# OBJECT PREPOSED CONSTRUCTIONS IN MALAY



MARIE LOUISE WILLETT

# OBJECT PREPOSED CONSTRUCTIONS IN MALAY

BY

© MARIE LOUISE WILLETT

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Linguistics
Memorial University of Newfoundland
May 1993

St. John's Newfoundland

ISBN 0-315-86612-8

# ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the syntactic nature of Object Preposed constructions in Malay. Its purpose is to determine whether these constructions exhibit properties typically associated with a passive analysis or a topic analysis. The data elicited for this thesis reveals two pertinent properties: (i) the verb in Object Preposed constructions cannot bear any morphology (i.e. inflectional prefixing); (ii) the appearance of an aspectual marker, modal or adverb (with certain restrictions regarding adverbs) is a necessary requirement for acceptability. The first of these properties has been widely recognized in the literature, whereas the second has not been acknowledged.

The analysis put forward in this thesis is within a Government and Binding (Generative) framework. Various assumptions have been made with regard to constraints on A'-movement, licensing properties of INFL, and the availability of an alternate subject position. Based on these assumptions, this thesis argues that the properties exhibited by Object Preposing, with regard to morphology and required elements, are indicative of a syntactic structure typically associated with topicalization rather than passivization.

Examples from Mandarin Chinese involving preverbal object NPs are discussed as they are remarkably similar to the Malay data found in this thesis. These examples also require the appearance of an additional element. Mandarin, however, imposes further restrictions than Malay as the element is limited to a small group of aspectual markers and adverbs.

Constructions sharing a similar syntactic structure with topicalization (e.g. wh-movement and focusing) are also examined and compared with those of Object Preposing. These provide further evidence that Object Preposed constructions are essentially topicalized constructions and not a second form of Passive in Malay.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to express my gratitude to Dr. Alana Johns, my thesis supervisor, not only for her encouragement and comments pertaining to this thesis, but also for fuelling my interest in Generative Syntax. My general interest in Linguistics was supported and encouraged constantly throughout my program by all faculty members in the Department of Linguistics.

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Jim Black and Dr. Sandra Clarke for their guidance throughout my program, and to Fran Warren for sharing her computer knowledge (and general knowledge of everything) with me. I am grateful to the Department of Linguistics and the Provincial Government of Newfoundland for their financial support.

There are many people to whom I owe a great deal of thanks for their help with this thesis: to my Malay consultants Rosliza Hashim and Afdera Hussein for their patience and generosity; to my readers Dr. Philip Branigan and Dr. Eithne Guilfoyle for their valuable comments and suggestions; to Janet Benger for the insightful discussions on syntax; to Jan Voskuil for his comments on my data and preliminary findings; and to the Dean of Arts, Dr. Michael Staveley.

All of the graduate students in this department have been a great source of encouragement for me. I thank Barbara O'Dea, Julie Brittain, Catherine Lanari, Snezana Milovanovic, Qiu Xiao Yan and Amani Youssef for having made my program all the more interesting and enjoyable.

Finally, and most importantly, thanks to my parents and my sister for their love and support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

## 0.0 Bahasa Malaysia

Bahasa Malaysia, or Malay, is a member of the Western branch of the Malayo-Polynesian group, one of several groups found in the Austronesian family. Next to the Indo-European family, the Malayo-Polynesian languages are the most geographically widespread, beginning in Madagascar (southeast Africa), and spreading eastward to Easter Island (eastern Pacific Ocean).

The Malayo-Polynesian languages are divided into two groups. The Western branch contains languages found in Malaysia (Malay), Indonesia (Indonesian), Madagascar (Malagasy), the Philippines (Tagalog), Java (Javanese), and Guam (Chamorro), just to name a few. The Eastern (Oceanic) branch is comprised of the Micronesian, Polynesian (Hawaiian, Tahitian), and Melanesian (Fijian) languages.[1]

Malay may be considered a related dialect of Indonesian. Historically, Indonesian is based on the Malay language of Malaya, which was used as a trade language in Indonesia (Lehmann (1973)). Today, the major differences between Malay and Indonesian are found more in the vocabulary than in the grammar.

---

[1]See Prentice (1987).

It is important to note the geolinguistic surroundings of the Malay language, as it may be relevant in explaining certain constructions found in the data elicited for this thesis. The Malay language is the national language of four South-East Asian countries: the Federation of Malaysia, the Republic of Indonesia[2], the Republic of Singapore, and the Sultanate of Brunei. However, only in Brunei is this language the mother tongue of the majority of inhabitants. In Malaysia only 45 percent of the population speak Malay as their native language (35 percent are native speakers of a Chinese language). In Singapore the numbers drop even lower to 15 percent. And in Indonesia, only 7 percent of the population are native speakers of Bahasa Indonesia. These significant statistics would certainly indicate that Malay, being anything but isolated from other languages and language families, may be affected with regard to grammar and vocabulary by its geolinguistic surroundings.

In this thesis, I am concerned only with the standard form of the language and not the various dialects spoken throughout Malaysia. The data collected for this research is from two female Western Malaysian students studying at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Both are native speakers of Malay and speak only English as a second language. The

---

[2]The language being officially termed as Bahasa Indonesia.

first language consultant is from Temerloh, Pahang, and the second from Alor Setar, Kedah. Any other data used in this thesis will be directly quoted from other authors, and I will specify as to whether the data is Malay or Indonesian.

## 0.1 A Theoretical Overview of Generative Grammar

For the last half of this century, Generative Grammarians have been concerned with developing a theory of Universal Grammar. This Universal Grammar (UG) will account for general abstract properties of language that may be realized in separate ways in specific grammars. Chomsky (1981:3) states that the theory of UG must satisfy two obvious conditions:

(i) "it must be compatible with the diversity of existing (indeed, possible) grammars"

(ii) "UG must be sufficiently constrained and restrictive in the options it permits so as to account for the fact that each of these grammars develops in the mind on the basis of quite limited evidence".

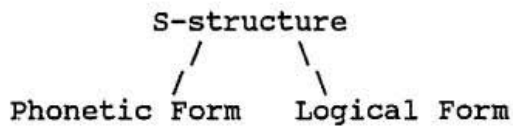
Chomsky claims that in many carefully studied cases, it is almost certain that the evidence available to the learner is not adequate to determine the intrinsic properties of the attained grammars. Therefore, these properties must be determined by UG.

0.1.1 Levels of Representation and the System of Rules

In a theory of UG we can define a minimum of three levels of representation: S-structure, PF, and LF. Chomsky (1981:4) defines S-structures as "an infinite set of abstract structures" generated in the syntactic component of the grammar. These structures exhibit both a phonetic form (PF) and a logical form (LF).

In the diagram illustrated in (1):

(1)




we see that three systems of rules must be specified: 1) the rules of the syntactic component that generate S-structures, 2) the rules of the PF-component that link S-structures to PF, and 3) the rules of the LF-component that link S-structures to LF. All expressions of a language, determined by its grammar, must be represented at these three levels.

In this thesis, I will assume a D-structure level where lexical items are mapped onto an X' framework. These lexical items undergo syntactic rules whereby traces of moved items are coindexed with their antecedents at the S-structure level.

### 0.1.2 X'-Theory

X'-Theory outlines a framework in which all lexical items of the base structure are organized. Within X'-theory, every projection X'' has a lexical head X, and $X^n$ immediately dominates $X^{n-1}$. We can organize this framework into the following rules:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (2) | X'' → X', (YP) | Specifier Rule |
| | X' → X', YP | Adjunct Rule (optional) |
| | X' → X , (YP) | Complement Rule |

## 0.2 Principles of Generative Grammar

Certain principles on which Generative Grammar is based are brought into discussion in this thesis. These include theories on theta role assignment, case assignment and government. Each of these are defined in turn.

### 0.2.1 Argument Structure and Theta Role Assignment

In Generative Grammar, every predicate must have an argument structure. This is the lexical specification of the number of arguments required by the predicate. Grimshaw (1990) states that these arguments exhibit a relation of prominence which is determined by both the thematic and aspectual properties of the predicate.

The thematic properties of the predicate reflect a thematic hierarchy. Grimshaw assumes the following hierarchy in (3) ranking the Agent as the highest argument:

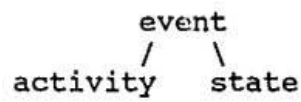
(3) **(Agent (Experiencer (Goal/Source/Location (Theme))))**

(Grimshaw:8)

According to this hierarchy the Agent will always be, thematically, the most prominent role. After the Agent, the Experiencer is regarded as the most thematically prominent, then Goal/Source/Location, and then Theme. The ordering of elements in the argument structure reflect this thematic hierarchy. However, the theta roles themselves are not given in the predicate's argument structure. Only the relative prominence of the arguments with respect to each other are represented.

Grimshaw argues that thematic properties only partially determine the prominence relations of the predicate's arguments. Aspectual properties are also a factor. She assumes each predicate is associated with an event structure divided into separate aspectual subparts, as shown in (4):

(4)




(Grimshaw:26)

The argument relating to the first sub-event is considered more prominent than the argument associated with the second sub-event. An argument must be considered the most prominent on both thematic and aspectual levels for it to have most prominent argument status in the argument structure. The argument that is most prominent is the external argument. Arguments that are not most prominent are internal.

Each argument must receive a theta role, and every theta role relevant to the argument structure must be assigned. This requirement is outlined in Chomsky's (1981:36) Theta-Criterion:

(5) Theta-Criterion

> Each argument bears one and only one theta-role, and each theta-role is assigned to one and only one argument.

This criterion ensures that all NPs have a semantic function in the phrase. For the language in question, it is presupposed throughout this thesis that the most prominent theta role is specifically assigned to the SPEC of VP position[3], while other theta roles are assigned to a V-complement position or V-adjunct position.

---

[3]The question of whether this is true of all languages will not be addressed here.

For example, according to Grimshaw, the verb **pukul** 'to hit' would have the following argument structure:

(6) **pukul** (x(y))
1 2

Example (6) illustrates that **pukul** must have two arguments. The brackets indicate that argument x is more thematically prominent than argument y. On a different level, the numbers indicate that argument x is more aspectually prominent than y as it is linked to the first aspectual subpart of the event structure.

0.2.2 Case Theory

According to the Case theory, certain lexical categories must be licensed in their S-structure position. This includes all overt NPs. Any NP that is morphologically realized must be assigned abstract case features. Case is generally considered to be assigned under government by such category heads as INFL, transitive verbs and prepositions. All lexical NPs must be case-marked by one of these. This requirement is outlined in the Case Filter (Chomsky (1981)) in (7):

(7) Case Filter

At S-structure, every lexical NP needs Case.

Structural case and inherent case have been distinguished as two different types of case assignment. Structural case is assigned under government. Inherent case is also assigned under government, but the case assigner must theta-mark the NP.

### 0.2.3 Government

Government is a configurational property. Chomsky (1986:8) defines government as follows:

(8) Government

**A** governs **B** iff **A** m-commands **B** and every barrier for **B** dominates **A**.

I assume in this thesis that governors are heads. M-command can be defined as follows (Chomsky (1986)):

(9) m-command

**A** m-commands **B** iff **A** does not dominate **B** and every **X** that dominates **A** also dominates **B**, **X** being a maximal projection.

Considering this definition of government, in an example such as (10) (Chomsky 1981:162):

(10) $[_{VP}\ V\ [_{PP}\ P\ NP]]$

it is clear that P governs NP and V governs PP. However, V does not govern NP as the maximal projection PP acts as a barrier to government.

Government is a condition for case assignment. As a result, Case theory and government theory are considered to be closely related.

### 0.3 A Note on Passive

It is important to distinguish between the traditional view of passive and the current Generative approach. Traditionally, passive constructions have been said to exhibit the following characteristics:

(11) "a) the subject of the passive clause is a direct object in the corresponding active;
b) the subject of the active clause is expressed in the passive in the form of an agentive adjunct or is left unexpressed;
c) the verb is marked passive."

(Siewierska (1984):2-3)

In Generative Grammar, it is clear the term "passive" does not represent one single phenomenon (Chomsky (1981)), as it has been traditionally viewed. The suppression of Agent or appearance of direct object in subject position could be triggered by separate factors and, thus, may be considered as two separate phenomena. Chomsky proposes that the notion of

"passive" could be a descriptive category containing a vast range of phenomena which do not focus the "logical subject" or do not express one at all. These phenomena, however, still exhibit a surface subject NP in accordance with the Extended Projection Principle, which requires that a subject be present.

In the traditional view of passive the terms subject, object, etc. are considered primitive notions. In Generative Grammar this is not so. Chomsky (1981) considers these to be derived notions which he labels grammatical functions (GFs).

## 0.4 On Defining Subject and External Argument

In Generative Grammar, all sentences must contain a subject. This requirement is referred to as the Extended Projection Principle (EPP) (Chomsky 1981). The EPP ensures that all lexical requirements are met at all levels in the syntax, and that every clause contains a subject. As mentioned in the previous section, in a Government and Binding framework the subject is considered a derivative rather than primitive notion. In this thesis, the subject is regarded as the argument licensed by case external to V'. This argument may or may not trigger agreement with the verb.

The notion of external argument is not to be confused with that of subject. An external argument, according to Grimshaw (1990), is the most prominent argument (both

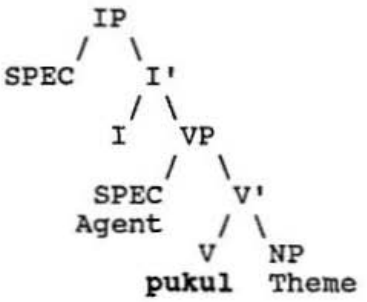
thematically and aspectually) in the predicate's argument structure. This argument may or may not be licensed as subject. In a passivized construction, for example, it is the internal argument that is licensed as subject.

