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Balai Bahasa Provinsi Jawa Tengah



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“The Role of Indigenous Languages in Constructing Identity”

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NOTE

This international seminar on Language Maintenance and Shift V (LAMAS V for short) is a continuation of the previous LAMAS seminars conducted annually by the Master Program in Linguistics, Diponegoro University in cooperation with *Balai Bahasa Provinsi Jawa Tengah*.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the seminar committee for putting together the seminar that gave rise to this compilation of papers. Thanks also go to the Head and the Secretary of the Master Program in Linguistics Diponegoro University, without whom the seminar would not have been possible.

The table of contents lists 92 papers presented at the seminar. Of these papers, 5 papers are presented by invited keynote speakers. They are Prof. Aron Reppmann, Ph.D. (Trinity Christian College, USA), Prof. Yudha Thianto, Ph.D. (Trinity Christian College, USA), Dr. Priyankoo Sarmah, Ph.D. (Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India), Helena I.R. Agustien, Ph.D. (Semarang State University, Indonesia), and Dr. M. Suryadi, M.Hum. (Diponegoro University, Indonesia).

In terms of the topic areas, the papers are in sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, theoretical linguistics, antropolinguistics, pragmatics, applied linguistics, and discourse analysis.

NOTE FOR REVISED EDITION

There is a little change in this revised edition, which as the shifting of some parts of the article by Tatan Tawami and Retno Purwani Sari entitled “Sundanese Identity Represented by the Talents of *Ini Talkshow* A Study of Pragmatics” on page 166 to 167. This has an impact on the change of table of contents.

**SCHEDULE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT V
"The Role of Indigenous Languages in Constructing Identity"**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2015					
TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
07.00 - 08.00	REGISTRATION			LOBBY	Committee
08.00 - 08.15	SPEECH FROM THE COMMITTEE			KRYPTON	Head of Committee
08.15 - 08.30	OPENING			KRYPTON	Dean of FIB Undip
08.30 - 10.30	PLENARY SESSION 1			KRYPTON	Dr. Nurhayati, M.Hum.
	Prof. Aron Reppmann, Ph.D.	CODE SWITCHING IN CARTHAGE: AUGUSTINE'S USE OF THE PUNIC LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL UNITY	1 - 7		
	Prof. Yudha Thianto, Ph.D.	LOAN WORDS AS SHAPERS OF IDENTITY IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MALAY: A HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS STUDY OF CHRISTIAN SONGS INTRODUCED BY THE VOC	19 - 27		
	Dr. Priyankoo Sarmah, Ph.D.	LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT: THE ASSAM SORA PERSPECTIVE	8 - 18		
10.30 - 11.00	COFFEE BREAK			RESTO	
11.00 - 12.30	PARALLEL 1 A			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Nasariah Mansor, Nooriza Wahab	ANALISIS KESALAHAN BAHASA: PERBANDINGAN ANTARA PELAJAR KELAS CEMERLANG DAN PELAJAR KELAS KURANG CEMERLANG	328 - 331		
	Deli Nirmala	ATTITUDES TOWARDS JAVANESE LANGUAGE AND ITS MAINTENANCE BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY	58 - 62		
	Pradnya Permanasari	WILL JAVANESE LANGUAGE BECOME EXTINCT?	114 - 118		
	Siti Suharsih	PENGGUNAAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANTEN DI KALANGAN MAHASISWA (STUDI KASUS PADA DUA PTN DI PROPINSI BANTEN)	378 - 381		
	PARALLEL 1 B			KRYPTON II	Committee
	Ahmad Jazuly	IMPLEMENTASI PENGEMBANGAN BAHASA PADA ANAK USIA DINI	201 - 205		
	Eric Kunto Aribowo	SELAMATKAN PERKAWINANMU, SELAMATKAN BAHASAMU: CATATAN MENGENAI DAMPAK POSITIF PERKAWINAN ENDOGAMI TERHADAP BAHASA MASYARAKAT KETURUNAN ARAB DI PASAR KLIWON SURAKARTA	271 - 275		
	Sudirman Wilian	PELESTARIAN BAHASA DAERAH MELALUI PENULISAN DAN PENERBITAN BUKU	387 - 391		
Ika Inayati	PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PUISI TERJEMAHAN	296 - 299			

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
11.00 - 12.30	PARALLEL 1 C			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Jumharia Djamereng	INFLUENTIAL FACTORS IN THE MAINTENANCE OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AMONG INDIAN SOCIETIES IN MEDAN, NORTH SUMATERA	77 - 80		
	Masruddin	WOTU LANGUAGE IN ENDANGERED PHASE : SOLUTION FOR REVITALIZING WOTU LANGUAGE	91 - 94		
	Siti Fitriati	GAYA BAHASA DALAM SASTRA LISAN LAMPUNG PEPANCOGH	374 - 377		
	Sofi Aulia Rahmania	RAGAM DIALEK PADA MASYARAKAT TUTUR KABUPATEN DEMAK	382 - 386		
	PARALLEL 1 D			MATRIX	Committee
	Ribut Surjowati	NEWSPAPER IDEOLOGY: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON 2002 BALI BOMBING AND PAPUA CONFLICT REPORTED BY SYDNEY MORNING HERALD	129 - 133		
	Risha Devina Rahzanie	KEBERPIHAKAN BAHASA JURNALISTIK MEDIA MASSA DALAM KERAJAAN JOKOWI	365 - 368		
	Nurhayati	POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MEGAWATI'S SPEEC IN THE OPENING OF THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE PDIP	105 - 109		
P. Ari Subagyo	JEJAK KUASA DALAM SABDA RAJA DAN DHAWUH RAJA: TINJAUAN ANALISIS WACANA KRITIS	350 - 354			
12.30 - 13.30	LUNCH BREAK			RESTO	
13.30 - 15.00	PARALLEL 2 A			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Rosida Tiurma Manurung	ANALISIS DIMENSI SOSIAL, BUDAYA, DAN EKONOMI DALAM FENOMENA ALIH KODE DI RUSUNAWA	369 - 373		
	Antonius Suratno, Cecilia T Murniati, Emilia N Aydawati	A STUDY OF THE PERCPtual BELIEFS AND THE USE OF INFORMAION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING	39 - 43		
	Pradiptia Wulan Utami	ALIH KODE DAN CAMPUR KODE DALAM ACARA "BUKAN SEKEDAR WAYANG" DI NET TV: SUATU KAJIAN SOSIOLINGUISTIK	355 - 359		
	Rin Surtantini, Teguh Imam Subarkah	LANGUAGE INFERIORITY OF NON-MAINSTREAM VERNACULAR: A CASE OF NGAPAK AND BANDHEK DIALECTS	124 - 128		
	PARALLEL 2 B			KRYPTON II	Committee
	Agus Hari Wibowo	PERMASALAHAN PENGUCAPAN BUNYI VOKAL BAHASA INGGRIS	197 - 200		
	Apriliya Dwi Prihatiningtyas	PENGARUH SISTEM FONOLOGI BAHASA PERTAMA TERHADAP PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA KEDUA: STUDI KASUS PADA PENUTUR BAHASA CINA DAN JEPANG	229 - 232		
	Eko Widiyanto	INTERFERENSI BAHASA ARAB DAN BAHASA JAWA PADA TUTURAN MASYARAKAT PONDOK PESANTREN SEBAGAI GEJALA PERGESERAN BAHASA	262 - 266		
Taufik Suadiyatno	MOTHER-TONGUE (L1) PHONOLOGICAL INTERFERENCEIN THE SPOKEN ENGLISH OF SOUVENIR SELLERS IN LOMBOK	170 - 174			

