunikasi efficiency, one thing from before is
23 ya, komunikasi penting communication yes, communication is
important.

Zane

24 Heem. Yes.

Pak Agus

25 yang menyangkut bahasa tadi. That which involves [the type of] language use [we talked about] earlier.

Zane

26 Hmm. Right.

Pak Agus

27 Artinya komunikasi itu informasi, dari This means the communication is
28 atas bawah itu, imbang berimbang. information from above and below,
29 Kemudian juga yang harus diperbaiki balanced, balanced. Then what also needs
30 adalah pendapatan. fixing is income.

The import of excerpt 5 is that we see how *kinerja* “efficiency” and how to improve it are initially linked with apparent unequal workloads (1-17), the inability to force workers (lines 11-14), communication (lines 21-23), the need for using language in specific ways (line 25), two-way communication (lines 27-28), and income levels (lines 29-30). Taken together, what we see in this setting and among this participant constellation is the imitation of the idea of efficiency noted in other discourses of good governance. The old part of this imitation is the idea of work output and the new one is its link to specific conditions and practices. In this case, work output is both the connection to other chronotopes and the scalar shifter, while the evaluative commentary about communication and remuneration become part of a reconfigured and emergent chronotope. This emergent chronotope of good governance is inhabited by figures of personhood whose efficiency is restricted by poor communication

practices within the workplace and low remuneration. In other words and in contrast to the slack civil servant, what is being created here is the persona of the hard-working and underpaid civil servant who can become more efficient through better means of communication and better remuneration.

Semiotic fragments of this chronotope are also present in an interview I conducted with Pak Agus' immediate boss, Pak Ismail, and Pak Gatot another colleague from within the same department on the 13 of November 2003. In this interview, which I conducted directly after a meeting that I attended and recorded, Pak Ismail explains part of his philosophy for managing people in general, and his staff in particular. Rather than provide the whole transcript, here I will just detail how Pak Ismail and Pak Gatot imitate the idea of efficiency. In this case, it is discursively linked to older ideas from other chronotopes, including work output, *kinerja*, which continues to function as a scalar shifter. The new part of the configuration is a philosophy of management emanating from a Japanese textbook, the valuing of staff through communicative practices that value effort, and through practices of giving bonuses and access to other forms of income, such as honorariums, funding to engage in professional development, and mentoring for career progression. Together all of these things are discursively linked constructing efficiency as a process that is generated by a manager who values staff, and who looks after them in financial and career terms. Thus, in this emergent chronotope, the figures of personhood that inhabit it have become efficient through good management practices, while the word *kinerja* and the participant constellation and setting where it is used is the connection with other chronotopes in this office and elsewhere.

A few months later, in my final interview with Pak Gatot and another colleague from the same department, some of the content of the interview with Pak Ismail and Pak Gatot in November was again imitated, with the link between these two emergent chronotopes being

kinerja as a process, participants, and setting. The new part of this imitation was synergy which was metapragmatically defined and valued as close positive social relationships in the office and ultimately the driver of efficiency. Synergy was discursively constructed as a product of movement between languages (Indonesian and familiar forms of Javanese), movement between different languages enable movement between identities (e.g. the boss moving to being a friend through the use of familiar Javanese), and engaging in social practices of having meals with the boss, going fishing with them, and traveling together. In short, this emergent chronotope of good governance was inhabited by personas that included a boss who acted as a friend and staff who related with the boss and their departmental colleagues in a family-like manner.

Conclusion

In this paper, we engaged with the question of how different scales are interconnected in and through chronotopes. Drawing our inspiration from work on semiosis and imitation, scale, chronotope, and shifters we developed a term, “scalar shifter”, that we have proposed elsewhere in collaboration with another colleague (Goebel et al., 2016) and showed how it was one way of thinking about connection between chronotopes from different scales. Our empirical data consisted of mass-mediated texts, interviews, and conversations between research participants that aligned with ideas of ‘natural’ data. More specifically, we started by showing how metapragmatic commentary brought scale and scalar shifter to focal prominence through an analysis of how they co-occurred with other signs to invoke chronotopes in interaction among Indonesian youth. We then went on to look at how a word, “efficiency”, that was part of an emergent chronotope of good governance emanating from the World Bank and the IMF acted as both a scalar shifter and link between chronotopes from different scales. Our take home from all of this was the importance of how the co-occurrence

of signs with evaluative commentaries help us to identify scalar shifters and the point that chronotopes are constantly under construction.

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