## 0.5 VP-Internal Subjects

Some linguists have argued that a subject position other than SPEC of IP exists (Fukui and Speas (1986), Kitagawa (1986), Koopman and Sportiche (1988), Kuroda (1988)). This position is realized as a specifier position projected by the maximal phrase VP. This analysis assumes that all arguments are base-generated and theta-marked within VP, and no argument is base-generated or theta-marked in SPEC of IP. An alternate view within the Government and Binding approach has assumed that the VP assigns the subject theta role to the specifier of IP position (Chomsky (1981)).

Guilfoyle, Hung and Travis (1992) (henceforth GHT) argue for the availability of this second subject position in several Austronesian languages. Following their analysis, the arguments selected by the Malay verb **pukul** 'hit' in (6) would be mapped onto a D-structure as follows:

(12)




At D-structure, the Agent is theta-marked in SPEC of VP as the most prominent argument is assigned to this position. The Theme is theta-marked in the V-complement position. Any argument that is unable to be case-marked in its base-generated position will move to the non-theta position SPEC of IP where it can be properly licensed by INFL.

Throughout this thesis, I will assume the existence of the SPEC of VP position and will consider all arguments to be base-generated within the maximal projection of VP.

## 0.6 Questions to be Raised

It is the purpose of this thesis to determine the syntactic nature of Object Preposed (O.P.) constructions in Malay. This type of construction has been widely accepted as a second form of passive in the language. I consider Object Preposing to be, in actuality, topicalization and provide solid evidence supporting this claim. This evidence cannot be accounted for under the passive analysis.

The questions raised in this thesis concern two properties exhibited by O.P. constructions. The first concerns the lack of verbal morphology in Object Preposing, i.e. why the verb cannot be morphologically prefixed in this type of construction. The second property refers to the obligatory presence of what I have termed a "case marker". These case markers can appear as an aspectual marker, modal or adverb, with certain restrictions regarding the adverbs. In all cases the semantic interpretation of the case marker is preserved.

# CHAPTER ONE

## A Descriptive Account

This chapter is intended to serve as a brief descriptive account of sentence patterns in Malay. It focuses on active constructions, the Canonical Passive, the Accidental Passive and Object Preposing.

### 1.0 Active Constructions

Malay has traditionally been considered an SVO language. In its unmarked word order, the logical subject appears in preverbal position and the object appears postverbally, as in (1):

(1) **Ali mem[4]-baca buku itu.**
Ali read book the
'Ali read the book.'[5]

---

[4]**MəN-** is one of several verbal prefixes in Malay. The final consonant of this prefix will change, depending on the initial segment of the verb to which it is prefixed. Its semantic content will be discussed later in this thesis.

[5]Tense is not morphologically marked in Malay. (Aspectual markers, however, may be used.) Example (1) may be translated as either 'Ali reads the book' or 'Ali read the book', depending on the context.

The **meN-** prefix has been referred to as a transitive prefix (Chung (1976)). Generally, it appears in an [Agent + Verb + Theme] type construction, as examples (2) to (4) demonstrate[6]:

(2) **Saya mem-andu kereta itu.**
I drive car the
'I drove the car.'
*'The car was driven by me.'

(3) **Ali mem-baca buku itu.**
Ali read book the
'Ali read the book.'
*'The book was read by Ali.'

(4) **Dia me-makan kuih itu.**
s/he eat cake the
'S/he ate the cake.'
*'The cake was eaten by her/him.'

This prefix also appears on unaccusative verbs. These verbs have an internal argument but are unable to assign

---

[6]Voskuil (1990) notes that the prefix **meN-** may be omitted in the spoken variants of Malay:

**Saya tidak akan baca buku itu.**
I not will read book that
'I will not read that book.' (Voskuil:10)

The above example would not be accepted in its standard form. Macdonald and Dardjowidjojo (1967:148) also remark that "many verbs which are morphologically complex in formal Indonesian become morphologically simple in colloquial speech, and the tendency to use such forms is increasing even on more formal levels".

accusative case. Describing a fixed class of verbs that fall under this definition is problematic. However, unaccusative verbs do seem to suggest some sort of movement, state or change of state.[7]

In the example in (5), the internal argument **dia** 's/he' of the unaccusative **jatuh** 'fall' is licensed as the subject:

(5) $[_{IP}$ **Dia**$_j$ $[_I$ **sedang** $[_{VP}$ **men-jatuh** $t_j]]]$
s/he ASP fall
'S/he is falling.'

As the verb cannot assign accusative case to its internal argument, the structural object **dia** is forced to raise to an external case-marked position. In light of (5), it is difficult to consider that the **meN-** prefix marks the assignment of case to the complement of the verb (i.e. a transitivity marker). If it can appear on unaccusative intransitive constructions, then it cannot be solely linked to accusative case.

**MeN-** is also found on certain unergative intransitives (Voskuil 1990), as shown in (6):

(6) a. **Dia men-angis.**
s/he cry
'S/he cries (weeps).'

---

[7]See Burzio (1986) for a detailed discussion of unaccusatives in Italian.

b. **Saya men-ari.**
I dance
'I dance.'

These unergative intransitives select an external argument in their argument structure. Once again, if **meN-** can appear on the intransitives in (6), it is difficult to consider **meN-** as a transitivity marker.[8]

### 1.1 Canonical Passive

It has been claimed in the literature (Chung (1976), Dardjowidjojo (1978), de Vries (1983), Guilfoyle, Hung and Travis (1992), Macdonald (1976)) that there are two forms of passive voice in Malay: the Canonical Passive, and Object Preposing (Subjective Passive). (Dardjowidjojo, de Vries and Macdonald mention a third passive termed the Accidental Passive which is discussed in the following section.)

The Canonical Passive is more often used in writing than in spoken language[9]. Similar in structure to the English passive, it exhibits the following characteristics:

a) the direct object (Theme) appears in preverbal position;
b) the logical subject (Agent) is oblique, and is optional;
c) the verb is morphologically marked with the prefix **di-**.

---

[8]There are intransitives in Malay that cannot bear the **meN-** prefix. However, I do not have the data available to determine which intransitives behave in this manner.

[9]I am drawing this conclusion based on comments made by both language consultants and by Voskuil (p.c.).

The "passivized" counterparts of examples (2) to (4) are shown below:

(7) **Kereta itu di-pandu oleh saya.**
car the drive by me
'The car was driven by me.'
*'I drove the car.'

(8) **Buku itu di-baca oleh Ali.**
book the read by Ali
'The book was read by Ali.'
*'Ali read the book.'

(9) **Kuih itu di-makan oleh-nya.**
cake the eat by her/him
'The cake was eaten by her/him.'
*'S/he ate the cake.'

In example (7), the Theme (**kereta itu**) appears in preverbal position, the optional Agent (**saya**) is object of the preposition **oleh**, and the verb must be morphologically marked with the prefix **di-**.

In double-object constructions a Goal may appear in preverbal position, as shown in (10):

(10) **Wanita itu di-kirim-i**[10]**surat oleh Ali.**
girl the send letter by Ali
'The girl was sent a letter by Ali.'

(Hung 1987:25)

In Indonesian, the preposition **oleh** can be omitted in the Canonical Passive while the Agent is still overt. The following example adapted from Voskuil (1990:10) illustrates this:

(11) **Buku itu di-baca (oleh) Parto.**
book that read by Parto
'That book is read by Parto.'

When **oleh** is present, the Agent phrase need not be immediately adjacent to the verb, as shown in (12). When **oleh** is omitted, however, the Agent must immediately follow the verb or the construction is not acceptable, as in (13):

(12) <u>with 'oleh'</u>

**Buku itu di-baca dengan teliti oleh Parto.**
book that read attentively by Parto
'That book is read attentively by Parto.'

---

[10]According to Hung (1987), the suffix **-i** provides the extra case feature required in double-object constructions.

(13) without 'oleh'

a. * **Buku itu di-baca dengan teliti Parto.**
book that· read attentively Parto

(Voskuil 1990:10)

b. **Buku itu di-baca Parto dengan teliti.**
book that read Parto attentively
'That book is read attentively by Parto.'

The **oleh** omission is specific to the Indonesian dialect. Example (13b) would not be acceptable in Malay, and is not the centre of discussion in this thesis.

### 1.2 Accidental Passive

The Accidental Passive is similar to the Canonical Passive in its structure. However, this construction carries the added meaning that the action was unintentional or took place by accident. It has the following properties:

a) the direct object (Theme) appears in preverbal position;
b) the logical subject (Agent) is oblique, and is optional;
c) the verb is morphologically marked with the prefix **ter-**.

The following example illustrates an Accidental Passive:

(14) **Buku itu ter-baca oleh orang itu.**
book that read by person that
'That book was (accidentally) read by that person.'

(de Vries 1983:165)

The Theme (**buku itu**) appears in preverbal position, the logical subject (**orang itu**) is oblique, and the verb is obligatorily marked with the prefix **ter-** and carries the meaning 'by accident'.

The Accidental Passive will not be brought into discussion in this thesis, as I will focus primarily on the Canonical Passive and Object Preposing.

### 1.3 Object Preposing (Subjective Passive[11])

Object Preposing, unlike the Canonical Passive, is more frequent in spoken language than in writing. Its properties are quite different from those of the Canonical Passive:

a) the direct object (Theme) appears in initial position;
b) the logical subject (Agent) is not oblique, appears in preverbal position, and is obligatory;
c) the verb cannot be morphologically marked;
d) the presence of an aspectual marker, modal or adverb is obligatory.

As shown in (15), the structure of this construction is remarkably different from the two previous passive constructions:

(15) **Buku itu Ali baca dengan teliti.**
book the Ali read with care
'Ali read the book carefully.'

---

[11]Object Preposing is also referred to in the literature as the Subjective Passive. In this thesis I refer to the construction as Object Preposing.

The Theme (**buku itu**) appears in initial position, while the Agent (**Ali**) is obligatorily present in preverbal position and is not oblique. The verb is morphologically unmarked, and the necessary adverb (**dengan teliti**) is present.

The Agent can neither be omitted in this construction, nor can it appear as the object of a preposition, as the following examples illustrate:

(16) a. * **Buku itu baca (dengan teliti).**
book the read with care

b. * **Buku itu baca oleh Ali (dengan teliti).**
book the read by Ali with care

Both NPs must appear preverbally with the Theme located in initial position. If the Theme does not appear in initial position, an example like (17) will bear an odd interpretation:

(17) **Ali buku itu baca dengan teliti.**
Ali book the read with care

(17) would be understood as 'the book read Ali carefully' instead of 'Ali read the book carefully'.

### 1.3.1 Possible Agent NPs

It has been mentioned in numerous sources (Chung (1976), Dardjowidjojo (1978), de Vries (1983), Guilfoyle, Hung and Travis (1992), Macdonald (1976)) that there is a restriction on possible Agent NPs in Object Preposing and the Canonical Passive. The distribution of Agent NPs appears to be as follows:

(18)

| Canonical Passive | Object Preposing |
|---|---|
| Agent = { proper noun, full NP, 3rd person pronoun } | Agent = { proper noun, pronoun } |

Even though this distinction is mentioned in the above sources, GHT (1992) state that only conservative speakers of the language restrict the Agent in a Canonical Passive to 3rd person. Chung (1976) and Macdonald and Dardjowidjojo (1967) acknowledge that the above restrictions are not in effect for the Canonical Passive. Neither of my language consultants observe the restrictions in (18). For them, both the Canonical Passive and Object Preposing can be expressed with all forms of Agent NPs.

### 1.3.2 Word Order

There are only two possible word order combinations in O.P. constructions. They are as follows:

(19) Theme Agent Aux Verb

**Kuih itu dia akan makan.**
cake the s/he ASP eat
'S/he will eat the cake.'

(20) Theme Aux Agent Verb

**Kuih itu akan dia makan.**
cake the ASP s/he eat
'S/he will eat the cake.'

Several grammars claim that Object Preposing may only exhibit the word order illustrated in (20) (Dardjowidjojo (1978), Macdonald (1976)). However, Macdonald adds that constructions such as (19) do occur. Chung (1976) observes that both constructions are equally possible.

### 1.3.3 Semantic Interpretation

Object Preposing has been identified by native speakers as comparable to an active sentence or an object topicalization in English[12]. Chung (1976) states that for native speakers Object Preposing is not semantically stative, as is the case with the Canonical Passive, but rather it is semantically active.

It is already apparent from the examples provided in this section that Object Preposing does not fall under the

---

[12]I have also verified this with one of my language consultants.

traditional definition of passive whereby an underlying direct object becomes subject and the underlying subject appears oblique or is omitted. This thesis provides evidence that this construction is, in fact, an instance of topicalization. This structure becomes clear as answers to why this construction exhibits two puzzling properties are uncovered; these properties being the obligatory absence of verbal morphology (i.e. inflectional prefixing) and the necessary appearance of a case marker.

# CHAPTER TWO

## Verbal Inflection

In order to explain why verbal prefixing is prohibited in Object Preposing, it is necessary to clarify the syntactic explanation for the appearance of verbal prefixes elsewhere. Verbal morphology may be required for a number of reasons (e.g. agreement, licensing purposes, case absorption, etc.). The appearance of **meN-** and **di-** in non-preposed constructions is the focus of this chapter.

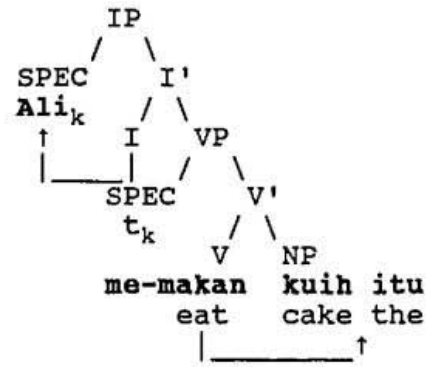
### 2.0 MeN-

Many previous analyses of the inflectional prefix **meN-** do not account for certain data concerning intransitives and Aux-initial constructions. Both Hung (1987) and Voskuil (1989) link these prefixes to case assignment. Hung claims that the unaffixed verb in Malay assigns case to the left. Thus, primary case would be assigned to the verb's specifier position. She argues that the appearance of **meN-** affects the assignment of primary case in that it is no longer assigned to the left specifier position, but rather to the right complement position, as shown in the following example:[13]

---

[13]The arrows indicate the direction in which NP licensing takes place.

