Typographical Input Enhancement for Learning Indonesian Transitivity

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This paper is proposing a different approach to teach Indonesian transitivizers –i and –kan. This approach utilizes typographical input enhancement to get learners' attention to the target forms and to increase their understanding of the directionality meaning carried by the target forms. These transitivity constructions are notoriously difficult and confusing for Indonesian learners. Despite explicit rule explanations and extensive exposure to the target constructions, many Indonesian learners still have problem acquiring them.

This approach is motivated by Joanne White's study on drawing the English learners' attention to the linguistic features of English possessive determiners (1998). She utilizes typographical enhancement, proposed by Sharwood Smith (1981, 1991) to help the students understand the English 3ʳᵈ person marking subsystem and its applications. In the readings she uses in her experiments, the targeted linguistic features such as his or her is typographically enhanced with bolding and italics to make the students attend those targeted linguistic features and their messages.

The Indonesian transitivity with its unique linguistic features and directionality meaning is a perfect candidate for typographical enhancement model. The use of bolding in the suffix –i and –kan and the use of arrows to indicate the directionality of the subject or object in the constructions would hopefully increase perceptual salience of the target forms and promote acquisition.

The Indonesian suffixes -i and –kan are quite a challenge to teach as well as to learn. Indonesian learners face a lot of difficulties in understanding them. Firstly, they have to deal with the notion of transitivity that –i and –kan carry

(namely their occurrence causes the verbs to take another argument and often times two arguments for –kan).

For example:

1. Ali menyanyi.   'Ali sings'. (Intransitive)
 Ali meN-sing

2. Ali menyanyikan lagu itu. 'Ali sings the song.' (Transitive)
 Ali meN-sing-kan song that

3. Ali membukakan bapak pintu. 'Ali opens his father the
 Ali meN-open-kan father door door.' (Ditransitive)

4. Ali datang.   'Ali comes.' (Intransitive)
 Ali come

5. Ali mendatangi bapak. 'Ali comes to his father.'
 Ali meN-come-i father (Transitive)

  Secondly, each of these morphemes semantically carries several different meanings that we can see as follows:

1. The case of –kan (Dikken1995)

–kan$_1$ = applicative suffix in double object constructions
E.g. Ali membukakan bapak pintu. 'Ali opens his father
  Ali meN-open-kan father door the door.'

–kan$_2$ = that appears in prepositional dative constructions
E.g. Ali membukakan pintu untuk bapak. 'Ali opens the door
  Ali meN-open-kan door for bapak for father.'

–kan$_3$ = causative suffix in causative constructions
E.g. Ibu menidurkan Ali 'Mother puts Ali to bed.'
  Mother meN-sleep-kan Ali

–kan$_4$ = particle in a heterogeneous set of constructions.

E.g. Ali membicarakan rencananya.   'Ali talks about his
     Ali meN-talk-kan plan-his   plan.'

2. The case of –i (Wolff 1984)

a. location (do at, in, on)
    E.g. diam 'quiet/inhabit'   diami 'stay at'
         datang 'come'   datangi 'come to'

b. bring something into the state of
    E.g. penuh 'full'   penuhi 'to fill up'
         terang 'bright'   terangi 'to light'

c. + nouns means 'to provide with noun'
    E.g. air   'water'   airi 'to water'
         bekal 'provisions'   bekali 'to provide
                                     someone with provisions'

c. + roots that refer to status or the like, -i means "over'
    E.g. kuasa 'power'   kuasai 'to control / have
                                     power over'
         raja   'king'   rajai 'to reign over'

d. action affects a recipient (feelings)
    E.g. suka   'like'   sukai 'to like something'
         marah 'angry'   marahi 'to scold'

e. simply forms transitive (the roots don't occur without –i or
    it is intransitive)
    E.g. punya 'have'   punyai 'to have'
         layan 'serve' (not used unaffixed)   layani 'to serve'

        Finally there is no clear cut of what kinds of roots take
–i or –kan when they co-occur with active verb prefix meN-
(as well as passive verb prefix di-). The categories of roots,
whether they are verbal, nominal, adjectival, in this case are
quite arbitrary. However, the roots will fall into one of the
following subsets (Dardjowijoyo 1983):

