The languages of preaching: Code selection in Sundanese Islamic oratory, West Java

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Why do Sundanese Muslims of West Java in certain situations prefer Islamic oratory in their regional language, Sundanese, and in others prefer the national standard, Indonesian? This article answers this question by firstly exploring different preaching outcomes that are recognised and generally accepted by Sundanese Muslims. Some preaching events are oriented preeminently to the communication of affect within the temporal frame of co-presence. In others, preacher and audience unite around a transformative ethos. These outcomes bear contrasting implications for code selection. Where the first outcome is desired, preachers display multivocal, heterogeneous preaching styles in which the regional language offers functional benefits. In the second, Indonesian preachers and audiences respond to the national language's indexing of transformation. The social value of transformation is a situational factor for which Indonesian is the appropriate code. In this way, code selection signals the diversity of ways of being Islamic in the West Javanese public sphere.

Keywords: Islam in Indonesia, Islamic media, Sundanese language and identity

INTRODUCTION

Oratorical events attract high participation from Muslims of Indonesia's Sundanese ethnic group, the majority of whom live in the province of West Java. Sundanese Muslims frequently attend preaching events held in civil, private and formal religious settings and are familiar with a diverse range of preaching styles and competencies.[1] Most Sundanese are bilingual in two West-Malayo-Polynesian languages of the Austronesian family, namely Sundanese and the national standard language, Indonesian. In any given preaching event, orators always mobilise one of these two languages as the dominant code, even as the performance will also include frequent code-switching into the other language and into further languages besides these two, notably Arabic (for quotation of textual materials). But the choice of Indonesian or Sundanese as the dominant code does not indicate two classes of preachers: most Sundanese orators are comfortable preaching in either language, although many develop clientele in specific settings that require them to preach more frequently in one than the other. This article asks how preachers and audiences know when it is appropriate to use one or the other of the languages as the dominant code.

I carried out eleven months of fieldwork on Islamic oratory between 2007 and 2010, in and around West Java's capital city, Bandung. After becoming familiar with the diverse situations in which oratorical events are typically held, I developed an intuitive sense concerning which language would be preferred in what situation. At festive, community-based events such as the celebrations staged by village communities to mark Islamic feast days or lifecycle celebrations such as marriages and circumcisions, Sundanese would generally be used. By contrast, sermons delivered in settings of a civic nature, such as the preaching schedules organised for the benefit of employees of state-run utilities, were usually in Indonesian. I listened to an orator choose Indonesian when speaking before elected officials and public servants during a work-time event held in a public service building, but later heard the same preacher use Sundanese when giving a sermon at a festive event held in a village as part of the election campaign of a candidate he was supporting.

There are no explicit normative prescriptions on code selection. Contemporary preaching manuals, for example, are silent on the subject.[2] Nevertheless, the selection of one or the other appeared to be accepted and supported without reflection by preachers and audiences.[3] In response to my questions about the issue, preachers usually gave me answers that made associations between languages and the 'inherent character' of social segments: 'Village people are confused by Indonesian', 'Sundanese has more feeling, so villagers like it', or 'Audiences in the state-owned utilities are more modern, so they prefer Indonesian'. These observations are accurate to a degree, but their positing of essentialised correspondences between social groups and linguistic form obscures the more central pattern on which I concentrate in this article, namely that Indonesian Muslims' conceptions of linguistic appropriateness are, in fact, determined according to situation, not audience.

In this article, my analysis of the interlingual process by which one or the other language is chosen as the dominant code in a preaching event is built on two premises. The first concerns preaching outcomes. Although some Muslims assert that Islamic oratory has only a single goal, most often through reference to a number of Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions (see Cook 2000), Sundanese Muslims in fact recognise and for the most part support multiple possible outcomes from preaching events. I identify two possible outcomes here. In many commonly occurring preaching situations, preachers succeed by creating what Stasch in his afterword to this volume aptly characterises as 'artful effects of emotion and belonging within the temporal horizons of the moment of speaker–audience co-presence itself'. To achieve this outcome, preachers must put work into the reception of their oratory, communicating on an affective level through ways of speaking, genres and cultural forms within the competency of their audiences. Here Sundanese is preferred.[4] The second outcome I identify is transformation. When preacher and audience support a religious vision of transformation, contrasting conceptions of appropriateness come into play. In particular, preachers and audience valorise the situational meanings of the national standard, and *in situ* affective gratification is held to be an outcome of secondary or even negative value.

The second premise on which this article is based is provided by the indexical meanings of Indonesian, the Republic's national standard language (for the notion of 'indexicality', see Rumsey's contribution to this volume). Scholarship on Indonesian language development in civil contexts has traced the processes by which Indonesians have come to interpret the standard as both 'symbol and medium' for Indonesian progress (Errington 2000: 209). But I argue that Indonesian Muslims also associate the national standard with the transformations aspired to within religious projects. Furthermore, alongside the norms of oratorical practice considered appropriate to the ethic of transformation, multivocal oratory that draws broadly on the communicative resources and ways of speaking recognised by the audience is interpreted as a sign of an anachronistic religious subject, an interpretation that distances the regional language from transformative religious programmes.[5]

One qualification concerning the fieldwork must be expressed at the outset. My fieldwork sought to capture the textures and significances of Islamic oratory as it takes place in a broad range of religious and civil contexts, with emphasis on those situations arranged in the spaces of everyday Bandung life, such as workplace preaching routines, lifecycle celebrations, routine preaching schedules of Islamic organisations and events held in institutional and civic contexts. My research did not deal with Islamic oratory taking place in the paradigmatic Islamic oratorical context, the Friday congregational prayer (Antoun 1989; Gaffney 1994). Oratory in that setting is subject to normative constraints that distinguish it from the preaching situations just described, which materialise at the crossing points of religious and other interests.

