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FORMAL AND FUNCTIONAL MARKEDNESS OF INTRANSITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN MINANGKABAUNESE

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ABSTRACT

This paper specifically analyzes and discusses the markedness values of the intransitive constructions in Minangkabauese based on the related markedness theories used in Linguistic Typology. Two questions as the basis for data analysis and discussion are: (i) what are the unmarked and marked intransitive constructions of Minangkabauese based on formal and functional markedness analysis?; and (ii) how are the unmarked and marked intransitive constructions of Minangkabauese functionally used in communication? The data presented in this paper are those of basic-clause constructions of Minangkabauese in intransitive ones collected through the execution of a field research in West-Sumatera and supported by the library study. The result of data analysis reveals that the intransitive constructions with morphological markers are the formal-marked constructions, but some are the functional unmarked ones in Minangkabauese. The constructions without morphological markers are those of formal unmarked ones, but some are the functional- marked constructions. Such findings tell that the unmarked and marked intransitive constructions in Minangkabauese are grammatically influenced by the complex systems of grammatical (morphosyntactic) and semantic properties of the intransitives. In addition, they are also related to the linguistic and broader-communicative circumstances for the functional markedness.

Keywords: *intransitive construction, markedness, marked, unmarked, Minangkabauese*

INTRODUCTION

Markedness theory, in its history, has been simultaneously adopted and adapted by linguists in both structural and generative trends in rather different ways although the concept of markedness still refers to the works firstly developed in the Prague School of linguistic theory. As mentioned by Croft (1993:64), the notion of marked and unmarked values of a category was firstly developed for phonological systems by Trubetzkoy (1931, 1969) and firstly applied to morphosyntactic categories and semantics by Jakobson (1932, 1984). In its development and uses, markedness in generative grammar is considerably different from markedness in typology. In linguistic typology, the markedness theories applied has been becoming an important tool for typologists in order to directly link formal (structural) linguistic data and properties across languages. The essential notion of markedness in typological studies deals with the fact of asymmetrical or unequal grammatical properties of otherwise linguistic elements such as inflections, words in word classes and even for syntactic constructions in the level syntax. Markedness is one of the main criteria used to determine the "degree" of symmetry and/or equality of grammatical constructions in languages being learnt.

In linguistic typology, markedness is an important tool for the typologists because it provides a mean to directly link formal (structural) linguistic properties across languages. Therefore, markedness analyses are linguistically applied to differentiate the underlying constructions from those of derived ones. Croft (1993:65) adds that markedness patterns can be used to account for phonological, morphological, and syntactic irregularities. Then, typological marking theory consists of two parts, *the kinds of evidence for markedness patterns* and *the actual markedness patterns*. The kinds of evidence for markedness deals exclusively with the evidence for markedness presenting a new classification of Greenberg's and researchers' markedness criteria. Most of the markedness criteria have stood the test of time and data. The actual markedness patterns, called classical marking theory, allows for only one sort of patterns: an absolute relationship between the two values of a binary-valued category, such as singular and plural in which the one value (singular) is unmarked and the other value (plural) is marked.

Furthermore, Croft (in Shibatani and Bynon (eds.), 1999) explains that typological markedness is a property of grammatical category such that it displays one or more of a cluster of grammatical asymmetries cross-linguistically. The most important type of markedness criteria for typology fall under the behavioural markedness types, which can be divided into three sub-types. The first one is *the inflectional behavioural criterion*: the unmarked member of a category will have at least as many cross-cutting grammatical distinctions as a marked member. For example, the English singular pronouns *he/she/it* have a cross-cutting gender distinction that the marked plural pronoun *they* does not. The second one is *the distributional behavioural criterion*: the unmarked member is found in a wider range of environments than the marked member. For example, the active construction is found in wider range of

syntactic environments than the passive; the passive is more syntactically restricted, and therefore more marked than the active. The third one is *the cross-linguistic distribution*; the unmarked member will occur in language types that the marked member does not occur in. Dominant word order is an example of the cross-linguistic distributional criterion. Croft (in Shibatani and Bynon (eds.), 1999) also adds that the last criterion for markedness is frequency. The unmarked member will be more frequent than the marked member, both in use (textual frequency) and across-languages (cross-linguistic frequency).

