ACQUIRING THE CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF JAKARTA INDONESIAN

Uri Tadmor
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Jakarta, Indonesia
uri@cbn.net.id
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Some characteristic features of Jakarta Indonesian (vis-à-vis the educated koine)

Phonology

Elision of word initial s- in a small number of frequently occurring (mostly function) words, e.g. sudah vs. udah ‘already’, satu vs. atu ‘one’, saja vs. aja ‘just’, sama vs. ama ‘with’

Sporadic lowering of high vowels, e.g. adik vs. adek ‘younger sibling’, mabuk vs. mabok ‘drunk’, main vs. maen ‘play’, tahu vs. tao ‘know’, kunci vs. konci ‘key’

Optional raising of final [a] to [e] in a small number of frequently occurring (mostly function) words, e.g. mana vs. mane ‘which, where’, apa vs. ape ‘what’, gimana vs. gimane ‘how’

Schwa in final closed syllables, corresponding to [a] in the koine, e.g. malam vs. malem ‘night’, lapar vs. laper ‘hungry’, tekan vs. teken ‘press’, benar vs. bener ‘true’

Morphosyntax:

Different affixes: -kan vs. -in ‘causative and transitivizing suffix’, ter- vs. ke- ‘affix marking an accidental or involuntary action or state’, meN- vs. N- ‘actor orientation’

Affixation (vs. periphrasis): comparative, lebih X vs. X-an, e.g. lebih tinggi vs. tinggian ‘taller’, lebih cepat vs. cepetan ‘faster’, lebih kuat vs. ‘stronger’

Periphrasis (vs. affixation): superlative, terbaik vs. paling baik ‘best’, termahal vs. paling mahal ‘most expensive’, tertinggi vs. paling tinggi ‘tallest’


Lexicon/Semantics

Semantic differences: bangku ‘bench’ vs. ‘chair’, bilik ‘room’ vs. ‘matted partition between rooms’, buat ‘make’ vs. ‘for’, kasih ‘love’ vs. ‘give’
Lexical differences (especially in a small number of frequently occurring function words): *hanya* vs. *doang* ‘only’, *sekali* vs. *banget* ‘very’, *lah* vs. *deh* ‘exhortative particle’, *kau/kamu* vs. *lu* ‘second person pronoun’

**EXAMPLES**

**Non-communicative use of MEN-**

**Singing** (Rizka 2:5)

Child: lingkaran kecil, lingkaran besar.
Phonetic tr.: lîŋkaran kœcil lîŋkalan bœsal
Glossing: circle-AN small circle-AN big
Translation: small circle, big circle.
Comments: singing a nursery rhyme and dancing in a small circle.

Child: lingkaran kecil.
Phonetic tr.: lîŋkaran kœcil
Glossing: circle-AN small
Translation: small circle.
Comments: singing and making a bigger circle.

Mother: lingkaran besar itu.
Phonetic tr.: lîŋkaran bœsar itu
Glossing: circle-AN big that
Translation: that’s a big circle.

Child: kecil *menjadi* besar.
Phonetic tr.: kœcil mœnjadi bœsal
Glossing: small MEN-become big
Translation: the small one becomes big.
Comments: singing and dancing.

Child: besar *menjadi* kecil.
Phonetic tr.: bœsal mœnjadi kœcil
Glossing: big MEN-become small
Translation: the big one becomes small.
Comments: singing and dancing.
Repetition (Timo 1;11)

Father: selamat sore.
Phonetic tr.: slamat sɛːle
Glossing: safe late.afternoon
Translation: good evening.
Comments: pretending to be an MC.

Child: selamat sore.
Phonetic tr.: slamat sɛːle
Glossing: safe late.afternoon
Translation: good evening.
Comments: repeating.

Father: bapak-bapak!
Phonetic tr.: bapak bapak
Glossing: RED-father
Translation: gentlemen!

Child: bapak-bapak!
Phonetic tr.: papa papa\(^{b}\)
Glossing: RED-father
Translation: gentlemen!
Comments: repeating

Father: Timo mau menyanyi.
Phonetic tr.: timo mau mɔnaːpi
Glossing: Timo want MEN-sing
Translation: Timo will now sing.

Child: mau menyanyi.
Phonetic tr.: mau mɔnaːpi
Glossing: want MEN-sing
Translation: will now sing.
Comments: repeating.

Father: ya.
Phonetic tr.: ya\(^{?}\)
Glossing: yes
Translation: right.

Child: menyanyi.
Phonetic tr.: mɔnaːpi
Glossing: MEN-sing
Translation: sing.
Comments: repeating.

