



## Effective Sentences in Indonesian



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### Abstract

This paper aims to describe effective sentences in Indonesian. It is shown that (in Indonesian) an effective sentence could be manifested by the addition or subtraction of a sentence element such as the copula *adalah* 'to be', the prepositions *dari* 'of', the relative pronoun *yang*, and clause reduction. Effectiveness tied to a reduced clause only undergoes a subtraction of a sentence element such a nominal predicate and the subject of a dependent clause. Importantly, it is shown that effectiveness can be said to be universal (i.e. the analysis is supplemented by the English data) which automatically corroborate and support the effectiveness phenomena in Indonesian.

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### 1. Introduction

The use of effective sentences in Indonesian involves language economy. It broadly includes enhanced the use of spelling and the use of standard Indonesian so as to produce a sentence in accordance with the syntactic/phonological rules of Indonesian (Rusdin 2014). Consider the following examples:

- |       |   |         |               |           |                |         |       |         |       |
|-------|---|---------|---------------|-----------|----------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| 1. a) | Dia   | belajar | keras         | agar      | supaya         | dia     | dapat | lulus   | ujian |
|       | 3SG   | study   | hard          | COMP      | COMP           | 3SG     | AUX   | OV.pass | exam  |
|       | '(S)he studied hard so that (s)he could pass the exam.' |         |               |           |                |         |       |         |       |
| b)    | Studi   | ini     | mendiskusikan | mengenai  | transportasi   | di      | Bali  |         |       |
|       | study   | this    | AV.discuss    | about     | transportation | in      | Bali  |         |       |
|       | 'This study discussed the transportation in Bali'       |         |               |           |                |         |       |         |       |
| c)    | Pekerjaan-nya   | adalah  | menjawab      | telepon,  | pengiriman     | barang, | dan   |         |       |
|       | Job-3SGPOSS   | COP     | AV.answer     | telephone | delivery       | goods   | and   |         |       |
|       | mengarsipkan  | surat   |               |           |                |         |       |         |       |
|       | AV.archive  | letter  |               |           |                |         |       |         |       |

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‘His job is answering phones, delivery of goods, and archiving mails’

- d) Analisis-nya            harus        menggunakan        sistim        yang        ada  
 analisis-DEF            AUX        AV.use            system        REL        exist  
 ‘The analysis should use the existing system’

Sentence (1a) is linked to ineffectiveness. The complementizers *agar* and *supaya* are equally used to connect two clauses to show that the embedded clause is a purposive clause. The simultaneous use of these two complementizers causes wastefulness, which ultimately produces an ineffective sentence. In a similar vein, (1b) is not effective because of the presence of the preposition *mengenai* ‘about’ which is not required by the verb *discuss*. Sentence (1c) is also ineffective because the predicate *pengiriman barang* ‘delivery of goods’ is not parallel to the other predicates existing in the clause. So, to straighten out (1c), *delivery of goods* must be replaced by *delivering goods*. The ineffectiveness of sentence (1d) involves a borrowed word from a foreign language, in this case, English. The borrowed word *system* must be adjusted to the Indonesian spelling system; i.e. *system* instead of the *sistim*.

## 2. Research Method

The Indonesian data used in this study were mainly collected from other speakers of Indonesian (although I am the native speaker of Indonesian myself, I would not rely only on my judgments) by means of an elicitation technique. To identify the acceptability judgment of the sentences used, the yes-no task was also employed. The participants were presented with a sentence at a time and were asked to give their judgment by indicating *yes* if the sentence is acceptable or *no* if it is unacceptable. The collected data were descriptively analyzed. Since the issue of effective sentences pertains to the interface of syntax and phonology (prosody), the analysis was handled employing these two linguistic domains.

## 3. Results and Analysis

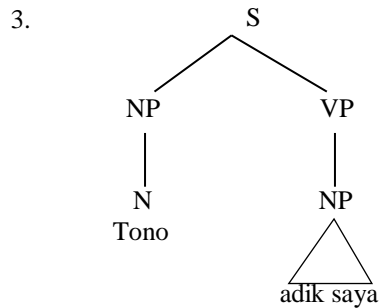
This paper focuses on effective sentences related to the addition and reduction of the copula *adalah* ‘to be’, the relative pronoun *yang*, and the prepositions *dari* ‘of’; and the ones only tied to a reduction of a sentence element (i.e. nominal predicates and subject of a dependent clause). The discussion of these issues of effectiveness is done in order.