THE LINGUISTIC REPERTOIRE

According to the 2010 census (BPS 2010), the Indonesian Province of West Java has a population of 43,053,732 people. About seventy-four per cent of this provincial population self-identify as Sundanese, and these Sundanese people form sixteen per cent of the national population. Of all Indonesian ethnic groups, only the Javanese exceed the Sundanese in number. A high proportion of West Java's population are Muslims: 97.65 per cent as opposed to a national proportion of 87.51 (Suryadinata *et al.* 2003: 104–107).

As noted above, most Sundanese are bilingual, speaking a regional language known in Indonesian as *bahasa Sunda* (Sundanese language) as well as Indonesian. The contemporary Sundanese language developed from the ancient languages of the peoples of West Java's interior, while Indonesian, a variant of Malay that constitutes the formal standard for the Republic of Indonesia, arrived in West Java far more recently.[6] Intensive contact between speakers of Sundanese and Malay commenced when West Java's interior was opened to commercial activity by the colonial government in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Dutch promoted Malay as the colony's administrative language and lingua franca. In 1928, in the early stages of the Indonesian nationalist movement, activists from a number of ethnic groups of the Netherlands East Indies announced that Indonesian was to be the language of

the united peoples of Indonesia (Foulcher 2000). After independence was declared in 1945 and then realised through an armed struggle over the following 4 years, use of the national language increased rapidly as national media increased in relevance for Indonesian citizens and as participation in the developing national education system increased. Almost all contemporary Sundanese have mother tongue competency in both languages.

Sundanese audiences are, therefore, competent to interpret oratorical discourse delivered in Sundanese or Indonesian. However, in certain situations, intelligibility may affect selection: older members of contemporary Sundanese communities, whose contact with the national standard commenced in times when it was not widely spoken in West Java, sometimes face difficulties in interpreting preaching in Indonesian, especially if variants of Indonesian marked as youth styles are prominent. If such people are present in sufficient numbers in a given audience, a preacher may prefer to use Sundanese over Indonesian. Likewise, a preacher will sometimes have no option other than to use Indonesian because of the strong presence of non-Sundanese listeners.[7] This sometimes occurs in civil contexts in the Province's major cities. In such cases, intelligibility is the consideration that determines code selection. However, what interests me here is code selection in situations where audiences find the two languages equally intelligible.

Nationally known preachers who do not speak Sundanese are highly popular in West Java.[8] This is correlative with the fact that, for Sundanese, the national standard does not signify a history of foreign encroachment, economic disadvantage or status inequality.[9] Sundanese do not regard any group as being more authentically Indonesian than themselves and do not have to deal with any group that makes such a claim. In other words, they do not behold a 'native-speaking Indonesian "they"' (Errington 1998: 157). From this perspective, the Sundanese are no different to many other of Indonesia's ethnic groups: most Indonesians are regional as well as national subjects, a condition which, with important exceptions, grants a level of equality to Indonesia's ethnic identities.[10]

This does not mean the languages merge as an undifferentiated resource. This article engages with important situational distinctions between them. Apart from these, a number of discursive processes of distinction are evident in contemporary West Java. There is concern among elites that Sundanese language loss is a sign of cultural and ethical decline (e.g. Rosidi 2004). This anxiety has recently been mobilised in political campaigning, with candidates promoting Sundanese language and symbols as signs of authenticity. A further discursive process of distinction—and this is an Indonesia-wide phenomenon—is seen in signifying practices that humorously represent regional language speakers as 'out of touch' with urban realities. In everyday conversation as well as entertainment genres, the imprint of regional languages on Indonesian pronunciation marks the speaker as 'simple' or a 'hick'.

Overall, though, Sundanese feel themselves to be authentic owners of both languages. When compared with the literature analysing the hierarchisation and marginalisation that frequently arise as consequences of centrally planned programmes of

linguistic modernisation and universalisation (see Woolard 1998; Kroskrity 2000), the boundaries encountered by Sundanese in their negotiation between the two languages are free of negative meanings.

A final background point concerns constraints arising from religious norms. All Islamic oratory will feature some Arabic language entextualisation of normative sources (Qur'an and hadith). Furthermore, the commencement and conclusion of oratories with supplications in Arabic is a widely accepted practice. These conventions reflect Arabic's privileged position as the language of revelation, as a language for worship and supplication, as a sign of learning and as a scientific language. But the Islamic science of preaching (Arabic: *'ilm al-khitabah*) has little relevance for code selection: the issue is resolved according to situational conditions of the oratory's delivery.[11]

SUNDANESE: PREACHING FOR *IN SITU* GRATIFICATION

In certain common preaching situations, orators are required to focus their efforts on the reception of their oratory in the moment of its delivery. This requirement frequently arises when audience members have not assembled around a shared religious programme or conviction of any specificity, something that can be said of many preaching situations that are created by organisers in the spaces of everyday West Javanese life. Employers, for example, commonly implement preaching programmes for their employees.[12] Educational institutions regularly require their students to attend events that feature oratory, especially on feast dates of the Islamic or civil calendars. Celebrations of lifecycle events such as weddings and circumcisions frequently include Islamic oratory, often as the high point of the celebration. In such situations, the audience will listen to a sermon after having assembled *for a reason other than listening to a sermon*. Such an audience will most likely include followers of a wide variety of Islamic currents and affiliations, many of which imply conflicting dispositions and interpretations. These situations are not the proper places for elevating one religious inclination above the others, nor are they places for critiquing the situated realities of the audiences. Here, a successful oratory does not leave audiences reflecting negatively on their situations. Rather, preachers aim to achieve positive *in situ* reception of their oratory while encouraging reflection on Islamic messages accepted broadly by Muslims of diverse affiliations. To do this, they must pay attention to the communicative competencies and cultural particularities of their audience and mobilise these in affective preaching strategies.

