

# “In Situ”, p. 1

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Consider the f-structure:

(1)

OPER	<i>f</i>
SUBJ	["the librarian"]
TENSE	PAST
PRED	'put <((↑ SUBJ)(↑ OBJ)(↑ OBL <sub>Loc</sub> )>'
OBJ	<i>f</i>
OBL <sub>Loc</sub>	["on the shelf"]

*f* = ["what"]

From a realizational perspective, this raises a question: In which position should the multifunctional element appear? The “minimalist” assumption would be that both positions are available.

In fact, there are languages in which the multifunctional element appears in the canonical position of the locally licensed grammatical function. This kind of construction has been given the unfortunate name “in situ *wh*”.

Why is this name unfortunate?

## Mandarin Chinese

Classification: Sino-Tibetan, Chinese; 873,014,298 speakers. Official language of China and Taiwan and Singapore. Also spoken in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, and Thailand

C. T. James Huang (1982) "Move Wh in a Language Without Wh Movement." *The Linguistic Review* 1: 369--416.

- (2)
- a. Zhangsan wen wo shei mai-le shu  
Zhangsan ask me who bought books  
'Zhangsan asked me who bought books.'
  - b. Zhangsan xiangzin shei mai-le shu  
Zhangsan believe who bought books  
'Who does Zhangsan believe bought books?'
  - c. Zhangsan zhidao shei mai-le shu  
Zhangsan know who bought books  
'Who does Zhangsan know bought the books?'  
'Zhangsan knows who bought the books.'

## “In Situ”, p. 2

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### Japanese

Classification uncertain. 122,433,899 speakers. National language of Japan

Louise Mycock (2005) “Wh'-in-Situ in Constituent Questions.” in Miriam Butt and Tracy Holloway King, ed., *Proceedings of the LFG 05 Conference, University of Bergen*. On-line: CSLI Publications. 313–333.

- (3) Mari- ga depāto- de dare- ni ranpu- o eranda ka?  
 Mari- NOM dept.store- LOC who- DAT lamp- ACC choose.PAST Q  
 ‘Who did Mari choose a lamp for at the department store?’

### Kikuyu (allows either construction)

Classification: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, E, Kikuyu-Kamba (E.20).5,347,000 speakers in Kenya.

Victoria L. Bergvall (1983) “Wh-Questions and Island Constraints in Kikuyu: A Reanalysis.” in Jonathan Kaye, Hilda Koopman, Dominique Sportiche, and André Dugas, ed., *Current Approaches to African Linguistics* (Vol. 2). Dordrecht: Foris. 245–260.

- (4) a. Oyweŋi:ria Goye oiŋire maheire keŋaŋi o:  
 you.think Ngũgĩ said they.gave crab who  
 ‘Who do you think Ngũgĩ said they gave a crab to?’  
 b. Noo oyweŋi:ria Goye oiŋire maheire keŋaŋi?  
 FOC.who you.think Ngũgĩ said they.gave crab  
 ‘Who do you think Ngũgĩ said they gave a crab to?’

### Egyptian Arabic (unlike most dialects and unlike Standard Arabic)

Classification: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, West, Central, Arabic. 46,321,000 speakers. In addition to Egypt, spoken in Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Michael Kenstowicz, and Wafaa Wahba (1983) “Wh-in-Situ Constructions in Egyptian Arabic.” in Jonathan Kaye, Hilda Koopman, Dominique Sportiche, and André Dugas, ed., *Current Approaches to African Linguistics* (Vol. 2). Dordrecht: Foris. 261–281.

- (5) a. Fariid ḥatt ʔeeh ʕala l- tarabeeza.  
 Fariid put what on the- table  
 ‘What did Fariid put on the table?’  
 b. Fariid ḥatt kitaab miin ʕala l- tarabeeza.  
 Fariid put book who on the- table  
 ‘Whose book did Fariid put on the table?’  
 c. Fariid ḥatt kitaab Mona ʕala ʔeeh.  
 Fariid put book Mona on what  
 ‘What did Fariid put Mona’s book on?’

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### Hindi (with scope marker)

Classification: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Central zone, Western Hindi, Hindustani. 180,764,791 speakers. Official language of India (spoken in northern India). Also spoken in Nepal, South Africa, and Uganda.

Veneeta Srivastav Dayal (1994) “Scope Marking as Indirect *Wh*-Dependency.” *Natural Language Semantics* 2: 137–170.

- (6) a. Jaun kyaa socta hai Meri kis- se baat karegii ?  
 John what thinks AUX Mary who- with will.talk  
 ‘Who does John think Mary will talk to?’
- b. Jaun kyaa socta hai Meri kahaan jaayegii ?  
 John what thinks AUX Mary where will.go  
 ‘Where does John think Mary will go?’

### English

Classification: Indo-European, Germanic, West, English. 309,352,280 speakers.

Jonathan Ginzburg, and Ivan A. Sag (2000) *Interrogative Investigations: The Form, Meaning, and Use of English Interrogatives*. Stanford, Calif.: CSLI Publications.

(These are non-echo questions.)

- (7) a. A: Well, anyway, I’m leaving.  
 B: OK. so you’ll be leaving WHEN exactly?
- b. A: I’m annoyed.  
 B: Aha. You’re annoyed with WHOM?

### Also...

“*wh*-in-situ” obeys (at least some) island constraints. This is illustrated here for the Complex NP Constraint:

### Kikuyu

- (8) a. \*Matiɔ:e mo:do orea otiniriε mahao mareko?  
 they.not.know person DEM cut flowers which  
 ‘Which flowers did they not know anyone who cut?’
- b. \*Mɔ:niriε mo:do orea otiniriε mahao mareko?  
 they.saw person DEM cut flowers which  
 ‘Which flowers did they see the person who cut?’
- c. \*Kamau ɔ:niriε mo:do orea oringiriε o?  
 Kamau saw person DEM hit who  
 ‘Who did Kamau see the person who hit?’

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**Egyptian Arabic** (\* for conservative speakers)

- (9) \*Fariid simiŋ iŋaʔit inn Mona yimkin titgawwiz miin?  
 Fariid heard rumor that Mona might marry who  
 ‘Who did Fariid hear a rumor that Mona might marry?’

**But...**

In some languages, “in-situ *wh*” constructions are not subject to island constraints.

**Egyptian Arabic**

The sentence above is grammatical for more liberal speakers.

**English**

- (10) (A question to a guest on a radio show about the interim chief of the US Attorney’s office)  
 This is a position that is **how important** in your judgment, Rory?

In these cases, the “in-situ *wh*” constructions are not true *wh*-type constructions.

SUBJ	["the librarian"]
TENSE	PAST
PRED	‘put ⟨(↑ SUBJ)(↑ OBJ)(↑ OBL <sub>Loc</sub> )⟩’
OBJ	["what"]
OBL <sub>Loc</sub>	["on the shelf"]