

## INTERROGATIVE SENTENCE IN MINANGKABAU LANGUAGE: X-BAR THEORY

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### Abstract

This study discusses the grammatical function of the question words and the internal structure of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language. The study of this interrogative sentence structure applies X-bar theory as one of the generative syntax subtheories. The data is gained from the interview of Minangkabau language native speaker and analysed by using the distributional method. The result of the analysis shows that the question words for wh-question has two grammatical functions, specifier and complement. For yes-no question, the question word “*iyonyo*” has one grammatical function, that is complement. The internal structure of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language is constructed by specifier, complement, and adverb.

Key words: *interrogative sentence, question word, Minangkabau language*

### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini membahas fungsi gramatikal dari kata tanya dan struktur internal kalimat tanya dalam bahasa Minangkabau. Penelitian struktur kalimat tanya ini menggunakan teori X-bar sebagai kajian sintaksis generatif. Data penelitian ini diperoleh dari hasil wawancara penutur bahasa Minangkabau dan data tersebut dianalisis dengan menggunakan metode agih. Hasil penelitian memperlihatkan bahwa kata tanya untuk kalimat tanya parsial memiliki dua fungsi gramatikal, yaitu sebagai spesifier dan komplemen, sedangkan kata tanya “iyonyo” untuk kalimat tanya total berfungsi sebagai komplemen. Struktur internal kalimat tanya bahasa Minangkabau dibentuk oleh spesifier, komplemen, dan keterangan.*

*Kata kunci: kalimat tanya, kata tanya, bahasa Minangkabau*

### INTRODUCTION

Interrogative sentence is an important part in our daily life, because most of the communications happen in asking and answering questions. When we first meet other people, the thing we say generally is “how do you do?” or “hi, what is your name?” which belongs to interrogative sentence. Usually, how people express the question is different in each language, so that it can be said that the interrogative sentence structure is different between one language to another language. Only the language from one language family most likely has the same structure in asking questions.

A research about interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language has been rarely done, especially by using X-bar theory, it has never been done before. It is proven from the recent researches of sentence in Minangkabau language as the following. First, the research by Usman (2000) about the question signs (*penanda tanya*) in Minangkabau language. The research describes the formation of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language in structural analysis. The result of this research shows that the interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language can be formed by raising the intonation of declarative sen-

tence, inverting the structure and intonation of declarative sentence, and starting the interrogative sentence with the word “*iyonyo*”. Second, the research by Revita (2007) about the request in Minangkabau language. The research describes the ways how Minangkabau people request from the syntactical form and the types of the request. The result of this research shows that Minangkabau people use declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamative sentences to make requests. Third, the research about syntactic interference of Minangkabau language towards Indonesian language done by Bahri (2016). The research describes how Minangkabau language structure interfere in Indonesian language of Minangkabau people in Medan, and also disclose the most dominant syntactic interference happens in Indonesian language. The result of this research shows that the most dominant interference happens in Indonesian language is in the affixed verb.

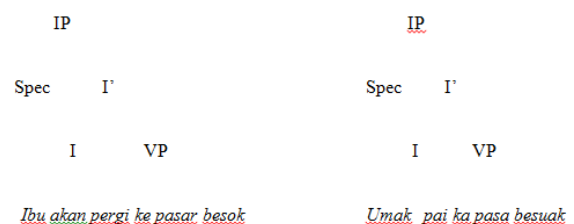
Most of the researchers have done the research of clauses or sentences in declarative structure and in the structural analysis. Since, the structure of declarative sentence is neat and predictable. While in interrogative sentence, there is a wh-movement or there is an addition of question words. It makes the interrogative sentence is more challenging to be analysed.

There is significant difference between declarative and interrogative in sentence structure, especially when it is analysed by using X-bar theory. In interrogative, there are number of different types and most of them seem to make use of the CP in one way or another. The two most obvious ones are wh-questions and yes-no questions.

It is assumed that Indonesian and Minangkabau language has similar sentence structure, both in declarative and interrogative sentence. 1 and 2 are declarative sentence, they have similar structure or we can say it same.

