

TYPES OF COPULA VERB IN INDONESIAN LANGUAGE

Norma Pawestri

Language Center, International Relations Department, Faculty of Humanities,
Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia - 11480
norma.pawestri@binus.ac.id

Abstract

This study tries to discuss and analyze the topic of copula verbs in Indonesian language, and is aimed to see the types of copula verbs in Indonesian language, also the structure of copula verb in Indonesian language. This research used descriptive analysis method, the findings showed that in Indonesian language, there are these copula verbs such as “adalah” or “ialah” which equals to ‘to be’ in English, but unlike in English, these copula verbs are optional in Indonesian language. Just like in English, it is imperative to use the copulative verbs such as: seem (tampak /terlihat, appear (tampak), become (menjadi), turn (berubah) to form a construction in Indonesian language, but unlike in English, the form of copula in Indonesian language never changes based on tenses. Another similarity of Indonesian language and English is the necessity to use the copulative verbs such as: feel (merasa), look (tampak/terlihat) etc to form a construction. It is also possible in Indonesian language to form a copula verb by creating the verb into a noun and add some prefix and suffix –nya and pair it with adjective.

Keywords: *copula verb, indonesian language, english*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mencoba membahas dan menganalisis kata kerja kopula dalam bahasa Indonesia dan bertujuan untuk mengetahui tipe dan struktur kata kerja kopula dalam bahasa Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif analisis dan hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa dalam bahasa Indonesia, terdapat beberapa kata kerja kopula seperti ‘adalah’ atau ‘ialah’ yang setara penggunaannya dengan ‘to be’ dalam bahasa Inggris, namun yang membedakan adalah bahwa penggunaan kata kerja tersebut tidak lah krusial dalam bahasa Indonesia. Sama halnya dengan dalam bahasa Inggris beberapa kopula seperti “tampak/terlihat” (seem), tampak (appear), menjadi (become), berubah (turn) membantu konstruksi pada bahasa Indonesia, namun dalam bahasa Indonesia, kata kerja kopula tersebut tidak di pengaruhi tenses.

Kata kunci: *Kata kerja kopula, bahasa indonesia, bahasa inggris*

Introduction

Language as a means of daily communication is used to express ideas and it enables people to communicate each other. In the case of Indonesia, this country has many local languages like Iban, Malay, Javanese and others, with Indonesian language or what is usually called ‘Bahasa’ as the national language. Unlike the other languages, Indonesian language is used to communicate among different ethnic groups. It is an official language used in schools and office settings. Indonesian language, is a part of Malayo Polynesian which is a branch of Austronesian language family, the second largest language family in the world with about 1200 languages, representing one-fifth of the world's total.

Its 350 million speakers are spread across an enormous territory ranging from Madagascar, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Taiwan, in some coastal areas of New Guinea, and in the archipelagos of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia (Blust: 2013), making it an interesting language

worth studying. However, learning Indonesian for foreigner is not easy linguistic-wise. Since languages may apply different grammar from that of Indonesian. World languages, especially English and Indonesian language, are different, so transferring an idea from English into Indonesian and vice versa in many cases is not a simple job.

The study of linguistics may pervade a number of sub-fields. Be it the study of grammar which encompasses morphology (the formation and composition of words), syntax (the rules that determine how words combine into phrases and sentences), or phonology (the study of sound systems and abstract sound units). In the case of English for example, Indonesians may find difficulties in learning English grammatically. The ungrammatical English is due to the interference of Indonesian grammar. The formal elements of Indonesian are used within the context of English, resulting errors in English. English has a complex grammar and a

different grammatical structure from Indonesian that may lead to errors.

One particular area in which error might mostly occur is in the copula verb. Verbs are always deemed to be the core of the sentence, in which in relation to other parts of speech, form the lexical units. A copula is in many languages is a verb-like word, might be different in other languages and might also have relations to another component of the clause. Grammarians may have different views about its terminology. Some of them name it as a verb and a few others as predicate. Its terminology is not a problem in our study therefore we can use both of them in this paper. There are languages that do not have copula verb; which causes the phenomenon of 'verb-less clauses', while other languages may have many copula verb. (Dixon: 2009). To study the copula verb of Indonesian language means to analyze the structure of a sentence. Harvey (2003) states that linking verbs or copulas are verbs that show state of being.