### 3.1 Copula

It is often considered that Indonesian does not have a copula. It could be said that this view is based on the fact that the copula *adalah* is not present in some particular situations as exemplified in (2).

2. a) Tono    adik                            saya  
       name   younger.sibling        1SGPOSS  
       ‘Tono is my younger brother’
- b) Orang    itu                            dokter  
       person    that                        doctor  
       ‘The man is a doctor’

However, the absence of copula in sentences (2a-b) relates to the so-called effective sentences (in Indonesian). The omission of the copula *adalah* in the two sentences above motivates the fact that the subject constituent is filled by a simplex NP, which arguably does not disrupt the subject constituent segments and predicate constituent segment. The effectiveness can be shown in the representation of constituent structure in which the predicate constituent, i.e. the verb phrase (VP) is only realized by a noun phrase (NP). Thus, sentence (2b) can be represented as (3).



If the subject constituent in (2) were expanded, as in (4), the resulting sentence would be odd. It should be noted that one can argue that if given a pause break (marked by the symbol //) between the subject constituent and the predicate constituent, the resulting sentence will be fine. However, in a normal sentence utterance, this is not the case, which confirms that (4a-b) is odd.

4. a) Tono yang duduk di belakang kelas itu// adik saya  
 name REL sit at back class that little.brother 1SGPOSS  
 ‘Tono who was sitting at the back of the class is my little brother’
- b) Bapak yang memanggil saya tadi// dokter  
 man REL AV.call 1SG just.now doctor  
 ‘The man who called me just now was a doctor’

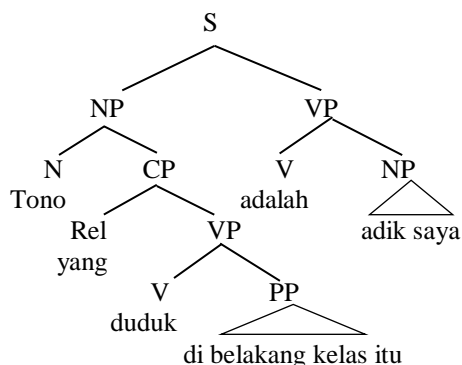
The acceptability of sentences (4a-b) can be restored by inserting the copula *adalah*, which means that the resulting sentences now become effective where the subject and predicate constituents are clearly separated. Sentences (4a-b) can thus be rewritten as (5a-b).

5. a) Tono yang duduk di belakang kelas itu adalah adik saya  
 name REL sit at Back class that COP little.brother 1SGPOSS
- b) Bapak yang memanggil saya tadi adalah dokter  
 man REL AV.call 1SG just.now COP doctor

The expansion of NP subject constituent here means causing to weaken the capacity of the subject NP as a constituent separator with the predicate constituent. In other words, sentence (5a), for example, the subject constituent is divided into three sub-constituents, namely: *Tono*, *sitting*, and *at the back of the class*. This may allow a situation in which only the sub-constituent *at the back of the class* is separated from the predicate constituent *my little brother*, not the whole subject constituent. Therefore, to avoid this possibility, the insertion of the copula *adalah* is extremely effective to contribute to the acceptability of the sentence.

The constituent structure representation of a sentence (5a) is shown in (6) where the VP constituent now contains V realized by the copula *adalah* and the NP *adik saya*.

(6)



Effectiveness can also occur directly with the presence of the copula *adalah*, although the NP subject constituent does not undergo an expansion (i.e. having a length modifier), as in (2). This may occur in (a simplex) subject NP which requires a precise definition or limitation to what that has been conveyed so that the copula *adalah* here has the function of reinforcing or avoiding errors of conception or understanding of things being explained.

7. a) Penisilin *adalah* sebuah kelompok antibiotika  $\beta$ -laktam yang digunakan dalam penicillin COP ART group antibiotic  $\beta$ -lactam REL PAS.use in penyembuhan penyakit infeksi karena bakteri curing disease infection due.to bacteria  
'Penicillin is a  $\beta$ -lactam antibiotic group which is used for curing infectious diseases due to bacteria'
- b) Washington *adalah* ibu kota Amerika Serikat  
Washington COP mother city America United  
'Washington is the capital city of the United States'

Now a question arises as to whether the presence of copula directly on the (simplex) subject is only the one shown by a sentence that exhibits a definition. The answer is no. Consider the following examples:

