

LANGUAGE AND GOVERNANCE IN PRE-COLONIAL EPOCH TRADING: A STUDY ON MALAY CLASSICAL TEXTS

NOR HASHIMAH JALALUDDIN

shima@ukm.my

ZAHARANI AHMAD

zaharani@ukm.my

Program Linguistik
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Studies on Malay classical texts always draw the attention of both international and local scholars. Several aspects of studies have been explored from different perspectives and disciplines such as literature, culture, politics, and sociology. Linguistic studies on the language used in the texts are also being investigated. Asmah (1991) describes the evolution of Malay language which can be observed from the Jawi spelling, morphophonemic system, morphology, syntax and the vocabularies used in the traditional text called *Aqa'id Al-Nasafi*. Secondly, Syed Muhammad Naquib (1988) who offers an explanation to the interpretation of implicit meaning behind the Jawi letters which refers to the eight-year cycle adhered by the Malay Muslims. In complementing the studies of previous scholars, this paper attempts to examine the language patterns of Malay used in trade and governance as manifested in the traditional texts. Nor Hashimah (2007) has accomplished a study on the language pattern used in trade in Kelantan Malay. Subsequently, this paper also aims to observe whether or not there are parallel patterns of language used in that domain in the time frame of two different epochs. Three renowned Malay traditional texts, namely *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (1997), *Undang-Undang Melaka* (2003) and *Misa Melayu* (1992) are used as corpus of study. The analysis is couched in the theory of semantic and pragmatic.

Keywords: traditional texts, semantics and pragmatics, implicature, corpus

ABSTRAK

Kajian teks tradisional selalu mendapat perhatian sarjana tempatan mahupun luar. Kajian dilakukan daripada pelbagai perspektif dan disiplin seperti kesusatseraan, budaya, politik dan sosiologi. Kajian linguistik turut dilakukan contohnya Asmah (1991) yang mengkaji mengenai evolusi bahasa Melayu yang dicerap melalui sistem ejaan Jawi, sistem morfonemik, morfologi, sintaksis dan perbendaharaan kata yang digunakan dalam Aqa'id Al-Nasafi. Keduanya oleh Syed Muhammad Naquib (1988) yang mengkaji makna tersirat di sebalik tulisan Jawi yang merujuk kepada pusingan lapan tahun yang diguna pakai oleh masyarakat Islam. Kajian ini akan melihat dari sudut pandang yang berbeza, iaitu mengkaji pola bahasa dan urus tadbir yang dimanifestasikan daripada teks-teks tradisional. Nor Hashimah (2007) pernah mengkaji pola bahasa yang digunakan dalam kalangan peniaga di Kelantan. Justeru artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji sama ada wujud persamaan pola bahasa dari dua zaman yang berbeza ini. Tiga teks karya agung, iaitu, Hikayat Hang Tuah (1997), Undang-Undang Melaka (2003) dan Misa Melayu (1992) akan dijadikan korpus kajian. Kajian ini akan mengaplikasikan teori semantik dan pragmatik.

Kata kunci: teks tradisional, semantik dan pragmatik, implikatur, korpus.

INTRODUCTION

The Malay kingdom attained its glorious epoch in the 15th and 16th centuries. During that era many Malay classical texts have been written which are generally instructed by the Sultan who was in power. Even in the time of Malacca has fallen into the hand of Portuguese in 1511, the court tradition of producing excellent classical texts has never diminished. Many texts are written to depict the annals of the Malay kingdom and its sultanate as described in Sulalat as Salatin, Merong Mahawangsa and Misa Melayu; the story of utmost warrior such as Hang Tuah and his comrades as inscribed in *Hikayat Hang Tuah*; and a text on the Malay as depicted in *Undang-Undang Melaka*. These are among the most prominent texts, and of course there are many other texts expressing the superiority of Malay in other parts of the Malay archipelago, such as Sumatera, Pasai, etc.