When West Javanese audiences are not united around a shared religious programme, Sundanese will often be the preferred code, for it assists the preacher to locate his or her oratory in the intimate and familiar experiential worlds of the audience. In Sundanese, a preacher can ensure high identification from a heterogeneous audience. The language is preferred over Indonesian because of its functional value in meeting the challenge facing the preacher.

The linguistic code is but one aspect of the shared communicative resources to be summoned. Use of Sundanese is part of a broader mobilisation of performance genres,

ways of speaking and cultural competencies shared by the speaker and audience. Preachers often range widely over their listeners' cultural knowledge, recycling back to them not only the realities of their domestic and communal life, but also knowledge mediated through local and national media. It is Sundanese rather than Indonesian that enables this to happen in a comprehensive way. What we observe, then, is a co-occurrence pattern between the use of Sundanese and high heterogeneity in the communication strategies employed.

The recent evolution of preaching styles in West Java illustrates this co-occurrence. For a number of reasons (see Millie 2012), the range of preaching competencies sustaining West Javanese preaching careers broadened in the 1980s. While the traditional class of Islamic leaders (Ind: *kyai*, Sund: *ajengan*) remained in demand as religious mediators, audiences began to accept and enjoy sermons from people with other competencies. Sundanese audiences were particularly welcoming towards people with skills in other genres of verbal performance such as comedians and the puppeteers (*dalang*) of the rod puppet theatre (*wayang golék*). As the previous constraints on competency weakened, individuals with skills in nonreligious verbal performance genres that were already known to audience members were accepted as preachers. Importantly, these people were not just Sundanese speakers, but Sundanese speakers with expertise in performance genres that could support mediations registering affectively within the temporal limits of the performance.

These experts succeed in communicating affectively in Sundanese because this is the language of shared experience in the informal, domestic and intimate areas of life. Sundanese understand kin relations and obligations in Sundanese structures; their earliest experiences in the family environment are mediated in that language; daily experiences such as eating and socialising are represented through a Sundanese lexicon far richer than its Indonesian equivalent; the characteristics of the human personality are affectionately represented in a rich Sundanese lexicon; ethical values are circulated in an extensive repertoire of figurative constructions, proverbs and maxims; and so on. The affective qualities of Sundanese give it a special valency in oratory where *in situ* gratification is a desired outcome.

Not surprisingly, orators are highly aware of this valency, and in conversation made frequent claims for it, often in comparisons they drew between Sundanese and Indonesian. A number of them described the language to me as a 'language of feeling' (Sund: *basa rasa*), through which connections of an informal and emotive nature could be created. Sundanese writers make similar comparisons. One writer with a high literary output in both Sundanese and Indonesian, Ajip Rosidi, has identified various 'deficiencies' of Indonesian as a literary medium. When writing in Indonesian, he claimed, he inserts Sundanese terms when that term expresses a 'feeling' (Ind and Sunda: *rasa*) for which there is no equivalent in the national standard (Rosidi 1983: 209–212; cf. Anderson 1966:105–109).

The preference for Sundanese emerges through an unreflective process. It is the most obvious of many aspects of shared culture that can be mobilised by preachers wishing to ensure the positive reception of their oratories. It is mobilised as the

dominant code because of the needs of the impending social interaction, not from reflections on social realities outside of the preaching context, or from the status implications of the code, or from reflections on sociohistorical context. In other words, the choice is not made on the ideological plane. Sundanese is preferred, alongside other communicative possibilities from the shared cultural corpus, because of its functional value in connecting with listeners at the level of shared emotional identification, intimacy and informality.

INDONESIAN: PREACHING'S TRANSFORMATIONS

To this point, I have restricted my discussion to situations in which the achievement of a good *in situ* reception of oratory by the audience is the most desirable or one of the most desirable outcomes. But that outcome is often sidelined or even excluded when a commitment to transformation is acknowledged as a goal of the event. Transformation of society or self is a core goal of religious programmes that motivate many preaching events in contemporary Bandung. In such situations, the ideologised meanings of the national standard outweigh the pragmatic value of Sundanese.

Throughout 2007, I attended many preaching events held in contexts in which people were highly aware of their roles as national citizens, such as orations staged at state-owned utilities and at educational institutions. For example, I was a repeat participant in the preaching programme held in the Bandung Municipal Water Board, a setting that locates its occupants unequivocally within the life of the state. This state-owned utility requires its employees to assemble once a month specifically to listen to a sermon from a visiting preacher. The audience members have diverse Islamic persuasions and cultural competencies. Based on my argument above, one might think that the heterogeneity of this specific kind of audience would encourage preachers to preach in Sundanese, especially if the number of non-Sundanese in the audience was low. But I found that the Sundanese preachers invited to preach in these settings invariably preferred to use Indonesian as the dominant code.

