



Syntactic Structures of Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) in Song Lyrics

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Abstract*

This study aims to describe and compare the syntactic structures of Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) in song interpretation. A descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design was employed. The data consist of clauses or sentences from Indonesian song lyrics and their representations in Bisindo gloss, obtained from a video interpretation of the song “Selalu Ada di Nadimu” on TikTok. The data were analyzed using intralingual and extralingual matching methods based on Indonesian syntactic theory, focusing on constituent order, negation system, and the realization of grammatical elements. The results show that Indonesian tends to use a linear structure with relatively fixed order and explicitly realized grammatical elements. In contrast, Bisindo demonstrates flexibility in structuring elements, with a tendency to place the main information at the beginning. Negation in Indonesian appears before the negated element, whereas in Bisindo it tends to occur at the end as emphasis. Some grammatical elements in Indonesian are not realized in Bisindo, yet meaning remains comprehensible. Validation results indicate that the glosses align with natural Bisindo usage. Overall, structural differences do not hinder meaning transmission but reflect different ways of organizing information across modalities.

1. Introduction

Indonesian, as a spoken language, constructs and conveys meaning through sound as well as through the linear arrangement of words. In linguistic studies, meaning is structured through grammatical relationships between words that follow certain patterns, allowing it to be systematically understood by speakers. Such patterns are not only found in everyday communication but also in aesthetic texts such as song lyrics. Although song lyrics contain musical

and poetic elements, they still represent grammatical structures and can be analyzed as linguistic texts that organize meaning in a structured way (Halliday, 1994).

With the growing emphasis on inclusivity and accessibility, the presentation of songs is no longer limited to auditory modalities but also appears in visual forms. One such form is the interpretation of song lyrics using sign language. This practice brings together two language systems with different modalities, namely spoken-auditory language and visual-gestural language. From a linguistic perspective, this intersection does not only involve changes in form but also implies differences in structure and meaning construction.

Linguistic studies have shown that sign languages possess complete phonological, morphological, and syntactic systems and are not merely visual representations of spoken languages (Klima & Bellugi, 1979; Sandler & Lillo-Martin, 2006). In terms of syntax, sign languages do not always follow linear patterns like Indonesian but instead demonstrate flexibility in structuring elements, with a tendency to foreground the most salient information.

In Indonesia, there are two sign language systems: Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) and the Signed Indonesian System (SIBI). Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), as a natural language, is used in daily communication by the Deaf community and exhibits regional variations, whereas SIBI is a constructed system based on Indonesian grammatical structure and is primarily used in formal educational contexts (Pusbisindo, 2025). This distinction indicates that Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) does not always align with Indonesian structure, particularly in terms of element arrangement and meaning construction.

These structural differences can be observed in the practice of song interpretation into Bisindo, which has increasingly developed in public spaces and digital media. A report by Antara News (2022) shows that the interpretation of the song “Ojo Dibandingke” does not follow the literal word order of Indonesian but is instead structured based on meaning and emphasis. In the lyric “*Wong kok ngene ojo dibanding-bandingke*,” the Indonesian structure “Orang seperti ini jangan dibanding-bandingkan” is represented in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) with a different order, namely “Orang seperti ini dibanding-bandingkan, jangan.” This phenomenon reflects a syntactic restructuring adapted to the visual-spatial characteristics of Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo). Moreover, on platforms such as TikTok, song interpretation in Bisindo has become a productive practice that gains broad public attention. This indicates that such interpretations function not only as a form of accessibility but also as a linguistic practice that reflects the grammatical system of sign language.

Several studies in Indonesia have examined sign language from sociolinguistic, educational, and language policy perspectives. However, studies that specifically investigate syntactic comparisons between Indonesian and its representation in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), particularly in the context of song lyrics, remain limited. This study offers a cross-modal perspective by comparing spoken language and sign language within the context of song lyrics, which has not been widely explored in previous research.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the syntactic structures of Indonesian song lyrics and their representations in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo). The analysis focuses on three aspects: constituent order, negation system, and the realization of grammatical elements. The data are drawn from the song “Selalu Ada di Nadimu,” which has a popular Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) interpretation on TikTok.