1. meN-Root
   E.g. ejek 'mock' → mengejek

2. meN-Root-i
   E.g. cinta 'love' → mencintai

3. meN-Root-kan
   E.g. ragu 'doubt' → meragukan

4. meN-Root, meN-Root-i
   E.g. tunggu 'wait' → menunggu, menunggui

5. meN-Root, meN-Root-kan
   E.g. bawa 'bring' → membawa, membawakan

6. meN-Root-i, meN-root-kan
   E.g. tidur 'sleep' → meniduri, menidurkan

7. meN-Root, meN-Root-i, meN-root-kan
   E.g. tulis 'write' → menulis, menulisi, menuliskan

Therefore, in order to put –i and –kan into use, Indonesian learners have to be aware of the ambiguity of those morphemes, their meanings and those subsets. These metalinguistic aspects need to be taught explicitly with rules describing the patterns. Explicit information explains how language works and serves as knowledge with which learners can use to monitor their output. De Keyser (1995) argues that explicit information is effective only with rules describing simple patterns. If the patterns are complex, overgeneralization will occur. Overgeneralization of complex patterns such as -i and –kan can be avoided with sufficient input. The question is what kind of input is effective to help learners understand –i and –kan and retain them in their long-term memories so they can avoid the following mistakes (marked by *??*):

1. Advanced Student

> Saya juga akan meneruskan pelajaran saya tentang Indonesia itu supaya dapat mengajar***kan??*** kepada orang Amerika tentang Indonesia. (*Transl. I also want to continue studying about Indonesia so that I can teach Americans about Indonesia. Note: with the occuring of –kan with the root ajar 'teach', an object argument has to follow.*)

2. Intermediate Students

> a. …Hari AIDS dihormati pada tanggal 1 Desember. Untuk menghormat***kan??*** hari itu, …. (*Transl. AIDS day is celebrated on Dec 1st. To celebrate that day,…. Note: -kan never occurs with the root hormat 'respect', and –i should replace –kan in this case.*)
>
> b. …Pada malam, itu, rumah-rumah orang Kristen dikunjung***??*** oleh "Kelinci Paskah". (*Transl. On that night, Chritians' houses are visited by easter bunny. Note: -kan never occurs with the root kunjung 'visit', instead –i should be attached.*)

3. Beginning Students

> a) Saya mendengar***kan??*** ada danau indah di Ubud. (*Transl. I heard there is a beautiful lake in Ubud. Note: Instead of saying "I heard", the student said "I listened" because of –kan occuring after dengar 'hear/listen'.*)
>
> b) Kami akan mendengar***??*** musik gamelan. (*Transl. We will listen to gamelan music. Note: -kan has to follow dengar to mean 'listen'. So in this case the student said "We will hear the gamelan music", which was not intended to mean.*)

As we can see in the previous examples, not only beginning students make mistakes but also advanced students. This fact comes as no surprise at all considering how ambiguous, complex and irregular –i and –kan can be. Even native speakers can make mistakes in using them. I documented a native speaker's incorrect use of –kan in the following sentence:

"Kalau ada masalah saya tidak tahu harus ke mana. Tentu saja isteri saya, saya cerita**kan??**". *(Transl. If I have a problem, I don't know where to go. Of course, I'll tell my wife about it).*

Instead of saying that he (a famous Indonesian entertainer) told his problem to his wife, he said "I told about my wife." Another example of incorrect use of –kan by native speaker I documented was made by my friend, herself is a linguist.

"Semoga saja tahun ini, saya bisa memperoleh**kan??** beasiswa-beasiswa yang saya daftarkan." *(Transl. I hope this year I can get the grants that I applied.)*

She used –kan after *memperoleh* 'to get' while the root *oleh* falls in the subset of meN- only.

So, could we say that it is legitimate for the students to make mistakes in using –i and –kan since native speakers do, too? Of course not, especially when the changing of meanings is very crucial. We want our students to be as accurate as possible and avoid making embarrassing mistakes such as saying: *Saya meninggal Jakarta* 'I die Jakarta.' instead of *Saya meninggalkan Jakarta* 'I left Jakarta', and *Saya meniduri anak saya* 'I slept with my child' (with a sexual connotation) instead of *Saya menidurkan anak saya* 'I put my child to bed'.