The choice appears logical when we consider how strongly the national standard points to a shared ethic of transformation and how audiences in the situations mentioned above orient themselves to that ethic when they gather to hear a sermon in their place of work or study. For Indonesians, the national language stands for a future that contrasts with Indonesian pasts. Anderson (1966) has described Indonesian's transformational meanings. It was a suitable language for the new Republic because it enabled a break from the hierarchical modes of ethnic societies. The language was a 'partly subconscious project for the assumption of "modernity"', and in the new era of independence, it 'had to develop into a means of communication which (could) not only express Indonesian nationalism, but Indonesian aspirations, Indonesian traditions and "international realities"—within the limits of a single vocabulary' (p. 89). The national standard 'represented in essence a "project", an aspiration to unity and equality, a generous wager on the future' (p. 105). These meanings were later consolidated by governments, especially the Suharto government, in support of development

programmes. For Suharto's New Order government, the cultivation of a single national language served the logic by which a standardised language appeared as a prerequisite for functional heterogeneity (Errington 2000: 209–211). Indonesia's standard language was monologically asserted as the standard language of a singular national identity (Heryanto 1995; Foulcher 2000). And the national standard has attracted very strong participation and support from Indonesians, who identified the Republic's modernising and development aspirations with their own goals. Kathryn Woolard labelled Indonesia's standardisation project as 'the wonder-child of language-planning' (1998: 21). The literature just cited reveals the sociohistorical processes, described by Agha (2007: 81–82) as 'enregisterment', through which Indonesians have come to prefer the national standard rather than regional languages in oratorical situations in which participants are mindful of the transformational trajectory of Indonesian public life (see also Goebel 2008).

The authors just discussed focus on language developments within civil settings framed by Indonesian statehood, not within Indonesian Islamic society. But for many Indonesians, the national transformation project and the project of Islamic renewal are inseparable. I argue here that Indonesian's indexical meanings as the language of national transformation are recognised by many Indonesians in communication contexts that are explicitly religious. The inseparability of these contexts is clearly revealed in the Indonesian versions of the global Islamic movement known as the 'modernist' or 'reformist' movement. This movement, which emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century in the Netherlands Indies at the same time as the nationalist movement, made religious and socio-political transformations into a single project, 'seeking to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity by offering an Islamic rationale for modern, political, legal and social change' (Esposito 1998: 44; for the Indonesian movements, see Noer 1973).

The merging of the civic nationalist project with the civic Islamic project (which of course is the reverse of the separation that we observe in many Western contexts) has provided a defining backdrop for many contemporary Indonesian lives. Indonesia's modernist organisations have produced much of the country's social infrastructure, such as educational institutions and hospitals. Many Indonesians grew up and were educated in environments in which the modernity of the Republic of Indonesia was at the same time an Islamic modernity. They have 'learned about the ideas of Indonesia and modernity in contexts of religious education, and they learned to be part of a public, multiethnic sphere largely under religious auspices' (Bowen 1993: 327). The state contributed to this through its positioning of monotheism as an essential characteristic of citizenship (Kipp & Rodgers 1987). As a result, for contemporary Indonesians, the category of religion implies 'notions of progress, modernisation and adherence to nationalist goals' (Atkinson 1983: 688; see also Hefner 1987; Brenner 1996).

The flip side of this, of course, is a concomitant aspiration to break free from the social forms and practices associated with earlier Indonesian societies (Brenner 1996; Millie 2011). A speaker representing the very earliest reform movement of the Indies,

the Islamic Association (*Sarekat Islam*), established in Java in 1912, expressed it thus at the organisation's 1916 congress: 'Let us do away with the obligatory services (to the elites), the giving of feasts by peasants far beyond their means … Because as long as the people willingly subject themselves to such slave-like treatment, we cannot speak of progress. This servile subjection is no product of Islam' (Williams 1990: 121; see also Shiraishi 1990). This statement powerfully captures the unity of the nationalist and Islamic reformist projects and expresses the imperative of moving away from religious conventions that were widely accepted in Java at the time.

The nationalist and Islamic reform movements show further oneness in their aspiration to transformations in Indonesian and Muslim selves. Most notably, and at the risk of overgeneralising, the religious modernisation project and the civic-national modernisation projects both envision an ideal human subjectivity that is autonomous and capable of critical reflection on its environment. Expressions of such aspirations have been ongoing throughout the period since Islamic modernism emerged. In the early 1980s, for example, in response to the Suharto regime's exclusion of Islamic movements from party politics, Islamic activists promoted a democratic empowerment movement. Their innovative achievement was to make the concept of 'civil society' the 'prevailing paradigm' in the democratisation agenda (Bush 2009: 97). One of the messages emerging repeatedly in this project was that Indonesian Muslims must be empowered to actualise their individual agency: political life would be sustained by subjects able to overcome the constraints of their surroundings (e.g. Hikam 1996: 123–124). Personal transformation is at the same time a national and religious undertaking.[13]

Nothing in this brief overview of Islamic modernism has directly dealt with code selection in oratory. But the associations between language and socio-religious transformation that emerge from it have direct implications for oratorical practice. I earlier proposed that Sundanese was favoured within the multivocal mobilisations that preachers implement to give *in situ* gratification to audiences. But where a preaching situation is underpinned by a religious programme dedicated to Islamically informed transformation, the national standard's indexical meanings in this direction are a formidable resource. Take the Water Board example mentioned previously. The Board's employees are dependent on the setting for their livelihoods. Respect for this environment's hierarchies and protocols is crucial to that dependent relationship. Apart from that, the physical environment is strongly marked as state terrain: the Indonesian flag flies in the yard; photographic portraits of the president and vice-president are prominent in a number of rooms of the complex; large reproductions of the Garuda bird, the national symbol whose feathers numerically signify the date of independence, are present. When the preacher arrives, he and the employees orient themselves to the situation in a way that makes religious and national transformations indissoluble.