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
13.30 - 15.00	PARALLEL 2 C			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Amy Sabila	SEBAMBANGAN CULTURAL SOCIETY IN THE DISTRICT OF LAMPUNG PEPADUN KIBANG BUDI JAYA UNIT 6 TULANG BAWANG LAMPUNG	210 - 214		
	Pininta Veronika Silalahi	LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY OF BATAK TOBA	110 - 113		
	Raheni Suhita, Djoko Sulaksono, Kenfitria Diah Wijayanti	DAYA PRAGMATIK DAN FUNGSI MANTRA PENGLARISAN BAGI MASYARAKAT JAWA	360 - 364		
	Adam Damanhuri	MADURESE PROVERBS (A SOCIOLINGUISTICS COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE OF MADURESE MEANING OF LIFE)	28 - 29		
	PARALLEL 2 D			MATRIX	Committee
	Angga Cahyaning Utami	REALISASI TUTURAN EKSPRESIF TENAGA KERJA WANITA DALAM FILM MINGGU PAGI DI VICTORIA PARK	215 - 219		
	Rosaria Mita Amalia, Rani Sitifitriani	APPLICATION OF PERFORMATIVE CONCEPT ON ENGLISH LEGAL DOCUMENTS: A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS	134 - 138		
	Athiyah Salwa	THE INFLUENCE OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY IN INDONESIAN SONG LYRICS	248 - 252		
	Cahyo Ramadani, Aris Munandar	PRESERVING VERNACULARS IN INDONESIA: A BILINGUAL VERNACULAR-ENGLISH DICTIONARY APPROACH	49 - 53		
15.00 - 16.30	PARALLEL 3 A			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Titi Puji Lestari	PERILAKU SOSIAL MASYARAKAT INDONESIA AKIBAT KOSA KATA SERAPAN BAHASA ASING DALAM BIDANG TEKNOLOGI DAN KULINER	399 - 403		
	Eny Setyowati, Sri Pamungkas	PERSINGGUNGAN ANTARBAHASA MASYARAKAT NELAYAN DI PESISIR PANTAI SELATAN PACITAN	267 - 270		
	Clara Herlina Karjo	IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA TOWARDS LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS	54 - 57		
	Melor Fauzita Binti Md. Yusoff	AMALAN KESANTUNAN BERBAHASA BAHASA ARAHAN GOLONGAN MAHASISWA	308 - 312	KRYPTON II	Committee
	PARALLEL 3 B				
	Nursyifa Azzahro	MAKNA SIMBOLIK PERMAINAN CINGCIRIPIT SERTA MANFAATNYA BAGI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER ANAK	345 - 349		
	I Nengah Suandi	PENYUSUNAN KAMUS SERAPAN SEBAGAI UPAYA PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DI INDONESIA	291 - 295		
	Favorita Kurwidaria	KEUNIKAN DAN KEESTETISAN PEMAKAIAN BAHASA RINENGA DALAM WACANA PANYANDRA UPACARA ADAT PERNIKAHAN MASYARAKAT JAWA	286 - 290		
	Lalu Ari Irawan, Susanto, Suharsono	THINK IN SASAK, SPEAK IN ENGLISH	86 - 90		

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
15.00 - 16.30	PARALLEL 3 C			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Faizah Ahmad, Hishamudin Isam, Mashetoh Abd Mutalib	PERSEPSI GURU TERHADAP PENGGUNAAN DATA KORPUS DALAM PENGAJARAN TATA BAHASA BAHASA MELAYU	285 - 289		
	Suparto	ADJECTIVISH INDONESIAN VERBS: A COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE	161 - 165		
	Mulyadi	CATEGORIZATION OF EMOTION VERBS IN BAHASA INDONESIA	95 - 99		
	Siyaswati	POLITENESS STRATEGY IN AMERICAN FOLKTALES: "JACK AND THE BEANSTALK"	143 - 146	MATRIX	Committee
	PARALLEL 3 D				
	Prihantoro	PROPER WORDS TO COMMON WORDS CONVERSION: THE FAMOUS, THE INFAMOUS AND THE GROWTH OF INFORMAL LEXICON	119 - 123		
	Tri Wahyu Retno Ningsih	PERSEPSI HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM TERHADAP ASPEK FONEMIS	409 - 412		
	Netty Nurdiani	NAMA DIRI ANAK JAWA DI ERA GLOBAL	332 - 335		
Ani Rachmat	ISTILAH KEKERABATAN SEBAGAI FRAGMEN DARI NATIONAL WORLD-VIEW	220 - 223			
16.30 - 17.00	COFFEE BREAK			RESTO	
19.00 - 21.00	DINNER			KRYPTON	
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2015					
07.30 - 08.00	REGISTRATION			LOBBY	Committee
08.00 - 10.00	PLENARY SESSION 2			KRYPTON	Drs. Pardi, M.Hum. & Herudjati Purwoko, Ph.D.
	Prof. Dr. Mahsun, M.S.	-			
	Helena I.R. Agustien, Ph.D.	PENINGKATAN LITERASI SEKOLAH: APA IMPLIKASINYA BAGI PARA PENDIDIK?	187 - 191		
M. Suryadi	TRIPILAR PELURUSLERESAN BASA ALUS SEMARANGAN UPAYA TERHADAP PELESTARIAN BAHASA IBU	192 - 196			
10.00 - 10.30	COFFEE BREAK			RESTO	
10.30 - 12.30	PARALLEL 4 A			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Asrofah, Festi Himatu Karima, Larasati	FETISME BAHASA DALAM LAGU POPULER	243 - 247		
	Y.B. Agung Prasaja	REVISITING MODEL OF READING COMPREHENSION IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	180 - 182		
	Nungki Heriyati, M. Rayhan Bustam	PEMENANG VS "ORANG YANG KALAH": REFLEKSI IDENTITAS DAN BUDAYA BANGSA	336 - 340		
	Susi Machdalena	KEUNIKAN ANTROPONIM RUSIA KAJIAN ANTROPONIMIKA	396 - 398		
	Ali Badrudin	MENGUNGKAP PENGETAHUAN LOKAL MASYARAKAT JAWA DALAM BERINTERAKSI DENGAN LINGKUNGAN MELALUI SASMITA JAWA	206 - 209		

