

## **Towards a Description of Modern Spoken Indonesian**

Indonesian Language Teachers Network Queensland  
1/1/2011

Halim Nataprawira  
University of the Sunshine Coast

## **'Towards a Description of Modern Spoken Indonesian'**

### **Part A: Textbook Language vs Authentic Speech**

'Many sentences occurred in textbooks, and were used grammar practices which were well-formed English sentences, but which it was difficult to imagine anyone actually using. Teachers tend to accept, and even praise, well-formed sentences which are possible, but implausible or unnatural. The problem arises partly because of an over-valuing of written language.'

(Lewis 2008: 13)

**Premise:** Often, textbook language is not 'natural speech'. Majority of dialogues in textbooks are written by educators/grammarians. It is often based on the 'ideal' written language, not based on speech acts from authentic sources; how the majority of native Indonesian speakers actually speak.

**Discussion 1:** Please read the texts 1-8. Some are derived from Indonesian textbooks, and some from authentic sources (recording from everyday dialogues in Indonesia, movies, TV shows). Then tick the table below and determine which ones are derived from textbooks and which ones are from authentic sources.

Text	Textbook	Authentic Source
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

### **Text 1**

Selamat Sore Nyonya  
Selamat Sore. Siapa nama Anda?  
Nama saya Arifin  
Anda punya saudara laki-laki?  
Ya, saya punya dua orang saudara laki-laki  
Berapa umur mereka?  
Seorang berumur 20 tahun, dan seorang lagi berumur 15 tahun.

### **Text 2**

Hei, Saudara Leo, sedang apa?  
Saya sedang membaca Koran  
Apa yang sedang saudara baca?

### **Text 3**

Ngomong-ngomong ini ada pita merah, ungu, ijo, apaan artinya sih? Merah kan AIDS.  
Ungu ama ijo apaan?  
Oh, disinyalir ini anti kekerasan.  
Bukannya putih yang against violence?  
Yang pertama kali ungu keluar.  
O ya?  
Kalo biru itu against drugs.  
Oh yah?

### **Text 4**

Apa yang sedang Anda kerjakan Tini?  
Saya sedang mengetik surat ini Tuan  
Tono sedang mengerjakan apa?  
Dia sedang memeriksa surat-surat yang keluar

### **Text 5**

Penonton, perkenalkan saya ini ada...orang gendangnya nga bener nih...orang lagi ngomong jangan main gendang dulu  
Ini latihan le musiknya...masing masing aja...latihan  
Apa lu kata...saya disini berperan...orang lagi ngomo...noh...orang gendang ganggu tuh...orang lagi ngomong  
Ey...tukang gendang keluar aja dulu...ini mau ngomong nih  
Nga, kalo nga bisa tangannya potong aja dulu biar nga mukul mukul gendang...enak aja... saya ini Aceng...punya temen namanya Sekak  
Kan saya udah tau .. saya bacain tadi  
Saya lagi nungguin si Sekak nih...biasa dia lagi di got....Sekak...Sekak

### **Text 6**

Assalamualikum  
Bagi dong Pak ama orang yang nga berdaya Pak, keluarin duitnya yang di laci Pak...

He he mas...nga ada orangnya kok  
Oh begitu...kenapa lu nga bilang dari tadi kadal  
Ri, ada tukang minta-minta, badanya gemuk, sehat lagi  
Masa  
Kita kerjain yu, tunggu sini ya  
Cepetan Pak...cape nih  
Salamualaikum  
Pindah apa ya?  
Bagi Pak  
Lama-lama gue copotin nih pintu...ada protetmu...sarap lagi  
Lari  
Aduh...cape (sambil berlari)  
Rasain lu pemalas, nyari duit kaga buta, dasar

#### Text 7

Gimana? Elo tuh ngasih nomernya bener nga sih?  
Bener kok...emang kenapa?  
Nga masuk lho ke nomer gue...  
Nga mungkin elu udah check lagi belum?  
Elu check deh  
Udah checkin tanya Bia  
Elu serious Bi?  
Ngapain sih kita bercanda?  
Elu berdua bercanda kali...  
Eh...ini kan duit lu...gue kan cuma ngechekin...  
Coba deh lu check sekali lagi  
Gini aja..tadi kita sepakat ya...mendingan kita ngomong lagi ke omnya terus transfer ke rekening gue yang lain  
Serious lo?  
Omnya mana?  
Omnya udah pergi...gimana dong...  
Elu gila ya...gue kan udah bilang jangan biarin omnya pergi sebelum kita berdua balik...  
Terus kita harus gimana? Gimana dong... jadi gue sia-sia dong... duit segitu kan banyak buat gue... gue bisa beli handphone...gue bisa beli tas...

#### Text 8

Kenalkan, nama saya Sri  
Selamat siang Sri. Nama saya Yanti. Senang sekali bertemu dengan kamu. Apa kabar?  
Baik-baik saja, dan bagaimana kabarmu?  
Saya juga sehat-sehat saja.

