Abstract

While there is a significant amount of research on language choice in intra-ethnic interactions in Indonesia, there have been few studies done on interethnic conversations. This lack of research led me to carry out an ethnographically oriented linguistic study of code choice in interethnic encounters in two neighborhoods (RT) of Semarang, in Central Java. Although it is often assumed that Indonesian is the language for interethnic communication in Indonesia, what was in fact found was that ngoko Javanese was being used to signal relative familiarity in interethnic interactions, as among the Javanese alone. A local variety of Indonesian was generally used in interethnic interactions to signal more distant relationships, where kromo Javanese was used to signal this among the Javanese themselves.

Introduction

While Indonesian has often been assumed to be the culturally appropriate language for interethnic interaction in Indonesia, there has been little research done on such interactions. Most research on language choice in Indonesia has investigated interactions between those of the same ethno-linguistic background, for example, interactions among Javanese from various areas of Central and East Java (see e.g. Bax 1974; Berman 1998; Errington 1985, 1988, 1998; Geertz 1960; Jay 1969; Kartomihardjo 1981; Robson 1985; Siegel 1986; Smith-Hefner 1983, 1988a, 1988b; Wolff and Poedjosoedarmo 1982). This lack of information on language choice in interethnic interactions and the question of when it is culturally appropriate to use Indonesian led me to undertake an extended ethno-graphically oriented linguistic study of intra-ethnic and interethnic
interaction in two neighborhoods (RT) of Semarang, in Central Java. Before summarizing the findings of this study, which are reported in detail in my Ph.D. dissertation (Goebel 2000), I will first look briefly at what research has already been done in this area and then move on to look at the theoretical and methodological aspects of the study.

**Previous research on interethnic and intra-ethnic interactions in Indonesia**

In this section I shall first look at what research has been done on interethnic interactions in Indonesia before moving on to look at intra-ethnic interactions. The reason for looking at the latter is that this research can provide us with some insights into how code choice is interpreted in interactions among the Javanese themselves, who — in a study based in one of the heartlands of Javanese-speaking Indonesian — would inevitably become participants in interethnic encounters.

As noted in the introduction, little research has been done on interethnic interactions in Indonesia. In fact to my knowledge there are only four studies that include any information on code choice in interethnic interactions. These four studies include Kartomihardjo’s (1981) and Wolff and Poedjosodarmo’s (1982) studies of the communicative codes found in East Java and Central Java respectively, Widjajakusumuh’s (1983) accounts of code choice in interactions among Sundanese and non-Sundanese in West Java, and Zurbuchen’s (1984) study of code choice in Bali. None of these studies focused solely on interethnic interactions because their main purpose was to look at how regional languages such as Javanese and Balinese functioned vis-à-vis Indonesian in intra-ethnic interactions (i.e. among members of the same ethnic group).

Widjajakusumuh’s (1983: 357) article, for example, only mentioned interethnic interaction in passing when talking about the influence of a regional variety of Indonesian on the acquisition of Indonesian by children in Bandung, West Java. Zurbuchen’s (1984: 251–252) study devoted half a paragraph to code choice in interactions between Balinese and non-Balinese, while Kartomihardjo’s (1981: 159) and Wolff and Poedjosodarmo’s (1982: 66–68) devoted a number of pages to interethnic interactions. In contrast to Zurbuchen’s (1984) study, which essentially noted that Balinese was not used in interethnic interactions, the studies of Kartomihardjo (1981), Widjajakusumuh (1983: 357), and Wolff and Poedjosodarmo (1982) all showed that regional languages were sometimes used in interethnic interaction to indicate familiarity. Interestingly, these findings contrast considerably with their earlier generalizations