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
10.30 - 12.30	PARALLEL 4 B			KRYPTON II	Committee
	Asih Prihandini, Novian Denny Nugraha	KONSUKSI BAHASA DALAM SLOGAN (TAGLINE) IDENTITAS TUJUAN WISATA (DESTINATION BRANDING) DI ENAM KOTA DI INDONESIA	238 - 242		
	Welsi Damayanti	FONOLOGI BAHASA MELAYU PROVINSI RIAU DAN BAHASA MINANG TANAH DATAR SUMATERA BARAT	426 - 429		
	Antonio Constantino Soares	PASSIVE-LIKE CONSTRUCTIONS IN MAKASAE LANGUAGE	35 - 38		
	Indrawati Pusparini	THE LANGUAGE STYLE ANALYSIS IN JOB ADVERTISEMENT FOUND IN KOMPAS NEWSPAPER	72 - 76		
	Mohd. Rasdi bin Saamah, Abu Hassan Abdul	PERSAMAAN LAMBANG DAN MAKNA DALAM PERIBAHASA SEMAI DAN PERIBAHASA MELAYU	313 - 317		
	PARALLEL 4 C			KRYPTON III	Committee
	Asep Burhan Nurdin, Dina Manda Putri, Dina Rosdiana, Prifita Alina Pergiwati	THE PRESERVATION OF SUNDANESE LANGUAGE IN MULTI-ETHNIC FAMILIES: THE RESEARCH OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS IN SAWARNA VILLAGE, BAYAH SUB-DISTRICT, LEBAK REGENCY	233 - 237		
	Veria Septianingtias	MORFOFONEMIK BAHASA INDONESIA DAN BAHASA LAMPUNG: KAJIAN MORFOLOGI KONTRASTIF	417 - 420		
	Trisnowati Tanto	LANGUAGE PLAY AND ITS FUNCTIONS IN CHILDREN'S FICTION	175 - 179		
	Herudjati Purwoko	LET'S "HAVE A LISTEN" TO A RADIO TALK	67 - 71		
	Juanda	"PUPUH" SEBUAH PROYEKSI PENGEMBANGAN KARAKTER SISWA	300 - 303		
	PARALLEL 4 D			MATRIX	Committee
	Kasno Pamungkas	WORD FORMATION AND PRODUCT NAMING STRATEGY: A STUDY OF MORPHOLOGY	81 - 85		
Tubiyono	PENG-IKON-AN WANITA KARIR DALAM MEDIA CETAK	413 - 416			
Afritta Dwi Martyawati	SIKAP BAHASA ETNIS JAWA TERHADAP BAHASA JAWA DI LUAR HOMELANDNYA	193 - 196			
Nunung Supriadi	PERAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANYUMAS TERHADAP PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA MANDARIN DI PURWOKERTO	341 - 344			
12.30 - 13.30	LUNCH BREAK			RESTO	
13.30 - 15.30	PARALLEL 5 A			KRYPTON I	Committee
	Andi Rizki Fauzi	PROMOTING OUTCOME BASED LEARNING (OBL) IN A LINGUISTICS COURSE	30 - 34		
	Baharuddin	NATURALNESS IN TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH NOVEL INTO INDONESIAN	44 - 48		
	Farikah	THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TALKING STICK TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING WRITING OF HORTATORY EXPOSITION TEXTS	63 - 66		
	Nani Sunarni	PEMAKNAAN LEKSIKON GERAKAN TARI TRADISI SEBAGAI IDENTITAS MASYARAKAT SUNDA (LC)	323 - 327		
	Euis Kurniasih	KATA SAPAAN DALAM SAWALA LUHUNG MASYARAKAT ADAT KARUHUN URANG	276 - 280		

TIME	NAME	TITLE	PAGE	ROOM	CHAIR PERSON
13.30 - 15.30	PARALLEL 5 B				
	Annisa Herdini	STRUKTUR SILABEL BAHASA INDONESIA: KAJIAN TEORI OPTIMALITAS	224 - 228	KRYPTON II	Committee
	Desie Natalia	SUNDANESE VOCABULARIES IN KAMUS URBAN INDONESIA: AN EFFORT TOWARD POSITIVE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE THROUGH LEXICOGRAPHIC TRANSLATION	253 - 256		
	Wati Kurniawati	AKOMODASI TUTURAN MASYARAKAT SAMBAU DI WILAYAH PERBATASAN	421 - 425		
	Suharno	TRANSLATION AND CROSS CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (CCU)	156 - 160		
	Widyatmike Gede Mulawarman	PERAN INTEGRASI LEKSIKAL BAHASA MELAYU MALAYSIA KE DALAM BAHASA INDONESIA PADA MASYARAKAT DESA TANJUNG ARU KECAMATAN SEBATIK TIMUR	430 - 433		
	PARALLEL 5 C				
	Subur Laksmono Wardoyo, Ririn Ambarini, Sri Suneki	DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES AND CONSTRUCTIVISM THROUGH THE BILINGUAL LEARNING MODEL WITH A BCCT APPROACH (BEYOND CENTER AND CIRCLE TIME) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN SEMARANG1	151 - 155	KRYPTON III	Committee
	Sri Rejeki Urip	PRAGMATICS IN THE FRENCH CLASSROOM AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE	147 - 150		
	Djarmika	KUALITAS KETERAMPILAN BERBAHASA JAWA PENUTUR BELIA DI SURAKARTA: SEBUAH FENOMENA PEMEROLEHAN BAHASA	257 - 261		
	Muhammad Iqbal Suhartomo, Riza Taufiq Rizki	BENTUK PERCAKAPAN WACANA HUMOR PADA ACARA PSBUKERS ANTV : SEBUAH KAJIAN PRAGMATIK	318 - 322		
	Tatan Tawami, Retno Purwani Sari	SUNDANESE IDENTITY REPRESENTED BY THE TALENTS OF INI TALKSHOW A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS	166 - 169		
	PARALLEL 5 D				
	Kahar Dwi Prihantono	PEMERTAHANAN DAN REVITALISASI BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PENERJEMAHAN TEATRICAL	304 - 307	MATRIX	Committee
	Titin Lestari	KONSEP PENGETAHUAN DALAM PUPUJIAN SUNDA KANGJENG NABI: KAJIAN ANTROPOLINGUISTIK DI DESA GIRI ASIH KAB. BANDUNG BARAT	404 - 408		
	Mytha Candria	THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS' USE OF JAVANESE LANGUAGE	100 - 104		
	Rukni Setyawati	REALIZING THE GREAT NATION THROUGH CULTURAL LITERACY	139 - 142		
	Sumarlam, Djarmika, Sri Pamungkas	GANGGUAN EKSPRESI BERBAHASA PADA PENDERITA DEMENSIA DI KOTA SURAKARTA	392 - 395		
	15.30 - 16.00	CLOSING			KRYPTON

