



Stylized Language and Construction of Bengkaung Youth Identity

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Abstract. The adolescents of West Lombok in the village of Bengkaung have created a new variant of the Sasak language and used it among themselves as a means of creating local youth communities. The language variant is uniquely patterned that only the youth group community members can identify and use it in everyday communication. The study aims at identifying the pattern which is symbolically used as means of constructing youth identities and youth micro-communities within the macro-community of Bengkaung. Data were collected by observing, interviewing, and distributing questionnaires to members of the youth group communities. Ethnographic analysis was used to elucidate the pattern and the factors governing its use. The study shows that, while the pattern of the variant is identifiable, the governing factors range from keeping private secrets to stylizing personal and resistance to adult domination of Bengkaung social structure.

Keywords: Language Choice · Adolescent · Stylized Speech · Identity

1 Introduction

In recent years, sociolinguistics has been focused on the speech stylization and the language crossing in communicative actions [1]. Speech style has become an explosive field of study amid modern society especially young people. One of the rapid changes in society is stylized language a variety of language used among marginalized members of a community as a means of communication among members the community as a symbol of identity differentiating them from those of other communities. It is thus used to identify individual's personal identity, social groups members, and nation. The characteristic or identity of people can be known from their language style. Basically, this stylized form of language is made on the choice of language forms patterned according to norms set up by the group members.

Stylized language used among members of youth groups can be found in Bengkaung, a cluster of villages on the southern slope of Mount Punikan in the west Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The village of Bengkaung is dominantly occupied by the Sasak ethnic group who speak as vernacular language, the Sasak language, one of the central-Austronesian language. The adolescents at Bengkaung village have constructed a new variant of the Sasak language and used it among themselves as a means of communication among themselves. It is spontaneously and subconsciously pattern in their

communication in patterns unknown even to them and these patterns need to be unraveled for the sake of sociolinguistic endeavor. The construction of this new variant of the Sasak language serves a number of socio-pragmatic purposes: for example, to keep things as secrets, to address in-group referents, to show membership of Bengkaung youngsters' identities, to talk about personal matters, and to discuss private matters. This language is often called the *una-una* language because it follows /u/-/a/ patterns following the *ana-ana* [I] language, in-group language marker of solidarity in the neighboring locality. This paper aims at identifying the patterns and extrapolating how they are used as a means of constructing Bengkaung youth identities.

Stylized language among youth groups is associated with social movement. Basic movement in the middle of social community covers personal identity in the scope of everyday life which is patterned on the local culture [2]. In specific terms social movement is related with struggle among individual or group which takes them into same solidarity, feeling, and fate. As group membership grows larger, the use of stylized language also grows wider and it spreads through stratification where the movement occurred. Along with the expansion of the process, the amount of agreement among members also decreases and, yet, the amount of dispute is enhanced [3].

A similar study has been reported in [1]. He described the social movement of code-switching into Stylized Asian English (SAE), a standard variety of British English uttered in South Asian accent by Anglo-Saxon and South Asian youngsters in London suburbs dominated by youngsters of South Asian descents (e.g. Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian). The young members groups of that city imitate the dialect of south Asian countries people in their English. They use the style of the language among themselves as a symbolic of their identity. They switch their vernacular language into the style of south Asian countries' language. It is in line with the new variant of the Sasak language among Bengkaung adolescents. Even though it is appearing various assumptions which is crossing toward the meaning and context of the *una-una* language among the other people, but it is less problematic. It is more covering on symbolic meaning of the members of the youth group communities to show their familiarity and solidarity.

Not only is language used for interactional purposes as in the SAE and the Bengkaung cases, but it is also used to construct the identity of the users in everyday life. In these cases, language or style of language use is related to the identity claim among the communicative participants. As these language varieties are used in internally within age-related networks of social relation, these language varieties have strong association with internal identity, group membership and solidarity among members of the communities. But, in some cases, the variety is also shared with adult members of the Bengkaung community indicating that the variety valorizes the identities of being members of the Bengkaung society excluding those without access to the variety the possibility of membership claim. Thus, in social interaction, the use of the language variety bounds members of the community in symbolically unified common identity which contrasts the local from the nonlocal or vice versa.