Having looked at earlier research on interethnic interactions we shouldn’t neglect earlier research on intra-ethnic interactions in Indonesia. In what can be regarded as the classic sociolinguistic study on code choice among urban Javanese of Yogyakarta in Central Java, Wolff and Poedjosodarmo (1982) reported that there were three Javanese speech levels or codes, kromo, madyo, and ngoko, which could be identified by the presence or absence of particular lexical markers. They argued that inequalities in status and/or age of interactants often lead to asymmetrical exchanges of these codes (Wolff and Poedjosodarmo 1982: 4–5, 15). For example, in situations where one interlocutor was of higher status (in their study, this included things like wealth, occupation, education, and to a lesser degree noble background), one could expect to see the person of lower status using kromo varieties of Javanese (BJK), while receiving ngoko varieties (BJN) in return (Wolff and Poedjosodarmo 1982: 15–17, 24–27). In cases where there was little inequality in status but inequalities in age, then one could also expect similar asymmetrical exchanges. Meanwhile in situations where there was little difference in status or age, one could expect to find either a kromo variety of Javanese being symmetrically exchanged, in cases where speakers were unfamiliar, or BJN being symmetrically exchanged where speakers were familiar.

Other studies on Javanese have not always confirmed these findings, however, and Bax (1974: 204) found that in a rural area outside of Yogyakarta there were only two speech levels, kromo and ngoko Javanese. Just as importantly, he also noted that they tended to be exchanged symmetrically rather than asymmetically, that is, ngoko for ngoko or kromo for kromo, rather than asymmetrically, that is, ngoko for kromo (Bax 1974: chapter 3).

Similarly, Errington’s (1985, 1988) research conducted among the urban nobility (priyayi) of Solo, showed that apart from informants giving different labels to the speech levels (he preferred to refer to them as speech styles), social change had resulted in different functional uses of these speech levels between different generations of speakers. For example, for the older “traditional” and “conservative” nobility, speech-level usage was determined by royal status and to a lesser extent age. In contrast, code choice among younger-generation speakers tended to be determined by familiarity with their interlocutor, rather than relative
status, with a tendency toward symmetrical rather than asymmetrical exchanges (Errington 1985: 180–184).

Other studies on the use of Javanese also found similar things to that of Bax (1974) and Errington (1985, 1988). For example, Smith-Hefner’s (1983) study of Javanese in two communities in East Java also showed that relative status or age wasn’t an important factor determining code choice in interaction in one of these communities (see also Smith-Hefner 1988a). If one looks at work done by Guinness (1986: 177) in a Javanese kampung ‘street or ward’, his work also highlights the idea that in this less affluent community the importance of the relative status of participants in interaction was subordinate to equality or solidarity.

Having briefly discussed what earlier research has told us about when it is culturally appropriate to use Indonesian and regional languages it is now time to provide a theoretical framework that will allow us to explore how social norms determine or are determined by language choice in interethnic interactions.

**Researching language choice**

Exploring the social norms governing language choice is more commonly referred to as exploring aspects of a speaker’s communicative competence. That is to say, what is entailed so that a speaker can associate a particular language choice (from here I’ll refer to language and/or its varieties or dialects as code) with other elements of an interaction, such as topic, participants, feelings, setting, and activities in such a way that the person they are speaking to interprets what is said in the same way that they intended (Hymes 1974; Gumperz 1982; Ochs 1988). Arguably there are three main approaches that have consistently been used to research what it means to be a communicatively competent speaker in a particular speech community. These include Hymes’s (1974) ethnography of speaking, Gumperz’s (1982) interactional sociolinguistics, and Myers-Scotton’s (1993) “markedness” approach.

All of these approaches have something to offer to enhance our understanding of what it means to be communicatively competent, and indeed a number of researchers have drawn from these approaches in some now-famous studies to demonstrate how ethnography and interactional sociolinguistics can be synthesized to research what a competent speaker knows (e.g. Ochs’ 1988 research on language socialization in Samoa; Schieffelin’s 1990 work on Kaluli children in Papua New Guinea; Moerman’s 1988 study of codeswitching in Thailand).
In the research being reported here, finding out what it meant to be a competent speaker meant finding out how code choice and prosody were used in naturally occurring interethnic and intra-ethnic interactions to signal intent and to interpret meaning, while also showing how they related to the daily social life of the participants. The way in which data were gathered and analyzed to investigate this question is the topic of the next section.

