

## *ELLIPSIS IN SPOKEN AND WRITTEN INDONESIAN*

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**Abstrak:** Pelesapan dapat dianggap sebagai ciri yang dominan dalam bahasa Indonesia namun di mana dan kapan terjadinya dalam bahasa tersebut belum banyak diketahui. Penerjemahan secara literal dari bahasa Indonesia ke dalam bahasa Inggris atau sebaliknya hampir dapat dipastikan tidak akan mencapai hasil yang diinginkan dilihat dari sudut perbedaan yang mencolok dari bentuk dan aplikasi unsur pelesapan antara kedua bahasa tersebut. Tujuan penulisan makalah ini adalah untuk: (1) mengidentifikasi unsur-unsur makna dalam pesan yang dilesapkan dengan cara menganalisis bentuk-bentuk leksiko-gramatikal yang digunakan dalam mengungkapkan makna, (2) mengidentifikasi apakah pelesapan terjadi dalam frekuensi yang berbeda dalam teks lisan dan teks tulisan bahasa Indonesia, (3) melakukan analisis kontrastif antara pelesapan dalam bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia berdasarkan teori Halliday (1976) yang berkaitan dengan temuan penelitian tersebut. Metode yang digunakan adalah kajian pustaka dengan teknik analisis deskriptif. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa: terdapat identifikasi enam jenis pelesapan dalam bahasa Indonesia. Dalam hal jenis dan prinsip yang digunakan, pelesapan dalam bahasa Indonesia memang memiliki sistem yang berbeda dari pelesapan yang ada dalam bahasa Inggris yang berdampak pada masalah penterjemahan dari bahasa Inggris ke bahasa Indonesia dan sebaliknya.

Kata kunci: pelesapan, penterjemahan, penterjemah

*Abstract:* Ellipsis may be claimed as a very dominant characteristic of Indonesian, but, ironically enough, very little is known about the exact nature of its occurrence in the language. It may be expected that translating a text from English to Indonesian and vice versa may almost impossibly be carried out literally because of the different ways ellipsis operates in both languages. The aims of the study are (1) to identify which elements of meaning(s) in a message or in any smaller unit of meaning is/are left unsaid, by analysing the lexicon-grammatical forms being used to realise the meanings (2) to identify whether ellipsis occurs in different frequency in written and spontaneous spoken texts in Indonesian (3) to conduct a contrastive analysis between English ellipsis (according to Halliday and Hasan, 1976) and Indonesian ellipsis related to the findings of the present study. This study reports an overview of recent literature on ellipsis phenomena in natural language, knowledge of constraints on ellipsis construction in Indonesian. It can be concluded that the types and frequency of Indonesian ellipsis may be held true only as far as the data in the present study are concerned. The study has identified six types of ellipsis in Indonesian. In terms of types and the underlying principles of their operation, Indonesian ellipsis may be seen as a very different system from English ellipsis that may have a significant implication for translation from English to Indonesian and vice versa.

*Key words:* ellipsis, translation, translator.

### INTRODUCTION

The background of this study is that the conditions that regulate the distribution of ellipsis have long held a central place in linguistic theory because of the possibility they rise for shedding light on fundamental questions about the form–meaning mapping. Various theories in the last four decades have used elliptical constructions as testing grounds for exploring the nature of the various posited components of the grammar, both syntax–phonology interactions and syntax–semantic ones.

The phenomenon of missing phrasal constituents (known as “ellipsis”) has been noted from a variety of angles in recent years. It remains difficult to classify, as it appears to involve phonology (due to its similarity to

deaccenting), syntax (by virtue of its distribution), semantics (evidenced by its apparent licensing conditions), and pragmatics (because of the cognitive load it imposes) (Noah,2001:1).

Ellipsis may perhaps be claimed as a very dominant characteristic of Indonesian, both spoken and written, but, ironically enough, very little is known about the exact nature of its occurrence in the language. In Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia (literally in English ‘Standard Indonesian Grammar’), which is specially issued by the government as the standard guide for the correct use of the national language (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan,1988), ellipsis is not seen as a special topic that is important enough to deserve a

separate section for discussion. A number of prominent books on Indonesian syntax such as Chaer (1988), Parera (1988) provide very little account for ellipsis, and Samsuri (1987) does not even mention it. Ellipsis also seems to have escaped the attention of researchers on Indonesian syntax. Ironically enough, the most complete account on Indonesian ellipsis is given by an English speaking writer, James Neil Sneddon, in his book *Indonesian Reference Grammar* (1996).

