

A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN ENGLISH AND INDONESIAN COPULATIVE VERBS

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Abstract

This research aims at determining the similarities, dissimilarities, and possible learning difficulties faced by the students learning English and Indonesian copulative verbs, as well as the recommendations to TEFL. The descriptive research design was used. The documentation technique was applied to collect the data. To analyze the data, the researchers used a descriptive analysis. The results showed that there were two similarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in meanings and dynamic verb. The three dissimilarities were in grammatical structure, tense on subject-verb agreement and certain verbs. The possible learning difficulties faced by the students learning English and Indonesian copulative verbs was tense and subject-verb agreement. The recommendations of this research was as a fundamental teaching guidance in helping English teachers design a better teaching Grammar on copulative verbs, in terms of nonverbal copulative nominal, stative copulative nominal and dynamic copulative nominal.

Keywords: contrastive analysis, copulative verbs, linking verbs

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Introduction

Since this research concerns with language, it will be much better to define what a language is and what it refers to. Language is the system of structural arrangement of human's sounds used to communicate in line with written representation unit such as morphemes, words, sentences, utterances, etc." (Richards, Schmidt, Kendrick & Kim as cited in Sulaiman, 2020, p. 33). In addition, Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, (as cited in Sulaiman & Yuliani, 2017 p. 125) identified language as a means or instruments of communication used by people whatever else they may do, when they come together, whether they play, fight, make love, or make automobiles, and they talk.

On the other side, Brown (as cited in Sulaiman, 2016, p. 1), categorized a language into a set of arbitrary symbol, symbols of primarily vocal but may also be visual, having conventionalized meanings to which they refer, being used for communication, operating in a speech

community or culture, being essentially human although possibly not limited to humans, and being acquired by all people in many the ways; language and language learning both have universal characteristics, including such systems of phonemes, morphemes, phrases, clauses and contexts (discourse)

As a foreign language, English is very important to be mastered after students' national language, Bahasa Indonesia. In fact, there are many problems in studying English, particularly in mastering grammar and structure. One of the problems is that the use of copulative verbs in sentences. Some of Indonesian students seem to be perplexed to use correct English and Indonesian copulative verbs or linking verbs when making sentences and talking to other people. They make some mistakes when writing or saying such a sentence in Bahasa Indonesia "*Dia seorang guru*" "which must be written or said as "*Dia adalah seorang guru*". In this case, they delete Indonesian copulative

verb “*adalah*”. On the other hand, they also make such a mistake in using English copulative verb “be”, like in a sentence “*When I am a student at Senior High School*” which must be written or said as “*When I was a student at Senior High School*”. In this case, they have such a problem in past form of copulative verb “be”. It happens because of the influence or the interference of L1 (first language). It also caused by their weaknesses in grammar that they tend to make such an error. In other words, they do not know the rules of English and Indonesian copulative verbs or linking verbs. It is such a normal condition which is encountered by them since both English and Indonesian grammatical characteristics are quite different. Richards, et al., (as cited in Sulaiman, 2020, p. 35) itemized that the core obstacles in learning a new language is influenced by are much caused by first language, and it can be assumed by contrastive analysis. It means that contrastive analysis has applications in diagnosing a proportion of L2 errors committed by the students. Yet, at the same time, it remains true that the primary purpose of writing this research is to examine the problems that can be encountered by L2 students in learning English and Indonesian copulative verbs or linking verbs which are gotten from the dissimilarities.

In relation to expressions being analyzed, the researchers conducted a research under the title “*A Contrastive Analysis between English and Indonesian Copulative Verbs*”. In this research, four problems are formulated, as follows: (1) what are the similarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs?, (2) What are the dissimilarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs?, (3) What are the possible learning difficulties faced by the students learning English and Indonesian copulative verbs?., and (4) What are the recommendations or contribution of

contrastive analysis (CA) between English and Indonesian copulative verbs to TEFL?

Basically, the objectives of conducting this research are to find out the similarities and the dissimilarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs, and the possible learning difficulties faced by the students learning English and Indonesian copulative verbs, as well as the recommendations or contributions of contrastive analysis (CA) between English and Indonesian copulative verbs to the teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL).

