

Indonesian is the national language of a vast, plural nation-state, the world's fourth-largest country with a population of more than 200 million people. Local minority languages are rapidly being displaced by Indonesian, and it is predicted that by 2020 roughly 70 percent of the projected population of 260 million will be Indonesian-speaking. This growth, unprecedented in the developing world, is largely due to the forceful presence of state institutions which use, promote, and disseminate a language first introduced by the Dutch colonial rulers. Joseph Errington's third book on language in Indonesia is a detailed analysis of "shifting languages" in two small Javanese communities. A key figure in this area of research, he examines changing conversational practices in relation to questions of ethnicity, nationalism, and political culture. The theoretical observations have implications beyond the two villages for other parts of Indonesia, Southeast Asia, and for the developing world in general.

is the author of two books on language and social change in Java, and numerous articles. He is Professor of Anthropology and East Asian Languages and Literatures at Yale University.



studies in the social and  
cultural foundations of language no. 19

studies in the social and cultural foundations  
of language 19

This series represents the concerns of scholars in the anthropology and sociology of language, sociolinguistics, and socially and culturally informed psycholinguistics. Its aim is to develop theoretical perspectives on the social and cultural character of language by methodological and empirical emphasis on the occurrence of language in its communicative and interactional settings, on the socio-culturally grounded “meanings” and “functions” of linguistic forms, and on the social scientific study of language use across cultures. Exploring the essentially ethnographic nature of linguistic data and language practices, the approaches may be synchronic or diachronic, normative or variational, spontaneously occurring or induced by an investigator. The books in the series make substantive and theoretical contributions to debates over the nature of language’s embeddedness in social and cultural life, and over the role of language in sociocultural systems.

*Editors*

Judith Irvine *Brandeis University*  
Bambi Schieffelin *New York University*

*Editorial board*

Marjorie Harness Goodwin *University of South Carolina*  
Joel Kuipers *George Washington University*  
Don Kulick *Stockholms Universitet*  
John Lucy *University of Chicago*  
Elinor Ochs *University of California, Los Angeles*  
Michael Silverstein *University of Chicago*

*A list of books in the series can be found after the index.*

# SHIFTING LANGUAGES

INTERACTION AND IDENTITY IN  
JAVANESE INDONESIA

J. JOSEPH ERRINGTON

 **CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

published by the press syndicate of the university of cambridge  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

cambridge university press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, United Kingdom  
<http://www.cup.cam.ac.uk>  
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA <http://www.cup.org>  
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© J. Joseph Errington 1998

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1998

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeset in 10/12pt Times c e

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Errington, James Joseph, 1951-

Shifting languages : interaction and identity in Javanese Indonesia / J. Joseph Errington;  
[editors, Judith Irvine, Bambi Schieffelin].

p. cm. - (Studies in the social and cultural foundations of language)

ISBN 0 521 63267 6 (hardbound). - ISBN 0 521 63448 2 (pbk.)

1. Javanese language - Social aspects. 2. Speech and social status - Indonesia - Java.

3. Java (Indonesia) - Social life and customs. 4. Linguistic change.

I. Irvine, Judith T. II. Schieffelin, Bambi B. III. Title. IV. Series.

PL5161.E778 1998

499'.222 - dc21 98-20577 CIP

ISBN 0 521 63267 6 hardback

ISBN 0 521 63448 2 paperback

## CONTENTS

<i>List of figures, maps, and tables</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
<i>Preface: suggestions for use</i>	xi
<i>Note on orthography and transcription</i>	xiii
1 Introduction	1
2 A city, two hamlets, and the state	16
3 Speech styles, hierarchy, and community	35
4 National development, national language	51
5 Public language and authority	65
6 Interactional and referential identities	82
7 Language contact and language salad	98
8 Speech modeling	117
9 Shifting styles and modeling thought	139
10 Javanese–Indonesian code switching	155
11 Shifting perspectives	184
<i>Notes</i>	195
<i>Works cited</i>	202
<i>Index of Javanese and Indonesian words</i>	210
<i>General index</i>	213

## FIGURES, MAPS, AND TABLES

### Figures

3.1	Generic markedness relations between speech styles	<i>page</i> 39
3.2	Structural relations between styles of <i>básá</i>	40
3.3	Traditional exemplary repertoire/use	41
3.4	Contemporary conservative elite Javanese use	44
3.5	Contemporary urban/village usage	46

### Maps

1	The Indonesian archipelago	xvi
2	Eastern Central Java	xvii

### Tables

3.1	Examples of Javanese address styles	37
3.2	Changing uses of polite second-person pronouns	49
6.1	Changing patterns of kin term use	84
6.2	Indonesian personal pronoun paradigms	93
6.3	Javanese vs. Indonesian personal pronoun usage	97
7.1	Complementary Javanese/Indonesian usage	113
7.2	List of elements in text 7.1	114



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Research on which this book is primarily based was carried out in 1985 and 1986 with intellectual, financial, and institutional support from numerous organizations and people. For financial support I am grateful to the National Science Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, and the Wenner–Gren Foundation; I also owe thanks for a Junior Faculty Fellowship from Yale University for the 1985–86 academic year. The Indonesian Academy of Sciences (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia) and Sanata Dharma University also gave me crucial institutional support. To all these organizations, and especially to Rama Danu, my sincere gratitude. None is responsible for this book's contents.

If there has been any benefit to the slowness with which this work has gestated, it has been the chance to interact with other scholars in ways which have shaped it directly and indirectly over ten years or so. I cannot refrain from mentioning some of these. In 1988, support from a Yale Senior Faculty Fellowship made possible a six-month residence at the Center for Psychosocial Studies in Chicago. Then and since, I have continually benefited from animated discussions involving members of several of the Center's working groups. I hope the influence of those contacts is as apparent to them as it is to me; I owe thanks to Barney Weissbourd, Ben Lee, and Greg Urban.

