

Syntax and Semantics of Adjectives in Indonesian

Adjectives in Indonesian are not nouns because they are negated with *tidak* instead of *bukan* which is a negator for nouns (Sneddon 2010, p. 202). For example, *saya tidak/*bukan kaya* ‘1SG NEG rich’. Rather, they behave like verbs in that they take verbal affixes. For instance, the adjectival root *senang* ‘happy’ can take the verbal affixes *meN-*, *-kan* and *-i* to form *menyenangi* ‘to like’ and *menyenangkan* ‘to give pleasure to’. Yet, they are not completely similar to verbs because they can take intensifiers such as *sangat* and *sekali* ‘very’ while verbs cannot. For example, *dia sangat pandai* ‘he/she is very smart’ / **dia sangat makan* ‘intended: he/she eats a lot’. In addition to that, they can take the affixes *ber-* (e.g. *bersedih* ‘be sad’) and *ter-* (e.g. *terkejut* ‘shocked’). However, the extent to how similar they are to verbs have not been studied in detail. In this paper, we would like to study the syntactic patterns and semantic functions of Indonesian adjectives. We will put a special emphasis on emotion adjectives taking the active voice prefix *meN-* and its interaction with the suffixes *-i* and *-kan*. Specifically, we want to answer these questions:

1. In what ways (syntax/semantics) are emotion adjectival roots similar or different to prototypical verbs?
2. When they do take verbal prefixes, do they produce comparable results to verbal roots? (e.g. *-kan/-i* benefactive~iterative alternation etc.)

In order to do that, we used the Indonesian sub-corpora of the Leipzig Corpora Collection (LCC) which contains over 15.5 million sentences as our source of data. We searched for emotion adjectives (adapted from Widhiarso & Hadiyono, 2010, p. 157) taking the active voice marker *meN-* and suffixes *-i* and *-kan* as well as $-\emptyset$. We will discuss the syntactic alternations that the emotion words listed below participate in as well as the types of semantic roles that the arguments that these surface forms take.

Root	meN-	Freq	meN- / -kan	Freq	meN- / -i	Freq
kecewa ‘disappointed’	*mengecewa	0	mengecewakan	3078	mengecewai	0
kesal ‘upset’	*mengesal	0	mengesalkan	75	*mengesali	0
khawatir ‘worried’	*mengkhawatir	0	mengkhawatirkan	4751	*mengkhawatiri	0
malu ‘shy’	*memalu	0	memalukan	2360	memalui	72
duka ‘grief’	*menduka	0	mendukakan	20	?mendukai	1
bosan ‘bored’	*membosani	0	membosankan	1335	*membosani	0
benci ‘hate’	membenci	2860	*membencikan	0	*membencii	0
cinta ‘love’	mencinta	117	*mencintakan	0	mencintai	9967
girang ‘happy’	*menggirang	0	menggirangkan	7	*menggirangi	0
gembira	*menggembira	0	menggembirakan	2652	*menggembirai	0

Table 1: Target words and their surface forms along with the frequency of the forms in the corpus

References

- Quasthoff, U., Richter, M. and Biemann, C. 2006. Corpus portal for search in monolingual corpora. In *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation*, 1799–1802. Genoa.
- Sneddon, J, Adelaar, A., Djenar, D.N., & Ewing, M. C. (2010). *Indonesian reference grammar 2nd edition*. Crows Nest, Australia: Allen and Unwin.
- Widhiarso, W., & Hadiyono, J.E. (2010). Struktur semantik kata emosi dalam bahasa Indonesia. *Jurnal Psikologi* 37(2), 153-164.