Everyone has their own style when talking a language. It shows the individuals' identity such as the differences between women and men in their language style. The women usually talk in softer and tender and shy tones as a way of contrasting themselves while male speak in coarser and louder voices. In this case, both women and men stylize

their language as a way of constructing their own identity differentiating themselves from other groups of the opposite sex. Similarly, the language that is usually used by children, teen, adolescents, is quite different with adults. It shows their identity as themselves. Another case showing language as identity that every country has their own pronunciation and stylization in their own language which is different from other countries. When speaking other languages, they use their own dialect which is different from the authentic pronunciation of the languages. In this case every country shows their identity as group member community of their nation.

Identity refers to the unity or the similarity among group of people at certain geographical places [4]. There are two types of identity of human; personal identity (an individual character which is differentiated her or him from another individual) and social identity (the similar character of some members group communities based on their agreement) [5, 6]. Social identity can include religion, ethnicity, and social identity is a recognized characteristic of the individual as a member of a group and the recognition of the group to the individual [7]. Social class, In the case of ethnicity, identity is an individual identification with social unit whose members have same cultures and do some activities together based on their culture [8]. It has closely related to cultural identity that appeared from habitual, custom, language, and values [9].

2 Methods

This study used ethnographic approach to data collection and analysis with triangulation of observation, interviews, elicitation, and questionnaires for data collection. Morphological analysis was done to tease out the patterns in the stylized language of the members of the youth group communities. Ethnography was used to elucidate the patterns and the factors governing its used.

The writers took notes of what and how the adolescents of Bengkaung village used the *una-una* language in their everyday communication. Interviews of the members of the youth group were done informally in the community gazebos where they usually meet at nightly basis. These interviews as well as other interactions were digitally recorded with prior consent of the group. Elicitation of the *una-una* language forms was also done in groups and in such a manner that every individual present was free to contribute their views. The elicitation was also digitally recorded. Questionnaires were also distributed focusing on the questions of what, how, why, when, and to whom they used the *una-una* language.

3 Results and Discussion

The *una-una* language has unique patterns, used in particular contexts for particular purposes.

3.1 Patterns

The *una-una* language is patterned according to the morphology of the base words and the number of syllables in the base words.

Table 1. Base Words

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Mangan</i>	Mungan	<i>Eat</i>
<i>Sampi</i>	Sumpa	<i>Cow</i>
<i>Miskin</i>	Muskan	<i>Poor</i>
<i>Sugeh</i>	Sugah	<i>Rich</i>
<i>Hape</i>	Hupa	<i>Cellphone</i>
<i>Kembang</i>	Kumbang	<i>Flower</i>
<i>Batok</i>	Butak	<i>Cough</i>
<i>Ngengat</i>	Ngungat	<i>See</i>
<i>Nulis</i>	Nulas	<i>Write</i>
<i>Piring</i>	Purang	<i>Plate</i>
<i>Lumur</i>	Lumar	<i>Glass</i>
<i>Mangkoq</i>	Mungkaq	<i>Bowl</i>
<i>Sidut</i>	Sudat	<i>Spoon</i>
<i>Atep</i>	Utap	<i>Roof</i>
<i>Gunting</i>	Guntang	<i>Cut</i>

3.1.1 Formulation from Base Words

Base words here refer to stems without any suffices attached to them. Table 1 list samples of those words in the source languages (i.e. the Indonesian language and the Sasak language) and the words formulated from them for the *una-una* or Bengkaung language.

The Table 1 apparently shows a regular pattern where all the syllable makers (i.e. vowels) in the initial position are altered to a high back unrounded vowel /u/ while the syllable makers in the later syllables are changed to a low back unrounded vowel /a/. This can be formulated as (i) below.

$$(i). [C1V1][C2V2C3] \rightarrow [C1/u/][C2/a/C3]$$

C = consonant

V = vowel

3.1.2 Formulation from Derivative Forms: Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefixes and suffixes in derivative forms are not involved in the alteration. Only the base forms are altered according to the /u/-/a/ pattern. Table 2 lists samples of derivative forms from the Indonesian and the Sasak languages as well as the formulated words in the *una-una* language.