Based on three Malay classical texts, namely *Misa Melayu* (1992), *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (1997) and *Undang-Undang Melaka* (2003)¹, this paper aims to describe the language used in trade during the pre-colonial epoch. These texts are chosen because of the following reasons. Firstly, the text contents can reflect the mind and the behaviour of the Malay people in those days. As Winstedt (1959) suggested, if you are to know who is British, and then you should be reading Shakespeare. Likewise by reading Burns then we will get to know the Scots. Similarly, by reading Malay classical texts we will get to know the Malays. From the texts, we can understand the history, culture, mindset and the way of life of the Malays in that epoch. By analysing and interpreting what is written in the texts, we can ascertain how the laws regulated the people, the existence of gender inequality, the positive and the negative values practised by the societies and many other aspects of life. Secondly, the classical texts are the major point of reference in understanding language evolution that has taken place.

It is commonly accepted that language evolves and subject to change. In the case of Malay, syntactical change can be observed by comparing the old and modern Malay sentence structures; semantic change, particularly the expansion of meaning is observable in loanwords; phonological change can be seen in the spelling systems. All these changes prove that Malay is a dynamic language. Subsequently, this paper attempts to describe the language used in trade during the pre-colonial epoch which simultaneously reflects the mind and the behaviour of the Malay speakers.

LINGUISTICS RESEARCH ON MALAY CLASSICAL TEXTS

Studies on Malay traditional texts always draw the attention of both international and local scholars. Several aspects of studies have been explored from different perspectives and disciplines such as literature, culture, politics, and sociology. Linguistic studies on the language used in the texts are also being investigated. Asmah (1991) describes the evolution of Malay language which can be observed from the *Jawi* spelling, morphophonemic system, morphology, syntax and the

¹ The classical texts used in this paper are based on *Karya Agung* published by Yayasan Karyawan, Kuala Lumpur. Yayasan Karyawan is given an authority to republished most of the Malay Classical Texts

vocabularies used in the traditional text called *Aqa'id Al-Nasafi*. Asmah employs a systemic and comparative approach in her analysis, and based on the linguistics forms and structures, she draws substantial diachronic conclusions about the evolution of each system that progressed through time. Language research based on traditional texts is also being studied by Syed Muhammad Naquib (1988). He offers an explanation to the interpretation of implicit meaning behind the Jawi letters which refers to the eight-year cycle adhered by the Malay Muslims. Nevertheless, there is no study focuses on language use in finance and trading based on classical texts.

Edwards and Blagden (1932) write an article on Chinese words and phrases in Malay language spoken in Malacca between 1403 and 1511. They give a full list of Chinese loanwords comparable with Malay translations. Interestingly, many of the loanwords are associated with climate and weather conditions, such as moon, cloud, thunder, rain, sunny, heavy rain and others. These words are important because they are related to businesses activities where transportation by sea is controlled by the monsoon winds. According to Edwards and Blagden, the majority of the borrowed words are categorically nominals (names of things); followed by adjectives; and the least are verbs. The list in table 1 below is some examples of Mandarin words and its Malay equivalence.

Table 1: List of Mandarin-Malay Words (adapted from Edwards and Blagden; 1932)

Mandarin	Meaning	Sound equivalent	Malay
日 [ri]	Sun, day	哈利 [ha li]	Matahari
風 [feng]	Wind	安因 [an yin]	Angin
雲 [yun]	Cloud	亞灣 [ya wan]	Awan
雷 [lei]	Thunder	孤路 [gu lu]	Guroh
星 [xing]	Star	兵因當 [bing yin dang]	Bintang
天陰 [tian yin]	Sky (day) cloudy	格藍 [gel an]	Kelam
天黑 [tian hei]	Sky (day) black	希丹 [xi dan]	Hitam
刮風 [gua feng]	Blow wind (it is windy)	安因 [an yin]	Angin
天寒 [tian han]	Day(weather) dry	克麻撈 [ge ma lao]	Kemarau
霞 [xia]	Red clouds, vapour, obscurity	邦孤寧 [bang gu ning]	Mambang kuning
舞 [wu]	Mist, fog, vapour	干必答 [gan bi da]	Gempita

Another important study on loanwords is Sanskrit loanwords in Malay Literature by Winstedt (1957). It is noted that the presence of Sanskrit loanwords in Malay was noted at least as far back as the time of Sir William Jones (Asiatick Researches, in I, 11, 12). The list of words that have been compiled categorically includes not only abstract terms denoting the conception of time, price or profit, but also comprises terms of relationship, names for parts of the body, names for utensils and articles of commerce, and many court terms of honorific import. Winstedt (1957) states that there are forty loanwords in Sanskrit and ten loanwords in Arabic found in

Sulalat al Salatin (*Sejarah Melayu*). However, he does not make known any examples taken from the texts.

