

Self-Reference and its Variation in Indonesian

Dwi Noverini Djenar

(d.djenar@latrobe.edu.au)

La Trobe University, Australia

Abstract

This article examines variation in the use of some Indonesian self-referring terms such as the pronouns *aku*, *saya*, and *gua/gue*, and proper names. It argues that these terms are not always distinguishable by appealing to factors external to the speakers such as different addressees and speech situations. Using examples from the speech of celebrities, it demonstrates that within the same speech situation, variation can occur between speakers as well as by the same speaker. An alternative account is proposed in which the pronouns are considered as linguistic expressions of different self-categorizations. Self-categorizations are cognitive groupings of the self in comparison with others. Variation in the choice of term is suggested as reflecting not only differences in the way that speakers view themselves in particular contexts, but also the flexibility of self-conceptions, in that within the same speech situation, a speaker may assert different identities. Apart from *aku*, which seems to highlight a personal identity, the other terms can be used to express either a personal or social identity. A term which in one context may express a social identity, can be used as a marker of a personal identity when contrasted with another term in another context. Choice of term is thus considered to be highly context-dependent.

1 Introduction

Indonesian speakers have at their disposal several alternatives for saying ‘I’. Beside the pronouns *aku* and *saya*, they also employ the Hokkien-derived pronoun *gua* (or its variant *gue*), proper names (e.g. *Lulu capek* ‘I (Lulu) am tired’), kin terms (e.g. *Papa kerja dulu ya* ‘I (literally, ‘father’) am going to work now, ok’), *tak* (e.g. *Nanti tak telpon* ‘I will ring you later’), the plural pronoun *kita* ‘(inclusive) we’ (e.g. *Besok kita kirim barangnya* ‘Tomorrow I will send the goods’). Avoidance of self-referring term (also called ‘zero anaphora’) is also common, e.g. *Pergi dulu* ‘(I) going now’ (Berman 1992). In addition, the majority of Indonesians also speak one or more regional languages, or are at least exposed to these languages through social interaction (e.g. hearing them being spoken at a friend’s house, by neighbours, and so on), and terms from these languages may also be used for self-reference when they speak in Indonesian. For example, a Sundanese woman can use the kin term *uwak* ‘aunt, older than one’s mother’ to refer to herself when she speaks to her nieces or nephews in Sundanese or Indonesian. She may also use this term to speak to the friends of her nieces and nephews who may not be of the same ethnic origin.

This availability of multiple strategies for self-reference often puzzles foreign language learners, particularly those whose first language has a more limited inventory of first person terms, such as English. Grammar textbooks and textbooks for foreign language learning may mention these various choices but generally describe only two terms associated with the standard variety of this language, namely the pronouns *aku* and *saya*, and provide a distinction between them in terms of social variables such as formality, neutrality, and intimacy. For example, *aku* has been described

as an informal, non-neutral term that should be used with close friends and younger persons, while *saya* has been described as a formal and neutral term which can be used when speaking to anyone.

Such a distinction may capture conventional uses of these pronouns and may help learners – particularly those at the beginners' level – to avoid potential errors when speaking to native speakers. However, it also gives a false impression that self-reference is a simple, straightforward process involving a matching between a term and certain social variables. The purpose of this article is not to examine exhaustively all options of self-reference available to Indonesian speakers. Rather, it seeks to show, through examples of the use of *some* terms, that self-reference is a not static matter, that once a speaker calculates which term is appropriate for which addressee and in which situation, and arrives at a choice, this choice is fixed. It argues that self-reference is a dynamic process which involves constant negotiation in interaction. This dynamism is reflected in the variation of terms used. Variation can be observed not only between different speakers (inter-speaker variation), but also by the one speaker (intra-speaker variation). Moreover, it can occur within the same of type speech situation, involving the same type of addressee(s). As will be shown, speakers may use not only *saya* and *aku*, but also *gue* and proper names, and they may shift between these terms.

This kind of variation cannot be satisfactorily captured by a 'normative' approach which stipulates a static mapping between a term and a set of variables because such an approach seems to assume that variation always correlates with factors external to the speaker, such as different addressees and/or different speech situations. The data to be presented in this article suggest that, in addition to these factors, choice of term is also induced by other factors such as discourse topics and individual styles. An alternative approach is proposed in which self-referring terms are considered as linguistic representations of different self-categorizations. Self-categorizations are context-dependent cognitive groupings of oneself in comparison with others. Inter-speaker and intra-speaker variation reflect the different ways that speakers position themselves in particular contexts. In contrast to a normative approach in which term choice is presented as stable, a self-categorization perspective considers self-reference to be flexible. It assumes that different choices of term are motivated by differences or changes in contextual factors, which include such considerations as accommodation of the addressee's speech, topic shifts and individual styles. The terms chosen correlate with different self-categorizations. The approach does not exclude the possibility that the use of a particular term may reflect intimacy or formality. Rather, it advances the view that the social meanings of self-referring terms are not reducible to these variables.

The data for the study is taken from the speech of celebrities in television interviews. The discussion is focused on their use of *aku* and *saya*, *gue* and proper names. *Aku* and *saya* are of particular interest not only because these are the terms that are most described in grammar textbooks, but also because most of the variation in the data concerns these terms. Variation involving *gue* and proper name is attested to in the data, but to a lesser extent. The choice of data is motivated by the following considerations. First, the use of *aku* by celebrities exemplifies an unconventional or non-normative use, in that it occurs in a domain conventionally associated with *saya*. As such, it provides an appropriate point of reference from which current assumptions about *aku* and *saya* can be re-examined. Second, there is ample variation of self-reference in the speech of celebrities to illustrate the range of choices that speakers make beyond *aku* and *saya*, although these choices do not exhaust all options available to speakers. Third, this variation also provides evidence that a difference in term is not always motivated by a difference of addressee(s) or speech situations.

The speech of celebrities is taken from television interviews in 9 broadcasts, totaling 6 hours of airtime, collected during December 2005 – January 2006. The broadcasts are generally known by various names such as "infotainment", "celebrity news/gossip", and so on. Though it may seem small, the following consideration should be taken into account. All commercial television channels in Indonesia (currently 9 in total) have one or more daily programs devoted to celebrity news/gossip, ranging from a total of half an hour to two hours of airtime daily. However, the number of celebrities and indeed, the number of items reported, are limited; consequently, the pro-

grams tend to repeat and elaborate on the same news and the same interviews. Therefore, the amount presented here is considered representative of this group of speakers.