2. Research Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at describing and comparing the syntactic structures of Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) in song lyric interpretation. A qualitative approach is used because the research focuses on an in-depth

understanding of linguistic phenomena, particularly in the context of cross-modal comparison between spoken-auditory language and visual-gestural language. A case study design is applied as the analysis is centered on a specific case, namely the interpretation of the song “Selalu Ada di Nadimu” into Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), which circulates on the TikTok platform.

The data source in this study is a video of the interpretation of the song “Selalu Ada di Nadimu” into Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), uploaded by the TikTok account @ibnmzk. The data were selected based on the consideration that the content creator is a Deaf individual and a native user of Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo). This is important because Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), as a natural sign language, possesses a grammatical system that does not always align with the structure of Indonesian. Therefore, the data are considered more representative of natural Bisindo usage compared to interpretations produced by non-native users.

This study is also supported by data obtained from a questionnaire distributed openly through TikTok. From this distribution, one respondent met the criteria as a Bisindo user and agreed to participate as an informant. The informant is an active Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) user with more than ten years of experience and is from Denpasar, Bali. Although the number of informants is not ideal from a methodological perspective, the informant is not positioned as the primary data source but as a linguistic validator (expert judgment). Therefore, the quality and competence of the informant are prioritized over quantity. The informant is used to verify the appropriateness of glosses and meaning interpretation in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), ensuring that the analysis remains within the scope of natural language use. The questionnaire consists of both closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions are used to obtain direct judgments on the appropriateness of sign structures, while open-ended questions are used to gather alternative sign forms and explanations (see Appendix 1).

In the analysis process, the ELAN (EUDICO Linguistic Annotator) software is used to segment the data, construct Bisindo glosses, and manage annotations systematically across several tiers, namely Gloss_Manual, Lirik_BI, and Struktur_ Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo). Data collection is carried out using the observation method, followed by transcription and annotation techniques. The observation method involves carefully observing the Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) interpretation video, while transcription and annotation involve transcribing Indonesian lyrics and constructing Bisindo glosses using ELAN.

The data in this study consist of clauses or sentences from Indonesian song lyrics and their representations in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) gloss. The data are analyzed using intralingual and extralingual matching methods based on Indonesian syntactic theory. The intralingual method is used to compare syntactic structures between Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), while the extralingual method is used to examine the equivalence of meaning between the two forms of language. The analysis focuses on three main aspects: constituent order, negation system, and the realization of grammatical elements. These aspects are used to identify differences in how Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) organize and convey meaning. The results of the analysis are presented both informally in descriptive form and formally in comparison tables between Indonesian lyrics, Bisindo gloss, and syntactic structure analysis.

3. Discussions

The analysis in this study is based on the concept of Indonesian syntax, which includes constituent order in sentences, the negation system, and the realization of grammatical elements (Alwi et al., 2014; Chaer, 2012). In this study, constituent order is understood as the sequence of elements in a sentence, the negation system as the means of expressing negative meaning, and the

realization of elements as the presence or absence of grammatical elements within sentence structures.

The discussion is conducted in stages, beginning with the analysis of Indonesian syntactic structures, followed by Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), and ending with a comparison between the two languages.

**Table 1. Song Lyrics Data and
Their Representation in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo)**

Number	Indonesian	Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) Gloss
1	Nyanyian ini bukan sekadar nada	NYANYIAN INI NADA BUKAN
2	Aku ingin kaumendengarnya	AKU INGIN KAMU DENGAR
3	Dengan hatimu bukan telinga	HATI KAMU TELINGA BUKAN
4	Ingatlah, ini bukan sekadar kata	INGAT INI KATA BUKAN
5	Maksudnya, kelak akan menjadi makna	MAKSUD NANTI JADI MAKNA
6	Ungkapan cintaku dari hati	CINTA AKU HATI

3.1 Syntactic Structure of Indonesian

3.1.1 Constituent Order

Based on data (1) to (6), Indonesian shows a tendency toward a linear constituent order. In data (1), “Nyanyian ini bukan sekadar nada” follows a subject-predicate-complement pattern, while data (2), “Aku ingin kaumendengarnya,” reflects a subject-predicate-object pattern. Structural variations appear in data (3), “Dengan hatimu bukan telinga,” which begins with an adverbial phrase; data (4), “Ingatlah, ini bukan sekadar kata,” which contains an imperative form; data (5), “Maksudnya kelak akan menjadi makna,” which includes a temporal element; and data (6), “Ungkapan cintaku dari hati,” which reflects a subject-complement-adverbial pattern. Despite these variations, all data demonstrate consistency in the arrangement of elements. This indicates that Indonesian relies on a linear structure in organizing information.

