

# The Type of Indonesian Language Phoneme in “Minimal Pair”

Ary Setyadi

[\[mr.arysetyadi@gmail.com\]](mailto:mr.arysetyadi@gmail.com)

Department of Library Science, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University  
Jl. Prof. Soedarto, S.H. Undip Tembalang, Semarang, Central Java - Indonesia, 50275

**Abstract.** The existence of 'minimal pairs' is functional, which is a method of proofing a phoneme to be categorized as an individual and phonemic phoneme, so the function of 'minimal pairs' can be used according to the accurate number of Indonesian phonemes. There are 33 phonemes existed: seven vowel phonemes, three diphthong phonemes, and 23 consonant phonemes. The theory applied in this research is the linguistic theory of the phonological branch of the phonemic subfield. The method of providing data starts from the application of the referral / listening method with the recording technique on the data card. The data analysis method is based on the internal structure of words with substitution techniques. The final results can be proven that the 33 phonemes are truly individual and phonemic phonemes. In order to examine the actual words' meaning paired in 'minimal pairs', the existence of the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* is crucial.

**Keywords:** *Phoneme; Type of Phoneme; 'Minimal Pair'*

## 1. Introduction

The problem of contrasting the meaning of words due to pairs of two or more words, for most Bahasa Indonesia speaker is always associated with antonym / antonym events, because what is called an antonym is, "Lexeme which is paired antonymy," and what is called antonymy is, "Opposition meaning in lexical pairs that can be stretched, for example in height: low 'not high' does not mean 'low'." The notion of the problem of pairing two or more words which results in the contrast of the meaning of words is not only found in antonym / antonymy events, because apparently the problem of contrasting the meaning of words can occur also due to the phoneme change in the word of 'minimum pair'. For example: Based on the presentation of the example above, it is clear that the contrast of the meaning of the word in the word pair does not always only apply to antonym / antonymy events; but it can also be due to the change (one) of the phonemes in the word pair (which is paired). The case of the contrast of the meaning of the word for the pair of words due to the substitution (one) of the phonemes in the word internal can be stated to have never been studied by an expert or observer or of Indonesian language enthusiast before. Starting from the fact that the problem of contrasting the meaning of words due to substitution (one of the phonemes in the internal word) has never been studied (by anyone), then finally it can be said that studies that focus on phonemes as the cause/contrast of word meanings can be said to be interesting and necessary. The basic reason for the study effort relates to the question, "Is it true that the notion of phonemes as the smallest unit in the language as a sign of meaning does apply?"

the Evidence that the existence of phonemes as the cause of the contrast of the meaning of the word in 'minimal pairs' has never been reviewed by anyone, so the literature review below can be said as a basis for proof.

It should be noted here, that the object of the study in this article is part of the results of the study entitled "Functional Properties and Benefits of 'minimal pairs' Phonemes in Indonesian Language Phonology Learning" [2].

Based on the results of these studies, convincingly that the existence of phonemes in Indonesian is 33; seven vocal phonemes, three diphthong phonemes, and 23 consonant phonemes, are indeed phonemic; so that the results of the study can be presented with efforts to prove Indonesian and Javanese Language "[3], the problem of phoneme types has been mentioned, namely there are three: 1. vowel phonemes, 2. diphthong phonemes, and 3. consonant phonemes.

The results of the study turned out to be limited to these problems; phoneme types, phoneme abilities in forming clusters and sequences, and only at a glance questioned the existence of phonemes as the smallest units in the meaning-differentiating marker language in 'minimal pairs'. The existence of these three types of phonemes has not been explicitly said to be phonemic phonemes in 'minimal pairs', so there are no discussion and examples of evidence related to the existence of the three types of phonemes in 'minimal pairs'

The other reading sources that discuss phonemes in 'minimal pairs' can be found in a book entitled Introduction to Linguistics [4]. In the book, the phoneme problem and 'minimal partner' have not received deep attention. The discussion subject is only limited to examples of phoneme abilities in 'minimal pairs', and given an example: forget and form. The existence of phoneme replacement / l / with phoneme / r / is functional, because it results in different meanings (he said).

Kentjono in a book entitled *Dasar-dasar Linguistik Umum* [5] in one section of the chapter has alluded to the existence of phonemes. It's just that the functional nature problem in the 'minimal partner' has not yet received deep attention. Only given an example: *bila* dengan *bela* without further explanation.

