# THE UNSTABLE STATE OF THE INDONESIAN-JAVANESE BILINGUALISM: EVIDENCE FROM LANGUAGE USE IN THE HOME DOMAIN

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## 1. Introduction<sup>2</sup>

The remarkable success of the promotion of the Indonesian language as the national language of Indonesia turns out to have had a dire impact on ethnic languages, noticeably the minor ones. The national language has encroached upon the various domains of language use, so much so that the minor ethnic languages are undergoing shift and, possibly, meeting with language death in the long run.

This paper reports on the results of a sociolinguistic research study conducted with a view to finding out whether, as hypothesised, the Indonesian language (IL) has infringed upon the use of the Javanese language (JL) in the home (family) domain, regarded as the last bastion of language maintenance: whether or not bilingualism is stable can, as a rule, be inferred from language choice in this domain. The point of departure of this study is the basic assumption that IL and JL have formed a diglossic situation, and hence the main objective of this study is to answer the research problem whether the diglossia is leaking. Some empirical evidence is sought to prove or disprove the hypothesis arising from the research problem.

IL is technically the Malay language, long serving as the *lingua franca* of the Malay archipelago. The name "Indonesian language" is in fact a political name given to the *lingua franca*, which was exalted to become the candidate of the national language of the envisioned state by the farsighted youths representing various ethnic groups in the Youth Congress of 1928. In terms of the number of native speakers, Malay was, and

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still is, a relatively small language compared to JL. Yet, geolinguistically its prestige has soared higher than that of JL among other things because of its status as the national language of Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Indonesia with all of its implications.

JL is one of more than 400 languages in Indonesia. It is the mother tongue of over seventy million speakers mostly living in Central Java, the Special Territory of Yogyakarta, a sultanate, and in East Java. There are also Javanese communities, albeit small, in New Caledonia, in the South Pacific, and in Suriname, in northern South America. JL belongs to the western Austronesian language family, whose members include IL (Malay), Batak, Sundanese, Minangkabau, Balinese, and Madurese, to cite just a few, and many languages in the Philippines, including Tagalog. JL differs from many of the other members of the Austronesian language family, as it does from many languages in the world, in that it has distinct and well-established speech levels, the use of which is dictated by an aggregate of factors such as the status of the hearer or addressee (including that of the person(s) being talked about), the social distance between the speaker and the hearer as well as, to a certain extent, the degree of the formality of the interaction.

With its intricately ramified stylemes (up to twelve according to some grammarians of Javanese, plus one styleme –a disrespectful one— which is reserved when the speaker is very angry (Sasangka, 1999: 1-3)), JL is, other things being equal, more difficult to learn and to use than IL, and therefore easily generates language insecurity on the part of the learners. It is also less "democratic" than IL.

#### 2. The study

# 2.1. Data collection

The data corpus for this study was extracted from the answers given by the respondents elicited by means of a survey questionnaire. In addition to personal data, including information on age group (with an interval of ten years), sex, and residence (i.e. in the city or in the outskirts of the city), respondents were asked to rate their (dis)agreements to ten statements on a five-point Likert type scale, on the basis of which their relative attitude towards the JL was measured. It would have been more accurate to use a matched guise technique to measure the respondents' language attitude. However, in view of the cumbersome nature of this technique, it was decided

to use the Likert technique instead, the rationale being that the objective was only to get a picture of what the attitude of the respondents was generally like towards JL. To conform to the practice of using the Likert technique, the rating scale for the language attitude was validated before being used.

Ten statements were singled out from the potential twenty. Respondents were asked to show their (dis)agreements to each of the ten statements, the scale being 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (not agree but not disagree), 2 (disagree) and 1 (strongly disagree). The English translations of the ten statements are as follows:

- (1) JL is a beautiful and sweet-sounding language.
- (2) JL is the caretaker of a high culture.
- (3) As a Javanese, I am proud to be able to speak JL.
- (4) All endeavours should be made to preserve JL.
- (5) I feel good when someone speaks JL to me.
- (6) I like speaking JL to other Javanese.
- (7) JL should be developed on a continuous basis.
- (8) JL should be taught in schools in regions where the majority of the people are Javanese ethnics.
- (9) The government should be more active in assisting the development of JL.
- (10) A campaign is imperative that JL be used at home among members of the Javanese family.