It is not the case that Sundanese *per se* is uncongenial in such a setting. Although Sundanese does not bear the same indexical links as Indonesian, it does not index in the opposite direction. Rather, it is the multivocal preaching of *in situ* gratification that is uncongenial. The enregisterment processes described above connect the

national standard with an idealisation of Islamic subjects as critical, reflective ones whose Islamicness is to be dedicated to the development of the nation's democratic culture. A preacher who mobilises a wide range of shared communicative resources to please an audience *in situ* does not show respect to this commitment, nor does he respect the 'critical' and 'reflective' capabilities of his audience. In modernist thinking, the ideal Muslim subject, committed to religio-national transformation, does not attend oratory with the expectation of sensory engagement. In fact, a skilful performer hoping to succeed by recycling the audience's shared culture back to it runs the risk of appearing as a reason for the failure to achieve the transformation to which the programme aspires (see Keane 2007: 130–133).

In the above, I have used the word 'transformative' to characterise the preaching outcome that contrasts with, and sometimes excludes, *in situ* affect. However, I do not mean that all participants in such oratory are personally committed to active participation in transformational projects. Rather, it is more accurate to see transformation as a social value, indexed by the national standard, to which all Indonesians should ideally show deference. The Indonesian language indexes transformation, but it also provides a tool for the obligatory performance of appreciation for the social value of transformation.

Ward Keeler's (1998) analysis of code selection and Islamic oratory illustrate the national standard's instrumental value in performing transformation. His research was carried out within the Javanese ethnic group, which occupies the provinces of Java to the east of West Java Province. West Java and the Javanese provinces to the east display considerable similarity in cultural and religious conditions, and the interlingual patterns observed by Keeler, and his conclusions, are applicable to the West Javanese situation as well. During a lengthy stay in a Javanese village, he compared festive, multivocal preaching drawing on regional cultural resources with formally consistent, stylistically nondescript preaching in a combination of Indonesian and the formal variant of Javanese. Male audience members mostly gave negative critiques of festive, multivocal preaching, even when they themselves were stimulated by such performances. They approved of preaching delivered in a 'constricted style' characterised by a 'single, serious tone, constant use of either refined Javanese or the national language, Indonesian, or perhaps a mixture of the two, plus a great deal of Arabic, and the exclusion of song and narrative' (Keeler 1998: 166). It is important to note precisely what was excluded: not the use of the expressive registers of Javanese, but a preaching style rich in multivocality and diverse ways of speaking. But the exclusion of the second effects an exclusion of the first, for in preaching to regional audiences, a satisfying multivocality materialises in the expressive modes of the regional language rather than Indonesian.

Keeler found this preference to be motivated by the status aspirations of the listeners. They associated the limited, monotonous style with modern, urban elites and perceived this preaching style as an expression of the power of the modern state. For these listeners, a positive evaluation of the 'ponderous, weighty Indonesian style' was a foundation for claiming personal status. In other words, Keeler's audiences displayed

a similar metadiscursive understanding to the one I am presenting here. They gave a negative evaluation to a style that engaged with their affective sensibilities and shared cultural knowledge. They expressed a correlative perception that Indonesian formality was the code of status and power in the contemporary nation. Hence, 'The serious, monological tone of official speech strikes (Javanese villagers) as more persuasive than a more entertaining tone' (Keeler 1998: 175).[14] They felt compelling reasons for showing deference to the social value of transformation.

Preaching events in which the transformative meanings of Indonesian are welcome are frequently held in contemporary Bandung. The preaching schedules of modernist organisations such as Muhammadiyah, the Islamic Union (*Persatuan Islam*) and the Salman movements are prime examples. Activist groups at universities and mosques will often stage events recognised as transformational by their audiences. When school students are visited by a preacher, an ethic of transformation is strongly present in the resulting oratory. In all of these events, the orientation to transformation would ideally remove the gratification of audiences from the scope of desirable outcomes.[15]

CODE-SWITCHING: LANGUAGE AND REFRESHMENT

So far I have discussed the issue of code selection at the level of the choice between one language or the other as the dominant communicative medium across the entire length of a preaching event. However, the phenomenon of briefer events of code-switching on a moment-to-moment basis within a larger performance opens up a different perspective on the issues of interest to this article. When code choice oscillates within a single speech event, the boundary negotiations that animate interlingual processes are revealed in high relief (Heller 1988: 3). In other words, code-switching allows an intensified perspective on the same processes that emerged in my consideration of code selection. The example I discuss below illustrates preachers' awareness and exploitation of some of the code-related issues under discussion here. It shows that when a Sundanese preaches in Indonesian, he or she will invariably turn to Sundanese to implement refreshing strategies that enable, if only temporarily, the affective connection so strongly supported by the regional language.