2 The “formality and neutrality” account of *aku* and *saya*

Formality is one of the variables used in grammar textbooks to distinguish the pronouns *aku* and *saya*. *Aku* has been described as an informal pronoun and *saya*, a formal one. As an informal pronoun, *aku* can be used between adults and children, or between equals who have a close relationship or share a similar social status (Mintz, 1994, p. 77; Sneddon, 1996, p. 160; Kaswanti Purwo, 1984, p. 57). In some descriptions (e.g. Mintz, 1994), formality is suggested as corresponding to neutrality, and neutrality as corresponding to non-offensiveness. According to these descriptions, informal pronouns are not neutral, in the sense that by using them, a speaker may inadvertently offend the addressee. Mintz therefore cautions foreign language learners against using *aku* when talking to native speakers. *Saya*, as an informal pronoun, is considered neutral in social connotation. It is the recommended pronoun to be used by learners as it is also the polite form and is suitable for any situation. However, Mintz also adds that *saya* could cause offence “if a speaker and his listener have come to use informal pronouns as part of their relationship”. In other words, a shift from an established use of some other pronoun to *saya* can potentially create an upset.

Describing *aku* and *saya* in this fashion is problematic for several reasons. First, it suffers from circularity. According to the description, *aku* and *saya* are to be distinguished in terms of informality and formality respectively, and the distinction between informality and formality, in turn, is to be understood in terms of neutrality. That is, *aku*, being an informal pronoun is not neutral, while *saya*, a formal pronoun, is neutral. Neutrality, in turn, is understood in terms of the potential to cause offence. Yet, if both *aku* and *saya* can potentially cause offence, then surely this strict distinction cannot hold, for if we follow the reasoning, neither of the pronouns is neutral.

Second, whilst it is true that *saya* is potentially less offensive, it does not follow that it is neutral in the sense that it can be used by *any* speaker in *any* situation. For example, parents are unlikely to use it when speaking to their children, and similarly, children are not likely to use it with their parents. This is not to say that it is never used in this context. I was recently informed of a person in her thirties who uses *saya* when speaking to her parents. This person has been continually teased by her friends for doing so. When asked what she thought of her friends’ reaction, she replied that she was aware that her use of the term was not common. Her reason for using it was that she considered *saya* to be a polite term and hence an appropriate one to use when speaking to her parents. Thus a choice judged by one person as suitable may be perceived by another as inappropriate.

Third, although it is correct that *aku* may create offence, it is not explained why it is potentially offensive. What is it, for example, about the use of this pronoun that might render it offensive other than when it is used to speak to the “wrong” addressees (i.e. those who are not close friends or younger persons)? Can it be offensive in other cases? If so, what might some of these cases be? Moreover, the potential for causing offence is not exclusive to informal pronouns, because, as Mintz notes, *saya* can also do the same, though the contributing circumstances might be different.

Fourth, the definition fails to account for the overlap in the use of the pronouns. As noted by Kaswanti Purwo (1984, p. 57), both *aku* and *saya* are commonly employed by people in intimate relationships. The use of *saya* in this case contradicts the definition, which states that it is *aku*, not *saya*, which is the intimate form.

Fifth, the description fails to take into account the dynamics of social interaction, which motivate shifts in term choice. A particularly good example showing the weakness of the definition can be found in the hugely popular teen film, *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta* ‘What’s up with Love?’ (henceforth *AADC*), in which a shift from *gue* to *saya* is motivated by the establishment of an intimate relationship (Djenar, 2006). This demonstrates that *saya* is not exclusive to “formal”, non-intimate relationships. What is interesting in Mintz’s description though, is that, by mentioning that *saya* can also cause offence, Mintz actually indicates that the social meanings of this pronoun are not stable, that the interpretation of its use is also determined by circumstantial changes in the inter-

locutors' relationship. However, this observation is left unexplored, thus a potential insight into the non-singular meaning of *saya* is not gained.

3 The “intimacy” account

Intimacy is another concept drawn upon to distinguish between *aku* and *saya*. In sociolinguistic texts, “intimacy” is often contrasted with “formality” (see e.g. Fishman 1972, pp. 54, 76; Trudgill, 1983, pp. 102, 104, 122; Coulmas, 2005, p. 95). Though these concepts are generally considered in relative terms, what is implicit is that an intimate term such as *aku* cannot simultaneously suggest intimacy and formality, and conversely, a formal term such as *saya* cannot indicate both formality and intimacy. In other words, a term is either relatively formal or relatively intimate, not both. However, as with formality, drawing a clear distinction between the two pronouns by appealing to intimacy is problematic, not only because opinions vary regarding whether *saya* does or does not suggest intimacy, but also because the notion of intimacy itself is considered self-explanatory and therefore does not need a further explication.

As pointed out, *aku* is generally characterized as an “intimate” form, “used to children and between equals who have a close relationship with each other” (Sneddon, 1996, pp. 160-161). Opinions differ with regard to *saya* however. Sneddon states that the use of *saya* indicates the absence of an intimate relationship, while Kaswanti Purwo (1984, p. 57) notes that *saya*, like *aku*, is used by intimates but adds that whilst *aku* marks intimacy, *saya* does not (p. 60). It is unclear what is meant here by a pronoun being used by intimates but not marking intimacy. If both *aku* and *saya* are employed by intimates, should they not be both considered as intimate terms, though they may differ distributionally? The relevant question here is surely not which term marks intimacy and which does not, but rather, how intimacy is linguistically realized in a language such as Indonesian.

Intimacy, like formality, is a concept that is commonly employed in sociolinguistics but is not easily defined. As a term, it is often used interchangeably with ‘familiarity’ (Brown & Levinson 1987, p. 123–4), e.g. English address terms such as ‘honey’ and ‘darling’ are either intimate or familiar forms. As Chelune, Robison, and Kommor (1984, p. 13) state: “Almost everyone knows what intimacy is, but as soon as one must point to specifics, the concept becomes either elusive or bogged down in idiosyncratic trivialities.” They regard intimacy as a cognitive appraisal of certain behaviours, “a subjective appraisal, based upon interactive behaviours, that leads to certain relational expectations”. Intimacy is thus characterized by four key elements, as follows: (a) it is based upon “the exchange of private, subjective experiences, and therefore involves the “innermost” aspects of oneself, (b) it is “transactional” in that importance is given to the process of “sharing” as well as to what is shared, (c) it is a “positive relational process that entails both mutuality and self-differentiation”, and (d) our current perceptions of it is influenced by prior experiences. Thus based on these elements, Chelune et al. define intimacy as “a relational process in which we come to know the innermost, subjective aspects of another, and are known in a like manner” (1984, p. 14).