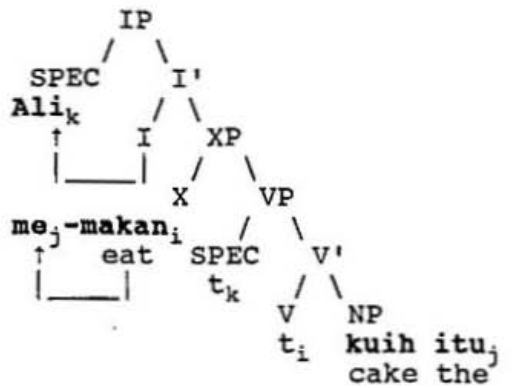
(1)




The verb is forced to assign its single case feature to the complement position, and the Agent must move to SPEC of IP to receive nominative case from INFL. GHT (1992) adopt a similar analysis.

Voskuil claims that **meN-** is an argumental head coindexed at D-structure with the structural object. He also maintains that the verb can only assign case to the left. Therefore, in order for an NP to be licensed in the complement position, it must form a chain with **meN-** appearing to the left of the verb. According to his analysis, we would expect the following tree:

(2)




In the chain <**meN-**, NP>, the Theme role is assigned to the V-complement position while case is assigned to **meN-**. **Kuih itu** receives a theta role specified by the Theta-Criterion and is licensed by the formation of a chain with **meN-**. The verb cannot directly assign case to **kuih itu** as case assignment is to the left only.

According to GHT, Hung and Voskuil this prefix is, in some way or other, involved in the licensing or appearance of an argument in the V-complement position. Under these analyses, **meN-** would have to be present in constructions involving a licensed argument in this position. It should not appear in intransitive constructions where no argument is licensed in the V-complement position. However, as we have seen in chapter one, **meN-** can appear on unaccusative and unergative verbs such as the ones repeated below:

(3) Unaccusative

$[_{IP}$ **Dia**$_j$ $[_I$ **sedang** $[_{XP}$ **men-** $[_{VP}$ **jatuh** $t_j]]]]$
s/he ASP fall

(4) Unergative

$[_{IP}$ **Dia** $[_{XP}$ **men-** $[_{VP}$ **angis**$]]]$
s/he cry

Both of these examples are left unexplained in the above analyses. If **meN-**'s purpose is to direct primary case assignment to the right complement position, as proposed in GHT and Hung, then it should not appear in either (3) or (4). If we consider **meN-** to be an argumental head coindexed with the right complement position, as does Voskuil, then these examples again pose a problem. Example (3) could be accounted for if we consider **meN-** to mark the presence of an internal argument, as the structural object position is filled at D-structure. However, the right complement position is not filled at any level in (4) and Voskuil's analyses gives no explanation for the presence of **meN-**.

Another issue for these analyses is the Aux-initial construction discussed in Hung (1987). When an auxiliary appears in initial position in the clause, the verb cannot bear the inflectional prefix. The auxiliary must appear after the initial NP in order for **meN-** to be present, as shown below:

(5) NP + AUX

**Ali akan mem-ukul anjing itu.**
Ali ASP ' hit dog the
'Ali will hit the dog.'

(6) AUX + NP

**Akan Ali (*meN-)pukul anjing itu.**
ASP Ali hit dog the
'Ali will hit the dog.'

(Hung 1987:78)

In example (5) the Theme is licensed to the right of the verb as the object. As we would expect following GHT, Hung and Voskuil, the **meN-** prefix appears on the verb either to direct case assignment to the right or to receive case as a coindexed argumental head. In (6), however, the Theme is licensed as the structural object but verbal prefixing is prohibited. Neither analysis sheds light on the ungrammaticality of (6), as both theories link **meN-** to the V-complement position, and in (5) and (6) the V-complement position has not changed.[14]

At this point it is clear that the function of the **meN-** prefix is not solely linked to the licensing of an NP in the V-complement position.

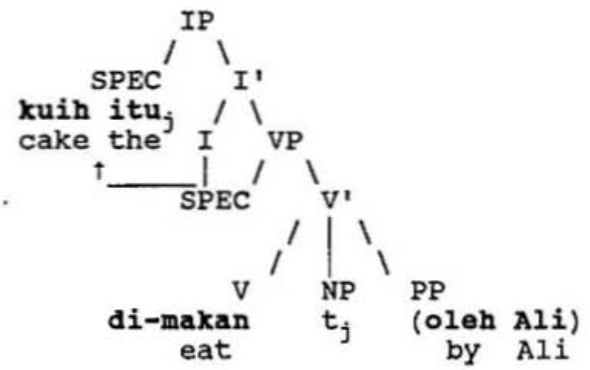
---

[14]An account of the non-appearance of **meN-** in example (6) is proposed in Chapter Four (section 4.4)

## 2.1 Di-

The **di-** prefix[15] is generally considered to be passive morphology, absorbing the external (Agent) role and the verb's single case feature (GHT (1992), Hung (1987), Voskuil (1989)). Because the Agent role has been suppressed, the specifier of VP position, where the Agent is base-generated, is empty. This suppressed position cannot contain an argument, but it can license an argument adjunct such as a by-phrase (Grimshaw (1990)). Thus, if the Agent is overt in a **di-** construction, it must appear as the object of the preposition **oleh**. The structural object moves outside of VP to be licensed in the SPEC of IP position as the prefix **di-** has absorbed the verb's single case feature. This is illustrated in (7):

(7)




Given that **meN-** and **di-** never appear in the same instance, and **di-** is a passive marker, then it would seem

[15]Here I am referring to **di-** constructions with **oleh**.

logical to conclude that **meN-** is an active marker appearing only in active constructions. We still have not, however, accounted for Object Preposed and Aux-initial constructions where verbal prefixing is absolutely prohibited. Both construction types are considered semantically active. Why is it they cannot bear the morphology marked on other active constructions? It would seem a reanalysis of the **meN-/di-** contrast is in order. One that does not consider the active/passive distinction, nor case-marking possibilities.

## 2.2 Subject-Verb Agreement

In Indo-European languages, a clausal subject may trigger morphological agreement on a verb. This agreement can reflect the number, person and/or gender of the subject NP. Verbal inflection in Malayo-Polynesian languages (e.g. Tagalog, Cebuano and Malagasy) may reflect the thematic role of an NP.[16] This thesis argues that the prefix **meN-** in Malay is, in fact, verbal agreement with a subject NP; more specifically the NP licensed in the specifier of IP position. This agreement reflects the prominence of the subject NP within the predicate's argument structure.[17]

---

[16]See GHT (1992) for examples.

[17]This would entail that the argument's external/internal status in the argument structure is still marked at the S-structure level.

If the NP licensed in the SPEC of IP position is the external argument in the argument structure, then the verb bears the most prominent argument prefix **məN-**, as shown in example (1), repeated below as (8):

(8) $[_{IP}$ **Ali**$_k$ $[_{XP}$ **me-** $[_{VP}$ $t_k$ $[_{V}$ **makan** $[_{NP}$ **kuih itu**]]]]]
Ali eat cake the

'Ali ate the cake.'

The verb **makan** 'eat' has the following argument structure (in accordance with Grimshaw (1990)):

(9) **makan** (x (y))
1 2

Argument **x**, realized as the Agent **Ali**, is both thematically and aspectually the most prominent argument. When this argument is licensed in the specifier of IP position, the verb bears the **meN-** prefix.

In example (4), repeated below as (10):

(10) $[_{IP}$ **Dia** $[_{XP}$ **men-** $[_{VP}$ **angis**]]]
s/he cry

the single argument of the ergative verb **tangis** 'cry' is the most prominent both thematically and aspectually, shown in (11):

(11) **tangis** ((x))
1

As would be expected, the verb in (10) must bear the **meN-** prefix.[18]

If the NP licensed in SPEC of IP is not the most prominent argument (i.e. external argument), as in example (12), the verb is not morphologically marked with **meN-**:

(12) $[_{IP}$ **Kuih itu**$_j$ $[_{XP}$ **di-** $[_{VP}$ $[_{V}$ **makan** $[_{NP}$ $t_j]]$ $[_{PP}$ **oleh**
cake the eat by
**Ali**]]]]
Ali

As (12) illustrates, the Theme **kuih itu** is licensed as the subject in SPEC of IP. In order for an internal argument to be licensed as subject in the specifier of IP position, the most prominent argument has to be absorbed by some other determining factor (as it is the most likely argument to be licensed in this position). In accordance with other theories of passivization where an internal argument is externalized as

---

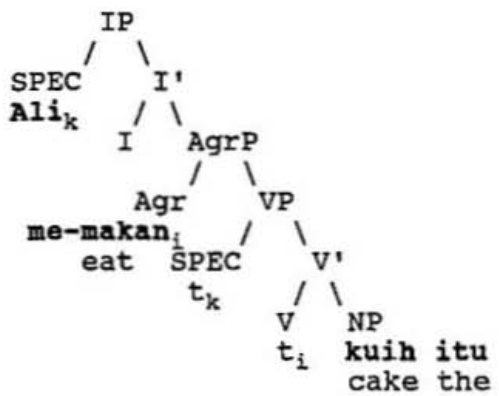
[18]The unaccusative construction in example (3) poses a problem here as its sole argument has internal status in the argument structure.

the subject, I assume that the external role (in this case the Agent) has been absorbed by the **di-** prefix. The Agent can now only appear as an argument adjunct (Grimshaw (1990)).

### 2.2.1 AgrP

Where is this subject-verb agreement generated? I claim that the D-structure of a Malay clause is similar to that proposed in Pollock (1989) for English and French. Pollock considers tense and agreement to be generated under two separate maximal projections, IP (or TP) and AgrP respectively. Both prefixes **meN-** and **di-** are generated under the head Agr, as shown below for example (13):

(13)




The verb **makan** moves via head-movement to Agr where it is marked for agreement with a subject NP having external argument status in the argument structure. As previously mentioned, the verb is not marked for tense in Malay.

Therefore, [+ tense] INFL does not contain any overt morphology and the verb is not forced to raise to INFL.

If we consider the appearance of **meN-** to be an indication of the external argument licensed as subject, and **di-** an internal argument licensed as subject, then we can account for the prohibition of these prefixes in certain instances by assuming that no inflectional verbal prefixing indicates the subject is not licensed in SPEC of IP, but rather in another position that does not trigger agreement.

# CHAPTER THREE

## Passive and Topic

Even though O.P. constructions in Malay have been widely accepted as a type of passive (Chung (1976), Dardjowidjojo (1978), de Vries (1983), GHT (1992), Macdonald (1976)), there are specific questions regarding this construction that a passive approach cannot explain. This chapter illustrates that O.P. constructions display properties that would be associated with a topic analysis rather than a passive one.

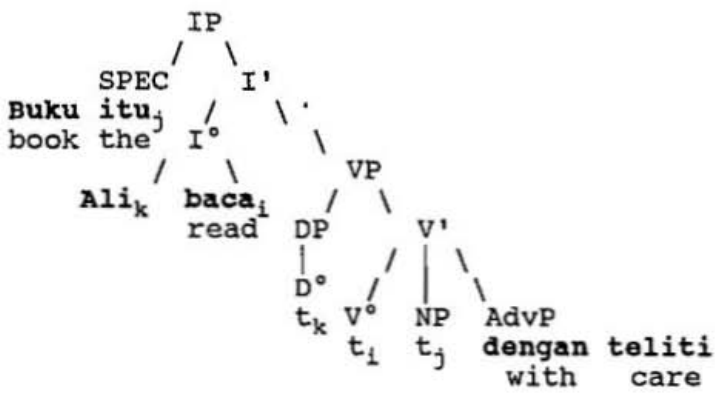
### 3.0 Object Preposing and Passive

Guilfoyle, Hung and Travis (1992) consider Object Preposing to be a second passive construction in Malay. They claim the Agent in this type of construction must appear as a pronoun, clitic or proper name. If Object Preposing is an actual form of passive, we would expect the externalization of an internal argument. Consider example (1):

(1) **Buku itu Ali baca dengan teliti.**
book the Ali read with care
'Ali read the book carefully.'

GHT would analyze this example as follows:

(2)




They propose that in SPEC of VP the head D° contains a set of features representing the Agent.[19] When the verb raises to INFL, the head D° can also raise to INFL to create a special case-marking relation with the verb.[20] The internal argument **buku itu** has moved outside of VP to what GHT refer to as the topic position (SPEC of IP) and is licensed by INFL.

There are two important factors that need to be explained here. First, in a passive analysis it is not clear what is forcing movement of the internal argument to an external position. In Generative Grammar, the externalization of an internal argument is presumed to have been triggered by some intervening factor (e.g. the absorption of the external role by overt morphology). In the Canonical Passive, the prefix **di-** is absorbing the external argument role, thus leaving only

---

[19]GHT assume that DP dominates NP.

[20]See Baker (1988).

an internal argument to be realized as the subject. In Object Preposing, however, the external argument role has not been absorbed as the Agent remains overt and does not appear as an adjunctive 'by'-phrase. Hence, it would seem that the internal argument should not be forced to move.

Secondly, this analysis does not account for the necessary appearance of aspectual marker, modal or adverb present in my data. For both consultants, the presence of one of these is essential to the acceptability of the construction. I have also confirmed this with two additional speakers. GHT do not mention this property, nor is it mentioned anywhere in the literature.