Respondents were also asked to indicate what language (i.e. JL and/or IL) they used at home when speaking about day-to-day family matters with family members in the descending and ascending generation. Their language choice was quantified according to the following scale:

- (1) (Almost) always JL: 5
- (2) More JL than IL: 4
- (3) JL and IL about the same frequency: 3
- (4) More IL than JL: 2
- (5) (Almost) always IL: 1

As was with the language attitude scale, the language choice scale was validated before the questionnaire was distributed.

#### 2.2. Respondents

A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire was distributed in two cities by a number of research assistants. The two cities, which also constitute the categories of the

city variable, were: (1) Yogyakarta, the capital of the Special Territory of Yogyakarta, considered to be the centre of Javanese culture; and (2) Surabaya, the capital of East Java Province, usually regarded as having a "lower quality of Javaneseness".

The research assistants were asked to distribute the survey questionnaires to would-be respondents whose level of education was at least lower secondary school. The rationale for this was the want of confidence that persons of lower than that level of education would not be able to understand –and to answer– the questions well.

Of the 107 copies of the questionnaire completed and returned, 11 copies were sorted out for defects in completing or for lack of seriousness in completing them. Thus, the corpus of data for this research study was the bits of information provided by 196 respondents, comprising 103 Yogyakarta respondents and 93 Surabaya respondents.

#### 2.3. Research variables

The focal variable of this research study is the age variable, the research objective being to see how language choice in the home domain and language attitude covary with age. With an interval of ten years, the categories of the age variable, along with the number of respondents in each category, are as can be seen in Table 1.

No.	Category	Responden	Respondents		
		$\overline{N}$	%		
1.	≥ 61	15	7.7		
2.	51 – 60	26	13.3		
3.	41 – 50	41	20.9		
4.	31 – 40	46	23.5		
5.	21 – 30	40	20.4		
6.	≤ 20	28	14.3		
		Total 196	100		

Table 1. The categories of the age variable.

Additionally, the variables include the sex and residence of the respondents, the respective categories being male and female, and in the city and in the outskirts of the city.

## 2.4. Data processing and analysis

The data corpus was processed using a computer program called the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to yield means for each category of the variables. To find out the degree of significance of the differences, the t-test (for the variable with two categories) and the analysis of variance (ANOVA) (for the variable with more than

two categories) were used. In addition, Bonferroni's Posthoc Analysis was also used to show multiple comparisons among the categories of the age variable. Duncan's Multiple Range Test was used to confirm the results of the t-test and the ANOVA.

## 3. Findings and discussion

## 3.1. Language attitude

As a whole, the language attitude of the Javanese, as can be inferred from the answers of the 196 respondents, is not very discouraging: on a scale of 1 to 5, the average language attitude score is 4.094, slightly over the scale of 4 ("agree"). This can be interpreted to mean that on the whole the respondents *agree* to the statements designed to elicit their attitude towards JL, the implication being that by and large their attitude is favourable, although not highly so.

What is interesting to note is the finding that, contrary to the hypothesis, there is no significant difference in the attitude towards JL between Yogyakarta respondents ("from the centre of the Javanese culture") and Surabaya respondents ("from the periphery of the Javanese culture"). As can be seen in Display 1, the t-test yields a t value of 1.211 and significance (2-tailed) value of .227, which shows that the difference is not significant.

City	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Yogyakarta	103	4.150	.623	6.142E-02
Surabaya	93	4.039	657	6.810E-02

Levene's test for equality of t-test for equality of means variances.

	F	sig.	t	Df	sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.424	.516	1.211	194	.227
Equal variances not assume	d		1.208	189.472	.228

Display 1. Results of the t-test computation of the difference in language attitude between Yogyakarta and Surabaya respondents.

Likewise, there is no significant difference between male and female respondents, the t value being 1.818 and the significance value (2-tailed) .071, as can be seen in Display 2.

Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Male	97	4.180	.607	6.167E-02
Female	99	4.015	.664	6.670E-02

Levene's test for equality of t-test for equality of means variances.

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	F	sig.	T	Df	sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.477	.490	1.818	194	.071
Equal variances not assumed			1.819	193.106	.070

Display 2. Results of the t-test computation of the difference in language attitude between male and female respondents.

The categories of *in the city* and *in the outskirts of the city* of the residence variable do not make a significant difference either. The t-test computation yields a t value of -.777 and a significance value of .438.

As regards the age variable, the analysis of variances (ANOVA) yields an F value of 8.993 and a significance value of .000, which shows that the language attitude between age groups is highly significant (Display 3).

	Sum of	df	Mean	F	sig.
	squares		square		
Attitude index between groups	15.294	5	3.059	8.993	.000
Attitude index within groups	64.624	190	.340		
Total	79.918	195			

Display 3. ANOVA of the language attitude in terms of the age variable.

The figures presented in Display 3 should not, however, be taken to mean that the difference in language attitude among the age groups applies across the board. As the result of the Duncan's Multiple Range Test shows (Display 4), at  $\alpha$ =0.05 there are essentially four composite age brackets which are significantly different in terms of language attitude. Those age brackets are: (1) the  $\leq$ 20 and 21-30, (2) the 21-30 and 31-40, (3) the 31-40,  $\geq$ 61 and 51-60, and (4) the  $\geq$ 61, 51-60 and 41-50 age brackets.

Age Group	N	Subset for $\alpha = .05$			
		1	2	3	4
≤ 20 years	28	3.646			
21 - 30 years	40	3.838	3.838		
31 - 40 years	46		4.107	4.107	
≥ 61 years	15			4.247	4.247
51 - 60 years	26			4.300	4.300
41 - 50 years	41				4.463
-	Sig.	.218	.083	.242	.189

Display 4. Duncan grouping of respondents' attitude towards JL.

In order to have a clearer picture of which age group significantly differs from which other groups in terms of language attitude, the same set of data was subjected to Benferroni's Multiple Comparisons Posthoc Analysis. The comparison of language attitude between the  $\leq 20$  age group and the other age groups yields figures as presented in Table 2.

No.	Age Group	Other Age Group	Mean Difference	Sig
1.	≤ 20	21 - 30	191	1.000*
2.		31 - 40	460	.018**
3.		41 - 50	817	.000**
4.		51 - 60	654	.001**
5.		≥ 61	600	.023**

<sup>\* =</sup> Not significant; \*\* = Significant

Table 2. Results of Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons of language attitude between the  $\leq$  20 age group and others ( $\alpha$ =.05).

The same comparison posthoc analysis between the age groups other than the ≤20 age brackets on the one hand and the remaining age groups on the other yields the following inferences:

- (1) the 21-30 age group does not differ significantly from the ≤20 age group, at the same time differing significantly from the remaining age groups, thus confirming the findings shown in Table 1;
- (2) the 41-50 age group differs significantly from the ≤20 and 21-30 age groups but *not* significantly from the remaining age groups;
- (3) the  $\geq$ 61 age group differs significantly from the  $\leq$ 20 and 21-30 age groups, but does not differ significantly from the remaining age groups.

All of the foregoing inferences, as well as the inferences which can be drawn from Table 2 above, seem to point to a likelihood that the language attitude scores of the respondents form an implicational scale. In order to find out whether or not this is the case, the mean scores of the language attitude were marshalled according to the hierarchy of age groups, as per Table 3.

No.	Age Group	N	Mean
1.	≤ 20	28	3.646
2.	21 - 30	40	3.838
3.	31 - 40	46	4.107
4.	41 - 50	41	4.463
5.	51 - 60	26	*4.300
6.	≥ 61	15	*4.247

<sup>\* =</sup> Aberration

Table 3. The mean score of language attitude of each of the six age groups of respondents.