As mentioned, there isn't any study on the language used in trade based on the Malay classical texts. Recent study on the language used in business negotiation among the petty cash traders and buyers has been conducted by Nor Hashimah (2007). The research was carried out in Kelantan which mainly focused on the regional dialect. Kelantan is known as female dominated business women. Based on the collected data, it is shown that about 83% of the conversations are using implicatures. Only 17% of the utterances used in the negotiations are explicitly uttered. Implicature by definition is an utterance with an implicit meaning. The meaning embedded in the utterance must be recovered by the help of contexts surrounding the utterances. There must be a mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer. Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson; 1995) states that a mismatch between both parties will lead to misunderstanding. Although implicatures are used, both parties never failed to communicate and understand each other. Messages are conveyed successfully. For instance:

Buyer: Can I have this for RM20.
 Seller: This is a fine quality textile. I get it from Singapore. Singapore currency is stronger as compared to ours...

The hearer is expecting an answer either 'yes' or 'no' to her request. The seller, however, is giving an excuse for not fulfilling the request. The seller does not opt to straightforwardly say 'no'. It is apparent that the answer 'no' can create a room for speculation. The hearer will speculate a few answers as to why her request is rejected. In Relevance theory, any speculation does not make any good in communication. Obviously, the study shows that implicatures are used more frequent as compared to explicature. Nevertheless, communication goes smoothly without any misinterpretation.

As noted earlier, there is no specific work has been done on language used in trade and finance based on the Malay texts. Thus, this paper attempts to give an overview of the language used during that epoch. A comparison between the classical and modern language used in conversation especially pertaining explicature and implicature will be explored. In addition, this paper attempts to analyse and verify that the Malay kingdom is a centre for trade and finance in the region with well structured governance, good legal system in business law, mutual diplomatic ties and business partnerships and the glory of the Malay kingdom.

THE MALAY KINGDOM AS THE CENTER FOR TRADE AND FINANCE – LINGUISTICS EVIDENCES

As mentioned, the data used in this study are based on Malay classical texts of Misa Melayu (MM), Undang-Undang Melaka (HKM) and Hikayat Hang Tuah (HHT).

The Language Used – Explicit and Implicit

It is observed that explicature and impliacature are used in trade and businesses activities. Implicatures, however, are not prominently used in the texts as compared to modern conversation among petty cash traders and buyers in Kelantan (Nor

Hashimah 2007). One of the reasons is that the parties involved, particularly the traders are not local. They are foreigners who come from Holland, Rome, India, China, Egypt, Makassar and finally Sumatra. Except for traders from Sumatra and Makassar, most of them speak different languages and sometimes they need an interpreter. For instance, as described in Misa Melayu, Pir Muhammad is appointed as an interpreter to assist the Sultan Perak to deal business with the Dutch. In this particular case the foreigners need a simple and straight forward conversation to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation. The examples below illustrate explicit conversations among traders:

Explicit meaning

- a. “Adapun hamba sekalian datang ini dititahkan Sultan Melaka membawa surat dan bingkis tanda berkasih-kasihan antara Sultan Melaka dan Duli Sultan Rom, **hendak membeli bedil yang besar-besar dari**, kerana bedil besar adalah kekurangan sedikit dalam negeri Melaka itu. Adapun hamba lihat akan tanah atas angin terlalu banyak bedil besar-besar.” (HHT: 497).
[Lit: Our presence here is instructed by the Sultan of Malacca to bring this letter and present as a symbol of friendship between the Sultan of Melaka and Sultan of Rome, we want to buy big cannons, as we are short of big cannons in Malacca. I can see many big cannons from the northern hemispheres].
- b. “Pada maksud Yang Dipertuan suruh ke Benua Rom; jikalau tiada, **negeri Mesir ini pun dapatlah kita membeli bedil Yang Dipertuan ini.**”
[Lit: The sultan's intention is to go to Rome, if there is none, we can buy the cannons from Egypt].
- c. “Hai Laksamana, **baiklah anakku suruh segala orang anakku membeli dagangan yang patut dibawa ke Benua China itu, sangat labanya** (HHT)
[Lit: Dear Admiral, it is good to instruct your people to buy goods and bring them to China, it is very profitable].

