INFIXING REDUPLICATIVES IN MALAY

FARIDAH HANOUM HUDSON*
University of Colorado at Boulder

INTRODUCTION

In standard treatments of Malay morphology, *stem-meN-stem*[1] reduplication is generally glossed as 'reciprocal' (Moeliono, 1988:120 and Verhaar, 1984:34). For example, the word *kirim* means 'to send', and *kirim-mengirim* means 'to send to each other'. Another example of a verb that is reciprocal is *sahut-menyahut*, where *sahut* means 'to reply' or 'to answer', and *sahut-menyahut* means 'to answer each other'.

This study will investigate the non-reciprocal uses of *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives. For example, the word *sambar-menyambar* is semantically non-reciprocal. *Sambar* means 'to snatch up' or 'to strike', and *sambar-menyambar* means 'to repeatedly strike', and this reduplicated verb is used with reference to lightning. Another example of a non-reciprocal reduplicative is *sinar-menyinar*, where *sinar* means 'to shine' or 'to sparkle', and *sinar-menyinar* means 'to continually shine'.

Most non-reciprocal *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives are iterative in meaning, for example, *pulas-memulas*. *Pulas* means 'to twist', and *pulas-memulas* means 'to repeatedly twist'. Moreover, it turns out that most reciprocal reduplicatives also have an iterative element, e.g., *pukul-memukul*, where *pukul* means 'to hit' and *pukul-memukul* means 'to repeatedly hit each other'.

This paper will show that *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives can occur with other words classes besides verbs such as nouns, adverbs and prepositions. Examples of these are *surat-menyurat* 'to send letters to each other', *terus-menerus* 'immediately', and *atas-mengatas* 'to top one another', of which the stem is a noun, an adverb and a preposition, respectively.

The hypothesis here is that monotransitive (two-argument) *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives which are reciprocal semantically will have a singular human subject and object, or a plural human subject with no object. As for ditransitive (three-

argument) *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives that are reciprocal, there can be a singular human subject with a non-human object and a human indirect object (in a prepositional phrase), or a plural human subject with a non-human object. Non-reciprocal *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives can have singular or plural, human or non-human subjects, but they will have a non-human object. The outline below should provide a clearer picture of the combinations mentioned.

RECIPROCAL: sg. human subj. + sg. human obj.   *(monotransitive)*
               pl. human subj. + 0 obj.

               sg. human subj. + non-human + human   *(ditransitive)*
                              obj.   indirect obj.
               pl. human subj. + non-human obj.

NON-RECIPROCAL: sg. / pl. human/non-human subj. + (non-human obj.)

This study also proposes that the construction of these *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives is independent of the prefix *meN-* construction in Malay syntax as there exist *stem-meN-stem* words which do not normally take the *meN-* prefix. An example is *tahu-menahu*, 'be cognizant of', where *menahu* does not occur independently as a verb in a sentence.

METHODOLOGY

Every *stem-meN-stem* structure was gathered from the *Malay-English Dictionary* by A. E. Coope, (1993) and from native speakers of Malay. These structures were again checked for legitimacy in *Kamus Dewan* by T. Iskandar, (1993).

To test the reciprocity of the words, the '*Kami* Test' was employed, in which sentences using the exclusive pronoun *kami* 'we' are constructed. *Kami* or any plural noun phrase would be used as the subject of a sentence, with no object. For example:

(1)   *Kami*   *bantah-membantah.*
      We   object-meN-object.
      We objected each other's (opinions).

If a sentence like the one above could be generated, then the *stem-meN-stem* would be semantically reciprocal. In other words, if a *stem-meN-stem* sentence can have a singular human subject and object, or a plural human subject with no object, then it will have a reciprocal meaning. Some examples are:

(2) *Saya   kejar-mengejar   adik   saya.*
     I   chase-meN-chase younger sibling   my.
     My younger sibling and I chased each other.

(3) *Kami   kejar-mengejar.*
     We   chase-meN-chase.
     We chased each other.

Example (2) above has a singular human subject and object, and example (3) has a plural human subject with no object. Therefore, from this test, we can state that *kejar-mengejar* is a reciprocal reduplicative.