We note that all these grammarians, though they may use different terms from each other, generally give the same definition for this grammatical concept. Therefore we do not think that its terminology poses a problem in English grammar. We accept both terms (copula, linking-verb) as equivalent to each other and both have a connective function in the sentence. We can say that a copula is a word used to link the subject of a sentence with a predicate. There has not been many previous study available about any systematic about copular verbs in Indonesian language. So, this particular study on the copular verbs as used by Indonesians learning English or vice versa might be useful to evaluate current status of copular verbs which may show long term effect on the spoken and written English literature developing in Indonesia or vice versa .

Objectives

This study is aimed to:

1. Describe the types of copula in Indonesian language and,
2. Describe the structure of copula in Indonesian language.

Methodology

A method is a way of doing something. To achieve the purpose of a research, the appropriate method is used in this research. In line with the purpose of the research that is to describe the copula verbs in Indonesian, descriptive research is chosen in this study. Along with qualitative design because the data are informed of words rather than numbers in addition. Descriptive qualitative method is a way

used to solve topical problem by collecting, classifying, and analyzing data and it aims to give description about subject that is being researched based on the given variables from the group of researched subject and it is not intended to examine hypothesis. The data were in the form of sentences. The researcher analyzed the data by describing Indonesian Language copula verbs used in the sentences.

Significance Of The Study

To some extent, this study is expected to contribute to the teaching, learning and translating the English into Indonesian language and vice versa. With the findings of this study, it is expected that Indonesian learners of English or vice versa will comprehend copula verbs translation as well as the similarities and differences between copula verbs in English and those in Indonesian.

Indonesian Language

This national language of Indonesia was derived from Malay language and developed as a national language in 1928, and borrowing words from many other language, such as Dutch, English, Arabic, Sanskrit, Persian, English, Mandarin, Tamil and other languages. These days, Indonesian language ranks around sixth or seventh in size among the world's languages, spoken by more than 200 million people in the modern states of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. And has become an important vernacular in the southern provinces of Thailand, in East Timor and among the Malay people of Australia's Cocos Keeling Islands in the Indian Ocean. This language is even understood in parts of the Sulu area of the southern Philippines and traces of it are to be found among people of Malay descent in Sri Lanka, South Africa and other places (Pratika: 2016).

Indonesian language is a branch of the Austronesian language family which extends across the islands of Southeast Asia and the Pacific, together with many other languages in this family such as Malagasy (spoken on Madagascar off the coast of Africa), Javanese (famous for its extraordinarily elaborate system of honorific speech levels), Balinese (the language of the beautiful Hindu island of Bali), Tagalog or Filipino (the national language of the Philippines), and Maori (the language of the indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand). This is a straightforward yet complex language for English speakers in term of pronunciation and its range of prefixes and suffixes which are attached to base words just as, for example, the English word "uncomfortable" is built up from the base word "comfort".

Like all languages, Indonesian language also shows dialect variation. The main dialect division is between the northern dialect (today called Malay or Malaysian) spoken in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, and the southern dialect spoken in Indonesia. The southern variant may in turn be divided into two broad dialect domains, the western and the eastern, each having slightly different patterns of stress and intonation and some differences in vocabulary.

The western variant is spoken throughout Sumatra, Kalimantan, Java, Bali, Lombok, Sumbawa and most of Sulawesi. The eastern variant, often referred to roughly and popularly as Ambonese Malay, is spoken in the north of Sulawesi, the islands of Maluku, in Flores, Timor and in West Papua. Within both western and eastern dialect domains there are local dialects shaped by the influence of local languages. Among the easily identifiable smaller dialects are those of the Batak people of north Sumatra, the Minangkabau people of west Sumatra, the people of Jakarta, the Javanese, the Balinese and many more (Quinn: 2001).

Copula Verb

According to Quirk et al.(1985), the term 'copular' refers to the verb 'BE', and copular verbs are those verbs functionally equivalent to the copular which are also called 'copulative', 'equivalent', 'intensive' or 'linking verbs'. Linking verbs known as 'copular' and (joining verbs), might also be described as verbs that in which a static condition or state of being occurs. They are shown between, or coupling, two substantives or a substantive and an adjective (Shaw, 1985). It is verbs which play role of associating some attribute expressed by the subject predicative following the verb with the clause (Longman:2003).

