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AN INTERMEDIATE SYNTAX PROBLEM FROM INDONESIAN

Gerald Sanders

University of Minnesota

0. This problem was originally constructed for use as part of a take-home preliminary examination for Ph.D. candidates at the University of Minnesota. It is of moderate difficulty, and could be approriately used, I believe, for practice or examination purposes in any intermediate, or second-term, syntax course for advanced undergraduates or graduate students. The basic focus and data for the problem are taken from Sandra Chung's article, "On the subject of two passives in Indonesian", which appears in Charles N. Li (ed.) *Subject and Topic*, pp. 57-98 (New York: Academic Press, 1976). Although it provides some basis for practice on nearly all major aspects of syntactic analysis, the primary challenges of the problem center around the analysis of alternations in grammatical relations of the active-passive type and through the superordination or promotion of arguments of semantically subordinate predications. I have made certain minor simplifications and regularizations of Chung's original data, chiefly in the area of morphology, but these do not affect any of the major syntactic generalizations at issue.[1]

1. The first part of the corpus, consisting of the grammatical sentences (1)-(8) and the ungrammatical sentences, or counter-corpus, (a)-(e), exemplifies simple copulative sentence patterns of the language and their corresponding topic-emphasized alternants.

Part I

1.	perempuan itu murit	'The girl is a student.'
2.	perempuan itu, dia guru	'The girl, she's a teacher.'
3.	orang ini, dia murit	'This man, he's a student.'
4.	orang itu guru	'The man is a teacher.'
5.	kami guru	'We are teachers.'
6.	saja, saja murit	'Me, I'm a student.'
7.	murit ini perempuan	'This student is a girl.'
8.	guru murit	'A teacher is a student.'

a. *saja, dia murit

b. *orang itu, saja perempuan

c. *dia, orang ini murit

d. *perempuan, dia guru

e. *guru, saja dia

The data in Part I show that Indonesian has sentences consisting of a subject nominal followed by a predicate nominal, with simple subjects consisting of either a pronoun alone or a noun optionally followed by a determiner, and with predicates consisting of a noun alone. Pairs of sentences like (1) and (2) show that for each sentence with a simple subject there is also a corresponding sentence consisting of that simple subject followed by a comma followed by a resumptive pronoun anaphoric to the subject followed by the predicate. The counter-corpus sentences (a) and (b) show that the pronoun and topical subject of such sentences must agree in person. Sentence (c) shows that resumptive pronouns cannot precede their antecedents. Sentences (d) and (e) show that only definite nominals (pronouns, or nouns with determiners) can be topical, and, therefore, as shown by (e), that ordinary predicate nominals never function as topics.

2. The next part of the corpus, sentences (9)-(19) and the counter-sentences (f)-(l), illustrate simple transitive sentence patterns.

Part 2

9.	saja mentemui orang itu	'I met the man.'
10.	orang itu, saja mentemui dia	'The man, I met him.'
11.	orang itu saja temui	'The man I met.'
12.	orang itu ditemui oleh saja	'The man was met by me.'
13.	kamu membawa perempuan ini	'You brought this girl.'
14.	perempuan ini, kamu membawa dia	'This girl, you brought her.'
15.	perempuan ini kamu bawa	'This girl you brought.'
16.	perempuan ini dibawa oleh kamu	'This girl was brought by you.'
17.	guru mentemui saja	'A teacher met me.'
18.	murit dibawa oleh guru	'A student was brought by a teacher.'
19.	orang kami temui	'A man we met.'

f. *saja temui orang itu

g. *orang itu, saja temui dia

h. *orang itu saja mentemui

i. *orang itu (men)temui oleh saja

j. *orang, kami temui dia

k. *orang perempuan ini temui

l. *saja murit bawa

Pairs like (9) and (12) show that these patterns include alternations that are closely parallel to the active-passive alternations of English, with the verbs of active sentences taking the prefix *meN-* and the verbs of passives taking the prefix *di-*. Sentences like (10) show that objects as well as subjects can function as preposed topics, with resumptive pronominal reflexes of such topical objects occuring in ordinary object position behind the verb. Sentences like (11) show that objects can also occur in sentence initial position without a pronominal reflex, the verb in such cases occuring without any prefix at all. Sentence (f) of the counter-corpus shows that prefixless verbs cannot be used in verb-medial sentences, that is, where the object is not prepositive. Sentence (g) shows that such verbs also cannot occur in sentences with object topicalization with resumptive pronouns. Sentence (h) shows that preposed objects without resumptive pronouns in fact require that their verbs be prefixless. Sentence (i) shows that the occurrence of the passive non-subject marker *oleh* 'by' requires the co-occurrence of the *di-* prefix on verbs. Sentence (j) shows that definiteness is a necessary condition for topicalization with resumptive pronouns of objects as well as subjects. (Sentence (19) shows that this is NOT a condition for preposed objects WITHOUT resumptive pronouns.) Sentences (k) and (l) show that objects cannot be preposed without resumption if the subject is not a pronoun (cf.(19)).

