

## SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION OF A CHILD AGED THREE YEARS SIX MONTHS

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**Abstract.** The present article describes Indonesian sentence constructions in a male child's language aged 3 years and 6 months. The corpus data were collected through a 17-day naturalistic participant observation. The data analysis was based on the rich interpretation approach. It was found that the child produced simple, negative, interrogative, compound, as well as complex sentences containing adjective, adverb, and noun clauses.

**Key words:** Indonesian sentence constructions, naturalistic participant-observation, syntactic acquisition.

When children start to elaborate the structure of their utterances, they also have to find ways of expressing more than one proposition in each utterance (Clark and Clark, 1977). The process of incorporating a negative proposition into an utterance in English, is not simple. Similarly, interrogative sentences, both yes/no questions and WH-questions, involve an extra proposition; and the process of incorporating it into an utterance is equally, if not more, complex. Understandably, it takes children a long time to work out the linguistic devices to express a negative or an interrogative proposition. In English, children go through rather similar stages in acquiring these two structures. At around three years old, children begin to use the first complex sentences that combine propositions into clauses through coordination, relativization, and complementation.

Most, if not all, of the examples of children's language described by

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Clark and Clark (1977) have come mainly from those acquiring English and other Indo-European languages. On the other hand, Bahasa Indonesia belongs to a different language family, that is, Austronesian language family. Therefore, it might be enticing to learn whether what has been found to be true to English-speaking children's language development is also true to the language development of Indonesian children. This article is intended to present and discuss sentence constructions employed in the language of a male child acquiring Bahasa Indonesia as a first language.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The study was a very short longitudinal study; so short that it should be considered as a synchronic investigation. It is a naturalistic case study of the language of a child. The subject was a male child named *Mara*, the third child of a family who daily speaks an informal dialect of Indonesian. The data, in the form of utterances which the child spontaneously produced when talking to the people in his home environment, were collected through a participant-observation undertaken for 17 days, from age 3;5 (12) to age 3;5 (29). Fieldnotes were used to record the subject's utterances together with the necessary context. In addition, tape recording was employed, although not regularly nor significantly. That is, the recordings were played back particularly to check and complete what had already been recorded in the fieldnotes.

The data from the fieldnotes were then copied to cards to be coded for further analysis and classification. Context was not only important in chunking and transforming the data from the fieldnotes to the cards, but also essential in the process of analysis. This process was based on "*rich interpretation*" approach to the child's language, which is defined by Elliot (1981) as an "*approach to a child's utterances whereby the adult investigator describes what he thinks the child is 'really' trying to say.*"

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

It is believed that, as children elaborate their language, they find ways to incorporate more propositions into a single utterance in the form of negative and interrogative sentences. They also elaborate their utterances through coordination, relativization, and complementation. *Mara*,

the subject of the present study, was found to produce not only simple, negative, interrogative sentences, but also compound sentences as well as complex sentences (see Table 1).

It should be noted that the figures in Table 1 are not accurately representative, since a sentence may be categorized to belong in two classes, e.g., as negative and interrogative. For example, the utterance *Nanti ke sini lagi ya?* is entered twice: first as a simple sentence and second as an interrogative sentence. Another example is *Bapak enggak suka Mogi naek-naek*, which is entered twice: first as a negative sentence and second as a complex sentence containing an adverb clause. However, most utterances fall quite neatly into each category.

**Table 1. Sentences and Clauses**

No	Type	Example	Total
1	Simple	Mara minta satu.	190
2	Negative	Mara aja enggak ngebongkarin.	44
3	Interrogative	Guntingnya mana?	105
4	Compound	Mara lepas, Mogi jatuh.	51
5	Complex: Adjective Clause	Dulu yang ada topinya punya Aa Mada.	11
6	Complex: Adverb Clause	Kalo pedes, jangan diambil.	32
7	Complex: Noun Clause	Kata Mogi itu cicak itu.	12
TOTAL			445

When he was 1;10 (Raja, 1998), during a 72-day observation, Mara produced 171 two-word utterances several of which are actually three-word utterances. When 3;5, within 17 days, he produced roughly 445 sentences, including two-word utterances. The increase does not concern only the quantity of the utterances, but also the quality since at 1;10 most of his utterances consisted of two morphemes only while at 3;5 his utterances consisted of 2 to 13 morphemes, as shown in Sentence 1 and 2 below.

- (1) Inget Mara.
- (2) Watu Bapak pulang kerja, dimarahin Dede, pipis di karpet, ya kan?