## Part B: What is your everyday natural language?

### Discussion 2: What would you say? (please tick a or b)

1a. Lagi apa Bu/Pak?		1b. Apakah yang sedang Anda lakukan?	
2a. Lebih baik kita menunggu lebih dahulu sebentar		2b. Mendingan kita nunggu dulu sebentar	
3a. Kenapa sih dia suntuk terus?		3b. Mengapakah dia selalu tidak bahagia?	
4a. Apakah benar itu demikian?		4b. Masa sih begitu?	
5a. Marilah kita pergi bersama-sama		5b. Barengan aja yo	
6a. Sama siapa datengnya?		6b. Dengan siapa akan datang?	
7a. Seperti apakah?		7b. Kaya apa ya?	
8a. Bisakah kamu menolong saya?		8b. Bantuin dong	

**Supposition:** 1a-2b-3a-4b-5b-6a-7b-8b, are common *Modern Spoken Indonesian* (MSI) phrases. Phrases 1b-2a-3b-4a-5a-6b-7a-8a are correct *Bahasa Baku* (BB) sentences, but unlikely to be uttered by native speakers in everyday context.

**Do you agree or disagree with the supposition above?**

---

---

**Can you suggest other 'natural' ways of phrasing the above sentences?:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

## Part C: Collocations

**Signification** = codified meaning of word (dictionary definition)

**Value** = may be similar or different to *signification*; words are used with extended or metaphorical meanings

(Lewis 2006: 14)

### Example 1

**Word:** **abis** elision of *habis* ; **abisan** variation of 'abis' - it expresses that there was no other alternative.

**Signification:** finish

**Value:**

- 1) **udah abis** – it's finished
- 2) **abis gitu** – and then
- 3) **abisan, terpaksa begini** - that's because<sub>i</sub> I was/we were<sub>ø</sub> forced this way
- 4) **abisan, mau gimana lagi?** – Ø<sub>i</sub> what else should we<sub>ø</sub> do? / what else can be done?
- 5) **abisan, dibilangin nga percaya** – Ø<sub>i</sub> I told you/pro<sub>ø</sub> but<sub>ø</sub> you/pro<sub>ø</sub> wouldn't believe me<sub>ø</sub>.

### Example 2

**Word:** **ada**

**Signification:** there is / existence / presence

**Value:** besides the standard meaning indicating location and possession, there are semantic shifts and set phrases involving *ada*;

- 1) **ada kan?** – there were some weren't there<sub>i</sub>?
- 2) **ada nga sih?** – is there any or not?
- 3) **ada nga ya?** - I<sub>ø</sub> wonder if there are some?
- 4) **ada dong!** – of course I<sub>ø</sub> got some
- 5) **ada apa sih?** – what's the matter?
- 6) **ada si:h** – there *actually*; are some
- 7) **ada de:h** – not telling you
- 8) **ada:aja** – there is always something (silly, mischievous, unnecessary)
- 9) **ada a:ja kamu** – you are such a joker

## Solutions:

Text	Textbook	Authentic Source
1	Fan 1990: 28	
2	Fan 1990: 155	
3		Sneddon 2006: 144
4	Fan 1990: 214	
5		Opera van Java: "Aceng Minta Kawin" #1
6		"Benyamin Jadi Gembel"
7		Perawan Indonesia #1
8	White 1994: 7	

1a. Lagi apa Bu/Pak?	MSI	1b. Apakah yang sedang Anda lakukan?	BB
2a. Lebih baik kita menunggu lebih dahulu sebentar	BB	2b. Mendingan kita nunggu dulu sebentar	MSI
3a. Kenapa sih dia suntuk terus?	MSI	3b. Mengapakah dia selalu tidak bahagia?	BB
4a. Apakah benar itu demikian?	BB	4b. Masa sih begitu?	MSI
5a. Marilah kita pergi bersama-sama	BB	5b. Barengan aja yo	MSI
6a. Sama siapa datengnya?	MSI	6b. Dengan siapa akan datang?	BB
7a. Seperti apakah?	BB	7b. Kaya apa ya?	MSI
8a. Bisa kamu menolong saya?	BB	8b. Bantuin dong	MSI

**Please Note:** Dear Colleagues, you may use ideas/language/content from this paper for educational purposes. The content in this paper are ideas/components from the author's PhD thesis. Many of these are still under research and in development; therefore there may be incompleteness and inaccuracies. I would like to hear feedback from you about this paper and/or issues related. My email is: [oznata@yahoo.com.au](mailto:oznata@yahoo.com.au). Salam, Halim.

## **Bibliography:**

- Fan, Liam Yock (1990) "Speak Standard Indonesian – A Beginner's Guide", Times Books International, Singapore.
- Lewis, Michael (2008) "The Lexical Approach", Heinle Cengage Learning, Hampshire.
- Opera van Java: "Aceng Minta Kawin" #1
- Short Clip: "Benyamin Jadi Gembel"
- Short Clip: Perawan Indonesia #1
- Sneddon, James Neil (2006) "Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian". Pacific Linguistics, ACT.
- White, Ian J. (1994) "Bahasa Tetanggaku", Longman Cheshire Pty Ltd, Melbourne.