1. *Ibu akan pergi ke pasar besok.*  
(Indonesian)
2. *Umak pai ka pasa besuak.*  
(Minangkabau)

From the example above, it can be seen that declarative sentence in both language has similar structure. Therefore, if we analyse it by using X-bar theory, they will have similar structure, as follows:



Also in interrogative sentence, they have similar sentence structure. The following example 3 and 4 are the examples:

3. *Dimana kamu jemput ibu besok?*  
(Indonesian)
4. *Dima uda jampuik umak besuak?*  
(Minangkabau)

From the example above, it can be seen

that interrogative sentence also has similar structure. Hence, the analysis of them by using X-bar theory would result same as declarative sentence. However, like what has been said before, there are two obvious ones in interrogative, wh-question and yes-no question. The example above is interrogative sentence in wh-question. The question words of wh-question in Minangkabau language are *sia (siapa)*, *apo (apa)*, *dima (dimana)*, *kama(kemana)*, *bilu (kapan)*, *mangapo(mengapa/kenapa)*, *bara (berapa)*, and *baa (bagaimana)*. In yes-no question, especially in Minangkabau language, the word used to indicate it is yes-no question is “*iyonyo*”. The word “*iyonyo*” can indicate *apakah*, *benarkah*, *akankah*, *maukah*, and other yes-no questions in Indonesian.

This research aims to analyse the structure of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language by using X-bar theory to see the grammatical function of question words of Minangkabau interrogative sentence, and the lexical category of complement, adverb, and specifier will be also disclosed.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 1. Relevant Research

In supporting the ideas of the research, some relevant researches have been collected to support the topic. All these researches have given a large contribution in doing this research. First, the research of question

signs or question marks (*penanda tanya*) in Minangkabau language done by Usman (2000). This research describes the formation of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language. The theory applied in this research is discourse and synthetic theory. This research concluded that the interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language can be formed by raising the intonation of declarative sentence, inverting the structure and intonation of declarative sentence, and starting the interrogative sentence with the word “*iyonyo*”. This research gives a big contribution for the writer, since it specifies the examples of question word of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language which helps the writer in doing this research.

The second research is about the request in Minangkabau language done by Revita (2007). The research describes the ways how Minangkabau people request. These ways are prospected from the syntactical form and the types of the request. The factors influencing the choice of these ways are also observed. The data of this research are taken from Minangkabau utterances used in Padang. The result of this research shows that Minangkabau people use declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamative sentences to make requests. This research gives a contribution for the writer, because the research shows the example of

how Minangkabau people request something in interrogative sentences.

The next research which gives contribution to the writer is about *wh*-questions in Shona done by Mukaro (2012). This research tries an explication of *wh*-questions, also referred to as interrogatives, in Shona. This research analyses the movement in direct questions as well as embedded *wh*-questions. This research also uses the X-bar theory in analysing the sentence structure of Shona language. The results of this research go against the generalizations that *wh*-movement is binary therefore rendering this proposition untenable. This research describes how the interrogative sentence in Shona analysed by using the X-bar theory, and it helps the writer in analysing the interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language.

In line with the topic of the writer about interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language, the research about *wh*-fronting in Mandarin done by Cheung (2013) is also very helpful for the writer in doing her research. This research explores the semantic and syntactic properties of *wh*-fronting constructions as well as the fine structure of the left periphery in Mandarin along the lines of the cartographic approach. It is discovered that *wh*-fronting constructions exhibit two salient properties associated with Identificational Focus (IdentF), namely, (i) ex-

haustive identification and (ii) the ability to occupy a scopal position, suggesting that *wh*-fronting is best analyzed as a strategy for licensing IdentF. This research also help the writer in doing the research with the explanation of *wh*-fronting construction in Mandarin semantically and syntactically.