As can be seen in the table above, from the 41-50 age group to the next younger age groups the mean scores consistently become increasingly smaller, suggesting that the attitude of the respondents toward JL becomes increasingly less positive as the age becomes younger. In terms of implicational scaling, the mean scores of the 41-50, 31-40, 21-30 and  $\leq$ 20 age groups conform to 100% scalability, there being no aberration whatsoever. However, if we include the mean scores of the 51-60 and  $\geq$ 61 age groups in

the picture, with two aberrations the implicational scalability goes down to (6 - 2):  $6 \times 100\% = 66.6\%$ , which is not high enough to suggest that, overall, language attitude diminishes among younger Javanese.

The aberrations as regards the 51-60 age group and ≥61 age group, whose mean scores are 4.300 and 4.247 respectively, can be seen as a paradox: they are in contradiction with the increasingly smaller mean scores of the other age groups in descending order. Perhaps this paradox reflects the tendency of the senior respondents' waning attitude towards JL for one reason or another.

On the assumption that language attitude correlates positively with the use of JL, the foregoing paradox, even if it is indeed a general tendency for Javanese of over fifty years old to have an increasingly diminishing attitude towards JL, does not seem to pose a threat to the maintenance of JL. What seems to be ominous is the finding that for the 41-50 age group downwards, the language attitude mean scores *consistently* become increasingly smaller, forming a perfect implicational scale. If this tendency continues to prevail, it can be assumed that there will come a time when Javanese people's attitude towards JL becomes negative, foreshadowing the grave shift of the language, which can lead, in the long run, to its death.

#### 3.2. Language choice

Today's Javanese, especially in big cities, are mostly Indonesian-Javanese bilinguals: they have a command of both languages at their disposal and are able to choose one over another as dictated by sociolinguistic factors.

As alluded to earlier, the choice of language used in the home (family) domain was quantified on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being for always or almost always IL, 2 for more IL than JL, 3 for IL=JL, 4 for more JL than IL, and 5 for always or almost always JL. The statistical computations (t-test) for language choice scores in terms of the city variable (Yogyakarta and Surabaya), the sex variable (male and female), and the residence variable (in the city or in the outskirts of the city) all yield results which show that the difference in the language choice between each of the three pairs of variable categories is *not* significant.

By contrast, the difference of language choice scores in terms of the age variable appears to be significant, the F value being 38.003 at  $\alpha$ =.000, as can be verified in Display 5.

	Sum of	df	Mean	F	sig.
	squares		square		
Choice index between groups	79.077	5	15.815	38.003	.000
Choice index within groups	79.071	190	.416		
Total	158.147	190			

Display 5. ANOVA of the language choice in terms of the age variable.

Duncan grouping of the same data yields figures which can be seen in Display 6.

Age Group	N	Subset for $\alpha = .05$			
		1	2	3	4
≤ 20 years	28	2.786			
21 - 30 years	40		3.513		
31 - 40 years	46			4.113	
≥ 61 years	15				4.520
51 - 60 years	26				4.588
41 - 50 years	41				4.598
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000	.673

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

Display 6. Duncan grouping of respondents' language choice scores in terms of the age variable.

As can be seen, there are essentially four age groups indentified by the Duncan's Multiple Range Test. These are (1) the  $\leq$ 20, (2) the 21-30, (3) the 31-40 group, and (4) the  $\geq$ 61, 51-60, and 41-50 group, all three forming one composite age group. This finding is confirmed by Bonferroni Multiple Comparison Posthoc Analysis results as exemplified by the following facsimile of the analysis results involving the  $\leq$ 20 age group compared with the other age groups.

No.	Age Group	Other Age Group	Mean Difference	Sig
1.	≤ 20	21 – 30	727	.000*
2.		31 – 40	-1.327	.000*
3.		41 – 50	-1.812	.000*
4.		51 – 60	-1.803	.000*
5.		≥ 61	-1.734	.000*

<sup>\* =</sup> Highly significant

Table 4. Results of Bonferroni Multiple Comparisons of language choice between the  $\leq$  20 age group and others ( $\alpha$ =.05).