A similar view is expressed by Laurenceau, Rivera, Schaffer, and Pietromonaco (2004), but they additionally suggest that intimacy involves two main components, namely, self-disclosure and partner responsiveness. Self-disclosures may be factual (pertaining to personal facts or information) or emotional/evaluative (communicating personal feelings and opinions), the latter being claimed as the closest to the experience of intimacy and the kind that promotes intimacy because “they allow for the most core aspects of the self to be known, understood, and validated by another” (2004, p. 63). Intimacy, then, is characterized not purely by a mutual interpersonal exchange, but also by the depth of the exchange that results from, in particular, emotional self-disclosures. Jamieson (1998, p. 9) suggests that close relation and privileged knowledge of the other person’s self are not sufficient conditions for intimacy; rather, it is deep knowing and understanding that are particularly important.

Though *aku* is indeed used by people in intimate relationships, such as friendships and couple relationships, it is not limited to them. *Aku* is used not only to mark but also to initiate intimacy. It

is not unusual for people to use this term with someone they have just met and whom they perceive to share a similar status. Conversely, people who may have privileged knowledge of others but do not engage in mutual emotional self-disclosures may also use this term with each other (e.g. colleagues). Furthermore, people in intimate relationships may shift between *aku*, *saya*, and other terms. For example, a husband may use the kin term *abang* (literally, ‘older brother’) to refer to himself when speaking to his wife. Similarly, terms such as *mama* ‘mother’ and *papa* ‘father’ are also used by many married couples when talking to each other and to their children (these terms are commonly used by Indonesians of ethnic Chinese background, and also by others who orientate towards modernity). Moreover, factors that trigger the shifts may vary (see Kridalaksana, 1974, for a detailed discussion on this point). Thus in the same way that *saya* is not restricted to formal contexts, neither is *aku* limited to intimate ones. *Aku* can also serve a function that has not been made explicit in previous descriptions, namely, to assert one’s personal identity. Celebrity speech provides a good example of language use in which this function is realized.

4 *Aku* and *saya* as self-categorizations

In what follows I describe an alternative approach which treats terms such as *aku*, *saya*, *gua/gue*, and proper names as linguistic realizations of different self-categorizations.

Self-Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987; Haslam, 2001; Onorato & Turner, 2001, 2002, 2004) is a cognitive/social psychology approach that builds on the insights of George Herbert Mead (see e.g. Mead 1967) concerning the relations between the self and society. Like Mead, self-categorization theory views the self not as an autonomous entity but rather as part of a social group. It supports Mead’s contention that the self arises out of “a social process which implies interaction in the group, implies the pre-existence of the group” (1967, p. 164). The theory promotes a conception of the self as fluid and necessarily context dependent. The self is understood not as a stable set of mental structures or schema that represents an individual’s unchanging self-identity. Rather, it is a conception in which there reside both personal and social identities which exist interdependently. Identities are understood as cognitive representations of the self that take the form of self-categorizations. Self-categorizations are defined as cognitive groupings of oneself and other members of a psychological group perceived to be similar to oneself in comparison to other groups (Onorato and Turner, 2001, p. 156). Groupings are defined in relation to the relevant context. For example, in one context, I may categorize myself in relation to a group defined in terms of nationality, such as “Indonesians”, while in another context, I may position myself in relation to an ethnic group, such as “Sundanese”, “Balinese”, and so on.

Personal identity, or the personal self, is a definition of the self that gives salience to the perceived difference between oneself and other people in a group. For example, in a group defined by ethnicity (e.g. “Sundanese”), a member might perceive her-/himself differently from other members for various reasons. It suggests a perception of the self as “me” and of the others in the group as “not me”, and represents a categorization in which intra-group (interpersonal) differences are perceived to be greater than inter-group differences (e.g. “Sundanese” vs. “Balinese”). In other words, a personal self-categorization reflects a conception in which a person perceives her-/himself as being different from other people in a group, however that group is defined. Thus a celebrity might perceive her-/himself differently from other celebrities though s/he is a member of the same group. The perception of difference might be based on considerations of place of origin, personal qualities, and so on. The use of *aku* by celebrities can be considered as a reflection of a personal identity when contrasted to their use of *saya*. In this sense, *aku*, which is a normatively informal and intimate form, is also one that can be used to express a personal identity.

Social identity, or the social self, on the other hand, is a self-categorization that gives salience to perceived similarities with fellow group members; it is an assertion of “us” (our group) as opposed to “them” (the group we compare ourselves against). It is a self-categorization in which intra-group differences are perceived to be smaller than inter-group differences. Thus in relation to a group defined by nationality, such as “Indonesians”, a person might perceive more similarities between her-/himself with other members of this group than with members of another group such

as “Australians”. Similarly, in a group defined by ethnic origin or first language background, a person might perceive more similarities with other members of the “Javanese” group than with members of, say, the “Minang” group or the “Menado” group. *Saya*, in contrast with *aku*, can be considered as an expression of this social identity. Thus the form that is normatively formal and neutral can also be used to express a social identity.

Both the in-group and out-group therefore provide the context for comparison between oneself and others. Which in-group or out-group is perceived to be relevant for a self-categorization depends on the relative accessibility of that categorization to the perceiver and the “fit” between the comparison and the category specifications (Onorato & Turner, 2001, p. 158). The relative accessibility of a group category reflects one’s past experience, present goals, motives, values, and needs and also “the active selectivity of the perceiver in being ready to use categories which are relevant, useful, and likely to be confirmed by the evidence of reality”. Comparative fit accounts for the grouping of people perceived to be more similar to each other as a focal category as contrasted with dissimilar others. The category specification fit refers to the matching between “our normative beliefs about the substantive social meaning of the social category” and the instances under consideration. Thus our categorization of people as a particular group (e.g. “celebrity”) as opposed to people outside of the group (“non-celebrity”) must be based on what we perceive as greater differences between the two groups than between each other in the same group (comparative fit), and also on our beliefs of what can be characterized as that group (e.g. celebrities are famous).