The last but not least, the research by Sheppard and Ilc (2015) about verb movement and interrogatives also gives a huge contribution for the writer in doing this research. This research is an attempt at a syntactic account of the type of verb movement displayed in interrogative clauses containing a *wh*-element. In this research, verb movement in *wh*-interrogatives in English, French and Slovenian is examined from a comparative perspective. This research also uses the X-bar theory. This research analyses the general properties of verb movement in *wh*-interrogatives and how can this type of movement be analysed by adopting the basic concepts and tenets of the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995). The researchers have argued that I-to-C verb movement in interrogatives occurs independently of *wh*-movement and have identified the [+QUESTION] feature of root C, denoting interrogative illocutionary force as the licenser of I-to-C raising in root interrogatives.

## 2. Interrogative Sentence

An interrogative sentence is a type of

sentence that asks a question. (Compare with sentences that make a statement, deliver a command, or express an exclamation). Interrogative sentences are typically marked by inversion of the subject and predicate: that is, the first verb in a verb phrase appears before the subject. An interrogative sentence ends with a question mark (?).

A *wh*-question is basically a content question, as opposed to a ‘yes/no’ question. Borsley (1991) defines *wh*-question as a question involving a question word (or a *wh*-word) of some kind and required a more specific answer than just ‘yes/no.’ Radford (2004) notes that *wh*-questions or expressions are those that contain an interrogative word beginning with *wh* like *what*, *which*, *where*, *when*, *who* and *why*. To this list *how* is also included based on the fact that it exhibits the same syntactic behavior as interrogative words beginning with *wh*-(Radford 2004:188). The whole concept of *wh*-questions is more regular than not dealt within the description of *wh*-movement which refers to complex movement of the *wh*-word to the spec, CP within a clause. Radford (1997:18) defines this concept as a ‘parameter which determines whether expressions can be fronted (i.e moved to the front position of the overall interrogative structure containing them) or not.’ This is allowed and at times obligatory in English interrogative structures. As the examples

below show, there is consistent fronting of the *wh*- structures.

5. a. She saw Mary.  
b. She saw who?  
c. Who did she see?
6. a. She went to town.  
b. She went where?  
c. Where did she go?

It is clear that *who* and *where*, which replaced the verb complements in the echo questions in 5b and 6b, moved to the front of the interrogatives in the final structures in 5c and 6c.

Interrogative sentence in Indonesian are varied. Its characteristics are: it is used in a rising pitch, using question mark (?), suffix *-kah*, or question words (*siapa*, *apa*, *dimana*, *kapan*, *mengapa*, *bagaimana*). Keraf (1991:204) said that interrogative sentences are divided into three categories. First, *kalimat tanya total* (total question) which consists of question word “*apakah*” or suffix *-kah*. Second, *kalimat tanya parsial* (parsial question) which consists of question words (*siapa*, *apa*, *dimana*, *kapan*, *mengapa*, *bagaimana*). Third, *kalimat tanya retoris* (rhetorical question) which means interrogative sentences requiring no answer, this is usually used in language style, speeches or conversations that listeners have known the answers of the questions.

Meanwhile, interrogative sentence in Minangkabau can be constructed in two ways, *wh*-question and yes-no question. In

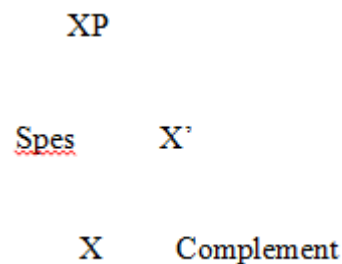
wh-question, the words used to indicate it is a question are *sia, apo, dima, kama, bilo, manga, baa and bara*. In yes-no question, the word used to indicate it is a question is “*iyonyo*”. The word “*iyonyo*” can indicate *apakah, benarkah, akankah, maukah*, and other yes-no questions in Indonesian.

### 3. X-bar Theory

X-bar theory is discussed in almost all modern textbooks of syntax. It attempts to identify syntactic features. It claims that among their phrasal categories, all those languages share certain structural similarity that does not appear in traditional grammar for English. X-bar theory was first proposed by Noam Chomsky in 1970 and further developed by Ray Jackendoff in 1977. Culicover (1997:134) stated that X-bar theory is a theory of phrase structure. That is, it is a theory of what constitutes a possible phrase in natural language.