8. [a] Jokowi-JK kita  
name 1PL.EXL  
(i) 'Our Jokowi-JK'  
(ii) 'Jokowi-JK is us'
- [b] Jokowi-JK *adalah* kita  
name COP 1PL.EXCL  
'Jokowi-JK is us' (Kompas.com, 24/05/2014)

At first observation, it appears that sentence (8a) is synonymous with a sentence (8b). By using the analogy of the previous analysis, the presence of the copula *adalah*, in a sentence (8b), separates the subject constituent from the predicate constituent. This analogy is correct; however, a strong trigger underlying the presence of the copula *adalah* is the pronoun *kita*. The pronoun *kita* in example (8a) is ambiguous between the pronoun treated as a possessive pronoun and the pronoun that syntactically functions as a predicate. This is due to the fact that pronoun forms in Indonesian are not distinguished for cases (possessive, nominative, dative, or accusative). The presence of the copula *adalah* can then be seen as a having a dual function. First, the pronoun *kita* precludes being interpreted as a possessive pronoun. Second, the presence of the copula *adalah* treats (8b) as a sentence, not as a phrase. Thus, we can conclude that the insertion of the copula *adalah* is very effective in (8b) where its interpretation here as a sentence is the desired one.

Constructions concerning effectiveness specifically the ones that relate to expansion of a constituent can also be observed in English, which is illustratable with the phrasal verb *pick up*. In the standard syntactic distribution, the adverbial particle *up* forms a unit with the verb *pick*, as shown in (9a). But syntactically, the particle *up* can be separated from the verb thus making it appear after the object of the sentence, as in (9b). If the NP object

undergoes an expansion, the separation of the particle from the verb cannot be done, as demonstrated by the ungrammaticality of (9c), which suggests that the particle *up* must be returned to its original position, as shown in (9d).

9. a) He picked up the man.  
 b) He picked the man up.  
 c)\* He picked the man who came here yesterday up.  
 d) He picked up the man who came here yesterday.

In order to conclude, the copula *adalah* may be elided in a sentence as specified above that might give an impression/ a view that copula is non-existent in Indonesian. A piece of evidence to show that the copula *adalah* is obligatory is found in cleft sentences as shown in (10b) which can be expressed as in (10c) (confirming again that the copula *adalah* is available in Indonesian).

10. a) Anak itu membantu mereka.  
 person that AV.help 3PL  
 'The man helped them.'
- b) Adalah anak itu yang membantu mereka.  
 COP person That REL AV.help 3PL  
 'It is the man who helped them.'
- c)\* Anak itu yang membantu mereka.  
 person that REL AV.help 3PL  
 'It is the man who helped them.'

### 3.2 Preposition *dari*

The preposition *dari* 'of' can serve as a link between a noun and another noun. However, its presence is also sensitive to effectiveness. Consider the following examples:

11. a) Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk merumuskan pertanyaan-pertanyaan  
 goal research this is to AV.formulate question-RED  
 yang lebih akurat yang akan dijawab dalam penelitian lanjutan  
 REL more accurate REL FUT PAS.answer in research further  
 'The goal of this research is to formulate more accurate questions which will be addressed in a future research'
- b) Pengaruh globalisasi terhadap dunia bisnis dirasakan di mana-mana  
 effect globalization on world business PAS.feel everywhere  
 'The effect of globalization on the business world is felt everywhere'

The NP *tujuan penelitian* 'research goal' in sentence (11a) is basically a combination of the two noun phrases, i.e. NP *tujuan* 'goal' and the NP *penelitian* 'research', which suggests that these two NPs bear a semantic relationship that requires the presence of a connector which connects these two noun phrases. The connector shows an alternative, additional, and contrastive relation filled by the connectors *or*, *and*, and *but* respectively, as illustrated in (12).

12. a) Buku *atau* pensil (alternative)  
 book or pencil  
 'Books or pencils'

- b) Baju **dan** celana (additional)  
 shirt and pant  
 ‘Shirts and pants’
- c) (Bukan) teman **tapi** musuh (contrastive)  
 not friend but enemy  
 ‘(We’re not) friends but enemies’

However, if the first NP is the expanded with a modifier, this expansion must require the presence of the preposition *dari*, acting as a connector, as shown in the following sentences.