As the matter of facts, the results of this research can give valuable information to the researchers themselves about English and Indonesian copulatives verbs. The results of this research could also be useful for all of university students in learning more deeply on grammar usage and function, especially in copulative verbs. Finally, the results of this contrastive analysis were expected to be able to uncover the possible learning difficulties faced by the students learning English and Indonesian copulative verbs and give recommendations or contributions to the teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) from the dissimilarities of both English and Indonesian copulative verbs to help English teachers design such teaching English grammar materials that enable the students understand copulative verbs.

Naturally, contrastive analysis (CA) is an analysis which is conducted to find out the differences and the similarities of sounds in two different languages. (Kridalaksana, 2008, p.135). Contrastive analysis was always concerned with a pair of languages, and founded on the assumption that languages could be compared applied to provide some comprehension dealing with practical needs like teaching and learning, translation study and further research (James as cited in Sukirmiyadi, 2018, p.

31). Like other experts, Johansson (as cited in Sulaiman, 2018, p. 83) explained that contrastive analysis (CA) is the systematic comparison of two or more languages applied for describing the similarities and differences and function to provide better language teaching materials for students.

It means that contrastive analysis is a linguistics analysis that is regarded on revealing the elements of differences and similarities inside the two different languages. There are three versions of contrastive analysis for instances: the weak and the moderate. The strong form is such the prime or sole cause of difficulty and error in foreign language learning intruded by the learners' native language. The two language differences created a comparison used to predict the learning difficulties and error. The weak form regards on the linguist's best knowledge used to account second language learning difficulties. The moderate form predicts the results of a spelling error analysis on the dictation. (Oller & Ziahosseiny as cited in Khansir & Pakdel, 2019, p. 38). In brief, contrastive analysis is such a comparative analysis which is done to see the comparison of two languages and also to figure out the learning difficulties as the teaching recommendations.

Furthermore, Tarigan (as cited in Sulaiman, 2017, p. 103) said that contrastive analysis as a transferring analysis which is parsed and formulated in the form of a theory of stimulating psychology. Tarigan (as cited in Sulaiman, 2017, p. 103) added that contrastive analysis is legally practised in the 1950s as an application of structural linguistics in language teaching, and based on three assumptions, for instances: there must be an interference of L1 in learning a new language (target language), some problems faced in learning a new language (target language) can be predicted by using a contrastive

analysis, and a contrastive analysis can be used as a guidance for a teacher, especially a teacher of English, in teaching pronunciation, in term of phonology.

It is in line with Mozlan (as cited in Thyab, 2022, p. 232) confirmed that contrastive analysis examines different languages with the aim of discovering their structural similarities and differences. It is a method that was greatly used in the 1960s and 1970s to explain reasons behind new language learning difficulties and reasons why some features of a target language were more difficult to learn than others. In this context, contrastive analysis (CA) is such a study that is carried out to compare two different language components or aspects, and also to predict students' difficulties in learning L2 as the recommendations for teacher's teaching materials.

Procedures of Comparing Language

In comparing language, there must be some procedures or steps that a researcher needs to do. As Al-khresheh, (2016, p. 335) reported that there were five steps or procedures used to compare two or more languages, as follows: (1) Selection; This step has something to do with selecting or taking the two languages, L1 and L2, and writing formal descriptions of them that needs choosing a special theoretical model which can be traditional, structural or transformational. In this case, it is needed to decide what is to be contrasted/compared. (2) Description; This step has connection with describing the selected linguistic units/structures of the two languages based on CA theories to find out the differences. (3) Comparison; This step has been in line with comparing the linguistic-selected units which have been described. It is to compare the differences and similarities of the forms and meaning. (4) Prediction; This step has relationship with making prediction of difficulty through the

contrast. The CA can noticeably predict for the similarities and differences of the two compared languages. (5) Verification; This last step is in keeping with verifying the predictions to know whether or not there are errors and difficulties on the basis of the contrastive analysis of the two languages. It can be said that the five steps or procedures of comparing language are very crucial to be applied

by a researcher who does a comparative study or a contrastive analysis to figure out the similarities and the dissimilarities as well as to uncover the possible learning difficulties. Al-khresheh, (2016, p. 334) also illustrated the procedures of CA approach. To be detailed, figure 1 was stated.