Thanks for inspiration and supportive criticism are due to members of the Center's working group on language ideologies, including Dick Bauman, Sue Gal, Jane Hill, Judy Irvine, Ben Lee, Bambi Schieffelin, Jacquie Urla, and Kit Woolard. I am grateful also to persons who responded to material which I presented first in a variety of venues, en route to this writing: at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Arizona, Yale University, and Harvard University, various conference panels, and the 1995 meeting of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society. In addition, I owe sincere thanks to Alton Becker, Joel Kuipers, and Kit Woolard, as well as anonymous reviewers who made the heroic effort of reading all or parts of previous drafts.

Some things never seem to end, including (it seems) my engagement with people in south-central Java. So my debt of thanks to them shows no signs of diminishing. I did not know when I met her in 1986 that I would have Mbak Tinuk as a companion now, as then; her help with the drudgery of research then was invaluable, and her gracious presence over the years since has helped me to feel that my writing has not become totally remote from the Javanese language or people. I owe no less to the persons who worked and consulted with me during the research. I cannot help but extend thanks specifically to Mas Dib, Pak Hari, Mas Poino, Pak Wanda, and Mbak Endhang for their interest and help.

My village hosts, who never made me feel like the encumbrance I surely often was, showed a graciousness and patience which I remember fondly and with gratitude. Their willingness to accept me as a visitor made it possible; my memory of that acceptance has sometimes been an impetus for seeing it through as best I can. So too I owe much to people in Java I was unable to meet, but whose voices have lingered in my memory as their words have entered this text. For better or worse, all of these people deserve credit for whatever value this book has, and certainly none of the blame for its inadequacies. *Nyuwun pangapunten saderengipun.*

## PREFACE: SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

As this book has developed, I have found myself addressing two different audiences: “area specialists” on one hand, and anthropological linguists on the other. Each imagined readership was focal for one of two earlier works which I wrote about Javanese, and both together have shaped this work. One way to provide a sense of what might be in this book for both, then, is to sketch its relation to its two predecessors.

Those two previous works were much more narrowly focused: on Javanese to the exclusion of Indonesian, and on use in tightly knit elite circles to the exclusion of the vast majority of Javanese. One could leave either book with little sense that the elites described in them are bilingual, as are millions of their coethnics; that they speak in ways significantly different from those found in other Javanese communities; that the Javanese part of Indonesia is being massively transformed by national development and a saturating, authoritarian state. This book represents an effort to redress these points of neglect comprehensively but also fairly concisely.

I wrote one monograph (*Language and social change in Java: linguistic reflexes of modernization in a traditional royal polity*, Ohio University Monographs in International Studies, 1985) for area specialists, aiming to diagnose some fairly broad dimensions of social change from some fairly narrow aspects of Javanese usage since the turn of the century. Chapters 2 through 5 of this book are aimed at much the same audience, but deal more broadly with dimensions of Javanese and Indonesian usage alike. My goal there is to develop a multifaceted overview of Javanese and Indonesian as mediators of shifting forms of political authority, and thus as linguistic grounds for shifting understandings of ethnic and national hierarchy. I hope that readers interested in social change will find that their willingness to deal with a few linguistic particulars is rewarded with some sense of Indonesian development’s most intimate engagements with everyday life, as it enters and is mediated in bilingual interaction.

My second book (*Structure and style in Javanese: a semiotic view of linguistic etiquette*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988) was a more

abstract, model-driven account of systemic change in Javanese elite usage, and was organized around descriptive particulars and comparative/theoretical concerns of primary interest to anthropological linguists. In its latter part, this book deals with similar details under a broader social purview. Descriptive material in chapters 6 through 10, framed with an eye to the politics and culture of bilingualism in south-central Java, is intended to subserve an account of talk as social praxis: structurally shaped, interactionally emergent, but also tacitly informed by shifting senses of both languages' broader values.

Although this book's two parts are thus framed with an eye to institutional and interactional dimensions of language use, I have tried to link them in thematically explicit, reciprocally revealing ways. If I have succeeded, then "macro" social forces can be considered in relation to "micro" social processes of everyday life; transient textures of talk can be considered interpretively as ripples on the surface of larger, shifting social tides. If I have failed to create such links, I hope that each part can nonetheless stand on its own as a more modest but useful sketch of aspects of a complex dynamic of sociolinguistic change.

## NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY AND TRANSCRIPTION

For the sake of convenience, I transcribe Javanese and Indonesian with orthographies as similar as possible to their standard spelling systems, introducing diacritics for just a few salient instances of allophonic variation. Provenances of words and talk in Javanese and Indonesian are marked as J and I respectively. In the following charts I note phonetic values of some allophones otherwise not transcribed.

### INDONESIAN

#### Vowels

	Front unrounded	Central unrounded	Back rounded
High	i~(I)		u~(U)
Mid	e	e	o
Low		a	

Following ordinary spelling rules, I do not distinguish orthographically between front-mid /é/ and mid-central shwa. Low, tense allophones of /i/ and /u/ are not orthographically distinguished.

#### Consonants

	Labial	Apico-dental	Palatal	Dorso-velar	Glottal
Voiceless stop	p	t	c	k	
Voiced stop	b	d	j	g	
Fricatives	f	s	sy	kh	h
Nasal	m	n	ny	ng	
Liquid		r, l			
Glides	w		y		

/k/ ordinarily alternates with glottal stop in word final position and intervocalically in Javanese dialects.

**JAVANESE**

Standard Javanese orthography (Subalidinata and Nartoatmojo 1975) is adapted here.