### 3.1 Object Preposing and Topic

It was Chomsky (1977) who claimed that movement of the topic to a fronted position patterns with wh-movement. In NP-movement, the argument moves from a caseless position to a case-marked position. In wh-movement it is the trace that is case-marked while the antecedent appears in a caseless position. These two types of movement are referred to as A-movement and A'-movement respectively. Chomsky (1981) considers A-movement to be the movement from one A-position (a position that may be assigned a theta role) to another. The moved element and its trace form an A-chain. A'-movement is movement to a position that cannot be assigned a theta role,

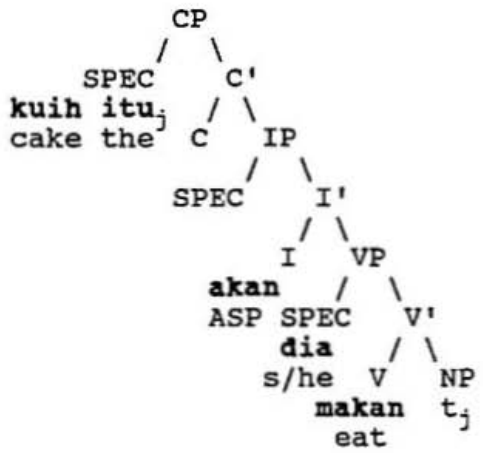
termed an A'-position. This position is caseless, therefore the moved argument forms an A'-chain with its trace and the trace itself is licensed in its position.

Consider the following example in (3):

(3) **Kuih itu akan dia makan.**
cake the ASP s/he eat
'S/he will eat the cake.'

If we make a preliminary assumption that we are dealing with an instance of A'-movement of the structural object rather than NP-movement, we would expect the following structure:[21]

(4)




[21]I am assuming that the projection of the functional category AgrP only takes place when agreement materializes in the construction.

In the above construction, the structural object NP **kuih itu** has undergone A'-movement outside of IP to the SPEC of CP position. This type of movement is associated with topicalization. The topic NP appears in a caseless position while its trace is licensed by the verb in the V-complement position.

There are two questions to be dealt with regarding this structure. (i) Given the Extended Projection Principle which requires that all clauses contain a subject, what allows for the non-appearance of a subject NP in the SPEC of IP position? (ii) If the verb's single case feature is case-marking the trace of the topic NP in its complement position, how is the Agent NP (in this case **dia**) being licensed?

Both of these questions are analyzed in turn in the following subsections.

### 3.1.1 Barriers

When an element undergoes A'-movement, the trace of the moved element must be properly governed. This is stated in Chomsky (1981) as the Empty Category Principle (ECP):

(5) Empty Category Principle

Every trace must be properly governed.

There are two ways for an element to be properly governed. The first is theta-government. A head theta-governs a constituent if two conditions are met: (i) the head governs the constituent, and (ii) the head theta-marks the constituent. A second possibility is antecedent-government whereby a maximal projection governs a coindexed trace. If the trace of an element cannot be properly governed, movement is not possible.

Hung (1987) claims that VP is always a barrier to movement in Malay. Thus, an element undergoing A'-movement faces two possible barriers: VP and IP. Chomsky (1986) states that VP can be avoided as a barrier by VP-adjunction. Adjunction is a type of movement whereby an element adjoins to a nonargument maximal projection. Under Chomsky's theory of adjunction, VP cannot constitute a barrier, as shown in (6):

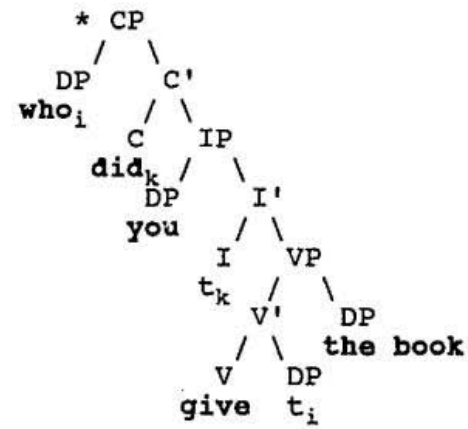
(6) **who**$_i$ **did** [$_{IP}$ **John** [$_{VP}$ $t_i$ [$_{VP}$ **see** $t_i$]]]

(Chomsky 1986:29)

Cowper (1987) argues, however, that VP is a barrier and may be avoided by passing through a vacant specifier position. When this position is filled, it is clear that VP constitutes

a barrier[22]. This is the case with English dative constructions. Consider the example in (7):

(7)



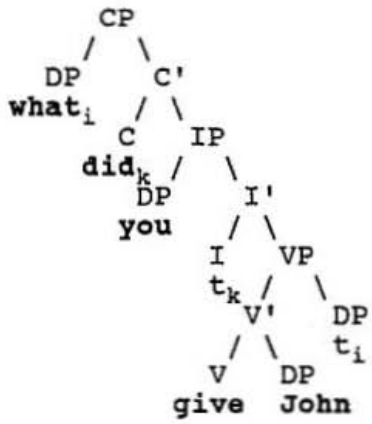

(Cowper 1987:12)

In (7), the specifier of VP is occupied by **the book.** Thus, the element undergoing A'-movement from the V-complement position cannot pass through the specifier of VP to avoid VP's barrierhood. If VP-adjunction were possible here, VP should not constitute a barrier and the construction should be acceptable. In an example like (8) where A'-movement is from the specifier position, VP is not a barrier:

---

[22]This implies that SPEC of VP does not necessarily contain an argument base-generated in that position.

(8)



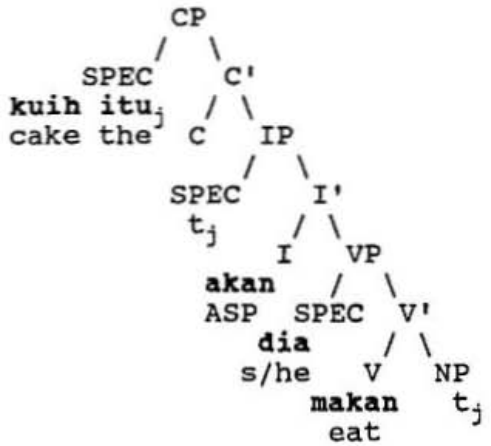

(Cowper 1987:12)

If the specifier position of a maximal projection is available to function as an "escape hatch" for movement, then the maximal projection does not form a barrier.

The specifier of VP position in Malay, being a theta-position, cannot be available to serve as an escape route, therefore VP is always a barrier to movement. Since the SPEC of VP position is unavailable, only one position is possible for movement outside of IP: SPEC of IP. This position must serve as an escape route for A'-movement, otherwise more than one barrier will be crossed, and the trace of the moved element will not be properly governed. Hence, if SPEC of IP is filled, movement outside of IP is not possible.

The structure in (4) can now be illustrated as follows:

(9)




Both arguments in (9) are base-generated within VP. The Theme **kuih itu** functions as topic in the construction, therefore it must pass through SPEC of IP in order to reach its position outside of IP. If it does not exit IP via the specifier position, it will cross more than one barrier (possible barriers being VP and IP).

Since the specifier of IP is occupied by the topic NP's trace, no external argument can appear in that position. For this reason, the verb cannot bear subject-verb agreement with an externalized argument. As discussed in the previous chapter, the verb is prefixed with **meN-** when the argument designated as external is licensed in SPEC of IP. If there is no argument licensed in this position, subject-verb agreement is not possible.

In an analysis linking the appearance of **meN-** with the licensing of an argument in the V-complement position, one

would expect the verb in (9) to bear the **meN-** prefix as the topic is essentially being licensed in that position through coindexation with its trace. However, example (9) is not acceptable with the **meN-** prefix, as shown in (10):

(10) * **Kuih itu akan dia me-makan.**
cake the ASP s/he eat
'S/he will eat the cake.'

An analysis whereby the presence of **meN-** is directly related to the licensing of a subject NP in SPEC of IP would explain the non-appearance of **meN-** in (9). The SPEC of IP position is not available to license a subject NP as it is necessarily occupied by the topic NP's trace. If we consider a version of (9) whereby the structural object does not undergo A'-movement, we find the verb must bear the **meN-** prefix, illustrated in (11):

(11) $[_{IP}$ **Dia**$_k$ $[_I$ **akan** $[_{AgrP}$ **me-makan**$_i$ $[_{VP}$ $t_k$ $[_V$ $t_i$ $[_{NP}$ **kuih itu**]]]]]]
S/he ASP eat cake the

'S/he will eat the cake.'

As there is no instance of A'-movement in (11), the SPEC of IP position does not function as an escape route out of IP and is available to license a subject NP. The external argument **dia** raises to the specifier of IP position where it is licensed by

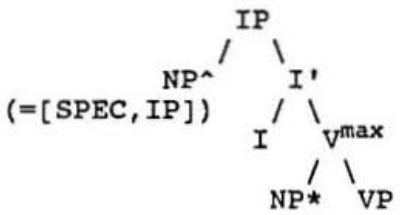
INFL as the subject. When a subject is licensed in this position, the verb must bear agreement morphology. The subject in this case has external argument status in the argument structure, therefore the verb bears the **meN-** prefix.

### 3.1.2 Alternate Subject Position

The licensing conditions of the Agent NP **dia** in (9) have yet to be determined. The verb's single case feature is responsible for licensing the trace of the topic NP in the V-complement position. If the verb cannot license the Agent NP, what other alternative is available?

In examining this question, let us first assume the possibility of an alternate subject position. GHT (1992) claim that subjects in Austronesian languages may appear in one of two positions: SPEC of VP or SPEC of IP. Koopman and Sportiche (1991) also argue for two subject positions, claiming the structure of an English clause is as follows:

(12)




(Koopman and Sportiche:212)

$V^{max}$ is a small clause with VP as its predicate. In the above structure, two possible subject positions exist: SPEC,IP (NP^) and SPEC,$V^{max}$ (NP*). As GHT have claimed that an argument may be generated in SPEC of VP, Koopman and Sportiche claim a subject may be generated in SPEC of $V^{max}$. (I will henceforth refer to this alternate subject position as SPEC of VP.) The appearance of an NP in one of two subject positions varies from one language to another, depending on the case-assigning properties of INFL. Koopman and Sportiche state that case assignment by INFL to the SPEC of IP position is through agreement whereas INFL assigns governed case to SPEC of VP (i.e. SPEC of $V^{max}$). In some languages like English and French, INFL can only assign case by agreement. Thus, SPEC of IP is the sole subject position available for NP licensing in these languages. In Irish, however, INFL only assigns governed case. SPEC of VP is utilized as the subject position. Standard Arabic has both options available as INFL can assign either case by agreement or governed case.[23]

---

[23]Standard Arabic provides some interesting evidence here with respect to case assignment. The subject in Arabic can appear in either postverbal (SPEC of VP) or preverbal (SPEC of IP) position. There is only verbal agreement, however, when the subject appears preverbally in the specifier of IP position. The lack of verbal agreement with the subject in SPEC of VP would indicate that governed case and agreement are not correlative. Because agreement with SPEC of IP is not optional, it would seem that only case by agreement and not governed case can be assigned to SPEC of IP (Koopman and Sportiche (1991)).

Malay is similar to English and French in that INFL can only assign case by agreement. This means that SPEC of IP is the only available subject position. If this were not the case, we would expect the following construction to be possible without agreement (i.e. **meN-** prefixing):

(13) * $[_{IP}\ [_{VP}$ **Ali** $[_{V}$ **baca** $[_{NP}$ **buku itu**]]]]
Ali read book the

The subject NP must raise to SPEC of IP where it is assigned case by agreement. As shown in (14), the verb bears the **meN-** prefix indicating an external argument has been licensed by INFL in SPEC of IP:

(14) $[_{IP}$ **Ali**$_k$ $[_{AgrP}$ **mem-baca**$_i$ $[_{VP}$ $t_k$ $[_{V}$ $t_i$ $[_{NP}$ **buku itu**]]]]]
Ali read book the

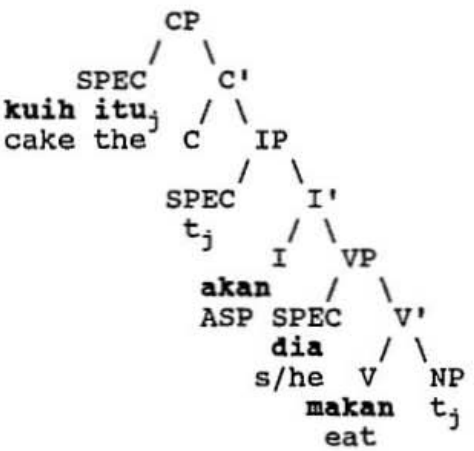
Since INFL assigns case by agreement solely to the specifier of IP position, we would expect subject agreement to be morphologically realized when an externalized NP is licensed in this position. However, if the externalized NP were to be licensed elsewhere, for example SPEC of VP, then morphological agreement should not be possible since there is no argument to agree with.

It appears that this is the case in Malay. When an argument is licensed in SPEC of IP via agreement, the verb

bears either the **meN-** or **di-** prefix. In a topicalized construction such as the one in (9), the subject NP cannot be licensed in SPEC of IP as the topic must pass through this position in order to avoid crossing more than one barrier. Because no argument has been licensed in this position, the verb cannot bear any morphology ~eflecting agreement, as is the case in (10).

In an O.P. construction, the Agent is forced to appear in another external position available for the subject: SPEC of VP. The structure in (9) can now be illustrated as (15):

(15)




### 3.1.3 Case-Marking

As shown in (13), INFL cannot assign governed case to the SPEC of VP position in Malay. Therefore, there must be another alternative available to ensure the Agent NP is properly licensed. As the verb has already assigned its

single case feature to its complement position, it is unable to license the Agent in its specifier position.

One possible solution is to assume the aspectual marker **akan** in (15) functions as a case marker in the clause assigning governed case to the Agent in SPEC of VP. This would not only account for the licensing of the Agent **dia** in (15), but would also explain why the aspectual marker cannot be omitted from the construction. It's omission would result in an unlicensed argument, thereby producing an unacceptable construction. The following chapter discusses these case markers in detail.

