

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.

You are not going to believe this. Selangor has lost to Brunei in the Malaysia Cup competition. Brunei won 2-0. Ini (this) refers forward to Selangor losing to Brunei by two goals to nil in the Malaysia Cup competition.

In both anaphoric and cataphoric reference, the referent could be a noun, a person, place, an object or some abstract idea, a fact or an opinion.

1.2.2. TYPES OF REFERENCE ITEMS

Reference items which have a cohesive function are pronouns, demonstratives, the definite article, and comparatives. We shall look at each reference item in turn.

1.2.2.1 PRONOUN

The use of pronouns (*kata ganti*), especially personal pronouns (*kata ganti diri*), and more commonly the third person personal pronouns (*kata ganti diri Ketiga*), is by and large the commonest way of realizing reference cohesion (Mohideen 1991).

The problem with the BM personal reference items dia, ia, beliau and -nya is that it is difficult to identify the gender of the person, except of course for those who are familiar with the proper nouns of persons. All the four words here correspond to 'he' and 'she'. Beliau is a more respectful way of referring to a person. -nya is equivalent to 'his', 'her' and 'its'. However, it also corresponds to the plural pronoun 'their'.

Mereka which corresponds to 'they' is restricted in usage to human beings. For animals -nya has to be used.

There are five pronouns in the third person, namely beliau, dia, ia and -nya (in the singular) and mereka (in the plural). Let us study the following text which demonstrates reference cohesion in BM:

ANAK TIDUR DISELAMATKAN

PETALING JAYA, Ahad. Enam orang kehilangan tempat tinggal apabila rumah mereka dijilat api dalam satu kebakaran di Kampung Damansara, 7:30 pagi ini.

Seorang daripada mangsa itu Ng Kwai Lin, 27, penjual sayur berkata dia berada di pasar apabila seorang pelanggan memberitahu mengenai kebakaran itu.

"Saya bergegas pulang dan sempat menyelamatkan anak perempuan saya, empat tahun yang sedang tidur," katanya.

Berita Harian, 21 August, 1989

Petaling Jaya, Sunday. Six people lost their homes when fire destroyed their houses at Kampung Damansara this morning at 7:30.

One of the victims, Ng Kwai Lin, 27, a vegetable seller said that he/she was at the market when a customer told him/her about the fire.

"I hurried home and was able to save my four-year old daughter who was sleeping," he/she said.

1.2.2.2. DEMONSTRATIVES

BM has demonstrative reference items (kata ganti tunjuk) equivalent to those in English. The BM equivalents of the two locative demonstratives in English 'here' and 'there' are sini and di sini (here); sana, di sana, situ and di situ (there). Two examples follow :

- 1) *Bila Encik Yusoff sakit kuat, jirannya membawa dia ke Hospital Besar. Dia meninggal di situ.*

When Mr. Yusoff became very ill, his neighbour took him to the General Hospital. He died there.

- 2) *Ini adalah jalan persendirian. Awak tidak boleh menunggang basikal sini.
This is a private road. You cannot ride your bicycle here.*

The endophoric use of deictic demonstratives - ini (this, these) and itu (that, those) are shown below :

1. *Perkhidmatan kapal feri di antara Semenanjung Malaysia dengan Sabah dan Sarawak adalah suatu perkara baru. Perkhidmatan ini disebut "Cruise Muhibbah".*

The ferry service between Peninsular Malaysia, and Sabah and Sarawak is something new. This service is known as "Cruise Muhibbah".

2. *Tahun 1986 adalah tahun yang tidak dapat saya lupakan. Pada tahun itu saya dan keluarga mendapat peluang menaiki Feri Malaysia ke Sabah dan Sarawak.*

(Nik Safiah, Awang Sariyan and Ahmad Tahir 1987:20)

1986 is a year which I cannot forget. It was in *that year* when my family and I had the chance to board Feri Malaysia to Sabah and Sarawak.

In terms of nearness and time, *ini* which corresponds to both "this" and "these" is associated with something near and the present. *Itu*, on the other hand with something further and the past.

The cataphoric use of *ini* and *itu* is rare in written BM, although not in the spoken language.

Besides having a deictic function *ini* and *itu* also express definiteness, for example :

1. *Kapal Feri Malaysia ini sungguh besar.....Kapal ini dapat memuatkan seribu orang penumpang*

Kapal Feri Malaysia is very big..... The ship can carry one thousand passengers.....

Para penumpangnya mendapat peluang berkenalan dan beramah mesra sepanjang pelayaran. Penumpangpelayaran itu memakan masa tiga hari.

(Nik Safiah, Awang Sariyan, Ahmad Tahir, 1987:20°)

Passengers get the chance to get to know one another and become friendly throughout the voyage Passengers the voyage takes three days.

1.2.2. SUBSTITUTION

Substitution, as the item implies, involves the substitution in a construction, of a single word or phrase that has already been used, by another, usually a single word.

In spoken as well as in written BM discourse, we have substitution just as there is ellipsis (whose discussion follows next). Examples from both the spoken and written medium are given below with their translation.

1) A : *Sudahkah Mary pulang ke rumahnya?*
Has Mary gone home?

B : *Saya fikir begitu.*
I think so.