Based on Sneddon's work (1996) on Indonesian ellipsis and the work of Halliday and Hasan (1976) on English ellipsis, it may be expected that translating a text from English to Indonesian and vice versa may almost impossibly be carried out literally because of the different ways ellipsis operates in both languages. Most of the elliptical constructions in Indonesian do not seem to correspond to the elliptical constructions in English. It is, therefore, essential that an English-Indonesian or Indonesian-English translator knows exactly which elements of meaning can be ellipted in both languages and how, so that he or she can decide whether the meanings that are expressed in elliptical constructions in the source language can be maintained as ellipsis in the target language or whether they should be expressed in different ways, in order to maintain the original meanings.

The aims of the study are (1) to identify which elements of meaning(s) in a message or in any smaller unit of meaning is/are left unsaid, by analysing the lexicogrammatical forms being used to realise the meanings (2) to identify whether ellipsis occurs in different frequency in written and spontaneous spoken texts in Indonesian (3) to conduct a contrastive analysis between English ellipsis (according to Halliday and Hasan, 1976) and Indonesian ellipsis related to the findings of the present study.

The study limits itself to examine three newspaper reports in Kompas Cyber Media issued in August and September 1999 which contain both spontaneous spoken text (more accurately 'quoted spoken') and written text. The study takes for granted that the quoted spoken texts represent exactly what the original speakers actually said.

Since the texts are not in the form of dialogues, the study will not cover ellipsis in what is referred to by Halliday and Hasan (1976:206-16) as REJOINDERS, which is "any cohesive sequel by different speaker." Unlike the discussion of ellipsis in Halliday and Hasan (1976), which is concerned only with ellipsis as a cohesive device between sentences, the present study is concerned with both ellipsis that relates between sentences in the text and ellipsis that relates between elements within the sentence. The method used in this study is an analysis content based on the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach by Halliday (1995) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004). The study is focused on the analysis of transitivity, i.e. the system for expressing ideational metafunction.

## DISCUSSION

### Ellipsis

It is important to note that according to Halliday and Hasan (1976:142-146) who are not concerned with ellipsis in any language but only ellipsis in English. The defining characteristics of ellipsis that they provide in the book, therefore, count only for English ellipsis, and may not reflect the nature of ellipsis in Indonesian. Instead of giving a defining statement about ellipsis, it provides a lengthy account on it, that is, each characterising feature is explained, often in terms of what it is and what it is not, exemplified, and compared with another cohesive tool, and so on. Firstly, they define ellipsis as "substitution by zero". Apparently, what they mean by 'zero' is 'left unsaid', that is, "Ellipsis occurs when something that is structurally necessary is left unsaid," and, therefore, "there is a sense of incompleteness". An important question is, where can the missing information be recovered from? According to Halliday and Hasan, English ellipsis is concerned with structural relation within a text, implying that the presupposed item can be found in the text.

### Clause

The notion of clause as representation seems to apply to Indonesian, although perhaps, the relationship between

the experience and the linguistic realisation may not be as consistent as that in English. For example, as evident in Sneddon (1996: 365), it is normal in Indonesian to leave a participant unsaid, resulting in Subject ellipsis. A verbless clause is quite normal in Indonesian. Judging from the fact that it is almost always possible to supply the empty Verb slot with a word that represents the process, it seems right to assume that the absence of the Verb element is due to a process of ellipsis. For example:  
 Dia sakit. -> Dia (menderita) sakit. -> Dia (adalah) sakit.  
 He sick He suffers from sickness He is sick  
 Saya mau ujian. -> Dia mau (mengikuti) ujian.  
 I will exam I will sit for an exam

In a discussion of VP-ellipsis, proposed that a VP can elide only when all subsequently needed information is recoverable. That includes the semantics of the VP and the arguments to the discourse coherence relation. Cause-effect relations are established using only the propositions denoted by clauses, not by sub clausal constituents, so no syntactic reconstruction is necessary to recover the arguments of the discourse coherence relation. (Frazier,2006:4).

