Referential strategies in some Malay varieties
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This presentation will provide an overview of the referential strategies employed in some Malay varieties, with special focus on the two questions below;
1. How identifiability is marked on lexical NPs
2. How ‘active’ referents are expressed in transitive clauses.

Most of the Malay varieties employ demonstratives to indicate that the referent is situationally or textually identifiable. The distinction of the short and full form of the demonstratives is observed in Eastern varieties with so-called semantic bleaching. The distinction between the short form and full form exhibits functional difference in some varieties, while it does not in others; Adelaar (2005: 212-217) pointed out that, in some Eastern varieties, the short form underwent so-called ‘semantic bleaching’. In addition to the demonstratives, some varieties employs the third person possessive form to indicate the referent is identifiable by association to the situation in which the discourse is made, as the third person possessive enclitic –nya in colloquial Indonesian does (Englebretson 2003, Ewing 2005, and Sneddon et al. 2010).

An experiment was conducted in several Malay speaking areas using a short video as stimuli. The results show considerable variation among Malay varieties in the way the active A argument (A, hereafter) and P argument (P, hereafter) are coded. The outline of the variation is as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Varieties</th>
<th>Verb form</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Indonesian</td>
<td>meN-</td>
<td>the pronoun <em>dia</em> or zero</td>
<td>the enclitic pronoun -nya or lexical NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloquial Indonesian</td>
<td>di-</td>
<td>zero</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barunei Malay</td>
<td>di-</td>
<td>-nya</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern varieties</td>
<td>unmarked</td>
<td>the pronoun <em>dia</em></td>
<td>lexical NP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 “Most frequent coding of active A and P arguments in Malay varieties”

Sentence (1)-(4) are one of the typical examples of coding of the active A argument and P argument in each varieties.

(1) Standard Indonesian
_Dalam video dengan judul pisang, [seorang anak perempuan]_A mengambil _pisang_ P dari atas meja. Dan _φ_ membuka [_kulit pisang_ P]. Lalu _φ_ memakan [_pisang tersebut_ P].

(2) Colloquial Indonesian spoken in Jakarta
_Ani cabut pisang, trus φ_P di-kupas φ_A, trus φ_P di-makan φ_A._

(3) Barunei Malay
_di...walau atu ia takidum-kidum taliat pisang, ada pisang diadapannya, φ_P di-ambil-*nya* A, φ_P di-patah φ_A...φ_P di-patah-*nya* A, φ_P di-kupas-*nya* A. inda _ia_ A lagi matahi _pisang_ A, tarus φ_A tah (<-sedang) suap φ_P ka mulut._

(4) Kupang Malay
_ini anak. _dia_ A, ambil [_pisang satu_ P]. abis itu _dia_ A kupas [_dia pun kulit_ P]. _dia_ A kupas [_dia pun kulit_ P]. baru _dia_ A makan [_tu pisang pun isi_ P].

References

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