Passive subtypes in Malay:
Their structures, frequencies and diachrony

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Introduction

• Malay has many passive subtypes.

• Richer at least than English and Japanese.

• This talk:
  • Summarises passive subtypes available in Malay
  • Reports frequencies of different subtypes in various texts/corpora
  • Proposes a hypothesis about their diachronical development
What is the passive voice?

• Very chaotic due to different conceptions of ‘passive’ by different authors.
• Nomoto (2015): Syntactic definition
• Not morphological
  • Not all sentences with *ter*-verbs are passive.
• Not functional
  • Not all sentences in which the agent is backgrounded are passive.
  • Not all sentences that express adversity (or high affectedness) are passive.
My definition of voice categories is based solely on whether and how an argument is licensed. The active-passive distinction [...] is concerned with how the functional head v licenses an internal argument, which is introduced by a lexical verb (V). [...] The active v licenses an internal argument [...] whereas the passive v lacks this ability and cannot license it. [...] Crucially, [...] how an external argument is licensed [...] is orthogonal to the active-passive distinction. It enables one to subclassify actives/passives.
Subtypes of passives

a. *Di*- passive

Dokumen itu sudah *di*-semak oleh mereka.

‘The document has already been checked by them.’

b. Bare passive

Dokumen itu sudah *(maka)* semak.

‘They have already checked the document.’
Subtypes of *di*-passives

(a) *Pro* type

Surat itu sudah di-poskan *pro*.
letter that already pass-post

(b) *Oleh* type

Surat itu sudah di-poskan *oleh kerani*.
letter that already pass-post by clerk

(c) *DP* type

Surat itu sudah di-poskan *kerani*.
letter that already pass-post clerk

‘The letter was already posted (by the clerk).’
Malay used to have another *di*-passive subtype with two concurring agent expressions: hybrid type.

Agent 1: 3rd person enclitic =*nya*, immediately after the verb Agent 2: introduced by *oleh*

**Hybrid type: **

\[ di-V=nya \text{ oleh DP} \]

maka di-lihat=nya [oleh mereka itu] ada se-orang Cina baharu

and \hspace{1cm} \text{PASS}-look=3 by \hspace{1cm} \text{them} \hspace{1cm} \text{that be one-CLF Chinese just}

\hspace{1cm} \text{bangun dari tidur.}

\hspace{1cm} \text{get.up from sleep}

\hspace{1cm} \text{‘and they saw a Chinese man who had just gotten up.’ (Abd.H 296:14)}
a. *Pro* type *di-* passive

```
VoiceP
  Voice
di-
  [gen]  VP
  pro
     vP      v
     v       VP
```

b. *Oleh* type *di-* passive

```
VoiceP
  Voice
di-
  [gen]  VP
  pro
     vP      v
     v       VP
     P       (overt agent)
     PP
```
c. DP type \(di\)-passive

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VoiceP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Voice} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{di-[gen]} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{DP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{(overt agent)} \\
\downarrow \\
v \\
\downarrow \\
\text{VP} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
v' \\
\downarrow \\
\text{vP} \\
\end{array}
\]


d. Bare passive

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VoiceP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Voice} \\
\downarrow \\
\varnothing \\
\downarrow \\
\text{DP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{(overt agent)} \\
\downarrow \\
v \\
\downarrow \\
\text{vp} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\downarrow \\
\text{VP} \\
\end{array}
\]
(15)a. Hybrid type

VoiceP

\[ \text{di-} \rightarrow \text{vP1} \]

\[ \text{vP2} \rightarrow \text{v'} \]

\[ \text{=nya} \rightarrow \text{v'} \]

\[ \text{v}_{\text{pass}} \rightarrow \text{VP} \]

\[ \text{V DP}_{\text{int}} \rightarrow \text{PP} \rightarrow \text{oleh DP1} \]
Frequencies in texts/corpora

• Speech
  • Clear cases of bare passives are very limited.
  • Within *di*- passives, pro > oleh > DP

• Writing
  • Bare passive are commonly used.
  • Within *di*- passives, pro > DP > oleh

• Classical Malay
  • Bare passives are commonly used.
  • Within *di*- passives, DP > oleh > pro > hybrid or DP > pro > oleh > hybrid
The data

• Writing (Nomoto & Kartini 2014)
  1. Utusan Malaysia front page in 2011
  2. Folktale (*cerita rakyat*)

• Speech (*Nomoto & Kartini 2014)
  1. *Multilingual Corpora (Malay) (Shoho et al. 2005)*
     Searched using MALINDO Conc (Nomoto et al. 2018)

• Classical Malay (Nomoto & Kartini 2016)
  1. Hikayat Marakarma (Si Miskin) (1855)
  2. Hikayat Abdullah (1849)
     Searched using Malay Concordance Project (Proudfoot 1991)
## Modern Malay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Multilingual Corpora</th>
<th>Korpus Variasi</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
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<td>253</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oleh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>DP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
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<th>Writing</th>
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<th>Folktale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oleh</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP</td>
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<td>75</td>
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## Classical Malay

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Hikayat Marakarma</th>
<th>Hikayat Abdullah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oleh</td>
<td>2,3</td>
<td>97</td>
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<td>DP</td>
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<td>Hybrid</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Possible path of historical development

1. Overt doubling with *oleh*

2. Emergence of *pro* → covert doubling

3. Non-doubling structure

4. Loss of redundant structure

Gambar 1. Kontinum tipe-tipe pasif bahasa Melayu

(From Nomoto & Kartini 2016)
Acknowledgements

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References


References