Data gathering, analysis, and validation

This research was carried out over a two-and-a-half year period in two neighborhoods (RT) in Semarang, Central Java. Geographically these neighborhoods were in close proximity and in fact were within fifty meters of each other. Out of the 167 residents who lived in these two RT, my research assistants and I observed and recorded the conversations of 88 of these, including 29 non-Javanese (15 men, 14 women) and 59 Javanese (30 men, 29 women). Some 60 hours of conversations were recorded by mainly non-Javanese research assistants in interactions with their Javanese neighbors and peers (some were also made with their peers from outside of these two RT). The reason that I chose mainly non-Javanese rather than Javanese research assistants was because they were more likely to be involved in interethnic interactions in these primarily Javanese neighborhoods. Information was also gathered on each recorded situation, including time of day, relationship of participants, spatial layout, proximity of participants, ethnicity of participants, ethnicity of participants’ spouses, ethnicity of participants’ parents, social status of participants in terms of age, occupation, education level, material wealth and income, length of residence in Semarang, and length of residence in the neighborhood that they now lived in.

Preference was given to recording naturally occurring group interactions (i.e. those that would have occurred whether they were being recorded or not) for at least an hour. This was done because it has been shown that often the initial presence of outsiders and recording equipment, the recording of pairs rather than groups, and artificially created contexts (i.e. formal interviews, experimental situations) do not lead to data representative of what actually happens in casual conversations (e.g. Labov 1972; Hill and Hill 1986; Milroy 1987; Wilson 1987). These recordings were then transcribed, color-coded, and encoded with information on the prosodic patterns of the conversations (amounting to some 1400 pages of annotated transcripts, which can be found on the CD-ROM that accompanies my Ph.D. dissertation). Native speakers, and in fact some
of those who participated in the recorded interactions, were used to transcribe the interactions in order to accurately portray turn-taking sequences as interpreted by the participants.

Interpretation of the social meanings of these patterns of code choice and prosody began with sequential analysis of these transcripts to see whether particular language choices and use of prosody were ratified or not (e.g. Gumperz 1982, 1992; Tannen 1984; Myers-Scotton 1993; and the papers in Auer 1998). At this stage data that could have been influenced by the presence of the observers and their equipment was identified and discarded (Goebel 2000: 77–98). Analyzed transcripts were then correlated to information concerning the situation (e.g. relationship of participants, ethnicity, etc.). Patterns that appeared from this process of correlation then formed the basis of initial hypotheses about language choice and social relationships.

The validity of these hypotheses was then determined by triangulating them with (1) data obtained through participant observation and/or recording of subsequent interactions involving the participants recorded and members of their social networks, for example, family, friends, work colleagues, acquaintances and so on, (2) informal interviews/conversations with the participants, and (3) data obtained from questionnaires about code choice and social relationships that were distributed in the last few months of fieldwork. Having briefly described the process of gathering, analyzing, hypothesizing, and determining the validity of data and hypotheses drawn from this data, it is now time to look at some of this data, starting with interactions among the Javanese themselves.

**Code choice in intra-ethnic interactions**

Although our main concern is with interethnic communication, the fact that this will often involve the Javanese in these two RT may lead us to wonder how the interethnic norms relate to the norms for interaction among the Javanese alone. We might consider interaction among Javanese either before or after interethnic interaction involving non-Javanese. However, here I’ll deal with it first because earlier research provides some basis for what to expect. While the above seems a convenient approach to presentation, note that it does not actually reflect the actual course of the research. Although I was of course familiar with the earlier literature, I did not set out to directly test its hypotheses but rather to see what patterns and thus hypotheses would emerge from the data itself. Here and in the next section on interethnic interactions,
however, I am more concerned with readability than with taking the
reader though the actual process of discovery.

In both neighborhoods I found that patterns of ngoko Javanese (BJN)
and kromo Javanese (BJK) usage generally weren’t influenced by status or
age, as Wolff and Poedjosoedarmo’s (1982) earlier research on Javanese
has reported. The only exception to this was one elderly female of
noble descent, who might be seen to represent a member of a conservative
generation who use and expect largely obsolete asymmetrical patterns of
exchange. Similar in many respects to the findings of Smith-Hefner (1983)
and Guinness (1986) I found that there was a tendency toward sym-
metrical exchanges of Javanese, which could be accounted for by looking
at the participants’ daily activities within their neighborhood and how this
either led to or prevented interaction.