According to Dixon (2010:236 – 237), markedness in grammar applies most appropriately to closed systems, and there are two distinct varieties of it. These sometimes correlate and sometimes do not. Each variety may be applied to systems of any size (with two members, or with more than two). Accordingly, two types of markedness values are probably involved, *formal markedness* and *functional markedness*. The formal markedness means if a term in a system has zero realization, then it is formally unmarked. For example, singular within the [singular, plural] number system applying to count nouns in English. The functional markedness relates to the situation of use – the marked term(s) may be used each in a restricted, specifiable situation, with the unmarked term being employed in all other circumstances. In English, singular number is functionally as well as formally unmarked. ‘Plural’ must refer to a set of two or more referents, whereas ‘singular’ may refer to just one referent, but may also be used in a general sense when no number specification is made; for example: *The dog is the most companionable animal I know*.

The studies on markedness values, so far, have been applied in many scopes of linguistics. Davison (1984), for instance, studies the syntactic markedness and the definition of sentence topic. Fox (1987) was another linguist who studied the interaction between discourse structure and morphosyntactic markedness. Other related study was the work of Chaudron and Parker (2008). They studied discourse markedness and structural markedness: the acquisition of English NP. Then, Culicover and Nowak (2002) studied the markedness, antisymmetry and complexity of constructions in the level of macro-linguistics. Danler (2006) wrote morpho-syntactic markedness in Italian from the perspective of CDA. Bale, Gagnon, and Khanjian (2011) explored two possible connections between the diagnostic for morphological and semantic markedness focusing on the case of plural morphology. The study on morphological markedness in an OT-grammar: zeros and syncretism was conducted by Pertsova (2013). The role of morphological markedness in the processing of number and gender agreement in Spanish (Banon and Rothman, 2016) was a challenging study dealing markedness and its relation to other aspects of language, number and gender in Spanish. Wei (2019) investigated the syntactic markedness as a stylistic feature in the Great Gatsby.

In a specific case, the typological studies on grammatical constructions of Minangkabaunese tell that the non-verbal and verbal clause constructions may possibly fall into the underlying or the derived ones. However, the previous typological analyses on the grammatical constructions in Minangkabaunese have not been mainly based on the markedness theory yet. Therefore, the markedness analysis on the grammatical constructions of Minangkabaunese is essentially needed, then. This paper, which is derived from a part of results of a research conducted in 2019, specifically analyzes and discusses the formal and functional markedness values of the intransitive constructions in Minangkabaunese based on the relevant markedness theories developed and used in Linguistic Typology. Two questions answered in this paper are: (i) *what are the unmarked and marked intransitive constructions of Minangkabaunese based on formal and functional markedness analysis?;* and (ii) *how are the unmarked and marked intransitive constructions of Minangkabaunese functionally used in communication in the speech community?* The formal and functional markedness analysis on the grammatical constructions of Minangkabaunese may give further description and investigation of grammatical typology of Minangkabaunese.

METHODOLOGY

This study was originally a descriptive-qualitative research in linguistics conducted in 2019 as a field research and supported by library study. As a field research, it was operationally executed in West-Sumatera where the native speakers of Minangkabaunese originally and socially live. The data were in the forms of clause-syntactical constructions which are categorized as the formal-grammatical constructions, more specifically the standard ones. Practically, the data were collected by means of participant observation, depth-interview, administering questionnaires, and quoting data from written manuscripts. The instruments used were field-notes, observation sheets, recorders, interview guideline, and questionnaire sheets. The sources of data were the native speakers of Minangkabaunese, intentionally selected as the informants and respondents, and the manuscripts (news papers, magazines, and letters)

written in Minangkabauese. In addition, since the researchers are also the native speakers of Minangkabauese, they were also possible as the sources of data, but the intuitive data were systematically cross-checked and consulted to the selected informants in order to have valid ones. The data obtained then were classified into clausal-syntactical categories in order to decide whether the data were appropriate and ready to analyze. The data were linguistically analyzed based on the relevant theories and principles of markedness developed and used in grammatical typology. The results of analysis are argumentatively described in formal ways commonly used in linguistics.