So, for the purpose of the study, the clause is seen more as a grammatical unit than a functional unit. Therefore, the elements of the clause are not labelled as 'Process', 'Participant', 'Circumstance', but, instead, using the grammatical labelling, as 'Subject' (S), 'Verb' (V), 'Object' (O), 'Complement' (C), and Adjunct (A). According to Preisler (1997) the terms Object and Complement are types of complementation, and they differ as the effect of their relationship with the main verb has on complementation:

- (A) Intransitive verbs (Vi),
- (B) transitive verbs (Vt),
- (C) copula (Vc)

However, the study uses a less elaborate system of clause classification than that used by Preisler (1977: 32), that is,

- (1) Vi relates the Subject and  $\phi$
- (2) Vt relates the Subject and the Object
- (3) Vc relates the Subject and the Complement

The Object is further distinguished into Direct Object

(DO) and Indirect Object (IO). The Complement, too, is further distinguished into Subject Complement (SC) and Object Complement (OC). This system of complementation results in the following types of 'nucleus' of the clause:

- 1) S Vi
- 2) S Vc C
- 3) S Vt DO
- 4) S Vt IO DO
- 5) S Vt DO OC

One Adjunct (A) or more may or may not be added to a nucleus.

## Ellipsis in English and Indonesian

### Nominal Ellipsis

The concept of nominal ellipsis is based on the concept of nominal group as a structure that consists of a Head with optional modifier(s). In English modifiers are of two types depending on the relative position with the Head: a premodifier precedes the Head, and a postmodifier follows it. The English modifiers that can stand as nominal ellipsis include Deictic (normally a determiner), Numerative (a numeral or other quantifier), Epithet (an adjective), very rarely Classifier (a noun), and never Qualifier (a relative clause or prepositional phrase). The Head refers to the part of the nominal group which represents such a phenomenon as "person, animate or inanimate object, abstraction, institution, process, quality, state, or relation", and therefore usually filled by the "common noun, proper noun, or pronoun expressing the Thing".

According to Sneddon (1996:147) there are only two possibilities of constructing nominal ellipsis in Indonesian: by retaining a Numerative or a relative clause (Qualifier) and making it the Head of the nominal group. It means that a Deictic, Classifier, and Epithet, which are all possible to serve as the Head of a nominal group in English, cannot stand as nominal ellipsis in Indonesian. On the other hand, a relative clause (a Qualifier), which cannot function as the Head of an English nominal group, is quite a common type of nominal ellipsis in Indonesian.

**Verbal Ellipsis**

For Halliday and Hasan, a verbal group in English consists of an operator element (normally a finite) and a lexical element (the verb itself). Therefore, an elliptical verbal group in English can be either lexical ellipsis or operator ellipsis, depending on which element is elliptic as verbal ellipsis. It seems that this short description is enough to assume that verbal ellipsis does not occur in Indonesian, because the verbal element of the clause that represent an experience of a process is always in the form of a lexical item only. In fact, the meaning element that is expressed in an English finite is normally expressed in Adjunct in Indonesian, because Indonesian does not have a finite element to form the verbal group.

**Clausal Ellipsis**

In English, ellipsis is closely associated with Halliday’s notion of the clause as exchange. A non-elliptical English clause consists of two elements: the Modal element (Subject + Finite) and the Propositional element (the rest of the clause, starting with the lexical element of the verbal group). In the discussion of the clause as exchange (Halliday, 1985/1994), the parts are respectively called the Mood and the Residue. A clausal elliptical construction in English may therefore retain either the Modal element or the Propositional element. As clausal ellipsis involves verbal ellipsis (breaking the verbal group into two parts of the clause: the Finite belonging to the Modal element and the Lexical belonging to the Propositional element), it may be stated that the system cannot apply in Indonesian.

It is relatively well known, especially since the work of Sag (1976) and Williams (1977), that English permits omission (ellipsis) or pronominalisation (anaphora) in certain precisely defined contexts (see also Lobeck (1995). These replacement strategies are, however, not always interchangeable; for example, verb phrase–anaphora (VPA) is possible, whereas VP-ellipsis (VPE) is dispreferred in contexts with passive and nominal antecedents. That is to say, VPE—unlike VPA—appears to require structural parallelism between the antecedent and the elided VP

(Matsuo and Duffield,2001:1).

Interestingly enough, ellipsis of a single element of the clause (S, V, O), which is not possible in English, operates in Indonesian. Chaer’s (1996:396) definition of Indonesian ellipsis is even explicitly stated as a construction without a subject, a verb, or both, and it often happens that it retains only an adjunct. It shows that it is possible in Indonesian to leave out more than one single element of the clause. This type of ellipsis is referred to by Sneddon (1996) as multiple ellipsis.

