

Emphatic Particles *do* and *du* in *Bahasa Ocu*, a colloquial dialect of Riau Malay

Emphatic particles are commonly used in colloquial Malay/Indonesian to indicate primarily emphasis for different expressions, e.g., contrast (Wouk, 1998). However, emphatic particles have not been explored thoroughly as they are abundant in numbers and that the spectrum of “emphasis” leaves much room for detailed pragmatic descriptions. This type of particles differ from the more comprehensive pragmatic particles tested through the contemporary cross-linguistic pragmatic anchoring methodologies, proposed by Östman (2006; cf. Sari, 2007; Aijmer & Simon-Vandenberg, 2012). Therefore, emphatic particles perhaps could gain advantage through cross-linguistic investigation, especially in attempting to broaden their functional use among dialects within a language family. In this paper, I offer that particles *do* and *du* in *Bahasa Ocu*, a colloquial dialect of Riau Malay spoken in the Kampar community along Kampar River in Kampar regency, mainland Riau, that shares some linguistic features with Minangkabau (Gil, 2010), may possibly help expand the functions of its equivalent/Indonesian emphatic particle *tuh*, synonymous with the demonstrative *itu*, while shedding light to the ‘emphasis’ nuance that the particles carry. The evidence includes the syntactic location for emphasis (verb-ending or clause-ending particles) and interactional functions (conclusiveness, affirmatives). Naturally occurring language data was used to help describe the particles, and an interview with native *Ocu* speakers was carried out.

(1) Tibo *do*
arrive *tuh*

(2) *nda ontu* *do*
neg know *tuh*

A different nuance of emphasis is seen between (1) and (2), where *do* in (1) highlights the speaker’s affirming the preceding verb as the focus. Meanwhile, *do* in (2) provides conclusiveness in the negation. The falling tone of the particle supports the conclusiveness factor in addition to emphasis (Leech & Svartvik, 1994).

(3) *Nda ontu* *lo*
neg know *tuh*

The emphatic particle *lo* in (3) is a variation of *do*. *Do* is widely used in Air Tiris, while, *lo* in Bangkinang, both are neighboring villages in the Kampar regency in mainland Riau.

(4) Dua puluh *du*
twenty *tuh*

The emphatic particle *du* shares the equivalent (Jakarta) Indonesian particle *tuh* as a demonstrative. Like *tuh*, the actual object/topic may not have be physically present for the speaker to ‘point at’. However, the particle provides speaker intention to ‘point at’ the focus and, thus, confirm. The pragmatic methodologies at least help create a closer look at the *Ocu* particles, as well as clarifying its Indonesian equivalent *tuh*.

References:

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