3. The next section of the corpus, sentences (20)-(27) and counter-sentences (m)-(t), illustrate verb-based lexical constraints on the occurrence of passives and non-resumptive object preposings.

Part 3

20.	saja meningin guru	'I wanted a teacher.'
21.	kamu mempunjai orang ini	'You owned this man.'
22.	orang ini, kamu mempunjai dia	'This man, you owned him.'
23.	murit kami suka	'A girl we liked.'
24.	kamu saja tahu	'You I knew.'
25.	guru itu dipertjajai oleh kami	'The teacher was trusted by us.'
26.	orang dirusak oleh kamu	'A man was ruined by you.'
27.	orang ini, kamu menrusak dia	'This man, you ruined him.'

m. *guru diingin oleh saja

n. *guru saja ingin

o. *orang ini dipunjai oleh kamu

p. *orang ini kamu punjai

q. *murit disuka oleh kami

r. *kamu ditahu oleh saja

s. *guru itu kami pertjajai

t. *orang kamu rusak

These data show that there are certain verbs (like *ingin* 'want') which cannot occur either in passive sentences (see (m)) or in sentences with non-resumptive object preposing (see (n)); that there are other verbs (like *suka* 'like') which can occur with non-resumptive object preposing (as in (23)) but not in passives (see (q)); and that there are still others, finally (like *rusak* 'ruin'), which can occur in passives (as in (26)), but not with non-resumptively preposed objects (see (t)).

On the basis, then, of their compatibility with passivization and non-resumptive object preposing, the transitive verbs exemplified in Parts 2 and 3 of the corpus fall into four subclasses:

	Passive	Object-Preposing	
1.	yes	yes	*temui, bawa*
2.	yes	no	*pertjajai, rusak*
3.	no	yes	*suka, tahu*
4.	no	no	*ingin, punjai*

As shown in Part 3 (see (22), (27), and the counter-corpus), there are no lexical restrictions at all on the occurrence of RESUMPTIVE preposing of objects--or on resumptive topicalization in general. Thus, as shown by the data presented thus far, passive and non-resumptive prepositive sentences fall together as a group in opposition to sentences with resumptive topicalization--the former but not the latter being governed by overlapping lexical restrictions on verbs, the latter but not the former being restricted in terms of the definiteness of prepositioned arguments.

4. The next section of the corpus, Part 4, consisting of sentences (28)-(35) and counter-sentences (u)-(y), illustrates complex sentence types with clausal arguments functioning as postverbal direct objects (28)-(31), subjects in passives (32)-(33), and preposed objects (34)-(35).

Part 4

28. perempuan itu menanggap bahwa saja murit
'The girl believed that I am a student.'

29. kamu menanggap murit ini mentemui kamu
'You believed this student met you.'

30. saja menkira orang itu dipertjajai oleh guru
'I thought the man was trusted by a teacher.'

31. orang menkira bahwa perempuan saja suka
'A man thought that a girl I liked.'

32. bahwa saja murit dianggap oleh guru
'That I am a student was believed by a teacher.'

33. bahwa perempuan ini dibawa oleh kamu dikira oleh saja
'That this girl was brought by you was thought by me.'

34. bahwa saja guru kamu kira
'That I am a teacher you thought.'

35. bahwa saja guru, kamu menkira itu
'That I am a teacher, you thought that.'

u. *saja guru kamu kira

v. *saja murit dianggap oleh guru

w. *kamu mentemui (bahwa) saja murit

x. *saja menkira orang itu

y. *bahwa saja guru, kamu menkira dia

The data here indicate that all three types of clauses--active, passive, object preposed--can occur as arguments of all three types of main clauses. These data also show that a clausal argument can function within its superordinate clause as a subject of a passive verb (32), (33) or as an object, either postverbal (28), (29) or preposed, either without resumptive pronominalization (34) or with it (35). Sentences (u) and (v) of the counter-corpus (cf. (34) and (32), respectively) show that while an initiating conjunction (*bahwa* 'that') is optional for post-verbal nominal clauses, it is obligatory before such clauses when they occur in sentence-initial position (cf. (32)-(34)). Sentence (w) shows that certain transitive verbs (e.g., *temui* 'meet') do not take clausal objects, and sentence (x) shows that certain other transitive verbs (e.g., *kira* 'think') take ONLY clauses as objects. Sentences (35) and (y) show that the resumptive pronoun for clausal arguments is *itu* 'that', in contrast to *dia* 'he, she', the resumptive pronoun for non-clausal (human) arguments.

