COMPLEMENTATION IN MALAY

by

RAMLI MD SALLEH
JABATAN LINGUISTIK
UNIVERSITI KEBANGSAAN MALAYSIA
43600 BANGI, SELANGOR
MALAYSIA

1.0. INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses complementation in Malay, in particular on finite versus non-finite complements. The paper shows that since Malay is a non-inflectional language, its auxiliary verbs, in particular the aspectual auxiliaries will render a clause finite. It will be argued that the Malay complementizer system; that is the nature of a complement clause, i.e. finite or non-finite istriggered by the choice of complementizers in COMP.

The organization of the paper is as follows. First we will give a general background of the language. A description of the Malay auxiliaries follows. In the next section, the discussion distinguishes the realizations of two universal constituents, (INFL)ection and (V)erb in the Malay verbal system. Finally the paper discusses finite and non-finite complement clauses in Malay.

2.0. GENERAL BACKGROUND OF MALAY

Malay is a configurational language with fixed positions for subject Noun Phrase (NP), INFL, and Verb Phrase (VP). Word order is of prime importance in the language since it does not make use of declension or conjugation. There are no overt marking on NPs for Case, nor do there exist any agreement phenomena between the subject NP [NP,S] and the verb. The verb is not marked for any inflection. Tense is often expressed by context, adverbs of time or the auxiliaries.

The basic word order in a declarative sentence is Subject-INFL-Verb-Object. The direct object usually follows immediately after the verb. The indirect object and oblique NPs typically occur with prepositions. Some basic examples are in (1) below:

(1) a.   Ali telah membeli buku di kedai semalam.
         Ali has   act-buy book at shop yesterday

         'Ali bought a book at the shop yesterday'

b.   Ali membeli sebuah jam untuk ibunya.
       Ali act-buy one-cl. watch for   mother-his

       'Ali bought a watch for his mother,

c.   Ali memberi RM10.00 kepada dana itu.
       Ali act-give RM10.00 to   fund the

       'Ali gave RM10.00 to the fund'

3.0. AUXILIARIES IN MALAY

What has been generally accepted as auxiliaries in Malay are the following closed class of lexical items:

(2) a. Aspects

$$\left.\begin{array}{l} \text{pernah} \\ \text{sudah} \end{array}\right\}$$ 'completed'

     telah   'has' (perfective)
     sedang   'in the process of' (progressive)
     akan   'will' (future)

b.   Modals

$$\left.\begin{array}{l} \text{hendak} \\ \text{mahu} \end{array}\right\}$$ 'want'

     ingin   'wish'
     harus   'may'
     mesti   'must'

$$\left.\begin{array}{l} \text{boleh} \\ \text{dapat} \end{array}\right\}$$ 'can/able'

Aspects and modals can occur individually or co-occur in a sentence.

(3) a. Ali akan ingin pergi memancing bila cuaca baik,
       Ali will wish go   act-fishing   when weather good

       'Ali will wish to go fishing when the weather is good'

b.   Ali telah boleh balik ke rumah setelah berada di rumah
       Ali has can return to house after   stay   at house

sakit selama tiga hari.
sick for   three day

'Ali has been able to return home after staying at the hospital for three days.'

If the order is reversed, the sentences are ungrammatical.

(4) a. *Ali ingin akan pergi memancing bila cuaca baik.

   b. *Ali boleh telah balik ke rumah setelah berada di rumah sakit selama tiga hari.

Furthermore, each element (i.e. aspect and modal) can occur recursively. (Nik Safiah Karim 1978) points out that the "obligation" class modals can occur only as the first element in a modal-modal sequence, and the other two classes, "intention and ability", can occur freely, i.e. before or after each other. As for aspects, their recursiveness is more constrained. (Soemarmo 1976) indicates the existence of recursive occurrences of the aspects and refers to it as the "progressivization" process. Some examples are below.

(5) a.   Mereka akan sedang tidur bila kita tiba.
         they   will   prog. sleep when we   arrive

         'They will be sleeping when we arrive'

   b.   Mereka akan sudah tidur ketika itu.
         they will has sleep time the

         'They will have slept by that time'

The order of the elements, i.e. aspect and modal, may not be interrupted by any other constituent, just as no constituent may interrupt an adjective and the noun it modifies.

(6) a.   Penduduk kampung sudah boleh menuai   padi semalam.
         occupant village   has can act-harvest rice yesterday

         'The villagers were able to harvest the rice yesterday'

   b.   *Penduduk kampung sudah semalam boleh menuai padi.

(7) a.   Akan dapatkah mereka membajak sawah itu?
         will can-Q they   act-plow field the

         'Will they be able to plow the field'

b.   *Akankah dapat mereka membajak sawah itu?

Note that in (6b), the order is interrupted by an adverb and in (7b) is interrupted by the question particle **KAH**. Hence, the ungrammaticality of the sentences.

As noted earlier, Malay verbs are not inflected for tense. Tense is determined by context, adverbs of time or the auxiliaries, i.e. the aspects. In particular, simple and past tenses are determined by context or adverbs of time. consider the sentences below.