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note	iii
Note for Revised Edition	v
Schedule of the International Seminar Language Maintenance and Shift V	vii
Table of Contents	xiii
CODE SWITCHING IN CARTHAGE: AUGUSTINE'S USE OF THE PUNIC LANGUAGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CULTURAL UNITY	
Aron Reppmann	1
LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT: THE ASSAM SORA PERSPECTIVE	
Priyankoo Sarmah	8
LOAN WORDS AS SHAPERS OF IDENTITY IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MALAY: A HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS STUDY OF CHRISTIAN SONGS INTRODUCED BY THE VOC	
Yudha Thianto	19
MADURESE PROVERBS (A SOCIOLINGUISTICS COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE OF MADURESE MEANING OF LIFE)	
Adam Damanhuri	28
PROMOTING OUTCOME BASED LEARNING (OBL) IN A LINGUISTICS COURSE	
Andi Rizki Fauzi	30
PASSIVE-LIKE CONSTRUCTIONS IN MAKASAE LANGUAGE	
Antonio Constantino Soares	35
A STUDY OF THE PERCEPTUAL BELIEFS AND THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING	
Antonius Suratno, Cecilia T Murniati, Emilia N Aydawati	39
NATURALNESS IN TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH NOVEL INTO INDONESIAN	
Baharuddin	44
PRESERVING VERNACULARS IN INDONESIA: A BILINGUAL VERNACULAR-ENGLISH DICTIONARY APPROACH	
Cahyo Ramadani, Aris Munandar	49
IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA TOWARDS LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS	
Clara Herlina Karjo	54
ATTITUDES TOWARDS JAVANESE LANGUAGE AND ITS MAINTENANCE BY THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY	
Deli Nirmala	58

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TALKING STICK TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING WRITING OF HORTATORY EXPOSITION TEXTS	
Farikah	63
LET'S "HAVE A LISTEN" TO A RADIO TALK	
Herudjati Purwoko	67
THE LANGUAGE STYLE ANALYSIS IN JOB ADVERTISEMENT FOUND IN KOMPAS NEWSPAPER	
Indrawati Pusparini	72
INFLUENTIAL FACTORS IN THE MAINTENANCE OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AMONG INDIAN SOCIETIES IN MEDAN, NORTH SUMATERA	
Jumharia Djamereng	77
WORD FORMATION AND PRODUCT NAMING STRATEGY: A STUDY OF MORPHOLOGY	
Kasno Pamungkas	81
THINK IN SASAK, SPEAK IN ENGLISH	
Lalu Ari Irawan, Susanto, Suharsono	86
WOTU LANGUAGE IN ENDANGERED PHASE : SOLUTION FOR REVITALIZING WOTU LANGUAGE	
Masruddin	91
CATEGORIZATION OF EMOTION VERBS IN BAHASA INDONESIA	
Mulyadi	95
THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS' USE OF JAVANESE LANGUAGE	
Mytha Candria	100
POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MEGAWATI'S SPEECH IN THE OPENING OF THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE PDIP	
Nurhayati	105
LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY OF BATAK TOBA	
Pininta Veronika Silalahi	110
WILL JAVANESE LANGUAGE BECOME EXTINCT?	
Pradnya Permanasari	114
PROPER WORDS TO COMMON WORDS CONVERSION: THE FAMOUS, THE INFAMOUS AND THE GROWTH OF INFORMAL LEXICON	
Prihantoro	119
LANGUAGE INFERIORITY OF NON-MAINSTREAM VERNACULAR: A CASE OF NGAPAK AND BANDHEK DIALECTS	
Rin Surtantini, Teguh Imam Subarkah	124
NEWSPAPER IDEOLOGY: CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON 2002 BALI BOMBING AND PAPUA CONFLICT REPORTED BY SYDNEY MORNING HERALD	
Ribut Surjowati	129

APPLICATION OF PERFORMATIVE CONCEPT ON ENGLISH LEGAL DOCUMENTS: A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS Rosaria Mita Amalia, Rani Sitifitriani	134
REALIZING THE GREAT NATION THROUGH CULTURAL LITERACY Rukni Setyawati	139
POLITENESS STRATEGY IN AMERICAN FOLKTALES: “JACK AND THE BEANSTALK” Siyaswati	143
PRAGMATICS IN THE FRENCH CLASSROOM AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE Sri Rejeki Urip	147
DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL VALUES AND CONSTRUCTIVISM THROUGH THE BILINGUAL LEARNING MODEL WITH A BCCT APPROACH (BEYOND CENTER AND CIRCLE TIME) IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN SEMARANG1 Subur Laksmono Wardoyo, Ririn Ambarini, Sri Suneki	151
TRANSLATION AND CROSS CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING (CCU) Suharno	156
ADJECTIVISH INDONESIAN VERBS: A COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE Suparto	161
SUNDANESE IDENTITY REPRESENTED BY THE TALENTS OF INI TALKSHOW A STUDY OF PRAGMATICS Tatan Tawami, Retno Purwani Sari	166
MOTHER-TONGUE (L1) PHONOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE IN THE SPOKEN ENGLISH OF SOUVENIR SELLERS IN LOMBOK Taufik Suadiyatno	170
LANGUAGE PLAY AND ITS FUNCTIONS IN CHILDREN’S FICTION Trisnowati Tanto	175
REVISITING MODEL OF READING COMPREHENSION IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION Y.B. Agung Prasaja	180
PENINGKATAN LITERASI SEKOLAH: APA IMPLIKASINYA BAGI PARA PENDIDIK? Helena I.R. Agustien	183
TRIPILAR PELURUSLERESAN BASA ALUS SEMARANGAN UPAYA TERHADAP PELESTARIAN BAHASA IBU M. Suryadi	188
SIKAP BAHASA ETNIS JAWA TERHADAP BAHASA JAWA DI LUAR HOMELANDNYA Afritta Dwi Martyawati	193
PERMASALAHAN PENGUCAPAN BUNYI VOKAL BAHASA INGGRIS Agus Hari Wibowo	197