3.1.2 Negation System

The negation system in Indonesian is explicitly realized through the placement of negation before the element being negated. This can be observed in data (1), (3), and (4), where the negation marker “bukan” appears before the negated elements, such as in “bukan sekadar nada.” Meanwhile, data (2), (5), and (6) do not contain negation elements. This shows that the negation system in Indonesian is explicit and consistent in its placement.

3.1.3 Realization of Grammatical Elements

Indonesian tends to explicitly realize grammatical elements within sentence structures. This can be seen in data (3), “Dengan hatimu bukan telinga,” which uses the preposition “dengan”; data (6), “Ungkapan cintaku dari hati,” which uses the preposition “dari”; and data (5), “Maksudnya kelak akan menjadi makna,” which includes the aspect marker “akan.”

In addition, data (2), “Aku ingin kaumendengarnya,” clearly realizes the object within the structure. All data (1) to (6) show that grammatical elements are explicitly expressed without omission.

3.2 Syntactic Structure of Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo)

In general, sign languages tend to foreground the most relevant or focal information before other elements. This pattern can be understood as a topic-comment structure, in which the topic is presented first, followed by the explanation (Sandler & Lillo-Martin, 2006).

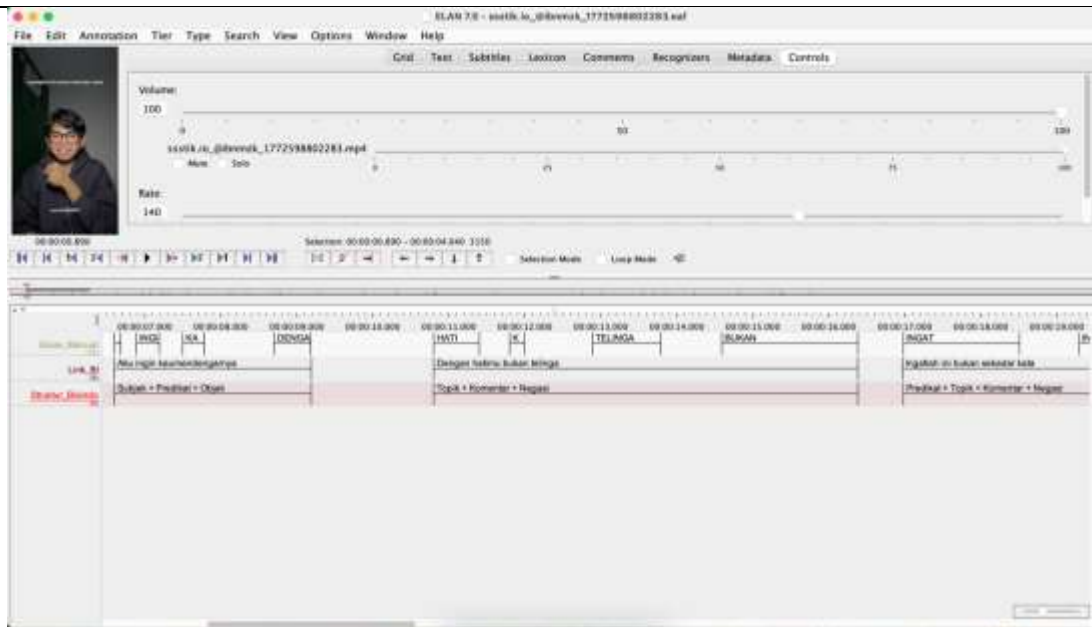
In this study, the structure is still analyzed using syntactic functional categories such as subject, predicate, and object, as an analytical tool to facilitate comparison with Indonesian.