ANALYSIS

The basic verbal-clauses of Minangkabauese can be differentiated based on: (i) verb type, intransitive or transitive; (ii) verb form, with/without affixes; and (iii) number of arguments. This paper, however, only focuses on the analysis of formal and functional markedness of intransitive constructions in Minangkabauese which are performed by the *presence* and *absence of affixes* in the verb forms. It should be noted that markedness in grammar applies most appropriately to closed systems, and there are, at least, two distinct varieties of it (see Croft, 1993; Dixon, 2010). In Minangkabauese, there are three closed-system or three distinct varieties of basic-intransitive constructions, which can be predicatively formulated as: (i) *VI – affixes*; (ii) *VI +/- affixes*; and (iii) *VI + affixes*. Thus, in this paper, the closed system and the distinct varieties of refer to the three distinct varieties. Therefore, the data analysis and discussion of formal and functional markedness of intransitive constructions in Minangkabauese presented in this paper are based on the three types of the intransitive basic-clause constructions in Minangkabauese.

The followings are the examples of intransitive basic-clause constructions in Minangkabauese using intransitive verbs in the base form, without affixes (*VI- affixes*).

- (1) *Urang tu mungkin alah pai patang.*
people ART probably PAST go yesterday
'The people probably went yesterday'
- (2) *Inyo duduak-duduak di kantua pemuda.*
PRO3SG sit down at office youth
'He is sitting down at the youth office'
- (3) *Ujan labek ka turun sanjo beko.*
rain heavy will turun afternoon then
'The heavy rain will be falling down this afternoon'
- (4) *Angin kencang ka tibo pulo.*
wind fast will come also
'The fast wind will also come'

In Minangkabauese, some intransitive verbs must stand in the basic form, without affixes (*VI- affixes*). The transitive verbs such as *pai* 'go', *duduak-duduak* 'sit down', *turun* 'fall', dan *tibo* 'come' are the examples of the *VI – affixes* (*zero affixes*). Using this type of intransitive verbs, the constructions as in (1) – (4) are both formally and functionally unmarked. In this sense, no morphological-verbal markers are grammatically required as the *zero verb forms* of intransitive constructions in Minangkabauese. The values of formal addressed to such type of basic clauses may be assigned since the absence of formal-verbal markers in the verb forms. Then, such types of intransitive constructions are typologically assigned as the functionally unmarked in this local language as they are naturally used and neutrally functioned in uses without additional pragmatic-contextual values. The presence of verbal affixes in such intransitive constructions lead to ungrammatical ones or they perform other types of verbal grammatical constructions in Minangkabauese. Thus, the following intransitives, (5) – (8), are not grammatical ones.

- (5) * *Urang tu mungkin alah ma-mai patang.*
- (6) * *Inyo man-duduak-duduak di kantua pemuda.*
- (7) * *Ujan labek ka ba-turun sanjo beko.*
- (8) * *Angin kencang ka ba-tibo pulo.*

Let's continue to explore the formal and functional markedness values of the second type of intransitive grammatical constructions in Minangkabauese, formulated as *VI +/- affixes* by noticing the following data.