In the given examples, the messages conveyed to the business partners or subordinates are very clear. There are no ambiguous lexical items used as this will facilitate the officer to carry out their duties smoothly. In (a), the Sultan of Malacca instructed his admiral to negotiate with the Sultan of Rome to buy big cannons. The Sultan believes that the west is more advanced in making weapons because they have involved in many wars. The phrase '**hendak membeli bedil yang besar-besar**' (*want to buy big cannons*), shows that the Sultan has made his intention very clear in buying the weapons. In fact, if the admiral failed to get them from Rome, they should get the cannons from Egypt. The Sultan of Rome then has to make a decision and tied a business relationship with Malacca.

In (b), the Sultan of Malacca has instructed the admiral and his people to sail to China. The relationship between Malacca and China was very strong due to the marriage of Sultan Mansur Syah with Princess Hang Li Po. The good relationship works well until today, given the fact that the existence of Baba Nyonya descendant from Malacca, Penang and Singapore. The Chinese has written a dictionary containing a list of words with Chinese orthography, Roman spelling and the equivalent meaning in Malay.

The strong ties in business with the Chinese continue to progress and develop. China is known as heaven for doing business as the profit gained is very

lucrative. The phrase in (c), '**baiklah anakku suruh segala orang anakku membeli dagangan yang patut dibawa ke Benua China itu, sangat labanya** (*it is good to instruct your people to buy goods and bring to China, it is very profitable*) is supporting the assumption. The businesses indirectly have invited big migrations from China to the Malay peninsular. The Chinese come and reside in the Malay state and become very prevailing. They involved in tin mines activities, especially in Perak. The phrase below demonstrates the presence of Chinese in the Malay kingdom"

d. '... penuh sesaklah di pulau Indera Sakti., penuh pekan dan bandar dan lagi kedai – kedai Cina berlapis – lapis dan bertindih – tindih. (Misa Melayu: 46)
 [Lit: "...Indera Sakti Island was packed, full of villages and towns and many more Chinese shops, and very packed.]

Implicit Meaning:

Implicature needs an extra effort in interpreting meaning (Blakemore; 1992). The underlying meaning must be fully recovered within the contexts given in the utterance itself. Sometimes there is an antecedent in the previous utterances that can become a clue for the closest interpretation. Implicature must only be used among speakers and hearers with similar background cognitive understandings. They must have a mutual understanding as to assure the intended message is successfully interpreted. The examples below are utterances with implicit meaning:

e. "akan sekarang adalah nakhoda kapal patik itu tinggalkan ia menanti di Pulau Sembilan kerana nakhoda kapal itu hendak menantikan titah dari bawah Duli yang Maha Mulia juga. . ." (Misa Melayu: 41).

[lit: *The captain is left waiting in Pulau Sembilan because the captain is waiting for the consent from the Highness...*]

f. "...maka Commissary pun membuat surat akan menambahi teguh setia dengan Raja Perak ...maka berteguh – teguhan janji orang Holanda itu dengan Raja Muda dan segala orang besar – besar sehingga jual beli timah jua. (Misa Melayu: 33)

[lit: *the Commissary wrote a letter to strengthened their relationship and be obedient to the Raja Perak...then the ties become stronger between the Dutch and Raja Muda and the dignitaries including the buying and selling of tin ores*].

In (e) and (f), **menantikan titah dari bawah Duli yang Maha Mulia** (*waiting for the consent from the highness*) and **menambahi teguh setia dengan Raja Perak** (*to be more obedient to Raja Perak*) are two phrases that need further interpretation. Why Raja Perak plays an important role in strengthening the relationship. In fact the Dutch are willing to wait and reinforced their relationship with the highness in securing their interests in the tin ore business. The question arises here is that why the Dutch are persistent in seeing the king and voluntarily wrote a letter to strengthen their friendship?. The letter must be very significant to the relationship.