As Matthews (1987)described, copula is a word used to link the subject of a sentence with a complement by which a predicator which is lexically non-verbal, and grammatically uninflected for tense and other verbal categories, is assimilated to a construction in which a verb is an essential element. The verb be in its various forms is a copula that is most commonly used, but appear, become, seem, are also copulative verbs, and come, continue, feel, get, go, grow, keep, lie, look, prove, remain, run, sit, sound, stay, turn, wax are frequently used copulatively.Copular verb is also defined by Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2000), that is, "a verb that is used to associate an attribute with thesubject of the clause. The attribute is usually expressed by the subject predicative following the verb".

Frank (1993) think of a a linking verb as a verb of incomplete predication. And on the other hand, Greenbaum (1990), states that a linking verb is

the verb that has copular complementation when it is followed by a subject complement or a predication adjunct, and when this element is impossible to be left out without any alteration of the meaning of the verb. Linking verbs like appear, seem, look, sound, feel, smell and taste are items used to join the subject with its complement and are also often named verbs of sensation.

To define what the copula is, and whether it is part of the predicate or not, has long become a question in the linguistic theory. Syntactic phenomena of copula and copular constructions have also been crucial in theories of phrase structure (Stowell 1978; Williams 1983; 1984). It is suggested that copula, (from Latin *copulare* 'to link') play the important role of bridging the predicate to the subject.

Because the copula has no contributions to lexicalmeaning of its own, many would say that the copula is a verb and argue that it is a specific kind of, for example a verb empty of semantic or syntactic features (Schütze: 2000). Meanwhile, other might say that when the copula is finite it is not a verb at all.Different grammarians, might come up with different terms and definition from each- other, generally give the same definition for this grammatical concept. Hence, there is no problem with the terminology. We accept those terms and conditions (copula, linking verb) as equivalent

A copula takes the same case after it as before it. A noun or a pronoun following a copula is variously called predicate nominative or attribute complement or subjective complement or predicate noun or predicate pronoun. An adjective used after a copula to describe or explain a subject is called a predicate adjective or predicative adjective. Some verb of being called the resulting Copula because of the changes in the subject of a sentence in the description. Part of the description (subject complement) is filled by a predicative adjective. For examples: Become, get, grow, turn.

Discussion

There are two kinds of copula in Indonesian Language:

1. Verb of being

Indonesian language has the construction for nominal sentences realized as copula '*adalah*'. So sentences containing VP with Copula + NP. These verbs are used to describe the state of the subject of a sentence. These of verbs type consists of: verb to be (is, am, are, was, were, be), act, Appear, Become, continue, grow, prove, remain, seem, turn, etc.

a. In Replace of Verb To Be

Subject – Complement

A simple sentence can be built by adding a noun, an adjective, a prepositional phrase or a numeral to complement the subject. There is no verb 'to be' in Indonesian. However, a sort of copula verb 'adalah' or 'ialah' is often inserted between the subject and complement.

- Dia guru
She/he teacher
'she (is a) teacher'
(nominal predicate)
- Dia adalah seorang guru
She/he is a teacher
'she is a teacher'
(nominal predicate)
- Dia cantik
She beautiful
'she (is) beautiful'
(adjectival predicate)
- Bapak di kantor
Father at office
'Father (is) at the office'
(preposition phrase)
- Anaknya satu
His/her son one
'his son is one'
(numeral)
- Dia bukan seorang guru
He/she is not a teacher
'she is not a teacher'
(negative sentence)
- Apakah dia guru?
What is he/she teacher?
'is she (a) teacher'
(interrogative sentence)
- Dialah guru yang cantik itu
she is teacher who beautiful that
'she is the teacher who is beautiful'

Subject – Predicate – Adverb

The predicator may be a simple intransitive verb without any affixes. It may also take the prefix ber-, me-, or ter-. Adverbial is an optional element.

- Bu guru ada di kelas
Mrs teacher is in class
'The Teacher is in the class'

- Uangnya tersimpan dengan baik
his/her money is kept with good
'His money is kept safely'

Subject – Predicate – Complement – Adverb

The complement may be a noun phrase, an adjective, or a noun phrase preceded by an adjective-like verb. It may be also a noun preceded by an adjective as predicate. Adverbial is an optional element.

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| subject | predicate | compliment | adverb: |
| – ujian | tinggal | dua hari lagi | |
| – exam | is just | two days | away |
| | | | 'The exam is two days away' |
| – bajunya | berwarna | kuning | |
| – his shirt | is (coloured) | yellow | |
| | | | 'His shirt is yellow' |

Subject predicate compliment
(adjective) (noun)

- mangga itu manis rasanya
that mango sweet the taste
'That mango is sweet in taste'
- Orang itu lambat jalannya
that person slow the walk
'That person are slow in walking'

b. In Replace of Copula Verbs Such As: Act, Appear, Become, Continue, Grow, Prove, Remain, Seem, Turn, Etc.