The brief translation below is an example of switching from an oratory by Shiddiq Amien (1955–2009), a preacher who was highly respected and loved by followers of one of Indonesia's oldest modernist organisations, the Islamic Union (Ind: *Persatuan Islam*). This organisation was formed in Bandung in 1923 at a meeting of Muslims who were mostly from the merchant classes and who were interested in stimulating discussion on religious ideas, and specifically ideas critical of the religious status quo (Federspiel 2001: 84–85). In contemporary Bandung, this organisation holds routine pedagogical and oratorical events in its infrastructure of mosques and religious schools. Like other Indonesian Islamic organisations, it publishes educational materials, as well as commentary and fatwa on contemporary issues. Its leading figures are invited to speak in civic and private contexts outside of the Union's environment. About one million Sundanese Muslims consider themselves to be followers of the

Islamic Union. For many of these persons, participation in Islamic Union events is a major feature of religious life.[16]

Transformation is at the core of the organisation's mission. The group urges its followers, and indeed all Indonesian Muslims, to shape their selves and society according to the prescriptions of the Qur'an and Prophetic traditions (Pijper 1977; Federspiel 2001). The Islamic Union treats its oratorical events as important media tools for prosecuting this programme, and a serious ambience prevails at them. Seen from this perspective, the Islamic Union has much in common with Muhammadiyah and other modernist groups.[17]

The oratory was delivered on Sunday, 3 May 2009, in the Bandung Mosque at which the Union holds weekly oratories.[18] The event attracts between three thousand and six thousand attendees. The mosque itself holds little more than one thousand people; so on every Sunday morning, the roads outside the mosque are closed by police to enable Islamic Union followers to listen to the sermon as it is broadcasted through speakers. Shiddiq Amien was a native speaker of Sundanese (like most of the orators who contribute to the series), but the Sunday morning oratories are generally delivered in Indonesian. This is so despite the fact that from an intelligibility perspective, the oratories could successfully be conducted in Sundanese. Why is this so? Because the participants in this situation support a goal of transformation that orients their participation to the indexical meanings of the national standard. The Islamic Union holds the goal of creating a more 'Islamic' Indonesia, and this initiative has the national standard as its appropriate code.

This particular oratory addressed a specific topic, as is usual for the Sunday morning event. On this occasion, the theme was the creation of human beings. Its content was Amien's interpretations of a number of Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions concerning the processes of human reproduction from conception to birth. Indonesian was the dominant code, with frequent switching into Arabic (for the entextualisation of verses and Traditions) and Sundanese. Over the space of one hour, Amien switched to Sundanese on twenty-three occasions. Many of these were single lexical items, while the longest consisted of two sentences.

Amien was not considered to be a performer by his audiences, who valued him for what they saw as his plain style and avoidance of generic variation and displays of skill.[19] But this appearance is somewhat deceptive. In my analysis of his oratories, I noticed artful mobilisation of subdued strategies for engaging listeners. Narrative structures, rhetorical questions to the audience and simulated dialogue, for example, were skilfully employed. Nevertheless, on the whole, his style appeared dour when considered against some of the dynamic styles to be observed in West Java during the period of his career.

The following is my translation of an excerpt from a sermon delivered by Amien at the Sunday morning session. In it, he translates Qur'anic language and provides exegesis. Translation and exegesis are core components of his oratorical style. I have not translated the Arabic, which was recognisable as Qur'anic text by the audience. Its meanings emerge clearly from the surrounding text. The text in

regular font was uttered in Indonesian, while the italicised text was delivered in Sundanese:

> So the first bodily organ to be created, the first of the sensory ones, apart from the nose, was of course the hearing. Now, with this hearing, when a family tries to speak with their newborn baby, the baby smiles, not because she can see, but because her hearing is already at work. The ears and hearing are first. In the same way, when a person is old, the first things to go to ruin are the ears. Summun, bukmun, umyun. Summun means deaf. *When someone is getting old they have difficulty hearing even when we shout at them* (subdued audience laughter). *You have to nudge them to make them look around* (subdued audience laughter). Bukmun means dumb, meaning there are no teeth left, not even one, toothless, so when they speak it becomes… (audience: *stammering*!). That's right, *stammering. When they speak they go 'offside'* (subdued audience laughter). Then when the eyes go, one must wear glasses … (Amien 2009)

The example reveals skilful oratorical exploitation of the affective value of Sundanese. Throughout almost every moment of this one-hour sermon, Amien's dour delivery in Indonesian drew minimal responses from audience members. Although many focussed intently on his words, their bodily positions indicated relaxation. Many never lifted their heads, and some chatted quietly with the person sitting beside them. People were massaging each other. But this example (and others like it) caused changes to this demeanour. In this case, the code-switch into Sundanese is a humorous recollection of a recognisable stereotype of village life: the toothless, old person who has difficulty hearing and speaking. Amien represented this person's vulnerability in a way that was humorous but affectionate. And the interaction created a heightened connection between preacher and audience, for many audience members joined in Amien's code-switch by responding in the regional language, even responding to his prompt (in Indonesian) with the Sundanese word *réro* (stammering). This was despite the fact that the vast majority of the sermon was delivered in Indonesian. And Amien himself, whose general demeanour almost always showed a detached concentration bordering on melancholy, smiled during the switching.

I observed moments such as these in almost every Indonesian language sermon I attended in Bandung. Their effects are like ripples passing through the previously immobile audience. Bodies rock gently. People turn to the person at their side. The audience is refreshed. The switches enable Amien to reach into the shared cultural context in a playful preaching voice and to establish a more intimate and less formal rapport than the one speaking through the national standard, which remains faithful to the strict letter of the Islamic Union's programme.[20] Because laughter and play are so strictly controlled throughout the sermon, the switches effectively establish an alternate interaction between preacher and audience. They provide momentary glimpses of other preaching outcomes with which Sundanese audiences are accustomed. Nevertheless, the switches are spare and disciplined. The playful voice is restrained, and the audience members do not sense any notable verbal or performing skill on his part.

