



An instrumental study of oral vowels in the Kedah variety of Acehnese



Yunisrina Qismullah Yusuf^a, Stefanie Pillai^{b,*}

^a Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Syiah Kuala, Jl. T. Nyak Arief, Darussalam, Banda Aceh, 23111, Indonesia

^b Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya, 50603, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 29 November 2014

Received in revised form 11 September 2015

Accepted 27 September 2015

Available online 23 October 2015

Keywords:

Aceh

Acehnese

Vowel formants

Indonesian

Kedah Malay

Vowels

ABSTRACT

The variety of Acehnese spoken in Malaysia, in particular the way in which it is pronounced, has thus far received little attention in the literature. One group of Malaysian Acehnese speakers can be found in a village in the northwest of Peninsular Malaysia. The present paper examines the oral monophthong vowels of the Acehnese variety spoken in this village based on an analysis of the formant values of the monophthong vowels produced by speakers from this location. The main aim of the paper is to determine the characteristics of monophthong vowels in the Malaysian Acehnese variety. The first and second formant values of the vowels were extracted and analysed from ten female Malaysians of Acehnese descent living in Kampung Aceh in Kedah. Comparisons with vowels in the Indonesian Acehnese variety were also carried out. Our findings indicate that most of the Malaysian Acehnese monophthongs displayed similar qualities with the Indonesian variety of Acehnese. However, there appears to be a loss of /ʌ/, and a more back production of /ə/, and in some cases /a/.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The Acehnese language was transported to Malaysia along with the migration of Acehnese people from north Sumatra to Peninsular Malaysia (then Malaya) because of trade between the two regions and political strife in Aceh. The migration began in 1873, when the Dutch first invaded Aceh (Smith, 2002). Permanent settlements were then set up in states north of the capital, Kuala Lumpur, such as in Kedah, Perak, Pulau Pinang and Langkawi (Nah and Bunnell, 2005). Today, a group of Acehnese descendants continue to live in the district of Yan, in Kedah, which is a state in the northwest of Peninsular Malaysia. Here, the Acehnese settled in a village called Kampung Aceh (literally 'Acehnese Village'), which was established by the first Acehnese immigrants to this area around 1895 (Panyot Ceulot, 2007).

Currently, approximately 126 people reside in Kampung Aceh with half of them being Acehnese descendants who are Malaysian citizens. The majority of the Acehnese descendants living in the village still use Acehnese as a home language (Yusuf et al., 2013). The location of Kampung Aceh within a predominantly Malay area, and in this case, a northern Malay dialect area, intermarriage with Malays, socio-cultural influences from the dominant Malay group as well as the passage of time, are bound to have had effects on the sounds of the Acehnese spoken in Kampung Aceh. However, thus far, there has been a lack of published research on the variety of Acehnese used in Malaysia especially on its pronunciation. This study

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +60 3 79673152.

E-mail addresses: yunisrina@gmail.com (Y.Q. Yusuf), stefanie@um.edu.my (S. Pillai).

attempts to fill this gap by examining the oral monophthong vowels of the Acehese variety spoken in Kampung Aceh based on the first and second formant values of the vowels. Thus, the main research question this paper addresses is: What are the characteristics of monophthong vowels in Kampung Aceh? The paper also seeks to compare how similar the vowels are to Indonesian Acehese vowels.

2. Vowels in Indonesian Acehese and Malay

2.1. Indonesian Acehese vowels

Previous work on the phonology of Indonesian Acehese, which is spoken in the Aceh province, were mostly impressionistic studies (e.g. Sulaiman et al., 1977; Asyik, 1987), except for Durie (1985) on the North Aceh dialect. Thus far, Asyik's vowel inventory provides the most comprehensive description of Acehese vowels. Asyik's data were based on the North Aceh dialect which is regarded by other Acehese researchers as the standard form of Acehese (e.g. Sulaiman et al., 1977; Sulaiman et al., 1983; Hanafiah and Makam, 1984; Durie, 1985; Asyik, 1987).

Indonesian Acehese has both oral and nasal vowels, but in this paper, the focus is on the former. The Acehese monophthong vowel inventory from Asyik (1987) consists of ten oral monophthong vowels: front vowels /i/, /e/, /ɛ/, central vowels /u/, /ə/, /ʌ/, /a/, and back vowels /u/, /o/ and /ɔ/. Like most descriptions of Acehese vowels, Asyik's inventory is based on impressionistic evidence. Perhaps because of the impressionistic nature of studies and references to small groups of speakers from different areas in Aceh, the inventory of Acehese vowels is not always consistent. For example, Asyik's inventory does not include /ɻ/ which appears in Durie's (1985) description of Acehese vowels.

A recent study by Pillai and Yusuf (2012) on Indonesian Acehese oral monophthongs and diphthongs were generally consistent with Asyik's (1987) inventory. Fig. 1 shows the Acehese vowels based on Pillai and Yusuf (2012). These findings are used as a basis to compare the findings in the present study.

Because the speakers in Kampung Aceh also speak Malay, in particular the Kedah Malay dialect, we describe Standard Malay and Kedah Malay monophthong vowels in the following sections.

2.2. Malay vowels

Standard Malay has six monophthongs vowels, which are /i/, /e/, /ə/, /a/, /u/ and /o/ (Asmah Haji Omar, 1993). Table 1 presents some examples of minimal pairs for Malay monophthongs. The examples are reproduced and translated from Indirawati Zahid and Mardian Shah Omar (2006).

There are eight monophthong vowels in Kedah Malay, which are /i/, /e/, /ɛ/, /ə/, /ʌ/, /a/, /u/ and /o/ and /ɔ/ (Asmah Haji Omar, 1993). Compared to Standard Malay, Kedah Malay has two extra vowels, which are /ɛ/ and /ɔ/. Some of the distinguishing features of Kedah Malay compared to Standard Malay are from (Asmah Haji Omar, 1993: 192–193):

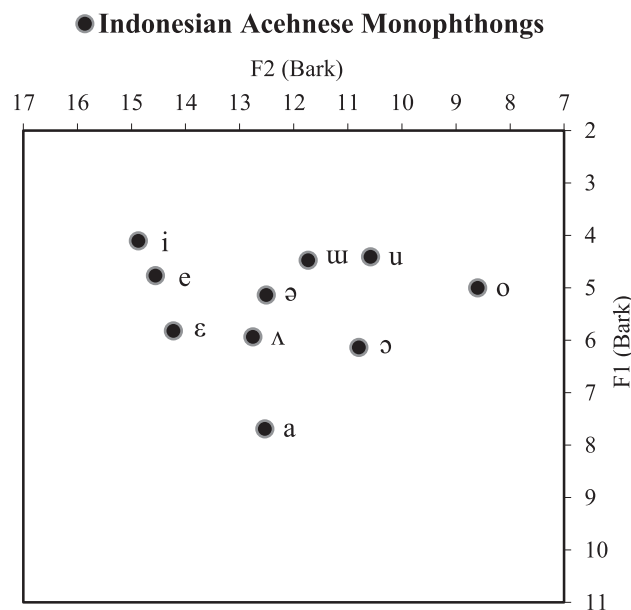


Fig. 1. Formant plot for Indonesian Acehese oral monophthongs (Pillai and Yusuf, 2012).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1103034>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1103034>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)