Frozen and lexicalized affixation (Aba 4;8)

Aba: Mas Aba juga kecelakaan, wu!
Phonetic tr.: mas abā? juga koɔɛlakaʔən wu
Glossing: EPIT Aba also KE.AN-disaster EXCL
Translation: I've had an accident too, whoa!
Comments: throwing down the toy airplane.

Researcher: wah, rusak nanti!
Phonetic tr.: wa: rusak nanti
Glossing: EXCL damaged later
Translation: hey, it’s going to break!
Comments: warning Aba not to throw down the toy.

Aba: bukan, meledak!
Phonetic tr.: bukan mlɛdak
Glossing: NEG MEN-explode
Translation: no, it’s going to explode!

Researcher: jatohin ya di sini, di karpet!
Phonetic tr.: jatɔhinə di sini di karpet
Glossing: fall-IN-NYA LOC here LOC carpet
Translation: make it fall here, on the carpet!
Comments: pointing at the carpet.

Aba: biar nggak pecah, ya?
Phonetic tr.: biyar nga? pɔcəh ya
Glossing: let NEG shattered yes
Translation: so it doesn’t break, right?

Child: Dek Ido susah nih.
Phonetic tr.: deʔ iɗoʔ susah nih
Glossing: TRU-younger.sibling Ido difficult this
Translation: mine is difficult here.
Comments: = my plane is having difficulties.

Aba: eh, sekarang Mas Aba sendirian sama... sama orang-orang.
Phonetic tr.: ?eh sokarəŋ mas ?aba sɔndiriʔən sama sama ?orang ?orang
Glossing: EXCL now older.brother Aba SE-self-AN with with RED-person
Translation: now I’m alone with other people.

Aba: Mbak Ajeng dah meninggal.
Phonetic tr.: mbaʔ?ajəŋ dah məŋinggal
Glossing: EPIT Ajeng PFCT pass.away
Translation: Ajeng is dead.
Comments: Ajeng is Aba’s cousin; he is pretending she was in the crashed toy airplane.

**Communicative use of MEN-**

**Role play (Rizka 2;10)**

Phonetic tr.: bapa bapa? ‘ibu ‘ibu san sədara sədara ki məmbaca dəa dimulae
Glossing: RED-father RED-mother xx RED-sibling xx MEN-read pray DI-beginning-I
Translation: Gentlemen, Ladies, Brethren, the prayer is about to begin.
Comments: pretending to lead a prayer in the mosque.

Hana: xxx.
Phonetic tr.: xxx təmana
Glossing: xxx
Translation: xxx.
Comments: mumbling.

Child: Mbak Novi **baca** doa!
Phonetic tr.: mba nəpi baca də?ah
Glossing: EPIT Novi read pray
Translation: pray, Novi!
Comments: urging Novi to start praying.

**School-like activity (Ido 3;10)**

Researcher: ayo kita ngelir.
Phonetic tr.: ayo kita ṭəlir
Glossing: AYO 1PL N-color
Translation: let’s coloring.
Comments: inviting CHI to color in a coloring book.

Child: ngelir apa?
Phonetic tr.: ṭəlir ṭapa
Glossing: N-color what
Translation: to color what?
Comments: apparently Ido is unfamiliar with the term ngelir ‘to color’.

Child: eh, bukan.
Phonetic tr.: e bukan
Glossing: EXCL NEG
Translation: no.

Child: itu mah buat **mewarnai**.
Phonetic tr.: itu mah ?uwat məwarnai
Glossing: that MAH for MEN-color-I
Translation: that’s for coloring.
Comments: using the formal term for ‘to color’.
Contexts for using educated koine features among in adult speech

- Formal conversations
- Writing (except for intimate letters, Internet)
- Songs (inc. pop songs)
- Dubbing (inc. comedies and soap operas)
- Speeches

Contexts for using educated koine features in child language

Non-communicative:

- Repetition
- Singing
- Retelling memorized stories
- Quoting (from commercials, announcements, etc.)

Communicative:

- Role plays
- Talking about school or engaging in school-like activities

Causes for the occurrence of some koine-like forms

- Phonological instability among very young children
- Lexical items with frozen or lexicalized affixes
- Lexical items which do not occur as bare root even in the dialect
- Idiomatic usage

Findings

- Certain dialectal features (or even single lexical items) are more salient than others; children learn early which dialectal features are more commonly used, in which words, and in which contexts
- Children often acquire equivalent general and dialectal forms at about the same time, but use few general forms communicatively, because the contexts rarely arise
• There is no perfect correspondence between age and use of general or dialectal forms, but large disparities in use patterns between children and adults are due to adults’ using more general forms