IMPLEMENTASI PENGEMBANGAN BAHASA PADA ANAK USIA DINI Ahmad Jazuly	201
MENGUNGKAP PENGETAHUAN LOKAL MASYARAKAT JAWA DALAM BERINTERAKSI DENGAN LINGKUNGAN MELALUI SASMITA JAWA Ali Badrudin	206
SEBAMBANGAN CULTURAL SOCIETY IN THE DISTRICT OF LAMPUNG PEPADUN KIBANG BUDI JAYA UNIT 6 TULANG BAWANG LAMPUNG Amy Sabila	210
REALISASI TUTURAN EKSPRESIF TENAGA KERJA WANITA DALAM FILM MINGGU PAGI DI VICTORIA PARK Angga Cahyaning Utami	215
ISTILAH KEKERABATAN SEBAGAI FRAGMENT DARI NATIONAL WORLD-VIEW Ani Rachmat	220
STRUKTUR SILABEL BAHASA INDONESIA: KAJIAN TEORI OPTIMALITAS Annisa Herdini	224
PENGARUH SISTEM FONOLOGI BAHASA PERTAMA TERHADAP PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA KEDUA: STUDI KASUS PADA PENUTUR BAHASA CINA DAN JEPANG Apriliya Dwi Prihatiningtyas	229
THE PRESERVATION OF SUNDANESE LANGUAGE IN MULTI-ETHNIC FAMILIES: THE RESEARCH OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS IN SAWARNA VILLAGE, BAYAH SUB-DISTRICT, LEBAK REGENCY Asep Burhan Nurdin, Dina Manda Putri, Dina Rosdiana, Prifta Alina Pergiwati	233
KONSTRUKSI BAHASA DALAM SLOGAN (TAGLINE) IDENTITAS TUJUAN WISATA (DESTINATION BRANDING) DI ENAM KOTA DI INDONESIA Asih Prihandini, Novian Denny Nugraha	238
FETISME BAHASA DALAM LAGU POPULER Asrofah, Festi Himatu Karima, Larasati	243
THE INFLUENCE OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY IN INDONESIAN SONG LYRICS Athiyah Salwa	248
SUNDANESE VOCABULARIES IN KAMUS URBAN INDONESIA: AN EFFORT TOWARD POSITIVE LANGUAGE ATTITUDE THROUGH LEXICOGRAPHIC TRANSLATION Desie Natalia	253
KUALITAS KETERAMPILAN BERBAHASA JAWA PENUTUR BELIA DI SURAKARTA: SEBUAH FENOMENA PEMEROLEHAN BAHASA Djarmika	257
INTERFERENSI BAHASA ARAB DAN BAHASA JAWA PADA TUTURAN MASYARAKAT PONDOK PESANTREN SEBAGAI GEJALA PERGESERAN BAHASA Eko Widiyanto	262

PERSINGGUNGAN ANTARBAHASA MASYARAKAT NELAYAN DI PESISIR PANTAI SELATAN PACITAN	
Eny Setyowati, Sri Pamungkas	267
SELAMATKAN PERKAWINANMU, SELAMATKAN BAHASAMU: CATATAN MENGENAI DAMPAK POSITIF PERKAWINAN ENDOGAMI TERHADAP BAHASA MASYARAKAT KETURUNAN ARAB DI PASAR KLIWON SURAKARTA	
Eric Kunto Aribowo	271
KATA SAPAAN DALAM SAWALA LUHUNG MASYARAKAT ADAT KARUHUN URANG	
Euis Kurniasih	276
PERSEPSI GURU TERHADAP PENGGUNAAN DATA KORPUS DALAM PENGAJARAN TATA BAHASA BAHASA MELAYU	
Faizah Ahmad, Hishamudin Isam, Mashetoh Abd Mutalib	281
KEUNIKAN DAN KEESTETISAN PEMAKAIAN BAHASA RINENGGGA DALAM WACANA PANYANDRA UPACARA ADAT PERNIKAHAN MASYARAKAT JAWA	
Favorita Kurwidaria	286
PENYUSUNAN KAMUS SERAPAN SEBAGAI UPAYA PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DI INDONESIA	
I Nengah Suandi	291
PEMERTAHANAN BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PUISI TERJEMAHAN	
Ika Inayati	296
"PUPUH" SEBUAH PROYEKSI PENGEMBANGAN KARAKTER SISWA	
Juanda	300
PEMERTAHANAN DAN REVITALISASI BAHASA DAERAH DALAM PENERJEMAHAN TEATRIKAL	
Kahar Dwi Prihantono	304
AMALAN KESANTUNAN BERBAHASA BAHASA ARAHAN GOLONGAN MAHASISWA	
Melor Fauzita Binti Md. Yusoff	308
PERSAMAAN LAMBANG DAN MAKNA DALAM PERIBAHASA SEMAI DAN PERIBAHASA MELAYU	
Mohd. Rasdi Bin Saamah, Abu Hassan Abdul	313
BENTUK PERCAKAPAN WACANA HUMOR PADA ACARA PSBUKERS ANTV : SEBUAH KAJIAN PRAGMATIK	
Muhammad Iqbal Suhartomo, Riza Taufiq Rizki	318
PEMAKNAAN LEKSIKON GERAKAN TARI TRADISI SEBAGAI IDENTITAS MASYARAKAT SUNDA (LC)	
Nani Sunarni	323
ANALISIS KESALAHAN BAHASA: PERBANDINGAN ANTARA PELAJAR KELAS CEMERLANG DAN PELAJAR KELAS KURANG CEMERLANG	
Nasariah Mansor, Nooriza Wahab	328