### 3.2 Comparing a Passive and Topic Analysis

In section 3.0, I noted that there are two important factors left unexplained in GHT's (1992) passive analysis for Object Preposing. First, it is not clear why the internal argument is forced to move to an external position. If this movement is a type of NP-movement, we could assume movement takes place for case-marking purposes. Generally when an internal argument is externalized, the verb's case-assigning property has been absorbed. There is no evidence of this in Object Preposing. GHT claim the Agent itself is licensed by the verb within VP.

If the internal NP in Object Preposing is considered to have undergone A'-movement, then it is clear why the NP must

raise to an external position. This kind of movement suggests a topicalized construction whereby an NP is marked with the feature [+ Topic] and raises to a topic position outside of IP. This topic position (i.e. SPEC of CP) is a caseless position. The topic NP is licensed through coindexation with its case-marked trace. Thus, we would not expect the verb's case-marking properties to be altered in any way.

A second unexplained issue for the passive analysis is the necessary appearance of the case marker. GHT do not mention this property in their analysis. However, if Object Preposing is considered a type of A'-movement, the function of the case marker becomes apparent. As previously mentioned, any NP-movement outside of IP in Malay must pass through the specifier of IP position in order to avoid crossing more than one barrier. Thus, the topic NP in Object Preposing has left its trace in SPEC of IP. This position is now unavailable to license a subject NP. The subject must appear in an alternate subject position that cannot be case-marked by INFL (i.e. SPEC of VP). An overt case marker is necessary to provide the case-marking option. In Malay this case marker surfaces as either an aspectual marker, modal or adverb.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## The Case Markers

The case markers appearing in O.P. constructions can be divided into three separate lexical classes: aspectual markers, modals and adverbs. In the following sections each of these are discussed separately with supporting data.

### 4.0 Aspectual Markers[24]

In Malay, aspect is not morphologically marked on the verb, as is the case in both English and French. It is marked by the appearance of an aspectual marker. These markers occur preverbally and never change their morphological form. A list of frequent aspectual markers is shown in (1):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | **akan** | implies that something will be done |
| | **pernah** | action has taken place at least once |
| | **sedang** | in the process of, continuation |
| | **sudah** | implies completion, 'already' |
| | **telah** | implies completion |

[24]In some Indonesian grammars (Dardjowidjojo (1978), Macdonald (1976)), aspectual markers and modals have been grouped together and labelled "auxiliary verbs".

The aspectual markers play an important role in the formation of O.P. constructions. Consider the following example:

(2) *** Kuih itu dia makan.**
cake the s/he eat
('S/he ate the cake.')

The consultants I worked with maintained there was something missing in this example. It did not seem to be complete.

Now consider the following examples:

(3) a. **Kuih itu akan dia makan.**
cake the ASP s/he eat
'S/he will eat the cake.'

b. **Kuih itu belum pernah dia makan.**
cake the NEG ASP s/he eat
'S/he never ate the cake.'

It would appear from example (2) that an O.P. construction without aspectual marker is not acceptable in Malay. Once the construction is marked for aspect, however, it is permitted. Examples (4) and (5) also illustrate this observation:

(4) a. *** Ikan merah itu dia tangkap.**
fish red the s/he catch
('S/he caught the red fish.')

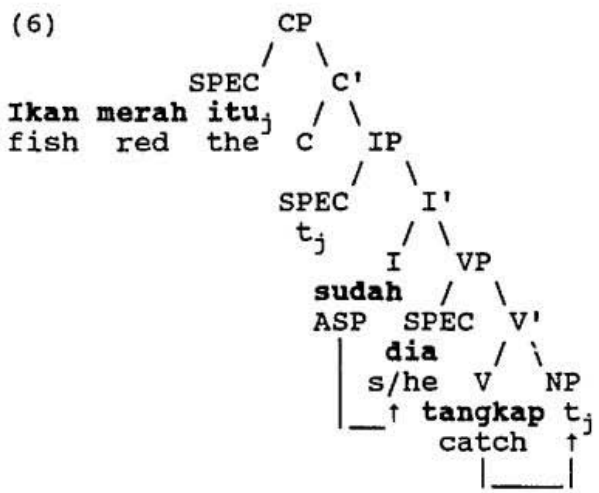
b. **Ikan merah itu sudah dia tangkap.**
fish red the ASP s/he catch
'S/he already caught the red fish.'

(5) a. *** Rak itu saya baiki.**
shelf the I fix
('I fixed the shelf.')

b. **Rak itu saya telah baiki.**[25]
shelf the I ASP fix
'I fixed the shelf (completed).'

As (4a) and (5a) indicate, an O.P. construction that is not marked for aspect is not acceptable. When an aspectual marker is present, as in (4b) and (5b), the construction is considered complete. This aspectual marker functions as a licensor for the Agent in the SPEC of VP position, as shown in (6) for example (4b):

(6)




[25]This example illustrates an alternate word order possibility in Object Preposing discussed in subsection 1.3.2. The licensing of the preverbal Agent in this example is examined in section 4.3.

The presence of an aspectual marker in **meN-** or **di-** constructions is optional. The marker may or may not appear without affecting the acceptability of the construction, as seen in (7) and (8):

(7) **Dia (sudah) me-makan kuih itu.**
s/he already eat cake the
'S/he (already) ate the cake.'

(8) **Kuih itu (sudah) di-makan oleh-nya.**
cake the ASP eat by her/him
'The cake was (already) eaten by her/him.'

Because the aspectual markers have no affect on the acceptability of (7) and (8), their role must be purely semantic. In (3a), (3b), (4b) and (5b) they cannot be omitted; therefore, they must play more than a semantic role in these constructions.

### 4.1 Modals

Like the aspectual markers, the modals appear preverbally and never change their morphological form. When both aspectual marker and modal are present in a phrase, the modal follows the aspectual marker. A list of modals is given in (9):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (9) | **boleh** | 'to be permitted to, be allowed to' |
| | **dapat** | 'can, to be able to' |
| | **hendak** | 'to want to' |
| | **ingin** | 'to desire to, to want to' |
| | **mahu** | 'to want to' |
| | **suka** | 'to like to' |

As with the aspectual markers, the appearance of a modal in an O.P. construction can account for its acceptability. Consider example (10):

(10) * **Budak itu dia lihat.**
child the s/he see
('S/he saw the child.')

Once again my consultants felt that this construction was not complete. Now consider example (11):

(11) **Budak itu boleh dia lihat.**
child the can s/he see
'S/he can see the child.'

The presence of the modal **boleh** appears to have an effect on the acceptability of example (10). Without the modal, the preposed construction is not possible.

Examples (12) and (13) also illustrate this fact:

(12) a. * **Ali dan Azmi Dida peluk.**
Ali and Azmi Dida hug
('Dida hugged Ali and Azmi.')

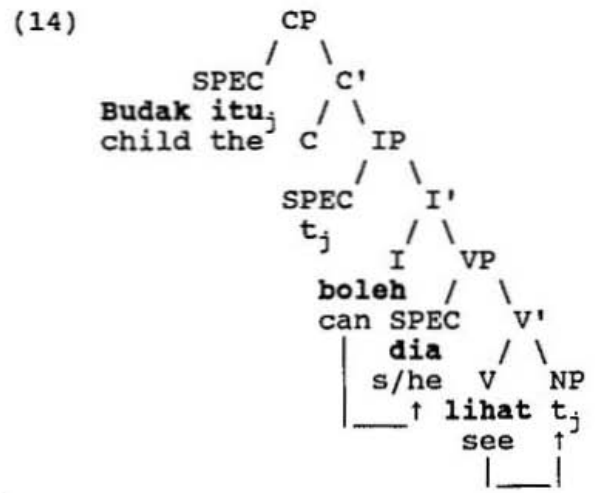
b. **Ali dan Azmi Dida mahu peluk.**
Ali and Azmi Dida want hug
'Dida wants to hug Ali and Azmi.'

(13) a. * **Buku itu Ali baca.**
book the Ali read
('Ali read the book.')

b. **Buku itu Ali suka baca.**
book the Ali like read
'Ali likes to read the book.'

The object cannot be preposed in (12a) and (13a) as there is no modal present. The constructions are only acceptable with the appearance of the modal in (12b) and (13b). The modal is responsible for licensing the Agent in the SPEC of VP position, as shown in (14) for example (11):

(14)



The modals have no effect on the acceptability of **meN-** and **di-** constructions, as illustrated below:

(15) **Abu (suka) men-cium Dida.**
Abu like kiss Dida
'Abu (likes to) kiss Dida.'

(16) **Dida (suka) di-cium oleh Abu.**
Dida like kiss by Abu
'Dida (likes to) be kissed by Abu.'

This data again suggests that the modals appearing in **meN-** and **di-** constructions are present for semantic reasons only.

### 4.2 Adverbs

A final lexical class playing a significant role in the formation of O.P. constructions is the adverb. These adverbs can appear as either an Adv or PP. The adverb has a similar function to that of the aspectual markers and modals. The appearance of the adverb determines whether or not the O.P. construction is acceptable.

Consider example (17):

(17) * **Buku itu Ali baca.**
book the Ali read
('Ali read the book.')

As seen in similar examples in the two previous sections, my consultants felt that something was missing in the above construction. This example is permitted with the addition of an adverb, as shown in (18):

(18) **Buku itu Ali baca dengan teliti.**
book the Ali read with care
'Ali read the book carefully.'

It would appear that a "bare" O.P. construction (i.e. [Theme + Agent + Verb]) has a missing element that must be present in order to achieve acceptability. An adverb is one possible solution along with the aspectual markers and the modals. Some further examples are provided below:

(19) a. *** Anjing itu Ali pukul.**
dog the Ali hit
('Ali hit the dog.')

b. **Anjing itu Ali pukul tanpa belas kasihan.**
dog the Ali hit without pity pity
'Ali hit the dog without sympathy.'

(20) a. **?? Cerita itu Ali percaya.**[26]
story the Ali believe
('Ali believed the story.')

b. **Cerita itu benar-benar Ali percaya.**
story the really Ali believe
'Ali really believed the story.'

---

[26]Examples marked ?? are not considered acceptable but are slightly better than those marked *.

Examples (19a) and (20a) are, again, unacceptable without the presence of the adverb. (19b) and (20b), however, are permitted as the adverb is present.

### 4.2.1 Restrictions

Not all adverbs play a role in the acceptability of O.P. constructions. The following list contains those that have clearly had an effect on the acceptability of the data elicited for this thesis:

(21)

| | |
|---|---|
| **benar-benar** | 'really' |
| **dengan baik** | 'well' |
| **dengan cepat** | 'quickly' |
| **dengan cermat** | 'carefully' |
| **dengan cuai** | 'recklessly' |
| **dengan kuat** | 'with force' |
| **dengan mudah** | 'easily' |
| **dengan teliti** | 'carefully' |
| **dengan terang** | 'clearly' |
| **tanpa belas kasihan** | 'without sympathy' |
| **tanpa berkelip-kelip** | 'without blinking' |

Most of the adverbials listed above denote some agentive quality (ex. **dengan cepat** 'quickly'), while a few do not (ex. **benar-benar** 'really'). The detailed class of adverbs that do play a role in O.P. constructions have yet to be defined. For example, an adverb denoting time may, at best, leave an O.P. construction marginally acceptable, as (22) illustrates:

(22) a. *** Lelaki itu budak itu lihat.**
man the child the see
('The child saw the man.')

b. **? Lelaki itu budak itu lihat semalam.**
man the child the see yesterday
('The child saw the man yesterday.')

If we replace **semalam** ('yesterday') with **dengan terang** ('clearly'), the construction is fully accepted:

(23) **Lelaki itu budak itu lihat dengan terang.**
man the child the see with clear
'The child saw the man clearly.'

Adverbs as a whole do not play a major role in Object Preposing. Rather a subset of adverbs, that have yet to be semantically defined as a group, are a key factor in forming acceptable O.P. constructions.

**Men-** and **di-** constructions do not require the adverb, as shown in (24) and (25):

(24) **Ali mem-baca buku itu (dengan teliti).**
Ali read book the with care
'Ali read the book (carefully).'

(25) **Buku itu di-baca oleh Ali (dengan teliti).**
book the read by Ali with care
'The book was read by Ali (carefully).'

The adverb has no effect on the acceptability of (24) and (25). It may or may not appear.

4.2.2 Distribution

If we consider these adverbials to have a similar syntactic role in Object Preposing as the aspectual markers and modals, it is not clear how their licensing function takes place as they are not restricted to one specific position in the clause. Consider the sentences in (26):

(26) a. **Dengan mudah biasiswa itu dia menangi**[27].
with ease scholarship the s/he win

b. **Biasiswa itu dengan mudah dia menangi.**
scholarship the with ease s/he win

c. **Biasiswa itu dia menangi dengan mudah.**
scholarship the s/he win with ease

'S/he won the scholarship easily.'

The obligatory adverb in these constructions can appear in initial, medial or final position. This is a problem for my analysis as the adverb need not be in a position where it can assign governed case to the Agent NP.

Travis (1988) proposes that adverbs are licensed via head feature licensing. She claims the adverb is a head that does

[27]The verb here is unprefixed. The **meN-** form is **mem-enang**.

not project to a phrasal category. This head is itself licensed by a feature in a different head, such as INFL or V. It is not the purpose of this thesis to explore the syntactic distribution of adverbials in Malay. I will assume with Travis that an adverb can appear anywhere within the projection area of the head licensing the adverb. In light of Travis, I will suggest that the particular group of adverbs playing a licensing role in O.P. constructions share the same underlying position. Since they have a similar syntactic function, they may be base-generated in a specific position where they can perform their syntactic function. I leave this problem open for further discussion.

