

# GRAMMATICAL COHESION IN BAHASA MELAYU (MALAY)

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## 1. COHESION

Halliday and Hasan (1976) who have treated the subject of cohesion most comprehensively in *Cohesion in English* explain that cohesion "refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text.

Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it.

When this happens a relation of cohesion is set up" (Halliday and Hasan 1976:4).

### 1.1. TYPES OF COHESION

There are two broad divisions of cohesion - grammatical and lexical. The various types of grammatical cohesion are reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Lexical cohesion is realized through repetition of lexical items, sense relations, and collocation. We shall only discuss grammatical cohesion with reference to Bahasa Melayu (BM) here as the latter kind of cohesion is beyond the scope of this paper.

## 1.2. **GRAMMATICAL COHESION**

Grammatical cohesion is realized through reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction. Although the last type mentioned has a lexical component in it, it is chiefly grammatical (Halliday and Hasan, 1974) and is also described as such by grammarians, for example, Quirk et al (1985). Let us now go on to look at each grammatical type of cohesion in BM in some detail.

### 1.2.1. **REFERENCE**

In reference, "the information to be retrieved is the referential meaning, the identity of the particular thing or class of things that is being referred to; and the cohesion lies in the continuity of reference whereby the same thing enters into the discourse a second time" (Halliday and Hasan 1976:31).

The two types of reference which play an important role in reference cohesion are exophoric and endophoric reference.

#### 1.2.1.1. **EXOPHORIC REFERENCE**

Exophora or Exophoric reference deals with reference outside a text. It is very much dependent on the context of the situation.

De Beaugrande clarifies exophora as the application of a reference item "to an entity not expressed in the text at all, but identifiable in the situational context " (De Beaugrande 1980:133). Exophoric use in BM is illustrated below :

- A *Sebentar lagi tuanku akan berangkat tiba.*  
His Majesty will be arriving shortly.
- B *Apakah yang akan dititahkan oleh baginda?*  
 What is His Majesty going to speak about?
- A *Tuanku akan bertitah tentang lawatan baginda ke luar negeri.*  
His Majesty will talk about his overseas visit (Nik Safiah, Awang Sariyan and Ahmad Tahir 1987:22) The translation throughout this paper is entirely mine.

In the constructed example of a conversation between two palace officials, the king being referred to by both but who is not there at the time, is the same person. The referent is clearly identifiable in the situational context, and easily retrievable from the situation. From situational reference let us move on to textual reference.

#### 1.2.1.2. **ENDOPHORIC REFERENCE**

Endophora or endophoric reference provides textual cohesion. There are two types - anaphoric and cataphoric reference.

### 1.2.1.2.1. ANAPHORIC REFERENCE

In anaphora, or anaphoric reference, the entity referred to is later followed by a reference item. Backward reference has to be made to identify the referent. An example follows :

*"Kuwait akan menghantar pulang 44 pembantu rumah Filipina yang melarikan diri daripada majikan mereka setelah memohon supaya mereka dihantar pulang kerana didera. (Utusan Malaysia, 23 Jun 1995)*

Kuwait will send back 44 Filipino housekeepers who had escaped from their employers and requested that they be sent back because of abuse.

The reference item mereka, translated into their in the first instance, and they in the second occurrence refers the reader backwards to 44 Filipino housekeepers.

### 1.2.1.2.2. CATAPHORIC REFERENCE

In cataphora, or cataphoric reference the reference item appears before the identifiable entity which could be a word, phrase, or even a sentence. Reference has to be made forward to identify what is being referred to. Let us study the example :

*Awak tidak akan percaya berita ini. Selangor telah kalah kepada Brunei dalam perlawanan Piala Malaysia. Brunei menang 2-0.*