Eko Endarmoko


Tesamoko is the second edition of the Tesaurus Bahasa Indonesia by Eko Endarmoko which was first published in 2006 and subsequently saw two reprints in 2007 and 2009. The thesaurus has grown from 738 pages to 802 and has now been published in a larger format. The lay-out has been made clearer so that users can more easily find what they are looking for. In the introduction, the main differences between this new edition and its predecessor are explained. In the first place antonyms have been added at the end of many (but certainly not all) entries. Secondly, a number of new words have been added following criteria which are briefly explained in note 1. (I will return to this below.) Thirdly, total internal circularity has been applied, meaning that all the synonyms under an entry are themselves entries in the book as well. Errors in the first edition have been corrected and some words deleted. The addition of hypernyms and hyponyms is another major difference with the first edition.

Let us return to the second point, the addition of words. In note one the author explains that his corpus consists of a number of digital sources: Jawapos.com, kompas.com, pikiran-rakyat.com, tempo.com and waspada.co.id next to sealang.net, mcp.anu.edu.au, and goenawanmuhomad.com. Apparently, these are not the only sources, but what the others are is not explained. Apparently, the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia was not among these sources, as many words in this dictionary have not been included in this book. No reasons are given why this particular corpus has been used or why words from the Kamus Besar have been omitted. Words have only been included in the book when they have synonyms but why words without synonyms cannot be considered part of a lexical thesaurus is unclear to me. Why the Malay Concordance Project has been used is interesting because it mostly contains words from Classic Malay texts which might lead away rather far from the core of the book, which is the modern Indonesian language. The designations ark (archaic) and kl (classical) probably point to words taken from these sources but the difference between archaic and classical is not explained.

Randomly browsing the book led me to the following observations. For undisclosed reasons the etymological background of words has been given. At least, that would be one’s first impression. Because of a list of abbreviations of a variety of languages in the introduction one would indeed think that this has been done. It has, but very unsystematically. In principle, the backgrounds of the entries are provided right after the entry but in an astounding number of cases this is not the case. Looking at the first seven pages alone
leads to the following etymological omissions. *Abatoar* is Dutch, as is *abnormal, abolisi, abonemen, aborsi, abortus, adekuat, adopsi, adjektiva, administrasi, administratif, administrator, admiral, adolesens, adopsi, adverbia, advertensi*, not counting words derived from other languages. Also words that were added to the entries have not been systematically provided with their etymological backgrounds, thus *bedinde* is not signalled as Dutch, *mangkrak* not as Javanese, *baka* not as Arabic, and so on. Curiously, the bibliography mentions the etymological dictionary of Jus Badudu of 2003, but not Russel Jones’ dictionary of loan-words in Indonesian and Malay that was published in 2008. It might have been better if no etymological information had been provided. Because of the sources used for the book, the entries rather centre on Javanese and other main Indonesian languages as Sundanese, Balinese, Minangkabau and Jakartanese, next to Arabic, Dutch, Chinese, and Sanskrit. This means that synonyms used in other parts of the country are not included, which is a pity.

The synonyms in the book have been arranged according to their alphabetical order and no indication has been given of frequencies of use which means, as in the first edition, that it is hard, especially for non-Indonesian native speakers, to decide whether a word is used often or not and makes the decision to use a word rather hard. It is also a pity that only the main entries in which /e/ occur are followed by the words between forward slashes in which is indicated how they should be pronounced, with /e/ for /schwa/ and/ é/ for /e/ but not the synonyms, which means that users have to look up the main entries of the synonyms to discover how these words are pronounced. What I find puzzling is that the introduction (p. xvi) says that ‘explanations’ are not the same as ‘synonyms’. The example given is the word *cangkang*, which in the first edition was explained by *kulit telur* (egg shell), which, in that edition was an entry in itself. As it is an explanation, it has been deleted in the new edition as an entry. Curiously, *kulit telur* has now completely disappeared, but under the entry *cangkang* the explanation *rumah siput* (snail’s shell), which sounds like an explanation to me, has been included and in this edition, it is also an entry in itself because it is now treated as a hyponym under the word *rumah* (house).

In the introduction, the many abbreviations used in the book have been listed in five distinct lists rather than in one which makes looking them up cumbersome. Some other details I do not understand include that *nafas* (with a /f/) has been included rather than *napas* (with a /p/) (to breathe) for the reason that the word *nafsu* exists, which is used in Indonesian rather than *napsu* (proof of this was found in the Malay Concordance which I find invalid for this book). This way of reasoning might just as well have led to the opposite, as *napas* is found in the Kamus Besar where *nafas* is seen as the alternative.
Stepping back from these shortcomings to take a larger view, it is good to have an enlarged thesaurus of the Indonesian language and it will undoubtedly be a useful tool for translators and writers. It is a pity that some details were not considered before the book was finally put together. The above remarks should therefore be seen as suggestions for the next edition which will hopefully come and lead to further improvements.

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References
