

# Standard Indonesian and Informal Indonesian: How do they differ?

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## Background

- “The Indonesian language has significantly different ‘high’ and ‘low’ varieties.”
- The high variety is the formal Indonesian, a result of deliberate language planning. This variety, referred to as *Bahasa Indonesia Baku* ‘Standard Indonesian’, is used in formal contexts, such as in government offices, schools, and mass media.
- The low variety is known as *Bahasa Indonesia Sehari-hari* ‘colloquial Indonesian’ which is used as the language of everyday communication.

(Sneddon 2006:3)

## This project

- Aim: to examine how speakers distinguish the two varieties of Indonesian: *Bahasa Indonesia Baku* 'Standard Indonesian' (SI) and *Bahasa Indonesia Sehari-hari* 'Colloquial Indonesian' (CI).
- Data were collected using the Jackal and Crow picture story, consisting of 9 pictures.
- Participants:
  - 20 people: 10 females and 10 males
  - Age: 18 – 27 years old
  - Native language: 18 Indonesian, 1 Hokkian, and 1 Palembang Malay
  - Educational level: University students or graduates



- P.1 The crow is taking a fish from the basket.
- P.2 The crow is flying to his/her tree (to eat the fish or with the fish). The jackal sees that the crow has a fish.
- P.3 The jackal sees the fish and realises that he/she is really hungry.
- P.4 The jackal goes to the tree and looks up at the crow who is holding the fish.
- P.5 The jackal asks the crow to drop the fish for him/her.
- P.6 The crow opens his/her beak and drops the fish into the mouth of the jackal below.
- P.7 The jackal quickly devours the fish.
- P.8 The jackal is full and satisfied after eating the fish,
- P.9 The crow is hungry and has no fish.

## An example of the elicited story



One day the crow was taking a fish from a basket so that he/she could take it back to his/her tree to eat.

When the crow was flying back to the tree with the fish, the jackal saw this. Upon seeing the fish the jackal was very hungry.

The jackal went to the bottom of the tree and looked up at the crow holding the fish.

The jackal then asked the crow to drop the fish for him/her. The crow dropped the fish from its beak into the mouth of the jackal below. The jackal quickly devoured the fish and was then full and satisfied. The crow now had no fish and was still hungry.

## Data collection

- Pre-recording: the experimenter explained about the two Indonesian varieties to the participants and that they were expected to tell the story using one variety at a time. They could start with either variety they wanted to.
- 1. Each participant was asked to first look at the picture set.
- 2. They told the story while flipping the pictures using either SI or CI .
- 3. They retold the story without looking at the pictures using the same variety of Indonesian as in point 2.
- 4. They told the story while flipping the pictures using the other variety of Indonesian.
- 5. They retold the story without looking at the pictures using the Indonesian variety they used in point 4.
- The second version of the story of each variety was recorded as we wanted the participants to be more natural in telling the story than simply describing each picture.

## This presentation

- We compare SI and CI based on “global” examination of the data.
- We show that close examination of the data from each speaker indicates that speakers vary with respect to what SI and CI are.

## SI and CI: “Global” examination

- Actives (with nasal prefix) and *di*-passives
- Discourse particles
- Lexical items

## Actives (with nasal prefix) and *di*-passives

- The standard meN-prefix is observed in both CI and SI varieties:
    - 238 occurrences in CI
    - 465 occurrences in SI
- (1) a. *dan... serigala tersebut melihat ikan*  
and fox mentioned MENG.see fish  
*yang berada di... paruh burung tersebut.* (GRA-SI2)  
REL to.be LOC beak bird mentioned  
'Then the fox saw the fish which was in the bird's beaks.'
- b. *lalu setelah... setelah dia mengambil ikan itu,*  
then after after 3 MENG.take fish DEM.DIST  
*dia mencari tempat pesinggahan... di se-buah pohon.* (YLA-CI2)  
3 MENG.look.for place stopover LOC one-CLF tree  
'Then, after he took the fish, he looked for a place perch on, which as a tree.'

