

Crossed-control in Malay/Indonesian as Long Distance Passivization

The Malay sentence in (1) is ambiguous between a normal control reading (i) vs. a second reading (ii) referred to as “crossed control” (Polinsky & Potsdam 2008) or “funny control” (Gil 2002). While both readings are grammatically possible, in this example the crossed control (CC) reading is preferred because the normal control reading is pragmatically implausible. A variety of ingenious and complex analyses have been proposed for the crossed control construction, in particular to explain the identification of the agent or experiencer of the matrix verb (V_1) with the passive agent of the complement verb (V_2): Polinsky & Potsdam (2008); Nomoto (2008); Sato (2010); Berger (2018); etc. We argue that crossed-control arises in restructuring clauses due to Long Distance Passivization, similar to the well-known Spanish pattern illustrated in (2).

- (1) *Tujuh anggota komplotan berhasil di-ringkus polisi.* [Sneddon 1996: 271]
 seven member gang succeed PASS-catch police
 (i) ‘Seven members of the gang succeeded in being caught by the police.’ (normal)
 (ii) ‘Police succeeded in catching seven members of the gang.’ (crossed)
- (2) *Las casas fueron acabadas de pintar ayer.*
 the house-PL were finish to paint yesterday
 ‘The houses were finished to paint yesterday.’ [Aissen & Perlmutter 1983]

Polinsky & Potsdam provide several strong arguments against a clause-reduction analysis, but we feel it is worth taking a second look at this issue, since clause-reduction provides a relatively simple and familiar analysis for an otherwise exotic and puzzling construction. Restricting their attention to two Indonesian verbs of wanting, *mau* and *ingin*, P&P present three types of evidence: (i) *mau* and *ingin* cannot occur on their own in the passive or Undergoer Voice (or “zero passive”); (ii) V_1 and V_2 can be independently negated or deleted under ellipsis; and (iii) distribution of the “emphatic” particle *-lah*. We address the first two of these issues below. Their third argument is based on some misleading terminology in Sneddon (1996: 261–263), who uses the term “predicate” to refer to the main verb together with any preceding negation markers and/or auxiliaries. These strings are not complex predicates, as P&P seem to assume, in fact not constituents in any sense, and the examples Sneddon discusses there do not involve CC.

(i) While *mau* and *ingin*, like many of the other CC predicates, are morphologically defective and cannot bear voice affixation unless they also bear some transitivity morphology, both verbs can in fact occur in the Undergoer Voice (UV), as illustrated in (3). Moreover, some other CC predicates can be inflected for passive voice, as seen in (4).

- (3) *Kau tidak perlu meN-(t)erima takdir yang tidak kau=mau!*
 2SG NEG need AV-receive fate REL NEG 2SG=want-UV
 ‘You don’t need to accept a fate that you don’t want!’ (Bastra14 blog)
- (4) *Berdagang lewat internet sudah di-coba oleh Ayah*
 trading follow internet already PASS-try by father
 ‘Doing business on the internet has been tried by Father.’ (Arka 2000)

Nevertheless, it is true that a significant number of CC predicates cannot be inflected for voice, including the *ber-* verbs (*berani* ‘dare’, *berhasil* ‘to succeed’, *berhak* ‘entitled to’, etc.), which are strictly intransitive, and the adjectives (*rela* ‘willing’, *layak* ‘qualified’, *mampu* ‘capable’, etc.). This fact is actually not a problem for a clause-reduction type of analysis, since the syntactic properties of a complex predicate can often be quite different from the properties of

either of the components on their own. It does seem to pose a potential problem for the “Voice incorporation” approach of Wurmbrand (2016) and Berger (2018), since the adjectival and *ber-*verb CC predicates presumably cannot bear a Voice feature.

(ii) Polinsky & Potsdam claim that V_1 and V_2 can be independently negated or deleted under ellipsis, preserving the CC reading, but we are unable to replicate the judgments which they report. Our primary consultant rejected the CC reading as being totally impossible in such examples, and could only accept the relevant sentence patterns under a normal control interpretation, even though in most cases this interpretation would be pragmatically bizarre. An ellipsis example is presented in (5). We also corresponded with seven other speakers, all but one of whom agreed with the judgments of our consultant. A recurring source of confusion is the fact that *mau* is polysemous; in addition to the ‘want’ sense which is relevant here, it can also function (in conversational Indonesian) as an auxiliary marking future tense (Arka 2014; Jeoung 2018), and this seems to be the preferred interpretation for many speakers when *mau* occurs before another verb. This may be a contributing factor in the differing acceptability judgments.

- (5) Mobil ini mau di-jual oleh Ali dan sepeda itu mau ____ juga.
 car this want PASS-sell by Ali and bicycle that want ____ also
 a. %‘Ali wants to sell his car, and (to sell) his bicycle also.’ (Polinsky & Potsdam 2008)
 b. #‘Ali wants to sell this car, and that bicycle also wants it.’ (our consultant)

Like Arka (2014), Wurmbrand (2016), and Berger (2018), we argue that V_1 and V_2 share a single voice feature. Voice is normally marked morphologically only on V_2 , but the voice function applies equally to both verbs. Since V_1 is normally unmarked, it tends to be translated as an active voice form, which leads to the puzzling “crossed” reading. But since both verbs share the same voice feature, a more accurate translation for the second reading of example (1) would be something like: ‘Seven members of the gang *were succeeded in being caught* by the police,’ similar to the translation offered for the Spanish example (2).

However, while the morphological expression of voice is normally marked only on V_2 , it can also appear on V_1 (as in 6a) or on both verbs at once (6b) without apparent change of meaning, as noted by Arka (2014) and Berger (2018). This distribution is reminiscent of tense and aspect inflection in serial verb constructions. These facts again pose a challenge for the model of restructuring proposed by Wurmbrand (2016) and Berger (2018), leading Berger to suggest some possible modifications to the analysis which allow more flexibility. Under an older, lexicalist view of the morphology-syntax interface, which allows fully inflected word forms to be inserted into syntactic structures, these facts are easily analyzed in terms of unification of voice features.

- (6) a. Setiausaha.Agung yang baru... di-coba bunuh oleh Datuk.Musa...
 Secretary-General REL new PASS-try kill by D.M.
 ‘The new Secretary-General... was tried to be killed by Datuk Musa...’
 b. Bung Karno pernah di-coba di-bunuh enam kali.
 brother K. EXPER PASS-try PASS-kill six times
 ‘Pres. Sukarno was tried to be killed six times.’

Selected References

- Arka, I Wayan. 2014. Double and backward control in Indonesian: An LFG analysis. In *Proceedings of the LFG14 Conference*. Berger, Mike. 2018. Indonesian crossed control: Expanding the typology of restructuring. WCCFL & AFLA. Nomoto, Hiroki. 2008. A unified analysis of funny control. ISMIL 12. Polinsky, Maria & Eric Potsdam. 2008. The syntax and semantics of wanting in Indonesian. *Lingua* 118. 1617–1639.