The following is the summary of the types of English ellipsis and Indonesian ellipsis based on the review of literature, and may show the contrast between the two systems.

<b>Major Types Of Ellipsis</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Indonesian</b>
1. Nominal in the form of ...	Deictic Numerative Epithet	Numerative Relative Clause (Qualifier)
2. Verbal	Operator ellipsis Lexical ellipsis	None
3. Clausal	Mood ellipsis Proposition ellipsis	Subject ellipsis Object ellipsis Verb ellipsis

**Research Procedure**

**a) Analysis of Indonesian Ellipsis**

**1. Data for Analysis**

- 1). To find three newspaper reports which contain both written and quoted spoken statements.
2. To pull out all the quoted spoken sentences in each text and break them into clauses.
3. To count the number of the clauses.
4. To pull out the same number (as that of the quoted clauses) of written clauses in the same text, starting from the first written sentence right through to the last sentence needed to meet the required number of clauses.

The final result of this stage is 6 lists of clauses to be analysed for the study: 3 pairs of lists of spoken and written clauses, from the three different texts.

## 2. Analysis of Clausal Ellipsis

The analysis will be presented in tables.

1. to break each clause into the meaningful units according to structural elements which are known with their functional labels of Subject (S), Verb (V), Object (O), Complement (C), and Adjunct (A). This will be presented in the top row of the table, and written in **bold** letters. The clause system used in the analysis is closer to Halliday's (1985/1994) notion of Clause as Representation, in which each element is seen as a model of an experience. This approach of analysis is assumed to be the most suitable for analysing the Indonesian clause, because ellipsis in Indonesian may refer to absence of an element which represents an experience, as a whole and never partially.
2. To give each unit of meanings a suitable functional labelling (such as S for Subject, O for Object). In this way, the ellipted element(s) in a clause, if there is one (or more), can be identified. This will be presented in the second row of the table.
3. To provide a literal translation of each element of the clause in English. A word or morpheme which does not have the exact equivalent in English is either not translated or left in its original (for example, the passive affix *DI-* *dibunuh* is translated into *DI-kill*; the future adjunct *AKAN* is not translated, but the meaning would be known from the functional label *FUT*, which is in the second row). It will be presented in the third row of the table, which is the last row if the clause is part of a complex sentence, or the second last row if the clause is itself a simple sentence).
4. To provide a free translation of each whole sentence in grammatical English. This will be presented in the fourth row of the table if it is a simple sentence or a separate row if it is a complex sentence. The free translation will be written in italics.

## 3. Analysis of Phrasal Ellipsis

At the phrasal level, Sneddon (1996) has identified only nominal ellipsis in Indonesian, which may presuppose either the Head or a modifying feature (Modifier). Verbal

ellipsis, which exists in English, does not occur in Indonesian because the verb function in the clause is occupied by one lexical word (either simple or compound), leaving it as elliptic would result in clausal ellipsis.

## 4. Ellipsis Types and Frequency

This stage documents the types of Indonesian ellipsis (i.e., they will be labelled according to which element of the clause is elliptic, such as Subject ellipsis, Verb ellipsis, Object ellipsis, and so forth) and obtain the frequency of ellipsis in a given element (f S-ellipsis; f V-ellipsis; f O-ellipsis) by dividing the number of occurrences of ellipsis of the given element (n S-ellipsis; n V-ellipsis; n O-ellipsis, etc.) by the overall number of occurrences of the element in each text ( $\Sigma S$ ;  $\Sigma V$ ;  $\Sigma O$ ), e.g.,

$$f \text{ S-ellipsis} = \frac{n \text{ S-ellipsis}}{\Sigma S}$$

### b) Comparing the Frequency of Ellipsis in Written and Spontaneous Spoken Texts in Indonesian

Presenting side-by-side the frequency of occurrence of each type of ellipsis in written and spontaneous texts.

