

WH-INTERROGATIVES IN THE MALAY CLASSICAL TEXT OF SULALATUS SALATIN

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1 Introduction

This study is part of an on-going research project which looks at the interrogatives used in Malay classical texts. The Malay classical texts are written documents produced before the 1900s. The classic Malay genre reflects a state of the Malay language through time. The data of the classic Malay genre consists of *hikayats*, official announcements of Malay rulers, official letters of sultans to colonialist administrators or official letters to foreign rulers. Through the examination of these documents and the style of language used, we can describe the patterns of constructions used and trace the development of the forms used in these constructions.

Sulalatus Salatin or *Sejarah Melayu* used in this study is the version edited by A. Samad Ahmad (1996) which is nearer to the original manuscript compared to the versions edited by Shellabear (1909) or Winstedt (1938). *Sulalatus Salatin* (SS hereafter) is a text which was written or compiled by Tun Seri Lanang during the times of Sultan Abdullah Ma'ayah Shah, a ruler in the southern state of Johor from approximately 1613 to 1623. The purpose of writing this collection of stories of the Malay sultans and Malay Sultanate was to inform the future generation of their heritage, culture, and roots of their lineage.

‘Bahawa hamba minta diperbuatkan hikayat pada Bendahara, peraturan segala raja-raja Melayu dengan istiadatnya supaya didengar oleh anak cucu kita yang kemudian dari kita dan diketahuinya segala perkataan, syahadan beroleh faedahlah mereka itu daripadanya’

SS contains interrogatives in the form of *wh*-questions, yes-no questions, alternative questions, and a small sampling of other forms of interrogatives.

wh-question

- (1) Mengapa maka anakku hendak pergi bermain jauh? (p36)
Why that child-my wan go play far
‘Why would my child want to go play far away?’

yes/no question

- (2) Adalah kita memanggil paman ini, kita hendak beristeri,
 is-EMP we all uncle Dem, we want marry
 ‘We summon uncle here, (because) we want to marry,
 carikan kita, adakah paman? (p36).
 find us is-QPRT uncle
 find a wife for us, are there any, uncle?’

Alternative question

- (3) Akukah Pak Si Bendul engkaukah Pak Si Bendul? (p21)
 I-QPRT the clown you-QPRT the clown
 ‘Am I the clown, (or) are you the clown?’

Our focus in this discussion is on one type of interrogatives, i.e. the *wh*-questions. We will look at the various issues regarding *wh*-movement in *wh*-questions with the purpose of trying to account for the characteristics of *wh*-movement in classical Malay of *Sejarah Melayu*.

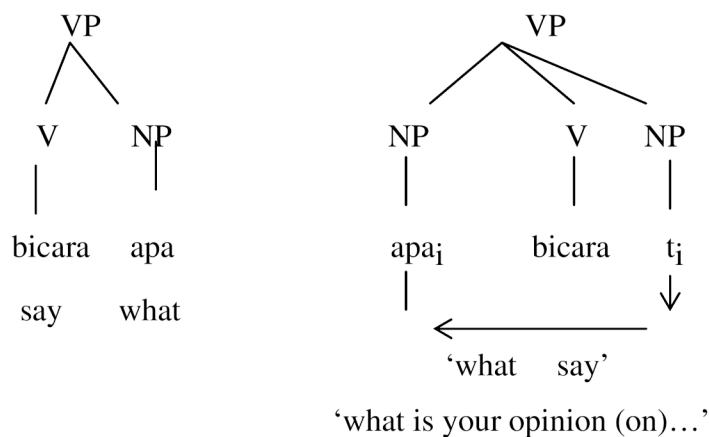
We will be employing assumptions of Government and Binding as in Chomsky (1981, 1986) in describing our data. We could not look at degrees of ungrammaticality of sentences in the data as our only source of judgment is the corpus in the book. Therefore, we will be restricting our discussion to account for the properties of *wh*-movement in the variety of Malay used in the classic text.