## Vowels

	Front unrounded	Central unrounded	Back rounded
High	i~(I)		u~(U)
Mid	é~è	e	o
Low		a~	á

Back rounded á, a regular allophone of low central unrounded a, appears in final, open syllables and penultimate open syllables preceding such a syllable. Differences between front-mid, front-low, and central shwa, not ordinarily transcribed, are distinguished in this book.

## Consonants

	Labial	Apico-dental	Apico-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Voiceless stop	p	t	th	c	k	
Voiced stop	b	d	dh	j	g	h
Fricatives	(f)	s				
Nasal	m	n		ny	ng	
Liquid		r, l				
Glides	w			y		

In the standard dialect, /k/ is realized as glottal stop in word final and intervocalic positions. I transcribe it here in all environments as /k/. /f/ is non-native and appears only in foreign words. Voiced stops are generally articulated with breathy voice in non-final positions.

**OTHER CONVENTIONS**

Conversational texts are set out in columns, such that transcriptions of original verbiage are on the left with translations on the right. I have tried to match original verbiage with its translation on a line-by-line basis; much detail not directly relevant to expository concerns has been omitted in the interests of accessibility.

Line numbers, provided for convenience of reference, appear in multiples of five.

Conversational latching is marked as follows:

ending segment==  
 ==latching segment.

Conversational overlaps are marked as follows:

preceding | segment

| beginning of overlap.



Map 1 *The Indonesian archipelago*





Map 2 *Eastern Central Java*

## I

# INTRODUCTION

In 1995, in the afterglow of the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) which it had hosted the previous year, Indonesia celebrated its fiftieth anniversary as a newly visible power on the international scene. Some believed Indonesia came of age twice then, at a doubly vindicating moment for the regime which had overseen its conspicuously successful thirty-year project of nation-building. Since 1965, the quasi-military New Order state had progressively centralized its political control and implemented an uncontested, long-term project of national development. Under its supervision a Western-educated, technocratic elite had successfully engineered the macrodevelopment which has gained Indonesia newfound stature on the world scene.

From Jakarta, the national capital and nexus of political and economic power, the New Order had progressively spread and deepened its oversight across the Indonesian archipelago. Communities once at the peripheries of the state's jurisdiction, and hardly touched by state institutions, are increasingly engaged with the ideology of nationalism and modernity which it propagates. As state institutions increasingly impinge on everyday life, ideas of modernity, national identities, and obligations of citizenship are increasingly salient in communities which only recently were loosely integrated into the national polity.

The New Order can be seen as fostering a native sense of Indonesianness by "ethnicizing" the Indonesian polity, yet simultaneously working to avoid overtly effacing antecedent ethnolinguistic diversity, or promoting the ascendance of any "native" subnational group. But in fact there is one ethnic group, the Javanese, which looms very large on the national landscape. Javanese dominate demographically in the nation as a whole; sixty million or so live in the ethnic "heartland" of Central and East Java – two of Indonesia's twenty-seven provinces but home to almost a third of its population – and a century of migration has led to the growth of large, distinctively Javanese ethnic communities elsewhere in Indonesia and the world.

Officials of Javanese descent likewise predominate in the state apparatus, and in urban elite circles a new version of "high" Javanese cultural

tradition is being actively reinvented. Upwardly mobile Indonesians, not all of whom are Javanese, are adopting modern versions of a refined “hothouse” culture which flourished during the Dutch colonial era. This new urban elite tradition refers back to a Javanese golden age, and so to the two royal cities of south-central Java: Jogjakarta and Surakarta. Both were once famous primarily for their courtly elites, and as the political and cultural centers of the prenational Javanese heartland. Both cities now count as the originary homes of traditions of the *priyayi* community, which the New Order elite had taken for its cultural if not genetic precursor. (For more on this connection see Anderson 1966; Pemberton 1994; Florida 1987; J. Errington 1986, 1998.)

Through a dynamic which Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis (1987) appropriately calls *priyayization*, this small bit of south-central Javanese territory has become a cultural epicenter for the nation at large. It does not seem coincidental in this respect that the national motto, *Bhinneka tunggal ika*, “Unity in diversity,” likewise acknowledges the nation’s ethnic diversity in a Javanese idiom: its Old Javanese form and nationalistic content together suggest a modern version of ethnic Javanese tradition, which is helping to elide or straddle received distinctions between modern and traditional forms of governmentality (see, e.g., Tsing 1993).

In 1998 the New Order found itself grappling with social upheaval and economic uncertainty in troubled times, which recall for some the circumstances of its emergence more than thirty years ago. International praise for successful New Order development has suddenly begun to ring hollow, and Indonesia’s progress toward “national modernity” seems more illusory than real. But these troubled conditions and uncertain successes throw into relief what may prove to be among the New Order’s most enduring effects on the Indonesian landscape: its success in propagating Indonesian-ness with and through the Indonesian language.

Every aspect of the New Order’s “development” of Indonesia has been subserved by the Indonesian language. As the language of state, Indonesian is infrastructural for institutional development; as the language of the nation, it effaces differences between citizens who live in antecedent, ethnolinguistically distinct communities. At the end of World War II, the artificial administrative Malay which counts as Indonesian’s immediate precursor was just one of several dialects of that language, spoken natively by a few million residents of the Dutch East Indies’ colonial empire. Now Indonesian is a fully viable, universally acknowledged national language, non-native but also clearly ascendant over hundreds of languages spoken natively among more than two hundred million Indonesians. Notwithstanding difficulties in evaluating the results of censuses which include questions about knowledge and use of Indonesian

(see Steinhauer 1994), such censuses provide grounds for broad consensus that Indonesia is well on its way to solving “the national language problem,” and enhancing its status as what Fishman (1978:333) has called a “miraculous” language in the developing world.<sup>1</sup> The slogan “language indicates nationality” (I: *bahasa menunjukkan bangsa*), which once expressed a nationalist hope, seems more and more to describe a national condition (Geertz 1973:315).