3.2.1 Constituent Order

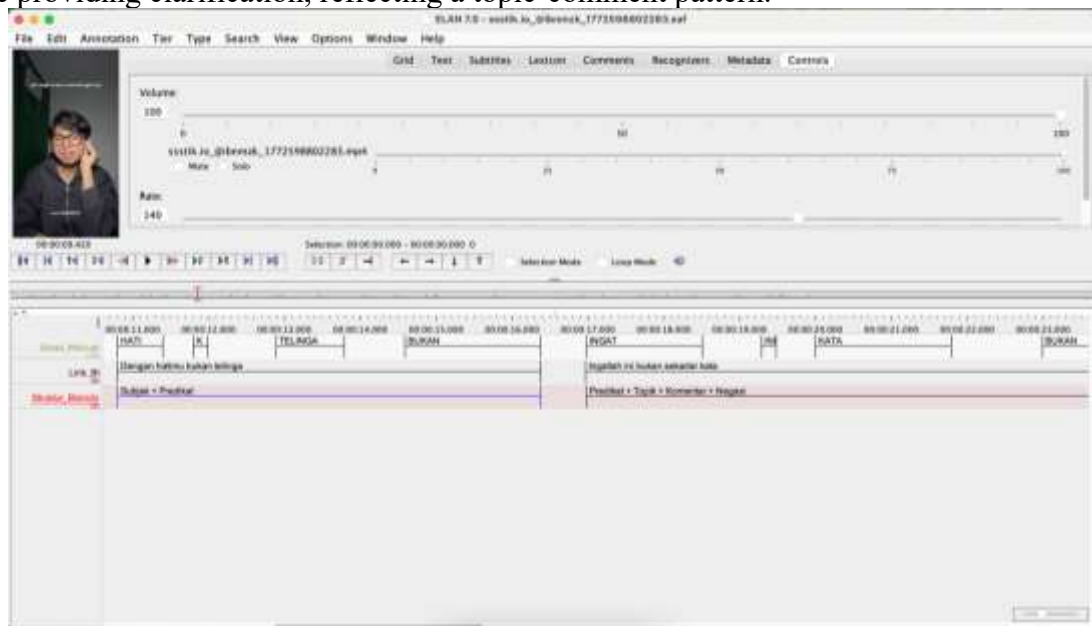
In data (1), “*NYANYIAN INI NADA BUKAN*,” the element “*NYANYIAN INI*” can be interpreted as the subject, while “*NADA BUKAN*” functions as the predicate containing negation. Syntactically, this structure shows a subject-predicate relationship. However, in terms of information structure, “*NYANYIAN INI*” is placed at the beginning as the main focus, followed by “*NADA BUKAN*” as an explanatory element that negates the meaning. This reflects a topic-comment pattern, where “*NYANYIAN INI*” serves as the topic and “*NADA BUKAN*” as the comment.



In data (2), “*AKU INGIN KAMU DENGAR*,” “*AKU*” functions as the subject, “*INGIN*” as the predicate, and “*KAMU DENGAR*” as the object. Although the structure follows a subject-predicate-object pattern, verbs are not morphologically realized as in Indonesian, resulting in a simpler structure. Nevertheless, the relationships between elements remain clear. In this case, “*AKU*” serves as the topic, while “*INGIN KAMU DENGAR*” functions as the comment.



In data (3), “*HATI KAMU TELINGA BUKAN,*” “*HATI KAMU*” can be interpreted as the subject and “*TELINGA BUKAN*” as the predicate. The structure foregrounds the main information before providing clarification, reflecting a topic-comment pattern.



