

WORD-ORDER TYPOLOGY OF MINANGKABAUNESE: VARIATION AND DEGREE OF ITS ACCEPTABILITY

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ABSTRACT

The study on word-order typology is one of central issues in grammatical typology. Based on the data and typological analyses, it was reported that Minangkabaunese, the main local language originally used in West-Sumatera, has the basic grammatical construction in the word order SVO with the variation VOS and OSV. This paper, which is developed from a part of research report conducted in 2016 – 2017, specifically discusses the variation of word-order typology and degree of its acceptability in Minangkabaunese. The data were collected through the execution of field research and library study dealing with grammatical constructions in Minangkabaunese. The data analysis was based on relevant theories of word-order typology in Linguistic Typology. The results of analysis tell that: (i) Minangkabaunese has the basic grammatical constructions in the word order SVO with the variation VOS and OSV; (ii) the word order SVO is the highest degree of acceptability for formal language and commonly used by young-educated speakers; (iii) the word-order VOS is acceptable in classical-stylistic constructions; and (iv) the OSV word order is only used in topicalization construction in the pragmatic values are involved. The result of analysis and discussion presented in this paper may have meaningful ideas and significant contributions for further-critical studies on the word-order typology cross-linguistically.

Keywords: grammatical construction, Minangkabaunese, word-order typology, degree of acceptability

INTRODUCTION

In the study of linguistic typology, one basic study of word-order typology deals with the ordering of words or grammatical constituents in the level of clause construction. Finegan (2004:234 – 235), among the others, illustrates that speakers of English and other European languages commonly assume that the normal way of constructing a sentence is to place the subject of the sentence first, then the verb, and then the direct object (if there is one). Indeed, in English, the sentence *Mary saw John*, which follows this order, is well formed, while variations like *John Mary saw* or *saw Mary John* is not grammatically well formed. However, normal word-order in a sentence differs considerably from language to language. In Japanese, the normal word-order of the basic clause construction is subject, direct object, and verb (SOV), as in (1).

- (1) *Akiko ga taro o butta.*
Akiko subject Taro object hit
'Akiko hit Taro'

In Tongan, the normal word-order of basic clause is VSO, as in (2).

- (2) *Na?e taa?i ?e hina ?a vaka.*
past hit subject Hina object Vaka
'Hina hit Vaka'

In practical uses of language, in nature, such basic word-order of grammatical construction in the level of clause is not monotonously followed by native speakers; they may vary the grammatical constructions due to other linguistic and non-linguistic reasons. All speakers of the same language in practical uses of the language (see Fromkin et.al, 2011:430) can talk to each other and pretty much understand each other. Yet, no two speakers exactly speak alike; the differences are the result of age, sex, social situation, and where and when the language was used and academically learned. Such differences are reflected in diction (word choice), pronunciation, grammatical construction, or stylistics. The 'standard' languages, in other side, are systematic and well-formed of grammatical constructions based on universal and specific characteristics.

The terms *well-form* and *ill-form* usually refer to 'prescriptive quality' of grammatical constructions produced and used by speakers or writers. The grammatical constructions are fundamental in underlying grammar of human languages. A grammatical construction is ideally judged as well-formed construction at syntactical level. The word-order typology is the studies and analyses on well-formed constructions of given languages. In linguistic typology (as stated by Dryer in Shopen (ed.), 2007:61), one of the primary ways in which languages differ from one another is in the order of constituent, or, as it is most commonly termed, their word-order. Based on Dryer's, when people refer to the word order of a

language, they often are referring specifically to the order of subject, object, and verb with respect to each other, but word order refers more generally to the order of any set of elements, either at the clause level or within phrases, such as the order of elements within a noun phrase. There are two main aims of studying word-order typology, namely: (i) to know what the order of elements is in a language; and (ii) to assign how the word order in the language conforms to cross-linguistic universals and tendencies.

In addition, Whaley (1997:79 – 80) explains that a prominent area of study within typology deals with the order of elements in clauses and phrase. Many of Greenberg's (1966) universals, for instance, deal with the ordering of various constituents. In typology research, there has been particular interest in the relative ordering of subject (S), verb (V), and object (O) in natural languages. The most prevalent distribution of these three elements in a language is sometimes referred to as the "basic word-order" for that language. Meanwhile, it is also relevant to use the term "basic constituent order" to describe the dominant linear arrangement of S, V, and O, then.

Whaley (1997:80 – 81) adds that, for many languages, a basic word-order at syntactic level can be determined easily and non-controversially. In English, for example, clauses with the orders OSV (3a) and VSO (3b) are permitted. However, the orders are "special" and that SVO (3c) is typical in nature.

- (3) a. *Beans, I hate.*
b. *Believe you me.*
c. *Seymour sliced the salami.*

Cross-linguistically, there are six possible logically orders of words (constituents) of clauses in human languages, and all of them have been claimed to serve as the basic constituent order for at least one language in the world. The followings are the basic word-order typology of human languages.