### Simple Sentences

The number of simple sentences produced by the child during the observation is 190. In this article, simple sentences will cover only affirmative sentences (totaling 168) and positive imperative sentences (22). Negative and interrogative sentences are treated in different, separate sections.

Affirmative sentences also include two- and multi-word phrases which can be reconstructed as sentences with implicit parts, such as *rante sepeda*, *bubur beras*, and *naik ke punggung bapaknya*. This is possible primarily because of the rich interpretation approach used in this study. The pronoun *itu*, in the first and second sentences, and the phrase *anak macan*, in the third, are implied but can be understood and reconstructed from the context of the utterances.

**Table 2. Sentence Patterns**

No	Pattern	Example	Cases
1	NP-NP	Itu pager besi.	18
2	NP-PP	Ini untuk Mogi.	14
3	NP-AdjP	Enak aernya.	21
4	NP-Num	Dua mobil gandengannya.	3
5	NP-AdvP	Gunting-guntingannya nanti.	5
6	NP-VP	Bapak lupa.	46
7	NP-VP-NP	Mara minta satu.	76
8	NP-VP-NP-NP	Dikasih anaknya.	9
9	NP-VP-NP-PP	Dikasih ke anaknya.	3
10	NP-VP-NP-VP	Suruh Mika pegang.	1
TOTAL			190

The 190 simple sentences are made up of 10 different patterns, each with varying degree of production frequency, as displayed in Table 2. Each of the patterns will be discussed in more details.

**Pattern 1 NP-NP.** In this pattern, the first NP, i.e., the subject of the sentence, may be in the form of pronouns, e.g., *ini*, *itu* and *Ibunya* (in sentences 3, 4, and 7), a noun clause, e.g., *yang ini* as in 5, as well as a nominalized verb phrase, e.g., *ngences* as in 6. It is often that the particle *itu* is

used both to indicate the subject part of the sentence and to separate it from the predicate, such as in sentences 6 and 7. Interestingly, both NP's of 6 and 7, i.e., both the subjects and the predicates, are nominalized verb phrases.

The noun clause of sentence 5 is actually reconstructed from the context of the utterance, in which Mara was asked *Siapa yang punya?* and his reply was *Orang gede*. In sentence 8, the verb *jadi* is not followed by an object; that is, the second NP is not the object of the verb but its complement. Therefore, the sentence is included in Pattern 1 instead of Pattern 7.

- (3) Macan itu.
- (4) India terus ini.
- (5) [Yang punya]<sup>1</sup> orang gede.
- (6) Ngences itu maen mudah.
- (7) Mbim itu bersim.
- (8) Jadi bantal Ibunya.

**Pattern 2 NP-PP.** In this pattern, the predicate of the sentence is a prepositional phrase, i.e., a preposition plus its object. Among the prepositions that Mara used are *ke*, *buat*, *untuk*, *punya*, *sama*, and *dari*. The word *punya* may more correctly be classified as a verb; however, as used in sentence 12, it behaves more like a preposition. In addition, it is interesting to note that in 41 the object of the preposition *buat* is a nominalized verb phrase.

- (9) Kakinya ke lantai.
- (10) [Kotak rokok] buat diguntingin.
- (11) Ini untuk kopi [sendok].
- (12) Punya Mara [mainan].
- (13) Sama Bapak pake celananya.
- (14) Nanti ke sini lagi [Roni].
- (15) Dari Indonesia [penyanyi di tv].
- (16) Ini untuk pasirnya.

**Pattern 3 NP-AdjP.** In this pattern, the predicate of the sentence takes the form of an adjective phrase. Some of the adjectives, such as those in sentences 21, 22 and 23, may be modified by intensifying adverbs *masih*, *sekali* and *sudah*. It is interesting to observe that in 18 the predicate

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<sup>1</sup> Square brackets [] are used to indicate a reconstructed word or phrase which was not actually uttered by the subject.

is an adjectivized verb phrase and that in 20 the predicative adjective is further modified by a prepositional phrase, *sama Mogi*.

- (17) Masa bulu-bulunya kecil-kecil.
- (18) Mandinya guling-gulingan.
- (19) Gembul Mika.
- (20) Sama Mogi mah takut Mika.
- (21) Mara mah masih kuat kakinya.
- (22) Banyak sekali tempat tangganya ini.
- (23) [Pisang] Mara udah abis.