Self-categorization is thus a dynamic process, in that it represents context-dependent self-definition. A person may define her-/himself as part of the celebrity group in the professional context, but even within this context, s/he may give salience to her-/his personal identity (“I am different from other celebrities”) rather than social identity (e.g. “I am part of the female-celebrity group, different from the male-celebrity group”). It is worthy to note at this point that viewing self-conceptions as context-dependent and flexible brings certain implications for the interpretations of the use of self-referring terms. One such implication is that there is not a necessary one-to-one mapping between a term and a particular self-categorization. Thus a term which in one context reflects a social identity (social self-categorization) may mark a personal identity (personal self-categorization) in another context. For example in (1), taken from the film *AADC*, *gue* is used to mark a social (in-group) identity. Here, one of the protagonists, Cinta, is talking to a close friend, Alya, reminding her that she values their friendship. The same pronoun is used by other members of Cinta’s teen friendship group when communicating with each other.

- (1) *Asal lo inget, Al. Persahabatan kita tuh serius. Buku ini jadi saksi! Dalam keadaan apa pun kita selalu bareng! Makanya kalo elo ada masalah jangan disimpan sendiri. Di-share. Mau nelpon gue jam berapa aja boleh. Mau datang jam berapa aja gue bukain pintu.*

‘Just remember, Al. Our friendship is true. This book is a witness! Whatever happens we’re always together! So if you have a problem, don’t keep it in. Share it. You can ring me anytime. My door is open for you anytime you want to come over (lit. Anytime you want to come over, I’ll open the door for you).’

Gue becomes a marker of differentiation when it is used in a contrastive context, for example, when Cinta’s use of this term is contrasted with the use of *saya* by Rangga, another protagonist with whom Cinta falls in love. This contrast is particularly pronounced in contexts where the two characters are in conflict, as shown in (2). Here Cinta is putting Rangga down by saying that he is a social outcast. Rangga retorts by saying that at least he is not emotionally dependent on anyone. He accuses Cinta of being too dependent on her friends by asking sarcastically whether she is even capable of going home alone (without her friends).

- (2) Cinta:

Oh sori, gue lupa. Percuma gue ngomong, lo nggak bakalan ngerti. Punya temen juga nggak.

‘Oh sorry, I forgot. It doesn’t matter how much I explained, you won’t understand. [After all, you] don’t even have friends.’

Rangga:

Paling enggak, saya nggak bergantung sama siapa-siapa. Lebih baik kamu susul temen-temen kamu segera. [...] Bisa pulang sendiri?

‘At least, Im not dependent on anyone. You’d better go and find your friends quickly. [...] Are you able to go home alone?’

Thus in this contrasting context, *gue* as well as *saya* suggest a personal identity, a self that differentiates itself from the interlocutor group – here being limited to the two interlocutors, in contrast to the friendship group to which Cinta belongs, which consists of five girls.

Another implication is that the groupings drawn upon for comparison between the self and others may include, but are not limited to, those defined by static social variables such as age and ethnic group, which are commonly used to explain person-referring terms in Indonesian. For example, Sundanese term *tete*h ‘older sister’ might be used as a self-reference (“I, your older sibling”) when speaking in Indonesian to a younger sibling to suggest a social self-categorization, implying that the speaker sees herself as member of the same group, namely, “Sundanese family” (“I’m an older sibling to you, but we are members of the same family”). It is social in the sense that it highlights the person’s perception of similarities with her ethnic group. In another context, the same person may use *aku* to the same sibling to differentiate herself from him/her and to assert her personal identity (“we are Sundanese and we are siblings, but I am different from you”). While age and ethnic group might explain the use of *tete*h, these variables alone cannot explain the distinction in the choice between *tete*h and *aku* here. Similarly, one might object that the use of *aku* in this instance can be explained by appealing to informality (i.e. that sibling relationship is an informal one). However, saying so does not solve the problem of distinguishing the two terms.

How, then, do notions such as formality/informality, and intimacy relate to self-referring terms and self-categorization? In the account proposed here, the pairing between terms such as *aku* and *saya* and intimacy and formality, respectively, represents normative expectations, that is, the collective, societal expectations and values that guide the use of these terms (cf. Brown & Gilman (2003[1967]:172-3). However, how individuals understand these expectations vary. Some speakers may choose to adhere to them while others may not. In addition, what a person regards as an adherence to such expectations may be perceived by others as a divergence from the norm, as in the case mentioned earlier of the person who uses *saya* when speaking to her parents. In using this term in accordance with the norm, a person presents a certain self-categorization that accords with the categorization preferred by the society, that is, a categorization of the self as a social self, of a self that sees itself as always defined by its relations with others.

5 Indonesian celebrities and pronoun choice

The normative notion that *aku* is an informal and intimate term implies that it is associated with the domain of the personal. This partly explains why a well-known past use of this pronoun in a public context invited an unfavourable reaction. Chairil Anwar’s poem bearing the pronoun as title, written in 1943, has been hailed as a landmark work in the history of contemporary Indonesian poetry, yet it has also been considered negatively as an expression of individualism and arrogance. Goenawan Mohammad (1995) suggests that this interpretation is largely due to the authoritarianism of the New Order regime under Suharto, which portrayed individualism as a negative attribute. This observation is significant, for it suggests that as a self-referring term, *aku* does not necessarily mean individualism or arrogance, and that the negative interpretation is a result of the assignment of certain social values to this term by a certain group of people, namely, those associated with the New Order government.

This negative response seems far removed from a recent similar use of the pronoun by celebrities. As celebrities receive a constant public exposure, so do their speech styles. By “style” is meant the particular linguistic choices a speaker makes in a particular speech situation, or in Bell’s (2001, p. 139) view, it essentially concerns the question “*Why did the speaker say it this way on this occasion?*” (emphasis his). It is a question about the difference or distinctiveness in the speech

of an individual speaker (Irvine, 2001). While “celebrity” as a social category represents a certain group of people, how members of this group expresses themselves vary. The use of *aku* marks the speech style of many celebrities but not of the whole group, for as mentioned, *aku* is not the only term employed by these speakers. Of the 40 celebrities featured in the interviews, *saya* is used by almost the same number of celebrities as *aku* is, as shown in Table 1. One speaker each uses *gue* and a proper name, while the rest shift between two or more of these terms.

Choice of term(s)	Number of speakers & percentage	
<i>Aku</i> :	14	(35%)
<i>Saya</i> :	17	(42.5%)
<i>Aku & saya</i>	3	(7.5%)
<i>Aku & proper name</i>	3	(7.5%)
<i>Aku & saya & proper name</i>	1	(2.5%)
Proper name	1	(2.5%)
<i>Gue</i>	1	(2.5%)
Total	40	(100%)

Table 1: The distribution of self-referring terms in the interviews

It is worth mentioning here that age, which is claimed to be one of the most important considerations in address choice in Indonesian (Kaswanti Purwo, 1984, p. 62; Aziz, 2003), does not seem to be a determining factor in celebrities’ choice of self-reference; both *aku* and *saya* are employed by celebrities of various ages, from those in their teens to those in late 40s. Similarly, the use of *gue* or personal name does not seem to be determined by age.