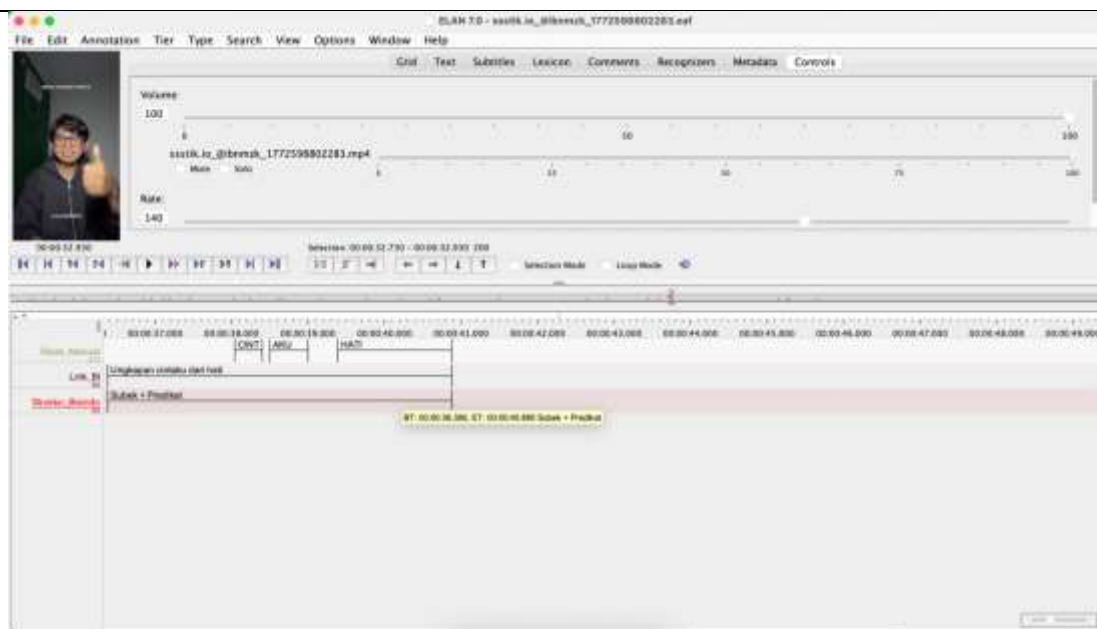
In data (4), “*INGAT INI KATA BUKAN,*” “*INGAT*” functions as an imperative predicate, followed by “*INI KATA BUKAN,*” which contains a subject-predicate structure. The information is organized by presenting the action first, followed by the explanation.



In data (5), “*MAKSUD NANTI JADI MAKNA*,” “*MAKSUD*” functions as the subject, “*NANTI*” as a temporal marker, and “*JADI MAKNA*” as the predicate and complement. The structure foregrounds the main idea before explaining its outcome.



In data (6), “*CINTA AKU HATI*,” “*CINTA*” functions as the subject, while “*AKU HATI*” serves as the predicate or complement. The structure places the main information first, followed by additional explanation, reflecting a topic-comment pattern.



3.2.2 Negation System

In data (1), “NYANYIAN INI NADA BUKAN,” data (3), “HATI KAMU TELINGA BUKAN,” and data (4), “INGAT INI KATA BUKAN,” the negation marker “BUKAN” appears after the element being negated, as seen in “NADA BUKAN” and “TELINGA BUKAN.”

Syntactically, negation remains part of the predicate; however, its position occurs at the end of the structure. This indicates that negation functions as an emphatic element conveyed after the main information.

3.2.3 Realization of Grammatical Elements

In Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), not all grammatical elements are explicitly realized. In data (3), “HATI KAMU TELINGA BUKAN,” the preposition “dengan” is not realized in the structure. In data (6), “CINTA AKU HATI,” the preposition “dari” and the element “UNGKAPAN” present in Indonesian are also not realized. Meanwhile, in data (5), “MAKSUD NANTI JADI MAKNA,” the aspect marker “akan” is not realized.

Despite the absence of these elements, the meaning remains comprehensible through the relationships between elements. This indicates that Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) prioritizes efficiency in conveying meaning.

3.3 Comparison of Syntactic Structures between Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo)

Based on the analysis of data (1) to (6), the comparison between Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) reveals consistent differences across three main aspects: constituent order, negation system, and the realization of grammatical elements within sentence structure.

3.3.1 Comparison of Constituent Order

Indonesian demonstrates a predominantly linear constituent order, where meaning is largely determined by the position of elements within a sentence. This is evident in structures such as subject-predicate-object, subject-predicate-complement, and their variations. In contrast, Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) shows a more flexible constituent order. Although it can still

be analyzed using syntactic functions such as subject and predicate, the arrangement of elements does not always follow a linear pattern.

The data indicate a tendency for the most salient information to be placed at the beginning, followed by further explanation. For example, in data (1), “Nyanyian ini bukan sekadar nada” is represented as “NYANYIAN INI NADA BUKAN,” where the focal element “NYANYIAN INI” is presented first. A similar pattern is observed in data (3) and (5), where the core element appears at the beginning of the structure. Thus, the main difference lies in the strategy of information organization. Indonesian relies on linear ordering, whereas Bisindo prioritizes the presentation of main information. This pattern aligns with the topic-comment tendency in sign languages, where the focus is presented first, followed by explanation.