(8) a.   Petani itu menuai   padi.
          farmer the act-harvest rice

  i.   'The farmer harvests the rice'
  ii. 'The farmer harvested the rice'

  b.   Petani itu menuai   padi semalam.
        farmer the act-harvest rice yesterday

       'The farmer harvested the rice yesterday'

  c.   Petani itu akan menuai   padi.
        farmer the will act-harvest rice

       'The farmer will harvest the rice'

The favoured reading for (a) is in the present tense. Any other readings result from the context in which the sentence occurs. For example, in a discourse concerning the past time, it will have a past interpretation. The interpretation that (a) cannot have are the future, the present perfect, and the past perfect tenses, since the equivalent of these English tenses have to be overtly expressed by the aspect **akan** 'will', the aspect **sudah** 'already' or **pernah** 'completed', or a combination of both.

(9) a.   Ali sudah pergi ke Kota Kinabalu.
          Ali has   go   to Kota Kinabalu

       'Ali has already gone to Kota Kinabalu'

  b.   Ali pernah pergi ke Kota Kinabalu.
        Ali has   go   to Kota Kinabalu

       'Ali has been to Kota Kinabalu'

c.   Ali sudah pernah pergi ke Kota Kinabalu.
     Ali has   has   go   to Kota Kinabalu

'Ali has already been to Kota Kinabalu.

4.0. INFLECTION

The discussion below distinguishes the realizations in Malay of two universal constituents, INFL and V. The confusion with respect to the independence of INFL from V in traditional and early generative grammars of Malay stems from the fact that Malay verbs are not marked for inflections. Inflections in better studied Indo-European languages such as the present and past tense markers in English and the Romance languages are verbal inflections, hence, are candidates for membership in INFL, a category distinct from V. However, since such verbal inflections are absent in the Malay verbal system, traditional and early generative grammarians conclude that Malay does not have the constituent INFL. This is no doubt misleading since Malay does have elements that are prime candidates for membership in INFL as the constituent is actually motivated in works on English. These elements include aspects and modals; the latter being counterparts to the English modals.

(Ramli Md.Salleh 1992) motivated independently by a range of constructions such as the Malay variant of the classic subject-auxiliary inversion, VP-deletion, and questions (both yes-no and wh-question) argues that INFL and V are two distinct constituents in the Malay verbal system. With respect to the constituent INFL, the discussion concludes that Malay resembles English modals in that the elements which are called "auxiliary verbs" are morphemes separate from the category verb. These auxiliary verbs, i.e. aspects and modals, are base-generated in INFL and can only undergo syntactic operations that are restricted to INFL and are distinct from operations that involve verbs. One such operation is the Malay variant of the classic subject-auxiliary inversion. The discussion also suggests that INFL in Malay can contain a cluster of morphemes (see Koopman 1984, Lobeck 1986).

5.0. FINITE AND NON-FINITE COMPLEMENTS

Given the assumption that there is a constituent INFL in Malay, and that INFL contains the aspectual auxiliaries which render a clause finite, the discussion below distinguishes between finite and non-finite complements. It is argued that the nature of a complement clause, i.e. finite or non-finite is triggered by the choice of complementizers in COMP.

Malay is a language with sentence-initial COMP and according to (Emonds 1985), the existence of this COMP in the language entails a Wh-Fronting transformation. This holds since there is Wh-Fronting rule in Malay (see Ramli Md.Salleh 1992).

Following (Mashudi Kader 1981), we assume that COMP is generated in the base via rule (10).

(10)   S' —> Comp S

Now, consider the following sentences.

(11) a. Orang itu berharap bahawa Ali akan pergi dari rumah itu.
        person the hope   that   Ali will   go from house the

        'The person hopes that Ali will go from the house'

     b. Saya percaya bahawa Ali telah keluar   dari rumah itu.
        I   believe   that   Ali has   move-out from house the

        'I believe that Ali has moved out of the house'

     c. Bahawa Ali telah keluar   adalah ketara.
        that Ali has   move-out be   obvious

        'That Ali has moved out is obvious'

     d. Adalah ketara bahawa Ali telah keluar.
        be   obvious that   Ali has   move-out

        'It is obvious that Ali has moved out'

(12) a. Orang itu berharap supaya Ali keluar   dari rumah itu.
        person the hope   for   Ali move-out from house the

        'The person hopes for Ali to move out of the house'

     b. Untuk Ali keluar   dari rumah itu adalah susah.
        for   Ali move-out from house the be   difficult

        'For Ali to move out of the house is difficult.'

c. Saya membeli sebuah buku untuk awak baca.
I   act-buy one-cl.   book for   you read

'I bought a book for you to read'

d. Adalah susah   untuk Ali keluar   dari rumah itu.
be   difficult for   Ali move-out from house the

'It is difficult for Ali to move out of the house'

(13) a. *Orang itu berharap bahawa Ali pergi dari rumah itu.
person the hope   that   Ali go   from house the

*The person hopes that Ali goes from the house.