## Actives (with nasal prefix) and *di*-passives

- The non-formal N-prefix is used only in CI: 72 occurrences
- *di*-passives:
  - 77 occurrences in SI
  - 79 occurrences in CI
- Actives (with nasal prefix) in SI: 85.79% and *di*-passives: 14.21%
- Actives (with nasal prefix) in CI: 79.90% and *di*-passives: 20.10%

## Discourse particles

- Discourse particles like *deh*, *dong*, *nah*, *tuh*, and *kan* are only found in CI
- (2) a. *abis gagak-nya ketawa, jatoh deh ikan-nya.* (CTH-CI1)  
finished crow-3 laugh fall PART fish-3  
'After the fish laughed, the fish fell'
- b. *nah, deket pohon itu ada se-ekor rubah.* (KAT-CI2)  
PART near tree DEM.DIST exist one-CLF fox  
'Well, near the tree there was a fox.'
- c. *dan kemudian bilang, "enak banget nih... ikan-nya."* (JYU-CI1)  
and then say delicious very PART fish-3  
'Then [he] said, "This fish is very delicious".'

## Lexical Items

- Most lexical items which are 'informal', such as *gua/gue* '1SG', *lu* '2SG', *seneng* 'happy', *nggak/enggak/gak* 'NEG', *banget* 'very', *bilang* 'say', *bikin* 'make', *abis* 'finished', *pengen/kepingin* 'want', *aja* 'saja', *sampe* 'until', are never used in SI versions of the story.
- However, two exceptions were found, i.e. *jatoh* 'fall' (3 out of 25 occurrences), *dateng* 'come' (1 out of 5).
- Many 'Formal' lexical items, even if 'informal' counterparts exist, are used in CI. e.g. *kemudian*, *lalu* and *terus* 'then', *kepingin*, *pengen*, and *pingin* 'want'.

## To sum up

- SI and CI are very similar except for the use of the nasal prefix and most 'informal' lexical items and discourse particles.
  - the formal nasal prefix is used both in SI and CI, but the informal nasal prefix is never used in SI.
  - Most 'Informal lexical items' are not found in SI versions of the story.
  - Discourse particles are not observed in SI data set.
- In short, many SI features are found in CI variety, but few cases of CI features used in SI variety is found.

## SI and CI: Individual examination

- We closely looked at data from 6 participants (3 males and 3 females): age: 20-23
- The findings show that the participants could be categorized into 3 groups:
  - Group 1: All SI features in both versions of the story
  - Group 2: SI features in SI versions and CI features in CI versions of the story
  - Group 3: Some SI features are used in CI versions of the story

## Group 1: All SI features in both versions of the story

- Only 1 participant out of the 6.
- The formal active nasal prefix *meN-* is used in both varieties of Indonesian
  - Colloquial Indonesian

(3) a. *Dia mengambil.... satu ikan.* (CHR-CI1)

3 MENG.take one fish

‘He took one fish.’ [referring to the crow]

b. *dan... si rubah ini xx... eee... mengejar dan melihat....* (CHR-CI2)

and PERS fox DEM.PROX xx FILL MENG.chase and MENG.see.

‘... and this fox err... chased and saw...’

## Group 1: All SI features in both versions of the story

- Standard Indonesian

(4) a. *akhir-nya burung itu menjatuh-kan*

final-3 bird DEM.DIST MENG.fall-APPL

... ikan yang tadi... dia bawa dari awal.

(CHR-SI2)

fish REL earlier 3 bring from beginning

‘Finally the bird dropped the fish which he already brought from the beginning.’

b. *kemudian, rubah... itu mengambil... ikan yang jatuh*

then fox DEM.DIST MENG.take fish REL fall

tadi dan memakan-nya.

(CHR-SI1)

earlier and MENG.eat-3

‘Then, the fox took the fish which fell and ate it.’



## Group 1: All SI features in both versions of the story

- *meN*-active sentences are more than *di*-passive sentences.
- The proportion of passives are more in SI data
  - SI: *meN*-active 14 occurrences (70%) and *di*-passives 6 occurrences (30%)
  - CI: *meN*-active 16 occurrences (84.21%) and *di*-passives 3 occurrences (15.79%)
- No discourse particles such as *tuh*, *nih*, *dong*, *sih*, and *deh* are found in either variety.