**Pattern 4 NP-Num.** In this pattern, the predicate of the sentence is a numerical. The subject of the sentence, in Mara's case, is always indicated and separated from the predicate by the suffix {-nya}.

- (24) Dua mobil gandengannya.
- (25) Anak kucing gedanya dua.
- (26) Kakinya dua anaknya.

**Pattern 5 NP-AdvP.** This pattern is similar to Pattern 4 except for the predicate, which is an adverbial phrase. The adverbial phrases that Mara used are *kesatu*, *dua kali*, *sudah*, and *nanti*.

- (27) Dia kesatu.
- (28) Dua kali [siram].
- (29) Sudah makan pisangnya.
- (30) Nanti, maen robot nanti.
- (31) Gunting-guntingnya nanti.

**Pattern 6 NP-VP.** In this pattern, there are two sub-patterns. The first is that with an intransitive verb which may be modified by an adverbial phrase. Sentence 32 exemplifies the simplest form of this pattern, while in sentences 33 and 34 the intransitive verbs *pipis* and *maen* are modified by the phrases *di kamar mandi* and *jauh-jauh* respectively. The verbs *bisa* and *mau*, as in 35 and 36, are problematic. They behave more like an English modal auxiliary, and they are treated as such.

The second sub-pattern is that with the existence verb *ada*, which is exemplified by sentences 37 through 41: 37 is the simplest one, in 38 and 39 the verb *ada* is modified by an adverbial phrase—*di kantong Mara* and *tadi sore* respectively, and in 40 and 41 it is modified by a verbal phrase—*lompat* and *kagantung* respectively.

- (32) Lidahnya bunyi.

- (33) Mara pipis di kamar mandi.
- (34) Itu maen jauh-jauh itu [anak macan].
- (35) Mara bisa suap sendiri.
- (36) [Mara] mau ngaca.
- (37) Ada semut.
- (38) Ada lilin di kantong Mara.
- (39) Tadi sore ada [robot Mara].
- (40) Ada kodok lompat.
- (41) Ada robot kagantung.

**Pattern 7 NP-VP-NP.** In this pattern, the verb is a transitive verb followed by a NP as object of the verb, as exemplified by sentences 42 through 45. This pattern may also be found in a passive form, as exemplified by sentences 46 through 49. As mentioned previously, the verbs *bisa* and *mau* pose a problem. Sentences 44 and 45 illustrate this. In 45, as well as in 35 and 36 above, they look like an auxiliary verb; however, in 44 the verb *mau* serves as a full verb.

- (42) Orang Dede memecahin balon Aa.
- (43) Nyari temennya [serigala].
- (44) Mara mau bubur beras.
- (45) Mara mau nonton film buaya.
- (46) Mika diselimitin.
- (47) Dipake Aa Mara [sandal Ibu].
- (48) Maranya ditendang sama Mika.
- (49) Dibohongin tadi Bapaknya.

**Pattern 8 NP-VP-NP-NP.** This pattern, in which the verb is a ditransitive, may be found both in the active and in the passive forms. Sentence 52 clearly exemplifies this pattern in the passive form with the first NP (the subject) ellipsized and the third NP *bando* substituted with *itu*. Mara directed this utterance to his mother after he had put a *bando* on his father's head. Sentence 50 is another example of this pattern in the passive with even more NP's ellipsized. The active form of 52 would be *Macan memberi anaknya makanan*.

- (50) Dikasih anaknya. [makanan, macan]
- (51) Pegang maenan Mika, Bapak.
- (52) Bapaknya dikasih itu. [bando]

Sentence 51 looks as if it belongs to Pattern 7 NP-VP-NP, in which

*Mika* is a possessive form. However, the context shows that Mara uttered it in Pattern 8. Before he produced this sentence, he had uttered sentence 54 below, and, since his father was slow to respond, he uttered 51 to repeat his request.

**Pattern 9 NP-VP-NP-PP.** This pattern is actually a variation of Pattern 8. The second NP of Pattern 8, the indirect object of the verb, is placed as the object of a preposition in this pattern. In 53, the first and the second NP's (the subject and the direct object) are both ellipsized; in 54, which is a request, the first NP is deleted; and in 55 the verb *mengatakan* is implied and reconstructed from the context.

(53) Dikasih ke anaknya. [makanan, macan]

(54) Pegang maenan untuk Mika, Bapak.

(55) Mika itu ke Mbak "Nggiiiiing" gitu.

