

The Diminishing Use of Suffix –A in Spoken Javanese in Yogyakarta

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The Javanese language spoken in Yogyakarta is referred as a standard variety of Javanese, along with the one spoken in Surakarta. Today it is still in use, but undergoing a shift and change. The shift is imminent, especially through the shrinking domain of use, while the change in structure is more subtle because it is diachronic. The change of structure can be predicted through the tendency of use of a particular structure.

Javanese has general and specific pattern of morphosyntax. The general pattern shows similarity with that of Indonesian, while the specific pattern is unique. Speakers of Javanese, mostly of younger generation, tends to use general structure, producing Javanese utterances which are more convergent with Indonesian. This study focuses on the use of the suffix –a to explain the diminishing use of unique pattern of Javanese morphosyntax as symptom of its shift and change. It uses utterances recorded from authentic speech events.

The results of the study show that younger generation tends to exploit general patterns, which is the paraphrase of the unique (condensed) pattern when expressing condition and request. Therefore the study concludes that the unique patterns of Javanese morphosyntax demonstrate low resistance to shift and change.

Keywords: Javanese, shift and maintenance, structural change, suffix –a.