

# Conjunctions in Jamamadi Narrative

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## ABSTRACT

The conjunction fai (and so) with its variants fai-ya (and so there) and faira (but) occur at transition points in Jamamadi narrative. These transition points are at paragraph and episode boundaries. Fai and fai-ya occur only with event line information and serve to bring the story back to the sequence of events that directly concern the topic or move the sequence forward after delays.

Fara (but) does not occur in personal narrative. It occurs mostly with evaluative, stative, or identifying information and occasionally with events. Its function is to indicate a causative relation at key points in the story, such as the compilation, resolution and coda.

## 0. Introduction

In Jamamadi narrative<sup>1</sup> conduction words are rare. The most common, fai<sup>2</sup> and its variants is the subject of this paper. Three others are makobote (later), hibati (before), and hibajata (now). These are rarely used, and appear to be used only on clause level as time words. Instead of conjunction words, relations between events are principally indicated by the presence or absence of certain suffixes on the verb, used singly or in combination.<sup>3</sup> At least some of these same relations may be indicated on the higher levels of narrative structure (paragraph, episode, and discourse) by the use of fai and its variants.

The conduction fai occurs at transition points in Jamamadi narrative. It directs attention away from what precedes to the imminent introduction of a new topic, activity or situation that is central to the story. When fai occurs, it serves to indicate transition points at various levels of the hierarchical structure of a narrative. Its occurrence and function at two kinds of transition points are described: 1. paragraph boundaries, and 2. episode boundaries.

### 0.1 Forms of fai

Fai has three variants, fai (and so), fai-ya (and so there), and fara (but). The clitic ya in fai-ya (and so there) is a locative indicator which can also occur on nouns such as yobe-ya (in the house). Since the form differs from fai only semantically, its functional meaning will be discussed together with fai. It tends to occur in the same places that other locative and time information occur, at the beginning and ending of episodes and journeys. Fara (but) will be discussed separately.

### 0.2 Discourse groupings

Certain groupings in Jamamadi discourse structure are needed for this discussion. A paragraph is a group of event clauses having unity of place and participants. A change of setting necessitates a new paragraph. The boundaries of a paragraph are often indistinct.

The transition between paragraphs contains only medial<sup>4</sup> (non-sentence final) clauses with the motion verbs required to get from one setting to the other. Such information is difficult to assign to either the preceding or the following paragraph. Usually the onset of the second paragraph is indicated by either a final clause<sup>4</sup> or topicalization devices or both. If there is also to be a topic change in the second paragraph, an event in the previous paragraph (usually the last one) is often repeated in the transition.

An episode is one or more paragraphs with the same general topic and usually covers a day's happenings. Usually the topic is an undergoer or a villain. It ends with a time phrase and a special kind of medial clause. Paragraphs within the episode have their own paragraph level topics, which usually contribute in some way to the development of the episode topic.

## 1. Paragraph boundaries

Fai can occur at paragraph boundaries. Occurring at the end of a paragraph it is part of the transition leading to the next paragraph. Occurring near the beginning of a paragraph it indicates a transition point within that paragraph. The occurrence of fai in a transition between

paragraphs functions on the episode level of the narrative. The occurrence of fai at a transition point within a paragraph functions at the paragraph level of the narrative.

### 1.1 Transition between paragraphs

When fai occurs as part of the transition between paragraphs, the following paragraph will start a new paragraph level topic or return to an old one. Fai helps to identify the onset of this transition. Medial clauses that occur in these transitions and in other places are indicated in examples by a comma. Final clauses that usually occur at paragraph onsets and other places are indicated in examples by a period. In the following example the transition is only one clause with the new paragraph having "They" as its topic.

' "Where are the results of the gun shots I heard?" I asked. "There aren't any results of the gun," they said. Fai (and so) we came back, they carried the wild pigs.'

Sometimes the transition between paragraphs is more extended beginning with fai and including a repetition of the major action of the previous paragraph.