2. Comparison of Negation System

Differences are also evident in the negation system. In Indonesian, negation is explicitly realized and placed before the element being negated, as seen in data (1), (3), and (4) through the use of “bukan.” In contrast, in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), negation remains part of the predicate but tends to appear at the end of the structure, as in “NADA BUKAN,” “TELINGA BUKAN,” and “KATA BUKAN.”

This difference indicates that in Indonesian, negation is attached to the negated element within a linear structure, whereas in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), negation functions as an emphatic marker that follows the main information. Therefore, the difference in negation systems lies not only in position but also in how meaning is conveyed.

3. Comparison of the Realization of Grammatical Elements

In terms of the realization of elements, Indonesian tends to explicitly express grammatical elements such as prepositions (dengan, dari) and aspect markers (akan). In contrast, in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), these elements are not always realized. This can be observed in data (3), where “dengan” is not realized; data (6), where “dari” and “ungkapan” are not realized; and data (5), where “akan” is not realized. Despite the absence of these elements, meaning remains comprehensible through the relationships between elements within the structure. This indicates that Indonesian relies more on formal markers, whereas Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) relies more on context and direct relationships between elements.

In this study, the comparison across these three aspects is summarized in the following table.

Table 2. Comparison of Syntactic Structures between Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo)

Number	Aspect	Indonesian	Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo)
1	Constituent Order	Tends to be linear (S-P-O)	More flexible, with focus placed at the beginning
2	Negation System	Negation appears before the constituent (bukan)	Negation appears at the end (BUKAN)
3	Element Realization	Grammatical elements are fully realized	Some elements may be omitted

The table shows that Indonesian tends to use a more complete and linear structure, whereas Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) demonstrates flexibility in structuring elements and does not always explicitly realize grammatical elements.

The results of the analysis were further validated through a questionnaire distributed to Bisindo users to ensure that the findings align with natural Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) usage.

Table 3. Questionnaire Validation Results

Data	Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) Gloss	Evaluation
(1)	NYANYIAN INI NADA BUKAN	Appropriate
(2)	AKU INGIN KAMU DENGAR	Appropriate
(3)	HATI KAMU TELINGA BUKAN	Appropriate
(4)	INGAT INI KATA BUKAN	Appropriate
(5)	MAKSUD NANTI JADI MAKNA	Appropriate
(6)	CINTA AKU HATI	Appropriate

Based on the questionnaire results, all data were considered appropriate by the informant. This indicates that the gloss forms used in this study are understandable and align with natural Bisindo usage. Thus, the questionnaire findings reinforce the conclusion that structural differences between Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) do not hinder meaning transmission.

4. Novelties

This study offers a cross-modal syntactic comparison between spoken Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) in the context of song lyrics. While previous studies have discussed sign language from sociolinguistic and educational perspectives, studies focusing on syntactic structures in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), particularly in song interpretation, remain limited.

The novelty of this study lies in the integration of syntactic analysis with multimodal linguistic data derived from natural Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) usage in digital media. This research provides a deeper understanding of how meaning is structured differently across spoken and sign language modalities.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis, consistent differences were identified between Indonesian and Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) in syntactic structure, particularly in terms of constituent order, negation system, and the realization of grammatical elements. Indonesian tends to use a linear structure with relatively fixed constituent order and explicitly realized grammatical elements. In contrast, Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) demonstrates flexibility in structuring elements, with a tendency to place the main information at the beginning of the structure.

In terms of negation, Indonesian places negation before the element being negated, whereas in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo), negation tends to appear at the end as a form of emphasis. Regarding the realization of grammatical elements, Indonesian tends to retain full grammatical marking, while in Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) some elements are not explicitly realized, yet meaning remains comprehensible through the relationships between elements within the structure.

Validation results obtained through a questionnaire indicate that all data were considered appropriate by the informant, suggesting that the analysis aligns with natural Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo) usage. Therefore, structural differences between Indonesian and Indonesian

Sign Language (Bisindo) do not hinder meaning transmission but instead reflect different ways of organizing and conveying information.