On the other hand, non-reciprocal reduplicatives can have singular subjects with no object or with non-human objects. As a further evidence, these reduplicatives fail the 'Kami Test'; they cannot have the plural inclusive pronoun *kami* as a subject and still have the reciprocal meaning.

(4) *Dia   pacu-memacu   kuda - nya.*
     He/She spur on-meN-spur on horse - his/her.
     He/She spurs on his/her horse.

     *Kami pacu-memacu.

Example (4) has a singular human subject and a non-human object which is the horse. *Pacu-memacu* fails the 'Kami Test'; therefore, it is a non-reciprocal reduplicative.

RECIPROCALS

The following are two examples of monotranstive *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives, or two-argument verbs, that are semantically reciprocal. Observe that example (5) has a singular human subject and object. Example (6) takes a plural human subject and no object.

(5)   *sindir-menyindir*   'to make a sarcastic remark'

    Ahmad tengah sindir-menyindir   *Ali.*
    Ahmad PROG make sarcastic remarks-meN-make
                sarcastic remarks   Ali.
    Ahmad is making sarcastic remarks at Ali.

(6)   *pukul memukul*   'to hit'

    Mereka pukul-memukul dengan hebat - nya.
    They   hit-meN-hit   with   zest   INTENSIFIER
    They were (repeatedly) hitting each other intensely.

The next two examples are *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives which are ditransitive, i.e., three-argument verbs. These reduplicatives are reciprocal and can occur in sentences under the following conditions:

(a) a singular human subject with a non-human object and a human indirect object in a prepositional phrase.

(7)   *kirim-mengirim*   'to send'

    Saya kirim-mengirim surat   dengan - nya.
    I   send-meN-send   letter   with   him/her.
    He/She and I send letters to each other.

(b) a plural human subject with a non-human object.

(8)   *serah-menyerah*   'to give/present'

   Kedua-dua pihak serah-menyerah   hantaran.
   Both   party resent-meN-present   gifts.
   Both parties present the wedding gifts to each other.

We should note at this point that the reduplicatives in examples (5) through (8) are also iterative in meaning, in that the action is repeated several times. An interesting aspect that differentiates monotransitive and ditransitive reciprocal reduplicatives is that monotransitive reduplicatives have counterparts in the *meN-stem-stem* structure, but the ditransitive reduplicatives do not. For example, *pukul-memukul* also has the *memukul-mukul* form, but *kirim-mengirim* does not have the **mengirim-ngirim* counterpart.

Coming back to the '*Kami* Test' that was used to decide whether a verb was reciprocal or not, we can see below that examples (5) and (6) can have the plural pronoun *kami* as a subject with no object, and examples (7) and (8) can have *kami* as a subject as well but with a non-human object, being that they are ditransitive verbs.

(5a)   *Kami sudah lama kirim-mengirim surat.*
       We   have long send-meN-send letter.
       We have been sending letters (to each other) for a long time.

(6a)   *Kami pukul-memukul dengan hebat -nya.*
       We   hit-meN-hit   with   zest INTENSIFIER
       We were intensely hitting each other.

(7a)   *Kami kirim-mengirim   surat.*
       We   send-meN-send letter.
       We send letters to each other.

(8a) *Kami serah-menyerah   hantaran.*
We   present-meN-present gifts.
We presented gifts to each other.

Because these verbs are able to take the pronoun *kami*
as a subject with no object as seen in examples (5a) through
(8a), we can declare that they are semantically reciprocal.

NON-RECIPROCALS
The following are examples of non-reciprocal
reduplicatives.

(9)   *karang-mengarang*   'to do literary work'

Ayah karang-mengarang di tengah   malam.
Father write-meN-write   at POINT OF TIME night.
Father writes at night.

(10)   *kira-mengira*   'to count'

Mereka tengah kira-mengira   duit.
They   PROG count-meN-count   money
They are counting money.