Returning to Duncan grouping, we see that the mean score of each of the four groups (with those of the oldest three age groups averaged) is as shown in Table 5.

a. Uses harmonic mean sample size = 28.306

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

No.	Age Group	N	Mean
1.	≤ 20	28	2.786
2.	21 - 30	40	3.513
3.	31 - 40	46	4.113
4.	41 - 50, 51 - 60, ≥ 61	82	4.568

Table 5. The mean score of language choice of each of the four age groups according to Duncan grouping.

The table shows that the language choice mean scores consistently become increasingly smaller as the age groups become younger. The figures under the mean column form a perfect implicational scale (scalability = 100%), suggesting that there is a drift in the use of JL: JL is undergoing shift.

#### 3.3. Language attitude - Language choice correlation

In an earlier research study (Gunarwan, 2002) it was found that language attitude correlated positively with language choice. In order to confirm or refute that finding, the correlation between the two parameters is here replicated. Using Pearson Correlation, the result shows that there is a highly significant correlation between the two dependent variables (Display 7).

		Attitude Index	Choice Index
Attitude Index	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	196	196
Choice Index	Pearson Correlation	.470	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	196	196

<sup>\*\* =</sup> Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Display 7. Pearson correlation between language attitude and language choice.

This finding confirms the assumption made earlier that language attitude towards JL correlates positively with language choice.

#### 3.4. Language choice vis-à-vis the addressee

Whereas the foregoing findings all point to the tendency that the use of JL diminishes with the younger age group, it would be pertinent to find out what language(s) a speaker would use when speaking to members of the extended family. The computation of the language choice score for each age group in that regard yields results as presented in Table 6.

		Addressee					
No.	Age Group	Grand- parent	Parent	Uncle/ Aunt	Sibling	Child	
1.	≤ 20	4.68	4.32	4.00	3.61	-	
2.	21 - 30	4.75	4.55	4.28	4.03	2.00	
3.	31 - 40	*4.67	4.70	4.48	4.39	2.85	
4.	41 - 50	4.90	4.95	4.71	4.54	4.12	
5.	51 - 60	-	*4.42	4.73	4.69	4.27	
6.	≥ 61	-	-	*4.53	*4.60	4.53	

<sup>\* =</sup> Aberration

Table 6. Language choice when speaking to members of the extended family.

The mean score figures in Table 6 above show a general tendency that less and less JL is used by a speaker when addressing members of the extended family in the descending generation. With 27 cells and 4 aberrations, the figures form a two-track implicational scale (sideward and upward) with a scalability of  $(27-4): 27 \times 100\% = 85.2\%$ , sufficiently high to believe in its predictability power.

## 3.5. Diglossia leakage

All of the findings regarding the surveys of language attitude and language choice above seem to point to the general tendency that the quantity of the use of JL is on the decline. This signals, as alluded to earlier, that JL is shifting. However, those findings do not show whether or not the presumed Indonesian-Javanese diglossia (in which IL functions as the High language and JL as the Low language) is leaking.

In order to find out whether this would be the case, the language choice counts of the respondents, across the board, were computed and converted to percentages. The results are presented in Table 7.

	Language Use Option	Respondents			
No.		Yogyakarta		Surabaya	
		N	%	N	%
1.	JL*	51	49.5	38	40.9
2.	JL > IL	22	21.4	21	22.6
3.	JL = IL	27	26.2	28	30.1
4.	IL > JL	3	2.9	6	6.5
5.	IL*	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Total	103	100	93	100

<sup>\* =</sup> Always or almost always

Table 7. Percentages of Yogyakarta and Surabaya respondents' use of language in the home domain.

<sup>(5 = (</sup>almost) always JL; 4 = JL>IL; 3 = JL=IL; 2 = IL>JL; 1 = (almost) always IL)

The percentage figures in the table show that there is no case of IL being always or almost always used. What is worth noting is the relatively low percentage of the exclusive or almost exclusive use of JL (49.5% and 40.9% for Yogyakarta and Surabaya respondents respectively). This indicates that IL has encroached upon the use of JL in the home domain. Ideally, in a well-compartmentilised diglossic situation (without leakage), the percentage should be 100 or nearing it. This was most probably the case when Javanese people had not become IL-JL bilinguals.