This study is expected to contribute to linguistic research, particularly in understanding cross-modal structural comparisons between spoken and sign languages.

6. Acknowledgements

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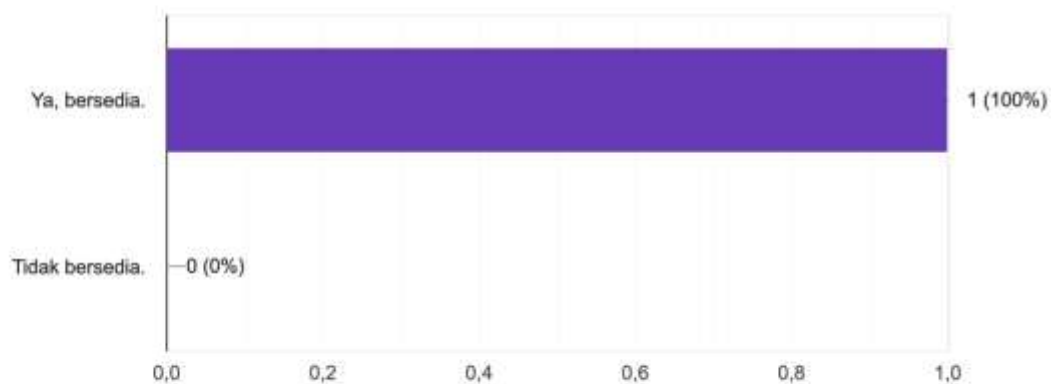
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Appendix 1. Questionnaire Data for the Validation of Indonesian Sign Language (Bisindo)

Apakah Anda bersedia menjadi informan dalam penelitian ini?

1 jawaban



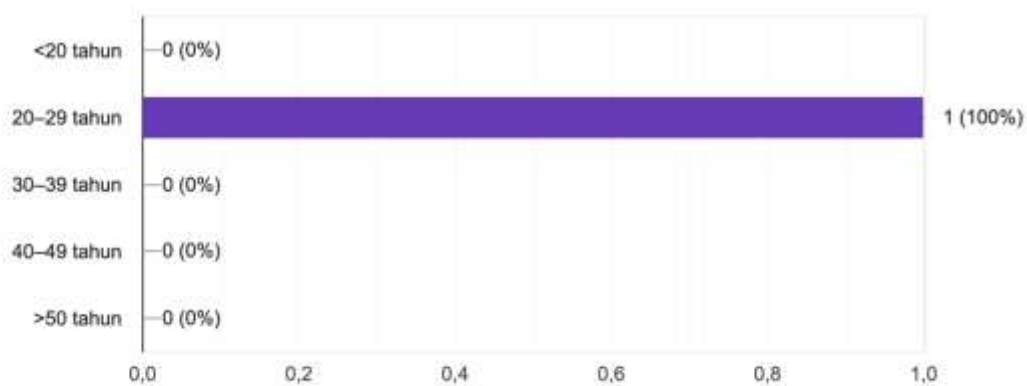
Nama (boleh anonim/inisial)