Example (9) above has a singular human subject and no
object. Example (10) has a plural human subject and a non-
human object. As these verbs are non-reciprocal reduplicatives,
they do not need an object or may have a non-human object.
However, they are similar to reciprocal reduplicatives as they
are semantically iterative. In fact, one could even have a non-
human as the subject of a non-reciprocal reduplicative.

(11)   *sinar-menyinar*   'to shine'

Cincin itu   sinar-menyinar.
Ring   that shine-meN-shine.
That ring shines.

Example (11) above has the singular non-human subject 'ring' and it is continuously shining, which makes the sentence semantically iterative.

If we compare non-reciprocal *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives with reciprocal ones in the '*Kami* Test', we can see that non-reciprocal reduplicatives cannot have *kami* as the subject with no object and still have the 'reciprocal' meaning. The sentence would simply mean that the subject is the plural 'we' and that there is no reciprocity between two parties.

(12)   *Kami karang-mengarang.*
        *We   write-meN-write
        *We write.

(13)   *Kami kira-mengira.*
        *We   count-meN-count
        *We count.

Furthermore, non-reciprocal reduplicatives cannot take a human object as seen in example (14) below:

(14)   *Pekedai   itu   kira-mengira   saya.*
        *Shopkeeper that   count-meN-count me.
        *That shopkeeper counts me.

WORD CLASS

If we look at the word class of the *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives that we have covered so far, we see the root form is usually a verb. However, this study found other word classes with which these reduplicatives can occur, for example, nouns, adverbs and prepositions.

(15)   *surat-menyurat*   'to send letters to each other.'
        surat - letter
              NOUN ---> VERB

(16) *terus-menerus*   'continuously, without any breaks'
       terus - straight
                ADJECTIVE ---> ADVERB

(17) *atas-mengatas*   'to top one another'
       atas - above
                PREPOSITION ---> VERB

Regardless of the original word class of the stem, all reciprocal and non-reciprocal *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives are verbs, and only a few are adverbs.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen in this investigation, *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives fall into two different groups: reciprocals and non-reciprocals. Deciding on the semantics of the reduplicatives included the application of the '*Kami* Test'. However, there is a group in which certain reduplicatives may be both semantically reciprocal or non-reciprocal. For example, the verb *tipu-menipu* meaning 'to lie' can have the following constructions:

(18) *Dia   suka   tipu-menipu.*
       He/She like   lie-meN-lie.
       He/She likes to lie.

(19) *Kami tipu-menipu.*
       We   lie-meN-lie.
       We lied to each other.

Examples (18) and (19) are both iterative, but (18) is non-reciprocal and (19) is reciprocal. Therefore, certain reduplicatives have the flexibility of being semantically reciprocal or non-reciprocal depending on how the sentence is constructed. However, members of this type of reduplicatives are not many.

This study also proposes that the construction of these *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives is independent of the prefix *meN-*

construction in Malay syntax as there exist *stem-meN-stem* words which do not normally take the *meN-* prefix. An example is *tahu-menahu* where *tahu* means 'to know' and *tahu-menahu* means 'to be cognizant of'. However, we would not find *menahu* occurring independently in a sentence. Another example is *punggung-memunggung* where *punggung* means 'buttocks' and *punggung-memunggung* means 'back to back'. Similarly, we would not use *memunggung* independently in a sentence. Therefore, the derivational process of these reduplicatives is probably not based on *meN-* prefixation.

As a final note, the research that led to this paper also uncovered a group of words that are very similar to the *stem-meN-stem* reduplicatives. These include words like *adik-beradik* 'siblings', *arai-jemarai* 'hanging loosely', and *tali-temali* 'rigging'. These words also have the *stem-syllable-stem* form. They are idiosyncratic in meaning; for example, *adik-beradik* and *tali-temali* means group of diverse members that share a certain similarity, and *arai-jemarai* is used with expressives. Nevertheless, these words could certainly belong to the same category of reduplicatives being discussed in this paper.

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[1] This particular investigation will only deal with reduplicatives of the *stem-meN-stem* nature. I acknowledge the existence of other types of reduplicatives such as the *ber-stem-stem* type or the *stem-syllable-stem* type, but these reduplicatives will perhaps be discussed in another investigation.