Begitu (so) is a substitution for Mary sudah pulang ke rumahnya (Mary has gone home) in B's reply.

2) Mr. Y : *Tolong berikan saya teh tanpa gula*
Please give me tea without milk.

Mrs Y : *Berikan saya yang sama*
Give me the same

Yang sama substitutes teh tanpa gula in Mrs Y's request.

3) *Ketua Setiausaha Negara telah mengeluarkan arahan supaya semua kakitangan Kerajaan berambut pendek dan tidak menghisap rokok semasa berada di pejabat. Kakitangan pejabat ini diminta berbuat demikian.*

The Chief Secretary has issued instructions that all government servants must have short hair and not tsmoke while they are in the office. The staff of this office are requested to do likewise. Berbuat demikian (to do likewise) is a substitute for berambut pendek dan tidak menghisap rokok semasa berada di pejabat (having short hair and not smoking while at the office).

4) *Murid-murid yang ada masalah mesti ditolong. Murid-murid begitu tidak patut dihukum.*

Pupils who have problems must be helped. Pupils like that should not be punished.

*

Begitu in the second sentence substitutes yang ada masalah in the first.

1.2.3. ELLIPSIS

In ellipsis, there is an allusion to some word or phrase which has gone before, but the speaker leaves a gap in the structure of his language for the interactant to retrieve the omission.

BM has elliptical cohesion in both spoken and written language. The following sentences are from the spoken one :

1) A : *Bolehkah awak memandu kereta?*
Can you drive a car?

B : *Ya, saya boleh.*
Yes, I can

The ellipped part from B's response is found in A's question, i.e. *memandu kereta* (drive a car).

2) Timah : *Get tak berkuncikah, mak?*
Isn't the gate locked, mother?

Emak : *Tak berkunci, pergilah bukakan.*

Mother : *It isn't locked, go and open*

(Othman 1979:188)

In this excerpt from a conversation, we have ellipsis of the noun *get* (gate) in the mother's reply after *bukakan* (open). Without ellipsis the sentence will read as *Tak berkunci, pergilah bukakan get* (It isn't locked, go and open the gate).

A constructed example is provided for ellipsis in written BM :

Pertandingan ini dibuka kepada semua warganegara, tanpa mengira umur, keturunan, agama dan tempat bermastautin.

This competition is open to all citizens irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion and place of residence.

The expression *tanpa mengira* (irrespective of) has been ellipped before *keturunan* (race) *agama* (religion) and *tempat bermastautin* (place of residence).

Another example of ellipsis in written BM follows :

Encik Zain tidak akan datang ke majlis itu sebab dia tidak diundang.

Mr. Zain will not attend the function as he has not been invited.

The ellipsis in the sentence is after the word *diundang* (invited). The ellipped phrase is *datang ke majlis itu* (to attend the function).

1.2.4 CONJUNCTION

BM has a lot of conjunctives which are similar in function to those in English. Arbak (1989) cites 35 words as being examples of conjunctions. The chart that follows shows some common BM conjunctives (*kata hubung*) and their English equivalents.

Conjunctions in BM	:	Conjunctions in English
<i>atau</i>		<i>or</i>
<i>bila</i>		<i>when</i>
<i>dan</i>		<i>and</i>
<i>padahal</i>		<i>whereas</i>

<i>sambil</i>	<i>while</i>
<i>sehingga</i>	<i>until</i>
<i>sekiranya</i>	<i>if</i>
<i>supaya</i>	<i>so that</i>
<i>tetapi</i>	<i>but</i>
<i>walaupun</i>	<i>although</i>

The following synopsis of a Hindi film is given to illustrate the striking similarity between BM and English conjunctions :

"Salaami" - *Filem ini membawa kisah cinta antara seorang kadet tentera, Vijay Singh dan Salaami, tetapi ibu Salaami amat benci akan semua kadet-kadet tentera kerana dia sendiri telah ditinggalkan oleh kekasihnya yang juga seorang kadet tentera.*

(Utusan Malaysia, 23 June 1995)

This film is a story of love between a military cadet, Vijay Singh and Salaami. But Salaami's mother hates all military cadets because she was deserted by her lover who was also a military cadet.

Despite the close similarities there are some differences. BM uses conjunctions which will be redundant in English, for example : *Walaupun dia pandai, tetapi dia malas* (*Although he is clever, but he is lazy) and (*Meskipun dia diugut berkali-kali namun dia tetap menegakkan kebenaran*) (*Although he has been repeatedly threatened, but he still stands for truth).

(Adibah Amin 1995 : 30).

"Then" (*lalu*) is used as a conjunction in BM, whereas in English it is used as an adverb with a conjunctive function at times :

Mereka naik ke pentas lalu menyanyi lagu kebangsaan.

They got on the stage, then sang the national anthem. *Lalu is used to indicate that an action follows another.*

Conjunctions in BM can be difficult for a speaker of BM as a second language. For instance, dan, serta and lagi correspond to one conjunction in English - and. Adibah Amin (1995) advises learners to choose dan if a choice has to be made between dan and serta. If dan already appears earlier in the sentence, then serta should be used to avoid repeating dan. Lagi is preferable when joining two adjectives.

To conclude this paper, grammatical cohesion in BM follows that of English closely except for a few differences as discussed in this paper.

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