2 Properties of *Wh*-Interrogatives in SS

Basically, the *wh*-movements in SS do not differ much from *wh*- movements in modern Malay. Nevertheless, there are characteristics which give *wh*-movement in classical Malay as in SS a distinctive and idiosyncratic flavor.

2.1 Absence/Presence of Internal Fronting in [+wh] constituents**(a) Verb phrases (VP [+wh])**

Verb phrases which have the feature [+wh] tend to undergo an internal fronting of the word containing the [+wh] feature in the VP constituent prior to movement to [Spec,CP] position.

**Figure 1**

now what say all people because we want to there
 'Now, what does everyone think, as we want to go there,

terlalu sekali kita berkenan memandang dia.] (p38)
 very much we like look her
 (we are) very much infatuated looking (at) her'.

Other examples of this type of internal-VP movement are as in (5a) to (5f).

- (5) a. apa mahu?
 what want
 'What (do you) want?'
- b. apa rasa?
 what think
 'What(do you) think?'
- c. apa kerja?
 what work
 'What (are you) doing here?'
- d. apa khabar?
 what news
 'How are (you) doing?'
- e. apa sebab?
 what reason
 'What is the reason?'
- f. apa jadinya?
 what become
 'What happened?'

Following the internal movement in the VP constituent, the whole VP_[+wh] undergoes *wh*-movement to [Spec,CP] position.

(b) Noun Phrases (NP_[+wh])

There is no internal movement of the *wh*-word within the NP; instead the *wh*-word remains at the original position in the NP constituent even after *wh*-movement in the VP.

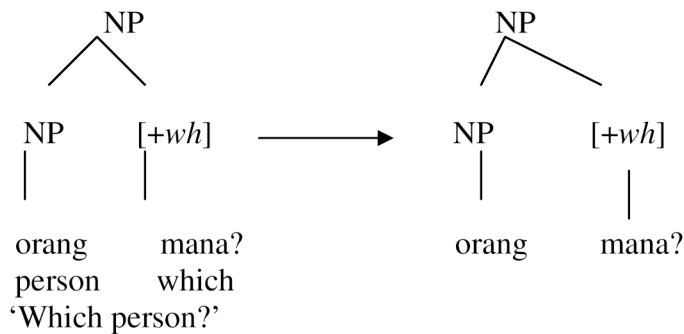


Figure 2

- (6) [Orang mana [kamu ini], dan [hendak ke mana [kamu]]?
 people where you DEM and want to where you
 'What is your origin and where are you heading to?'

Other examples of NP_[+wh] are in (7a) to (7f).

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---|--|
| (7) | a. bahasa mana?
language which
'Which language?' | b. destar mana?
head-gear which
'Which head-gear?' | c. daging apa?
meat what
'What meat?' |
| | d. gendang apa?
drum what
'Which drum?' | e. menteri apatah?
minister what-EMP
'What kind of minister?' | f. orang siapa?
person who
'Whose people?' |

(c) Clause (IP_[+wh])

IP_[+wh] in SS has examples of internal fronting of the [+wh] word in the clause, as in (8a) to (8c), (9), and Figure 3.

- (8)
- | | |
|--|---|
| a. [IP apa janji paman?]
what promise uncle
'What is uncle's promise?' | b. [IP apa pekerjaan lain?]
what work other
'What other job?' |
| c. [IP apa namanya?]
what name-it
'What is its name?' | |

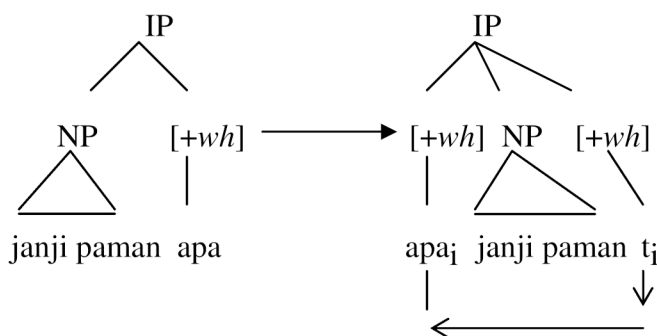


Figure 3

- (9) [Apa janji paman [hendak diperjanjikan dengan hamba itu?
 what promise uncle want promise-PASS with servant]](P30)
 ‘What is uncle’s promise to be promised to me?’