In the feudal system, the King is the symbol of power. Thus, all decision making must come from the king and not from the admiral or *syahbandar*. The admiral and *syahbandar* are his ministers that look after the businesses. They can only give advice but do not have an authority in making any decision. Everything goes back to the king as the decision maker. Lexical words such as 'consent' and

'obedient' prove implicitly that power is in the hand of the king. Even though a lexical word 'power' is not mentioned explicitly, but the meaning is understood by bridging the lexicals 'consent' and 'obedient' with the contexts given in the utterances. Readers must have the background assumptions on the whole picture of the traditional lives especially in the feudal settings.

The Governance in Trading And Finance

One of the factors that makes Malacca the best port in the region is due to its well structured governance. *Syahbandar* (trade minister) is in control of the port and trading. The *syahbandar* is answerable to the Sultan. In Misa Melayu (1992) it is stated that the economic wealth of Perak has invited many 'businessmen' to come and do their businesses in the state. Tin ore and elephants are the main business: All foreign traders' ship has to seek permission from the sultan in doing businesses. In feudal economic system, the sultan and ministers monopolised the export and import activities.

Having being monopolised by the sultan and his ministers, the commoners are happy and live in peace. The concept of 'raja adil raja disembah, raja zalim raja disanggah' (*lit: a just monarch is revered, a cruel one is rejected*) become the rule of thumbs in the society. The glory of the Malay kingdom has made the straits of Malacca as the centre for the traders from the west to meet the east. The wests are looking for silk, and spices from the east whereas the easts are looking for weapons from the west.

Laws In Trades And Finance - Undang-Undang Melaka

Another contributing factor for Malacca to become a well known port is the law that binds the trading, the traders and the people. A specific text the so-called '**Undang-Undang Melaka**' was written for reference. How businesses are exchanged and governed can be observed in the following data.

Pada Fasal 29 menyatakan segala hukum gantang dan cupak, segala hukum pasar itu sekalian pada syahbandar juga hukum nakhoda, jong dan balok dan kapal dan barang nama perahu yang besar kecil itu dan melukai sama **dagang dan hutang-piutang itu** sekalian itu dalam **hukumnya syahbandar juga**, diserahkan kepadanya. (UUM: pg; 133).

[*Lit: Article 29 states that all rules pertaining 'gantang' and 'cupak' (measurement), all market rules are in the hand of syahbandar, and rules on captain (nakhoda), junk and cargo-boat and ship and including all small or big boats together with businesses and debts are all under the ruling of syahbandar*]

Fasal 30 pula menyatakan segala **hukum be(r)niaga itu dan haram bagi yang mengambil riba**. Adapun pada hukum berniaga ertinya **tiada sah be(r)niaga bagi orang gila dan tiada sah be(r)niaga dengan kanak-kanak yang belum baligh dan tiada sah be(r)niaga melainkan dengan kata orang berjual juga seperti katanya: 'Kujual benda ini' maka kata yang membeli: 'Kubeli benda ini'**, dan harga benda itu hendak bertentu. Bermula hendaklah benda yang suci itu dijual dan **tiada sah be(r)niaga benda yang cemar** iaitu **seperti tuak dan arak dan anjing dan babi dan segala yang haram** (UUM).

[Lit: Article 30 states all rules concerning businesses and they are forbidden from taking interests. Rules in business noted that it is illegal to do business with those with mental illness, under puberty children and it is considered invalid until the traders says, "I sell this" and the buyer would reply, "I buy this" with the agreed price. The goods must be "clean" and it is prohibited to sell alcohol, dogs, pigs and all forbidden items.]

Fasal (34) **peri orang muflis**. Barangsiapa banyak piutangnya daripada artanya, maka dipintanya oleh segala yang empunya arta pada muflis itu daripada melakukan kehendaknya dalam artanya. Maka ditahan hakim bahawa muflis itu melakukan kehendaknya dalam artanya. (UUM)

[Lit: Article 34 is about bankruptcy. Whoever has too many debts, they are prohibited from spending. The judge will stop the debtor from managing the properties].

The given articles quoted from Undang-Undang Melaka are prescribing three main subject matters, namely governance (article 29), rules in trading pertaining to permitted and forbidden goods (article 30) and guiding principle of bankruptcy (article 34). This demonstrates that the rulers are very serious in managing trading activities. As stated clearly in article 29, the person who is responsible in administering the work is the *syahbandar* (ministry of trade). All matters regarding the administration of the port, '*measurements for goods, size of ships or boats and debts are managed by the syahbandar*'. The traders must abide with the rules and regulations set by the government.

