

Questioning “The Great Indonesian Dictionary” (KBBI)

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Abstract

There are several aspects that should be considered in “the Great Indonesian Dictionary” or “*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*” (KBBI) that is related to the ignorance of potential forms of Indonesian language, which actually have capacity to enrich the KBBI. Although KBBI has undergone several improvements in terms of the number of vocabularies, most of the vocabularies are derived from absorption of local or foreign languages basic vocabularies. The effort in increasing the number of vocabularies based on the existing forms might not be considered as a serious concern, observed from the fact that there are numerous potential forms that do not exist in the KBBI, such as **mengurang* which means to lessen or to reduce, as the opposite of *menambah* which means to add. Therefore, this paper aims to elaborate the weaknesses of KBBI viewed from the absence of the existing potential forms by relying on the generative morphology approach.

Keywords: generative morphology; Indonesian language; KBBI; potential words

1. Introduction

Compared to other Malay languages, Indonesian language has experienced a fairly rapid development, especially the amount of the vocabularies and the refinement of the grammar. However, in the attempt of adding the existing words in KBBI there is one area that has not been deeply explored, which is the existence of potential words or forms that actually can be exploited from existing entries. On the other hand, the vocabularies addition in KBBI is influenced more by the adoption of other languages that derived from the local languages in Indonesia or the foreign languages such as English, Arabic, and Dutch.

This fact has raised several issues related to the neglect of some potential forms that can be used as new vocabularies in Indonesian, yet receive less attention from the authors of KBBI. For example, the form **mengurang* which means to make something decreased as opposed to *menambah* which means to make something increased does not exist in KBBI. In fact, the form has similar part of speech, which can be attached by similar affix. Do Indonesian speakers realize that the existence of certain forms in the Indonesian language can actually encourage the creation of other similar forms considering the same formation principle? Therefore, this article aims to further elaborate the weakness of KBBI in terms of the absence of the potential forms of Indonesian language.

2. Methodology

One branch of linguistics that addresses the word and its formation process is the study of morphology (Ramlan, 1980; Kridalaksana, 1986; Chaer, 2008; Kridalaksana, 2013). Meanwhile, a study of linguistics that specifically examines the presence of potential forms is generative morphological study (Scalise, 1986; Spencer, 1991; Ba'dulu, 2005; Booij, 2012). Generative morphological theory supports that language contains three fundamental principles, namely (1) List of Morphemes (LM), (2) Word Formation Rules (WFR), and (3) Filters (Koster & Riemsdijk, 1986). Based on this view, every language has the potency to create new words productively as long as they do not conflict with the WFR of the language. Furthermore, whether or not the form passes to be new vocabularies is not solely determined by the WFR but also by the Filter that attach some idiosyncrasies, namely the phonological idiosyncrasy, lexical idiosyncrasy, and semantic idiosyncrasy. For example, in the Indonesian language, the word of

berlambat exists while the form **bercepat* and/or **berpelan* do not exist. In fact, in everyday speeches or in KBBI both **bercepat* and **berpelan* forms are not found. This is because Indonesian speakers know that the forms *lambat*, *cepat*, and *pelan* are adjectives that are collocative, albeit the different meanings. The form **bercepat* and **berpelan* sound strange because those forms are almost never used in daily conversation. For that reason, in KBBI those forms have not been considered or have not been included in the list of Indonesian vocabularies. In this article, those forms are called the potential form. In addition, KBBI referred here is the online KBBI.

3. Discussion

3.1 Potential forms derived from affix {*ke-/-an*}

One of the affix {*ke-/-an*} has a function to change the basic form (stem) of word into the noun form, such as [[*indah*] A+ *ke-/-an*]N, [[*adil*] A + *ke-/-an*]N. In addition, affix {*ke-/-an*} can also work to form a verb like [[*setan*] N + *ke-/-an*]V. In the day-to-day speech and in KBBI the form *kesetanan* can be found, whereas the form of **kehantuan*, **keiblisian*, **kejinan*, and **ketuyulan* are not found. In fact, these forms can be raised with the (fairly) similar meaning, as shown below.