### 4.3 Alternate Word Order

In Chapter One (section 1.3.2) I briefly mentioned two possible word order combinations for Object Preposing. The first is the [$NP_1$ + AUX + $NP_2$ + V] type construction shown below in (27). The second possible ordering is [$NP_1$ + $NP_2$ + AUX + V] illustrated in (28):

(27) $NP_1$ + AUX + $NP_2$ + V

**Kuih itu akan dia makan.**
cake the ASP s/he eat

'S/he will eat the cake.'

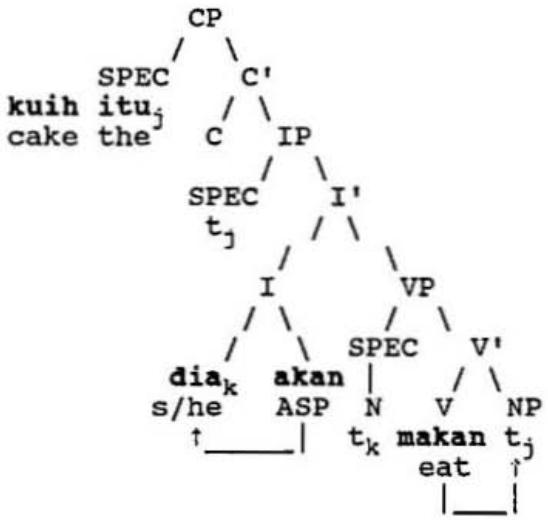
(28) $NP_1 + NP_2 + AUX + V$

**Kuih itu dia akan makan.**
cake the s/he ASP eat

'S/he will eat the cake.'

The Agent **dia** can appear in either SPEC of VP (27) or an alternate position (28). This alternate position cannot be SPEC of IP as it is already occupied by the topic's trace. GHT (1992) propose there is movement of the Agent from SPEC of VP to INFL. If this is the case for (28) then the Agent **dia** is in a position to be case-marked by the aspectual marker **akan**, as shown in (29):

(29)



Thus the Agent can optionally appear in SPEC of VP, or it can undergo what is effectively an incorporation-type movement[28] to INFL as in (29).

### 4.4 AUX-Initial Constructions

We can now account for the AUX-initial construction previously discussed in Chapter Two. These constructions are left unexplained in GHT (1992), Hung (1987) and Voskuil's (1989) analyses as they link the **meN-** prefix to the appearance of a Theme in the V-complement position. If we consider the following examples, we find that both contain a Theme NP licensed as object. However, the **meN-** prefix can only appear in (30):

(30) NP + AUX

**Ali (akan) mem-ukul anjing itu.**
Ali ASP hit dog the
'Ali (will) hit the dog.'

(31) AUX + NP

**Akan Ali (*meN-)pukul anjing itu.**
ASP Ali hit dog the
'Ali will hit the dog.'

(Hung 1987:78)

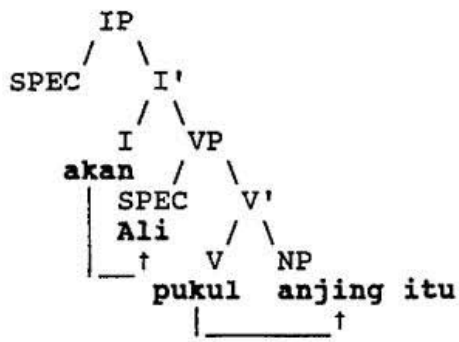
---

[28]See Baker (1988).

GHT, Hung and Voskuil do not provide an explanation for this.

If we consider the aspectual marker **akan** to have a case-marking function in (31), we can account for the non-appearance of **meN-**. I have presumed in this thesis that INFL can only license the SPEC of IP position in Malay. If a subject NP were to appear in the SPEC of VP position, a licensing alternative must be available as INFL cannot license this position. The aspectual marker **akan** provides this alternative licensing the Agent **Ali** in SPEC of VP, as shown in (32):

(32)




There is no subject licensed in the specifier of IP position in (32), therefore subject-verb agreement is not possible. If we compare (30) and (31), we find that subject-verb agreement is necessary in (30) as the subject NP (**Ali**) is licensed in the SPEC of IP position. In (31), subject-verb agreement is not possible as the subject NP (**Ali**) is licensed in SPEC of VP by the overt case marker.

Omission of the aspectual marker **akan** is not possible in (31), as illustrated in (33):

(33) * $[_{IP}\ [_{VP}$ **Ali** $[_{V}$ **pukul** $[_{NP}$ **anjing itu**$]]]]$.
Ali hit dog the
('Ali hit the dog.')

The aspectual marker has a licensing function in (31). If it is not present, the subject **Ali** cannot be licensed in the SPEC of VP position. The aspectual marker is not responsible for licensing the subject **Ali** in (30), therefore it is optional in the construction.

## 4.5 Preverbal NPs in Mandarin Chinese

Lu (1991) describes a similar phenomenon in Mandarin Chinese in which he claims aspectual and adverbial morphemes are also required in order to prepose object NPs. His data is comparable to that presented here in that either aspectual morphemes or specific adverbs must be present when an object NP appears in preverbal position. Each of these will be discussed with examples in the following sections.

### 4.5.1 Possible Preverbal NPs

Lu gives the following example to illustrate the basic word order in Mandarin:

(34) **Lisi zhidao suoyou shiqing.**
Lisi know all thing
'Lisi knows everything.'

(Lu:35)

Both Lu (1991) and Light (1979) consider Mandarin to be an SVO language.[29] Lu discusses several types of preverbal NPs in Mandarin. For the purposes of this thesis, I am only concerned with two specific types which he refers to as pre-Os and pre-T1s.

Pre-Os are object NPs that appear "in the medial position between the subject and the verb" (Lu:31). Lu claims that under certain conditions, some objects can appear between the logical subject and the verb, as illustrated in (35) and (36):

(35) **Wo zaofan yijing chi-le.**
I breakfast already eat ASP
'I have already had my breakfast.'

(36) **Zhangsan lian Beiji dou qu-guo.**[30]
Zhangsan even North-Pole all go ASP
'Zhangsan has even been to the North Pole.'

(Lu:32)

---

[29]Li and Thompson (1974, 1975) propose, however, that modern Chinese is becoming an SOV language.

[30]Lu states that **qu** 'go' is a transitive verb that can take a locative object.

Pre-T1s are topics in a topicalized construction. They appear in initial position, as shown in (37) and (38):

(37) **Zaofan wo yijing chi-le.**
breakfast I already eat ASP
'Breakfast, I have already had.'

(38) **Lian Beiji Zhangsan dou qu-guo.**
even North-Pole Zhangsan all go ASP
'Even the North Pole, Zhangsan has even been to.'

(Lu:32)

Lu provides an interesting analysis as to how these preverbal NPs are licensed, which will be discussed in the following sections.

### 4.5.2 Perfective Aspect

Lu claims that Perfective aspect morphemes license some of the pre-Os in Mandarin Chinese. There are two Perfective aspectual morphemes: **le** and **guo**. Their appearance enables objects to occur in the medial position. Their omission results in an unacceptable construction, as demonstrated in (39) and (40):

(39) a. **Xuesheng-men zuo(-le) gongke.**
student PL do ASP exercise
'The students do/(have done) their exercises.'

b. *** Xuesheng-men gongke zuo.**
student PL exercise do
('The students do their exercises.')

c. **Xuesheng-men gongke zuo le.**
student PL exercise do ASP
'The students have done their exercises.'

(40) a. **Wo kan (guo) zhe-bu dianying.**
I watch ASP this CL movie
'I watch/(have watched) this film.'

b. *** Wo zhe-bu dianying kan.**
I this CL movie watch
('I watch this film.')

c. **Wo zhe-bu dianying kan-guo.**
I this CL movie watch ASP
'I have watched this film.'

(Lu:38)

In an [Agent + Verb + Theme] type construction ((39a) and (40a)), the aspectual morpheme is optional. However, an [Agent + Theme + Verb] type construction without a Perfective aspectual morpheme is not acceptable, as shown in (39b) and (40b).

We find the same restrictions with certain topicalized constructions. The Perfective aspectual morpheme must be present in order for the object NP to appear in initial position.

(41) a. **Zhangsan qu meiguo.**
Zhangsan go America
'Zhangsan goes to America.'

b. *** Meiguo Zhangsan qu.**
America Zhangsan go.
('Zhangsan goes to America.')

c. **Meiguo Zhangsan qu-guo.**
America Zhangsan go ASP
'America, Zhangsan has been to (there).'

(42) a. **Lisi bu kan zhe-ben shu.**
Lisi not read this CL book
'Lisi does not read this book.'

b. ***? Zhe-ben shu Lisi bu kan.**
this CL book Lisi not read
('Lisi does not read this book.')

c. **Zhe-ben shu Lisi mei kan.**
this CL book Lisi not read
'This book, Lisi has not read.'

(Lu:69-70)

Examples (41b) and (42b) illustrate that the object NP cannot appear in initial position as topic without the presence of a Perfective aspectual morpheme. Once the construction is marked for Perfective aspect, as in (41c) and (42c), the object NP can be topicalized.

This data is strikingly similar to the Malay data presented in examples (2)-(5) in this chapter. As is shown in

Malay, in order for an object NP to be preposed[31] there must be at least one of three constituent classes present, one of these being the aspectual markers.

### 4.5.3 **Dou** and **ye**

Lu claims that the adverbs **dou** 'all' and **ye** 'also' can function as case markers of preverbal NPs in Mandarin Chinese. When they do behave like case markers they lose their adverbial properties and give an abstract meaning implying that the situation being described is very unusual.

Lu compares the adverbial and case-marking functions of **dou**. He states that the adverb may be optional in a given construction, but the case marker is obligatory, as shown in (43) and (44):

(43) "dou" modifies NP

a. **Wo zhe shi dou zhidao-le.**
I this thing all know ASP
'I have known all about this thing.'

b. **Wo zhe shi zhidao-le.**
I this thing know ASP
'I have known about this thing.'

---

[31]Unlike Mandarin Chinese, preposed objects in Malay cannot appear immediately before the verb, as illustrated in the following example:

*** Ali buku itu baca dengan teliti.**
Ali book the read with care
Literally: 'The book read Ali carefully.'

(44) "dou" licenses NP

a. **Wo zhe shi dou zhidao.**
I this thing CM know
'I even know about this thing.'
(It is unusual to know such a thing.)

b. * **Wo zhe shi zhidao.**
I this thing know
('I have known about this thing.')

(Lu:40-41)

In (43a), the adverb **dou** has no case-marking properties as Lu claims the aspectual morpheme **le** fills this role. Therefore, the adverb can be deleted without affecting the acceptability of the construction, as shown in (43b). In (44a), however, **dou** has a case-marking function as there is no aspectual morpheme available to assume the necessary role of case marker. Thus when **dou** is omitted, as in (44b), the construction is not permitted. Given the special semantic effects exhibited by the case marker **dou**, it is possible that the adverb **dou** in (43a) appears in a different syntactic position than the case marker **dou** in (44a).

This data once again exhibits similar properties to those of the Malay data. As previously discussed, preposed object NPs in Malay require the presence of one of three possible case markers. Their semantic role is not affected by their syntactic one. In Mandarin Chinese it would appear as though a more restricted group of adverbs (**dou** and **ye**) play a case-

marking role. Unlike Malay, their semantic content is altered once they function in this manner.

Despite variations within specific lexical classes, the actual lexical classes considered to be case markers of preverbal object NPs are remarkably similar between the two languages. One could surmise that these similarities result from the geolinguistic situation of the Malay language.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## A'-Movement

This thesis has thus far claimed that certain properties exhibited by Object Preposing (i.e. lack of verbal agreement and the presence of an overt case marker) can be accounted for if Object Preposing is considered to be an instance of topicalization (i.e. A'-movement). In this chapter, I will analyze two other types of A'-movement in Malay, wh-movement and focusing, and examine whether or not they too prohibit verbal prefixing and require an overt case marker.

### 5.0 Barriers to Movement

As previously mentioned, both VP and IP are barriers to movement in Malay. A moved element cannot cross more than one barrier without violating the Empty Category Principle. I assume with Hung (1987) (following Cowper (1987)) that a potential barrier can be avoided if the specifier position of the maximal projection is available to serve as an "escape hatch" for movement. In Malay, the specifier of VP is a theta position and cannot provide an escape route for A'-movement. If VP is always a barrier, the specifier of IP must be made available or more than one barrier will be crossed. All elements undergoing A'-movement outside of IP must pass

through the SPEC of IP position. If a lexical NP appears in SPEC of IP, A'-movement outside of IP cannot take place.

## 5.1 Verbal Morphology

In the following sections, I discuss examples of A'-movement in which the targeted element plays one of the following roles in the construction: (i) internal argument, (ii) external argument licensed as subject, (iii) internal argument licensed as subject. Let us first consider examples in which the moved element functions as the internal argument.

If Object Preposing is an actual instance of A'-movement, then we would expect other types of A'-movement to exhibit similar properties. The first property discussed in this thesis was the lack of verbal morphology in O.P. constructions. I claimed the Malay verb exhibits subject-verb agreement when an NP is licensed in the SPEC of IP position as subject. This agreement reflects the NP's status as external or internal in the argument structure. If there is no NP licensed in SPEC of IP, the verb does not bear any agreement morphology.

In Object Preposing, an internal NP moves outside IP to a topic position. This topic position is caseless, therefore the topic NP is licensed through coindexation with its case-marked trace in the V-complement position. Hence, when an internal NP is targeted for A'-movement, SPEC of IP functions

as an escape route only and not as a licensing position. Since the internal NP can only reach the topic position by passing through SPEC of IP, no other NP can be licensed as subject in this position. Subject-verb agreement is directly related to the licensing of a subject NP in SPEC of IP. Thus, agreement should be prohibited in Object Preposing. Numerous examples in this thesis illustrate that this is the case.

If we examine other types of A'-movement involving movement of an internal NP, we would expect the same constraint on subject-verb agreement. Consider the following wh-construction:

(1) a. **Apa yang Ali baca?**
what COMP Ali read
'What did Ali read?'

