

1.

David Gil - *Department of Linguistics, Max Planck Institute
for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig*

Riau Indonesian:

A VO Language with Internally-Headed Relative Clauses

Downing (1978:399) and Cole (1987) have proposed that internally-headed relative clauses occur only in languages in which the basic word order is OV, or in which the other relative clauses are right-headed. This paper provides a counterexample to this claim, from the Riau dialect of Indonesian, a colloquial variety of Indonesian spoken in East Central Sumatra, described in Gil (1994, 1999, to appear b,c).

In Riau Indonesian, word order is quite free, but in general, VO order occurs with greater frequency than OV. Moreover, adpositions invariably occur before their NPs, further supporting the characterization of the language as basically VO. Relative clauses in Riau Indonesian may be left headed (the most common option), right headed, or internally headed, as illustrated in examples (1) - (5) below.

- (1) **Saya beli ikan tadi?**
1:sg buy fish pst:prox
[Interlocutor says he ate all the fish; speaker asks which fish; interlocutor says the red and white ones; speaker, verifying reference, asks]
"The fish I bought before?"
- (2) **Kemarin ada kawan sini mana?**
previous.day exist friend here where
[Hotel receptionist, at hotel, where, last time, I had come with friend]
"Where's your friend who you were with last time?"
- (3) **Damsir beli celana sama si Man**
Damsir buy trousers accompany pers:non.voc
Man sudah bulu-bulu
fam-Mansudir pfct distr-feather
[About a pair of trousers]
"The trousers that Damsir bought with Mansudir are already frayed"
- (4) **Saya ada beli kaca mata dulu, mana dia?**
1:sg exist buy glass eye pst:dist where 3
[Looking for glasses]
"The eye-glasses I bought before, where are they?"
-

- (5) **Ada** perempuan **tadi**, ininya nampak
 exist woman pst:prox dem:prox-assoc ag-see
 [Commenting on a women with a low front to her blouse, speaker
 points to his own chest and says]
 "The woman before, her [this] was showing"

(The above examples are all taken from a naturalistic corpus of spontaneous speech specimens; the context in which each example was uttered is indicated in square brackets.) In the above examples, the entire internally-headed relative-clause construction is indicated in bold-face, and the head of the construction is underlined. In each of the above examples, the head of the relative clause occurs internally to the construction, flanked by the attributive material. There is no relative pronoun or any other kind of relative marking.

Thus, the above examples provide a counterexample to the claim that internally-headed relative clauses occur only in languages with OV basic word order, or otherwise right-headed relative clauses. Similar constructions are attested in other colloquial varieties of Malay and Indonesian, including Kuala Lumpur Malay, Jakarta Indonesian and Ternate Malay, though not in Standard Malay and Indonesian. In addition, internally-headed relative clauses occur in another geographically proximate language variety with VO word order and left-headed relative clauses, namely, Colloquial Singapore English, also known as Singlish — see Gil (to appear a) for examples and discussion.

References

- Cole, P. (1987) "The Structure of Internally Headed Relative Clauses", *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 5:277-302.
- Downing, B.T. (1978) "Some Universals of Relative Clause Structure", in J.H. Greenberg ed., *Universals of Human Language, Vol. 4, Syntax*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 375-418.
- Gil, D. (1994) "The Structure of Riau Indonesian", *Nordic Journal of Linguistics* 17:179-200.
- Gil, D. (1999) "Riau Indonesian as a Pivotless Language", in E.V. Raxilina and Y.G. Testelec eds., *Tipologija i Teorija Jazyka, Ot Opisanija k Objasneniju, K 60-Letiju Aleksandra Evgen'evicha Kibrika (Typology and Linguistic Theory, From Description to Explanation, For the 60th Birthday of Aleksandr E. Kibrik)*, Jazyki Russkoj Kul'tury, Moscow, 187-211.
- Gil, D. (to appear a) "English Goes Asian; Number and (In)definiteness in the Singlish Noun-Phrase", in F. Plank ed., *Noun-Phrases in European Languages*, Empirical Approaches to Language Typology, Mouton, Berlin and New York.
- Gil, D. (to appear b) "Reflexive Anaphor or Conjunctive Operator? Riau Indonesian *sendiri*", in P. Cole, G. Hermon and J. Huang eds., *Long Distance Reflexives, Syntax and Semantics*, Academic Press, New York.
- Gil, D. (to appear c) "The Prefixes *di-* and *N-* in Malay / Indonesian Dialects", in F. Wouk and M. Ross eds., *Papers From the 8-ICAL Workshop on Focus*, Pacific Linguistics, Canberra.