For example, in the low-income neighborhood, which I shall refer to as
RT05, male members tended to work shorter hours than their counter-
parts in RT08 and to rely more on one another to maintain neighborhood
infrastructure, to keep the neighborhood secure, and for socializing.
The tendency to have more leisure time and the need for neighborhood
cooperation oriented these members toward frequent interaction, and
indeed those who were regularly involved in formal RT activities also
tended to be involved in sporting activities, such as volleyball and soccer,
and social activities, such as chatting, playing cards, and playing marbles.
These members also tended to exchange ngoko Javanese (BJN).

Social life in RT05 appeared to contrast considerably with the other
more affluent and nearby neighborhood, which I shall refer to as RT08,
whose male members worked longer hours, who preferred to pay hired
help to do all RT maintenance, and who preferred to socialize with others
from outside their RT. In fact, at best they interacted on a monthly basis
at formal RT occasions, and even then many male members of this RT did
not attend. These factors tended to orient members away from frequent
interaction, and interactions among Javanese males in RT08 were
characterized by the use of kromo Javanese (BJK). On the other hand,
Javanese females in RT08 tended to interact frequently for reasons
discussed in Goebel (2000: chapters 7 and 9) and as a result tended toward
the use of BJN in interaction.

Thus BJN was exchanged among those who frequently interacted,
while BJK was used among those who rarely interacted. Put another way,
BJN was used with familiairs, peers, and those one wished to befriend,
while BJK was used with those one had no need or will to become friendly
or socially intimate with. My conversations with Javanese from these RT
and the results of a questionnaire distributed to them supported this
interpretation (see e.g. Goebel 2000: 70–73). For example, many judged
the relationship of participants who used BJK to their interlocutor as baru kenal/kenal tapi tidak akrab ‘recently acquainted/just acquaintances’, while instances of BJN exchange were judged as representing interactions among those who were friends (teman/teman dekat/sehabat).

Thus far we have looked at how the Javanese in these two communities interpreted the use of BJN and BJK. Although we have argued that person-related reasons can be used to account for these patterns of code choice, nevertheless it does leave open the question of why a regional variety of Indonesian (abbreviated NSI for “non-standard Indonesian”) was also used in some interactions among the Javanese of these two communities. In preparing to address why NSI was used among the Javanese themselves it is perhaps prudent to remind the reader that code choice is not always a product of context and indeed choosing a code can also create contexts (see e.g. the collections in Heller 1988; Jacobson 1990; Duranti and Goodwin 1992; Eastman 1992; Auer and Di Luzio 1992; Milroy and Muysken 1995; Auer 1998). In my thesis work (Goebel 2000) I drew on some of this work to interpret the use of NSI in otherwise Javanese conversations and following Errington (1998) argued that instances of codeswitching from BJN to NSI changed the frame of an ongoing activity from one of a conversation between friends to one where a speaker was indicating their stance toward the information that they gave. For example, switching from BJN to NSI could be used to provide information about the type of activity that a speaker is engaged in, such as whether it is exemplifying or pointing to what is to be taken as objective or personal opinion.

Having briefly discussed how the use of BJN, BJK, and NSI were used and interpreted in interactions among the Javanese of these two neighborhoods, we are now in a better position to look at and interpret the code choices found in the interethnic interactions that occurred in these two RT.

**Code choice in interethnic interactions**

Here I present extracts from a few interethnic interactions, which are representative of many of the interethnic interactions found in my larger corpus of data, before then going on to account for these code choices. Extract 01 was recorded in RT08, and extracts 02 and 03 were recorded in RT05. “NJ” is attached to participant numbers to indicate non-Javanese, as in P3NJ. *Italics* indicate the local variety of Indonesian (NSI), *italic CAPS* indicate forms that can be classified as either Javanese or Indonesian, *CAPS* represent *ngoko* Javanese (BJN), *UNDERLINED*
Extract 01 represents a conversation between Bu Sumaryono (P19NJ), a Sumatran from North Sumatra, and Bu Nurholis (P8), a Javanese from Central Java. (Pseudonyms are of course used instead of the real names of the participants.) This conversation occurs during one of the monthly female neighborhood meetings in RT08 and is preceded by a conversation about who has paid up their money for the Independence Day celebrations and who it is difficult to get payment from.