## Group 1: All SI features in both versions of the story

- Lexical items:
    - *Tersebut* and *itu* are found in both versions, with more or less the same **frequency** (e.g. *tersebut* 9 occurrences SI and 7 in CI; *itu* 3 occurrences in SI and in CI).
- (5) a. *dan akhir-nya... **burung tersebut**... ber-teriak...* (CHR-SI1)  
       and final-3      bird      mentioned    BER-scream  
       ‘and at the end, the bird shouted.’
- b. *dan tiba-tiba, ikan yang tadi... dia ambil jatuh ke bawah dan eee... ...*  
       and suddenly fish REL earlier 3    take    all    to below and FILL  
       *di-makan oleh si... **rubah tersebut**.* (CHR-CI1)  
       PASS-eat by    PERS fox      mentioned  
       ‘and all of the sudden, the fish which he took fell down and errr... was eaten  
       by the fox.’

## Group 1: All SI features in both versions of the story

- *Kemudian* ‘then’ is used in both versions: 7 in SI and 8 in CI. *Lalu* ‘then’ only occurred once in CI.
- *Oleh* ‘by’, but not *sama* ‘by’ is used in passive sentences.
- One exception: *terus* ‘then’ is used twice in CI.

## Group 2: SI features in SI versions and CI features in CI versions of the story

- 3 participants are grouped into this category.
  - The participants only use the formal active *meN*-prefix in SI and its informal counterpart *N*-prefix in CI version. (100% for 1 speaker, 1 exception for 1 other, and 2 exceptions (same item) for the other)
- (6) a. *lalu, burung gagak menjawab, ia sedang memakan ikan.* (GER-SI1)  
 then, bird crow MEN.answer, 3 PROG MENG.eat fish  
 ‘Then, the crow answered that he was eating a fish.’
- b. *kemudian ia mendapat-kan ide... yaitu dengan cara menggonggong... ke gagak*  
 then 3 MENG.get-APPL idea that.is with way MENG.bark to crow  
*agar si gagak... terkejut dan... membuka mulut-nya...* (LIN-SI2)  
 so.that PERS crow surprised and MENG.open mouth-3  
 ‘Then, he got an idea, that is to bark to the crow so that the crow got surprised and open his mouth.’
- c. *boleh-kah kau memberikan sedikit saja bagian dari ikan itu untuk-ku?* (TIM-SI2)  
 may-Q.PART 2SG MENG.give-APPL a.little just part from fish DEM.DIST for-1SG  
 ‘Could you give me just a small part of the fish?’

## Group 2: SI features in SI versions and CI features in CI versions of the story

- (7) a. *tapi si burung gagak itu nolak.* (TIM-CI1)  
but PERS bird crow DEM.DIST MENG.reject  
'But the crow rejected it.'
- b. *dia mik(ir)... mikir kalo dia ngegonggong*  
3 MENG.think MENG.think COMP 3 N.bark  
*si gagak ini bakal... ngebuka mulut-nya.* (LIN-CI2)  
PERS crow DEM.PROG will N.open mouth-3  
'He was thinking... if he barked, this crow will open his mouth.'
- c. *burung gagak-nya terus ngejatoh-in ikan-nya.* (GER-CI1)  
bird crow-3 continue N-fall-APPL fish-3  
'The bird then dropped the fish.'

## Group 2: SI features in SI versions and CI features in CI versions of the story

Interestingly, passives are more frequently used in CI variety than in SI variety.