(Hung 1987:55)

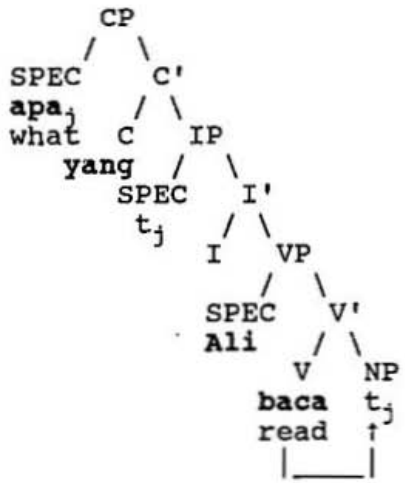
Wh-movement parallels topic movement in that an NP moves from a case-marked position to a caseless position outside of IP. SPEC of CP is considered to be the landing site for NPs undergoing wh-movement. In Malay wh-constructions consist of the moved NP followed by the complementizer **yang**.[32]

We can illustrate example (1) as (2):

---

[32]Dutch, Flemish, Bavarian German (Bayer (1984a and b)) and Early English (Lightfoct (1979)) also require the appearance of an overt complementizer with wh-elements.

(2)




The wh-element **apa** exits IP via its specifier position. The trace of the wh-element is licensed in the V-complement position by the verb's single case feature. Once again, SPEC of IP functions only as an escape route. Since the specifier of IP is filled, the external argument **Ali** cannot be licensed there and must appear in the alternate subject position: SPEC of VP. (The licensing conditions of **Ali** in SPEC of VP are discussed in the following section.) If INFL does not license a subject in SPEC of IP, subject-verb agreement is not possible. Example (3) illustrates that the verb cannot bear any agreement morphology:

(3) *** Apa yang Ali mem/di-baca?**
what COMP Ali read
('What did Ali read?')

Since both Object Preposing and wh-movement of an internal NP prohibit subject-verb agreement, one could reasonably conclude that both constructions are of a similar syntactic nature (i.e. A'-movement).

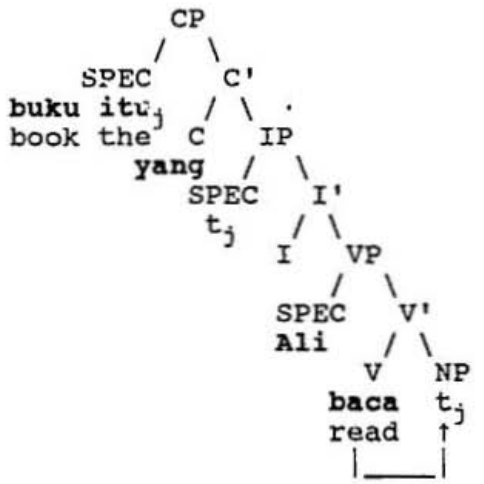
Focused constructions are another example of A'-movement in Malay requiring the presence of the complementizer **yang**. They too are subject to the constraint on A'-movement: they must pass through the specifier of IP position in order to avoid violating the Empty Category Principle. Consider an example like (4) where an internal NP is focused out of IP:

(4) **Buku itu yang Ali baca.**
book the COMP Ali read
'This is the book that Ali read.'

(Hung 1987:55)

This construction can be illustrated as follows:

(5)




Once again, the internal NP has left a trace in the specifier of IP position, forcing the external argument to appear in an alternate position to be licensed as subject. Since there is no NP being licensed in SPEC of IP, this position functions only as an escape route. Subject-verb agreement is not possible, as shown in (6):

(6) * **Buku itu yang Ali mem/di-baca.**
book the COMP Ali read
('This is the book that Ali read.')

At this point it is clear that Object Preposing, wh-movement and focusing exhibit identical properties with regard to verb morphology when an internal argument is the target for A'-movement. Now we consider examples where the external

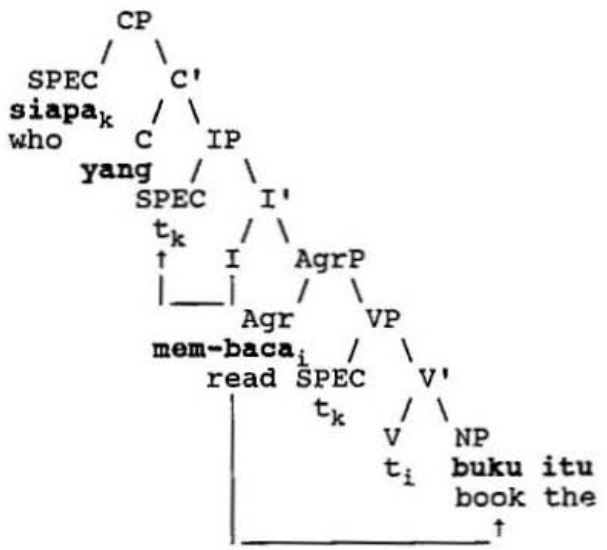
argument licensed as subject is the wh- or focused element. Example (7) illustrates a wh-construction:

(7) **Siapa yang mem-baca buku itu?**
who COMP read book the
'Who read the book?'

(Hung 1987:54)

Unlike the previous wh-construction in (1), the verb in (7) bears agreement morphology with an external argument. As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, the **meN-** prefix indicates that an argument having external argument status is licensed by INFL in the specifier of IP position. In the case of (7), it is the trace of the moved wh-element that is licensed in this position, as shown in (8):

(8)



Example (8) illustrates that the internal argument **buku itu** is licensed by the verb in its base-generated position. The external argument **siapa** has undergone A'-movement outside of IP to the SPEC of CP position. It cannot be licensed there as it is a caseless position. Thus, INFL will license its trace in SPEC of IP in order to satisfy the Case Filter. In this case, SPEC of IP not only functions as an escape route, but also as a licensing position. The appearance of the **meN-** prefix on the verb reflects this licensing. It is necessary to assume that the trace of the wh-element **siapa** retains the features of the NP regarding argument status. The wh-element has external argument status in the construction and, thus, its trace triggers **meN-** agreement on the verb.

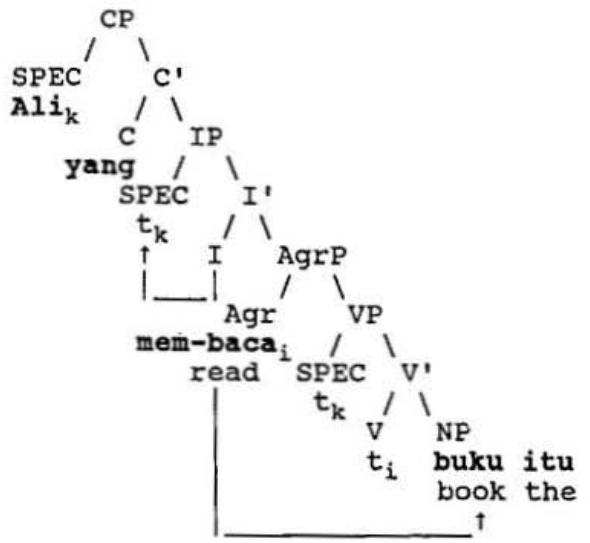
We find that the verb in a similar focused construction also bears external argument morphology, shown in (9):

(9) a. **Ali yang mem-baca buku itu.**
Ali COMP read book the
'It is Ali who read the book.'

(Hung 1987:55)

Once again, if we consider the illustration below in (10), we see that the internal argument **buku itu** has been licensed by the verb in its base-generated position:

(10)



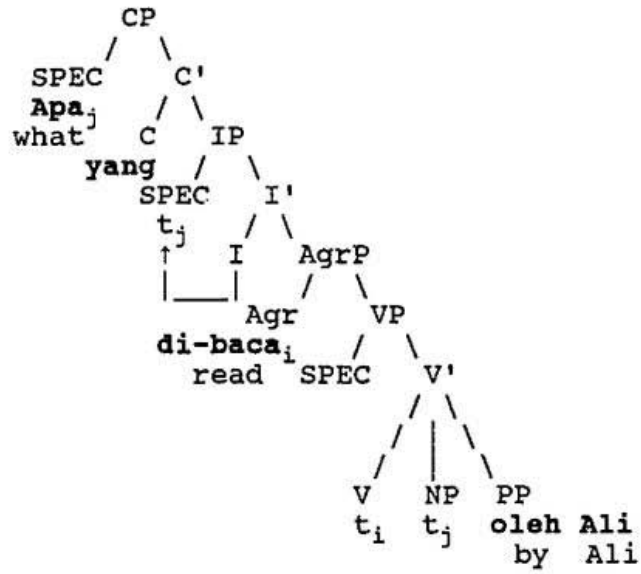

The external argument **Ali** has been focused out of IP to a caseless position. Thus, its trace must be case-marked within IP. INFL provides this licensing possibility by case-marking the trace of the moved NP in the SPEC of IP position. This case assignment triggers agreement in Agr. The agreement, realized as **meN-**, reflects the external argument status of the focused NP.

Examples of A'-movement in which an internal argument is licensed as subject and targeted for A'-movement also illustrate the link between subject-verb agreement and the SPEC of IP position. Consider the following wh-construction:

(11) **Apa yang di-baca oleh Ali?**
What COMP read by Ali
'What was read by Ali?'

The verbal morphology in (11) indicates an internal argument has been licensed in the SPEC of IP position, as shown in (12):

(12)




A similar focused construction also bears the internal argument morphology:

(13) **Buku itu yang di-baca oleh Ali.**
book the COMP read by Ali
'This is the book that was read by Ali.'

As (14) and (15) illustrate, the **di-** prefix cannot be omitted from these constructions:

(14) *** Apa yang baca oleh Ali?**
What COMP read by Ali

(15) *** Buku itu yang baca oleh Ali.**
book the COMP read by Ali

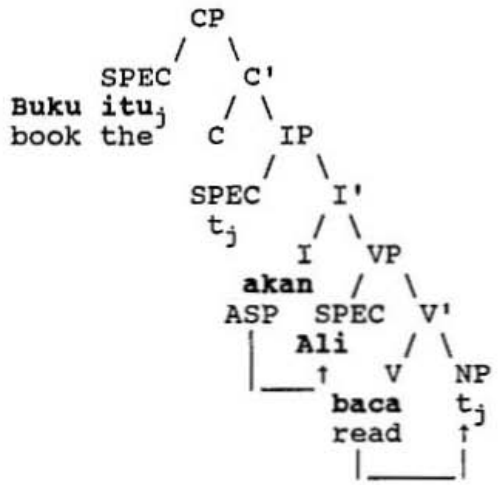
The data provided in this section illustrates that subject-verb agreement in Malay is directly linked to the SPEC of IP position. In constructions involving A'-movement, the Empty Category Principle ensures the SPEC of IP position will always be occupied by the trace of the element targeted for movement. The realization of morphological agreement will depend on whether or not that trace is licensed by INFL in SPEC of IP. Since the verb in O.P. constructions cannot be marked for agreement, I have concluded that Object Preposing is an instance of A'-movement in which SPEC of IP is an escape route for the object NP but is not a licensing position.

## 5.2 Case-marking

In examples of A'-movement, such as (8), whereby the element targeted for movement is licensed by INFL as subject, we have accounted for the licensing conditions of both NPs. However, in examples where a non-subject internal argument undergoes A'-movement, we have not yet accounted for the licensing of the subject NP within VP.

Consider the following O.P. construction:

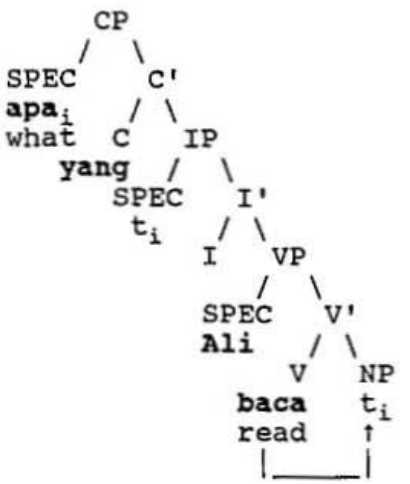
(16)




I have previously claimed that the internal argument **buku itu** is licensed in the V-complement position through coindexation with its trace. The subject **Ali** cannot be licensed by INFL as the SPEC of IP position is filled and INFL cannot assign governed case to SPEC of VP in Malay. Thus, the construction requires the appearance of the case marker **akan**. This case marker provides the necessary licensing condition. Without it, the subject **Ali** cannot be properly licensed and the construction is unacceptable.

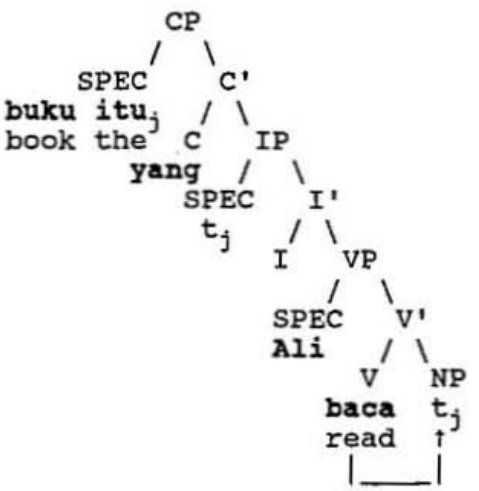
In an example such as (2), repeated below as (17), where INFL is unable to license the subject **Ali** in SPEC of VP, we would also expect an overt case marker to be necessarily present. This is not the case, however, as (17) illustrates:

(17)




If INFL is unable to assign governed case to SPEC of VP, something else must be licensing this position. The same problem applies to example (5), shown below as (18):

(18)




Once again, the subject **Ali** appears to be licensed in SPEC of VP without the presence of an overt case marker.