Extract 01 taken from tape 10c (265)

1. P6 > all  TERUS SINTEN MELIH.
2. P8 > all  Bu Robi KARO Pak Robi IKI YO DIJALUKI YA ANGEL, WIS RA USAH WAÉ OPO? Pak Indro sampai Pak Jati Pak Tobing Pak Yuli PODO ANGEL WAÉ. ORANGÉ NGGAK BAYAR TENAN!
3. P6 > P8?  WOLULAS Bu MUNG DADI (Dani sebagaian ??? pergi???)
4. P8 > all  KOK AKU UJANÉ MALES, DADI MALES KON NARIKI ORA DIKEI SEBELAHKU YO NGONO ORA DIKEI!
5. P6 > P8  Oh IYA?
6. P8 > P6  SEBELAHKU.
7. P19NJ > P8  SING NGGONÉ DHEWEKÉ AKEH SING ORA BAYAR.
8. P8 > P19NJ  AKEH KOK SING PODO ORA GELEM BAYAR OK, AKU BARI Bu Yon WIS KUWI RA BAYAR WIS NGONO.

English

1. P6 > all  Ok who else [hasn’t yet paid]?
2. P8 > all  Bu² Robi and Pak Robi yeah are difficult to get anything from, blow it, what if [we] don’t bother [with them], Pak Indro down to Pak Jati, Pak Tobing, Pak Yuli all of them are difficult, they don’t pay at all believe me!
3. P6 > P8?  Only eighteen Bu have paid up (Dani?) (only some?) (???) (went?).
4. P8 > all  Actually I couldn’t be bothered, [I] am not interested in being asked to go and collect money [for the celebrations
to the place next door since] they don’t give me any. Yeah that’s the story, they don’t give me any! [The people she refers to are a number of females who are boarding at a house next door to Bu Nurholis.]

5  P6 > P8     Oh yeah.
6  P8 > P6     Yeah the one’s living beside me.
7  P19NJ > P8   [Actually] there are plenty of [people] who own and live in their houses [in this RT] who haven’t paid.
8  P8 > P19NJ   There are in fact plenty who don’t like paying. Me and Bu Yon have already tried, [but they] didn’t pay, yeah its like that.

As can be seen on lines 7 and 8 the interethnic encounter between Bu Sumaryono (P19NJ) and Bu Nurholis (P8) is characterized by the use of ngoko Javanese (BJN). We can also find a similar pattern of code choice in interethnic interactions that occurred in neighboring RT05. Extract 02 below represents such an interaction and involves Pak Liman (P2), a Javanese born and raised in Semarang, interacting with Pak Sudiman (P7NJ), who is a Sundanese from Bogor in West Java. This conversation occurs during one of the frequent card games that occurred in RT05 and is preceded by the end of another hand, which Pak Liman lost.

Extract 02 taken from tape 05c (630)

1  P7NJ > P2   NEK MAU NGEDUK BUWANGANMU WOLU.
2  P2 > P7NJ   ORA ISO MAU, KUDU BUWANG Aku!
3  P7NJ > P2   WOLU BUWANGANÉ heem.
4  P2 > P7NJ   Oh MAU.
5  P7NJ > P2   Heeh.

English

1  P7NJ > P2   If you wanted to put down and pick up others’ cards earlier, then you should have thrown out the eight.
2  P2 > P7NJ   No I couldn’t earlier. In fact, I should have thrown cards out.
3  P7NJ > P2   You should have thrown out the eight.
4  P2 > P7NJ   Oh earlier?
5  P7NJ > P2   Yeah.

As can be seen on lines 1 to 4 the above interaction is also characterized by an exchange of BJN. It is also interesting to note here that even in interactions where both participants were non-Javanese I found instances of BJN usage, as can be seen in extract 03 below.
In extract 03 we have Mas Putu (P3NJ), who is a Balinese, interacting with Pak Abdul (P1NJ), who is a Buginese. This interaction is taken from the same card game as the previous extract and it occurs just after a new game has started. Pak Abdul starts the interaction by boasting to Mas Putu that he hasn’t had to use any skill yet but already has a number of sets that will score him points.

