

Verbal Aspect in Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian

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The Malay language, in all its varieties, employs a number of aspect markers to define the time reference of an utterance. In some varieties, such as Standard Indonesian, these pre-verbal aspect markers are limited in the range of functions they are used for and transparent in their meanings.

Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian, however, employs a different set of pre-verbal aspect markers than those found in Standard Indonesian, which include *lagi* PROGRESSIVE and *udah* PERFECTIVE.

Previous studies of Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian (Sneddon 2006) and Colloquial Indonesian from other locations in Java (Englebretson 2003, Ewing 2004), have noted the presence of these aspect markers, but no detailed analysis of their use and function has been undertaken.

This study, which is based on analysis of corpora of Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian naturalistic speech as well as elicited examples, presents the range of aspect markers used in Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian. These aspect markers, which have a greater range of functions than those in Standard Indonesian, are described and analyzed. Their use in Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian is compared to the use of aspect markers in Standard Indonesian, as described in grammars of the language (Sneddon 1996, Alwi et. al. 2000).

The aspect markers of Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian occur in specific slots in the verbal complex and interact with modals, auxiliaries, negators and main verbs to create a range of aspectual and modal meanings. There is also evidence that these aspect markers have become grammaticalized in Colloquial Jakarta Indonesian, and this evidence is presented. The possibility that these aspect markers function as clitics is also explored.

References

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