But in ethnically homogeneous areas, like south-central Java, Indonesian is little used across self-evident lines of ethnolinguistic difference. Speakers there have no native models to emulate because, as ethnic Javanese, they are not in contact with a native-speaking Indonesian community. They are learning to speak Indonesian not by emulating the concrete verbal “practice[s] of . . . specific group[s] of [Indonesian] speakers” but instead by assimilating an underdetermined, “vague ideal norm” to local, native ways of dealing with coethnics (DeVries 1988:125).

So in Central Java, at least, Indonesian is not so much a non-native language learned from or used with members of some linguistically distinct group. It is more an *un-native* language, whose forms and uses are being acquired and used in interaction with otherwise native (-speaking) Javanese. As an outgroup language without an outgroup, Indonesian carries no immediate sense of social “otherness”; it can be said – with apologies to Gertrude Stein, and prior to discussion in chapter 10 – that for Indonesian there is no native (-speaking) “they” there.

### Indonesian’s modernity

Indonesian’s un-nativeness crucially enables and informs its place in the Indonesian national project. As Benedict Anderson recognized in the 1960s, it makes Indonesian a “*project* for the assumption of ‘modernity’ within the modalities of an autonomous and autochthonous social-political tradition” (1966:89). Anderson wrote these words on the eve of the fall of President Sukarno, in 1965, but they are still apposite for considering here Indonesian’s broadest political cultural saliences in the 1990s, and in communities well beyond the elite circles which he discussed.

As New Order development has been superposed (“from above”) on communities which were recently peripheral to state control, Indonesian territory has become the scene of many such “projects of modernity.” These can be thought of as emerging situations of “contact” – between local community and national polity, between citizen and authoritarian state – which are mediated and shaped by the Indonesian language. At the same time, Indonesian is an increasingly common way of talking in

the “ordinary” interactional engagements which make up much of the fabric of everyday interactional experience. Among the many institutions which subserve New Order power and oversight over Indonesians’ lives, Indonesian is uniquely available for appropriation to the most self-interested purposes, which can be entirely at a remove from state interests or venues. For this reason, Indonesian can be considered a state-fostered institution which is subject to situated appropriation “from below.”

On one hand, then, the Indonesian language is quite transparently part of a state system, that is, a “palpable nexus of practice and institutional structure, extensive, unified and dominant” (Abrams 1988:58). On the other hand, Indonesian talk, situated in conversational contingencies of everyday life, can mediate a “state idea” of Indonesian-ness as it is “projected, purveyed, and variously believed” (ibid.). Indonesian can figure in such interactional self/other relations as the intimate vehicle for a *doxa* – “diffuse, full, complete, and ‘natural’” (Barthes 1989:121) – of modernity and nationalism. This point of convergence has been recognized by observers other than Anderson who see Indonesian as “perhaps the most important single ingredient in the shaping of the modern [Indonesian] culture” (Liddle 1988:1).

This book frames bilingual Javanese and Indonesian usage as mediating this divide between nation-state and everyday life, the “realm of institutional politics” and “order[s] of [verbal] signs and [conversational] practices” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991:23). It describes ongoing “contact” between the Indonesian and Javanese languages on a shifting, south-central Javanese landscape; in it I seek to read language use as a point of dynamic convergence between institutional hierarchy and the “individualized, familiar, habitual, micro-climactic of daily life” (Jelin 1987:11, translated in Escobar 1992:29).

My expository strategy for sketching this scene of “contact” between Javanese and Indonesian is two-sided in ways signaled by the book’s systematically ambiguous title. On one hand, the phrase “shifting languages” resembles “language shift,” the sociolinguistic term of art used for patterns of historical change in the knowledge and use of two languages within communities. Typically, language shift occurs as a community’s native language (usually minority or “ethnic”) is progressively displaced by or relinquished for another (usually majority or “national”). These are cumulative, “long-term” processes which occur among collectivities of speakers, and as such can sometimes be read as mediating the effects of “large-scale” forces – political, cultural, economic – which shape broader senses of collective identity. As a rubric for collective phenomena, more sociohistorical happenings than intentful doings, “language shift” corresponds to a grammatically intransitive reading of “shifting languages.”

---

On the other hand, “shifting languages” is a phrase which can be used to describe what happens in interactional process when bi- or multilingual speakers juxtapose elements (minimally phrase-long) of two languages. Such transient bits of conduct, more commonly called instances of code switching, are particulars of talk in the “real time” of social life, concrete enough to leave traces (in recordings and transcriptions) for retrospective scrutiny. This is the sphere of language as immediate, situated, other-oriented self-conduct. As other-directed social practice in which speakership presents at least the guise of communicative agency, code switching corresponds to a transitive reading of “shifting languages.”

Even if the pun is clumsy, it helps here to thematize the expository counterpoint I try to develop in the following chapters between institutional and interactional aspects of Javanese and Indonesian language in change and use. It provides a way of framing distinct issues while avoiding either a prejudicially unitary metatheoretical profile, or juxtaposed, disjoint sketches. I try instead to develop a dynamic tension between these institutional and interactional perspectives, a tension which is a bit like the one linking yet separating these two readings of “shifting languages.” To read the phrase in one sense does not cancel the other possibility; instead it binds them in an asymmetric, “both/and” relation of foregrounded and backgrounded element. I can outline this double strategy here by showing how it helps me to work against the grain of accounts which are predominantly weighted to the side of macro institutional forces, and residualize micro interactional processes.