Article 30 clearly states that any transactions involving interests are not permitted in the system. The rules also emphasize that no deals should be made with under aged children and a person with mental illness. It is pertinent that business transaction is ended with ingenuous expressions, '*saya jual*' (I sell this...) and '*saya beli*' (I buy this...). The traders are also reminded not to sell goods that are forbidden in Islam such as pig, dogs, alcohol and wine. In the case of bankruptcy, someone who has a lot of debts is barred from spending. All his properties will be confiscated and the judge will stop the debtor from managing their properties.

It is apparent that the rules and regulations in trading as prescribed in Undang-Undang Melaka are based on Islamic law. In Islam, no one is allowed to take interests. Dogs, pigs, alcoholic drinks are also strictly prohibited. When Parameswara converted to Islam and changed his name to Megat Iskandar, Islam has become the official religion ever since. The influence of Islam is clearly manifested in Hukum Kanun Melaka. The used of Arabic words such as '*hakim, hukum, baligh, haram*' and many others demonstrate that the peoples of Malacca are practicing Islam as a way of life. In addition to trading, there are many other articles that are based on Islamic law, such as in marriage and divorce, human rights, and etc. As stated in the Islamic law, any party who is involved in business must not be mentally ill or under aged children. This is to protect those who are weak from being cheated and manipulated by the other party. Islam is a religion who treated its followers equally. This is one of the reasons that establish Malacca as a centre point for international traders.

International Trading – Malay Kingdom with Holland, China, India, Egypt, and Indonesia

As the most popular entreport in Asia, the Malay Kingdom has successfully attracted many international traders to carry out their businesses here. Due to its strategic position located at the Straits of Malacca, it turned out to be the busiest port in the region. Inevitably, other Malay states like Perak and Kedah which are relatively close to Malacca have also benefited and enjoyed the economic development transpired by Malacca. Perak is one of the states that produce a lot of tins and it is able to attract the Dutch to come and do business here. This is evident based on the data presented in (g) below.

g. Maka tersebutlah perkataan orang Holanda duduk di Tanjung Putus itu. Adapun Holanda itu disuruhkan oleh rajanya dari negeri Betawi lalu ke Melaka; dari Melaka langsung ia masuk ke negeri perak. Maka ia memohonkan tempat kepada Raja Perak hendak duduk di Pangkalan Halban dan ia hendak membeli timah dengan rial Holanda, sebahara timah dibayarnya tiga puluh rial; maka cukainya pula dua rial. Oleh Sultan Muzaffar Syah segala kehendak Holanda itu semuanya dikenankan baginda. Maka duduklah Holanda itu di Pangkalan Halban. Maka dibuatnya gedung serta kotanya berkeliling gedungnya" (Misa Melayu: 7)
[It is mentioned that the Dutch who resides in Tanjung Putus. The King from Batavia has instructed the Dutch to go to Melaka, and from Melaka to go straight to Perak. They seek permission to reside in Pangkalan Halban and they want to buy tins in Dutch rial, a small amount of tin is paid 30 rial; and the tax is 2 rial. Sultan Muzaffar Shah has agreed to allow the Dutches to stay in Pangkalan Halban. They built a godown and a town surrounding the godown].

It is internationally known that the Malay peninsular is affluent with mining activities involving tin and iron production. These natural resources, particularly tin are one of the most demanded materials for industry. Europe at that time is moving fast towards its industrial revolution. It would be a great advantage to the Europeans if they can purchase tin and iron directly from Perak, instead of having transactions through a third party. The phrases '*permission to reside in Pangkalan Halban*', '*to buy tins in Dutch rial, a small amount of tin is paid 30 rial; and the tax is 2 rial*' demonstrate the seriousness of the Dutch of having business with the Perak peoples. The Dutch even managed to build a godown in the town area. This indicates that the Dutch are seriously involved in the tin business.