5. The final section of the corpus, Part 5, consisting of sentences (36)-(41) and counter-sentences (z)-(hh), illustrates sentence patterns involving an interaction between the promotional or prepositioning patterns of simple sentences and the clausal argument structures of complex sentences.

Part 5

36. perempuan ini dikira oleh guru membawa murit itu
'This girl was thought by a teacher to have brought the student.'

37. saja dianggap oleh kamu ditemui oleh orang itu
'I was believed by you to have been met by the man.'

38. kamu dikira oleh murit saja tahu
'You were thought by a student to have been known by me.'

39. kamu saja anggap meningin murit
'You I believed wanted a student.'

40. kamu saja kira dipertjajai oleh perempuan ini
'You I thought to have been trusted by this girl.'

41. kamu saja anggap kami temui
'You I believed we met.'

z. *perempuan itu dikira oleh guru bahwa membawa murit itu
aa. *kamu dikira oleh murit orang itu tahu
bb. *kamu perempuan anggap meningin murit
cc. *kamu dikira oleh murit saja ingin
dd. *kamu saja kira disuka oleh perempuan ini
ee. *saja dianggap oleh kamu dipunjai oleh orang itu
ff. *orang itu dikira oleh perempuan saja mentemui (dia)
gg. *kamu dianggap oleh orang itu kami membawa (kamu)
hh. *perempuan ini dikira oleh guru dia membawa murit itu

Sentences (36)-(38) show that an argument of the predicate of a clausal object can function as the subject of a passive superordinate verb, with corresponding ellipsis of that argument as subject or preposed object of the subordinate clause. The subordinate clause can thus be active, as in (36), or passive, as in (37), or non-resumptive object prepositive, as in (38). Sentences (39)-(41) show that an argument of a subordinate predicate can also function as the preposed object of a superordinate verb, that verb being prefixless then, as in all cases of simple non-resumptive object preposing, and the promoted argument governing a corresponding ellipsis again of the active subject (39), the passive subject (40), or the preposed object (41) of the subordinate clause.

Sentence (z) of the counter-corpus shows that arguments of a subordinate clause cannot occur as promoted constituents of the superordinate clause if the subordinate clause is introduced by *bahwa* 'that'. Sentence (aa) shows that an argument cannot be promoted out of a subordinate clause with a prefixless verb and a non-pronominal subject. (Compare (38), where the subordinate subject is a pronoun.) Sentence (bb) shows that the pronominal-subject condition for object preposing applies for promoted arguments as well as non-promoted ones. (Compare (39), where the subject of the superordinate clause is a pronoun.) Sentence (cc) shows that verbs, like *ingin*, which cannot have preposed objects in simple sentences also cannot have promotion and ellipsis of such arguments in complex sentences. Sentence (dd) shows that verbs, like *suka*, which have no passives with inherent arguments, have no passives with promoted arguments either. Sentence (ee) shows that verbs, like *punjai*, that have no simple passives cannot participate in elliptical passivization either when subordinate. Sentences (ff) and (gg) show that objects of subordinate ordinary active clauses (with *meN-* prefixed verbs) cannot be promoted, either with or without the occurrence of a resumptive pronoun in the subordinate clause. Sentence (hh), finally, shows that promotion, even of subjects, requires ellipsis rather than resumptive pronominalization of the promoted argument in the subordinate clause (cf. (36)). In other words, the data in this section reveal that the only arguments of a subordinate clause that can have a grammatical function in a superordinate clause are those that can also function as subject or non-resumptively-preposed object of that subordinate clause.

NOTES

[1]Thus where Chung translates a few verbs with *meN-* and *di-* prefixes as non-past rather than past tense (chiefly non-activity verbs like *tahu* 'know' and *suka* 'like'), I have translated all verbs in the corpus as past tense. Also, where Chung gives *rusak* as the active form of 'wrecked', I use the regular active form *menrusak*. The pattern exemplified in sentences (35) and (y), with preposing of a clausal object with resumptive pronominalization, is not dealt with in Chung's article, and thus represents a generalizing extrapolation of the pattern of object preposing with non-clausal arguments.