Certainly the figures on language use cited earlier are easily mobilized for predictions of massive social and language change which will lead to a shift from Javanese to Indonesian. Here is one such vision of Java’s linguistic future, taken from the writings of Yoshimichi Someya (1992:61–62):

Indonesian will spread . . . like a tide to rural areas . . . eventually replacing Javanese [which] is gradually becoming incompatible with such values as directness, clarity, effectiveness, and speed of communication – necessary conditions for the national unity, the “blending” of Indonesian ethnic groups, democracy, modernization, and rationalization required by today’s Indonesian government, industries, education, arts, and sciences.

However much some New Order officials would deny it, this allusion to Indonesian “values” resonates strongly with the state’s own ideology of development. Because he emphasizes the homogenizing effects of “large-scale” institutional forces, operating uniformly across Javanese territory and communities, Someya likewise echoes writings on “language engineering” dating from the heyday of development (see, e.g., Fishman et al. 1968). Predictions like these center Indonesian among the various state-

fostered institutions which will presumably become social grounds and taken-for-granted frames of reference in everyday life.

Before critiquing this politically fraught position and its ideological grounds in chapter 4, I can quickly consider it here in terms of the complicating factors which it elides and which I address in the following chapters. Each point of criticism can be thought of as an upshot of tacit assumptions about the autonomy of the Indonesian language: as a structured linguistic system, as a social institution shared within and across communities, and as a verbal instrument mobilized for situated communicative ends. So too each of these issues can be broached preliminarily here with an eye to its correlates in Javanese language structure, political culture, and interactional dynamics.

### **Language, territoriality, and ideology**

Someya tacitly dissociates Indonesian's "values" from its role as an instrument of New Order oversight; he similarly brackets any relevance which Javanese might have for contemporary, national political culture. I seek to avoid such simplifying assumptions in this book's first chapters, where I foreground aspects of language use which mediate and legitimize authority. To this end I contrast Javanese and Indonesian with an eye to recent work at the juncture of human geography and critical theory (see, e.g., Peet and Thrift [1989]), which provides a way to consider each language as integrally bound up with a distinct mode or strategy of *territoriality*. In this way, each language can be considered as institutionally and ideologically bound up with one of two distinct strategies to "affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over geographic area" (Sack 1986:19).

Chapter 2 provides a territorially framed, language-centered sketch of ongoing change in upland village communities of south-central Java where I spent time. It juxtaposes Javanese and Indonesian as extensions and symbols of two distinct modes of lowland territorial power, and in shifting perceptions of the modes of territoriality which bind these rural peripheries to cities, where prenatal Javanese and national Indonesian authority have both been centered.

Someya's top-down picture of Indonesian's spread likewise ignores any possible salience which antecedent, ethnic, social, and linguistic conditions might have for a national future. It presupposes, rather, that Indonesian language and culture are autonomous with respect to "local" language and traditions, and so together will effect a quantum leap which leaves the prenatal era to recede on the rear horizon of history. It matters little from this broadly epochalist point of view that prena-

tional south-central Java has for centuries been far from a social or linguistic *tabula rasa* onto which New Order institutions and language are now being straightforwardly superposed.

This politically fraught assumption is thrown into question in chapters 2 and 3 alike, which center on some enduring political and cultural saliences of Javanese as a mediator and symbol of authority. I sketch there the Javanese language's role in the territoriality or geosocial control which was exercised by the colonial-era kingdoms based in Jogjakarta and Surakarta. Language and social hierarchy were then linked in obvious and complex ways through Javanese linguistic etiquette, best known as the "speech levels."<sup>2</sup>

These speech styles, as I prefer to call them, are still hallmarks of elite Javanese tradition, and still famous for their extensive vocabularies of "crude" and "refined" elements. In use, these styles serve as interactionally nuanced and very conspicuous mediators of status and intimacy between people. But in chapter 3 I focus less on their overt interactional saliences than on their broader institutionally grounded roles as naturalizers of sociolinguistic inequality, within and across lines of territorial hierarchy. In this way they can be considered as the idiom of non-national imagined communities of persons, linked in asymmetric "nets of kinship and clientship" (Anderson 1991:6) which were centered on south-central Java's "exemplary centers" (Geertz 1980) or "galactic polities" (Tambiah 1976). (See in this regard also Cohn and Dirks' discussion [1988:224] of "theater[s] of power.")

Finally, Someya's prediction of language shift is overtly teleological, like New Order development rhetoric. It promotes a secular, ameliorative vision of profound social change, framed as a broad transition from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*, or from mechanical to organic divisions of social labor. This developmentalist ideology accords to language a special place in social change, which I consider in chapter 4 with an eye to the striking fit between New Order development ideology on one hand, and Ernest Gellner's (1983) functionalist account of nationalism on the other. Because of the privileged place of standard languages in his account of nationalism, Gellner helps to explicate the consequences of un-native Indonesian's curious social history, and what Someya calls its value for "directness, clarity, effectiveness, and speed of communication" (Someya 1992:61). Someya's specific assertion, together with Gellner's general account, speaks to the broadest, tacit assumptions of New Order development ideology regarding the "meanings" which accrue to Indonesian, over and against ethnic pasts and languages. In this way the ideological correlates of Indonesian's institutional grounds can be explicated, and its perceived privilege as the vehicle of abstract, rational thought can be foregrounded.



**Syncretic usage**

Over and against such sweeping pictures of sociohistorical change stand the modest particulars of everyday life, including talk: the fabric of situated, face-to-face relations cocreated among persons who are each others' consociates, and share the social biography of "a community of space and a community of time" (Schutz 1967a:163).