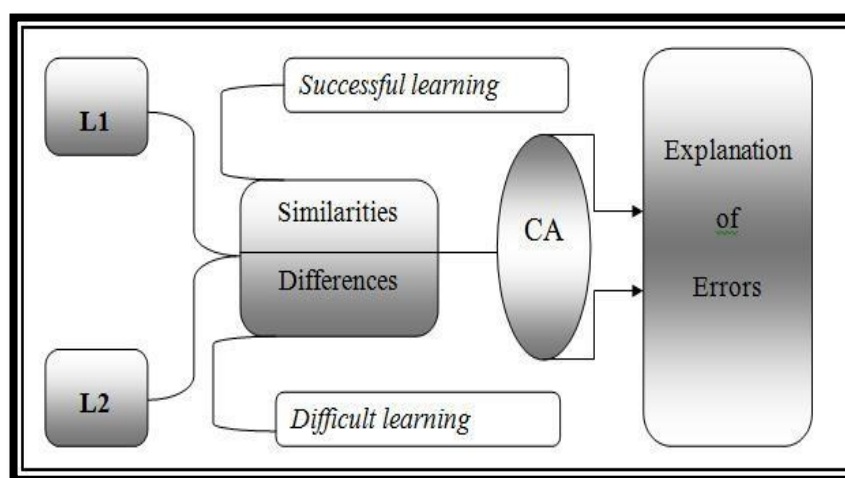


Figure 1. The Procedures of Contrastive Analysis (CA)

Figure 1 describes the procedures of contrastive analysis (CA) which are used to elaborate the comparison between the two language systems related to native language (L1) and target language (L2). It also shows that both of the two languages have similarities and dissimilarities. The similarities can create successful learning. Yet, the dissimilarities can cause difficult learning which enable the L2 students commit errors when learning target language (L2).

Copulative Verb

Copulative verb is such a grammatical term derived from the word “copula”, the latin noun used to refer to linking verb. In fact, every language has a copula clause type, which may take a copula verb (Dryer as cited in Moeljadi, Bond, & Morgado da Costa,

2016, p. 443). Some languages have more than one kind of copulative verb. Most commonly, one will just refer to ‘a state’ and the other to ‘coming into a state’, similar to be and become in English (Dixon as cited in Moeljadi, Bond, & Morgado da Costa, 2016, p. 443).

In addition, Eastwood (2002, p. 9) testified that copulative verb known as linking verb which needs a complement (an adjective phrase or a noun phrase) relates to and describes the subject or identifies. He further states that linking verb is between the subject and complement, such as “*The hotel was quite*” and “*The book has become a best-seller*”. In this case, the copulative verb “be” is followed by an adjective as in ‘was quite’ and the copulative verb “become” is followed by a noun as in “a best-seller”.

English Copulative Verb

In English, the major copulative verb is “*be*” like “*she is a doctor*” and it is often restricted to this verb but there are many others which have the same function such “*feel*” in “*She feels angry*”, and “*look*” in “*She looks nice*”, etc. (Crystal, as cited in Tahir 2009, p. 2). The verb “*be*” as a main verb has a copular function, as a linking verb which is used to express different situations such as profession, nationality, age, characteristics, condition, size, shape,

colour, time, and place, It emphasizes the information about a person or a thing, as in “*Betty is a student.*”, “*Bill is serious.*”, “*Mrs. Allen is ill.*”, “*He is here.*” (Praninskas, as cited in Tahir 2009, p. 2)

Eastwood (2002, p. 9) categorized English copulative verb into three major types such as adjective or noun phrase copulative verb, adjective copulative verb and noun phrase copulative verb. To be detailed, Table 1 presents the three types of English copulative verbs.