Some people have observed that there has been an increasing use of *aku* by celebrities. However, when asked to comment on it, they usually respond with nonchalance. A systematic study of people’s attitudes toward celebrities’ use of *aku* remains to be undertaken; however, the comments noted from informal discussions with a group of university educated Indonesians have been revealing. One person described the use as *sok dekat*, *sok teman* ‘as if they’re close to you, as if they’re your friends’. Another person commented that *selebritis kan memang gitu, egonya gede* ‘celebrities are just like that, they have big egos’. These comments are interesting for the following reasons. First, they suggest an awareness that the choice is somewhat non-conventional. Secondly, they indicate that in using *aku*, celebrities treat their audience as though they are friends. Third, by saying that celebrities have big egos, the relevant speaker captures one of the key characteristics of celebrities, namely, the amplification of individuality. In other words, the casual responses are recognition that celebrities continually strive to appear friendly while at the same time asserting their individuality.

Celebrities’ use of *aku*, therefore, does not fit the general, normative understanding of this pronoun as a term used between “real” intimates. Rather it is one that capitalizes on this understanding to suit a different purpose, namely, to create an impression of familiarity, of closeness with the audience, for when a celebrity speaks in public they also have in mind the viewing audience whose presence is always assumed.

Studies on celebrities generally hold that the social category “celebrity” is a modern construction. In this category are well-known individuals who are products of cultural and economic processes manifest in advertising, promotion, and publicity (Marshall, 1997; Rojek, 2001; Tolson, 2001; Turner, 2004). According to Marshall (1997, p. 43), “the essential nature of the celebrity is individuality, unique identity”. The celebrity is an example of “hyperindividualism”, characterized by “the intensification of the concerns of the personal and the psychologization of greater areas of life” (1997, p. 59). The construction of celebrity is formed by the dominant culture and coincides and correlates with the formation of the audience as a social category (p. 61).

It might be conjectured that if celebrities are characterized by their individuality, then *aku* should be a preferred choice, given that this pronoun, in contrast with *saya*, can be used to assert a personal identity. Here it is useful to bear the following in mind. First, although the speakers may represent the group known as “celebrity”, they may assume different identities within the same speech situation. Second, a collective use of *aku* by members of a social group in a public context is itself a relatively recent phenomenon. That *aku* is employed by nearly as many speakers as *saya*, in fact attests to its growing currency among members of this group. In what follows I present some examples from the data to illustrate how the uses of the different terms can be accounted for in terms of self-categorizations.

5.1 Inter-speaker variation

The use of *aku* and *saya* by different speakers are illustrated in (3) and (4) respectively. In (3) singer Agnes Monica (20 years old) uses *aku* in responding to a question about why she is still single despite no lack of admirers. Defensively, she also asks people not to perceive her as a “bad” person simply because she is single, and stresses that having a boyfriend is not her current priority.

(3)

1. *Cuman maksudnya di sini adalah jangan*
2. →.. *jangan .. jangan mentang-mentang **aku** nggak punya pasangan,*
3. *terus jadi hal-hal yang jelek gitu loh,*
4. →*maksud **aku** gitu.*
5. *Jadi, ya .. banyak hal di dunia ini,*
6. →*di .. di hidup **aku***
7. →*yang masih bisa **aku** kejar selain dari*
8. →.. ***aku** punya cowok .. gitu.*

1. What [I] mean here is don't¹
2. →.. don't .. don't think that just because I (*aku*) don't have a partner,
3. then [I] am into bad things,
4. →that's what I (*aku*) mean.
5. So, there are many things in this world,
6. → in .. in my (*aku*) life
7. →that I (*aku*) can still attain other than
8. →.. me (*aku*) having a boyfriend .. right.

In (4) *saya* is being used by 27-year old famous *dangdut* female singer, Inul Daratista, who was catapulted into fame several years ago due largely to her provocative dance moves. Here she is defending herself from the accusation by some Muslim clerics that her dance moves are the cause of rapes.

(4)

1. *Sejak Adam dan Hawa itu sudah muncul*
2. *e.. homo,*
3. *udah muncul lesbian,*
4. *udah muncul pemerkosaan dan lain sebagainya.*
5. →*Apakah juga karena saya,*
6. *pada saat itu belum lahir kan.*
7. *Ya jangan disalahkan dong.*
8. →*Jangan .. jangan disalahkan saya sebagai kambing hitam.*

1. Since the times of Adam and Eve there have always been
2. er .. homosexuals,
3. there have been lesbians,
4. there have been rapes and so on.
5. →Is it all because of me (*saya*),

6. [I] wasn't even born then, was I?
7. So don't blame [me], alright.
8. →Don't .. don't use me (*saya*) as a scapegoat.'

Considered independently, *aku* and *saya* in (3) and (4) do not seem to be different in meaning. Can *aku* in (3) and *saya* in (4) be taken as suggesting informality/intimacy and formality/absence of intimacy respectively, considering that both pronouns are used in a television interview situation, and both occur in statements of self-defense against a personal attack from the public? In what respect can they be considered as reflecting different self-categorizations?

One might argue that the statements in (3) and (4) are intimate in the sense that they deal with the speakers' personal concerns. They may also be informal in the sense that the celebrities might know the journalists and so their relationship is a familiar one. Yet, saying so already contradicts the normative assumption that *saya* is a formal term. Moreover, the question concerning the distinction between *aku* and *saya* remains unresolved. To follow the conceptual approach proposed earlier, it is useful to take into account the context of these statements. Examples (3) and (4) are uttered by two individuals with different professional histories and different professional concerns. Agnes Monica is a pop singer whose rise to popularity took place against the background of a welcoming young audience eager to embrace the Indonesian embodiment of Britney Spears that Agnes Monica has admitted to being. Like Britney in her pre-motherhood period, Agnes strives to be known as an unattached, successful female pop singer. Therefore, although she identifies herself with the American singer, her status as a celebrity in Indonesia is built not only upon her singing ability, but also crucially upon her insistence in being single. Thus her use of *aku* suggests a desire to be perceived as a distinct individual and amplifies a personal identity, that is, a categorization of the self as being different from others in her professional group by virtue of her being young, successful, and single.