Extract 03 taken from tape 05 (029)

1 P1NJ > P3NJ belum apa apa udah masuk SANGONO LOH. Delapan puluh lima.
2 P3NJ > P1NJ WAH IKI, tinggal NUTUPKÉ IKI Pak.

English

1 P1NJ > P3NJ [I] haven’t done anything yet and I already have this much, eighty-five points.
2 P3NJ > P1NJ Wow [look at] this [card], all that is left is to declare that you’ve won.

As with the previous extract there are clear Indonesian alternatives for the BJN terms used (which these speakers knew, as noted in Goebel 2000: chapter 6); for example, sangono ‘as much as this’ (line 1), iki ‘this’, and nutupké ‘to shut’ (line 2), could have been replaced with segitu, nih, and nutupkan respectively.

Of course there were some members of these two communities who exclusively used Indonesian in interethnic interaction, as one might expect, although it was a local colloquial variety (NSI) rather than standard Indonesian (BI). Examples of this usage can be found in Goebel (2000: 201–219). Having provided some examples of code choice in interethnic interactions in these two RT it is now time to look at why some interethnic interactions were characterized by NSI while others were characterized by Javanese. My data consistently suggested that these code choices could be accounted for by looking at the participants’ daily activities within their neighborhood and how this either led to or prevented interaction. As noted earlier when discussing interactions among the Javanese themselves, in low-income RT05, male non-Javanese members tended to interact frequently with their Javanese neighbors and indeed those who regularly interacted exchanged BJN. Interestingly, this situation appeared to contrast considerably with the other more affluent neighborhood, RT08, whose non-Javanese male members rarely interacted with their Javanese neighbors (for reasons already discussed in the previous section) and tended toward the use of NSI. On the other hand, females in
RT08 tended to interact frequently for reasons already discussed and they, like the males of RT05, tended toward the use of BJN in interethnic interaction.

In essence non-Javanese used BJN with Javanese (and visa-versa) whom they frequently interacted with, while NSI was used with those one rarely interacted with. Put another way, BJN was used with familiares, peers, and those one wished to befriend, while NSI was used with those one had no need or will to become friendly or socially intimate with. To take this one step further we can also suggest that BJN and NSI were "contextualization cues" (Gumperz 1982) that members of these two RT used to signal and interpret affective stance in interaction. The data I obtained through my conversations and informal interviews with members of these two RT tend to support this interpretation. For example, several of them talked of relationships in terms of whether they were cs ‘close/friends’ or not and when explaining what it meant to be cs they noted that it meant the same thing as being akrab ‘close’ and that the more often one interacted with someone the more cs they became. They went on to say that the more cs one was with their Javanese neighbors, the higher the likelihood or need to use BJN in interaction with these people. To continually use Indonesian in interactions with a Javanese one has frequent occasion to interact with would be interpreted by the Javanese interlocutor as wagu or kagok ‘strange/not appropriate’, or worse, nggak ramah ‘not friendly’. In other words, using Indonesian would not be an accurate reflection of their relationship.

Before concluding this paper it should also be noted that, as with the intra-ethnic interactions discussed in the previous section, some inter-ethnic interactions in these two RT were also characterized by an alternation between NSI and BJN, as could be seen in extract 03. In the following section I will take a more detailed look at some instances of codeswitching before going on to offer interpretations as to why codeswitching occurred.

**Codeswitching in interethnic interactions**

As with interactions among the Javanese themselves there were some interethnic interactions that contained instances of codeswitching, which were initially problematic to the interpretation of code choice offered above (i.e. that BJN is used to indicate familiarity and NSI is used to indicate unfamiliarity). For example, in extract 04 below the interactants are in fact friends, yet in this interaction there is some use of NSI (line 1). In this extract Mas Zainal (P20NJ) from the more affluent RT08 is
interacting with two of his ethnic Javanese friends, Joni (P2) and Guruh (P3). (This interaction occurs at Joni’s house in his bedroom around ten in the morning.)