'I shot the monkey that came. Whump! the monkey fell. He was very fat. Fai (and so) I shot the monkey (reference to previous event), I carried the monkey back, I threw the monkey down, Madoki roasted the monkey.'

The first three clauses after fai are medial clauses constituting a transition to the next paragraph and to a new topic 'Madoki'.

Consecutive paragraphs can occur without transition clauses between them, however. Fai may occur at these boundaries also.

'My uncle accompanied us (end of first paragraph). Fai (and so) the dogs woke up the tapir.'

The occurrence of fai in the transition between paragraphs serves to keep the story moving towards the completion of its stated goal (the episode topic). A fuller gloss of fai could be (and now to go on with the story). A sequential relation is a component of the meaning of fai. It brings the story back to the sequence of events that directly concern the topic or moves the sequence forward after delays. Fai does not occur in every paragraph transition, but only in those which start the story moving again after the final resolution and after any delay, interruption, or activity that is not central to the development of the episode topic. In one instance, fai occurs following a paragraph in which Arniso was a paragraph level topic. Following fai, attention is resumed on the episode level topic 'jaguar'. The paragraph about Arniso is not significant in the killing of the jaguar.

'In the jaguar's stomach the shot finally hit, "Tei" (end of paragraph). Fa-ya<sup>5</sup> (and so there) he (the jaguar) sat,<sup>6</sup>

'He sat' describes the jaguar both before Arniso's attempt to kill him and afterward. Arniso's attempt failed to make a change.

In a story in which "wild pigs" is the episode topic, fai occurs following a paragraph in which the participants were fishing. The fishing activity was quite incidental to the pig hunt to follow.

'Fai (and so) they were dipping the poison in the water (summary of previous paragraph), (when) they heard the sound of the pigs.'

Although the narrator seems to have a range of choice concerning whether or not he considers certain activities peripheral or central to the telling of his story, the occurrence of fai after the resolution of the episode is quite a regular occurrence in most stories. It usually begins the homeward journey. In the jaguar story it occurs after the jaguar was finally killed.

'He (the jaguar) fell over dead. Fai (and so) we tied the jaguar.'

In another instance fai occurs following shooting a monkey which was the last significant event before the return journey.

'I shot the monkey, fai (and so) I covered the monkey with leaves, and circled around,'

Fai also frequently occurs after stopping to rest on the homeward journey.

'Arniso stopped to rest (after carrying the jaguar) (end of paragraph), fai (and so) he started out again, coming back,'

## 1.2. Paragraph introductions

Near the beginning of a paragraph fai may occur between a quotation or explanatory aside and the resumption of the narrative. The quotation or the explanation is not central to the development of the paragraph topic and fai indicates the return to the central events and states of the paragraph. A common way to introduce a new paragraph topic is a topic sentence, and an initiation-response pair with fai (and so) occurring with the response clause as in the following example. The parenthetical information is out of temporal sequence, and fai resumes the time sequence of the paragraph.

'Madoki burned the hair off the monkey. "I'm going to eat the monkey." Fai (and so) Madoki burned the hair off the monkey.'

"I'm going to eat the monkey" was just a passing comment of Madoki and is not necessarily the reason he burned the hair off the monkey.

Another occurrence of fai at paragraph onsets is after an explanatory aside to the hearer.

'We arrived at Bodo. Bodo, Uh, today we call it Santa Maria. Fa-ya (and so there) we arrived at Santa Maria.'

## 3. Episode Boundaries

### 3.1 Episode final paragraph

At episode boundaries the presence of fai in the final paragraph of an episode indicates the finishing of the episode and imminent transition to another episode. Sometimes on this level

fai occurs in several consecutive clauses. The narrator is adding the last details of the episode and these are usually highly predictable and frequently repetitive. Usually after a day's activities a new episode starts, but if there is no topic change the same episode continues and fai does not occur.