Note that dashes (-) have been used to separate the prefixes and the suffixes from the base forms in order to ease our understanding of the data and the patterning there in for the formulation of words in the *una-una* language.

Table 2. Words with Prefixes and Suffixes

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Ke-temu-ang</i>	Ke-tuma-ang	<i>To meet</i>
<i>Be-gawe-ang</i>	Be-guwa-ang	<i>To work</i>
<i>Ke-tidem-ang</i>	Ke-tudam-ang	<i>To oversleep</i>
<i>Ke-lelah-ang</i>	Ke-lulah-ang	<i>Too tired</i>
<i>Ng-(k)aken-ang</i>	Ng-(k)ukan-ang	<i>To consume</i>
<i>Pe-lari-ang</i>	Pe-lura-ang	<i>To Escape</i>
<i>Be-peleng-ang</i>	Be-pulang-ang	<i>To cut</i>
<i>Be-salam-ang</i>	Be-sulam-ang	<i>To shake hand</i>
<i>Be-lanja-ang</i>	Be-lunja-ang	<i>To treat</i>
<i>Be-sapa-ang</i>	Be-supu-ang	<i>To greet</i>
<i>Be-tangis-ang</i>	Be-tungas-ang	<i>To cry</i>
<i>Be-repot-ang</i>	Be-rupat-ang	<i>To be busy</i>
<i>Be-seneng-ang</i>	Be-sunang-ang	<i>To be happy</i>
<i>Be-tulang-an</i>	Be-tulang-an	<i>To help</i>

From the data above, only the base forms are altered but the prefixes and the suffixes remain the same. This can be formulated as in (ii) below.

(ii). $PRE + [C1V1][C2V2] + SUFF \rightarrow PRE + [C1/u/][C2/a/] + SUFF$

3.1.3 Formulation from Derivative Forms: Prefixes or Suffixes Only

As previously mentioned, only the base forms are altered and the prefixes or the suffixes retain their forms. Table 3 presents base data with prefixes while Table 4 shows data with suffixes.

It is clear here that prefixes remain and only the base forms are changed, and this can be formulated as in (iii).

(iii). $PRE + [C1V1][C2V2C3] \rightarrow PRE + [C1/u/][C2/a/C3]$

The data above indicates that suffixes retain their form and only the base forms are altered in the /u/-a/ pattern as indicated in (iv) below.

(iv). $[C1V1][C2V2C3] + SUFF \rightarrow [C1/u/][C2/a/C3] + SUFF$

Table 3. Base Forms with Prefixes

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Be-poto</i>	Be-puta	<i>To take pictures</i>
<i>Me-rokok</i>	Me-rukak	<i>To smoke</i>
<i>Be-gawe</i>	Be-guwa	<i>To work</i>
<i>Te-paleq</i>	Te-pulaq	<i>To be thrown at</i>
<i>di-gulang</i>	di-gulang	<i>To be folded</i>
<i>Te-peleng</i>	Te-pulang	<i>To be cut</i>
<i>Be-rempok</i>	Be-rumpak	<i>To kick around</i>

Table 4. Base Words with Suffixes

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Kenal-ang</i>	Kunal-ang	<i>Introduce</i>
<i>Beleq-ang</i>	Bulaq-ang	<i>Bigger</i>
<i>Peleng-ang</i>	Pulang-ang	<i>Cutting</i>
<i>Pinaq-ang</i>	Punaq-ang	<i>Making</i>
<i>Sugeh-ang</i>	Sugah-ang	<i>Richer</i>
<i>Miskin-ang</i>	Muskan-ang	<i>Poorer</i>
<i>Inges-ang</i>	ungas-ang	<i>Bigger</i>
<i>Kocet-ang</i>	Kucat-ang	<i>Smaller</i>

3.1.4 Formulation in Poly-syllable Base Forms

As the pattern is rather simple, it might run into trouble with multi-syllable base forms. However, the solution is rather simple, that is, by treating initial syllable as prefixes and only the last two syllables are altered according to the /u/-/a/ pattern. This can be seen in Table 5.