**Pattern 10 NP-VP-NP-VP.** In this pattern, the first NP is the agent of the first VP while the second NP is the agent of the second VP. During the 17-day observation, Mara was found to produce only one utterance decidedly with this pattern:

(56) Suruh Mika pegang, Bu.

Another utterance which might be classified as exemplifying Pattern 10 is *Bapak enggak suka Mogi naek-naek*, which is not included in the class of Simple Sentence but in that of Negative and Complex Sentences. As has been mentioned previously, this sentence may be interpreted as a simple sentence, and thus embodying Pattern 10; and it may as well be interpreted as a complex sentence containing an adverb clause with the conjunction *kalau* implied—*Bapak enggak suka [kalau] Mogi naek-naek*, in which case it does not embody Pattern 10.

It should be emphasized, therefore, that the sentence patterns discussed earlier are based on the analysis of the corpus of simple sentences only, excluding that of negative, interrogative, compound, and complex sentences.

Another thing worth mentioning is the fact that Mara to a large extent seemed to be free in ordering the words of his sentences. That is, subjects might be placed at the end, and verb phrases as well as adverbial and prepositional phrases might be placed at the beginning. This might be somehow related with the pressure of communication and with the strategies he was employing at the time of the interaction.

Based on the previous discussion on Mara's sentence patterns, it seems that at 3;5 the child had little progress left before he would achieve full mastery of the adult language sentence patterns.

### Negative Sentences

During the observation, Mara, the subject of the present study, produced 44 negative sentences, which can be classified into three groups: negative, negative interrogative, and negative imperative sentences (see Table 3).

**Table 3. Negative Sentences**

No	Type	Example	Cases
1	Negative	Ibunya enggak pake itu.	33
2	Negative Interrogative	Kertas ininya masih ada enggak?	3
3	Negative Imperative	Jangan maen pintu.	8
TOTAL			44

The negative words that Mara used in Type 1 are *enggak*, *belum* and *bukan*. Most of his negative sentences contain the adverb *enggak*, and only on 4 occasions was he observed to use *belum*, although in all of these occasions his use of the word *belum* is acceptable, meaning that he had acquired its meaning, as in sentences 57 through 60.

(57) Belum. [asked "Enggak tidur?"]

(58) Belum. Ganti baju aja. [asked, "Sudah mandi belum?"]

(59) Belum gede itu anaknya.

(60) Mara belum [selesai main mobilan lasi].

As for *bukan*, based on Mara's four utterances containing this word, he seemed incapable yet of incorporating it into his sentences. He was able only to use it in isolation, i.e., as a sentence in its own, as in sentences 61 through 64. In other words, he seemed to be at the early phase of acquiring this word.

(61) Bukan. [asked, "Palu yang diginiin itu?"]

(62) Bukan. [asked, "Susunya ya?"]

(63) Bukan. Dik Rizki. [asked, "Aa Didit?"]

(64) Bukan. Bapak dibohongin Mara. [asked, "Mara dibohongin

Bapak?"]

It seems then that Mara acquired *enggak* first, *belum* second, and *bukan* third. Perhaps, this phenomenon might be related to the concept of *semantic complexity*. In this case, it can be inferred that *enggak* is semantically less complex than *belum*, which in turn is semantically less complex than *bukan*.

Both *bukan* and *belum* contain the meaning of *enggak*, but *bukan* does not contain the meaning of *belum* since *belum* means [NOT] and [sudah] while *bukan* does not imply [sudah]. It might be that, although both words contain [NOT], *bukan* is semantically more complex than *belum* in other ways unrelated to the meaning [sudah].

However, this picture of acquisition order of negative words is not as simple as that since at 1;10 Mara had been producing *enggak* and *bukan* but not *belum* (Raja, 1998). At that age, he also used *bukan* only in isolation, i.e., as a sentence in its own. What can be inferred from this is that it took Mara such a long time to incorporate *bukan* into a sentence that even at 3;5, after he had been using it for more than a year and a half, he did not seem to make any progress yet.

In Type 2 Negative Interrogative, the word *enggak* is inserted into a statement, as in sentence 65, attached to the end of a statement, as in 66, or used together with the word *apa*, as in 67, and thus turning the statements into questions. In a sense, therefore, they are more of interrogative sentence than of negative sentence since the negative word *enggak* is employed mainly to change the force of the utterance from an assertion to a question.

(65) Itu ada rokoknya enggak di dalemnya?

(66) Kertas ininya masih ada enggak?

(67) Aernya kurang apa enggak?