### c) Contrastive Analysis between English Ellipsis and Indonesian Ellipsis

Contrasting the elliptical types (except in rejoinders) in English and in Indonesian by presenting the two systems side-by-side, in order to find the similarities and differences.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Indonesian Ellipsis and How It Contrasts with English Ellipsis

#### Types of Indonesian Ellipsis

The findings of the study seem to agree with the theories of Indonesian ellipsis available at the moment, in particular the one proposed by Sneddon (1996). The following are the types of ellipsis identified in the analysis. Indonesian ellipsis can be grouped into two major classes: Clausal ellipsis and Phrasal ellipsis. There are three types of clausal ellipsis: Subject ellipsis, Verbal ellipsis, and

Object ellipsis. Verbal ellipsis is further divided into two types: Copula ellipsis and Transitive ellipsis. The Phrasal ellipsis can be in the form of Numerative or Relative clause.

#### A. Clausal Ellipsis

1. Subject Ellipsis
2. Object Ellipsis
3. Verb Ellipsis
  - a. Copula Ellipsis
  - b. Transitive Ellipsis
- B. Nominal Ellipsis
  4. Numerative
  5. Relative Clause

Both Spoken and Written text demonstrates almost all the types of ellipsis, although Object ellipsis is not found in written text. And, as it has been hypothesized, the frequency of ellipsis in spoken Indonesian turns out to be much bigger than that in written Indonesian, in all types. The summary of the types and frequency of Indonesian ellipsis can be seen in the following table.

Types of Ellipsis	Spoken Text (In %)	Written Text (in %)
A. Clausal Ellipsis		
1. Subject Ellipsis	14.6	6.7
2. Object Ellipsis	4%	0
3. Verb Ellipsis		
a) Copula Ellipsis	82	54.3
b) Transitive Ellipsis	2.9	1
B. Nominal Ellipsis		
1. Numerative	50	11
2. Relative Clause	39	9.5

#### The Comparison of the Frequency of Ellipsis in Spoken and Written Text

With regard to types, apart from Numerative ellipsis, Indonesian ellipsis and English ellipsis have very different systems of operation. Although both languages have clausal ellipsis, they differ in choosing the meaning elements that are ellipted. This results in different types of ellipsis in both languages. English clausal ellipsis omits either the Mood element or the Propositional element of the clause, giving Mood ellipsis and Propositional ellipsis. On the other hand, the meaning elements left unsaid in

Indonesian ellipsis correspond with the functional elements of the clause, giving Subject ellipsis, Object ellipsis, and Verb ellipsis.

Indonesian Verb ellipsis, as apparent in the analysis, does not operate in the same way as English Verbal ellipsis. Following the English verb form which consists of Operator and Lexical elements, English ellipsis is of two kinds, Operator ellipsis or Lexical ellipsis. This system is certainly does not work in Indonesian because Finite does not occur in the language. Indonesian realises the process element of experience only in the lexical form of the verb. Therefore, as far as ellipsis is concerned, an element of the Indonesian clause may either appear in the complete form to express the intended experience or not appear at all and be presupposed by the whole clause and the context of situation.

Because the mechanism of English verbal ellipsis is impossible to apply for the Indonesian verb (as a class), Indonesian therefore only has Nominal ellipsis. It is possible in both languages to use the Numerative as Nominal ellipsis. However, while it is possible to use the Deictic and the Epithet in English, it may not be possible in Indonesian, as the data in the present study does not show even one evidence of each of the types.

#### Clausal Ellipsis

##### Subject Ellipsis

It is found that the frequency of subject ellipsis in Spoken text is 14.6% and in Written text 6.7%. It means that in Spoken text, 1 elliptical subject can be expected to occur in between 6 or 7 clauses, while in Written text, 1 in between 14 or 15 clauses. Elliptical Subjects are identified in all the text samples. Altogether, of the 130 Subjects in Spoken text, 19 are elliptical. The principle reason for the occurrence of an elliptical Subject seems to agree with Halliday's theory, that is, the presupposed meaning can be traced within the text. Specifically, it has been previously mentioned in the text (anaphorically), either within the same sentence (at sentence level) or in a different sentence (at text level). The following example is in Spoken Text 1.

(3) Sudah beberapa kali dipersoalkan, tetapi selalu kandas ....  
[PERF several times Di-discuss-KAN, but always fail ....]

The clause is about the corruption case of the former President, Mr. Soeharto. This topic is not realised at all in the lexical elements neither in the first nor the second clause. The producer of this sentence (Mr. Muis) does not mention it explicitly because, as it has been hypothesised, he assumes that the other participant in the communicative event (the journalists) know exactly what he means. This is because it has been mentioned previously, and obviously in a sentence, or more, that come(s) before. The following example is in Spoken Text 2, clause 17.