Inul Daratista, on the other hand, has come to fame shrouded in controversy. The provocative nature of Inul's performances has granted her a legion of fans but has also drawn heavy criticisms from conservative groups. Whereas Agnes boldly defends her choice of lifestyle, regardless of the criticisms that are drawn against her, Inul attempts to minimize her association with events that are seen as controversial. Her use of *saya* within this case can be interpreted as an attempt to withdraw and dissociate herself from offending occurrences such as rapes, and to highlight the "reality" that these events have a history that is not dependent on her actions as a singer. Where Agnes uses *aku* as a proclamation of personal identity, Inul's use of *saya* has the effect of drawing herself back into society. It indicates her desire to be treated like other members of her professional group (i.e. singer/entertainers), and not to be singled out as the culprit in undesirable events. *Saya*, the social self, locates Inul within that group, and more generally, within the Indonesian society, and emphasizes her identity as being tied to that society. These differences are discernable when we relate the two terms to the speakers' backgrounds and topics of their talk.

One might question whether the difference in the choice of term is determined by the speaker's place of origin. In contrast to Jakarta-born Agnes, Inul originally comes from Pasuruan, a small town in East Java, thus *saya* might be more commonly employed by speakers outside of the capital. However, without a systematic study it is difficult to answer this question. Drawing on the present pool of data, it cannot be claimed that place of origin is a determining factor, as *saya* is used by speakers from outside of the capital Jakarta as well as those who are Jakartan born (e.g. Enno Lelian in (7) and Sophie Novita in (9) below). Similarly, *aku* is not exclusive to Jakartan born speakers such as Agnes.

The use of proper name and *gua* are exemplified in (5) and (6) respectively. In (5), entertainer Dewi Hughes uses her nickname Ogos, a diminutive of her last name.

- (5)
1. →**Ogos** bisa berbuat banyak
2. *buat anak-anak Indonesia*
3. *buat perempuan-perempuan Indonesia*

4. *Itu saja sudah jadi*
 5. → *e.. berkah yang luar biasa buat **Ogus**.*
 6. *Terus mohon*
 7. *e.. supportnya,*
 8. *doanya,*
 9. *supaya ke depannya*
 10. → *.. **Ogus** berharap ya*
 11. *.. mendapatkan hidup yang lebih baik.*
-
1. → 'I (Ogus) was able to do much
 2. for Indonesian kids
 3. for Indonesian women
 4. All that has been
 5. → er .. an extraordinary blessing for me (Ogus)
 6. And [I'm] asking for
 7. er.. your support,
 8. your prayers,
 9. so that in the future
 10. → .. I (Ogus) can hope
 11. .. to have a better life.

It has been pointed out that the use of a person's name for address indicates intimacy or a desire for intimacy (Wardhaugh, 1986, p. 260). One might propose that the same applies to its use for self-reference, as in (5) above. However, although *Ogus* might reflect intimacy, it is not clear in what respect this name is different from either *aku* or *saya*, which can also be used to suggest intimacy. Like *aku* in (3), *Ogus* is also an expression of a personal self-categorization. The difference between (3) and (5) is that the diminutive in (5) suggests this identity as being child-like (the name *Ogus* represents Dewi Hughes's pronunciation of her last name as a child).²

In (6) *gua* and its variant, *gue*, are used by 24-year old actor Revaldo Fifaldi when reflecting on his recent violent behaviour toward fellow celebrities. Originally from Hokkien Chinese, *gua/gue* is often associated with speakers from Jakarta (Ewing, 2005). This is also true of (6), though additionally, this pronoun is used in this case to assert a personal identity, similar to *aku* and *saya*. This identity is asserted through a comparison between the speaker and others, as illustrated in lines (5)-(8).

- (6)
1. *E.. tapi ya namanya juga manusia kan*
2. *pasti ada cacatnya,*
3. *nggak mungkin sempurna.*
4. *Namanya semua orang juga belajar*
5. → *mungkin **gua** belajar dari cara yang susah*
6. *tapi banyak orang yang*
7. *.. belajar dari cara yang*
8. *.. nggak begitu berat gitu.*
9. *.. Tapi semua itu juga belajar.*
10. *Tapi kalo soal kasus kemarin*
11. *itu emang*
12. → *.. emang udah harus dilakuin ama **gue***
13. → *.. dan **gua** harus belajar dengan cara yang susah.*
14. *Ya udah*
15. → *.. **gua** terima aja,*
16. → *.. **gua** ikhlasin,*
17. *tapi dengan catatan*
18. *.. goblok aja kalo misalnya*
19. → ***gue** nglakuin kesalahan yang sama dua kali.*

1. 'Well, us human beings

2. all have flaws
3. never perfect
4. Everyone has to learn
5. → Perhaps I (*gua*) learned it the hard way
6. but there are many people
7. .. who learn from ways
8. .. that are not so hard
9. .. but all of them are learning
10. but in relation to the recent incident
11. that was
12. → .. indeed something I (*gue*) had to go through
13. → .. and something I (*gua*) had to learn the hard way
- Well then
14. → .. I (*gua*) accept all this
15. → .. I (*gua*) accept
16. but on the condition
17. .. [I'd] be foolish if for example
18. → I (*gue*) make the same mistake twice.?

Though *gua/gue* expresses a personal identity in this example, this is not its only use. As shown earlier in (1)-(2), like *saya*, this pronoun can also express a social self³. The difference between *gua/gue* and *saya* is perhaps a matter of different language varieties. That is, *gua/gue* is a colloquial Indonesian equivalent of *saya*, which is a standard Indonesian term.⁴

5.2 Intra-speaker variation

We have seen in Table 1 that speakers do not only choose one term but also shift between two or three of terms. Shifts of term can be interpreted as shifts in style, that is, as changes in the way that a speaker says something. Ervin-Tripp (2001, p. 49) identifies three types of style shifts: (a) shifts induced by a change of speech participants, whereby the speaker shifts terms to accommodate different interlocutors, (b) rhetorical shifts (e.g. when quoting what is said to or by others, or when there is a change in topic), and (c) circumstantial shifts (e.g. induced by a change in the speech production, such as the contrast between speech and writing). Of these, only one is supported by the present data, namely (b). Type (a) does not fit the shifts described in this study, given that there is no change of interlocutors, though the shifts to be shown below (see section 5.2.3) are indeed motivated by accommodation. Additionally, there is also another type of shift not accounted for by Ervin-Tripp, which I call “uncertainty of expression”. This is illustrated by instances in which the shifts appear random. In the account proposed here, these shifts are taken to be correlating with shifts in self-categorization.