In Type 3 Negative Imperative, the negative word used is *jangan*. This word may be used in isolation and thus becomes a sentence in its own, as in sentence 68. It may also be used with an affixless verb, as in 69 and 70, thus making it similar to the English expression *don't* as used in *Don't play in the rain*. Nevertheless, it may also be found, as Mara used it, in combination with a passive verb with prefix {di-}, as in 71 and 72, thus making it look more like a modal auxiliary.

(68) Jangan, Mogi. Jorok.

- (69) Kalo Mara udah gede, Mara sekolah, jangan ikut ya?  
 (70) Mogi, jangan maen pintu.  
 (71) Kalo pedes, jangan diambil.  
 (72) Jangan dibuka ya?

In the formal adult language use, sentences 71 and 72 are said to exemplify the non-standard use of *jangan*. This prescription is based on the logic that, since *jangan* serves as a request, it is directed to people and therefore should be followed with an active verb expressing the action which may not be done by the people so directed. However, as factually used by Mara the subject of the present study, the word *jangan* may be used with both an active verb and a passive verb.

#### Interrogative Sentences

As many as 105 interrogative sentences were uttered by the subject during the observation. Of the 105 interrogatives, 57 were questions seeking confirmation and 48 were for information (see Table 4).

**Table 4. Interrogative Sentences**

No	Type	Example	Cases
1	Confirmation	Aernya kurang apa enggak?	57
2	Information	Mana satunya yang itunya?	48
TOTAL			105

Mara produced the first type questions in order to have a confirmation concerning a certain thing. In a sense, therefore, questions of this type are similar to yes-no questions in English. In its simplest form, this type is characterized by a rising intonation only, as exemplified by sentence 73, which may be interpreted to mean *Did you say beker?* Other lexical items indicating this type are *ya*, *ya kan*, and *enggak*, as shown in sentences 74 through 76.

- (73) Beker?  
 (74) Besok lagi ya?  
 (75) Ketangkep sama anaknya, ya kan?  
 (76) Kertas ininya masih ada enggak?

The second type of questions were used by Mara the subject of the

present study in order to obtain some information that he did not have at the moment of speaking. The words that he was observed producing are *mana*, *siapa*, *apa*, *berapa*, *kenapa*, and *kok*, as exemplified in sentences 77 through 85 below.

- (77) Bapak mau ke mana?
- (78) Di Sarinah mana?
- (79) Siapa itu, Bu, ya?
- (80) Apa yang bunyi, ya?
- (81) Piso apa?
- (82) Mau diapain?
- (83) Ada berapa kaki Mogi?
- (84) Kenapa ya?
- (85) Kok bisa lepas?

It is worth noting that, first, Mara was capable of using some of these question words, especially *mana* and *apa*, in the capacity of modifier, such as in 78 and 81, in which the question words are translatable to *which* in English. Thus, sentence 78 in English would become *Which Sarinah?* and 81 would become *Which knife?* Secondly, he was also found to use *apa* in an affixed form *diapain*, such as in 82. Thirdly, as in confirmation questions, Mara was found to sometimes use the particle *ya* at the end of his information questions, such as exemplified in sentences 79, 80, and 84. Finally, Mara used *kok* and *kenapa* to ask for the reason of some event or happening. The difference between the two is that through *kok* Mara seemed to express some unfulfilled expectation. In other words, when he used it, he asked for a reason and at the same time revealed that the state of events were not as he had expected.

It has often been discussed how children acquiring English or some other Indo-European language acquire negative and interrogative sentences in several fixed phases. However, these are not observable in the language of the subject of the present study perhaps because the formation of negative and interrogative sentences in English is more complicated since it involves auxiliary verb employment and movement, while such verbs may be absent in Bahasa Indonesia.

#### **Compound Sentences**

In addition to simple sentences, Mara also produced compound sen-

tences. However, what is meant by a compound sentence here is syntactically not truly a compound sentence with an explicit coordinative conjunction. Most of Mara's compound sentences are judged to be such by the relationship between the propositions contained in the utterances rather than by the existence of any specific conjunction which syntactically relates the adjacent sentences. During the 17-day observation, Mara was found to produce at least 51 compound sentences, which can be classified into five types as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Compound Sentences**

No	Type	Example	Cases
1	Time	Katanya Bapak pulang kerja, Mara maen komputer.	10
2	Addition	Sebelah sini ada. Sebelah situ ada.	9
3	Contrast	Aa pake yang ini. Mogi pake yang itu.	6
4	Elaboration	Robot kagantung kepalanya. Mara iket kepalanya.	20
5	Result	Mara lepas, Mogi jatuh.	6
TOTAL			51

The first type of Mara's compound sentences is of time, that is the relationship between two adjacent utterances that Mara produced is concerned with time. As displayed in utterance 86, the semantic relationship between utterances, although quite apparent, was not syntactically indicated by any specific word or phrase. In other cases, some words might be employed to make explicit this relation of time, such as *abis* (as in 87), *terus* (as in 88), *baru* (as in 89), and *tadi* (as in 90).

