# Possessive Verbal Predicate Constructions in Indonesian

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This study deals with verbal predicate constructions used to express 'possession' in Indonesian ('formal Indonesian' and 'Colloquial Jakartan Indonesian'). Eight possessive verbal constructions in Indonesian can be classified into three groups based on the form of the main verb (X represents 'possessor', Y represents 'possessee' or 'possessum', and Z represents a complement):

I. Constructions with possessive verbs: (1) *X memiliki Y*, (2) *X mempunyai Y*, (3) *X punya Y*;

II. Constructions with existential verb *ada*: (4) *X ada Y*, (5) *X ada Y=nya*;

III. Constructions with denominal affixes: (6) *X ber-Y*, (7) *X ber-Y-kan Z*, (8) *X Y-an.*

I conclude that the '(in)alienability' notion plays important role in the encoding process.

**Table 1:  The relation between the possessee (Y) and (in)alienability in Indonesian.**

| ALIENABLE | | | INALIENABLE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **X memiliki Y, X mempunyai Y, X punya Y** | | | | | | |
| | | **X ber-Y, X ber-Y-kan Z** | | | | |
| **X ada Y** | | | **X ada Y=nya** | | **X Y-an** | |
| **Event, Temporary property** | **Social relation, Belongings (movables), Nonspecific referents** | **Acquired attribute, Private property (immovables), Kinship roles** | **Body-parts, Part-whole relationship, General nature** | **Substance attached to a narrow area** | **Substance attached to a wide area** | **Clothes etc. worn on the body** |
| acara *event* rapat *meeting* tes *test* demam *fever* | teman *friend* buku *book* anjing *dog* sesuatu *something* | hak *right* ibu *mother* rumah *house* uang *money* | mata *eye* atap *roof* nama *name* khasiat *efficacy* | karat *rust* uban *gray hair* jerawat *pimples* janggut *beard* | | pakaian *clothes* kacamata *glasses* senjata *weapon* selimut *blanket* |

However, the '(in)alienability' notion here is merely useful to explain the difference between *X ada Y* and *X ada Y=nya*. Moreover, there is a disagreement within the '(in)alienability' notion itself syntactically and semantically. For example, 'kinship roles' can be regarded as 'alienable' syntactically as it appears only in *X ada Y*, not in *X ada Y=nya*, but it is difficult to regard it as 'alienable' semantically (e.g. a 'mother' cannot be transferred from one person to another). Instead of '(in)alienability', a new criterion is needed to explain why different constructions choose different possessees.

In June and September 2010, I conducted a research in Tokyo and Malang in order to search a new criterion. The data I got from this research then were analyzed using cluster analysis. The similarity or the 'distance' between each construction and the others was calculated and the constructions were clustered into groups. Two groups can be settled: *X ber-Y-kan Z* and *X Y-an* in one group and the other constructions in the other group. My interpretation is that (1) *X ber-Y-kan Z* and *X Y-an* cannot be regarded as possessives and (2) 'permanence' of possession can be seen as a new criterion.