Even statements as broad as Someya's carry implicit predictions about such situated transiciencies of Indonesian and Javanese usage. By imputing autonomy or separateness to Indonesian in relation to Javanese, he makes it easy to figure particulars of "mixed" Javanese–Indonesian usage as historically transitional in an epochal shift between languages and eras, as socially residual in everyday life, and as structurally interstitial with respect to two distinct, autonomous language systems.

This book's middle chapters speak to this position through descriptive particulars which reflect indirectly, narrowly, but (I hope) revealingly on considerably more complex shapes of sociolinguistic change. In chapters 5 through 8 I rebut such epochalist positions with sketches of usage, ranging from authoritative public discourse to everyday conversation, in which Javanese and Indonesian intimately shape each other in discourse. These can be read as syncretic in two broad senses of that term.

"Syncretism" recurs in writings about Javanese culture as a notion which has proven malleable enough for self-conscious framings of ethnicity in the nation (e.g., former minister of education, Professor Priyono 1964:23), for ethnographic description (e.g., Geertz 1960), for analysis of political culture (e.g., Anderson 1972), and for quasi-prescriptive social criticism (e.g., Mulder 1978). In such contexts, "syncretism" can intimate a sense of Javanese tradition as being mutable but coherent, accommodative yet resilient, perduring in the distinctive manner in which it incorporates "outside" influences. But in this way "syncretism" can also license essentialist understandings of Javanese culture's unity and autonomy in the face of variation across geosocial space, and change across historical eras.

In chapter 5 I try to read "syncretic" dimensions of Javanese *cum* Indonesian political culture from a few transcribed specifics of authoritative public talk. Framed with an eye to the preceding chapters' sketches of shifting territoriality, a few tiny texts of official Indonesian and formal Javanese speech are considered as more or less efficaciously representing Indonesian authority to peripheral Javanese publics. This is an account of public speech, speakers, and audiences which locates such talk in triadic relations created and presupposed between sources of territorial authority, the speakers who im-person-ate it, and the collective addressees who count as an audience. The ways public Indonesian

business is sometimes done in Javanese, and in which Indonesian sometimes figures in otherwise markedly Javanese ceremonial occasions, show such “mixed usage” to be constitutive of emergent, syncretic understandings of authority.

In structural linguistic description, “syncretism” has a distinct technical sense which was introduced to the study of bilingualism in Jane Hill and Kenneth Hill’s work on “mixed” language use in upland communities of central Mexico (1986). In chapters 6 and 7 I broach similar particulars of bilingual usage with an eye to their adaptation of Kurylowicz’s structurally grounded definition of syncretism as the “suppression of [system internal] relevant opposition[s] under certain determined conditions” (1964:40). My interest, like theirs, is in “mixed” usage which suppresses the social relevance of oppositions *between* systems, and in which the provenances of talk’s elements – native Javanese, or un-native Indonesian – are interactionally muted.

Chapter 6 deals with personal pronouns and kin terms, resources for speaking of the speech partners, interactional selves and others, who cocreate the intersubjective grounds for conversation. Javanese Indonesians have common recourse for such acts of reference to kin terms, which are interactionally focal and broadly syncretic. That such usage represents a point of convergence between interactional and institutional identities is obvious enough, but has unobvious social implications. Formerly Javanese kin terms have been subjected to institutional treatment in Indonesian venues; they have been assimilated to new hierarchies and understandings of status. In use, then, they count as “small-scale” transiciencies of talk which reflect “large-scale” shifts in status, class, and territoriality; they mediate face-to-face relations in ways which are tacitly shifting along with understandings of collective identity on an ethnic yet national landscape.

Personal pronouns, on the other hand, are indexically grounded in the interactional identities assumed by persons, speaker (“I”) and addressee (“you”), to whom they refer. In chapter 6 I also focus on unobvious but interactionally salient patterns of *non-use* of Indonesian pronominal resources. Javanese speakers tacitly but consistently avoid using a full stylistic range of (prescribed) Indonesian pronominal reference, and so seem to create rather than merely accept a sense of interactional “flatness” in their national language. This interactionally keyed “anti-syncretism” makes Indonesian relatively de-situated in comparison with stylistically nuanced Javanese; it is part of the reason why Indonesian can be counted over and against Javanese as a “third person” or im-personal language which is relatively uninflected for self/other relations.

I believe that these narrow but revealing aspects of usage represent points of purchase in everyday life for the developmentalist ideology of

language, explicated in chapter 4. If such otherwise negligible patterns of (non-)use mark a point of entry for national modernity into everyday conversational life, then it shows that conversational practice can, as Woolard and Schieffelin put it (1994:70), “distort . . . [Indonesian] in the name of making it more like itself.”

Chapter 7 deals with two other, more disparate patterns of syncretic language use involving discourse particles on one hand, and lexical items on the other. Extensive repertoires of discourse particles serve Javanese Indonesians as means for marking feelings about and stances toward conversational topics, contexts, and participants. Their non-referential, crucially situated significances appear to make them peripheral for speakers’ awarenesses relative not just to their encoded linguistic functions (Silverstein 1976, 1981), but also with respect to their various provenances as well. For this reason their use takes on an osmotic quality across categorical, prescriptive boundaries between the codes of Javanese and Indonesian.

Lexical borrowings from Indonesian into Javanese, on the other hand, are conspicuous in what Javanese themselves sometimes call “salad language.” But I suggest in chapter 7 that grammatical and phonological homologies between the two languages enable intimate borrowing from Indonesian to Javanese which recalls stylistically “mixed” Javanese usage sketched in chapter 3. Considered in light of antecedent patterns of Javanese usage, even these conspicuously bilingual ways of talking can be seen as tacitly syncretizing un-native lexical resources into otherwise native interactional dynamics.