(86) Mara ambil, Mara giniin, bunyi.

(87) Masa Moginya mukulin Mara. Abis ngeginiin Mika.

(88) Mara udah mandi tadi sama Mbak. Terus pake baju Panji.

(89) Giniin. Baru kesempatan sama Mara.

(90) Tadi kan ada mobil bes yang gede itu. Mara pegang-pegang.

The second type is of addition, in which two or more utterances were produced one after another based on the semantic relationship of addition. In this type, Mara was not found to use any specific syntactical marker at all to indicate the relationship between utterances. However, as displayed in utterances 91 through 94, this relationship of addition between utterances is quite obvious. In utterance 93, there are actually two types of relationship: one is of addition and the other of elaboration. That of addition

exists between utterances *Robot mobil* and *Robot tangan*.

- (91) Ini maenan Mara. Banyak ini.
- (92) Ini anjing. Ini bebek. Ini kuda. Ini kucing. Ini telur (telor).
- (93) Mara punya robotan dua. Robot mobil. Robot tangan.
- (94) Tempat ngeluarin bensinnya di sini. Tempat masukin bensinnya di sini.

The third type is of contrast. Compound sentences of this type express the contrast between Mara's expectation about a certain thing or event and the actual happening. Utterance 95, therefore, does not neatly belong to this type. It should, rather, fall into an adversion. The word *orang*, as shown in utterances 96 and 97, and *masa*, as in 98, were sometimes used to signal the relationship of contrast. In 99, the contrast between the utterances was not indicated by any syntactical device at all, but merely expressed through prosody.

- (95) Aa pake yang ini. Mogi pake yang itu.
- (96) Orang lagi nulis, diambil.
- (97) Orang lagi maen-maen ini, diambil.
- (98) Ogi kan sudah punya. Masa yang satunya diambil.
- (99) Guling Mara! Dilempar!

The fourth type of compound sentences produced by the subject during the 17-day observation is of elaboration. Actually there are two different types of semantic relationship between utterances subsumed in this type. The first is of elaboration, exemplified by utterances 100 through 102; the other is of explanation, exemplified by utterances 103 through 106. Although the elaboration relationship in 100 is quite clear, that in 101 and 102 need to be clarified. In 101, elaboration exists between *Mara punya robotan dua*, on the one hand, and *Robot mobil. Robot tangan*, on the other. The relationship between *Robot mobil* and *Robot tangan* itself, as has been mentioned previously, is that of addition. In 102, elaboration exists between *Itu celana Mara* and *Udah kekecilan, buat Mogi*.

Explanation is different from elaboration in that the former to some extent expresses a more evident causal relationship than does the latter. Utterances 103 through 106 exemplify the semantic relationship of explanation, in which the first proposition, e.g., *Ganti yang gede. Cari yang gede*, is supported by a causal explanation, e.g., *Bengkok-bengkok ininya*.

- (100) Robot kagantung kepalanya. Mara iket kepalanya.

- (101) Mara punya robotan dua. Robot mobil. Robot tangan.
- (102) Itu celana Mara. Udah kekecilan, buat Mogi.
- (103) Bapak enggak bisa nulis lagi tuh. Dicoret-coret.
- (104) Ganti yang gede. Cari yang gede. Bengkok-bengkok ininya.
- (105) Sudah kuat. Enggak sakit. Tuh banyak tulang-tulang kakinya Mara.
- (106) Bapak dibohongin Mara. Mara bilang tadi mau ke rumah Om Zul.

The fifth type of compound sentences is of result. In a sense, it is the opposite of explanation: while explanation carries the meaning of cause to the relationship between propositions, result carries the meaning of effect. As exemplified by utterances 107 through 109, the second part of the utterances, e.g., *Moginya dikurung Bapak*, somehow express the effect of the first part, *Aa jatuh didorong Mogi*. This relationship of result may sometimes be indicated by the word *jadinya*, as in 109.