We discovered that some constituents with $[+wh]$ features display internal fronting in the constituents prior to wh -movement. We find that $NPs_{[+wh]}$ at $[VP\ V\ NP_{[+wh]}]$ and NPs at predicative positions particularly of the $[IP\ NP\ NP_{[+wh]}]$ structure allows internal movement. On the other hand, NPs at modifier positions in nominal constructions $[NP\ NP\ NP_{[+wh]}]$ do not allow movement.

This apparently corresponds to the fact the $NPs_{[+wh]}$ in the former group are NPs in governed positions, whilst the $NPs_{[+wh]}$ in the latter group are NPs in an ungoverned positions. We propose in (10) a condition on extraction for the internal fronting.

- (10) Condition on Extraction for Internal fronting
 (i) $NPs_{[+wh]}$ in governed positions permit internal fronting.
 (ii) $NPs_{[+wh]}$ in ungoverned positions does not permit internal fronting.

This condition explains the nature of wh -constituents in interrogatives in SS. $NPs_{[+wh]}$ in governed positions are free to move after being assigned theta-role by its governor whereas $NPs_{[+wh]}$ in ungoverned positions are modifiers which are crucially needed by its noun head to complete its structure and meaning.

2.2 Categories of Wh-Movement

Wh-movement in SS can be categorized as either head movement or maximal projection movement. The majority of the data that we have on wh -interrogatives consist of examples of maximal projection movements. Head movements in wh -interrogatives are only a small sample of the data.

Maximal projection movement is movement of the NP, VP, PrepP, AdvP, or InflP(clause). The maximal projection movement will move to a position which allows an XP to be adjoined. This position is the $[Spec, CP]$ position. Head movement is movement of X^0 such as the noun apa ‘what’, siapa ‘who’, berapa ‘how much’, verbs such as kabul ‘agree’, or auxiliaries such as hendak ‘want’ to a position which allows an X^0 to fill the adjoined position. This position is the $[Comp, CP]$.

In order to test these generalizations, we have to look at interrogative sentences which have both maximal projections and head movements.

- (11) Sekarang hendak ke mana Duli Yang Dipertuan hendak pergi? (p284)
 now want to where Your Highness want go
 'Now, where does Your Highness want to go?'

- (12) DS: [ADVP Sekarang [IP Duli Yang Dipertuan hendak pergi
 now YHighness want go
 [IP DYP hendak ke mana]]
 YH want to where