When beginning learners make such mistakes, we can refer to the fact that they have not been exposed long enough to –i and –kan. At beginning levels they usually have just been introduced to the patterns and may not have sufficient input yet. In order to reach the next level of proficiency, they will need enough time to internalize and then acquire the morphosyntactic complexity of –i and –kan. However, intermediate students and especially advanced students have already been exposed to the use of –i and –kan long enough. They are so complex that the students complain that it seems that they will never have them in hands. Sometimes they seem to acquire them but often times they are completely lost. Is this due to fossilization? Can this be prevented? Is there a way to make the input sufficient and effective enough so that Indonesian learners' intake (part of input that is attended and processed) of –i and -kan becomes more like what the teachers expect? The motivation of this paper is to answer those

questions by integrating the notion of conscious learning and focus on form in typographically enhanced input.

Conscious Learning

Referring to the way speakers learn their first language and some instances of subliminal learning, some SLA research claims that people can pick up some aspects of language without consciously being aware of them. Therefore, what language learners mostly need is massive exposure to the target language or more precisely comprehensible input (Krashen 1985). However, in immersion programs, extensive exposure to comprehensible input with no focus on form results in the failure of acquisition of second language morphosyntax (Swain 1988, 1991). It turns out that comprehensible input alone and implicit learning do not induce all aspects of second language learning. Therefore, in some domain of SLA studies, the pendulum swings back to focus on form that involves conscious learning of the given forms.

Enhanced Input

When language learners need to learn certain linguistic features of a second language, they are most likely to be bombarded by incoming input. The incoming input can be in the form of extensive readings, which can be good input for the linguistic forms that are the targets of the learning. However, learners may process the input for meaning instead and do not notice the linguistic forms manifested in the input or they may process more salient features only. In other words what part of input learners are actually processing can be completely different from what is being targeted by their teachers.

If the input is enhanced, thus adding its perceptual saliency, it will help learners sort out the targeted features because their attention is focused on them. "Attention is necessary to encode a stimulus into long-term memory" (Schmidt 1993: 209). Alanen (1995) and VanPatten and Oikkenon (1996) also agree that conscious attention driven by

enhancing the target input and conscious knowledge provided by explicit information facilitate learning.

The enhanced input is particularly necessary in the acquisition of morphemes –i and -kan because like what I have previously mentioned, morphemes –i and –kan are ambiguous, have different functions and meanings, and are attached to the verbs that belong to different subsets. The enhanced input is pertinent to frequency pertaining to which roots they occur or never occur with.

What I am aiming in this paper is utilizing input enhancement to integrate the type, quality and quantity of input and learning. I would like to make students aware, notice and understand the formal linguistic features of the input by enhancing them. It is important to make students notice the targeted forms because "noticing is related to rehearsal within working memory and the transfer of information to long-term memory, to intake, and to item learning" (Schmidt 1993: 213). In noticing hypothesis, Schmidt (1993) claims that in order to acquire targeted forms one must attend the linguistic features of those forms and the contexts in which they occur. Input enhancement is pertinent to this claim. Enhancing input basically involves manipulation of input in various ways to make the given target more salient or noticeable to the learners so that they will attend them and incorporate them in their second language (L2) developing system (Sharwood Smith 1981, 1991).

Typographical Input Enhancement

In terms of integrating the notion of enhanced input and acquisition, I am inspired by Joanne White's study on drawing the English learners' attention to the linguistic features of English possessive determiners (1998). She utilizes typographical enhancement, proposed by Sharwood Smith (1981, 1991) to help her students understand the English 3rd person marking subsystem and its applications. In the reading materials she uses in her experiments, the target linguistic feature such as his or her is typographically enhanced with

bolding and italics to make her students attend those features and their messages.