To sum up, all of the main findings of this research study suggest that JL is undergoing shift: the intergenerational continuity is, to borrow Fishman's (1991: 1) words, "proceeding negatively," which is evident from the fact that the quantity of JL use is becoming lower and lower from the older generation to the younger ones. At this juncture, JL cannot be categorised as an endangered language, because there is no imminent risk of it being no longer spoken in the foreseeable future, unlike the case of the Lampung language in southern Sumatra, which would die out in 75 to 100 years' time unless the shift is reversed (Gunarwan, 1994). All things considered, JL can be classified as a threatened language, like the case of Balinese on the island of Bali (Gunarwan, 2001a) and Banjarese Malay in southern Borneo (Gunarwan, 2001b).

In the literature of language shift there are factors usually considered giving rise to language shift. These include sociolinguistic, demographic, economic and psychological factors. With regard to the JL shift, another factor can perhaps be cited: linguistic factor, referring to the fact that JL is difficult to learn and use.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

The general conclusion of this research study is that the Indonesian-Javanese bilingualism is not stable: JL is succumbing to the penetration of IL in the home domain and, given the incessant pressure of IL as the dominant language, it is not impossible that in the long run IL will cause JL to sidle in the home domain. When this happens, JL's status as a threatened language will change to a declining language or, worse, to a moribund language. From the point of view of nationalism and nationism, this would be an advantage for Indonesia as a state.

However, from the point of view of linguistics, the probable eventual death of JL would be a great loss. Unfortunately, many Javanese, Javanese scholars alike, do not seem to be aware that JL is on the decline and shifting. This is evident from the fact that

nobody raised this issue, let alone presented a paper on this issue, in the well-attended Third Congress of the Javanese Language held in Yogyakarta in July 2001.

As was expected, it is difficult to measure the pace of the decline of JL use among JL speakers. At the risk of resulting in an error, the decline of the JL use is here attempted. On the assumption that the decline pace is regular, and that no endeavour to reverse the JL shift is made, the mean scores presented in Table 4 can be used as a basis for calculation. To make it easier to follow, the order of the mean scores is reversed: the 41-50 age group is put at the top, followed by the 31-40, 21-30, and ≤20 age group in that order. The average difference of the mean scores presented in Table 4 is 0.591. On the basis of this average mean score, the mean scores of the hypothetical respondents of the next twenty five years (i.e. the next generation) can be projected, and so can those of the next fifty years. The projection can be sketched as per Table 8.

No.	Age Group	Present Generation	Next One Generation	Next Two Generations
1.	41 - 50	4.568	2.786	0.983
2.	31 - 40	4.113	2.165	0.392
3.	21 - 30	3.513	1.574	?
4.	≤ 20	2.786	0.983	?

Table 8. Projection of the hypothetical mean scores of language choice among Javanese in the next generations (0 = 0.591).

In twenty five years' time, the  $\leq$  20 Javanese will become members of the 41-50 age group. Assuming there are no factors affecting language choice in a positive manner, the mean score for this new age group would be the same as that of the present  $\leq$  20 age group, namely 2.786. The mean score of the  $\leq$  20 age group in twenty five years' time would then be 0.983, which would become the mean score of the 41-50 age group of the following next generation. If this gross calculation turns out to be correct, then it can be predicted that in fifty years' time JL will become a moribund language, namely a language which is no longer learned as the first language by children (Grenoble & Whaley, 2001: 465). JL becoming a moribund language, its death would be a matter of time.

If that projection sounds too harsh, it should be remembered that most of the respondents of this research study are from two big cities. In the big city like Jakarta, the capital, for instance, the projection is not empirically uncorroborated: if there are

Jakarta-born children of Javanese parentage who can now speak JL, this is exception to the rule.

Serious endeavours to reverse the shift of Javanese are imperative lest it should die out. One way is to ensure the intergenerational transmission of the lagnuage in the home domain: Javanese must continue to be spoken between Javanese parents and their children.

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