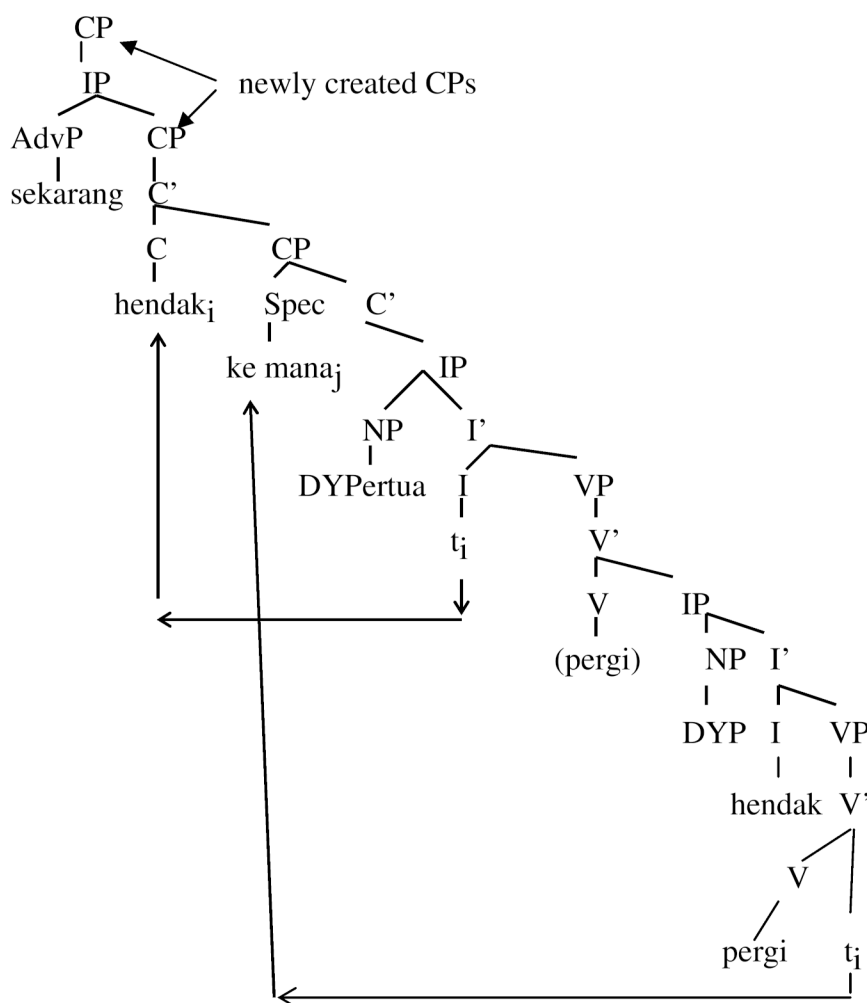


Figure 4

From the surface structure in (11), we can conclude that the interrogative sentence involves two movements: the movement of hendak 'want' and the *wh*-movement of ke mana. Accordingly, hendak 'want', being an X^0 , has to move to a position which allows an X^0 , whilst PrepP ke mana 'where to' has to move to a position which allows an XP. We

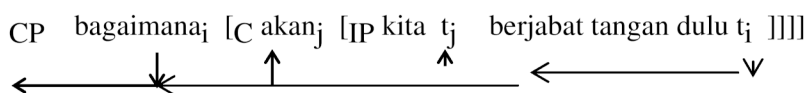
also have to cater for the AdvP *sekarang* ‘now’, located sentence-initially at surface structure. These requirements mean that we have to create two new landing sites: one for the X^0 *kehendak* and the other for AdvP *sekarang*. The PrepP *ke mana* ‘where to’ moves to the [Spec,CP] of the matrix clause. The new landing sites are adjunctions to the CP of the matrix clause. Figure 4 gives us the surface structure of the interrogative sentence.

The auxiliary *hendak* ‘want’ which is from I, the INFL head moves to Comp of CP. Meanwhile the PrepP *ke mana* ‘to where’ which is a maximal projection goes to [Spec,CP].

Another sentence which demonstrates these two kinds of movements is (13).

- (13) Lagi pula pada Duli Yang Dipertuan belum kita menjunjung
 more over to Royal Highness not we salute
 ‘Moreover, before we salute His Royal Highness;
 duli; bagaimana akan kita berjabat tangan dahulu (p254)
 respect how will we shake hand before
 how are we to shake hands first?’

- (14) SS: [AdvP Lagi pula pada Duli Yang Dipertuan belum kita menjunjung duli;



In (14), *bagaimana* ‘how’, an AdvP, moves to [Spec,CP], whilst the auxiliary *akan* ‘will’, which is the head of INFLP, moves to [Comp,CP].