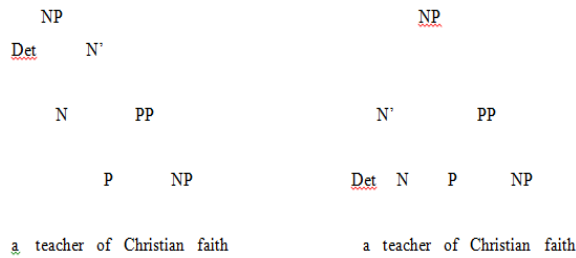
The letter X is used to signify part of speeches; when analyzing a specific utterance, specific categories are assigned. Thus, the X may become an N for noun, a V for verb, an A for adjective, or a P for preposition. The term *X-bar* is derived from the notation representing this new structure. Certain structures are represented by X (an X with an over bar). Because this is difficult to typeset, this is often written as X'. In English, however, this is still read as "X bar".

Three level structures are needed to express the relationship between head and their complements. Under the highest node of any phrase (XP) will be a specifier, which is optional, to the left which modifies everything generated under X' on the right.



From the above descriptions about x-bar theory, analyzing sentences using an x-bar can avoid the repetitive use of phrasal categories (NP, VP, PP, AdvP or AdjP) within one sentence. We can differentiate different relationships of words in a noun phrase. Correctly represents constituents smaller than XP, bigger than X. The nature of the relationships of different NP's which serve as post modifiers for a deverbal noun can be determined.

Unlike traditional grammar, when we use X-bar, we can recognize ambiguity. A phrase “a teacher of Christian faith” can be clearly differentiated in x-bar syntax in the following way. In the first tree structure, the meaning of the sentence is the teacher teaches Christian faith. In the second one, the teacher is a person who has a Christian faith. The complement is closest to the head noun that is sister of the N, and the adjunct is sister of the N'.



However, in writing the x-bar theory, we have to generate the articulated trees to replace the flat structure. It has three rules to be generated because it has three levels (NP as the phrase level, N' as the intermediate level, and N as the word/head level). NP is divided into (det) and N', N' is divided into (AP) N' or N' (PP), and N (PP). They are all binary branching, and all elements in x-bar rules are the projections of the head N. The NP represents the maximal projections and the N' represents the intermediate projections. This surely needs lots of space.

**METHOD OF RESEARCH**

The research is started by collecting the data. Verbal data is used in this research. The data is collected through observation and interview methods. In the observation method, the data is recorded and noted from the use of everyday language. In the interview method, the subject is asked about how to ask something or how to ask in interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language. The subject is a person who speaks Minangkabau language in his daily life at the age of 40-70 years old. The answer from the subject is also recorded and noted.

The data collected from the interview are the interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language. There are two forms of interrogative sentence, those are wh-question and yes-no question. The following is the table of the data collected.

**Table 1.**  
**Interrogative Sentence Found in Minangkabau Language**

Wh Question	Yes-no Question
<i>Sia nan umak jampuik di sekolah?</i>	<i>Iyonyo uda tibo di si-nan besuak?</i>
<i>Apo nan uda agiah?</i>	<i>Iyonyo umak pai ka</i>
<i>Dima uda jampuik umak?</i>	<i>Iyonyo waang biso mambawo oto?</i>
<i>Kama umak pai besuak?</i>	<i>Iyonyo uda sakiak?</i>
<i>Bilo umak pai ka pasa?</i>	<i>Iyonyo uda amuah manjampuik umak di pasa?</i>
<i>Bara uda bali oto tu?</i>	
<i>Manga uda agiah oto tu jo adiak?</i>	
<i>Umak manjampuik sia?</i>	
<i>Uda agiah apo?</i>	

After the data is collected, it is shared and grounded on the type of the use. Then, it will be analyzed by using distributional method and substitutional technique. In this research, the substitutional technique is used to identify the lexical and grammatical function of the question word.

- a. Umak manjampuik adiak di sekolah.  
NP V NP PP
- b. Umak manjampuik sia di sekolah.  
NP V NP PP

The NP “*adiak*” is substituted into “*sia*” which means “who” because “*adiak*” is a

person. Here we can see that the question word “*sia*” has lexical function as a noun, and therefore it can occupy the position dominated by specifier.