(17) ... diharapkan kita akan mendapatkan pimpinan yang terbaik, mendapat kedamaian, ketentraman, dan kesatuan bangsa ....  
[... expected we FUT get good leader, get peace, security, and national unity ....]

The second, third, and fourth clauses are without a Subject. The reason seems to be obvious, that is, because the presupposed meaning item has been mentioned in the first clause, and is related by the co-ordinating conjunction *dan* 'and'. It is also possible to ellipsis Subject of a clause when the presupposed item is found in the same sentence and is related to the presupposing element by subordination. For example, in Spoken Text 2, clause 12.

(12) Jangan kita menutup pintu terhadap siapapun, apalagi hanya karena berbeda pandangan.  
[Don't we close door to anybody, especially only because have different view.]

The adjunct clause that refers to the reason is without a Subject, and it is because the word *siapapun* has been mentioned in the previous clause. As for the problem with recovering the presupposed meaning, Indonesian seems to approach it, not only textually but also contextually. In the above examples, the presupposed meaning in the elliptical constructions can be found in the text. This textual approach may not be adequate to solve the problem of retrieving the intended meaning elements in the following sentence (Spoken Text 1, clause 1)

(1) Itu kan karena kelambatan Habibie sendiri, mengapa dulu ketika masih segar bugar, masih bisa mengadu ke kiri ke kanan, prosesnya tidak dijalankan.

[That TAG because Habibie's own slow act, why PAST when still perfect condition, still can ME-sue to left to right]

The Subjects of the second and third clauses are elliptical. But, it is obvious that the two clauses are about different persons (Mr. Habibie and Mr. Soeharto). It is only possible to decide the correct meaning for each elliptical Subject if the contextual situation is taken into account. The idea of 'still in perfect condition' can be assumed to presuppose 'Mr. Soeharto', and 'still can sue to right and left' can be assumed to presuppose 'Mr Habibie', not because of the textual data, but rather because of the real situation known by both parties in the communicative event.

The Written Text, on the other hand, seems to allow elliptical Subject only at the sentence level; that is, the presupposed meaning is available in the same sentence, and is related to the ellipsis by co-ordination as well as subordination. This also seems to be the reason why ambiguity in identifying the presupposed information, such as in clause 1 in Spoken Text 1, is not found in the written data.

### Object Ellipsis

Only two elliptical objects are identified in the data, and both occur only in one sample text, Spoken Text 3.

(1) Lha saya belum tahu.

[Well, I PERF not know]

(13.3) ... Indonesia akan menyerahkan kepada PBB.

[... Indonesia FUT submit to UN]

Clause (6) presupposes the object 'the current situation in East Timor' and sentence (13-3) presupposes 'East Timor'. Judging from the fact that only two elliptical objects are identified among 49 objects in the data, and that they occur only in spoken text, it can be suspected that object ellipsis is not a common case in Indonesian. The object ellipsis in clause (6) may be explained from two points of view. First, in the original text, it is clear that the clause occurs in a response given by Mr. Muladi to a question asked by a journalist. In other words, it is in a rejoinder. It is quite common in Indonesian dialogues (in English as well) for the responder not to repeat the

speaker's words. Moreover, the object-less verb *tahu* generally occurs only in a response, and quite understandably, it is assumed to be redundant to mention something stated by the other participant himself or herself previously. Therefore, it is not normally possible in written text. In this explanation, the occurrence of object ellipsis after the verb *tahu* is suspected to result from the systematic principle of the verb.

The omission of the object in clause 13(3) may also be suspected to be normal only in Spoken text; in written text, it is not normal for a verb with the combined affix ME-KAN such as *menyerahkan* with elliptical object. This may result from the permissive nature of dialogues in Indonesian, which assumes that any information known by the other participant is not necessary to be made explicit.

#### Verb Ellipsis: Copula Ellipsis and Transitive Ellipsis

The data in the study demonstrate only copula ellipsis and transitive ellipsis, but not intransitive ellipsis. It is found in the study that the frequency of Copula ellipsis in Spoken text is 82%. It seems to suggest that in Spoken text elliptical copula is much more normal than explicit copula. In the written data, the frequency is also high, 54.3%. Although it is much lower than that in spoken data, it may also be right to assume that ellipsis copula is very normal in written text. Moreover, it is not always easy to try to find the exact copula that may sound normal to fill the Verb element. The following examples may illustrate the argument.