b. *Saya percaya bahawa Ali keluar   dari rumah itu.
I   believe that   Ali move-out from house the

*I believe that Ali goes from the house.

c. *Bahawa Ali keluar   dari rumah itu adalah ketara.
that   Ali move-out from house the be   obvious

*That Ali moves out of the house is obvious.

d. *Adalah ketara bahawa Ali keluar   dari rumah itu.
be   obvious that   Ali move-out from house the

*It is obvious that Ali moves out of the house'

(14)a. *Orang itu berharap supaya Ali sudah pergidarisana.
person the hope   for   Ali has   go   from there

*The person hopes for Ali has gone from there.

b. *Untuk Ali akan pergi dari sana adalah susah.
for   Ali will go   from there be   difficult

*For Ali to will go from there is difficult.

c. *Saya membeli sebuah buku untuk awak akan baca.
I   act-buy one-cl.   book for   you will read

'I bought a book for you to will read.

d. *Adalah susah   untuk Ali akan pergi dari sana.
    be   difficult   for   Ali will go   from there

*It is difficult for Ali to will go from there.

Now, let us consider sentences in (11) and (12). Each of the sentences in (11) contains a complement clause introduced by the complementizer **bahawa** 'that', and each of the complement clause contains an aspectual auxiliary. On the other hand, each of the sentences in (12) contains a complement clause introduced by the complementizer **untuk** and **supaya** 'for', and each of the complement clause does not contain any aspectual auxiliary. Now, compare the sentences in (11) and (12) with the sentences in (13) and (14). Each of the sentences in (13) contains a complement clause introduced by the complementizer **bahawa**, but none of the complement clause contains any aspect. On the other hand, the sentences in (14) contain complement clauses introduced by the complementizer **supaya** or **untuk** but the complement clauses contain the aspectual auxiliaries. Furthermore, we also notice that the sentences in (13) and (14) are all ungrammatical. Now, how do we account for these grammatical and ungrammatical sentences? A test to determine the grammaticalness of these sentences lies in the presence or absence of the aspectual auxiliaries. All sentences introduced by the complementizer **bahawa** must have aspectual auxiliaries in their complements and these complements are finite complements since all finite complements must have tense. On the otherhand, sentences introduced by the complementizer **supaya** or **untuk** may not have any aspectual auxiliaries in their complements and these complements are non-finite complement since infinitival clauses must not have any tense. This explains the grammatical (11) and (12); and the ungrammatical (13) and (14).

We have so far given only an informal statement of the fact that **bahawa** is restricted to finite and **supaya** and **untuk** to infinitival clauses. We have also noticed the distribution of the complementizers in question with respect to the features [+Finite] and [-Finite]. There is some kind of agreement between the complementizers and the features as shown in the paradigm below.

(15)   a. bahawa   ———————   + ASPECT
        b. supaya, untuk   ———————   - ASPECT
        c. *bahawa   ———————   - ASPECT
        d. *supaya, untuk   ———————   + ASPECT

The paradigm in (15) shows that the complementizers must agree in features with the grammatical formatives that specify the finiteness of the complements, i.e. finite or infinite. Thus, the complementizer **bahawa** is specified with the inherent features [+Finite, +Aspect], and is inherently finite, while the complementizer **supaya** or **untuk** is specified with the inherent features [-Finite, -aspect], and is inherently infinite. Following (15), notice that the differences

between (11) and (12) is that the complements in (11) contain aspects, while the complements in (12) do not contain any aspects. The complements in (11) thus contain tense and are equivalent to finite clauses in English. On the other hand, the complements in (12) do not have any tenses and are roughly equivalent to English infinitives. (15) also shows that the types of clausal complements allowed is triggered by the complementizers in COMP. The complementizer **bahawa** takes a finite clausal complement, while the complementizer **supaya** or **untuk** takes a non-finite complement. It follows that the conditions (15c,d) predict the ill-formedness of (13) and (14), respectively.

Given this discussion, it seems that the COMP node in Malay does not appear to differ very mush from the COMP node in English. Thus, in addition to the rule (15) repeated here as (16), we expand the COMP node represented as in (17).

(16) S' ——> COMP S
(17) COMP ——> [± Tense]
      [+ Tense] —> bahawa
      [- Tense] —> supaya, untuk.

REFRENCES

Chomsky, N. 1981. Lectures on Government and Binding. Dordrecht: Foris Publication.

Emonds, J. 1985. A Unified Theory of Syntactic Categories. Dordrecht: Foris Publication.

Koopman, H. 1984. The Syntax of Verbs. Dordrecht: Foris Publication.

Lobeck, A. 1986. Syntactic Constraints on VP Ellipsis. Unpublished Dissertation, University of Washington.

Mashudi Kader. 1981. The Syntax of Malay Interrogative. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Nik Safiah Karim. 1978. Bahasa Malaysia Syntax. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Ramli Md.Salleh. 1992. Fronted Constituents in Malay: Base Structures and Move Alpha in a Configurational Non-Indo-European Language. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

Soemarmo, M. 1976. The semantics of proximity time relations. Foundation of Language 14.