(i)	<i>kesetanan</i>	‘possessed or trance’
	<i>*kehantuan</i>	‘possessed or trance’
	<i>*keiblisian</i>	‘possessed or trance’
	<i>*kejinan</i>	‘possessed or trance’
	<i>*kekuntilanakan</i>	‘possessed or trance’

3.2 Potential forms derived from the interconnection between affix {*me-*} and {*pe-*}

In Indonesian language, there is an interconnection between the forms that are attached by affix {*me-*} and the forms that are attached by affix {*pe-*}. For example, the form *memberi* is interconnected to the form *pemberi*; the form of *membeli* is interconnected to the form *pembeli*; the form *membunuh* is interconnected to the form *pembunuh*. However, to some extent, the interconnection becomes unproductive when the affix {*me-*} attached to the basic form of noun. In fact, we recognize that the form *melaut* meaning going to the sea is interconnected to *pelaut* man/women working at the sea, but we do not recognize the form **memasar* as going to market be connected to **pemasar* which means man or woman who work in a market’. In fact, there are several potential forms corresponding to WFR that can be formulated due to the presence of these forms. Consider the following examples.

(ii)	<i>melaut</i>	‘go to the sea’	<i>pelaut</i>	‘those working at the sea’
	<i>*memasar</i>	‘go to the market’	<i>*pemasar</i>	‘those working at the market’
	<i>*mengantor</i>	‘go to the office’	<i>*pekantor</i>	‘those working at the office’
	<i>*menyawah</i>	‘go to the farm area’	<i>pesawah</i>	‘those working at the farm area’
	<i>meladang</i>	‘go to the farm area’	<i>peladang</i>	‘those working at the farm area’
	<i>*mengebun</i>	‘go to the garden’	<i>pekebun</i>	‘those working at the garden’
	<i>*menoko</i>	‘go to the store’	<i>*penoko</i>	‘those working at the office’
	<i>*mengemal</i>	‘go to the mall’	<i>*pengemal</i>	‘those working at the mall’

It is interesting to discuss further about some inconsistencies in the determination of the words list in the KBBI. For example, the form *meladang* in the KBBI is not included in the list of Indonesian vocabularies, yet the form is commonly found in everyday life. At least, the form does not sound strange. Furthermore, we know that the forms *pelaut*, *pesawah*, *peladang*, and *pekebun*, exists in Indonesian language. The existence of the forms cannot be separated from the fact that the jobs related to the forms exist. However, in the KBBI, we can only find the forms *melaut* and *meladang*, while **menyawah* dan **mengebun* cannot be found, even though the forms are parallel each other as the affinity between the affix {*me-*} and {*pe-*}. Then, how about **memasar*, **mengantor*, **menoko*, **menge-mal* as well as their pair **pemasar*, **pekantor*, **penoko*, and **pengemal*, respectively? Perhaps, because those forms are not that familiar to the Indonesian users, thus, they are not yet added in the KBBI. However, they must be recognized as the potential forms that can be employed to enrich the vocabularies of the Indonesian language.

Furthermore, another connection that can be generated from the relationship between {*me-*} and {*pe-*} is the interconnection of the two affixes with the affix {*ber-*}. In this case, we find *berkebun* meaning as gardening or working in the garden, *berladang* means working in the farm area, and *bersawah* that is meant as working in the farm area as forms that exist in the daily conversation of Indonesian as well as in KBBI. However, **berlaut* that means working in the sea is not found, even though **berlaut* is a potential form of Indonesian vocabulary. For the same reason, other forms as in the examples below can be formulated as potential forms.

- (iii) **berlaut* 'work at the sea'
- *berpasar* 'work at the market'
- *berkantor* 'work at the office'
- bersawah* 'work at the farm area'
- meladang* 'work at the farm area'
- berkebun* 'work at the garden'
- *bertoko* 'work at the store'
- *ber-mall* 'work at the mall'

4. Conclusion

The Indonesia language has so far continued to do improvement, at least in terms of the number of vocabularies, by adopting the abroad languages (such as English) or adopting the domestic or local languages (such as Javanese language). KBBI that was first published in 1988 by *Balai Pustaka* only contained 62.100 entries, but the last edition published in 2016, the entries has increased to 127.036 (Wikipedia, 2018). Apart from that, there are still a lot of works that need to be considered by the editors of KBBI. One of them is to consider some potential forms to be listed as Indonesian vocabularies instead of just adopting words from foreign languages. If it is really done, then the number of Indonesian vocabularies that can be registered in KBBI will increase dramatically and the Indonesian language will be enriched.

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