13. a) Tujuan yang paling penting **dari** penelitian ini adalah untuk  
 goal REL most important of research this is to  
 Merumuskan pertanyaan-peranyaan yang lebih akurat yang  
 AV.formulate question-RED REL more accurate REL  
 akan dijawab dalam penelitian lanjutan  
 FUT PAS.answer in research further  
 ‘The most important goal of this research is to formulate more accurate questions  
 which will be addressed in a future research’
- b) Pengaruh yang sangat besar **dari** globalisasi terhadap  
 effect REL very big of globalization on  
 dunia busnis dirasakan dimana-mana  
 world busines AV.feel everywhere  
 The big effect of globalization on the business world is felt everywhere’

As shown in sentences (13a-b), the preposition/connector *dari* ‘of’ is present. The question then is why the preposition that functions as a connector is omissible. The answer is that the connector is generally possessive in nature whose presence could behave like the copula *adalah*. That is, when the first NP is filled by a noun head (which is not expandable), the possessive relationship between the two noun phrases can be predicted. Conversely, if the first NP is expanded the connector must be present to separate the first NP from the second NP.

A similar situation occurs in English noun phrases. However, unlike Indonesian, the appearance of a connector is triggered by the ordering pattern of two NPs (in English). The connector of noun phrases appears if the ordering between two nouns forming an NP is reversed. An NP requires a combination of a modifier (which limits the meaning of the head noun) with a head noun. The canonical sequence of an NP in English is Modifier + Head, as shown in (14a) and (14d). Note that in (14b) the reverse ordering between the two nouns requires the preposition *of*, while the ordering of the NP in (14d) whose modifier is filled by an adjective is not grammatical.

14. a) research aims (Modifier +Head)  
 b) aims of the research (Head +Modifier )  
 c)\* Aim research (Head + Modifier)  
 d) A beautiful garden (Modifier + Head)  
 e)\* A garden beautiful (Head + Modifier)

### 3.3 Relative Pronoun *Yang*

*Yang* is the relative pronoun in Indonesian, as in the clause *orang yang datang kemarin adalah saudara perempuan saya* ‘the person who came yesterday is my sister’. The noun *orang* ‘person’ and *saudara perempuan saya* ‘my sister’ are the same entity. Thus in a complex sentence, one of these same entities is replaced with a relative pronoun.

In Indonesian relative pronouns can be used to segment the constituents present in a clause; as in (15a), in which the relative pronoun *yang* serves to separate the specifier constituent marked by the question word *apa* from the clausal constituent. Note that the relative pronoun *yang* has the same function as the pause break (marked by //) in (15b); whereas, in (15c), pausing is given after the subject constituent, which predictably yields

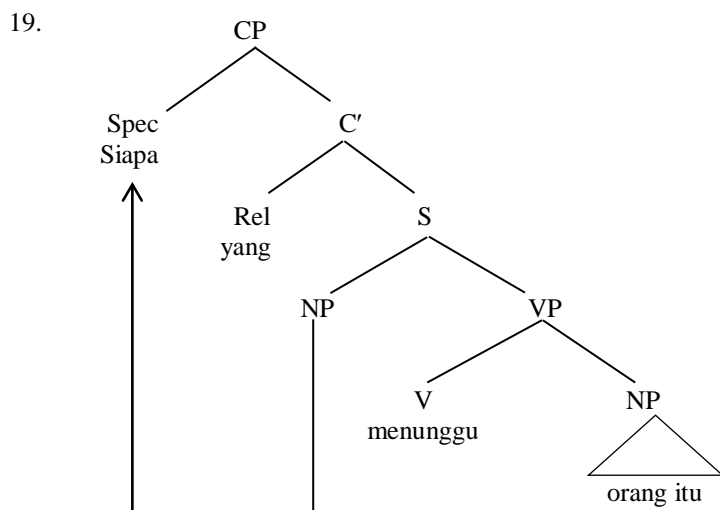
an ungrammatical construction for the segmentation is done incorrectly. A similar sort of situation is shown in (16). Segmentation between question constituent and the clausal constituent must be done correctly. As predicted, the presence of the relative pronoun *yang* eliminates the pausing mistake thus effectively provides correct information about the constituents contained in the clause.

