



Betawi Language Ecology

- Threatened creole spoken in Jakarta, Tangerang, and Bekasi
- No standardized orthography (data presented here adheres to source spelling practices)
- Interethnic community resulting from the slave trade in Dutch East Indies, immigration from China, abandonment of biracial children by European fathers, and intra-archipelago emigration
- Source languages: Malay (Indonesian), Chinese (Hokkien), Balinese, Sundanese, Javanese, Arabic, Dutch, Portuguese
- Continued contact with Jakarta Indonesian, Standard Indonesian, Javanese, Buginese, Chinese (Hokkien), Sundanese

Key Dates

- Originated in the 17th century under Dutch colonialism, became the *lingua franca* for Betawi community by the 18th century
- 1928: Indonesian language is created; regional variety of Malay spoken in the archipelago chosen to avoid ethnic conflict
- 1945-1948: Indonesian Revolution; Dutch control expelled from the country
- 1990s: Indonesian becomes mandatory in education system; urbanization sparks establishment of interethnic neighborhoods and increase in interethnic marriages

-nya's Enclitic 3rd-Person Function in Betawi & Indonesian

Genitive: Attested in **both** Betawi and Indonesian

| | | | |
|---------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Betawi: | baju-ñe | Indonesian: | baju-nya |
| | clothes-3SG.GEN | | clothes-3SG.GEN |
| | 'his/her/their clothes' | | 'his/her/their clothes' |

Direct Object Replacement: Attested **primarily** in Indonesian (few occurrences in Wallace 1976)

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Indonesian: | Mem-bawa-nya |
| | ACT.TR-bring-3SG.ACC |
| | 'Bring it' |

Indirect Object Replacement: Attested **only** in Indonesian

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Indonesian: | Narti men-unggu-nya |
| | Narti ACT.TR-wait-3SG.DAT |
| | 'Narti waits for him/her' (Sneddon 1996: 165) |

Subject Replacement: Attested **primarily** in Indonesian (singular occurrence in Wallace 1976)

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| Indonesian: | Kucing di-bawa-nya |
| | Cat PAS-bring-3SG.NOM |
| | 'He/she brought the cat' |

Research Questions

Has Jakarta Indonesian influenced Betawi pronouns? If so, are free pronouns more likely than bound/enclitic forms to be borrowed in contact situations? (Borrowing Scale presented in Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 74-76)

Methodology

- Diachronic analysis of dialogues from sources of three separate and distinct time periods
 - 1909-1949: Transcribed Betawi dialogues from early-20th century sources (pre-Indonesian Revolution); included in appendix of C.J. Grijns 1991 doctoral dissertation
 - 1976: Transcribed dialogues collected during fieldwork by Stephen Wallace for doctoral dissertation
 - 2020: YouTube Betawi-language sitcom produced by members of contemporary Betawi speakers (Agus Fazriansyah, LenSkit)
- Dialogues picked based on following criteria: all interlocutors speak Betawi, social/age status difference between speakers (to account for honorifics licensing)
- Free and enclitic pronoun tokens coded
 - For enclitic pronouns, the function of the pronoun was classified as "e.gen" [enclitic 3rd-person genitive], "e.acc" [enclitic 3rd-person accusative], "e.dat" [enclitic 3rd-person dative], or "e.nom" [enclitic 3rd-person nominative]
- Limitations: Uneven number of tokens due to accessibility of sources, small number of tokens overall due to accessibility of sources (2024 BewWikipedia and 2023 dictionary released **after** data collection)

Results

Free Pronouns

- Infiltration of Indonesian register rules
- More age-grading in 2020 vs. 1976 data
- No attested instances of 'kalian' or 'Anda' (more recent Indonesian pronouns) (Sneddon 2010: 165-166)

Diachronic Distribution

- Increased use of 'ana/ane,' 'gua/gue'
- Decreased use of 'dia/die'
- No attested use of 'kami;' no change in Betawi conflation of INCL. vs. EXCL. 1PL

Results (Continued)

Enclitic Pronouns

- Extremely scarce instances of expanded (Indonesian-like) -nya functions; limited to 1976 data (possible product of code-switching)
- Predicted that younger speakers in 2020 data would be more likely to expand functions due to contemporary widespread bilingualism but **not found** in data.

Discussion

- Little evidence of enclitic pronoun function expanding as a result of increased contact with Indonesian.
- Suggests that free pronouns are more likely to be borrowed – at this current stage in contact (see Thomason & Kaufman 1988 Borrowing Scale).
- Presence of age-grading in the 2020 data suggests that pronoun borrowing in Betawi-Indonesian contact is a sociolinguistic phenomenon
 - Future work should probe whether this is because of indexicality and identity-marking (similar to concepts discussed in Abtahian, Cohn, Djenar, & Vogel 2021)
 - Possibly explained by language attitude differences amongst age groups and perceived association with low socio-economic class (Wouk 1989: 8; Nur, Lukman, Kaharuddin, & Dafirah 2021: 108)
- Remaining question of how relationship between form and function in language contact relates to previous studies that establish age-based language shift (Wallace 1976; Kurniawan 2018; Sneddon 2006)

Implications & Significance

- Creoles with non-European lexifiers remain understudied
 - Malay-based contact languages (e.g. comparative studies of Francophone or Lusophone pidgins and creoles)
 - Little previous existing literature on Betawi language
 - Language endangerment and climate change (flooding of Jakarta and move of the capital city)
- Pronoun borrowing
- Speaker agency and identity
- Contact morphology
- Ongoing misconceptions about creole and contact languages
- Second Language Acquisition