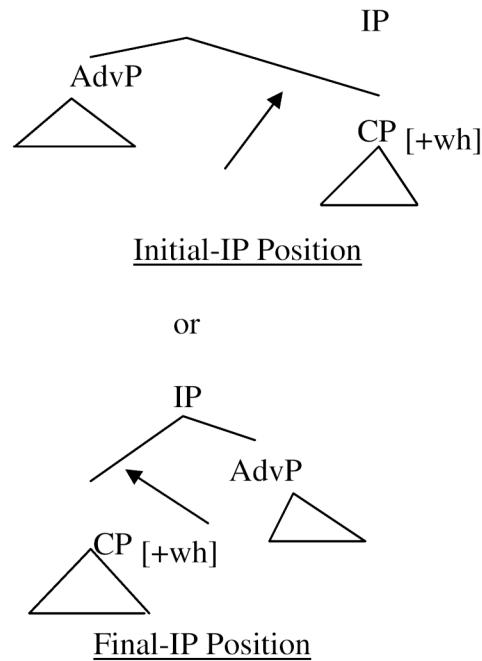
2.3 The Landing Sites for Wh-Movements

Interrogative sentences in SS demonstrate interesting possibilities for landing sites of *wh*-movements. There is the position [Spec,CP] of the matrix clause, as in (15) and (15’).

- (15) *Gunung mana* yang kelihatan dua itu?
 Mountain which that appears two that
 ‘Which mountain appears to be two (mountains)?’

- (15’) SS: [CP gunung mana_i [IP yang kelihatan dua itu t_i]]

Another possible landing site is a position between the ADVP and the CP matrix. This site is a common site for *wh*-movement in the data. The AdvP is usually some form of salutation, indicating time, condition, an introductory comment, etc which precedes the matrix CP. The structure is as produced in Diagram 5.

**Figure 5**(16) Examples of initial IP position

- (a) [AdvP Jikalau tuan hamba daripada anak cucu Iskandar
if sir slave from child grand Iskandar
'If you are from the generation of Alexander' ...
(conditional) [CP ...]] (p21)

- (b) [AdvP Sekarang [CP ...]] (p38)
'Now, ...' (time)

- (c) [AdvP Hei, Maharajah Dewa Sura [CP ...]] (p100)
'Hei, King Dewa Sura ... (salutation)

- (d) [AdvP Pada perasaan patik sekalian, [CP ...]] (p275)
at feeling subject all
'We all feel, ... (introduction)

(17) Examples of final IP position

- (e) [CP...[AdvP jikalau apa sekalipun tiada kita tahani]] (p194)
if what once-EMP no we stop
'..., whatever it is we will not stop you'.

- (f) [CP ... [AdvP jikalau demikian sia-sialah yang dibeli
if like that waste-EMP that buy-PASS
... 'if that's the case, that which was bought has gone to waste

oleh bapaku sekati emas di benua keling itu]].
 By father-my one kati gold at continent Indian the
 by my father the one kati of gold at the Indian continent’.

These structures are characteristic of clausal structures in the classical Malay text. These types of structures produce sentences which are unusually complex and long-winded due to the positioning of these AdvPs.

- (18) [Jikalau kita dikehendaki Allah Taala antara siang dan malam,
 if we want-PASS God between day and night
 ‘If we are called to Allah (anytime) between night and day,

[siapa [Bendahara dan orang-orang sekalian sembah [akan ganti kita
 who Bendahara and people all prostrate will replace us
 who (will) Bendahara and the other subjects prostrate to replace us,

[supaya Pahang ini jangan binasa?]]]]]
 so Pahang this not destroy
 so that Pahang will not be destroyed?’

In some cases, the landing sites of the *wh*-movement could be the [Spec,CP] of the respective embedded clauses. This is especially so in the cases of complex NPs in subject or object positions and interrogative sentences which have embedded sentences conjoined by connectives.

- (19) [CP Apa kehendaknya [IP menyuruh Orang Kaya Kedua ini
 what wish-his ask People rich second DEM
 ‘What (are) his wishes [asking both of Orang Kaya

(dan) [CP apa hendak [IP dicari?]]]] (p98)
 and what want find-PASS
 (and) what desires (does he) sought?’