In the case of multi-syllable base words, only the last two syllables are altered into the /u/-/a/ pattern, and this can be formulated as in (v) below.

$$(v). [C1V1C2V2C3V3C4] \rightarrow [C1V1C2/u/C3/a/C4]$$

3.1.5 Formulation in Base Forms with Syllable in /u/-/a/ Pattern

Exception to formula (i) to (v) above comes from words with /u/-/a/ pattern in the base forms. Examples of these words can be seen in Table 6.

Table 5. Multiple Syllable Base Words

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Terompah</i>	Terumpah	<i>Slippers</i>
<i>Kelemaq</i>	Kelumaq	<i>Morning</i>
<i>Kekelem</i>	Kekulam	<i>Evening</i>
<i>Kelambiq</i>	kelumbaq	<i>Shirt</i>
<i>Sekolah</i>	Sekulah	<i>School</i>
<i>Jendele</i>	Jendula	<i>Window</i>
<i>Nerake</i>	Neruka	<i>Hell</i>
<i>Bebalu</i>	Bebula	<i>Widow</i>
<i>Bejoraq</i>	Bejuraq	<i>To be playful</i>
<i>Bulayak</i>	Buluyak	<i>Satay</i>

Table 6. Base Words with /u-/a/ Syllable Patterns

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Upah</i>	Upuh	<i>To hire</i>
<i>Urap</i>	Urup	<i>Mixed vegies</i>
<i>Hujan</i>	Hujun	<i>Rain</i>
<i>Hutan</i>	Hutun	<i>Forest</i>
<i>Hutang</i>	Hutung	<i>Loan</i>
<i>Bulan</i>	Bulun	<i>Moon</i>
<i>Berugaq</i>	Beruguq	<i>Gazebo</i>
<i>Tuhan</i>	Tuhun	<i>God</i>

In case of /u-/a/ pattern already form in the base forms, /u/ is copied to the /a/ part resulting a new /u-/u/ pattern as shown in (vi) below.

(vi). [C1/u/C2/a/C3] → [C1/u/C2/u/C3]

3.1.6 Formulation in Monosyllabic Base Forms

The need for /u-/a/ bi-syllabic pattern in the /u-/a/ language creates a formulaic problem when the base forms are monosyllabic, but the solution for such problems have found as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Monosyllabic Base Forms

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Pot</i>	Upat	<i>Pot</i>
<i>Rak</i>	Urak	<i>Rack</i>
<i>Cok</i>	Ucak	<i>Charge</i>
<i>Cek</i>	Ucek	<i>Check</i>
<i>Cop</i>	Ucap	<i>Stop</i>
<i>Los</i>	Ulas	<i>Straight</i>
<i>Lim</i>	Ulam	<i>Glue</i>
<i>Jam</i>	Ujam	<i>Watch</i>
<i>Mol</i>	Umal	<i>Mall</i>
<i>Saq</i>	Usaq	<i>One</i>
<i>Pas</i>	Upas	<i>Suitable</i>
<i>Pil</i>	Upal	<i>Pill</i>
<i>Bal</i>	Ubal	<i>Ball</i>
<i>Tas</i>	Utas	<i>Bag</i>
<i>Ges</i>	Ugas	<i>Stove</i>

The solution is the promotion of /u/ as the maker of the additional syllable while /a/ replaces the syllable maker in the monosyllabic base forms. This can be formulized as in (vii) below.

(vii). [C1V1C2] → [u/][C1/a/C2]

3.1.7 The Case of Base Forms with Diphthongs

In the case of base forms with diphthongs /aI/, /aU/ and /oI/ where glide /y/ is dominant, the /u/-/a/ pattern in the Bengkaung language might require the use glide /w/. Examples of such words can be seen in Table 8.