15. a) Apa yang kamu lakukan di sini  
Q REL 2 OV.do in here  
'What are you doing here'
- b) Apa // kamu lakukan di sini  
Q 2 OV.do in here
- c)\* Apa Kamu // lakukan di sini  
Q 2 OV.do in here
- 16 a) Siapa yang menunggu orang itu?  
Q REL AV.wait man that  
'Who was waiting for the man?'
- b) Siapa // menunggu orang itu  
Q AV.wait man that
- c) \*Siapa menunggu // orang itu  
Q AV.wait man that

In a clause where the predicate constituent is realized by a simple predicate such as the one containing a demonstrative pronoun, the segmentation between subject and predicates constituents has been very clear. In sentence (17a), the question word *apa* occupies the subject position. The demonstrative obviously serves as the predicate of the clause. The insertion of the relative pronoun *yang* in such constructions as in (18) makes the resulting construction ungrammatical.

17. a) Apa ini?  
Q this  
'What is this?'
- b) Siapa itu?  
Q that  
'Who is that?'
18. a)\* Apa yang ini?  
Q REL this
- b)\* Siapa yang itu?  
Q REL that

The constituent structure representation of a sentence (16a) is given in (19). The subject of the clause is analyzed as moving to the Spec position (indicated by an arrow) in which it is predictably realized as a question word.



The moved element here has the effect of disrupting the clausal constituents, meaning that a type of separator is needed to separate the question word constituent from the remaining clausal constituent. This task is done by the relative pronoun *yang*. Recall that the combination of two NPs poses a dilemma. We have made it clear that the sequence of two NPs requires the preposition *dari* if the first NP is expanded. In a similar manner, the presence of a specifier means the addition of a new syntactic unit to the clause. Note again that the separator *yang* is needed when the moved item originates from the core argument of a clause, the subject, the primary object, and the secondary object. This confirms the situation that an interrogative cannot combine with the relative pronoun *yang* when the moved element, i.e. the question word replaces an oblique for one main reason. An oblique in Indonesian is realized by a prepositional phrase which amounts to saying that it is not compatible with a specifier which is realized by an NP whose head is a noun or a noun equivalent.

20. a)\* Kemana yang mereka pergi?  
Q REL 3PL go  
Where are they going?
- b)\* Untuk siapa yang dia membeli baju itu?  
for Q REL 3SG AV.buy dress that  
'For whom did she buy the book?'

### 3.4 Reduced Clauses

More or less related to the phenomenon of effective sentences in Indonesian is what I call a reduced clause. Reduced clauses, as the name suggests, can be said to be derivable from a complete clause but they are deliberately made effective for the purpose of linguistic frugality or achieving a certain pragmatic effect. Compare the following examples:

21. a) Kemarin dia panas  
Yesterday 3SG hot  
'Yesterday he had a temperature'
- b) Kemarin dia sakit panas  
yesterday 3SG sick hot
- c) Kemarin dia punya sakit panas  
yesterday 3SG has sick Hot



22. a) Dia sakit jantung  
3SG sick heart  
'S(he) had a heart trouble'
- b) Dia punya penyakit jantung  
3SG has disease heart
- c) Dia jantung  
3SG heart

Sentence (21), the adjective *panas* 'hot' is used to show that one has a temperature. In other words, the adjective *panas* indicates a symptom (which might indicate the presence of a disease) as opposed to the same adjective when used to indicate a meteorological condition. Under this view, the adjective *panas* is not necessarily combinable with *sakit* 'sick, ill' in (21b) and *punya sakit* 'have a disease/illness in (21c); due to the fact that (21b) and (21c) have the same interpretation, as the English translation shows. In a similar manner, the noun *jantung* 'heart' can be used to express a disease. However, unlike the adjective *panas*, the noun *jantung* specifies the information that it is a body part; thus, the noun *jantung* per se does not inherently give the information of any disease related to it unless it is given a modification, as in (22a-b). In colloquial Indonesian constructions such as (22c) often occur. This is commonly intended for the purpose of softening the information that the speaker does not wish to be direct in stating the idea that the addressee has a heart trouble. The construction such as (22c) can lead to a misinterpretation especially in a situation where the addressee does not agree with the speaker or the addressee does not expect that the person in question has a heart trouble. Thus in the dialogue below (A) may react by interpreting *jantung* as part of the body rather than a disease.

23. A: Bagaimana Tono?  
how name  
'How is Tono?'
- B: Dia jantung  
3SG heart  
(i) '(S)he is heart' (lit.)  
(ii) 'He has a heart trouble' (intended meaning)
- A: Semua orang punya jantung  
all person has heart  
'All (people) have hearts'

Another phenomenon that enters into the category of clause reductions is shown in sentences containing what is called the secondary predicate, as exemplified in (24).