(15-1) *Ucapan Soeharto itu gertakan saja.*  
[Soeharto's statement just bluffs.]

8 kita 'low profile' saja.  
[We just low profile]

The first is in Spoken Text 1, and the second in Spoken Text 2. To fill in a copula in each clause would be easy and the resulting non-elliptical clause would sound normal.

(18-3) *Ucapan Soeharto itu adalah gertakan saja.*  
[Soeharto's statement just bluffs.]

8 kita bersikap 'low profile' saja.

[we just low profile]

It would be also possible to fill in the Verb element with a copula in each of the following clauses (in, respectively, Spoken Text 2 and Spoken Text 1), (13-3) *Kita berharap Gus Dur melakukan yang terbaik.*  
[We hope Gus Dur do that the best.]

(20-1) *yang penanganannya hanya sebentar saja.*  
[Of which the handling just short time only]

But the results would not sound natural.

(13-4) *Kita berharap Gus Dur melakukan yang bersifat terbaik.*  
[We hope Gus Dur do that the best.]

(20-2) *yang penanganannya adalah hanya sebentar saja.*  
[Of which the handling just short time only]

Without a copula the meaning relationship between the Subject and the Complement is almost always obvious.

(1-2) ... *ketika Soeharto masih segar bugar.*

[ ... when Soeharto still in perfect condition.]

This is curious because verb ellipsis does not seem to be normal with transitive and, let alone, intransitive verbs. Intransitive ellipsis is not found in both Spoken and Written text and the frequency of transitive ellipsis is very small, 2.9% in Spoken text, and 1% in Written text. These findings seem to suggest that, on the one hand, it is not normal to leave out a transitive or intransitive verb of the clause and, on the other hand, it is highly recommended to leave out a copula. It is an interesting linguistic phenomenon that the Verb element of the clause can either be normally elliptical or non-elliptical, depending on the type of process it is to express.

The explanation may be sought by referring to the principle that language consists of both form and meaning. As far as meaning is concerned, it may be argued that the role of a copula is not as important as a transitive or an intransitive verb. On the contrary, a transitive verb in the following example is obligatory, because otherwise, the meaning relationship between the Subject and the Object cannot be identified.

(12-1) *Jangan kita menutup pintu terhadap siapapun.*

[Don't we close the door to anybody?]



Leaving out the verb menutup ('close') would break the meaning relation between the subject kita ('we') and the object pintu ('door').

Based on the evident that Indonesian seems to stick more consistently with 'meaning' (in the context of situation) than with 'form' (in grammatical rules), it seems to be logical for the language to leave the copula unsaid (resulting in a verb-less clause) because the meaning is already obvious without it. This seems to be in contrast with English, which seems to demonstrate a one-to-one relationship between form and meaning.

Another example to demonstrate grammatical consistency in English and meaning consistency in Indonesian would be the case of a transitive verb, which is so defined because it requires an object (see Preisler, 1997).

I like fried rice. Do you like it?

In Indonesian, the transitive verb for 'like' suka would be normally followed by the object 'fried rice' nasi goreng in the first sentence, but not in the second. Saya suka nasi goreng. Anda suka?

[I like fried rice. You like?]

Another example would be 'Saya tidak percaya' (I don't believe), in which it is normal for the transitive verb percaya without an object following it; if the speaker assumes that the meaning that would be expressed by an object is known to the other participant. In English it would be impossible to say 'I don't believe,' and it seems that the presence of 'it' as the object is more for grammatical consistency than for meaning.

As for the very small frequency of transitive ellipsis in the data, it may be used to hypothesise that it has a very limited range of application. The elliptical transitive verb in sentence 17 in Spoken Text 2 occurs because of the process of co-ordination. It seems that the mechanism of ellipsis may be better being seen as being guided by the co-ordinating principle rather than by the internal characteristic of the verb itself.

(17-5) ... kita akan mendapatkan pemimpin terbaik, mendapat kedamaian, ketentraman, dan kesatuan bangsa. [... We FUT get best leader, get peace, security, and

national unity.]

The object ketentraman ('security') and kesatuan bangsa ('national unity') in the last two clauses both presuppose the transitive verb mendapat ('get'), which occurs in the previous clause mendapat kedamaian ('get peace'), and they relate to it by the co-ordinating conjunction dan ('and').