1 jawaban

Lyn

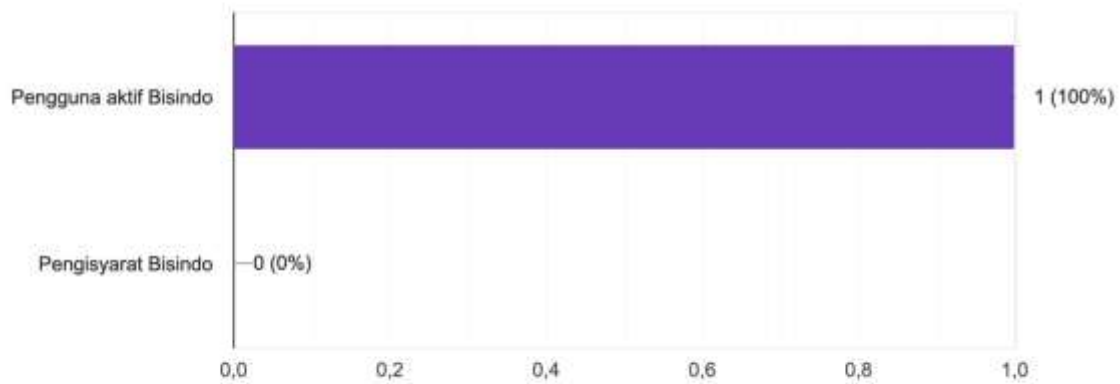
Usia

1 jawaban

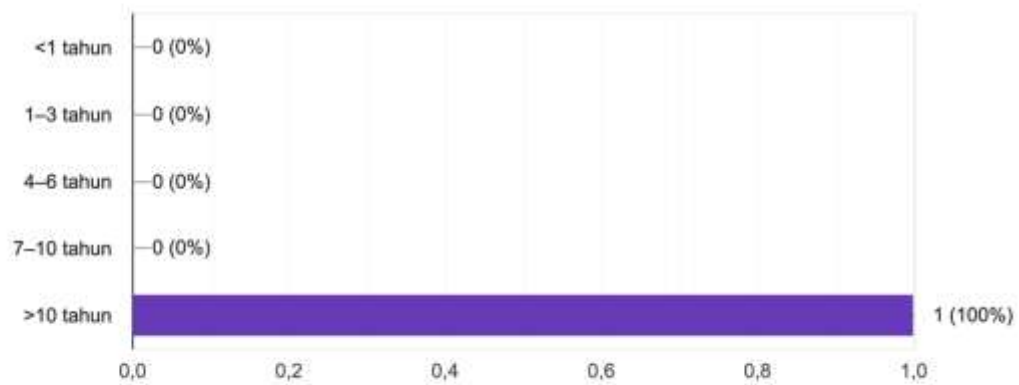


Status

1 jawaban

**Lama menggunakan Bisindo ... tahun**

1 jawaban



Anda biasa menggunakan Bisindo dari daerah mana?

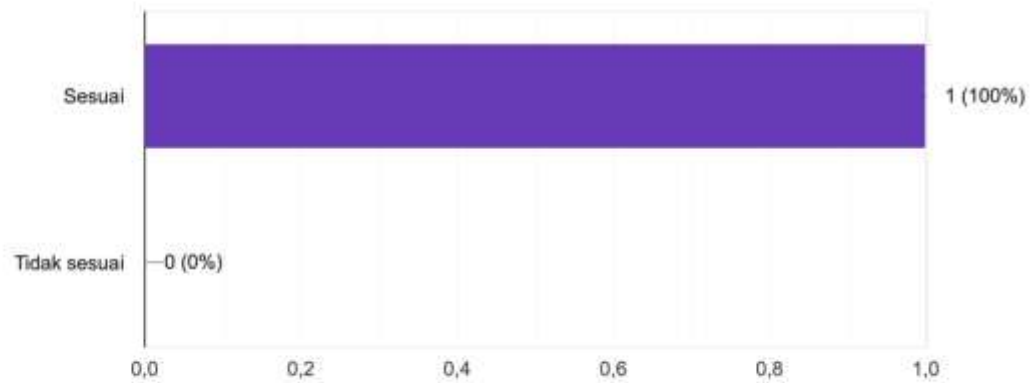
Data ini diperlukan untuk mengetahui variasi Bisindo yang digunakan karena setiap daerah dapat memiliki perbedaan isyarat.

1 jawaban

Saya biasa pakai BISINDO daerah Denpasar (Bali)

Lirik: "Nyanyian ini bukan sekadar nada" Isyarat: NYANYIAN INI NADA BUKAN

1 jawaban



Lirik: "Aku ingin kaumendengarnya" Isyarat: AKU INGIN KAMU DENGAR

1 jawaban



Lirik: "Dengan hatimu, bukan telinga" Isyarat: HATI KAMU TELINGA BUKAN

1 jawaban



Lirik: "Ingatlah, ini bukan sekedar kata" Isyarat: INGAT INI KATA BUKAN
1 jawaban



Lirik: "Maksudnya, kelak akan menjadi makna" Isyarat: MAKSUD NANTI JADI MAKNA
1 jawaban



Lirik: "Ungkapan cintaku dari hati" Isyarat: CINTA AKU HATI
1 jawaban