Too much *in situ* gratification would be harmful to the shared commitment to transformation.

The choice Amien makes is not between two linguistic codes, but between, on the one hand, a preaching style that affectively mobilises a variety of communicative and generic possibilities, and on the other, proper respect to an idealised conception of the role of religion in public life. In other words, the refreshing strategy could just as well take shape in a song or joke and could even be achieved in the national standard. However, for Amien, a native speaker of Sundanese in the process of preaching to other Sundanese, the most effective refreshing strategies are those in which generic variation and Sundanese language co-occur. They allow a clear 'short-term gain' in the *in situ* context, while preserving the 'long-term' integrity of the Union's transformational programme.[21]

CONCLUSION

Understanding interlingual processes within multilingual groups inevitably involves searching for and identifying boundaries or oppositions signalled by language use (Heller 1988; Irvine & Gal 2000). For Muslims of West Java, neither Indonesian nor Sundanese signifies negatively as a symbol of ethnic rivalry, reminder of past injustice or marker of imbalance in power or influence. The conflictual identity issues that arise in the search for boundaries in other linguistic communities as described in, for example, Hill and Hill (1986) and Kroskrity (1993) do not arise here. Nevertheless, in oratorical situations, Sundanese differentiate between the languages in important ways: Sundanese is the communicative medium of affect and is practically mobilised for engaging audiences *in situ*. But Indonesian stands for important values shared by all Indonesians and indexes transformations that underpin identities and projects that are religious as well as civil.

In effect, I have argued here that language use in oratorical contexts should be considered, in important ways, to be subject to the same processes and laws that affect language use in 'civil' contexts. Of course, I am not the first anthropologist to observe homologies and overlaps between recent Indonesian trajectories of religion and sociopolitical life. Many of their observations are mentioned above. Atkinson (1983: 686), whose research into Wana religion also confronted a regional versus centre dialectic, was moved to identify the centre with an Indonesian 'civil religion', describing it as 'a theistic doctrine that legitimates the country's nationalist enterprise'. In the Indonesian case, the construction of borders between religion and civil life frequently leads to artifice.

But my analysis enhances our knowledge of those homologies and overlaps. First, I have drawn attention here to the simultaneous support that many Sundanese Muslims give to multiple outcomes from preaching events. Audiences and preachers are accustomed to orienting themselves differently in preaching situations according to the desired preaching outcome and are also accustomed to the implications of those orientations for interlingual processes. Many Sundanese comfortably assume multiple

listening subjectivities that are at one time 'anachronistic', at another 'contemporary'. It is not a matter of either/or, and it is not a matter of essential affinities between social groups and preaching styles. For many Sundanese Muslims, attendance at contrasting preaching situations is a normal aspect of public life in contemporary Bandung.

Second, if any tension is signalled by the preference for Indonesian over Sundanese, this tension is not generated over ethnic distinctions, but religious ones. The two preaching outcomes I have discussed above reveal contrasting conceptions of how Muslims should conduct themselves in the public Islamic sphere. As I have just stated, most Sundanese are comfortable with both outcomes identified in this chapter. But some activists and organisations perceive highly affective, multivocal oratory as a sign of something gone wrong. They prefer to distinguish sharply between the two outcomes and condemn one of them as inappropriate, where many other Sundanese find both acceptable. I have elsewhere analysed the bifurcation they observe (Millie 2008): it metaphorically describes affective oratory as 'spiritual meals' (Ind: *santapan rohani*) that are inefficacious because they achieve little other than sensory affect *in situ*, by contrast with events that implement ongoing projects of religious and social renewal. These dispositions project a public Islamic sphere with conflicting visions of proper Islamic subjectivity. Against this background, West Java's languages are not neutral communication tools. Because of their situated communicative properties (Sundanese) and indexical meanings (Indonesian), the two languages offer contrasting values for contrasting projects of public Islam. The interlingual borders negotiated by preachers signal distinct ways in which religion is considered to properly play a role in social and political life.

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NOTES

1 The range of competencies to be observed among Indonesia's Islamic preachers is very wide. Many preachers self-present in the conventional roles of Islamic specialisation, such as *kyai* (leader of religious schools) or *ustad* (Qur'anic teacher), but the class of preacher includes also child

preachers, former rock star preachers, puppeteer preachers, preachers who are academics, housewife preachers, Chinese convert preachers and repentant criminal preachers. Scholars who have engaged with this variety in Indonesia include Fealy (2008), Howell (2008), Muzakki (2008) and Wei-Wang (2010).

2 Preaching manuals have not always been silent on the subject. Writings about oratory from the pre-independence period, when the national standard was not widely understood in the Indonesian Archipelago, display a typically modernist emphasis on intelligibility. This exhortation from the modernist figure, Hamka, is illustrative: 'Our goals (as preachers) will be better realised if we read the Friday sermon in the language understood by the broader population, namely, in the language used in the place concerned. In the Bugis lands, use Bugis. In Makassar, use Makassarese, and in Java, use Javanese' (Amrullah 1937: 41).