- SI:
  - Actives: 69 occurrences (86.25%)
  - Passives in SI: 11 (13.75%)
- CI:
  - Active in CI: 37 (63.79%)
  - Passives in CI: 21 (36.21%)

## Group 2: SI features in SI versions and CI features in CI versions of the story

- Discourse particles (*nih, deh, nah, dong, kan*) are only found in CI.
- (8) a. *ah, ternyata pas di-coba sama sirubah, berhasil nih.* (LIN-CI1)  
 PART in.fact when PASS-try with PERS fox successful PART  
 'When the fox tried it, he was successful.'
- b. *dia tanya ke si burung gagak, "eh, bagi dong ikan-nya, sedikit aja."* (TIM-CI2)  
 3 ask to PERS bird crow hey give PART fish-3 a.little just  
 'He asked the crow, "Hey, please give me the fish, just a little.'
- c. *trus musang-nya juga ngiler tuh sama ikan-nya.* (GER-CI2)  
 continue weasel-3 also N.drool PART with fish-3  
 'The weasel also wanted the fish.'
- d. *nah, pas di-kaget-in gagak-nya bisa buka mulut dia.* (LIN-CI1)  
 PART when PASS-surprised-APPL crow-3 can open mouth 3.  
 'So, when he was surprised, the crow could open his mouth.'

## Group 2: SI features in SI versions and CI features in CI versions of the story

- The 'informal' lexical items, when used are only in CI versions of the story and never in SI ones
  - *pas* 'when', *banget* 'very', *laper* 'hungry', *dapet* 'get', *jatoh* 'fall', *udah* 'already', *aja* 'just', *denger* 'listen', *ama* 'by'.
- Suffix *-kan* is only found in SI and suffix *-in* in CI.

## Group 3: Some SI features are used in CI versions of the story

- Two participants are of this group.
- SI features are used in CI variety, but CI features are not used in SI variety.
- The formal *meN*-prefix is used in both SI and CI versions.

(9) a. *akhir-nya eee... si rubah-nya **memuji-muji** si gagak itu...* (JAN-CI2)  
final-3 FILL PERS fox-3 MENG.RED-praise PERS crow that  
'At the end, the fox praised the crow.'

b. *...enggak lama kemudian... si gagak ini **membuka** mulut-nya...* (BRY-CI2)  
not long then PERS crow DEM. PROX MENG.open mouth-3  
'Soon after that, the open his mouth.'

## Group 3: Some SI features are used in CI versions of the story

- The informal *N*-prefix is only found in CI versions.

(10) a. *sampai ketika si gagak-nya **ngebuka** mulut-nya,*  
until when PERS crow-3 N.open mouth-3  
*ikan-nya langsung jatuh ke mulut si rubah.* (JAN-CI2)  
'when the crow opened his mouth, the fish directly fell into the fox's.'

b. *nah, eee... dia **ngeliat**...*  
PART FILL 3 N.see  
*ada tiga tong besar yang isi-nya penuh sama ikan.* (BRY-CI1)  
exist 3 barrel big REL contents-3 full with fish  
'So, err... when he saw... there were three barrels full of fish.'

## Group 3: Some SI features are used in CI versions of the story

- Some uses of words are consistently separated.

Words	Gloss	SI	CI
<i>enggak</i>	NEG	*	√
<i>tidak</i>	NEG	√	*
<i>lagi</i>	PROG	*	√
<i>sedang</i>	PROG	√	*
<i>tengah</i>	PROG	√	*
<i>kepingin</i>	want	*	√
<i>ingin</i>	want	√	*

## Group 3: Some SI features are used in CI versions of the story

- However, some others are not

Words	Gloss	SI	CI
<i>kelaparan</i>	starving	√	√
<i>lapar</i>	hungry	√	√
<i>kelaperan</i>	starving	*	√
<i>laper</i>	hungry	*	√
<i>bahwa</i>	COMP	√	√
<i>berfikir/berpikir</i>	Think	√	√
<i>jatuh</i>	fall	√	√
<i>jatoh</i>	fall	*	√
<i>kemudian</i>	then	√	√

## Group 3: Some SI features are used in CI versions of the story

- All discourse particles are only found in CI.

## Conclusion

- General data seems to show that SI and CI are very similar, except for the use of most 'informal' nasal prefix and most 'informal' lexical items, including discourse particles which are only used in CI.
- Closely examination of the data show that speakers are different from one another. Speakers can generally be divided into 3 categories:
  - Those who always use SI features regardless of SI or CI contexts
  - Those who consistently use SI features in SI contexts and CI and CI contexts
  - Those who seem to have some features mixed up.

## Further plans:

- Comparing meN-actives, 0-actives and di-passives
- Gathering data from people who are older.