The book entitled *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia* [6], the existence of phonemes in 'minimal pairs' has indeed been alluded to. The discussion is only limited to the example: *tari x dari, pantai x pandai, cari x dari, acar x ajar, kalah x galah, akar x agar*.

Based on a book entitled *Fonetik and Fonemik* [7], the discussion on "minimal pairs" is only briefly mentioned. In the book, 'minimal pairs' is called the minimum set term. The discussion was only on the example: *paku x saku, kaku x laku, baku x daku, batik x batak, batuk x batok*.

Cahyono in his book entitled Indonesian Language [8] the existence of phonemes in 'minimal pairs' is only alluded to as an example of proof: as a result of the change of phonemes in the internal words can change the meaning of the word paired. For example: *pola x pula, barang x parang*.

Based on the article "Indonesian Language Phonology" [9], which basically refers to Verhaar's opinion, the discussion is only limited to the example: *lupa x rupa, putra x putri*; and it has been explained that what is meant by 'minimal pair', 'A set of words that are the same, except in one sound'. The term "minimal pair" is termed "contrasting word".

Kridalaksana in the Linguistic Dictionary [1] the problem of 'minimal pairs' is given a definition, "Two syllables in which one element is different, two elements are the same except for one sound; eg. forget and look".

Reading resources from (Scientific) Journal Languages entitled "Realization and Phonetic Variants" [10], the existence of phonemes and "minimal pairs" are only given examples: *kapan x kafan, kita x gita*. The definition of 'minimal partner' is explained, "The pairs of the smallest and meaningful forms in a single language or word that is ideally the same, except for one distinct sound".

Starting from a number of reading sources above, it is clear that the phoneme study in 'minimal pairs' has not received deep attention and specifically studied.

## 2. Method

The theory used regarding the study of phoneme types in 'minimal pairs' is the linguistic theory of the phonological field of the phonemic subfield. Because the focus of the study departs from the phoneme as the smallest unit of the meaning-differentiating marker, which is simultaneously related to the proofing device that the result of phoneme substitution in 'minimal pairs' is capable of changing the meaning of the word. The method applied concerning the study of the object in question starts at three strategic stages as applied by linguistic research in general [11].

The first stage is presenting the data. At this stage a written data source is needed, resulting in secondary data. Thus the data is obtained from several reading sources that discuss phonology based on Indonesian because the sources of oral data that produce primary data are relatively difficult to find. The method used in connection with the data presenting is the listening/listening method, which is balanced with the application of the recorded technique to the data card. Recording data on the data card is important, because of the ease of classification of data found.

As a result of the provision of data starting from the written data source - which produces secondary data - the problem of checking the truth of contrasting word meanings in 'minimal pairs', the existence of a Large Indonesian Dictionary [12] plays a role. Thus the existence of the dictionary in question serves as a check for the correctness of the meaning of words that are lexical in nature.

The second stage relates to data classification and data analysis. At this stage, the effort to classify the data rests on the fact that the ability to install two or more words in 'minimal pairs' is based on the principle: the result of phoneme replacements in the internal words (must) can change the meaning of the paired word. The data analysis departs from the application of the phonological theory of the phonemic subfield, that what is called a phoneme is, "The smallest sound unit capable of showing contrast of meaning; ...; / b / and / p / are two different phonemes because father and father are different in meaning. ... [1]. The method used in connection with data analysis is to depart from the internal structure of the paired word, based on the application of replacement (phoneme) techniques.

The third stage is the preparation / writing of the report. At this stage it is the final stage, because it has led to the preparation / writing, so that at the last stage this is related to efforts to express the results of the study of data analysis.

## 3. Results and Discussion

There are three kinds of phonemes in Indonesian which have been mentioned before: 1. three vowel phonemes: / a, i, ê, é, è, u, o /; 2. three diphthong phonemes: / ai / ay, aw, oi / oy /; and 3. 13 Consonant phonemes: / b, p, t, d, k, g, q; c, j; m, n, ŋ, ŋ; f, s, z, ʃ, x, h; l, r; w, y /. The number of all phonemes in Indonesian is 33 (phonemes).