The X-bar theory is used to analyse and identify the data because it is a universal theory that can be used to any language in this world. The X-bar theory can explain a specific tree diagram whether in phrases or clauses to give a clear function of each category of words. Also, the X-bar theory has never been used before in analysing the interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language.

The tree diagram will be described to see the structure of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language. The lexical category of complement, adverb, and specifier will be also disclosed. Then the analysis is displayed. If the data collection and reduction are done, conclusion and verification can be made depends on the data display.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Grammatical Function of the Question Words

The interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language is constructed by specifier, complement, and adverb. Specifier is the internal structure which has to be occupied by the NP, and is combined to I' and forms IP. Complement is the internal structure which can be occupied by auxiliary,

PP, or NP. The auxiliary is combined to IP and forms C', while the PP or NP is combined to V and forms the first V'. Adverb is the internal structure which can be occupied by PP or NP, and is combined to the first V' and forms the second V'.

As stated above, the interrogative sentence is analysed by using the substitutional technique and X-bar theory to see the interrogative sentence structure and also the lexical category of complement, adverb, and specifier. First, the grammatical function of the question words will be described. The data collected have been grounded on the type of the use, the followings are the representation of the data:

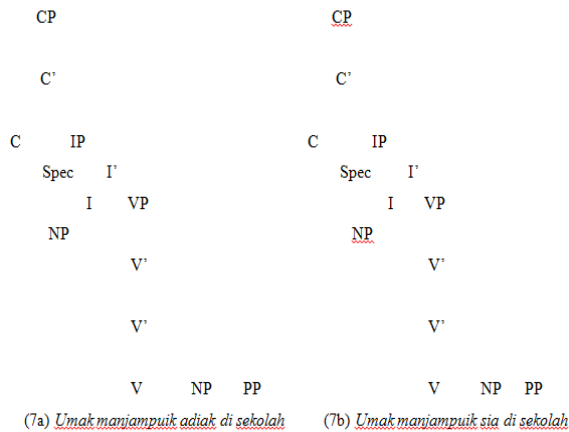
7. *Sia nan umak jampuik di sekolah?*
8. *Umak manjampuik sia?*
9. *Apo nan uda agiah?*
10. *Uda agiah apo?*
11. *Iyonyo uda tibo di sinan besuak?*
12. *Iyonyo waang biso mambawo oto?*

Let's start from the type of interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language, wh-question and yes-no question. First, wh-question. Before we begin to describe the structure of wh-question, it is better to change the form into its declarative sentence to make it easier in analysing the structure. Look at the analysis of (7a), (7b), and (7c) below:

- (7) a. *Umak manjampuik adiak di sekolah.*
- (7) b. *Umak manjampuik sia di sekolah.*
- (7) c. *Sia nan umak jampuik di sekolah?*

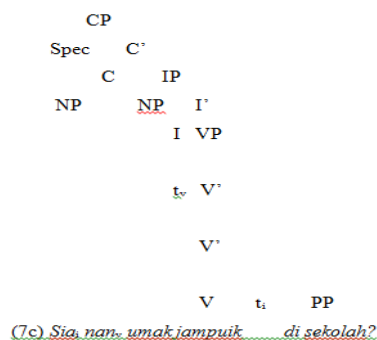


The schematic structure of (7a), (7b), and (7c) is described below:



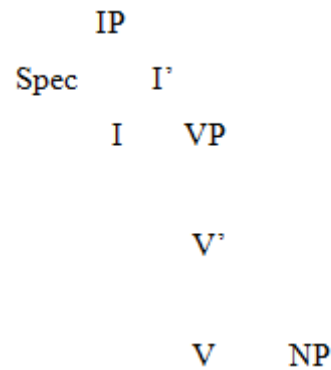
In (7a), NP “*adiak*” is the complement of the VP because it is combined to V and forms the first V'. PP is the adverb of the VP because it is combined to the first V' and forms the second V', and then directly forms VP. VP is the complement of the IP because it is combined to I and forms I'. NP “*umak*” is the specifier because it is combined to I' and forms IP. Specifier must be a NP.