Applying this model to teaching Indonesian morphemes –i and –kan, we can bold –i and –kan whenever they occur in the extensive readings. The extensive readings themselves can be created, simplified, modified (for beginning levels) and authentic (for intermediate and advanced levels). To make better form-meaning connections, arrows can be used when directionality is involved.

For example:

$\longrightarrow$ $\Downarrow$
Tono menaik**kan Budi** ke atas meja.   'Tono lifted Budi to
Tono meN-lift-kan Budi to on   table   the table.

$\longrightarrow$ $\Downarrow$
Tono menaik**i**   **Budi**.   'Tono climbed Budi.'
Tono meN-lift-i Budi

$\longrightarrow$ $\Downarrow$
Tono melewat**kan Budi** ke tempat itu.   'Tono took Budi to
Tono meN-pass-kan Budi to place that   pass that place.'

$\longrightarrow$ $\Downarrow$
Tono melewat**i**   **Budi**.   'Tono passed Budi.'
Tono meN-pass-i Budi

$\longrightarrow$ $\Downarrow$
Tono mendatang**kan Budi** ke Surabaya.   'Tono made Budi
Tono meN-come-kan Budi to Surabaya   come to Surabaya.'

$\longrightarrow$ $\Downarrow$
Tono mendatang**i**   **Budi**.   'Tono came to Budi.'
Tono meN-come-i Budi

The horizontal arrows indicate which argument is moving and the arrowheads point the directionality. On the other hand, the vertical arrows point the location.

The same type of typographical input enhancement can be integrated in authentic reading materials like the following examples.

a. Enhanced Passage for Intermediate Learners *(an authentic text about ten ways to lead a happy life, which was taken from an anonymous circulated email sent by a friend)*.

<div align="center">

Sepuluh Langkah Menuju Hidup yang
Bersukacita dan Berbahagia

</div>

Karena pikiran sangat berperan dengan kehidupan Anda, Anda dapat mempertimbang**kan usulan** di bawah ini:
Pertama:
> Berhenti merendah**kan diri** Anda sendiri. Ada banyak hal yang benar dalam diri Anda. Kosong**kan pikiran** Anda dari kegagalan dan kesalahan dan mulailah melihat dirimu sendiri sebagai orang yang kompeten.

Kedua:
> Buanglah sikap mengasihan**i diri** sendiri. Mulailah memikir**kan apa** yang Anda miliki, dibanding**kan** dengan **apa** yang mungkin akan hilang. Daftarlah aset kepribadian dan talenta Anda.

Ketiga:
> Berhentilah memikir**kan** terus-menerus **dirimu** sendiri. Pikir**kan**lah orang lain. Sebaiknya keluar dan carilah seseorang yang memerlu**kan bantuan** Anda dan beri**kan**lah secara cuma-cuma. Anda tidak akan mempertahan**kan aliran** yang berlimpah-limpah terus-menerus bila pikiran Anda hanya memikir**kan diri** sendiri.

Keempat:
> Ingatlah kata-kata Goethe: "Ia yang memiliki keteguhan akan menjamur**i dunia** bagi dirinya." Allah Maha Besar meletak**kan kekuatan** besar dalam diri manusia yang disebut kemauan. Guna**kan**lah.

Kelima:
> Milikilah **tujuan** dan tuang**kan**lah dalam **jadwal** yang dapat **dicapai**. ...

b. Enhanced Passage for Advanced Learners *(an authentic text taken from the Indonesian newspaper Suara Pembaruan on-line April 25th, 1999 regarding the condition of Indonesian*

*teachers and the journalist's comments on their demonstration
to demand salary improvement)*

SUARA PEMBARUAN DAILY (April 25 1999)

Murid Di Istana, Guru Masih Merana

Oleh Wartawan "Pembaruan" Wall Paragoan

.... Tetapi apakah mereka yang menyayang**kan gerakan** itu tidak membayang**kan bagaimana guru** di negeri ini sudah terlalu lama **di**telantar**kan** dan mereka selalu menyembunyi**kan kesabarannya** di balik pengabdiannya yang tidak pernah sia-sia?