NAMA DIRI ANAK JAWA DI ERA GLOBAL Netty Nurdiyani	332
PEMENANG VS “ORANG YANG KALAH”: REFLEKSI IDENTITAS DAN BUDAYA BANGSA Nungki Heriyati, M. Rayhan Bustam	336
PERAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANYUMAS TERHADAP PERKEMBANGAN BAHASA MANDARIN DI PURWOKERTO Nunung Supriadi	341
MAKNA SIMBOLIK PERMAINAN CINGCIRIPIT SERTA MANFAATNYA BAGI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER ANAK Nursyifa Azzahro	345
JEJAK KUASA DALAM SABDA RAJA DAN DHAWUH RAJA: TINJAUAN ANALISIS WACANA KRITIS P. Ari Subagyo	350
ALIH KODE DAN CAMPUR KODE DALAM ACARA “BUKAN SEKEDAR WAYANG” DI NET TV: SUATU KAJIAN SOSIOLINGUISTIK Pradiptia Wulan Utami	355
DAYA PRAGMATIK DAN FUNGSI MANTRA PENGLARISAN BAGI MASYARAKAT JAWA Raheni Suhita, Djoko Sulaksono, Kenfitria Diah Wijayanti	360
KEBERPIHAKAN BAHASA JURNALISTIK MEDIA MASSA DALAM KERAJAAN JOKOWI Risha Devina Rahzanie	365
ANALISIS DIMENSI SOSIAL, BUDAYA, DAN EKONOMI DALAM FENOMENA ALIH KODE DI RUSUNAWA Rosida Tiurma Manurung	369
GAYA BAHASA DALAM SASTRA LISAN LAMPUNG PEPANCOGH Siti Fitriati	374
PENGGUNAAN BAHASA JAWA DIALEK BANTEN DI KALANGAN MAHASISWA (STUDI KASUS PADA DUA PTN DI PROPINSI BANTEN) Siti Suharsih	378
RAGAM DIALEK PADA MASYARAKAT TUTUR KABUPATEN DEMAK Sofi Aulia Rahmania	382
PELESTARIAN BAHASA DAERAH MELALUI PENULISAN DAN PENERBITAN BUKU Sudirman Wilian	387
GANGGUAN EKSPRESI BERBAHASA PADA PENDERITA DEMENSIA DI KOTA SURAKARTA Sumarlam, Djatmika, Sri Pamungkas	392
KEUNIKAN ANTROPONIM RUSIA KAJIAN ANTROPONIMIKA Susi Machdalena	396

PERILAKU SOSIAL MASYARAKAT INDONESIA AKIBAT KOSA KATA SERAPAN BAHASA ASING DALAM BIDANG TEKNOLOGI DAN KULINER	
Titi Puji Lestari	399
KONSEP PENGETAHUAN DALAM PUPUJIAN SUNDA KANGJENG NABI: KAJIAN ANTROPOLINGUISTIK DI DESA GIRI ASIH KAB. BANDUNG BARAT	
Titin Lestari	404
PERSEPSI HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM TERHADAP ASPEK FONEMIS	
Tri Wahyu Retno Ningsih	409
PENG-IKON-AN WANITA KARIR DALAM MEDIA CETAK	
Tubiyono	413
MORFOFONEMIK BAHASA INDONESIA DAN BAHASA LAMPUNG: KAJIAN MORFOLOGI KONTRASTIF	
Veria Septianingtias	417
AKOMODASI TUTURAN MASYARAKAT SAMBAU DI WILAYAH PERBATASAN	
Wati Kurniawati	421
FONOLOGI BAHASA MELAYU PROVINSI RIAU DAN BAHASA MINANG TANAH DATAR SUMATERA BARAT	
Welsi Damayanti	426
PERAN INTEGRASI LEKSIKAL BAHASA MELAYU MALAYSIA KE DALAM BAHASA INDONESIA PADA MASYARAKAT DESA TANJUNG ARU KECAMATAN SEBATIK TIMUR	
Widyatmike Gede Mulawarman	430

ADJECTIVISH INDONESIAN VERBS: A COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

There has been a deeply rooted belief that parts of speech can be discretely categorized. It is something widely accepted in linguistics. There is a tendency of taking for granted of such an academic belief. Therefore it happens from time to time without being thought critically the degree of its empirical truth. Those studying linguistics will sooner or later read many linguistics text books stating that once a word has its own category, there will be no potential of the word to have another word category. Most people learning linguistics considered it as something necessary to occur. This linguistic phenomenon is not just taken to be true, yet it comes to be taken as something conclusive. Factually, there are Indonesian verbs behaving adjectivishly. They are, to some extent, verbs, yet to another one, they are adjectives. It is evidenced by the fact that they have the properties of adjective. These linguistic phenomena demonstrate that there are Indonesian verbs that have stronger quality of their verbness. It means that there are Indonesian verbs that are verbier than others. Based on the data found, Indonesian transitive verbs have higher potential to behave adjectivishly than the Indonesian intransitive ones. A certain kind of Indonesian transitive verbs can be treated adjectivishly. This finding shows that the degree of word category discreteness, particularly verb, is not something clear and cut. There are possibilities to emerge that word categories can, to some extent, be fuzzy. The fuzzy quality can be referred to the attributions of adjective to the Indonesian transitive verbs. It means that categorizing word class is not as simple as we thought before.

Keywords: adjectivish, Indonesian verbs, transitive, intransitive, verbier.

INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistics, classifying words into their word categories has been something essential. It is a way in which derived words can be broken down morphologically in order to understand the basic components that the morphological structures of the words are reasonably analyzable. Evans and Green (2006:31) pointed out that such analyzable processes of constructing new words based on the potential of certain bound morphemes to be embedded to some free morpheme drive an assumption that such ways of composing words based on their raw materials constituting word classes have psychological reality. The underlying assumption of this psychological reality makes many linguists think that word classes are things discretely categorized. Consequently a word belonging to a part of speech is homogenously characterized and as if there is no potential of having gradability, in the sense that a word has stronger category in a certain one, yet less strong category in another one.

Factually, there is a variation in the essence of the grammatical behavior of verbs and nouns if we try to observe the empirical data in the relation to the real application of grammatical rules of the verbs and the nouns. This illustration will justify this notion. Theoretically, Indonesian transitive verbs can be agentively nominalised by being prefixed with a bound morpheme *pe-*, as in the verbs: *penulis*, *pembaca*, *penerjemah*, *pengajar*, etc. as in this sentence.