3 This lack of explicit discourse on the question is highly understandable. Firstly, preaching is very often a communication event in which participants pragmatically find the appropriate codes and conventions for the situation, and these adjustments are often performed without conscious reflection. Secondly, where interlingual processes are concerned, the evaluations and distinctions pertaining to language are determined by broader social conditions and lived realities. The naturalness of these conditions renders the interlingual processes invisible.

4 This process reveals preachers taking roles as 'performers' in the sense described by Hymes (1975) and Richard Bauman (1977), among others.

5 My thinking on the anachronistic meanings of conventional oratorical frames has developed out of my reading of Keeler (1998) and Keane (2007).

6 The best historical account of the Sundanese language is Noorduyn and Teeuw (2006). A thorough analysis of recent developments in regional language policy in West Java can be found in Moriyama (2012). Useful accounts of Indonesian include those of Maier (1993), Errington (1998: 51–64), Robson (2002) and Sneddon (2003).

7 Interestingly, the presence of non-Sundanese Indonesians does not automatically dissuade the preacher from using the regional language. One reason for this is that preachers are aware that non-Sundanese working in Bandung frequently acquire competency in the regional language. However, the more important reason is that the gains to be achieved by mobilising the regional language (which are outlined in this article) outweigh the risk that a segment of the audience will not adequately interpret the oratory.

8 It is very common for visiting non-Sundanese orators to give sermons in Bandung, in which case Indonesian is used. Even in the early days of the Republic, Islamic orators had successful preaching careers in West Java despite lacking competence in Sundanese. Of these, the Sumatran Muhammad Isa Anshary (1916–1969) has been the most successful (Anshary 1995).

9 This has not always been the case. The decades leading up to and immediately following independence saw Sundanese elites express significant anxiety about the future of the Sundanese nation (Ekadjati 2004, 2006).

10 This relatively unproblematic distinction between regional and national identities and languages is not encountered everywhere in Indonesia. The vast majority of Sundanese express a striking sense of belonging in relation to the Republic. Yet in Indonesian provinces where the sense of inclusion in the Republic is weak or antagonistic, interlingual processes are influenced by languages' significations of inequality, political repression, inequitable natural resource exploitation and ethnic marginalisation.

11 Arabic was at one time preferred as the code for use in the Friday congregational prayer in West Java, irrespective of whether orator or audience could discern the oratory's referential meanings. Broadly accepted modernist interpretations that privilege intelligibility have marginalised that practice (Federspiel 2001: 163–166).

12 The literature on predication projects in Indonesian workplaces is increasing in volume. A brief historical account of workplace preaching is found in Millie (2012). Millie and Safei (2010) approach the preaching schedules organised in state-owned utilities as components of broader government strategies to improve levels of public service and to be seen to do so (Millie & Safei 2010). Rudnyckyj (2010) describes and analyses workplace Islamic programmes that take shape as conjunctions of Islam and neoliberalism designed to heighten employee accountability.

13 For as long as modernists have advocated an inclusive transformation of Indonesian society, they have also identified conventional forms of Islamic mediation, including oratory, as anachronistic. Progressive commentators commonly perceive Islamic oratory, in its traditional forms and shapes, as an impediment to projects of Islamic renewal and social change (Millie 2011, 2012). A continuing theme of Islamic modernism is that the traditional, oral forms of Islamic participation signified an outdated Islamic subjectivity that would impede Islamic solutions to contemporary social problems. The Muslim sensorily engaged by skilful preaching was one who seemed in need of the transformations advocated in renewal projects.

14 Norms of public display in Indonesian cultures play a role here also. Keeler notes that men approved of the restrained, less expressive preaching style because it is 'indicative of self-possession and control, an attribute of people who are in possession of power and deserve to exercise authority' (Keeler 1998: 174).

15 Although the aspiration to Islamic transformation is valued very highly and widely, it is a cause of frustration to oratory's critics that, in practice, the medium cannot escape its reliance on socially situated significances (cf. Keane 2007: 197–222). Some of Bandung's most skilful orators, including commercially successful ones, display the outward signs of transformational commitment, while in their oratories, they skilfully mobilise a broad range of shared communicative resources.

16 I base this figure on my discussions with an Islamic Union official. The figure of one million refers not to registered members, but to the class known as *simpatisan* (sympathisers), meaning Muslims for whom the Islamic Union's religious programmes are a space for participation and for whom Islamic Union ideology provides an authoritative reference point.

17 The Islamic Union can be distinguished from other modernist groups by the level of commitment it demands from its followers. It is well-known for refusing to compromise on interpretations of religious norms and their implementation in the public sphere (Noer 1973: 90–95; Federspiel 2001). Nevertheless, the Islamic Union is not isolationist. Like other Indonesian modernist groups, its transformational programme encourages involvement in the world rather than seclusion. Members and leaders are active in many walks of life, especially in urban environments.

18 The Islamic Union makes video recordings of its Sunday oratories, which it later circulates in the form of DVD. I have used one such recording (Amien 2009) as a source for this analysis.

19 A Bandung journalist once called Amien's style 'awkward' (Ind: *kagok*) (Sarnapi 2007).

20 Another common motivation for Amien's switching, also referencing a more informal, less-prepared relationship with his audience, emerges at moments when he strains to recall a word, or searches in his notes to find his position. At these moments of disorder, he switches to Sundanese, often verbalising the Sundanese equivalents to expressions such as 'What is the word?' and 'Where were we?'

21 I derive the 'long-term' versus 'short-term' dichotomy from Heller's (1988) analysis of switching strategies.

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