5.2.1 Topic shift

Pronoun variation induced by a shift in topic is exemplified in (7) and (8), both taken from the speech of Enno Lirian, a recently divorced 23 year-old singer with a young child. In (7) the singer uses *saya* when responding to a question about how the divorce might affect her singing career. *Saya* can be viewed as an expression of a social self, that is, a self that is a member of the singer-entertainer group, in spite of the recent change in personal status. It is an articulation of the desire to be considered within this professional group context rather than as an individual entity.

- (7)
1. *Oh nggak ada perubahan di karir.*
 2. → *Yang pasti kan emang sebenarnya karir saya emang di nyanyi.*
 3. → *Saya pengen meneruskan karir saya di nyanyi,*
 4. *ya mungkin saatnya sekarang, kayak gitu.*
 5. *Sekarang udah*

6. *e .. selain nyanyi bareng sama*
7. *e .. nyanyi-nyanyi sama feature-nya sama band-band,*
8. → *trus saya juga lagi nyiapin album, kayak gitu.*
9. *Ya .. mudah-mudahan emang ini salah satu caranya supaya*
10. *.. supaya .. tetep eks-*
11. *.. maksudnya supaya*
12. *.. supaya nglatih manggung juga, kayak gitu.*

1. Oh there is no career change.
2. → You know that my (*saya*) actual career is in singing.
3. → I (*saya*) want to continue my (*saya*) career in singing,
4. well maybe now is the time really.
5. [I] have
6. er .. beside singing with
7. er .. singing with some bands,
8. → I (*saya*) am also preparing an album, right.
9. Well .. hopefully it is really one of the ways that
10. .. that .. I can cont-
11. .. [I] mean so that
12. .. so that [I] can also have some practice in performing on stage, right.

In the same interview, the singer shifts to *aku* when she begins to talk about the personal themes of the songs in her latest album. In (8) she mentions that the themes are based on personal experiences and adds that one of the songs is a personal dedication to her young child and children in general (the word *anak* ‘child’ is used here ambiguously, referring to either her own child or all children, or both).

- (8)
1. *Tema-tema yang diambil juga*
 2. *e .. banyak yang seperti yang aku hadapin, kayak gitu.*
 3. *Misalnya tentang anak,*
 4. *aku juga masukin satu lagunya buat anak*
 5. *.. tentang cinta, tentang hidup, kayak gitu.*

1. The themes chosen are also
2. er .. many are based on what I (*aku*) have experienced, right.
3. For example about children,
4. _____I (*aku*) also included one song about children
5. .. about love, about life, right.’

The shift in the topic, from a professional (singing career) to a personal one (personal themes), as marked by the different pronouns, correlates with a shift from a social (“me as a singer”) to a personal self-categorization (“me as a recently divorced, young mother”). This shift illustrates the fluidity of self-conceptions, in that within the same speech situation, a speaker may not embrace a single, stable identity.

5.2.2 Uncertainty of expression

Intra-speaker variation can also be triggered by an uncertainty about which self-categorization is to be assumed, resulting in an “uncertainty of expression”, as exemplified by the shifts between *saya* and *aku* in (9). Here 27-year old actor, Donna Agnesia, is talking about her hope that her relationship with boyfriend Okan will last. Notice below that there are 3 shifts occurring: the first is from *saya* to *aku* (lines 1-3), followed by a shift back to *saya* (line 13) and ending with a shift back to *aku* (lines 18-19).

(9)

1. → Ini laki-laki yang *saya* cari untuk menjadi pendamping hidup, gitu kan.
2. The right person gitu buat
3. → .. buat *aku* untuk
4. .. untuk saat ini deh,
5. mudah-mudahan sampai selamanya.
6. Tinggal cari aja,
7. the right person
8. and the right time-nya kapan.
9. Entar apalagi sudah .. sudah .. sudah
10. e.. usia, sudah merasa matang, mantep gitu kan.
11. Mau cari apa lagi, gitu kan,
12. cuma pengen cari orang yang bisa diajak berbagi dan sepertinya ya
13. → .. *aku* merasa *saya* sudah mendapatkan itu,
14. ya tinggal pasrahin aja.
15. Kita punya rencana,
16. mudah-mudahan Tuhan juga
17. e.. bisa apa ya .. bisa
18. .. kehendak Tuhan samalah dengan keinginan *aku*
19. dan rencana *aku* nantinya sama Okan gitu.

1. → This is the man I (*saya*) want for my husband, right.
2. The right person for
3. → .. for me (*aku*) for
4. for the time being,
5. and hopefully forever.
6. You just have to find
7. the right person
8. and the right time for you.
9. And when you feel you have .. have .. have
10. .. reached the right age, and feel ready and sure, right?
11. What else do you want, right,
12. other than find a person you can share your life with and well
13. → I (*aku*) feel that I (*saya*) have found that,
14. and so just see what happens.
15. We have our plan,
16. and hopefully God can also
17. .. can also what is it ..
18. → .. that His will matches my (*aku*) will ,
19. → and my (*aku*) plan to marry Okan, right.'

These shifts seem to be random, given that there is no apparent shift in topic or any other discernable factors triggering them, and it is tempting to dismiss them as such. However, an alternative explanation can be sought that takes into account the position of the speaker as a celebrity and the recent tendency for the members of this group to use *aku* in public contexts. The shifts between *aku* and *saya* here can be interpreted as a reflection of the speaker's uncertainty about which identity to amplify at different points in the speech. In the excerpt she expresses not only her personal aspiration – namely, to find the “right” person to marry – but also her awareness that this aspiration is shared by other people in the society, as evident in lines (6-12). The random shifts between pronouns suggest that no clear distinction is made between her personal aspiration and the aspiration of others, hence between her personal identity and a shared, social identity. Such shifts are a good example of a case of ambiguity between personal and social self-categorizations.

5.2.3 Accommodation

Some pronoun shifts are triggered by accommodation, that is, a speaker may shift between terms in response to the speech of the addressee, as exemplified in (10)-(12). Here, well-known television host/entertainer, Dorce, is interviewing Joshua, one of the four child singers turned teenagers invited to her morning talk show. Throughout the earlier part of the interview (not shown here), Dorce addresses Joshua by the shortened version of his name, Jo. Joshua self-refers also using his proper name. Towards the end of the show, Dorce shifts to *kamu* when addressing Joshua, as shown in (10) – *kamu* being a second person equivalent of *aku*. Joshua responds by a momentary shift to *aku*, as shown in (11), but quickly returns to proper name, as in (12).