- Dia bertingkah seolah dia kaya
he/she acts as if he/she rich
'he acts as if he were rich'
- Dia tampak senang
he seems happy
'he seems to be happy'
- Mereka menjadi dokter
they become doctors
'they become doctors'
- Mereka terus belajar
they continue studying
'they continue studying'
- Wajahnya berubah merah
her/his face turns red
'her/his face turns red'

- Mereka tampak senang hari ini (terlihat)
they appear happy today
'they appear happy today'

2. Verb of Sensation

These verbs are used to express the senses, among others: feel, look, smell, sound, taste.

- Rasanya hari ini panas sekali
the feel day this hot very/so
'it feels so hot today'
- Baunya sedap
the smell good
'it smells good'
- Kedengarannya menarik
the sound interesting
'it sounds interesting'
- Rasanya enak
the taste delicious
it tastes yummy
- Saya (merasa) malu
I feel ashamed
'I feel ashamed'
- Anda tampak pucat (terlihat)
you look pale

Result

As the title indicates, this study has investigated the copula verb in Indonesian language. It was concerned in providing full description of the copula. This includes syntactic and semantic issues that the description involved. It is shown that in Indonesian, there are copulas "adalah" or "ialah" which functions similarly with the copula 'be' in English, but unlike in English, the use of this copula is just optional in Indonesian language. However, it is necessary in Indonesian Language to use the copulative verbs such as: seem (tampak /terlihat, appear (tampak), become (menjadi), turn (berubah) to form a construction in Indonesian.

Difference was also noticed, as unlike in English, the form of copula in Indonesian language never changes because nor affected by tenses, but just like in English, it is necessary to use the copulative verbs such as: feel (merasa), look (tampak/terlihat) etc to form a construction in Indonesian language. Sometimes we can make the verb into a noun by adding some prefix and suffix -nya and pair it with adjective in Indonesian to form a copula verb. The interrogative marker in Indonesian language is

simply constructed by adding the question word 'apakah' in front of declarative sentences. The use of 'apakah' in Indonesian interrogative sentences is the most common in 'yes-no' questions.

Suggestions for Further Study

The study of the copula is an important topic and huge topic, making it difficult for researcher to cover all the issues. That being said, although the present study has considered some of the main issues in the study of the copula verb in Indonesian language, there are issues left worth discussing in depth. First, as the present research has been concerned with the copula in Indonesian language, and it would be interesting to study the copula in Indonesian dialects. Since this study here is just a small-scale focusing on the syntactic and semantic features of copula verb in English and in Indonesian Language, it is also still possible to continue the study of the following proposed topics:

- Pragmatic features of copula verb in English and in Indonesian language.
- A study of phrasal copula verb

References

- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., Finegan, E. (2000). *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Blust, R. A. (2013). *The Austronesian languages*. Australian National University.
- Dixon, R. M. W. (2009). *Basic Linguistic Theory 2: Grammatical Topics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Frank, M. (1993). *Modern English: A Practical Reference Guide-Second edition*. New Jersey: Regents, Prentice Halls.
- Greenbaum, Sidney and Randolph Quirk. (1990). *A Student's Grammar of the English Language*. Harlow: Longman
- Harvey. M. (2003). *The Nuts & Bolts of College writing*. Hackett Publishing Company, Inc USA
- Longman dictionary of contemporary English. (2003). Harlow: Longman.
- Matthews, P.H. (1987). *Syntax*. London: Cambridge University Press.

- Pratika, D. (2016). The Existence of Indonesian Language: Pidgin or Creole. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, 6(2), 83-10
- Quinn, G. (2001). *The Learner's Dictionary of Today's Indonesian*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin. ISBN 1864485434
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., and Svartvik, J. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.
- Schütze, C. (2000). *Semantically empty lexical heads as last resorts*. Semi-lexical Categories: On the Content of Function Words and the Function of Content Words. N. Corver and H. v. Riemsdijk. Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.
- Shaw, H. (1986). *McGraw-Hill Handbook of English*. New York: McGraw Hill, Inc.
- Stowell, T. (1996). *The phrase structure of tense*. Phrase structure and the lexicon. J.
- Rooryck and L. Zaring. Dordrecht, Kluwer: 277-291.