In (7b), the structure of sentence is as same as (7a). But, the NP “*adiak*” is substituted into “*sia*” which means “who” because “*adiak*” is a person. The question words (who, what, where, when, why, which, whom, and how) functions as NP (Kridalaksana, 1994).



In (7c), the NP “*sia*” position moves and leaves the trace (t<sub>i</sub>). It moves to the front position and functions as specifier, since the question word functions as NP.

Another form of wh-question in (8) and (10) is described below:



(8) *Umak manjampuk sia?*

(10) *Uda agiah apo?*

In (8) and (10), NP is the complement of the VP because it is combined to V and forms the first V'. VP is the complement of the IP because it is combined to I and forms I'. “*Umak*” and “*Uda*” function as specifier because they are combined to I' and forms IP. The question word “*sia*” and “*apo*” in (8) and (10) function as complement.

From the analysis of (7c), (8), and (10) above, it can be seen that the question word “*sia*” and “*apo*” can function both as specifier and complement depending on its position. If the question word is placed in the front position, it will be functioned as specifier. Because it is combined to C' and forms the maximal projection CP. But, when the question word is placed in the last position, it will be functioned as comple-

ment. Because it is combined to V and forms the first V'.

In Minangkabau language, the question word placed in the middle of the sentence is not found. For example, in Indonesian language, the question word e.g. *apa* and *apakah* can be found in the front, middle, and last position.

- 13.a. *Apa yang akan ayah beli?*  
 b. *Ayah akan membeli apa?*  
 c. *Aku tidak tahu apa yang akan ayah beli.*
- 14.a. *Apakah benar ayahnya seorang dokter?*  
 b. *Kami tidak tahu apakah benar ayahnya seorang dokter*

If it is compared with Minangkabau language, there will not be found the question word placed in the middle of the sentence, as the example in 15, 16, 17, and 18.

- 15.\**Umak nan sia manjampuik?*
- 16.\**Uda pai bilo ka pasa?*
- 17.\**Piti bara angku agiah?*
- 18.\**Adiak tibo kama besuak?*

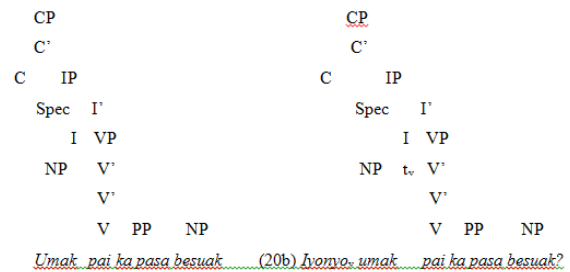
The question words in Minangkabau language namely *sia*, *apo*, *dima*, *kama*, *bilo*, *manga*, *baa*, and *bara* function as same as the explanation above. Because their lexical function is as a noun (Kridalaksana, 1994). As stated before that interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language can be constructed in two ways, wh-question and yes-no question. The wh-question has been described above.

In yes-no question, the word used to indicate it is a question is “*iyonyo*”. The word “*iyonyo*” can indicate *apakah*, *benarkah*, *akankah*, *maukah*, and other yes-no ques-

tions in Indonesian. Look at the examples below:

- 19. a. *Benarkah abang sakit?*  
 b. *Iyonyo uda sakiak?*
- 20. a. *Akankah ibu pergi ke pasar besok?*  
 b. *Iyonyo umak pai ka pasa besuak?*
- 21. a. *Apakah kamu bisa mengendarai mobil?*  
 b. *Iyonyo waang biso mambawo oto?*
- 22. a. *Maukah abang menjemput ibu di pasar?*  
 b. *Iyonyo uda amuah manjampuik umak di pasa?*

From the examples above, it can be seen that the word “*iyonyo*” is able to indicate the meaning of *apakah*, *benarkah*, *akankah*, and *maukah* in Indonesian. The schematic structure of yes-no question is described below:



