

LEXICAL STRATA OF INDONESIAN VOCABULARY

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0 Introduction

Indonesian is known for its rich use of loanwords. It has adopted a number of words from different languages throughout its history. Scholars describe the historical borrowings in Indonesian as coming from Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, English, Hindi, Japanese, Portuguese, Sanskrit, Tamil, etc. (Gonda 1973, Jones 1984, Lapoliwa 1981, Lowenberg 1983, Quinn 2001, etc.). In this paper, I will focus on loanwords from Sanskrit, Arabic, Dutch and English in today's Indonesian language.

For the purpose of observing the morphophonemic degrees of coherence between the prefix and stems, this paper focuses on the history of the Indonesian lexicon in connection with the transitive verb forming prefix *məŋ-*. The morphophonemic boundaries show stronger or weaker degrees of coherence depending upon the origins of the stem vocabulary¹.

Indonesian lexical strata are layers formed within the Indonesian vocabulary as the result of accumulation of words from different languages and time periods through the history. Although the idea of lexical strata presented here is closely related to a Lexical Phonology (LP) framework, there is a fundamental difference between my proposal and the original LP strata. Major scholars who developed the theory of LP, such as Kiparsky (1982) and Mohanan (1982), based their analyses on morphophonological interactions between affixes of different classes and stems. However, I am using a stem-based analysis (c.f. Giegerich 1999) to give an explanation for a similar morphophonological situation. My approach allows us to account for the history of a language in the same organized way as the original LP framework. I will first introduce the historical background of the major loanwords in Indonesian before getting into the discussion of the morphophonemics.

1 Historical Background of the Major Loanwords

1.1 Sanskrit

Among the languages that influenced Indonesian, Sanskrit loanwords are concentrated in religious and scholarly terms. The French scholar Coedès (1948: Chapter II) viewed the contact between India and Indonesia as starting around 100 AD. The earliest inscription or Yupa inscription that dates back to c.400 was found at Kutai, West Kalimantan (Hunter 1998:12). According to Gonda (1973:67), there is a record of the existence of Hindu settlements in Java in 414 AD. Since Sanskrit loanwords started coming into the Indonesian language such a long time ago with strong religious influence roughly until the 14th century in different parts of today's Indonesia (Collins 1996:12), they are deeply assimilated into the indigenous vocabulary with respect to the morphophonemic variation with the *məŋ-* prefix. Many Indonesian speakers in general consider the Sanskrit loanwords as their native vocabulary.

Examples of Sanskrit loanwords in Indonesian are *dewa/dewi* (< *deva/deva*)

Shoichi Iwasaki, Andrew Simpson, Karen Adams & Paul Sidwell, eds. *SEALSXIII: papers from the 13th meeting of the Southeast Asian Linguistics Society* (2003). Canberra, Pacific Linguistics, 2007, pp.67-78.

‘god/goddess’, *surga* (< *svarga*) ‘heaven’, *neraka* (< *naraka*) ‘hell’, *puji* (< *pūjā*) ‘worship’, *agama* (< *āgamā*) ‘religion’, *gembira* ‘delighted’ (< *gambhīra* ‘serious, sagacious’), *sarjana* (< *sajjana*) ‘virtuous, a wise man’, and *siswa* (< *śiṣya*) ‘student’ (data from Jones 1984:5-10).

1.2 Arabic

The Islamic religion started to spread throughout Indonesia circa 1300 (Jones 1984:12) with strong influence from the Arabic language. According to Collins (1996:30), “borrowing from Arabic into Malay greatly increased and Arabic loanwords began to supplement and replace Sanskrit and indigenous Malay words” in the 16th century. Lapoliwa (1982:288) reports that many words of Arabic origin, which had been introduced into the Indonesian language through the Islamic religion, have been adopted into Indonesian for a long time; thus, many of them have been nativized to the extent that they behave as native vocabulary considering morphophonemic rule applications.

Examples of Arabic loanwords in Indonesian include, *patuh* ‘to obey’, *terjemah* ‘to translate’, and *sadar* ‘to be aware’ (Alwi et al. 2000).