It must be mentioned that activities involving international trades are not restricted to Holland only. Traders from China who is one of Malacca prominent partners have even moved to Perak. It is explicable that tin is the main business attraction. The data below verifies the presence of Chinese immigrants in Perak.

h. '... penuh sesaklah di pulau Indera Sakti., penuh pekan dan bandar dan lagi kedai- kedai Cina berlapis-lapis dan bertindih-tindih. (Misa Melayu: 46)
[Lit:..it is fully packed in Indera Sakti, full of villages and towns and many more Chinese shops, and very packed.]

The clause in (h) 'penuh pekan dan bandar dan lagi kedai-kedai Cina berlapis-lapis dan bertindih–tindih' (*full of villages and towns and many more Chinese shops*,

and very packed) shows that there are many Chinese came to work and involved in tin mining activities. The migration of the Chinese initiates the construction of more shops, and opening of new villages and townships. As expected, the establishment of new township will make trading activities more active. Subsequently, these activities have opened the door wider and attracted the Indians, Sumatranese and the Bugerese (from Makassar) to come and migrate to Perak, as indicated in the data (i) below.

- i. Selain Belanda, pedangang luar yang ramai ialah dari India, manakala pedangang dari Kepulauan Melayu pula ialah dari kawasan Sumatera dan Makasar. Pedagang dari luar itu turut serta dalam majlis rasmi dan perayaan kerajaan. “adapun pada masa itu Holanda dan orang Cina dan orang Keling pun semuanya datang persembahkan segala permainannya berbagai – bagai rupanya dan lakunya. (Misa Melayu: 47)

[Lit: Besides the Dutch, many outside traders are Indians, whereas traders from the Malay archipelago are from the area of Sumatra and Makasar. Outside traders are also involved in the official function and government festives, “at that time the Dutch, Chinese and Keling came with colourful and attractive presents”].

In must be noted that international trading does not confine in Perak and Melaka only but operates outside the Malay kingdom as well. As described in the text, the Laksamana (admiral) was instructed by the Sultan to go to India for a business trip. Besides India, he also goes to China for the same mission, as data (j) and (k) illustrate.

- j. Setelah sudah maka Laksamana pun berkata, “**Hai sekalian, berlengkapalah dan belilah segala dagangan yang patut dibawa ke Benua Keling**, kerana hamba hendak dititahkan ke Benua Keling, kerana hamba pun hendak segera juga.” Maka kata segala orang-orang mudanya, “Baiklah.” (HHT: 383) *[Lit: The Laksamana said, “Dear all, prepare yourself and buy all stuffs that can be taken to Benua Keling, because I was summoned to Benua Keling, and it is urgent”. Then replied the young men, “yes sir”.]*
- k. “**Hai Laksamana, baiklah anakku suruh segala orang anakku membeli dagangan yang patut dibawa ke Benua China itu, sangat labanya,** *[Lit: Dear Admiral, it is good to command your people to buy goods and bring them to China, it is very profitable]*.

In the data presented above, phrases such as, ‘*buy all stuffs that can be taken to Benua Keling*’ and ‘*buy goods and bring to China, it is very profitable*’ suggest that trading is their main mission to the foreign countries.

As far as trading is concerned, it is also interesting to know what type of business that draws the intention of the Malays to go to Rome and Egypt. In Hikayat Hang Tuah, the Sultan has summoned his admiral to go to Rome and Egypt to buy weapons, specifically cannons. Their mission is to bring cannons to Malacca. If they failed to get them from Rome, they should go to Egypt.

- i. “Adapun hamba sekalian datang ini dititahkan Sultan Melaka membawa surat dan bingkis tanda berkasih-kasihan antara Sultan Melaka dan Duli Sultan Rom, **hendak membeli bedil yang besar-besar dari**, kerana bedil

besar adalah kekurangan sedikit dalam negeri Melaka itu. Adapun hamba lihat akan tanah atas angin terlalu banyak bedil besar-besar.” (HHT: 497). *[We are instructed by the Sultan of Malacca to bring this letter and present as a symbol of friendship between the Sultan of Melaka and Sultan of Rome, we want to buy cannon, as we are short of cannons in Malacca. I can see many huge cannons from the northern hemispheres].*

m. “Pada maksud Yang Dipertuan suruh ke Benua Rom; jika lau tiada, **negeri Mesir ini pun dapatlah kita membeli bedil Yang Dipertuan ini.**”
 [Lit: *Our intention is to go to Rome, if we failed to get one, we can buy the cannons from Egypt.*]

It is apparent that the relationship between the Malay kingdom and Europe must be very close. The kings from both countries write letters to each others. The clause in (l), ‘we are instructed by the Sultan of Malacca to bring this letter and present as a symbol of friendship between the Sultan of Melaka and Sultan of Rom’ shows that the relationship has been established for quite some time. Malacca is portrayed as a wealthy kingdom, therefore it can afford to buy weapons from the east.