24. a) Tono memakan mentah daging itu (depictive)  
name AV.eat raw meat that  
'Tono ate the meat raw'
- b) John menembak mati orang itu (causative)  
name AV.shoot dead man that  
'John shot the man dead'

Sentences (24a-b) contain a secondary predicate, indicated respectively by the words *mentah* 'raw' and *mati* 'dead'. Before we come further to this issue of effectiveness, there is one important issue that needs to be addressed with regard to these sentences, i.e. why they are distinguished from each other by the term depictive and causative. Whether the sentence refers to depictive or causative depends on the properties/characteristics indicated by the first (verbal) predicate of the sentence, as shown in (24a-b), namely the verb *memakan* 'eat' and *menembak* 'shoot' respectively. The verb *memakan* does not cause the meat to be raw, therefore; (24a) the adjective is referred to as secondary depictive predicate. However, the action denoted by the verb *shoot* can cause people to die; then, (24b) relates to the secondary causative predicate. Based on this view, the first predicate in (24b) cannot be replaced with the verb *membunuh* 'kill' as it automatically has caused death, which means (24b) does not require the secondary predicate *dead*, making the resulting sentence ungrammatical, as shown in (25).

- 25.\* John membunuh mati orang itu  
 name AV. dead man that  
 'John killed the man dead'

Sentences (24a-b) can be said to be a combination of two clauses, as exemplified in (26) and (27), where the second clause is attached to the first clause.

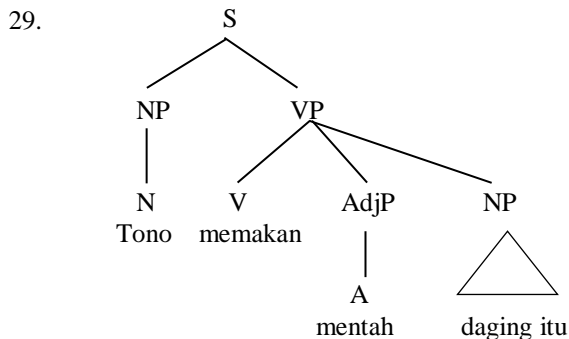
26. Tono memakan daging itu dan daging itu mentah  
 name AV.eat meat that and meat that raw  
 'Tono ate the meat and the meat was raw'
27. John menembak orang itu dan orang itu mati  
 name AV.shoot man that and man that dead  
 'John shot the man and the man died'

The combination of the two clauses in (26) and (27) yield a complex sentence. Quirk *et al* (1985) call these sentences complex transitive because they combine an object with an (object) complement so as to produce an SVCO pattern. The complex sentence could be analyzed as a sentence which undergoes a reduction because the so-called secondary predicate in surface syntax does not have a subject. However, such a predicate is analyzed as a predicate that requires subject argument (Rothstein, 2004, Levin and Hovav, 1995, Simpson 1983, and others). That the secondary predicate, in and of itself is an argument-taking predicate can be interpreted in terms of event semantics. The event semantic representation of (24a), based on Rothstein (2004), is given in (28).

28.  $\exists e \exists e_1 \exists e_2 [ e = \langle e_1 \cup e_2 \rangle \wedge \text{EAT}(e_1) \wedge \text{Ag}(e_1) = \text{TONO} \wedge \text{Th}(e_1) = \text{THE MEAT} \wedge \text{RAW}(e_2) \wedge \text{Arg}(e_2) = \text{THE MEAT} \wedge \text{TPCONNECT}(e_1, e_2, \text{THE MEAT}) ]$

The representation (28) states that there are two events denoted by the verbal predicate *memakan* 'eat' and the (secondary) predicate *mentah* 'raw', which refers to a situation in which not only the predicate *memakan* (which takes an argument) but also the predicate expressed by the adjective *mentah*.

A secondary predicate such as (25), although potentially appears after NP objects in Indonesian; however, in general, it syntactically precedes the object. In other words, the secondary predicate gets its syntactic position between the verb and the NP object.



#### 4. Conclusion

Effectiveness is a complex linguistic problem (in Indonesian). On the one hand, it can show the relationship between syntax and phonology (syntax-phonology interface). The copula *adalah*, for example, can be omitted entirely in the realm of syntax and pausing emerges (in the realm of phonology). Both of these domains interact with each other to demonstrate the acceptability of the sentence. On the other hand, effectiveness can also be shown in the reduction of sentence elements. The reduction may occur in a simplex sentence (containing one predicate) and complex sentences (containing two predicates).

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**Biography of Author**

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