.... Tindihan psikologis itu telah menggerak**kan solidaritas** guru untuk berjuang memperbaik**i nasib** setelah bertahun-tahun mengabdi tanpa diapresiasi secara memadai dan wajar. Meski gerakan semacam ini dalam sejarah hanya menjadi label **perjuangan kaum buruh** dan **petani** yang **di**identik**kan** dengan kaum proletar oleh pemikir-pemikir sosialis radikal maupun sosialis humanis demokratis.

.... Banyak yang mendukung gerakan itu, terutama yang melihat keadaan dan peran guru secara utuh. Tetapi ada juga yang menyayang**kan** karena gerakan itu akan menelantar**kan anak** didik.

.... Di balik protes guru sebenarnya ada gambaran paradoksal perlakuan terhadap guru. Mereka dianggap berjasa dan terhormat, tetapi **nasibnya ter**lupakan. Di antara spanduk gerakan **guru** ketika mendatang**i Kantor** Mendiknas 18 April lalu, menggambar**kan keadaan** itu dengan jelas. Bunyinya, "Murid sudah di Istana, guru masih merana", "Leceh**kan guru**, kualat tujuh turunan".

.... Padahal tanggung jawab berbangsanya jauh lebih besar. Karena di tangannya terletak nasib generasi, mereka yang mencetak setiap **orang** agar bisa memasuki **lapangan**
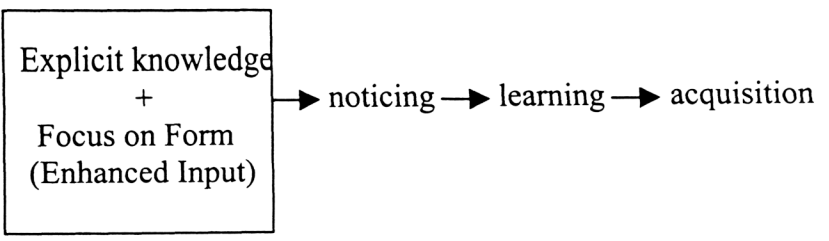
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pekerjaan yang baik dan memasuki **dunia** kekuasaan. Bisakah seseorang menjadi pegawai, karyawan swasta, anggota DPR, menteri dan presiden, jika tidak pernah bersentuhan dengan guru? Mustahil. ...

(Note: di- and ter- prefixes are also bold-faced because they are passive markers, and in the Indonesian passive constructions the object argument is promoted to the position before the verbs. Therefore, di- and ter- are made salient to make students aware that they will not see the object argument after the verbs. Instead they have to locate it before the verbs.)

Instructional sequence that happens during this process is as follows:

1. Providing learners with explicit information, pointing out the morphosyntactic complexity of –i and –kan.
2. Structured practices at sentence levels.
3. Extensive readings with typographical enhancement for morphosyntactic input processing and reinforcement.

This sequence hopefully can induce learning and acquisition, which can be summarized as follows:

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│ Explicit knowledge │
│         +          │──► noticing ──► learning ──► acquisition
│   Focus on Form    │
│  (Enhanced Input)  │
└────────────────────┘
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Learning is a conscious process while acquisition is unconscious process of abstraction of aspects of target language (Krashen 1981).

Conclusion

When Indonesian learners are given particular input that teachers want them to focus, their intake can be completely different because of the nature of their classroom discourse. In the case of Indonesian learning, when the teachers want their students to focus on transitivizers, they could instead attend other linguistic features that by nature are more salient or have been brought up at one point by their peers during classroom interaction.

If we want our students to attend –i and –kan, we have to enhance those suffixes so that our students' attention can be focalized. As a visual person myself, I found it useful to draw mental images to retain certain features in my memory. Therefore, I thought it might be useful to draw arrows and mark the distinctive linguistic features in explaining how –i and –kan work. My intermediate and advanced students found them useful. Many of them have already learned the applications of –i and -kan but claimed that the enhanced input reinforce those applications and help them learn better. However, whether the targeted forms are registered in learners' long-term memory is still a big question. That is why, a longitudinal study is needed to observe whether after being provided with extensive form-focused practices, in this case, typographically enhanced readings, learners can incorporate the targeted forms to their Indonesian language development system, thus prevent fossilization.

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