'He roasted the monkey, fai (and so) we slept, at night we slept (end of episode). We ate the monkey, and took off early,'

'When it was just getting dark we arrived, fa-ya (and so there) we arrived, later, fa-ya (and so there) we arrived, we slept. (end of episode) We took off early,'

Episodes can also change abruptly without a transition paragraph.

'In late afternoon we arrived at the Boka de Abiro (end of episode). Fa-ya (and so there) a jaguar. (title of new episode)'

### 3.2 Episode introductory paragraph

Discourse medial episodes often begin with a paragraph, which includes an initiation-response pair. The response initiates the first action of the episode.

' "At the Kamita trail I am going to cut sorva." I said. Fa-ya (and so there) in order to cut sorva I went.'

' "Mother, I'm going hunting." I said. Fa-ya (and so there) (to the jungle) I went.'

## 4. Fara

The study of the function of the conjunction fara is incomplete. However, a comparison with fai (and so) has revealed a number of significant observations. The comparison is summarized below.

	<u>Fai</u>	<u>Fara</u>
Type of text	all types	not in personal narratives
relation to what precedes	preceding usually peripheral; sequential	preceding essential; usually contrast
relation to what follows	returns to or advances sequence of central events	usually causal
kind of information in clause	event-line information, motion verbs, action verbs	sometimes action verbs, more often evaluations, states, statives, identification

Whereas fai may occur in all types of text, fara is not found at all in personal narratives. Instead it is found in legendary, historical, and expository texts.

#### 4.1 Kinds of information

The kinds of information that occur with fai and fara differ sharply. The sentence in which fai occurs is always an event. The sentence in which fara occurs is usually not an event. The information in such a sentence is often a state, an evaluation, or an identification. Often just a noun with verbal endings occurs with fara. The following are examples of fara occurring with negative evaluations.

'Faira<sup>6</sup> (but) he lied. Fara (but) a lie'

'Fara (but) the one who stuffed her (in the log) was unrepentant.'

'Bito drank the medicine, faira (but) it didn't do any good.'

The following are implied negative evaluations. The actions expressed were culturally inappropriate or taboo. In the first, the man who had tried to kill his wife was acting as if nothing had happened.

'Fa-faira (but) the one who stuffed her (in the log), lying in the hammock, singing, he was, he was singing songs.'

Fa-faira is a reduplicated form. Reduplication on verbs emphasizes the fact rather than the process of doing an action.

The second implied negative evaluation is when the villain teases his wife's mother as if he were on good terms with her.

'Faira (but) when he finished stuffing (her in the log) fara he teased.'

Fara also occurs with stative and identification clauses.

'Fara (but) it is for that reason, Arniso's sickness worsened.'

'Fara (but) it was urine.'

'Fara (but) it was blood.'

Fara can also occur with events. In this case it is the event of peak suspense.

'Fara (But) at the water he was blown (in the nose with a drug). Fara (because of that)<sup>7</sup> blown, dead, he fell over.'

#### 4.2 Logical relations

Most evaluations and states preceded by fara are negative. Implied in all negative evaluations and states is a relation of either contrast or cause-result. Therefore, because these logical relations are implicit by the nature of the content in the kinds of information that occur with fara, causation and contrast seem to be a component of the meaning of fara. It will be glossed (but) and sometimes (because of that). Fai (and so) by way of comparison has temporal relationships implicit in its meaning.

Also this division of the kinds of information occurring with fai and fara and its implicit relations are exactly parallel to the same divisions occurring with ke and ra (perspective

indications) verbal suffixes.<sup>3</sup> The verbal suffixes indicate these relations between events. Fai and fara indicate these relations on the higher levels of the narrative (paragraph, episode, and discourse).

Fara occurring at transition points in the narrative not only indicates an evaluation of the central events but also indicates logical relations (either causal or contrastive) with the preceding information and often indicates a result to follow.

cause - fara, evaluation or state - result to come

Fara occurs at major turning points in the development of a story. At the onset of the complication, a legendary villain attempts to persuade his wife to crawl inside a log to catch an animal. After numerous assurances that the animal was there and that it was safe, the narrator says:

'Faira (but he lied), fara (because of) the lie she went into the hole (result).'