One possible solution emerges when we compare the lexical items present in the following three examples:

(19) Object Preposing

**Buku itu akan Ali baca.**
book the ASP Ali read

(20) Wh-Movement

**Apa yang Ali baca?**
what COMP Ali read

(21) Focusing

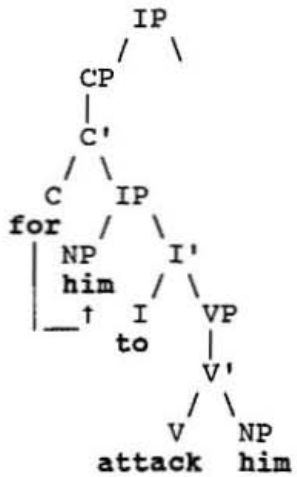
**Buku itu yang Ali baca.**
book the COMP Ali read

In the constructions containing no overt case marker, i.e. (20) and (21), the complementizer **yang** is necessarily present. In the O.P. construction in (19) there is no overt complementizer but the case marker **akan** is necessarily present. It is possible that the complementizer **yang** in (20) and (21) has similar case-marking properties to those of the case marker **akan** in (19). Thus, **yang** may be responsible for licensing the subject in the SPEC of VP position.

It is assumed in English that overt complementizers in C can assign case to a subject NP in SPEC of IP. For example,

the prepositional complementizer **for** in (22) is said to assign accusative case to the subject **him:**

(22) **[For him to attack him] would be surprising.**

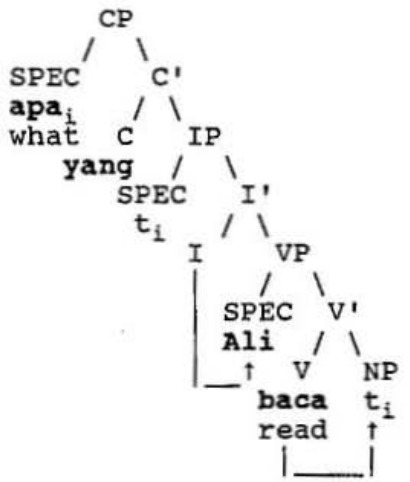



The presence of the complementizer **for** allows for the appearance of the subject NP **him** in SPEC of IP.

If we consider the structures in (17) and (18), it is not immediately evident how a complementizer in C could case-mark an NP in the SPEC of VP position, given that C cannot govern SPEC of VP. In light of Chomsky's (1992) Checking theory, however, we can make the following proposal. We can assume that in (17) and (18) I must eventually raise to C at the LF level. If the overt complementizer in C contains case-assigning properties and INFL anticipates the eventual movement to C, INFL may be able to effectively absorb the

case-marking properties of the complementizer in C before it actually reaches that position.[33] This is illustrated in (23) for example (20):

(23)




This analysis would account for the appearance of an overt case marker in (19), as the aspectual marker **akan** has the same role as the complementizer **yang** in (20) and (21).

This data once again supports the analysis that Object Preposing is a type of A'-movement. If other forms of A'-movement (i.e. wh-movement and focusing) require an overt element for case-marking purposes, then Object Preposing should exhibit the same requirement. Numerous examples in

---

[33]Note, however, that in Malay INFL itself does not have the necessary case-assigning properties to license the SPEC of VP position.

this thesis indicate that Object Preposing does in fact require an overt element for licensing purposes.

### 5.3 GHT's Analysis

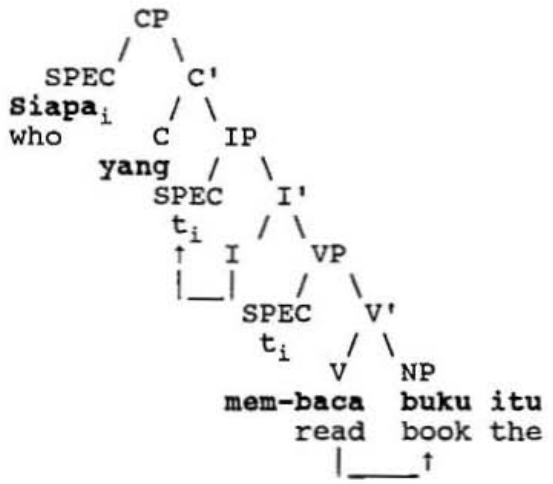
In GHT's (1992) discussion of wh-extraction in Malay (and other Austronesian languages), they claim only the topic NP can be wh-extracted. (For them the topic NP is the NP licensed in the specifier of IP position. Thus, their use of the term topic in Malay is comparable to what I have referred to as subject.) They also consider verbal morphology to be directly linked to the SPEC of IP position.

Their analysis differs from the one proposed in this thesis in that they state the verbal morphology reflects the thematic role of the topic (i.e. subject) NP: the **meN-** prefix indicates an Agent topic and **di-** a Theme topic.[34] If we consider example (7), GHT's discussion would suggest the following analysis:

---

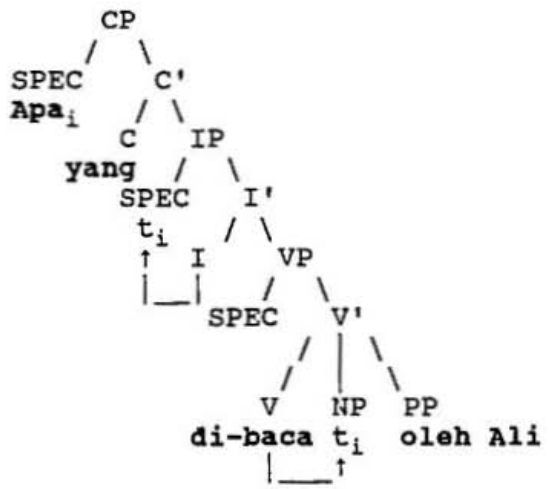
[34]They seem to have two separate analyses for the prefix **meN-**. One analysis, previously mentioned in Chapter Two, considers the presence of **meN-** to be directly linked to the appearance of a Theme in the V-complement position. Unergative intransitive verbs bearing the **meN-** prefix pose a problem here as they do not theta-mark a Theme argument in the complement position. GHT also refer to **meN-** as agreement morphology indicating an Agent NP is topic (i.e. subject). Unaccusative constructions, however, can be marked with **meN-** (see Chapter One (section 1.0)) even though there is no Agent topic.

(24)




If we apply their analysis to (11) we can correspondingly illustrate a similar structure in which a Theme topic (subject) is extracted out of IP, shown in (25):

(25)




With regard to wh-extraction of non-topic internal NPs, GHT's discussion poses two problems. First, they do not

include data illustrating a non-prefixed verb in a wh-construction. Examples like (20) are possible, however GHT do not discuss them in their analysis. Furthermore, it is not clear if their analysis can account for examples like (20). They claim only topic (i.e. subject) NPs may be wh-extracted. If this is the case, why doesn't the verb bear Theme-topic morphology in (20)? In (25) a Theme topic is extracted and the verb accordingly bears Theme-topic morphology (**di-**). However this agreement is prohibited in (20), as was illustrated in (3). One wonders if the lack of verbal morphology here is an indication that the trace of the extracted Theme NP is being licensed elsewhere. Unfortunately, GHT do not address this issue.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Conclusion

In this thesis, I have attempted to shed light on the syntactic nature of Object Preposing in Malay. This construction has been widely accepted as a second form of passive in the language (Chung (1976), Dardjowidjojo (1978), de Vries (1983), GHT (1992), Macdonald (1976)). However, the data presented here seems to indicate that O.P. constructions do not exhibit properties usually associated with passive, but rather properties typically associated with topicalization (i.e. A'-movement).

In reaching this conclusion, I have made several general assumptions. I first proposed that Malay exhibits subject-verb agreement when a subject NP is licensed in the specifier of IP position. This agreement is marked by an inflectional prefix on the verb. When there is no subject licensed in this position, subject-verb agreement is prohibited. This morphological agreement reflects the NP's status in the argument structure. If the argument is external, the verb will bear the most prominent argument morphology. If the argument is internal, the verb will bear non-prominent argument morphology.

I have also adopted the analysis that both VP and IP are barriers to movement in Malay (Hung (1987)). A potential barrier can be avoided if an argument passes through the specifier position of that particular maximal projection. Since the specifier of VP is a theta position in Malay, the specifier of IP must serve as an escape route out of IP. Therefore, all arguments targeted for A'-movement will pass through SPEC of IP leaving a trace.

A final assumption is the existence of a second subject position in Malay (GHT (1992)). When SPEC of IP is unavailable to license a subject NP, the subject appears in the SPEC of VP position.

Having made these assumptions, I examined two properties exhibited by O.P. constructions. The first concerned the lack of verbal morphology. I have presumed that when INFL does not license a subject in the specifier of IP position, verbal prefixing is prohibited. This is characteristic of instances of A'-movement whereby an internal argument (which I will refer to as the Theme) exits IP via the specifier position. If the Theme is not licensed as subject, its trace will be case-marked in its base-generated position (i.e. V-complement position). The external argument (Agent) cannot be licensed as subject in SPEC of IP as it is filled by the Theme NP's trace. Thus, the Agent subject is forced to appear in SPEC of VP.

The second property discussed in this thesis involves the licensing properties of the SPEC of VP position. An aspectual marker, modal or adverb must appear in an O.P. construction, or the construction is not acceptable. Since this additional element cannot be omitted, I have assumed it serves some syntactic function in the phrase.

If the case-assigning properties of INFL are similar to those in English, INFL should only be able to case-mark the SPEC of IP position and not SPEC of VP. I have claimed the aspectual marker, modal or adverb in an O.P. construction is present for licensing purposes. This additional element is only required when a subject is licensed in SPEC of VP. If the additional element is serving a case-marking function, it should not be optional in the construction. My consultants for this thesis have confirmed this.

Thus, this thesis has attempted to illustrate that a topic (i.e. A'-movement) analysis of Object Preposing accounts for the lack of verbal morphology and the obligatory presence of an aspectual marker, modal or adverb in the construction.

# REFERENCES


Baker, M. (1988) Incorporation: A Theory of Grammatical Function Changing, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois.

Bayer, J. (1984a) "Towards an Explanation of Certain That-t Phenomena: the COMP node in Bavarian," in de Geest and Putseys, eds., Sentential Complementation.

Bayer, J. (1984b) "COMP in Bavarian Syntax," The Linguistic Review 3, 209-274.

Burzio, L. (1986) Italian Syntax, Reidel, Dordrecht.

Chomsky, N. (1977) "On Wh-Movement," in P. Culicover, T. Wasow, A. Akmajian, eds., Formal Syntax, Academic Press, New York.

Chomsky, N. (1981) Lectures on Government and Binding, Foris Publications, Dordrecht.

Chomsky, N. (1986) Barriers, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Chomsky, N. (1992) "A Minimalist Program for Linguistic Theory," MIT Occasional Papers in Linguistics 1, MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Chung, S. (1976) "On the Subject of Two Passives in Indonesian," in C. Li, ed., Subject and Topic, Academic Press, New York.

Cowper, E. (1987) "Case Assignment, Categories and Grids," ms. University of Toronto.

Dardjowidjojo, S. (1978) Sentence Patterns of Indonesian, The University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu.

de Vries, L. (1983) "Three Passive-Like Constructions in Indonesian," in S. Dik, ed., Advances in Functional Grammar, Foris Publications, Dordrecht.

Fukui, N. and M. Speas (1986) "Specifiers and Projections," MIT Working Papers in Linguistics 8, 128-172.

Grimshaw, J. (1990) Argument Structure, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Guilfoyle, E., H. Hung, and L. Travis (1992) "SPEC of IP and SPEC of VP: Two Subjects in Austronesian Languages," Natural Language and Linguistic Theory 10, 375-414.

Haegeman, L. (1991) Introduction to Government and Binding Theory, Basil Blackwell, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Hung, H. (1987) Lexical and Functional Categories in Bahasa Malaysia, Masters thesis, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.

Kitagawa, Y. (1986) Subjects in Japanese and English, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts.

Koopman, H. and D. Sportiche (1988) "Subjects," unpublished ms., UCLA.

Koopman, H. and D. Sportiche (1991) "The Position of Subjects," Lingua 85, 211-258.

Kuroda, S.-Y. (1988) "Whether We Agree or Not: a Comparative Syntax of English and Japanese," in W. Poser, ed., Papers from the Second International Workshop on Japanese Syntax, CSLI, Stanford.

Lehmann, W. (1973) Historical Linguistics: An Introduction, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York.

Li, C. and S. Thompson (1974) "An explanation of word order change SVO → SOV," Foundations of Language 12, 201-214.

Li, C. and S. Thompson (1975) "The semantic function of word order in Chinese," in C. Li, ed., Word Order and Word Order Change, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas.

Light, T. (1979) "Word order and word order change in Mandarin Chinese," Journal of Chinese Linguistics 7, 149-180.

Lightfoot, D. (1979) Principles of Diachronic Syntax, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Lu, Z.-Y. (1991) The Preverbal NPs in Chinese, Masters thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Newfoundland.

Macdonald, R. and S. Dardjowidjojo (1967) A Student's Reference Grammar of Modern Formal Indonesian, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C.

Macdonald, R. (1976) Indonesian Reference Grammar, Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C.

Prentice, D. (1987) "Malay (Indonesian and Malaysian)," in B. Comrie, ed., The World's Major Languages, Oxford University Press, New York.

Pollock, J.-Y. (1989) "Verb Movement, Universal Grammar, and the Structure of IP," Linguistic Inquiry 20, 365-424.

Siewierska, A. (1984) The Passive: A Comparative Linguistic Analysis, Croom Helm, London.

Travis, L. (1988) "The Syntax of Adverbs," McGill Working Papers in Linguistics, Special Issue on Comparative Germanic Syntax, 280-310.

Voskuil, J. (1989) "Verbal Inflection in Indonesian," ms. University of Leiden (to appear in The Proceedings of the International Seminar on the Descriptive Linguistics of the Austronesian and Papuan Languages).

Voskuil, J. (1990) Some Transitivization Processes in Malay, Masters thesis, University of Leiden, Leiden, the Netherlands.