In (20), a conjoined sentence with two embedded sentences, the *wh*-word goes to the respective immediate CPs.

- (20) [CP ‘Anak siapa [IP engkau ini], [CP siapa [IP namamu], dan
 child who you DEM who name-you and
 ‘Whose child are you, what is your name, and

[CP apa sebabnya [IP engkau hanyut dengan sekeping papan perahu ini]]]]? (p112)
 what reason-it you afloat with a-piece wood boat DEM
 why were you swept away with only this piece of perahu wood?’

In (21), the sentence is a conjoined sentence with three embedded Ips. The *wh*-words move to the respective embedded CPs.

- (21) [‘Apakah [dosa hamba ke bawah duli YDP] (adalah) kerana
 what-QPRT sin servant to under Royal Highness (is) because
 ‘What are my sins towards Your Royal Highness,
 salah hamba yang sedikit inikah maka hamba hendak dibuangkan]?’ (p201)
 wrong servant that little DEM-QPRT that servant want banish-PASS
 is it for my small misdeed that I am going to be banished?’

We conclude that possible landing sites of *wh*-movement could be [Spec,CP] of either matrix or embedded clauses or an A’ position between the AdvP and the CP matrix clause.

2.4 Types of Movements – Long or Short Distance Movements

The types of *wh*-movement in the data could be categorized as either long-distance or short-distance *wh*-movement. Short distance movements are when the XPs [+*wh*] are moved to the [Spec,CP] of the matrix clause. On the other hand, long distance movements are when the XPs [+*wh*] are moved and crossed over more than one embedded IP.

- (22) ‘[IP Hendak [CP ke mana [IP Laksamana baharu-baharuan
 want to where Laksamana just
 datang [IP mengadap kita]]]]?’ (p128)
 come (have) audience us
 ‘Where are you going? Didn’t you just arrive to have an audience with us?’
- (23’) DS: [IP Laksamana baharuan-baharuan datang [IP Laksamana mengadap kita
 [IP Laksamana hendak ke mana?]]]
- (23’) SS: [IP Hendak_i [CP ke mana_j [IP₁ Laksamana baharu-baharuan datang
 [IP₂ pro mengadap kita [IP₃ pro t_i t_j]]]]]

The PrepP ke mana ‘where’ originated in the IP₃ and is moved to the [Spec,CP] of the matrix clause. On its way to its destination, the PrepP [+*wh*] crosses over 3 IPs. Although this distance would normally result in an ungrammatical sentence, sentence (23) is grammatical due to the fact that PrepP ke mana is an adjunct and its trace in the extraction site need not be governed.

We did not come across any long distance movement of argument XPs [+*wh*]. All instances of argument XPs are short distance movements like the examples in (24) to (26).

- (24) [Siapa_i [t_i bersetia dengan engkau orang derhaka?]]
 who befriends with you people traitors
 ‘Who befriends traitors like you?’

- (25) [Apa_i [Kita buat t_i [duduk saja ini?]]]
 what we do sit only this
 ‘What are we doing sitting around like this?’
- (26) [Orang mana_i [kamu ini t_i] dan [hendak_j [pro t_j (pergi) ke mana, kamu?]]]
 people where you DEM and want (go) to where you
 ‘What people are you, and where do you want to go?’

We find that adjuncts XPs_[+wh] move relatively further than argument XPs_[+wh]. An adjunct need not be governed and can be as far from its extraction site compared to an argument which needs its governor nearer for government.

2.5 The Cyclic Application of Transformations

Complex sentences in SS follow the cyclic application of transformational rules. The cycle begins from the most deeply embedded IPs progressing upwards and leftwards to the matrix clause.

- (27) Apa mau Raja hendak bertemu dengan kita? (p277)
 what want King want meet with us
 ‘What does the king wants to want to meet with us?’

- (27’) DS: [IP₁ Raja hendak bertemu dengan kita [IP₂ raja mahu apa?]]