Based on the research sources mentioned above, it turns out that the 33 phonemes can be proven in 'minimal pairs' so that they are truly phonemic. As a result of the 33 phonemes that are a separate phoneme, then finally the existence of each type of phoneme that exists can be

made 'minimal pairs', which in turn due to efforts to pair two/more words in 'minimal pairs' affect the existence of different meanings paired word.

The basis of conceptual proof of each type of phoneme that really exists as the smallest unit of meaning-distinguishing markers are: (a) phonemic if a 'minimum pair' can be made which has the effect of having different meanings; (b) the issue of proof in the 'minimum pair' of each type of phoneme is only one pair because the most important thing is that the two words paired with phoneme substitution refer to different meanings; and (c) attempts to pair two words in 'minimum pairs' must be in one language material, namely Indonesian. The truth is a kind of reinforced effort to check in the dictionary.

#### A. Vowel Phoneme

Evidence that the seven vowel phonemes, namely: / a, i, ê, é, è /, are truly phonemic can be seen in the following 'minimum pair' presentation. Example:

*Dari* x *duri*

*ikal* x *akal*

*pêrang* x *pirang*

(1) *kakak* x *kakèk*

*dada* x *dadu*

*kota* x *kata*

*keré* x *kerai*

It should be noted here, that the 'minimum pair' data which has a relatively limited number of vowel phonemes applies to vowel phonemes / è /.

#### B. Diphthong Phoneme

The presentation below proves that the three diphthongs: / ai / ay, au, oi / oy / phonemic in 'minimum pairs' as in the following example.

*pantai* x *panti*

(2) *pulau* x *pula*

*asoï* x *asa*

It should be noted here, that the 'minimum pair' data with diphthong phoneme elements which are relatively limited in number apply to the diphthong / oi / oy / phoneme.

#### C. Consonant Phoneme

The proof that all the thirteen consonant phonemes are truly phonemic can be seen in the 'minimal pair' presentation below.

*kabur* x *kapur*

*dadah* x *tadah*

*panah* x *panas*

*kado* x *gado*

*khafan* x *kapan*

(3) *jarang* x *carang*

*manah* x *nanah*

*ngeri* x *nyeri*

*quran* x *kuran*

*syarik* x *farik*

*ruas* x *luas*

*raya* x *rawa*

*azal* x *asal*

It should be noted here, that the data associated with the offerings minimal pair is minimal phoneme / q, j / the number is relatively limited.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the presentation explained above, it can finally be concluded that 33 phonemes in Indonesian are truly separate phonemes because they are phonemic. Such statements are supported by the data in 'minimal pairs'.

The problem of the certainty of a separate phoneme and phonemic must be able to make a 'minimum pair' because the existence of 'minimal pairs' is a proof of phoneme said to be phonemic.

Language dictionary, *Kamus Besar bahasa Indonesia*, for the actual different meaning of two words paired purpose is absolutely needed.

#### References

- [1] Kridalaksana, Harimurti. *Kamus Linguistik*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia. (2001).
- [2] Setyadi, Ary dan Djoko Wasisto. 2018. "Sifat Fungsional dan Manfaat 'Pasangan Minimal' Fonem dalam Pembelajaran Fonologi Bahasa Indonesia". Laporan Penelitian Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Undip, Semarang. (2018).
- [3] Soedjarwo, S., *et.al.* "Perbandingan Tata Bunyi Bahasa Indonesia dan Bahasa Jawa". Laporan Penelitian Dep. Pendidikan dan kebudayaan, Semarang. (1985/1986).
- [4] Verhaar, W. J. *Pengantar Linguistik*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press. (1977).
- [5] Kentjono, Djoko (Ed.). *Dasar-dasar Linguistik Umum*. Jakarta: Fak. Sastra UI. (1982).
- [6] Moeliono, Anton M. *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka. (1988).
- [7] Yusuf, Suhendra. *Fonetik dan Fonologi*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama. (1988).
- [8] Cahyono, Widi Eko. *Bahasa Indonesiaku*. Bandung: Pelita. (2013).
- [9] Sulastris, Isna. *Fonologi Bahasa Indonesia*. Bandung: Bass. (2011).
- [10] Mustolih. "Realisasi dan Variasi Fonem". Dalam Jurnal (Ilmiah) Bahasa. (2011).
- [11] Sudaryanto. *Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa: Pengantar Penelitian Wahana Kebudayaan secara Linguistik*. Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana University Press. (1981).
- [12] *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka. (2001).