- (107) Si itunya mau nembakin si itu. Jatuh si itunya.
- (108) Aa jatuh didorong Mogi. Moginya dikurung Bapak.
- (109) Ininya udah digigit ama Mara. Makanya ada ininya. Jadinya Mara makanin.

To summarize this discussion on Mara's compound sentences, it should be emphasized that the decision to classify any two or three adjacent utterances as a compound sentence is based on the existing propositional relationship between the utterances, not on the existence of syntactical device between the sentences. In other words, should the basis be syntax, the subject of the present study did not seem to have acquired much of the structure of compound sentences at age 3,5.

One last thing to put forward concerning compound sentences is the convention of writing. This convention compels one to decide whether a pause in a stretch of an utterance should be represented by a period or by a comma. It should be admitted that the assignment of a period or a comma to a pause in the subject's spoken utterance was done quite arbitrarily. Therefore, there is no reason, for example, why utterance 86 could not have been represented as *Mara ambil. Mara giniin. Bunyi*. Similarly, there is no reason what so ever why, on the other hand, utterance 92 could not have been represented as *Ini anjing, ini bebek, ini kuda, ini kucing, ini terror*. The point is that, once again, the judgment to decide whether or not

a stretch of utterances constitutes a compound sentence is made the basis of based on the relationship between the propositions contained by the utterances.

### Complex Sentences

The subject of the present study also produced complex sentences during the observation in addition to the simple, negative, interrogative, and compound sentences (see Table 1). These complex structures are differentiated into three: those containing adjective clauses, those containing adverb clauses, and those containing noun clauses.

### Adjective Clauses

During the 17-day observation, Mara was found to produce 11 sentences containing adjective clauses. It is plainly perceptible that they all contain the conjunction *yang*. In addition, it is evident that, in all the adjective clauses that Mara produced, the relativized NP is the subject, as shown in the following:

(110) Masa ada tangan *yang bisa bunyi* itu, lho!

(111) Orang tuh ada *yang mau pergi*, naek mobil.

(112) Kertas *yang belum ditulis?*

(113) Mobil *yang tadi diambil Mogi*.

Keenan and Comrie (1987) define a relativized NP as the NP in the subordinate clause which is replaced by a relative pronoun. It is moved to the beginning of the clause if it is not the subject of the subordinate clause. Keenan and Hawkins (1987) predict that the order of adjective clause acquisition is SU > DO > IO > OBL > GEN > OCOMP, in which SU means subject, DO direct object, IO indirect object, OBL object of preposition, GEN possessive, and OCOMP object of comparison.

In Mara's case, all of his adjective clauses have their subjects relativized: in 110 and 111, he relativized the subjects of active sentences and thus made them adjective clauses *yang bisa bunyi* and *yang mau pergi*, while in 112 and 113, he relativized the subjects of passive sentences and thus turned them into adjective clauses *yang belum ditulis* and *yang tadi diambil Mogi*. He did not produce any adjective clauses with relativized objects or possessives. In other words, his production of adjective clauses

at 3;5 follow the order predicted by Keenan and Hawkins (1987) who state that the first type of adjective clauses to be acquired is those with relativized SU.

#### *Adverb Clauses*

Another type of complex sentences that Mara produced during the 17-day observation is that containing adverb clauses. The adverb clauses may be grouped into five classes, as displayed in Table 6.

**Table 6. Adverb Clauses**

No	Type	Example	Cases
1	Time	Nanti hujannya berhenti, kita jalan.	7
2	Reason	Aa jatuh didorong Mogi.	4
3	Condition	Kalo enggak masih kuat, ya luka.	18
4	Adversion	Masa Mara mau pipis, ditutup pintunya.	2
5	Manner	Mau susu dia, Pak. Kaya Mara tadi.	3
TOTAL			34

Table 6 shows that the total number of adverb clauses produced is 34, while the actual total number is 32. This is so since 2 sentences are judged to contain more than one adverb clauses which should be classified as belonging to two different types. In 114, *watu Bapak pulang kerja* is classified as adverb clause of time while *pipis di karpet* as that of reason. In 115, *kalo Mara udah gede* is classified as adverb of condition while *Mara sekolah* as that of time.

(114) Watu Bapak pulang kerja, dimarahin Dede pipis di karpet, ya kan?

(115) Kalo Mara udah gede, Mara sekolah, jangan ikut ya?

The first type of adverb clauses that Mara produced is that of time. The words he used to mark this type are *sambil*, *waktu* (pronounced as *watu*), *tadi*, and *nanti*, as illustrated in utterances 116 through 119.

