

## Yes/No Questions in Malay: A Multiple C<sup>0</sup>-Based Account

Malay *wh*-Questions have been well-discussed (e.g. Cole and Hermon 1998) and Yes/No questions have been described, within a Phrase Structure theory, by Kader 1981. However, yes/no questions have never been analyzed within a modern theoretical framework. To this end, I describe Malay yes/no questions using the framework outlined in Fortin 2008: apparent variation is not due to optionality, but to distinct features in the C<sup>0</sup> associated with each variant. Additionally, I assume the Probe-Goal Theory of Agreement, as outlined in Chomsky (2001), which states that all movement to a specifier will be to check a [+EPP] feature.

I identify four main strategies for forming yes-no questions in Malay: Phrase Movement, Head Movement, *kah* In Situ, and *adakah* Insertion. Contra Kader (1981), I propose that the question particle *kah* and *adakah* are located in C.

The first strategy is Phrase Movement: DPs (1), PPs (2) and AdvPs (3) can all front to a position immediately preceding the question particle *kah*. Other constituents, however, cannot (4). I propose that this is movement to [Spec,CP] due to a [+FOCUS], [+EPP] C<sup>0</sup>: *kah*<sub>1</sub>. After this *kah* agrees with a Goal bearing a [+FOCUS] feature, the Goal raises to [Spec, CP] to satisfy *kah*'s [+EPP] feature.

The second strategy is Head Movement to C. Verbs (5) and overt tense (6) can precede a sentence-initial *kah*. Neither element constitutes a phrase, however, so this cannot be phrase movement. I demonstrate that Malay utilizes V→T movement, as assumed by Guilfoyle, et al. (1992). Also in support of the head-movement analysis is the fact that the presence of an overt T blocks verbal fronting (7), but does not block phrase movement (8).

I propose that the movement seen here is due to a [-FOCUS], [-EPP] *kah*<sub>2</sub> that bears a [+Q] feature driving T→C movement. I assume that [+Q] is not an inherent feature of all questions, but simply represents T→C movement. Therefore, its presence in one interrogative construction but not others is not problematic.

The third main strategy features a focused constituent in situ, but followed by *kah* (9). I propose that this construction employs a [+FOCUS], [-EPP], [-Q] *kah*<sub>3</sub>. This *kah*<sub>3</sub> then lowers on to the focused constituent because it needs a phonological host, but cannot attract one due to its [-Q] and [-EPP] features. The in-situ strategy cannot target verbs (10), as predicted by the Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984).

The fourth strategy, *adakah* Insertion, involves placing the word *adakah* before a declarative statement to form an unmarked question (11). I argue that *adakah* is a [-Q], [-EPP], [-FOCUS] C<sup>0</sup> that, as a longer word, is not in need of a phonological host and can therefore stand alone.

While the existence of four distinct interrogative C<sup>0</sup>s accounts for the four main yes-no question formation strategies in Malay, I identify areas in which future research would benefit the discussion: the interaction of negation, tense and focus; the theory of inherent focus in questions; subject-auxiliary inversion in Phrase Movement questions; and [+WH] *kah*.

#### Data

- (1) [Sebuah lagu];kah [kamu nyanyi  $t_i$ ?]  
 one.count song.kah you sing?  
 'Is it a song that you sang?'
- (2) [Di bilik itu].kah [kamu menyanyi  $t_i$ ?]  
 at room that.kah you meN.sing?  
 'Is it in that room that you sang?'
- (3) [Sekarang].kah [kamu tidur  $t_i$ ?]  
 now.kah you sleep?
- (4) \*[Makan ikan].kah [kamu  $t_i$ ?]  
 Eat fish.kah you?  
 'Is it eating fish that you're doing?'
- (5) [Faham].kah [kamu  $t_i$  bahasa melayu?]  
 understand.kah you language Malay?
- (6) [Boleh].kah [kamu  $t_i$  tidur?]  
 Can.kah you sleep?
- (7) \*[Tidur].kah [kamu boleh  $t_i$ ?]  
 sleep.kah you can?
- (8) [Kamu].kah [yang  $t_i$  boleh bercakap bahasa melayu?]  
 you.kah YANG can beR.speak language Malay?
- (9) Saya menyanyi [sebuah lagu]kah di bilik itu?  
 I meN.sing one.CLASS song.kah at room that?
- (10) ?[Kamu [menyanyi]kah sebuah lagu di bilik itu?]  
 you meN.sing.kah one.CLASS song at room that?
- (11) Adakah [kamu memahami bahasa melayu?]  
 adakah you meN.understand.i language Malay?

#### References

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