Extract 04 taken from tape 30c (227)

1 P1NJ > P2 & P3 JANÉ ANU OK DIPAS PASKÉ ANU IKI LO’. KUWI JEK, ini kan, dua TAUN kuliah. Dua TAUN kuliah, tiga TAUN lagilah. Jadi sak, sebelum kuliahnya BUBAR itu. IJIK ISO DIKUMPULKÉ YA NEK WIS. NEK WIS BAR kuliah MESTINÉ WIS KERJO NENG NENG NGENDI OK YO.

2 P3 > P1NJ & P2 WAH WIS DHUWE’BOJO ho hehe.

3 P2 > P1NJ & P3 Berarti renca TAUN dua ribu satu.

4 P3 > P2 & P1NJ LAI YO KOYO SING CEWEK CEWEK HI DO NDUWÉ BOJO (???).

5 P2 > P3 YO RA PO OPO.

6 P1NJ > P2 & P3 Asal, SING CILIK CILIK WAÉ (P2 YA masih??) WIS PODO NDUWÉ BOJO WIS DlANGKUTI RAK UWIS.

7 P3 > P1NJ & P2 Mungkin NENG KENÉ TO YO.

8 P2 > P3 & P1NJ WIS MOMONGAN.

9 P1NJ > P2 & P3 MALAH WIS JEK NONGOL MOMONGAN.

10 P2 > P1NJ & P3 SING ANAK SIJI WIS LORO BARANG. SING IKI RUNG NDUWÉ ANAK NDUWÉ ANAK SIJI hehe.

English

1 P1NJ > P2 & P3 Actually [if I] calculate [my time at Uni], you know. Its still, [us for example] there is still, two years studies, two years studies, say another three years. So before [our] studies are finished, [I] still have to [work out what subjects to repeat], then if studies are finished [I] should be able to get a job, [but] where yeah?

2 P2 > P1NJ & P2 Hah [we’ll] already be married ho hehe.

3 P2 > P1NJ & P3 (laughs) That means the plan is for the year 2001.

4 P3 > P2 & P1NJ (Yes all our female [classmates] already have husbands ??).

5 P2 > P3 (laughs) Yeah that’s ok.

6 P1NJ > P2 & P3 As long as (restarts utterance), [even] our younger female [classmates] ([P2 yeah and [we] still??)
already have husbands [and we haven’t even got girlfriends yet].

7 P3 > P1NJ & P2 Maybe even the young girl next door [already has a husband].

8 P2 > P3 & P1NJ [In fact she] already has an infant to take care of.

9 P1NJ > P2 & P3 In fact, she already has an infant.

10 P2 > P1 & P3 [Actually], those who before already had an infant now have two, those who didn’t have an infant now have [and we haven’t even got a girlfriend] hehe.

Drawing again on insights of Gumperz (1982: 73), Auer (1988: 199), and Errington (1998: 159), among others, who have demonstrated that codeswitching can be used to show that one is quoting, reiterating, qualifying, changing modes from giving information to evaluating it, and so on, we might interpret Mas Zainal’s use of Indonesian in line 1 as a qualification or exemplification of his previous utterance in BJN. Alternatively, or perhaps in addition to this, we could also interpret this codeswitch as reframing his utterance from personal to objective. Another hint, so to speak, that NSI is not used here to indicate social distance or unfamiliarity is the fact that its use is rare in this speech situation and stands out in an interaction that is otherwise characterized by the exchange of BJN. This objective or evaluative use of Indonesian was fairly common in my data, and for those interested, another example of this practice can be found in extract 38 in Goebel (2000: 260–261).

Drawing on the argument offered thus far, we can now also offer an interpretation of the alternation between BJN and NSI found within the interethnic interaction among two non-Javanese in extract 03. For example, we might interpret Pak Adbul’s alternation from Indonesian to BJN and then back to Indonesian in line 1 as a strategy to indicate which part of the message is to be interpreted as purely evaluative (i.e. the Indonesian) and which part contains the meta-message that indicates and reaffirms the existence of rapport between these two participants. Mas Putu’s (P3NJ) reply on line 2 of this extract, which went from BJN to Indonesian and then back to BJN, could also be interpreted in a similar way.