Chapters 6 and 7 together frame particulars of everyday Javanese Indonesian bilingual usage to elude broadly epochalist visions of language shift like that quoted earlier. Such syncretic aspects of usage, considered to be “sedimentation[s] of practices that incorporate extra-linguistic social . . . factors” (Hanks 1996:195), provide clues to broader, partial accommodations between native and un-native languages. As points of interactionally situated language “contact,” they provide structural insights into interactional dynamics of the bilingual usage I sketch in chapters 8, 9, and 10. They are oriented to talk as it is shaped by native senses of Javanese conversational practice on one hand, and an un-native Indonesian language ideology on the other.

### **Javanese conversation and Javanese–Indonesian code switching**

Code switching is a central topic in sociolinguistics, but deserves broader attention among students of social change as a point of convergence between social life and social history. On one hand, code switching emerges in the transient, interactionally situated micro-phenomena of

talk which mediate social biographies of relationships among consociates. On the other hand, acts of code switching involve languages which have distinct institutional grounds, yet come together in situations of sustained “contact” between social collectivities of speakers. In this respect code switchings can be read as transient, interactional figurings of “self” and “other” shaped within broader political and economic contexts (cf. Gal 1988:247).

Code switchings’ significances, situated in microinteractional processes but informed by macrohistorical change, can have a double meaningfulness which makes them daunting for descriptive and interpretive projects. Socially relevant studies of code switching must draw a few drops of water from oceans of talk, and make them speak to the nature of shifting social tides.

Two major, socially relevant factors obtrude in such an effort for “the Javanese–Indonesian case.” On the macrosocial side is Indonesian’s un-nativeness, which raises obvious questions about the social “otherness” it might serve to figure in interaction among Javanese. Under received comparative approaches like the one I discuss in chapter 10, it seems problematic that Indonesian lacks a native speaking outgroup (or “they”) over and against which Javanese counts as the language of an ingroup (“we”). In south-central Java, at least, “they” (with apologies to Walter Kelly) can only be “us.” Indonesian’s un-nativeness in this way throws expository weight onto its institutional groundings in the nation-state and the “project of modernity” it symbolizes and subserves. For this reason the ways Indonesian figures in otherwise Javanese interaction invite interpretation relative to the modernist language ideology discussed in chapters 4 and 6.

The other unusual aspect of Javanese–Indonesian code switching involves the Javanese speech styles: speakers commonly shift between them in ways which, Suzanne Romaine has suggested, are “tantamount to code switching between different languages” (1995:321). But these monolingual, multistylistic patterns of usage turn out to be related to broader, less obvious interactional dynamics in which style shiftings sometimes, but not always, figure. I discuss this broader aspect of Javanese interactional process in chapter 8, under a broad rubric of “speech modeling” (which also covers “thought modeling”). There I develop a context for considering shiftings between Javanese styles as broader shiftings in interactional self/other relations, what Erving Goffman (1981) famously dubbed “footing.”

These speech modelings involve rapid, minimally cued, transient shifts in modes of conversational engagement; they have close analogs (as far as I can tell) neither in Javanese uses of Indonesian, nor in native speakers’ use of English. Because of their language- and culture-specific

character, particularly when they serve to exteriorize internal states, I can deal with speech modelings only illustratively, through selected transcriptions of recordings of talk in which they occurred. One reason for relativizing style shifting to this broader practice of speech modeling is to show how style shifting and code switching fit together, and so to speak to Goffman's concerns (1981:155) about descriptions of (sub)code switching which are "too mechanical and too easy." In chapter 9 I show multistylistic usage to be more than a matter of switching between distinct communicative vehicles; it is bound up with shifts in interactional *cum* intersubjective engagement which, like changes in glance or stance, can be more or less intentful, strategic, or shifty.

These joined discussions of speech modeling and style shifting serve as grounds for sketching bilingual code switching in chapter 10 as shaped by Javanese conversational practice on one hand, and an Indonesian language ideology on the other. Together, chapters 8 and 9 inform an interpretive approach to Javanese–Indonesian code switching, one which attends to both languages as shapers of interactional relations. On one hand, I provide examples of usage which show Indonesian's assimilation to the distinctively Javanese conversational practices of modeling speech and thought. On the other hand, I foreground Indonesian's use in situatedly impersonal, "third-person" guises, which serve to transform social relations.

These three chapters center on transcriptions of talk, and so involve expository strategies which are fraught with operational and interpretive problems. Because I seek to present these transcriptions as traces of conduct – informed by shared senses of native practice and un-native ideology – it is difficult for me to treat them as transparent records of categorically intentful conduct. To read "through" them to the taken-for-granted, "large-scale" grounds of "small-scale" interactional transiencies, I must treat them instead as highly mediated re-presentations of Javanese–Indonesian bilingualism. So I work in this exposition to avoid presenting transcriptions of talk as im-mediate windows on or im-mutable records of social reality.

#### **From talk to transcription to text**

The transcriptions of everyday talk set out in this book's later chapters may seem overnumerous and overlong. But they are just a tiny fraction of the thirty-one hours of usage which I and my collaborators recorded and transcribed at different times, in different communities, and on different occasions. A few are drawn from recordings made by a colleague, David Howe, during his research project in 1980 and 1981 in Surakarta, where I was also working (see Howe 1980). But many more

---

were made during research focused on bilingualism in rural Java, between January and August of 1986. Some were recorded by me, but most were made by five consultants/collaborators who lived in various of the peripheral communities of Surakarta and, in one case, of Jogjakarta (shown on map 2).

Earlier research had already made me familiar with what William Labov (1971:113) dubbed the “observer’s paradox”: wishing to observe how people talk when one is not there to observe that talk. Only after gaining adequate facility in a range of spoken Javanese styles could I feel that my own talk was not too obtrusive in casual conversation; only among people I knew fairly well could I feel that my tall, white foreignness might not fundamentally shape interactional dynamics.