The lie referred to is the previous paragraph of extended conversation with his wife. The wife's crawling in the hole is the first step in the crime to be committed by her husband. At the beginning of the resolution of this legend is an evaluation of the villain and an identification of the means of revenge.

'Fa-faira (but) the one who had stuffed her in a log, swinging, singing, he was, he was singing song. Fara (and because of that) it is urine.'

Later in the paragraph it specifies that this urine will be the means of the villain's undoing. At the end of the resolution at the moment of final resolution fara occurs again.

'Fara (but) he was blown (with a drug). Fara (because of that), blown, dead, he fell over.

And again fara occurs near the end in the coda section of the story.

'The blood said, "hara, hara, hara", fara (but) it was blood. Fai-ya (and so) the blood was resurrected and became the hara (rat) we have today.'

Often, but not always, a negative evaluation is given or implied. However, the evaluation may be positive and still involve a contrast as in the following historical narrative. A man had died and then in the coda section it states:

'Bito's clothes were many. Some were destroyed, some, Bidi took for his own, some clothes. His (the dead man's) wife, some were destroyed by his wife. Fara (but) another one? I'm wearing it, see?'

If there was any bad luck or greediness involved in this the narrator would never admit it. He was rather boasting of his good fortune.

Fara is also used in a transition from a paragraph explaining that a certain kind of fish is good for bait. After fara, is a paragraph of a specific instance where a man succeeded in catching fish with this bait.

'The sako (fish) always like the ta-tanaka (fish). Fara (Because of that) Fono caught some, he threw the ta-tanaka (fish) into the water. The fish (the kind we eat) really liked them.'

## FOOTNOTES

1 Jamamadi is an Arawan language spoken by an unknown number of people along the Purus River in the state of Amazonas, Brazil. The dialect under study consists of about 100 speakers located above the town of Lábrea. Data were gathered during field trips from 1963 to 1977 under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in accordance with a contract with the Museu Nacional of Rio de Janeiro and by permission of the Fundação Nacional do Índio. I wish to thank Robert Dooley for his valuable advice given in a field workshop at Porto Velho, Rondonia, Brazil.

2 The phonemes of Jamamadi are vowels a e i o, voiceless stops t k, preglottalized voiced stops b d, fricatives f s, nasals m n h, the latter frequently dropping from an unstressed syllable leaving only nasalization), resonants w r y, The phoneme /s/ is [ts] word initially, /f/ is [p], /r/ is [l] initially and before front voicoids and [ř] elsewhere. Vowels following nasals /n/, /m/, and /h/ are nasalised. Stress alternates on every other syllable starting with the first. Sentence stress falls on the verb root and modifies the alternating stress pattern in some words.

3 These suffixes are more fully discussed in two unpublished papers on file at the Fundação Nacional do Índio, "Jamamadi Sentences" and Narrator's perspective in "Jamamadi Narrative".

4 A medial clause has non-final intonation (upglide). It does not end a sentence and lacks verification and perspective suffixes on the verb. A final clause has final intonation (downglide) and may end a sentence. The verb of the clause must contain a suffix from the verification system and usually contains a suffix from the perspective system.

5 Fa-ya is a phonemic variant of fai-ya. Faira is a phonemic variant of fara.

6 In Jamamadi narrative, sentence final clauses are relatively infrequent and sometimes occur only once in a paragraph. To complete each illustration at the end of its sentence would necessitate including much material irrelevant to the illustration.

7 This second meaning is mostly to approximate a meaning for the second occurrence of fara. Sometimes two or more fara's occur in consecutive sentences. This arrangement probably creates specialized meaning as various combinations of the verbal suffixes do so on event level. These arrangements with fara and fai have not been studied sufficiently to include here.