1.3 Dutch

Dutch merchants arrived at Bantam in West Java in 1596 (Vlekke 1959: Chapter V), and Dutch traders arrived in Ambon in the Moluccas in the 17th century (Lapian 1996: 42). Along with the Dutch East India Company operation from 1602 to 1799 (Jones 1984:24, Perengkuan 2001:4), Dutch influence became prominent in the Moluccas (Andaya 1996: 5657). From 1605, the Dutch controlled the government of much of the Moluccas, including supervision of the spice production and official administrations of the native people (Collins 1996:41).

Although Dutch became the official language of the colonial government in parts of today’s Indonesia and was taught in school, the actual use of the language was limited to the most elite Indonesians. Even among the very limited number of Indonesian population who were able to understand Dutch, the majority of them did not start acquiring Dutch until the 20th century (Dufon 1999:55, Jones 1984:24).

As far as loanwords go, unlike words of Sanskrit and Arabic origin, it is said that Dutch words are still to a large extent distinguished as *bahasa asing* ‘foreign words’ by the average Indonesian speaker (Suprpto 1993:12). Nonetheless, many words have been completely assimilated into today’s Indonesian compared to newer loanwords from English, and such assimilation can be observed in orthography as well. For example, there are many loanwords starting with /str/ clusters from both Dutch and English in Indonesian. For Dutch words, the Indonesian spelling commonly has an epenthetic vowel between the consonant clusters as in *seterap* ‘sweet drink made of syrup’ (< Dutch *strafen*), *seteruk* ‘receipt’ (< Dutch *strook*), *seterum* ‘electric current’ (< Dutch *stroom*), as oppose to the English loanwords in Indonesian such as *stroberi* (< English *strawberry*), *striptis* (< English *strip*), *stroke* (< English *stroke*), etc.

It is doubtful that most Indonesian speakers have knowledge of Dutch. The foreignness of the Dutch loanwords that led a scholar such as Suprpto (1992:12) to consider them to be ‘more foreign than Sanskrit and Arabic’ may be a result of miscategorization of Dutch loanwords with English vocabulary. Examples of Dutch loanwords used commonly in Indonesian include *kontrolir* ‘supervisor’ (< Dutch

controleur), *telepon* ‘telephone’ (< Dutch *telefoon*), and *portret* ‘to take a picture’ (< Dutch *portret*).

1.4 English

From about 1945, particularly after 1965, since Indonesia opened up to western economic and cultural influences, the newest loanwords have been adopted from English (Jones 1984:24ff). Despite a low education rate in Indonesia, many native speakers of Indonesian recognize English loanwords as words of English-origin relatively well. Due to the introduction of English via mass media by political leaders, scholars, journalists, and pop stars to the general public, acceptance of these loanwords has accelerated in today’s Indonesian society. According to Lapoliwa (1981:3), Dutch and English loanwords manifest their influence upon the Indonesian language and people in modern sciences, technology, and culture. Many Indonesian people consider the use of English loanwords as a sign of education; thus, expressions containing English loanwords have some degree of prestige in today’s general Indonesian society.

Collins (1996) states that the Indonesian language stands “unchallenged as the language of instruction and administration”; however, “the recent prescriptivist crack-down on the proliferation of English in public signs and mass communication channels implies a perceived threat to the Indonesian language” (Collins 1996:86). Examples of English loanwords commonly used in today’s Indonesian language are *teror* ‘terror’, *antisipasi* ‘anticipation’, *sosialisasi* ‘socialization’, *klasifikasi* ‘classification’, *mensurvei* ‘survey’ and so on (data from Alwi et al. 2000:113).