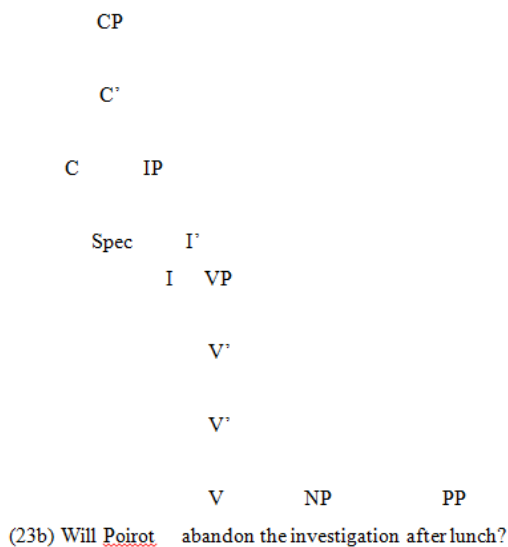
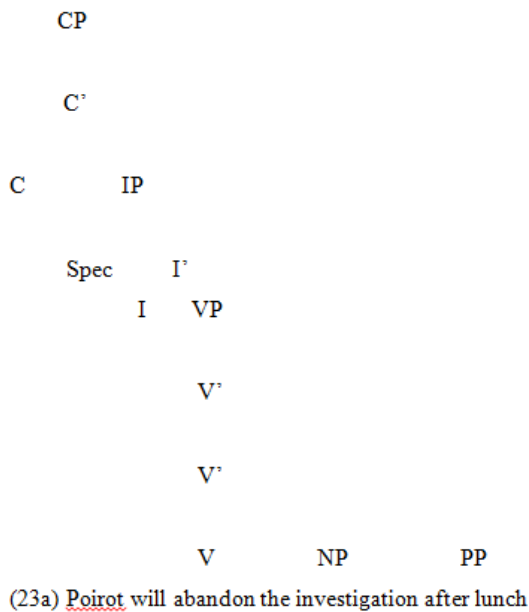
PP is the complement of the VP because it is combined to V and forms the first V'. NP “*besuak*” is the adverb of the VP because it is combined to the first V' and forms the second V', and then directly forms VP. VP is the complement of the IP because it is combined to I and forms I'. NP “*umak*” is the specifier because it is combined to I' and forms IP. Specifier must be a NP.

In the yes-no question form, “I” moves

and leaves the trace ( $t_v$ ). It is replaced with “*iyonyo*” which functions as complement. The word “*iyonyo*” is indicated as modal or auxiliary in English, e.g. *will*.

- 23.a. *Poirot will abandon the investigation after lunch.*  
 b. *Will Poirot abandon the investigation after lunch?*

Look at the schematic structure below:



In (23a), the modal *will* occupies the position dominated by I. Meanwhile, (23b) shows that the modal is moved from under I

to the position dominated by C. In other words, it assumes that the modal or auxiliary has two syntactic representations. The first is the representation of I, and the second is the representation of complement. However, the question word “*iyonyo*” has only one syntactic representation, a complement. The question word “*iyonyo*” is not found in the middle or last position, as the example in 24, 25, 26, and 27.

24. a. \**Uda sakiak iyonyo?*  
 b. \**Uda iyonyo sakiak?*
25. a. \**Umak pai ka pasa besuak iyonyo?*  
 b. \**Umak pai iyonyo ka pasa besuak?*
26. a. \**Waang biso mambawo oto iyonyo?*  
 b. \**Waang biso iyonyo mambawo oto?*
27. a. \**Uda amuah manjampuik umak di pasa iyonyo?*  
 b. \**Uda amuah iyonyo manjampuik umak di pasa?*

### The Lexical Category of Specifier, Complement, and Adverb

As stated before that interrogative sentence in Minangkabau language is constructed by specifier, complement, and adverb. The lexical category which can occupy the position of specifier is NP. Look at the following example in (7a) and (7c):

- (7) a. Umak manjampuik adiak di sekolah.  
 NP V NP PP  
 Spec
- (7) c. Sia nan umak jampuik di sekolah?  
 NP aux NP V PP  
 Spec

The lexical categories which can occupy the position of complement are auxiliary,



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