(1) a. *Dia membaca berita koran setiap hari.*

b. *Dia adalah pembaca koran setiap hari.*

(2) a. *Dia menulis banyak buku.*

b. *Dia adalah penulis buku.*

Yet such a morphological rule is hard to be valid for these verbs (at least for the contemporary Indonesian language): *lihat*, *tahu*, etc.

(3) a. *Dia melihat keberangkatannya setiap hari.*

b. **Dia adalah pelihat keberangkatannya setiap hari.*

(4) a. *Dia tahu peristiwa tersebut secara utuh.*

b. **Dia adalah penahu peristiwa tersebut secara utuh.*

Verbs and adjectives can also undergo such linguistic phenomena. Adjective is a part of speech that functions to modify noun. It can (usually) be modified by the intensifying expressions of *more* or *less*.

The distinction between verbs and adjectives is something clear and cut when the adjectives do not correspond homographically and semantically to verbs. On the other hand, it is something hard to determine if or not the words belong to originally verbs or adjectives. It is caused by the fact that certain transitive verbs can be both verbally and adjectively treated. Their syntactic behaviors can meet both the behavior of verbal and adjectival categories. To make it clear, let's pay attention to this sentence.

- (5) a. *Momentum kemerdekaan adalah saat yang tepat untuk mempertajam kepekaan nurani kita terhadap sesama nasib anak bangsa yang masih saja berada di pinggir perhatian.*
 Sumber: (<http://m.republika.co.id/berita/kolom/resonansi/15/08/03/nsik12319-kapan-bangsa-ini-dewasa>).
- b. *Momentum kemerdekaan adalah saat yang tepat untuk (lebih/kurang) mempertajam kepekaan nurani kita terhadap sesama nasib anak bangsa yang masih saja berada di pinggir perhatian.*

The sentence (5a) demonstrates that the verb *mempertajam* as a transitive verb can have the property of adjective in terms of its gradability as it is rewritten in (5b). The verb (*mempertajam*) can be modified by the property of adjective: *more* or *less*. Something that refers to quality usually denotes to the internal condition of a thing. The internal condition of the thing usually reflects the characteristics of the thing. The way to express such a phenomenon is usually realized through adjectival category, yet such the sentence (5) belongs to verbal category. It means that the assumption believing that the border of lexical items is fuzzy seems to be empirically justified true.

From the examples and elaboration stated before, it is pointed out that categorizing something as the way to make the thing grouped into a certain member by applying a definite parameter is not something that can be clearly and distinctly done. There are possibilities that the result of the classification can, to some extent, be the member of another classification. There is an empirical evidence that something that has been widely accepted as a certain category, factually it can also have properties of another one. The possibility of a word to have more than one parts of speech shows that as Geeraerts (1988: 665), and Albertazzi (2000: 13-14) pointed out that the border of lexical items is not something discrete. Lexical concepts have fuzzy borders. In relation to the indiscreetness of word category, Bloomfield (1933) stated that the practical world is not a world of clear-cut distinctions. Lexical concepts contain peripheral or additional areas surrounding the cordial concept having the clear border.

Realizing such linguistic phenomena, it is academically necessary to study the nature of word category. Such an academic activity enables us to have better insight on the matter. Radden and Dirven (2007: 3) pointed out that a category is the conceptualization of a collection of similar experiences that are meaningful and relevant to us, i.e. categories are formed for things that matter in a community. Categories are conceptual in nature. Our conceptual categories are also laid down in language as linguistic categories. In relation to this notion, linguistic categories, as a way of making the linguistic conceptualization practical, need to be clearly elaborated. In the practical sense, linguistic categories of words refer to the way of linguistic words to be grouped based on certain parameters.

Grouping words into a certain classification results the words which have particular rules and behaviors morphologically. Such morphological rules and behaviors make the word category exclusively theirs. It drives words belonging to a certain category have different morphological and distributional characteristics. The conventional morphological and distributional behaviors that there are certain bound morphemes which match to certain free morphemes, but not to others prove these characteristics. These illustrations justify the statement. A word suffixed by *-ness* is a noun (as in *greatness*), a word that can be suffixed with *-ify* is a verb (as in *mode-ify*), a word that can modify a sequence of words consisting of *definite article* and then *blank* followed by *past participle functioning as adjective* plus *noun* is an adverb of manner (as in *the ----- cooked cuisine*), etc. In the Indonesian language, it can be exemplified as follows: A derivative word resulted from a word (verb) being infixed by *-n-* is a noun (as in *kinerja*), the prefix *pe-* prefixed to a root word initialized with *t-* yielding a derivative word by retaining the *t-* refers to profession (as in *petani, petembak, petambak*). Such morphological and distributional behaviors have not only been conjectured practically in the sense of providing English speakers with a tool of elaboration, but also an effort to explain language speakers understand how to create new words and how to arrange them into a grammatically complete string of words expressing a complete thought.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The philosophical basis of this paper is qualitative research. Maykut and Morehouse (1994:3) stated that qualitative research generally examines people's words and action in narrative or descriptive ways more closely representing the situation as experienced by the participants. The qualitative approach is more appropriate for research that aims to get a deeper knowledge about a certain subject. The purposive basis is interpretive-descriptive research. It tries to analyze and interpret or describe the data in relation to the topic of the article. The basis to present the research findings is descriptive-explanatory research. It is to describe and to explain the data employed in this research. The basis of the way to provide the research data is a field-empirical research. The data is taken naturally from the natural linguistic expressions written by the Indonesian language users available on the internet.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The material object of this paper is the adjectivish Indonesian verbs. These refer to Indonesian verbs that can potentially behave adjectivishly, yet actually they are Indonesian verbs. On the other hand, the formal object is cognitive semantics. Based on the findings, it is likely that there is a group of Indonesian verbs that can be treated both adjectivishly and verbally. This group of Indonesian verbs belongs to Indonesian transitive verbs. On the other hand, Indonesian intransitive verbs do not have the potential to be treated as the Indonesian transitive verbs. To make it elaborated, the following examples will explain the notion that Indonesian transitive verbs have the possibility to be both adjectivishly and verbally treated.