Conclusions

Analysis of a number of interactions between Javanese and non-Javanese in the previous sections has demonstrated that often a regional language (in this case ngoko Javanese) is used instead of Indonesian. This finding
is consistent with the earlier findings of Kartomihardjo (1981) and Wolff and Poedjosoedarmo (1982). In looking at why members of these RT used a particular code we noted that code choice appeared to depend on who was speaking to whom and how frequently they interacted. We went on to say that in interethnic interactions code choice appeared to be one salient element for conveying and interpreting intent. For example, we saw that BJN and NSI could be used as a contextualization cue to indicate how a person viewed their relationship with their conversational partner (i.e. casual acquaintances or friends), to indicate what type of activity they were engaged in, such as whether it is exemplifying or pointing to what is to be taken as objective or personal opinion.

There are also a number of interesting parallels that can be drawn between interethnic and intra-ethnic interactions. For example, in both RT it appears that in intra-ethnic interactions among the Javanese unfamiliar relationships require or are signaled by the use of BJK, just as unfamiliar relationships require NSI or are signaled by its use in interethnic interactions. We also saw that familiar or friendly relationships required BJN or were signaled by its use in intra-ethnic and interethnic interactions, while codeswitching from Javanese to NSI was often used to change the frame of ongoing activity from a casual conversation between friends to an expert objective evaluation (Table 1 illustrates this relationship).

It is perfectly understandable why these parallels might exist: as interethnic relationships become close people learn BJN and thus end up following the intra-ethnic pattern. If relationships don’t become close, however, they don’t have as much occasion to learn either type of Javanese, and so they only have NSI to fall back on. NSI thus ends up the interethnic equivalent of the intra-ethnic BJK. The fact that most non-Javanese who knew Javanese did not know or use BJK also nicely illustrated the relationship between social life and code choice in these two RT. Those non-Javanese who did not know BJK did not in fact need to learn it since they already knew NSI, which could indicate unfamiliarity or an unwillingness to be friendly just as well as BJK did in interactions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship/frame</th>
<th>Intra-ethnic</th>
<th>Interethnic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar</td>
<td><em>kromo</em> Javanese (BJK)</td>
<td>colloquial variety of Indonesian (NSI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td><em>ngoko</em> Javanese (BJN)</td>
<td>BJN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert, objective, evaluative</td>
<td>codeswitching from Javanese to NSI</td>
<td>Codeswitching from Javanese to NSI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. *Code choice in intra-ethnic and interethnic interactions in two RT*
among the Javanese themselves. Put another way we can say that NSI has come to serve this function (i.e. indicating unfamiliarity) because the people involved haven’t got close enough to learn Javanese, that is, it’s an understandable historical development rather than just an arbitrary, conventional choice. The fact that BJN was even used in interactions among non-Javanese who were very familiar tends to support this interpretation.

Finally, as with other descriptive studies, the findings here illustrate the sometimes large gap between assumptions and what actually happens. For example the lack of research on interethnic interactions has sustained, or at least left unchallenged, the assumption that a variety of Indonesian will be used in interactions among those who come from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds (see e.g. Abas 1987; Lowenberg 1992: 65–66, 70–71; Moeliono 1986: 30; Nababan 1985: 5, 1991: 119; Dardjowidjojo 1998: 36). This assumption is also amply illustrated in the content of Indonesian language programs found in Australia, as discussed in Goebel (n.d.), Goebel and Black (2001), and Black and Goebel (2001, forthcoming). Of course what the situation may be in other areas of Indonesia is still in need of future investigation, as is the question of what happens in cross-gender and intrafamiliar interethnic interactions and what happens in interethnic interactions in Indonesian workplaces. It may also be the case that future research in other areas of Indonesia may find that other features of communication, such as prosody, repetition, gesture, and proximity, are more important than code choice for indicating a speaker’s affective stance (i.e. friendly, distant).

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Notes

1. I would like to thank Paul Black of the Northern Territory University, Darwin, Australia, for his kind feedback on this paper.
2. I have chosen not to gloss the kin terms Ibu/Bu and Pak due to a lack of equivalents in English and the multiple functions they serve. For example, Ibu literally mean ‘mother’ but can be used as the second person pronoun “you” on many occasions. In addition to this, with a name placed after it Ibu can mean “Mrs.” in formal contexts, or it can add to the intimacy of an interaction in less formal contexts.

References

of Indonesia 7. Canberra: Department of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University.