(10)

Dorce:

1. *Ok, kalo boleh liat di sini,*
2. → **Jo** ini kayaknya penutup deh
3. *dari penyanyi-penyanyi anak-anak ya kan,*
4. → *karena memang di era setelah Jo itu*
5. *nggak ada lagi*
6. → .. penyanyi anak-anak yang bisa berkarya kayak **kamu**,
7. *semua .. main filem, sinetron, trus*
8. *.. rekaman.*
9. → *Itu gimana kamu liatnya?*

1. 'If we have a look here,
2. → you (*Jo*) seem to be the last
3. of child singers, aren't you,
4. → because really in the period after you (*Jo*)
5. there has been no other
6. → .. child singers who can do what you (*kamu*) can,
7. everything .. from acting in films, TV serials, and
8. .. produce records.
9. → How do you (*kamu*) see this?'

(11)

Joshua:

1. → **Aku** sangat berterimakasih pada Tuhan karena **aku** tuh
2. .. istilahnya bontotlah
3. .. paling terakhirlah yang .. yang
4. → .. pokoknya setelah **aku** tuh,
5. sayang banget acara anak-anak nggak ada di tivi,
6. → jadi kesempatan untuk penerus **aku** itu
7. .. Padahal kita seneng banget ya kalo ada penerus.
8. Tapi .. kesempatan untuk mereka tampil itu
9. .. dikit banget, dikit banget .. ya kan.

1. → 'I am (*aku*) grateful to God because I am (*aku*)
2. .. if you like, the youngest
3. .. the last .. who .. who
4. → .. well after me (*aku*),
5. there has been unfortunately no children shows on television,
6. → so the opportunity for those following me (*aku*)
7. .. Actually we're very happy when there are kids who want to do the same.
8. But .. the opportunity for them to appear [on television] is
9. .. very slim .. very slim .. right?'

(12)

Joshua:

1. → *Walaupun sekarang Joshua sudah gede,*
2. → *tapi tetep aja Joshua di-*

3. .. *dibesarkan dari dunia entertainer anak kecil itu, gitu.*
 4. → *Jadi .. Joshua merasa kasihan sama yang*
 5. .. *penerus-penerus itu.*
-
1. → ‘Although I am (*Joshua*) now older,
 2. → it remains that I (*Joshua*) was
 3. was raised in the children entertainment world, right
 4. → So .. I (*Joshua*) feel sorry for those who
 5. .. want to follow [in my footsteps].’

As with the previous examples of intra-speaker variation, Joshua’s shifts from proper name to *aku* and back to proper name again illustrate the fluidity of self-categorizations. A speaker may shift back and forth between the social and personal self-categorizations within the same speech situation.

The use of a proper name to address a younger person and its use for self-reference by the younger person is a common practice in Indonesian interaction and suggests the recognition by both parties of their age difference. However, this is not the only use of proper names, for as shown earlier, a name can also be used by an adult speaker to assume a child-like personal identity. In (10)–(12) above, the use of the name can be interpreted as an expression of a social identity. It is social in the sense that it suggests the speaker’s recognition of himself as a part of a social group whose members are differentiated by age, a group in which Joshua perceives himself to be similar to the other young persons at the interview, in comparison to Dorce, the interviewer, who is in her late 40’s. But in spite of the age similarity, Joshua’s self-conception is not necessarily one that is shared by the other teen interviewees. Unlike Joshua who shifts between his name and *aku*, the others consistently use *aku* despite being addressed by name. Thus not only is ‘age’ a relative notion in the sense that persons categorized as ‘teen’ may not all be the same age, but also that, how they perceive their social position in relation to older persons differ. This difference in self-perception is reflected in their choices of term.

6 Conclusion

This article began with the proposition that, although previous definitions of *aku* and *saya* may capture the normative expectations of these pronouns, they do not satisfactorily explain the distinction between them or the variation between these pronouns and other terms such as *gua/gue* and proper names. The examples from the speech of celebrities illustrate that even within a social group characterized by its shared concern with individualism, there is no uniformity in the speakers’ choice of term. Some speakers consistently use one term, while others shift between two or more terms within the same interview. An alternative account has been proposed in which terms such as *aku*, *saya*, *gua/gue* and proper names are considered as linguistic representations of self-categorizations. Apart from *aku* which seems to be used as an expression of a personal identity, that is, as an assertion of a self that views itself as being different from others, the other terms can be used to express either a personal or social identity depending on the context. Terms such as *saya* and *gua/gue*, which in some contexts are used to express an in-group (social) identity, can become markers of differentiation when they are placed in a contrastive context. The seeming inconsistency in a speaker’s choices of self-reference highlights both the flexibility of self-reference and the complex and dynamic nature of social interaction.

Some have suggested that the rise in the public use of *aku* by celebrities can be attributed to modernity (see e.g. Keane, 2003). Indeed, if we consider that celebrities as a social group is a modern phenomenon, and if one important aspect of modernity is individualism (Taylor, 2002), then this suggestion seems to be reasonable. Yet, modernity alone cannot explain the variation in the choice of self-reference. For if those who choose to use *aku* are modern, what are we to make of those who do not? Moreover, what of those who shift back and forth between *aku* and *saya*? To claim that the use of a certain term represents modernity surely would require a careful and more

thorough examination of a wider range of speech contexts, for only then can one determine whether in such contexts speakers' uses of the term can collectively be claimed as orienting towards modernity. Such an undertaking is beyond what can be attempted here.

This article has concentrated on four self-referring terms and has mentioned briefly other strategies for self-reference in Indonesian such as the use of kin terms. Further study may explore questions left unaddressed here, for example, those regarding zero-anaphora. The question as to whether *aku* is increasingly becoming a preferred choice of self-referring term among celebrities, and whether it is a trend particularized to this social group, or one that is also occurring in other groups, are also questions that await further research.

Notes

¹ In square brackets are linguistic elements that are not present in the original but are required in the English translation for grammaticality or to fill in the missing contextual information. In curved brackets are the pronoun used in the Indonesian original, provided in the English translation for easy identification of the variation.

² Personal names can also be used to assert a personal identity defined through a professional role. The use by Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, is a good example. In Sukarno's case, the use also creates a self-aggrandizing effect through an association between one's own name with one's role.

³ It can be considered social only in sense that the self-definition expressed by *aku* is made through a comparison with others (thus, the self is not autonomous), but not social in the sense that the speaker perceives similarities with other members of the relevant group (social self-categorization).

⁴ The relation between language varieties and the second person equivalent of *gaul/gue*, namely (*e*)*lo*, is discussed in Djenar (2006).

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