- (9) a. *Anak-nyo lari kaliliang laman.*
small son-POS3TG run around yard
'Her small-son is running around the yard'

- (9) b. *Anak-nyo ba- lari kaliliang laman.*
PRE-
- (10) a. *Urang maliang tu tajun ka banda gadang.*
thief ART jump down to drain big
'The thief jumped down to the big drain'
- (10) b. *Urang maliang tu ba- tajun ka banda.*
PRE-
- (11) a. *Amak alah baliak dari baralek.*
mother PERF come back from wedding party
'Mother has just come back from the wedding party'
- b. *Amak alah ba- baliak dari baralek.*
PRE-

The verbs such as *lari* 'run', *tajun* 'jump down', and *baliak* 'come back' in Minangkabaunese can stand with or without affixes. Mostly, this type of intransitive verbs grammatically receive prefix *ba-* as the morphological markers of intransitive verbs in this language. As in its surface grammatical form, such group of intransitive verbs fall into two markedness values formally and functionally. The first one is that those without affix (as in a) are formally un-marked constructions; they grammatically and semantically equal to the zero affix constructions of intransitives discussed before and they are grammatically the basic-constructions, then. Those with affixes (as in b), however, may have slightly different markedness values. Formally, they are marked constructions as the presence of formal markers as opposed to the *zero constructions* in previous part. Functionally, the constructions with affixes, as in (9b) – (11b), are un-marked constructions as the grammatical-semantic properties of basic-intransitive constructions in Minangkabaunese; some intransitive verbs in this language lead to have intransitive-verbal markers with little semantic difference, but functionally in equal sense.

The third sub-type of intransitive constructions in Minangkabaunese is linguistically formulated as (*VI + affixes*); the verbal affixes must be presence in the constructions as in the following data.

- (12) *Kami anyo ma- angguk jo mang-geleang sajo kutiko itu.*
PRO2PL only PRE-nod and PRE-shake just time that
'We only nodded and shaken (head) at that time'
- (13) *Urang rundo bar- anti dakek lapau one.*
night-waiters PRE-stop near shop sister
'The night-waiters stoped neas sister's shop'
- (14) *Sajak cako waang man-dasah se.*
Since then PRO2SG PRE-wheeze only
'You have just only wheezed since then'

The group of intransitive verbs such *angguk* 'nod', *geleang* 'shake', *anti* 'stop', and *dasah* 'wheeze' as in (12) – (14) must be with affixes in the clause constructions; the absence of prefixes as in the following ones may cause the ungrammatical constructions.

- (15) **Kami 0- angguk jo 0- geleang sajo kutiko itu.*
- (16) **Urang rundo 0- ranti dakek lapau one.*
- (17) **Sajak cako waang 0- dasah se.*

The intransitive clauses as (12) – (14) are both formally and functionally un-marked constructions because they are regarded as the neutral-basic form of intransitive constructions with the verbs belonging to this group. In a very limited circumstance, however, the ungrammatical ones as (15) – (17) may be functionally marked constructions, since in specific types of discourse and language uses, such as in intimacy, personal-interactive, or interpersonal texts. They may be regarded as the functional marked constructions as far as the additional contextual-pragmatic items are communicatively involved. The formal dan functional markedness values of intransitive constructions in Minangkabaunese are grammatically influenced and determined by the complex systems of grammatical (morphosyntactic) system, grammatical-semantic properties of intransitive verbs, and the "sense" of pragmatic functions involved in the grammatical constructions. In addition, they are also related to the linguistic and broader-communicative circumstances for the functional markedness. It may also be claimed that the grammatical constructions of Minangkabaunese are much influence by pragmatic functions.

CONCLUSION

The formal and functional markedness values of intransitive constructions cannot be “explored” based on the surface grammatical constructions. The formally and functionally un-marked and marked intransitives in Minangkabau need to relate to *system of grammatical construction itself*, to *grammatical-semantic properties of verbs*, and to *broader-communicative circumstances*, as well. It is highly assumed that the grammatical construction of Minangkabau is not “purely” determined by grammatical categories, but it is also influenced by semantic and pragmatic properties in certain levels.

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