As the state is governed and administered effectively, Malacca gets attracted by foreign traders. Businesses flourish and prosper, and the state is economically strong and wealthy. More taxes can be collected from the traders and business partners. The descriptions in (n), ‘a small amount of tin is paid 30 rial; and the tax is 2 rial’, and in (i), *the more rial paid as tax to Perak state*, confirm that the wealth obtained by the state comes from the tax paid by the traders. Subsequently, the people are also well-of as indicated by the following phrase, ‘all people in this state save a lot of money...’.

n. Maka ia memohonkan tempat kepada Raja Perak hendak duduk di Pangkalan Halban dan ia hendak membeli timah dengan rial Holanda, sebahara timah dibayarnya tiga puluh rial; maka cukainya pula dua rial..’ (Misa Melayu: 7)
 [Lit: *He seeks permission to the Sultan of Perak to reside in Pangkalan Halban and he wants to buy tins in Dutch rial, a small amount of tin is paid 30 rial; and the tax is 2 rial.*]

o. Adapun akan Holanda itu lamanya pada tiap-tiap tiga tahun sekali berganti kapitan datang dari Betawi. Hatta maka berapa lamanya Holanda itu diam di Pangkalan Halban menunggui Kuala Perak, maka terlalu banyak rial berpuluhan ribu dipersembahkannya kepada baginda itu akan cukainya negeri Perak itu; dan segala orang di dalam negeri ini pun banyaklah yang menaruh rial...” (Misa Melayu: 7)
 [Lit: *The Dutch Captain changed every three years from Batavia. The longer they stay in Pangkalan Halban at Kuala Perak, more rials are paid as tax to the Perak state, and all people in this state save a lot of money...).*

An interesting note depicted in Hikayat Hang Tuah is about a special relationship between the Sultan of Malacca and the Chinese Emperor. Both parties gain a lot of profits from the trading activities. Although tax duties in China are very high, traders from Malacca are exempted because of the special relationship established between the two kingdoms, as the following description illustrate.

p. Apabila ia sampai ke benua China, **akui oleh anakku kapal ayahanda itu supaya lepas daripada cukainya. Kerana cukai di Benua China itu terlalu keras.**” (HHT: 408)

[Lit: *When you arrived in China, just tell them that this is my ship so that you are exempted from taxes, because the taxes in China are too high*].

Another interesting phenomenon involves in the trading activities is the existence of an interpreter. The role of the interpreter is to bridge the gap between two unintelligible languages. What is significant here is that language is not a barrier of conducting business transactions in trading activities.

q. Adapun akan Pir Muhammad itu dijadikan oleh Raja Perak jurubahasa Holanda yang diam bergedung di Pangkalan Halban itu (Misa Melayu).

[Lit: *Pir Muhammad is appointed by the Sultan of Perak as a Dutch interpreter who lives in Pangkalan Halban*].

CONCLUSION

Trading is the main source of incomes of the Malay kingdom. There are three contributing factors that elevate the Malay kingdom as the most important trading port in Southeast Asia. First, it is located in the midway between the east and the west. Second, the Strait of Malacca is protected from the monsoon wind, and therefore vessels all from over the world can sail throughout the year. Third, a good governance and administration by Bendahara, Temenggong, Syahbandar and Laksamana, and good rules and regulations as prescribed in the Hukum Kanun Melaka glorify the Malay Kingdom as the centre for Malay civilization. Based on linguistics evidence depicted in Malay classical texts, we are able to recapitulate the behaviours of the people involving in trading activities. The contents not only portray the structure of the language used but also the trading activities of the traditional Malay in the pre colonialization period as reflected in the texts.

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