- (6) a. *Jika patokan tahun 1920-an sebagai pembentukan keindonesiaan dapat disetujui, maka usia bangsa ini masih belum satu abad.*
 Sumber: (<http://m.republika.co.id/berita/kolom/resonansi/15/08/03/nsik12319-kapan-bangsa-ini-dewasa>).
- b. *Jika patokan tahun 1920-an sebagai pembentukan keindonesiaan dapat (lebih/kurang) disetujui, maka usia bangsa ini masih belum satu abad.*

The example (6a) consists of an Indonesian transitive verb. It is *disetujui*. Syntactically, it proves that the verb *disetujui* as an Indonesian transitive verb can be modified with intensifying expressions usually applicable to adjective as restated in the (6b). The syntactic acceptability of the sentence having the sentence been modified by an adjective property indicates that the Indonesian transitive verb can be adjectivishly treated. The tool to judge the syntactic acceptability is the semantic acceptability. Having the Indonesian transitive verb (*disetujui*) been modified by the adjective property, its meaningfulness is natural. The meaning naturalness indicates that the modification of the verb by the adjective property makes no distraction in terms of its degree of understanding. Being able to be understood naturally proves that there is no syntactic anomaly in such a sentence. Accordingly it is academically possible to state that the word category of the Indonesian transitive verb (*disetujui*) is not discretely categorized. Rather it is fuzzily classified. It does not belong to completely verbal category nor adjectival category. There is a shared semantic property with which the verb can be potentially treated both verbally and adjectivishly.

This modifier makes the degree of the verbness different from the same verb without being modified by the same modifier. Such a syntactic behavior that belongs to the Indonesian transitive verb makes the verb have more potential syntactic valence in comparison to the verb that does not have such an adjectivish behavior. The possibility of having more syntactic valence can be measured by the degree of the semantic acceptability having the Indonesian transitive verb been modified by the adjective properties. In such a case the linguistic intuition of a native speaker determines the degree of acceptability both syntactically and semantically.

Indeed, between the sentence (6.a) and (6.b) there is a significant difference degree in terms of its verbal meaningfulness. It shows that there is a purposive way of making the Indonesian transitive verb more powerful in the sense of its internal semantic content. The intensifying expression as the marker of adjective makes it happen. By being modified by such an intensifying expression, the Indonesian transitive verb can potentially demonstrate its degree of gradability. It makes the distinction of the category of the Indonesian transitive verbs fuzzy. Its fuzziness is syntactically demonstrated by its grammatical acceptability to be treated adjectivishly and semantically proven by the degree of

naturalness of its meaning. It means that such a linguistic-empirical evidence strengthens the hypothetical statement that word category is not something discrete. It tends to be fuzzy. It is found that some members of category seem to be central, but some other members seem to be peripheral. It belongs to the empirical and academic evidence in relation to the fuzziness of word category.

The following sentence will make the claim of the transitive verb category fuzzy have more justification.

(7)a. *Meski menawarkan opsi tersebut, Din menyatakan dirinya berharap Muhammadiyah tetap seperti sekarang netral tidak berafiliasi dengan parpol.*

Sumber: (<http://m.detik.com/news/berita/2984437/din-syamsuddin-ingin-muhammadiyah-tetap-netral-dalam-politik>, Rabu, 05-08-2015).

b. *Meski (lebih/kurang) menawarkan opsi tersebut, Din menyatakan dirinya berharap Muhammadiyah tetap seperti sekarang netral tidak berafiliasi dengan parpol.*

Sentence (7) has an adverbial clause written initially. There is a transitive verb in it. The transitive verb is *menawarkan*. Such a transitive verb can syntactically be modified with adjective properties. The adjective properties that can syntactically modify the transitive verb are both *lebih* and *kurang*. Having been modified with such adjective properties, the degree of its syntactic acceptance does not violate the syntactic pattern of the Indonesian language. Therefore, syntactically the modified sentence is acceptable.

The acceptability of the syntactic pattern brings about the acceptability of the semantic dimension. It makes the modified sentence completely acceptable. The meaning of the modified sentence meets the naturalness of the Indonesian meaning. The linguistic intuition of the Indonesians says that such a modified sentence is intelligibly understandable. It is the basic and natural parameter of measuring the degree of semantic acceptability. Indeed, the degree of the significance of the transitive verb before and after being modified is different. It is the logical consequence of existing the modifiers as the properties of adjective with which the transitive verb being modified has higher or lower degree of meaningfulness.

In such a case, the acceptability of the modified sentence in terms of syntactic and semantic dimension plays decisive criteria to make the modified sentence have a certain judgment. The degree of acceptability of the syntactic dimension functions as the necessary condition from which the degree of acceptability of semantic dimension derives. It means that the syntactic acceptability of a modified sentence chronologically comes before the acceptability of the semantic dimension. In other words, it is stable that the acceptability of the semantic dimension of a modified sentence involving transitive verb being modified adjectivishly depends on the acceptability of the syntactic dimension.

The Indonesian transitive verbs that can syntactically and semantically be modified adjectivishly demonstrates the different degree of verbness in comparison to the Indonesian intransitive verbs. The following sentence justifies this argument.

(8) a. *Mereka pergi ke kantor setiap hari.*

b. **Merka (lebih/kurang) pergi ke kantor setiap hari.*

The verb in the sentence (8) is *pergi*. This verb belongs to intransitive verb. In this sentence (8b), the modifier makes the sentence grammatically unacceptable, or at least awkward. The linguistic intuition of the Indonesian native speakers guides to judge that such a sentence is semantically hard to justify. It means that the Indonesian intransitive verb (*pergi*) has different syntactic valence in comparison to the Indonesian transitive verbs. Accordingly, it is likely to state that Indonesian transitive verbs have less potential in the sense of their verbness. Such verbs can be adjectivishly treated. On the other hand Indonesian intransitive verbs have more potential to be the real verbs. The latter cannot be adjectivishly treated. It proves that the Indonesian transitive verbs have higher degree of fuzziness in comparison to the Indonesian intransitive verbs. In other words it is also formulated that the Indonesian transitive verbs are less verbish than the Indonesian intransitive verbs and the Indonesian intransitive verbs are more verbish than the Indonesian transitive verbs.

CONCLUSION

The deeply rooted linguistic belief on the parts of speech that the parts of speech are something criterial and they have been, to some extent, considered as something conclusive seems to be redefined. The findings of this paper clearly demonstrate that there is a word category in the Indonesian language that can potentially be treated differently in terms of its own category. The Indonesian word category is Indonesian transitive verbs. The Indonesian transitive verbs can empirically and grammatically be treated as the Indonesian adjectival category. In this case is its potential to be modified by an intensifying expression indicating the degree of gradability that is usually the properties of adjectival category. This empirical evidence strengthens another assumption in cognitive linguistics that the demarcation of lexical item is not something discrete. Yet, it tends to be fuzzy. The fuzziness of the lexical demarcation finds its linguistic justification in the Indonesian transitive verbs.

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