As to the elliptical verb in sentence (14), Spoken Text 2, it does not seem natural. The object harapan-harapan kepada Gus Dur, ... (expectations to Gus Dur, ...) seems to presuppose a transitive verb menyampaikan ('tell') or another word with similar meaning. Filling in the empty slot of the Verb with such a word may seem to make the clause more natural.

(14) Kedatangannya untuk harapan-harapan kepada Gus Dur, kepada NU, dan ....

[their coming for expectations to Gus Dur, to NU, and ....]

(14) Kedatangannya untuk menyampaikan harapan-harapan kepada Gus Dur, kepada NU, dan [Their coming for tell expectations to Gus Dur, to NU, and ....]

It may be suspected that the absence of the transitive verb may have been caused by mistyping or any other chance.

### Nominal Ellipsis

#### Numerative Ellipsis

It seems that it is the only ellipsis in Indonesian which operates in more or less the same mechanism as Numerative ellipsis in English. The reason might be that Indonesian Numerative normally occurs as pre-modifier (occurring before the Head). In Indonesian Spoken text in the study, the frequency of Numerative ellipsis is 50%, suggesting that elliptical and non-elliptical Numerative is equally normal in the mode. In Written text, however, the frequency is found to be quite low, 11%. This seems to suggest that the non-elliptical form is much more preferred in this mode. As all clausal ellipsis, Numerative ellipsis may be related to the presupposed element within the same sentence level or between sentences. The

presupposed meaning is normally found in the text.

### Relative-clause Ellipsis

This type of ellipsis does not exist in English, but it seems to be quite normal in Indonesian, especially in Spoken text. Out of 18 nominal groups with a relative clause, 7 are elliptical. That is, the Relative Clause functions as the head of the nominal groups. In Written text, however, it is much less normal, as the study finds only 2 cases of elliptical Relative Clause out of 21 non-elliptical Relative Clauses.

One interesting thing about this type of ellipsis is that most of the elliptical Relative Clauses found in the study are those that contain an Epithet, or specifically an Adjective, as the Complement of the clause.

Spoken Text 1:

7(4) masalah yang sama ['the same problem']

Spoken Text 2:

13(3) [...] yang terbaik ['the best']

23(6) arahan yang jelas ['clear instruction']

Spoken Text 3:

16(2) [...] yang baru ['the new']

20(2) sesuatu yang luar biasa ['extraordinary thing']

Written Text 1:

16(3) [...] yang mengherankan ['the amazing']

Written Text 2:

22(2) hal yang sama ['the same thing']

Written Text 3:

6(3) posisi yang sulit ['difficult position']

8(2) [...] yang jelas ['the obvious']

Otherwise, the Head that is modified by the Relative Clause is normally non-elliptical. Out of the 27 nominal groups with a Relative Clause containing other than an Epithet identified in the data, only 5 are elliptical, and they are all in Spoken text.

Spoken Text 1

8(2) yang memutuskan apakah mantan Presiden Soeharto

...

['that decides whether the former President Soeharto ...']

20(1) yang penanganannya hanya sebentar

['of which the handling takes only a short time']

20(2) yang [penanganannya] lama

['Of which the handling takes a long time']

Spoken Text 2

6(2) yang juga menjadi alasan saya.

['that also becomes my reason']

9(2) yang menjadi keputusan PB NU

['that becomes the decision of PB NU']

It is important to note that the Relative Clause, which in Indonesian is connected by the Relative pronoun *yang*, may or may not function to define the identity of the Head. According to Halliday (1994: 188) only the defining Relative Clause can serve as a Qualifier, while the non-defining one, which is referred to in the present study as Appositive (App. for short), cannot. Therefore, the 8 cases of Appositive, all in Written Text [see I: 4(3), 9(5); II: 8(3), 9(2), 18(3), 20(2), 21(3); III: 12(2)] are excluded from the analysis of Relative-Clause ellipsis.

## CLOSING

### Conclusions

It can be concluded that the types and frequency of Indonesian ellipsis may be held true only as far as the data in the present study are concerned. The study has identified six types of ellipsis in Indonesian. In terms of types and the underlying principles of their operation, Indonesian ellipsis may be seen as a very different system from English ellipsis that may have a significant implication for translation from English to Indonesian and vice versa.

### Suggestions

It should be better if the translation or interpreting activities between the two languages may need to be guided by good knowledge about ellipsis in both languages. The assumption is that only the right form expresses the right meaning.

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