So I had strong practical reasons for enlisting help from Javanese collaborators who used the inexpensive tape recorders I provided. At the outset I asked each to record casual talk in his or her home, neighborhood, and workplace, suggesting that bilingual usage in everyday contexts might be most interesting. I asked each to carry the tape recorder for a while before using it, so as to acclimatize people they saw regularly to its presence. I also asked them to explain my efforts to study the ways Javanese is spoken on an everyday basis, and to request permission before turning the tape recorder on, while also minimizing its visual presence by using small omnidirectional clip-on microphones.

All five of my collaborators had at least high-school educations; three (two women, one man) were in their late twenties and teaching in high schools (Sekolah Menengah Atas) while living in their respective home villages. This may have had a skewing effect on the material which they recorded and which I present here. Still, as some of these rural communities’ first bilinguals, “locals who have made good,” they may likewise represent the first wave of bilingual community which will come of age with youngsters like those they are teaching. My other two consultants, a man and a woman, both in their forties, were a farmer and housewife respectively; though they lived in rural communities, they had lived outside rural Java for some time, and so were slightly unusual as older, bilingual village residents.

When the first recorded cassettes were returned to me by consultants, I listened to them with the idea of selecting particular segments for transcription. But it did not take long to realize that this strategy was leading me away from interesting aspects of usage. Thereafter I asked consultants to transcribe as much of the recordings they made as was audible. Though I paid for transcribing on an hourly basis, this intensive, time-consuming work was onerous enough to cost me early on the services of three other consultants, who were unwilling to listen repeatedly to tapes to pick up fast speech, tease apart voices in overlapping

conversation, or catch repetitions of words or interspersed, back-channel comments.

All transcriptions were written in standard Javanese spelling or some approximation of it which I have normalized here (see the note on orthography). I did not ask my collaborators to try to transcribe details of talk's sequencing – the gaps and overlaps in turns taken by speech partners – nor much other fine-grained information which is often included in transcriptions intended for conversation-analytic purposes. These original transcriptions are highly partial but, with suitable emendation, adequate for my purposes here. (For discussion of the theory- and interest-laden nature of transcription see Ochs 1979, Urban 1996, and Haviland 1996a.)

I was fortunate to be able to have these transcriptions keyed into the laptop computer I had brought with me to the field, which made it easy to revise and emend transcriptions after reviewing them. I did this on my own and with consultants on a recurring, usually weekly basis. This slow, painstaking process yielded rich, specific contextual information – about the social surround of talk, the people involved, the prior and following dynamics of interaction, etc. – as well as background on the aspects of usage taken up in this book.

Just as significantly, these sessions made me forcibly aware of speakers' common lack of verbalizable "insight" into many of the aspects of monolingual and bilingual usage which attracted my attention, and which I repeatedly queried. I discuss in later chapters their seeming indifference, if not resistance, to my attempts to elicit focused interpretations of particular aspects of usage with recourse either to "forced choice" strategies of interpretation, or to collaborative interpretation in some "native" metalinguistic vocabulary. This practical aspect of the research has in turn shaped my discussion here of expository and theoretical problems of comparison. I am recurrently concerned with the "potential circularity" which, as Romaine (1995:175) observes, is a real danger for analyses of code switchings (or speech modelings, or style shiftings) which lack fit with or confirmability from native speakers' points of view.

Before returning to the United States, I intended to visit and introduce myself to all the persons whose voices had been recorded, and personally to ask their permission to use transcriptions of those recordings in my writing. This proved to be impossible due to a serious illness which left me bedridden during four of my last six weeks in Java. When I asked consultants to request permission on my behalf, they reported back to me that none of the persons they had recorded objected.

It is important to make clear here that I did not witness or participate in all of this talk, and so cannot license all these transcriptions "in the

---

first person.” They came to me as recordings and transcriptions: physical traces which speakers’ actions left on magnetic tape, and their orthographic surrogates. Those recordings and transcriptions, in turn, required extensive supplement in the form of contextualizing narratives by the persons who recorded them. These descriptions, like their objects, can be only partly reproduced here, and in “the third person.” So these transcriptions are neither transparent windows on concrete social realities, nor empirical bedrock for general social description: their intelligibility rests on situated paraphrase, explication, and interpretation.

These mediating operations are in the first place practically motivated by the need to select very small portions of indefinitely long transcriptions for re-presentation here. This operation presupposes their separability and self-contained character as records of conduct; it requires me to assume my ability to supplement them with adequate narrative descriptions of their originary, verbal, and non-verbal surround. These excising operations are in turn grounded in the thematic purposes of an expository “here and now,” which confer salience to records of conduct in an originary “there and then.”

To keep in mind the mediated character which these expository operations confer on usage in the last three chapters, I refer to them as *texts* of usage. This helps to maintain an expositoryly keyed sense of variation in the kinds of explications I make of them, and the motivations or intentfulness I impute to the conduct of which I present textualized traces. A notion of “weakly” intentful conduct helps to adduce recurring patterns from use on which native speakers had little *post hoc* interpretive purchase. I contrast these with other, fewer, “strongly” strategic or intentful instances of usage which offered themselves to speakers, and sometimes to me, as parts of larger social and conversational projects, as transparently verbal means to identifiable, extrinsic social ends.

This distinction helps me to avoid conflating distinct analytic and interactional perspectives under an overbroad rubric of “function” or “strategy.” It also helps me to work toward a dynamic sense of relation between the shared, tacit grounds for use of language systems, and the to-handedness of language in the “small-scale” immediacies of social life. By developing a productive, “both/and” tension and simultaneity between both faces of language, I try to avoid reducing one to the other, and develop a double, shifting picture of Javanese and Indonesian in use and change.