In this case, the glide in the diphthongs in the base forms is altered to /w/ resulting from the co-articulation between /u/ and /a/ requires the insertion of glide /w/ in between and this can be formulized in (viii) below.

(viii). [C1V1C2V2Glide] → [C1V1C2u/w//a/]

3.2 Contexts and Purposes

The new variant of Sasak language, called *una-una* language, is used by the members of youth group communities of Bengkaung village in informal context. They use it only when talking among themselves while the others (kids, adults) cannot understand it.

Table 8. Base Words with Diphthongs

Sasak Language	Bengkaung Language	Meaning
<i>Bau</i>	Buwa	<i>Smelly</i>
<i>Beliau</i>	Beliwuwa	<i>Him/her</i>
<i>Buat</i>	Buwut	<i>Make</i>
<i>Cia cia</i>	Cuwacuwa	<i>Hey great</i>
<i>Coi</i>	Cuwa	<i>Brother</i>
<i>Lai</i>	Luwa	<i>To go</i>
<i>Pakai-an</i>	Pakuwa-n	<i>Clothes</i>
<i>Pelai</i>	Peluwa	<i>To run</i>
<i>Pulau</i>	Puluwa	<i>Island</i>

It makes them to talk freely about anything without being afraid from others. It also constructs the familiarity and solidarity among them as a group of the adolescents of Bengkaung village. The example of using the *una-una* language when a boy tells his friends about his dreamed girl:

Three young men had sat in front of a shop while some people seemed had bought something and some others had walked around the shop. 'A' came and joined them.

A: "ape gaweq meq pade ngumpul-ngumpul tene?"

("what are you doing here?")

G: "gitaq-gitaq cewek liwat sang ne arak kembauang", hehe, ante mbe wah meqaning"?

(just look around, perhaps we can find a girl to be mine". *laughing*. where have you been?")

A: "wah kulengan papukku."

("I have visited my grandmother")

U: "ndot- ndot juluk tene arak kancente, ante sibuk doang ante jak."

("stay with us here, I see you busy always")

S: "ye wah ni, *umpaq ruban gutak uka uya bkudak cuwak juaqna unang tunjangbuas ye puda mungan ruwane turas umpaq ne puda tuak juran ulak sudan punta,, eeee kuran jumak,,juaq lungan q ungat ye ukaumang ka kunncangka."*

(" yeah, you can say that again, I saw you with a girl at Tanjung Bias yesterday. you ate then rode a horse on the beach. wow,, looking so cool. I was with my father and looked at you from a distance").

A: (smile).

G: " *la uwaq kuran tudaq-tudaq*".

("wow, so cool")

U: " *la bunana kulahang tuna luman nguna, pucal uta una ujak.*"

(" how dare you defeat us")

A: " *upa dukaq unta puda nguna-nguna,,uraq skula una.*"

("It was only once").

Based on the conversation above, they use the *una-una* language only when talking about personal thing to keep it secret from others. So, the youth group members of Bengkaung community can talk freely wherever they are.

The using of the language of youngster in Bengkaung village includes one of the social movements that are usually appeared in the middle of everyday life of society. It spreads from one with another to be the group member youth of Bengkaung village and binds them in same solidarity [3]. It is as a symbolic of those adolescents as the group members of youth identity in Bengkaung and distinguishes them with the others youth villages [4, 5]. This study in line with the study conducted by Rampton in his book entitled *Crossing: Language and ethnicity among adolescents*. It is describing the using of Asian English among the youth cockney as a symbolic of themselves.

4 Conclusion

Bengkaung youngsters have created a local variant of language as way of forming youth groups and identities within the community.

Called the *una-una* language (the language of youngsters) or here the Bengkaung language, the variety is created from the local variant of Sasak language or the Indonesian language following /u/-/a/patterns with some variations based on particular linguistic contexts.

The Bengkaung language is used internally among Bengkaung youth group members and it symbolizes energetic, mobile, and global identity of the contemporary Bengkaung youth.

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