Table 1. Three Major Types of English Copulative Verbs

Adjective or Noun Phrase Copulative Verb	Adjective Copulative Verb	Noun Phrase Copulative Verb
appear, be, become, look, prove, remain, seem, sound, stay	feel, get, go, grow, smell, taste, turn	make

Table 1 shows three major types of English copulative verbs in terms of seventeen English copulative verbs followed by adjective or noun phrase, adjective and noun phrase that mostly used in sentences or expressions both in written and spoken. In this case, English copulative verbs have something to do with linking verbs which link or tie a subject to a complement, such as *feel, look, prove, remain, sound, stay, become, grow, turn, smell, taste.*

Indonesian Copulative Verb

Indonesian copulative verb is a verb which is not acting as a noun and usually occurs in a simple clause, such as “*adalah*” or “*ialah*”. (Sneddon, et al., 2010, p. 317). As Kridalaksana (2008, p. 136) argued that Indonesian copulative verb known as *kopula* which is regarded as the same as copula, copulative verb, linking verb, equational verb, catenative verb and connector which relate subject to complement. Like other experts, Alwi et al., (as cited in Moeljadi, Bond, & Morgado da Costa, 2016, p. 44-45) noted that Indonesian copula clauses with a noun phrase as verb

may or may not have a copula, “*adalah*”, “*ialah*” or “*merupakan*”. In addition, “*adalah*” and “*ialah*” are interchangeable. “*adalah*” can also be changed with “*merupakan*”, and mostly in noun clauses where either the subject or predicate is long or complex in formal written language structurally, such in “*Budi adalah/ialah/merupakan seorang guru*”, as the same as English “*Budi is a teacher*”.

Verhaar, et al., (2012, p. 180) confirmed that Indonesian copulative verb is regarded as a conjunction or copula used to relate subject and equative clause such “*adalah*”. Verhaar, et al., (2012, p. 180) further stated that there are four major types of copulas followed by nominal (an adjective or a noun) such as deleted copula, nonverbal copula, stative verbal copula and dynamic verbal copula. To be clear, Table 2 illustrates the four major types of copulas.

Table 2. Four Major Types of Indonesian Copulas

Deleted Copula Followed by Nominal	Nonverbal Copula Followed by Nominal	Stative Verbal Copula Followed by Nominal	Dynamic Verbal Copula Followed by Nominal
Dia guru.	Dia adalah guru yang dipecat kemarin.	Hal ini merupakan soal besar.	Dia menjadi semakin kaya.

Table 2 describes the instances of the four major types of Indonesian copulas or copulative verbs in terms of meanings as “*adalah*”, “*merupakan*” and “*menjadi*” that must be followed by an adjective or a noun (nominal). The first type in the sentence “*Dia Guru*” is called as deleted copula since the copula “*adalah*” that ought to be inserted has been deleted and it is not a matter in Bahasa Indonesia for it is not a verb Not in English. The second type is considered as nonverbal copula, because it can be deleted as the same as the first type. While, the third and the four types are considered as stative and dynamic verbal copula since they are such verbs that cannot be deleted.

Methodology

This research was conducted to find out the similarities and the dissimilarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs as well as some predictions of possible learning problems or difficulties faced by students learning both English and Indonesian copulative verbs. In this research, the researchers used the descriptive research design or method, since it describes the factual data of English and Indonesian copulative verbs without any treatment. Syahri, Sulaiman & Susanti (2017, p. 40) confirmed that descriptive research design is such an in-depth research having no two or more variables and it has nothing to do with treatment. Besides, Tavakoli (2012, p. 160) identified descriptive research as a research design or method used to establish the existence of phenomenon

by explicitly describing them and has no manipulating data.

In this case, the descriptive research design or method has been applied depending on the research and analysis of pre-existing data through the comparison between the observed English and Indonesian copulative and also based on contrastive studies and contrastive analysis theories and thus a thorough analysis of data has been reached.