(116) *Sambil makan...* Mara minum ini.

(117) *Watu ada temen Mara kemaren*, ada [robotnya].

(118) *Tadi itu Mara nyari Ibu*, kemana-mana Mara.

(119) *Nanti lama-lama, dimandiin Bapak*, ini ilang ini.

The second type is that of reason. Different from the first type, Mara

did not seem to mark this type with any specific word or phrase. Nonetheless, there was always a pause between the first part of the utterance and the second, which is represented in the written form sometimes with commas, as in utterances 122 and 123, and some other times without any pause at all, as in 120 and 121.

(120) Watu Bapak pulang kerja, dimarahin Dede *pipis di karpet, ya kan?*

(121) Aa jatuh *didorong Mogi*.

(122) Nanti dia jatuh, *ditarik*.

(123) Udah kekecilan, *buat Mogi*.

That of condition is the third type of adverb clauses that Mara produced. Commonly, as exemplified in utterances 124 and 125, the word *kalau*, pronounced as *kalo*, was used to introduce adverb clauses of condition. In 126, however, Mara did not employ any syntactical device to indicate this type of clause; in other words, the conjunction was ellipsized. In utterances 127 and 128, some parts the main clauses were ellipsized as well.

(124) *Kalo kena*, Mara ambilin celananya.

(125) *Kalo pedes*, jangan diambil.

(126) Bapak enggak suka *Mogi naek-naek*.

(127) *Kalo pistolnya ada perurunya*, ya sakit.

(128) *Kalo mau betulin mobil*, di perutnya.

The fourth type is adverb clause of adversion this clause was not indicated by any syntactical marker but was separated from the main clause with a pause in the spoken form. In the written form, this pause might be represented as a comma, as in utterance 129, and it might not be indicated at all, as in 130.

(129) Masa Mara mau pipis, *ditutup pintunya*.

(130) Enggak sakit kaki Mara *injek-injek maenan*.

The fifth type of the adverb clauses that Mara produced is of manner. Sometimes, this clause was marked by the word *kaya*, as in utterances 131 and 132; some other times, it was not marked at all, as in 133.

(131) Mau susu dia, Pak. *Kaya Mara tadi*.

(132) Kebelatan. *Kaya Mogi*.

(133) *Naek kapal* ke rumah Mamah.

### *Noun Clauses*

Besides utterances containing adjective and adverb clauses, Mara was also observed to produce utterances, totaling 12, that may be thought of as containing noun clauses. There are three types produced. The first is that with *yang*, as illustrated in 134 and 135. It is interesting to note that in 135 the noun clause *yang di buku Bapak* serves as the object of preposition *kaya*. The second type is that with question words such as *siapa*, as illustrated in 136. And the third is that with ellipsized *bahwa*, as illustrated in 137 and 138.

(134) Mogi yang ncis di situ.

(135) Kaya yang di buku Bapak film ini.

(136) Enggak tauk Mika siapa yang mandi.

(137) Kata Mogi itu cicak itu.

(138) Mara bilang tadi mau ke rumah Om Zul.

To summarize this discussion on complex sentences, the subject of the present study was observed to incorporate adjective, adverb, and noun clauses in his utterances. It was found that these subordinate clauses that he produced during the 17-day observation were still not fully developed. For example, the adjective clauses he produced were all of the first type according to the Keenan and Comrie's (1987) hierarchy of NP relativizability. In addition, some of his adverb and noun clauses were without explicitly expressed syntactical markers.

### CONCLUSION

The present article have presented and discussed some syntactical aspects of the language of an Indonesian child aged three years and a half. His utterances have been revealed to incorporate a number of syntactical constructions: simple (including imperative), negative (including negative imperative), interrogative, and compound sentences. In addition, a number of his utterances have also been displayed as made up of complex sentences containing adjective, adverb, and noun clauses.

It appears that the child demonstrated quite an advanced syntactic competence in the informal code of Bahasa Indonesia that he had so far acquired at age three and a half. Though more studies, preferably with different approaches, are needed to confirm this, there seems to be not

much in terms of basic syntactical structures that he had to develop before he would achieve adult language competence. This insight might be useful to those involved in the teaching of Bahasa Indonesia in elementary schools. It could be suggested that young children's considerably advanced syntactic competence in the informal code of Bahasa Indonesia when they enter schools should be taken into account and be made as a starting point in the design of the teaching-learning of the more formal code of Bahasa Indonesia.

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