The first cycle is the most embedded IP – which is fronting of apa in the VP clause.

Cycle 1: (i) [IP₂ raja [VP apa_j mahu t_j?]]

Then the VP clause is moved to the [Spec,CP] of the matrix clause.

Cycle 2: (ii) [CP Apa mau_i [IP raja hendak bertemu dengan kita [IP₂ pro t_i]]]

Another example of a cyclic application of transformation is in (28).

- (28) Jikalau ia hamil sekalipun, apatah orang kaya takut menaruh
 If she pregnant anyhow, what-EMP people rich afraid keep

dia kerana orang kaya, orang tua kepadanya?
 her because people rich people old to-her

‘Even if she is pregnant, why are you frightened to have her (in your house) because you are older than her?’

- (28’) SS: [AdvP Jikalau ia hamil sekalipun, [CP apatah_i [IP orang kaya takut t_i [IP pro menaruh dia kerana orang kaya orang tua kepadanya?]]]]

Cycle 1: No transformation.

Cycle 2: *wh*-movement of apatah to [Spec,CP] of matrix clause.

We have shown the cyclic nature of transformation rules in SS. This accounts for the systematic ordering of constituents in the sentences regardless of their complexity.

2.6 Examples of *Wh-Interrogatives In-Situ*

Even though most *wh*-word or phrases move overtly to [Spec,CP], there exists a small number of *wh*-words or phrases which remain *in-situ* at base position in interrogative sentences. Consider (29) to (33).

- (29) Siapa mengarang surat ini?
 who write letter DEM
 ‘Who composed this letter?’
- (30) Raja yang mana?
 king that which
 ‘Which king?’
- (31) Si Putih dengan Si Khatijah mana dia?
 Si Putih and Si Khatijah where her
 ‘Where is Si Putih and Si Khatijah?’
- (32) Manda ini orang siapa?
 Uncle DEM people who
 ‘Who are you (Uncle) associated with?’
- (33) Kamu (pergi) ke mana?
 You go to where
 ‘Where did you go to?’

3 *Wh-Interrogatives in SS: A Summarization*

One peculiarity of *wh*-interrogatives in SS is the internal fronting of the *wh*-word which has the [+*wh*] feature in the VP constituent prior to movement to [Spec,CP]. We find that clauses with [+*wh*] feature also demonstrate this kind of internal fronting prior to *wh*-movement. Only NPs[+*wh*] do not have such internal fronting. We postulated the condition on extraction for internal fronting to account for this phenomenon. This initial fronting preceding *wh*-movement could be due to Indian stylistic influence of expressions considering that Hindu rituals and the Indian language has a great influence on the Malay language and culture of the Malay natives.

The other interesting feature was the possible landing sites for *wh*-movements in SS. We found that the landing sites could be [Spec,CP] of either matrix or embedded clauses or an A' position between the AdvP and the CP matrix clause. The possibility of landing sites in SS certainly departs radically from modern Malay interrogatives. It is certainly these intricate and complex structures which made classical Malay a more genteel variety of the Malay language. It allows room for creativity and thus accounts for the complexity of sentences produced. This appropriately describes this variety of Malay language used in SS, which is termed *bahasa istana* ‘a language used within the inner circle of the palace’. This variety of Malay is the top-most ranked variety of language used in the feudalistic society depicted in SS. It represents Malay at its best, with beautiful phrasing of utterances yet very subtle in its meanings.

In general, we found that *wh*-movement in SS has characteristics which modern Malay *wh*-interrogatives have. They demonstrate short distance and long distance types of movements and the application of transformations are cyclical in nature. Adjuncts also have relatively longer movements than arguments. The *wh*-movements possess head and maximal projection movements, and it also has *wh*-interrogatives which are *in-situ*, albeit not many.

We hope further research will bring out further characteristics of interrogatives of classical Malay. An analysis of the whole gamut of interrogatives used in classical Malay would be useful in trying to provide an explicit account of *wh*-interrogatives in Malay.

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