Results and Discussion

This research has two kinds of data sources to be analyzed. The primary data and the secondary data. The primary data were “*Oxford Guide to English Grammar*” written by Eastwood, (2002), and “*Asas-Asas Linguistik Umum*” written by Verhaar, et al.,(2012) There were also some other books and articles from International and national journals used as secondary data to complete this research data. This research shows the similarities and the dissimilarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs and the possible learning difficulties faced by Indonesian students in learning English copulative verbs, as well as the recommendations to the teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). The similarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in term of meanings in relation to “*be*”, “*become*” and “*get*” as in Bahasa Indonesia “*adalah*”, “*merupakan*” and “*menjadi*”. To be clear, Table 3 presents the similarity between English and

Indonesian copulative verbs in term of meanings.

Table 3. The similarity between English and Indonesian Copulative Verbs in Term of Meanings.

No	English Copulative Verbs	Indonesian Copulative Verbs
1	Dehan is a student of Primary School.	Dehan adalah seorang siswa SD
2	Tania was the Head of an organization.	Tania merupakan pimpinan sebuah organisasi
3	Khalif becomes/gets a genius student	Khalif menjadi seorang siswa yang jenius

Table 3 delineates the similarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in term of meanings. In this context, the English copulative verb “*be*” can be classified into three forms as in present time “*am*” “*is*”, “*are*”, and past time “*was*” and “*were*”, future time “*be*”. In present time and past time, the copulative verbs “*be*” still have the same meanings with Indonesian copulative verbs “*adalah*” or “*merupakan*”. Meanwhile, the English copulative verbs

“*become*” or “*get*” have the same meanings with Indonesian Copulative verb “*menjadi*” and they can be substituted each other. Another similarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in term of dynamic verbs “*menjadi*” as in English “*become*” or “*get*”. To be clear, Table 4 presents the similarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in term of dynamic verb.

Table 4. The similarity between English and Indonesian Copulative Verbs in Term of Dynamic Verbs

No	English Copulative Verbs “ <i>become</i> ” or “ <i>get</i> ”	Indonesian Copulative verb “ <i>menjadi</i> ”
1	Mr. Shu becomes rich.	Tuan Shu menjadi kaya.
2	Habib became the captain of his class.	Habib menjadi ketua kelas
3	Dayat gets angry.	Dayat menjadi marah.
4	Aura got dizzy.	Aura menjadi pusing.

Table 4 describes the similarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in term of dynamic verb in line with “*become/became*” and “*get/got*” as the same as in Bahasa Indonesia “*menjadi*”. In this research, both English and Indonesian dynamic copulative verbs cannot be deleted since they are considered as verbal copulative verbs. In addition, the dissimilarities between English and Indonesian

copulative verbs occurred in grammatical structure which means that Indonesian copulative verbs must not be in the form of verbs because the copula can be deleted, not in English. To be obvious, Table 5 describes the dissimilarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in term of grammatical structure.

Table 5. The Dissimilarities between English and Indonesian Copulative Verbs in Term of Grammatical Structure.

No	English Copulative Verbs	Indonesian Copulative Verbs
1	Firdaus is a lecturer	Firdaus seorang dosen
2	Riska is a manager	Riska seorang manager
3	That is your fault	Itu kesalahan mu
4	It is not correct	Ini tidak benar

Table 5 describes the dissimilarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in term of grammatical structure. In this context, English copulative verb “be” has a function as a verb, thus it cannot be deleted as “*Firdaus is a lecturer*” Not “*Firdaus a lecture*”. The copulative verb “be” must be inserted. Yet it is not as the same as in Bahasa Indonesia, the copulative verb “be” as “*adalah*” and “*merupakan*” can be deleted as in “*Firdaus seorang dosen*” and “*Riska seorang manager*” in which the copulative verbs “*adalah*” and

“*merupakan*” are not inserted as well as in “*itu kesalahan mu*” and “*ini tidak benar*”. They are not connected with the copulative verb because their function is not a verb. Moreover, another dissimilarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs also occur in Tense on subject-verb agreement, such as in present tense and past tense and future tense not in Bahasa Indonesia. To be clear Table 6 presents the dissimilarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in terms of tense on subject-verb agreement.

