

Malay Adverb *Lagi*

Lagi could be an adverb itself or combined with affixes, i.e. *selagi*, *lagikan*. According to the definitions in *Kamus Dewan*, *lagi* comes with several meanings, i.e. ‘in addition’, ‘yet/still’, ‘what’s more’, ‘again’, and ‘even more’. Google translator provides a more comprehensive list, including ‘further,’ ‘over’, ‘off’, ‘anew’, ‘afresh’, etc.

We aimed to look at actual uses of *lagi* in news articles. When looked into the corpus containing 35,767 news articles of *Utusan Malaysia*, we found that *lagi* appeared 24,756 times in the corpus. Among these, 366 (1.48%) instances appeared as sentence initial position, within which 63 instances were news headlines; 2,537 (10.25%) appeared before a comma, and 1,537 (6.21%) appeared as sentence final position. The remaining majority appeared within a sentence. The meanings in the corpus showed frequent use of ‘more’ and ‘again.’ What’s interesting in the news articles that do not often occur in ordinary uses of *lagi* is the sentence initial use [*Lagi* + event] in headlines, some are shown below.

- (1) (a) ***Lagi*** *didakwa pecah amanah lebih RM14 juta*
- (b) ***Lagi*** *maut protes antikerajaan di Yemen*
- (c) ***Lagi*** *wanita disimbah asid*
- (d) ***Lagi*** *sampah di bahu jalan*
- (e) ***Lagi*** *anugerah untuk Berjaya Hills*
- (f) ***Lagi*** *mayat bayi di pusat pelulusan sampah*
- (g) ***Lagi*** *penulis blog hina raja Melayu disiasat*
- (h) ***Lagi*** *usaha cari jam tangan di Plaza*
- (i) ***Lagi*** *rumah musnah terbakar di Tawau*

The placement of *lagi* at the initial position emphasized the ‘repetitiveness’ of an event rather than the event itself. The re-occurrence of such as event increases the impact of the news.

Apart from this finding, we also searched for the occurrences of *lagi* in Malay idioms. Malay idioms (*pepatah* and *peribahasa*) often appear in parallel clauses. There were altogether 22 idioms (two repeated ones) taken from *Kamus Peribahasa*, some of which are shown in (3).

- (1) (a) *apa **lagi** sawa, berkehendakkan ayamlah* (what’s more)
- (b) *belum tahu **lagi**, ayam masih berlaga* (yet)
- (c) *berapa berat mata memandang, **berat lagi** bahu memikul* (more)
- (d) *cekur jerangau masih ada **lagi** di ubun-ubun* (still)
- (e) *embun belum kering **lagi*** (yet)
- (f) *jalan mati **lagi** dicuba, inikan pula jalan binasa* (still)
- (g) *kalaupun kucing tidak bermisai, tikus tidak akan takut **lagi*** (anymore)
- (h) ***lagi** murah **lagi** ditawarkan* (more)
- (i) *masin **lagilah** garam sendiri* (more)
- (j) *muda akan tua, hidup akan mati, dunia akan tinggal, bilakah **lagi**?* (again)
- (k) *sabung selepas hari petang, tidak dapat menuntut balas **lagi*** (again)
- (l) *sedangkan gajah yang besar itu yang berkaki empat **lagi** kadang-kadang terserandung* (more)
- (m) *sedangkan lidah **lagi** tergigit* (more)
- (n) *senduk dan periuk **lagi** terhantuk* (more)
- (o) *seperti api makan lalang kering, tidak dapat dipadamkan **lagi*** (ever)

The results showed that *lagi* has pragmatic functions that emphasize the non-singleton of an event. It is more often used to serve a comparative function, to emphasize the unexpected quality. *Lagi*, yet with a dominant repeated meaning, can be negated to mean something expected has yet happened.