2 Allomorphic Distributions and Morphophonemic Rules of the *məŋ*- Prefix

Indonesian adopts lexical items from foreign words easily with affixations; thus, a productive prefix such as *məŋ*-can attach to loanwords of different origins to form transitive verbs. The *məŋ*-prefix is realized as *mə*-before sonorant consonants, and *məŋ*-before vowels and all monosyllabic stems respectively. For stems starting with voiced obstruents, the coda nasal of the prefix *məŋ*-assimilates to a place of articulation of the first segment of following polysyllabic stems. Generally speaking, in stems that begin with a voiceless obstruent /p, t, k, s/ the base-initial consonant is deleted after the assimilation³. The voiceless palatal affricate /tʃ/ and all base-initial obstruents in monosyllabic stems are exceptions to obstruents deletion. I will focus on the morphophonemic rule concerning the *məŋ*-prefix with voiceless obstruents and vowels. Examples of the relevant morphophonemic realizations are as follows (data from Alwi et al. 2000, Kramer 1997).

(1) Stems starting with sonorants

<i>rokok</i>	→	<i>mərokok</i>	‘to smoke’
<i>latih</i>	→	<i>məlatih</i>	‘to practice’
<i>wakil</i>	→	<i>məwakilkan</i>	‘to represent’
<i>yakin</i>	→	<i>məyakinkan</i>	‘to convince of’

(2) Stems starting with vowels

<i>ambil</i>	→	<i>məŋambil</i>	‘to take’
<i>iŋat</i>	→	<i>məŋiŋatkan</i>	‘to remind’
<i>ulaŋ</i>	→	<i>məŋulaŋi</i>	‘to repeat’
<i>endap</i>	→	<i>məŋendap</i>	‘to settle, deposit’
<i>oŋkos</i>	→	<i>məŋoŋkosi</i>	‘to pay for one’s expense’

(3) Stems starting with monosyllabic stems

<i>bom</i>	→	<i>məŋəbom</i>	‘to bomb’
<i>cek</i>	→	<i>məŋəcek</i>	‘to check’

(4) Stems starting with voiced obstruents

<i>beri</i>	→	<i>məmberi</i>	‘to give’
<i>doroŋ</i>	→	<i>məndoroŋ</i>	‘to push’
<i>guna</i>	→	<i>məŋguna</i>	‘to use’

(5) Stems starting with voiceless obstruents

<i>potoŋ</i>	→	<i>məmotoŋ</i>	‘to cut’
<i>tonton</i>	→	<i>mənonton</i>	‘to watch’
<i>kirim</i>	→	<i>məŋirim</i>	‘to send’
<i>sakit</i>	→	<i>məŋakitkan</i>	‘to cause pain’

The *məŋ*-prefix assimilation is a common phenomenon observed, especially in the Western Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian language family (including languages spoken in the Philippines and western Indonesia) where **məŋ*- is the proto form for a transitive verbal marking prefix⁵.

3. Rule Application with Loanwords

3.1 Consonants

The behavior of nasal substitution suggests that the morphophonemic rules of Indonesian are sensitive to the status of stems as native or non-native parts. In other words, consonant assimilation and deletion with the prefix *məŋ*- is invariant for native vocabulary or nativized loanwords, but in newly adapted loanwords the deletion rule does not always apply. The former category includes native Indonesian vocabulary as well as Sanskrit and most Arabic loanwords. On the other hand, many of the Dutch and English loanwords are included in the latter category. Relevant examples are given in (6).

(6) *məŋ*-with voiceless obstruent-initial stems of different origins

Native	<i>məŋ-tontɔŋ</i>	→	<i>mənonton</i>	‘to view, watch’
Native	<i>məŋ-kaji</i>	→	<i>məŋaji</i>	‘to recite the Koran’
Sanskrit	<i>məŋ-puji</i>	→	<i>məmuji</i>	‘to worship’
Arabic	<i>məŋ-terjemah</i>	→	<i>mən(t)erjemahkan</i>	‘to translate’
Dutch	<i>məŋ-sopir</i>	→	<i>məŋopir</i>	‘to drive (chauffeur)’
Dutch	<i>məŋ-traktir</i>	→	<i>mən(t)raktir</i>	‘to treat someone’
English	<i>məŋ-teror</i>	→	<i>mən(t)eror</i>	‘to terrorize’