COMPLEMENTATION IN CLASSICAL MALAY

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This paper investigates the structure of a certain construction type in Classical Malay in which two verbs share an argument. The construction has been interpreted as a serial verb construction by Cumming (1991) and as a part of the 'sentence elaboration' by Ajamiseba (1983). We will show that syntactically it is best analyzed as a type of infinitival complement. It should be noted that the term 'complement' is used here in a wider sense to include some clauses that may not strictly be clausal arguments.

The Classical Malay Hikayat

The language referred to as Classical Malay is a historical precursor of modern Malay and Indonesian. Extant text materials in Classical Malay include legal texts, poetry, and a prose genre known as the hikayat. Most linguistic research on the language has concentrated on the latter narratives (Becker 1979, Ajamiseba 1983, Hopper 1983, Cumming 1991), due partly to the peculiar linguistic constraints on poetry and partly to the ready availability of several hikayat in scholarly editions. We will follow this tradition in the present paper.

Although they are 'written language', the hikayat, which mostly date from the 17th to 19th century, were most likely recited orally in front of an audience. The preponderance of clause-initial 'punctuation words' (i.e., words like *maka, hatta, syahdan, arakian,* and *demikian,* which indicate a sentence or clause boundary) in the hikayat texts has been linked to the unique requirements involved in the oral performance of a written text.

Basic Malay syntax

Classical Malay sentences are organized around a *pun*-marked theme constituent, which expresses old or given information, and a rhematic *-lah*-marked constituent, which presents new information. This central *pun- -lah* structure may be preceded by a contextualizing constituent, often a time or place modifier. One or several punctuation words open the sentence:

(1) Maka setelah keesokan hari-nya maka jaring dan jerat
    then   after   tomorrow   day-DEF then net   and trap

    pun di-tahan   orang-lah.
    TOP PASS-set person-COM

    'The following morning nets and snares were set'.

In sentence (1), the punctuation word *maka* is followed by the time adverbial *setelah keesokan harinya* [literally, 'after the tomorrowing of the day']. The noun phrase *jaring dan jerat pun* 'nets and snares' forms the topic constituent while the verb phrase *ditahan oranglah* 'were set (by people)' constitutes the rheme.

    A sentence may lack either a *pun* or a *-lah* marked constituent, or both, if they are not to be foregrounded, as in sentences (2) and (3).

(2) Maka Paya Tu Kerub Mahajana pun ber-anak
    then   TOP INTR-have:child

    se-orang   laki-laki.
    one-person male

    'Paya Tu Kerub Mahajana had one son'.

(3) Maka sembah   orang tua itu: 'Nama patik Encik Tani'.
    then speak:respectfully person old the name slave

    'The old man said: "My name is Encik Tani"'.

The absence of both markers is particularly common in introductions to direct speech passages, as in example (3), since the direct speech is relatively more foregrounded in such sentences, whereas the introduction mainly serves as a subsidiary device to allow the audience to track the identity of the speaker.

    When there is no *pun* marked topic in a sentence, the *-lah* suffixed constituent may be focussed by moving it to the clause-initial position:

(4) Dan pangkalan   itu-lah   tempat Encik Tani
    and landing:stage that-COM place Encik Tani

    naik turun   me-rawa.
    go:up go:down TA-catch:prawns

'And that landing stage was the place where Encik
Tani used to go up and down to catch prawns'.

Sentence (5) illustrates that the *puh- -lah* center may be followed
by additional information which elaborates the main proposition.

(5) Syahdan maka Paya Tu Antara pun ke-raja-an-lah
   moreover then   TOP become-king-COM

   meng-ganti-kan   ayahanda baginda itu.
   TA-change-TRANS father   majesty that

   'Then Paya Tu Antara became king, succeeding his
   father'.

The elaboration component is underlined in sentence (5). In the
present paper, we will be most concerned with this latter element.
      Ajamiseba (1983) utilizes the division between the initial
contextualizer, the *puh- -lah* center, and the final elaboration as the
basis for an analysis of Malay sentences into three formal elements,
which he refers to as the precore, the core, and the elaboration,
respectively. His analysis has the advantage that it isolates the
pun- -lah center as a single unit. However, he bases his analysis
purely on the constituents that are formally marked with either *pun*
or -lah, disregarding the internal structure of the precore and of the
elaboration.
      As a result of this strict formal definition of the core,
Ajamiseba is led to misanalyze the structure of any sentence in
which the main clause includes any constituents beyond the
particular elements that are marked with *pun* or -lah. For example,
the interpretation of the 'punctuation words' as clause-initial
markers of an S-boundary is well established in Malay linguistics
and accepted by Ajamiseba as well (1983: 46). In his analysis of
sentence (6), however, he interprets *maka* as a final element of the
precore (Ajamiseba 1983: 65). Ajamiseba's presumed precore is
underlined in this example:

(6) Setelah baginda men-dengar sembah orang itu maka
   after   majesty TA-hear   homage person that then

   baginda pun ber-angkat   ber-jalan kepada tempat itu.
   majesty TOP INTR-depart INTR-walk to   place that

   'After his majesty heard the man's report, he departed
   for that place'.

His analysis is consistent with the formal criteria that he set up insofar as *maka* precedes the topic *baginda pun* and so ought to be part of the precore; but it runs counter to the well-established generalization that punctuation words mark the initial position of a clause.

Similar problems arise with Ajamiseba's formal notion of the elaboration as that component that follows the *-lah* marked element. His analysis of sentence (7), for example, (1983: 62) explicitly notes that the elaboration consists of the prepositional phrase *dari atas_gajahnya* 'from his elephant' and the clause following it:

(7) Maka baginda pun *turun-lah*   dari atas gajah-nya
     then majesty TOP descend-COM from top elephant-3

     semayam di-dalam khemah di-adap   oleh segala
     sit:in:state in-inside tent   PASS-face by all

     menteri hulubalang ra'yat sekalian.
     minister officer   people all

     'Then he descended from his elephant to sit in state in a
     tent faced by all the ministers, officers, and all the people'.

Again, Ajamiseba's analysis may be formally consistent; but it makes the unlikely claim that the prepositional phrase *dari atas gajahnya* forms a unified constituent with the following clause, with which it does not contract a semantic relationship, but not with the predicate *turunlah* 'descend', with which it does belong semantically.

The crucial insight that leads to an analysis which avoids these problems is that the main clause can contain more than the *pun* and *-lah* marked entities. A main clause will regularly begin with some punctuation word(s), followed by the pun-lah core and, frequently, further, oblique constituents. With respect to the sentences discussed so far, this analysis enables us to state that the main clause in sentence (6) begins with *maka baginda pun*, with the initial punctuation word *maka*, while the main clause in (7) includes the oblique prepositional phrase *dari atas gajahnya*. It therefore fits the semantic facts of such oblique phrases as well as the well-known behavior of the punctuation words. The elaboration will, then, be limited to any clauses following the main clause.