

Revisiting Topicalization & Bare Passives in Indonesian

Abstract: Due in large part to Chung's (1976) seminal paper "On the Subject of two Passives in Indonesian," it is widely accepted that there are two passive constructions in Indonesian, the canonical passive with *di-* and the so-called bare passive with unprefixing verbs. It is also generally accepted that bare passive (Chung's Object Preposing) can be clearly distinguished from Topicalization in Indonesian. However a review of many of the examples of Object Preposing in Chung 1976 shows that many of them are analyzable as Topicalization. I introduce a finer set of contexts that clarify the syntactic differences between bare passive and Topicalization in Indonesian.

Bare passive vs. Topicalization: While Chung (1976) groups together all cases of Object preposing as instances of passivization, subsequent work (Arka & Manning 1998) differentiates between two cases of object fronting: (i) bare passive; and (ii) topicalization. The difference between the two is marked by the position of the aspectual marker relative to the subject. In cases of bare passive, the aspectual marker is to the left of the subject (1), while in cases of Topicalization, the aspectual marker is to the right of the subject (2). In the passive sentence in (1), the agentive subject stays low in Spec, vP; it is not promoted to a "true" subject position in Spec,TP. In the case of topicalization as seen in (2), the agentive subject does move to Spec,TP; followed by the movement of the topicalized object to a position in the left periphery. This derives the different positioning of the aspectual markers.

1. Buku itu sudah John baca
 book that PERF. read
 'The book has been read by John'
2. Buku itu John sudah baca
 book that John PERF read
 'That book, John has read'

Object preposing derived subjects: Chung (1976) claimed that derived subjects in Object Preposing must be anaphoric/generic. This is a potential criterion for distinguishing bare passive and Topicalization. Contemporary Indonesian data, however, does not bear out this generalization. In (3), most of my consultant actually disprefer a generic reading of the 'table,' and while examples like (4) and (5) are judged ungrammatical in Chung's (1976), they are judged perfectly grammatical by my consultants. The anaphoric/generic restriction on bare passive *qua* object preposing appears to be no longer operative in Indonesian. In the absence of auxiliaries as in (1), (3-5) are analyzable as bare passives or object Topicalization.

3. Meja sudah Ali beli
 Table PERF buy
 'The table was bought by Ali'
4. Seorang laki-laki Ali bunuh
 A man kill
 'A man was killed by Ali'
5. Sepuluh dolar sudah saya bayar kepada tukang rumput
 Ten PERF I pay to cutter grass
 'Ten dollars was paid to the grass cutter'

A-A' contrasts: Topicalization in Indonesian can be long distance, as shown in (6). In this example, Topicalization crosses a clause boundary introduced by the finite complementizer *bahwa* 'that':

6. Buku itu saya belum harap bahwa John sudah t baca
 Book that I IMP hope that John PERF read
 'That book, I did not hope that John read.'

7. *Buku itu belum saya harap bahwa t sudah John baca
 Book that IMP I hope that PERF John read
 'That book was not hoped that t was read by John'

8. Buku itu belum saya harap t sudah John baca
 Book that IMP I hope PERF John read
 'That book was not hoped to be read by John.'

In contrast in (7), bare passivization is not possible across *bahwa*. (8) shows that successive cyclic bare passivization is possible, but only when the finite complementizer is absent. Bare passive thus shows a standard A movement property - inability to cross a finite clause boundary - while Topicalization does not.

Weak Crossover: Weak crossover (WCO) effects also distinguish topicalization and bare passivization:

9. ?? Anaknya sendiri_i akan siapapun_i cintai
 Child-his self FUT whoever love
 'His own child will be loved by anyone'

10. ?? Anaknyasendiri_i akan siapa_i benci?
 Child-his self FUT who hate
 'His own child will be loved by whom?'

11. ? Anaknya sendiri_i siapapun_i akan cintai
 Child-his self whoever FUT love
 'His own child, whoever will love'

12. ? Anaknya sendiri_i siapa_i akan benci?
 child-his self who FUT hate
 'His own child, who will love?'

In the bare passive examples (9) and (10) we observe clear WCO effects, indicating that the DP containing the pronoun *sendiri* occupies an A position to the left of the quantifier. In contrast, the Topicalization examples in (11-12) trigger a weaker, or for some speakers, no WCO effect. The relative absence of a WCO effect suggests that Indonesian Topicalization may be comparable to Japanese Scrambling (Saito and Hoji 1983), in that it can be "undone" at LF. In contrast bare passive in (11-12), as an instance of A-movement, cannot be undone to rescue the WCO violation.

Conclusion: Once we distinguish them on the basis of a clear criterion (placement of the subject vis a vis aspect), bare passivization (Chung's Object Preposing) and Topicalization in Indonesian show the differences expected of A and A' movement respectively.

Selected References: Chung, S. 1976. On the Subject of Two Passives in Indonesian; Arka, W, Manning, C. 1998. Voice and grammatical relations in Indonesian: A new perspective; Saito, M, Hoji, H. 1983. Weak Crossover and Move α in Japanese.