Table 6. The Dissimilarity between English and Indonesian Copulative Verbs in Terms of Tense on Subject-Verb Agreement

English Copulative Verbs			Indonesian Copulative Verbs
Present Tense	Past Tense	Future Tense	
I am a teacher.	I was a teacher.	I will be a teacher.	There is no such verb changing on Indonesian Copulative Verbs since Bahasa Indonesia does not have such Tense and Subject-Verb Agreement
She is a doctor.	She was a doctor.	She will be a doctor.	
They are farmers.	They were farmers.	They will be farmers.	
It is my home.	It was my home.	It will be my home.	

Table 6 shows the dissimilarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in terms of Tense on subject-verb agreement. In this research, English copulative verbs have such kinds of verb changing based on the three tenses, such as present tense, past tense and future tense based on Subject-Verb agreement, such as “*I am a teacher*” becomes “*I was a teacher*” and then “*I will be a teacher*”, and it is not in Bahasa Indonesia. The rest dissimilarities

between English and Indonesian copulative verbs occurred in certain verbs, In other words, English has such kinds of certain verbs considered as copulative verbs like “*seem*”, “*feel*” and “*smell*” not in Bahasa Indonesia. To be vivid, Table 7 presents the dissimilarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in terms of certain verbs.

Table 7. The dissimilarity between English and Indonesian Copulative Verbs in Terms of Certain Verbs

English Copulative Verbs	Indonesian Copulative Verbs
There are some certain verbs in English commonly used as copulative verbs, for instance: become, get, turn, grow, feel, smell, sound, taste, appear and seem.	There is no such certain verbs in Bahasa Indonesia commonly used as copulative verbs

Table 7 describes the dissimilarity between English and Indonesian copulative verbs in terms of certain verbs. In this case, English has certain verbs used for copulative verbs since they can be replaced one another, such as “become” which can be replaced by “get”, “turn”, and “grow” as in “*She becomes/gets/turn/grow old*” and it is not found in Bahasa Indonesia. In addition, the dissimilarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs make recommendations to teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in line with learning materials or sources for teachers or lecturers in teaching Grammar, particularly in copulative verbs both in English and in Bahasa Indonesia. This research can be also as a guidance to predict or overcome their students’ difficulties in studying both English and Indonesian copulative verbs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the researchers found two similarities and three dissimilarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs. The two similarities were in meanings such as “*Tania was the Head of an organization*” which means that “*Tania adalah/merupakan pimpinan sebuah organisasi*” and dynamic verbs, such as “*Dayat becomes/gets angry*” which means that “*Dayat menjadi marah*”. On the other side, the three dissimilarities were in grammatical structure such as “*Firdaus is a lecturer*” which means that “*Firdaus seorang dosen*”, tenses on subject-verb agreement, such as “*I am a teacher*” becomes “*I was a teacher*” and then “*I will be a teacher*”, and certain verbs such as “*She becomes/gets/turn/grow old*”.

In this research, the researchers also uncovered some possible learning difficulties faced by the students learning English and Indonesian copulative verbs was that the use of tense (i.e. present

tense, past tense and future tense) and also subject-verb agreement that make them confused and they tend to make mistakes and errors when writing or speaking English using copulative verbs because they do not master it. In other words, they usually do not change English copulative verbs when writing or saying something in the present time, past time or even in future time and they also forgot to add suffix “s” to the copulative verb in present time when the subject was the third singular person.

In addition, they need to adjust with English copulative verbs with verb changes and also Indonesian copulative verbs which have no verb changes, since there is no such kind of tense in Bahasa Indonesia. Furthermore, the dissimilarities between English and Indonesian copulative verbs make recommendations or contribution to teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) as a fundamental teaching guidance in helping English teachers design a better teaching Grammar on copulative verbs, in terms of nonverbal copulative nominal, stative copulative nominal and dynamic copulative nominal, The results of this research also should be considered as raw materials that have no direct use in the classroom. These results can be used in preparing teaching materials and complementary materials for the teaching of Grammar and it should be reiterated that neither all differences cause problems, nor all problems happen because of the differences.

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