S – O – V	: <i>Taro ga inu o mita</i> (Japanese) Taro Sub dog Obj saw 'Taro saw the dog'
S – V – O	: <i>Umugore arasoma igitabo</i> (Kinyarwanda, Rwanda) woman 3S-read book 'The woman is reading a book'
V – S – O	: <i>Bara Elohim et ha- shamayim</i> (Biblical Hebrew) created God Obj ART-heaven 'God created the heavens'
V – O – S	: <i>Manasa lamba amin- 'ny savony ny lehilahy</i> (Malagasy) washes clothes with- the soap the man 'The man washes clothes with the soap'
O – V – S	: <i>Toto yahosiye kamara</i> (Hixkaryana, Brazil) man it-grabbed-him jaguar 'The jaguar grabbed the man'
O – S – V	: <i>pako xua u'u</i> (Urubu, Brazil) banana John he-ate 'John ate banana'

There should be possibility in each language to have various orders of constituents (words) of clause constructions. Therefore, it is also necessary to see the variation of word-order and degree of its acceptability in one particular language. Theoretically, the highest acceptability of grammatical constructions in one particular language should be the basic word-order typology as the result of intensive typological studies. Although constituent word-order typology has proved to be a powerful line of research in answering the question "what is a language?", there are still some rather basic issues have been raised. Among the others, *does one language have rigid word-order typology?* can be raised as one important question to explore the "degree" of flexibility of grammatical constructions existing in the language. Whaley (1997:96 – 97) claims that most (probably all) languages have more than one way to order S, V, and O as the basic clause constructions. In languages with fairly rigid constituent order, certain variations are clearly employed for specific functions in constructing a discourse. Thomson (in Whaley, 1997:97) mentions that in English when OSV ("*beans, I like*") arises, it is clear that this order should not be taken as basic to the language because it is used in a very restricted context. For many languages, however, two (or more) word orders may occur frequently and not seem to have any unique discourse function. In these instances, how do linguists decide what the basic word order is? Some linguists have proposed that in classifying languages according to basic constituent order, a category should exist for languages that do not have a basic constituent order at all.

Whaley (1997:97 – 98) also states that the primary split in language types is rooted in whether constituent order is primarily sensitive to pragmatic considerations (flexible order) or syntactic considerations (fixed order). By this way, the linguist does not need to impose a rigid constituent order classification on a language that does not manifest any obvious rules for the linear arrangement of clausal units. Even in many languages in which multiple orders for constituent arise, it is still often possible to determine a basic order using several diagnostic. Therefore, the label “flexible order” must be reserved for cases in which two or more patterns arise where it is not possible to make a principled determination of what is basic. The basic word-order in sentential level can be assigned based on syntactic consideration and/or pragmatic consideration. In one language with “high” pragmatic constrain (consideration) in clause constructions, the acceptability of grammatical constructions cannot be only based on syntactical rules. Such consideration should be related to pragmatic functions involved in sentential constructions. It is frequently found in the languages with “high” pragmatic constrain that basic word-order typology may be more than one. In many local languages, which belong to Malay language family, pragmatic functions are rather dominant in grammatical construction. Consequently, the variation and its acceptability of more than one basic grammatical construction can be measured in range. In addition, it should be also in high consideration that the word order typology of one language evolutionary tends to change as well (see Moravcsik, 2013:201-206).

In accordance with the ideas above and the facts found Minangkabaunese dealing with clause constructions, the study on word-order variation and its degree of acceptability is highly meaningful. This paper, which is developed based on a part of research report (Jufrizal et.al., 2016), specifically discusses *the variation of word-order typology and degree of its acceptability in Minangkabaunese*. It is assumed that the word-order of grammatical constructions in Minangkabaunese at syntactic level belong to non-fixed order. Therefore, it is believed that the analysis and discussion presented in this paper may have meaningful data, information, and ideas for further studies of word-order typology in particular.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive-qualitative research in linguistics practically conducted in 2016 in the form of field research and supported by library study. This research was operationally executed in West-Sumatera where the native speakers of Minangkabaunese originally live. The data in the form of various clause constructions were collected by means of participant observation, depth-interview, administering questionnaires, and library study. Thus, the sources of data were native speakers of Minangkabaunese, intentionally selected as informants and respondents and manuscripts (texts) written in Minangkabaunese. In addition, as the researchers are also the native speakers of Minangkabaunese, they were also the sources of data, but the intuitive data were always systematically cross-checked to informants in order to have valid and reliable ones. The data gained were systematically 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 relevant theories of grammatical typology – word-order typology, grammatical construction, basic clause construction – and language use in society. The criteria of acceptability and “dynamic uses” of the grammatical constructions are based on the socio-cultural practices of language uses.

ANALYSIS

The studies on word-order typology of grammatical constructions in Minangkabaunese have been being initiated in a series of researches since 2004 (Jufrizal, 2004; Jufrizal et.al., 2006; Jufrizal et.al., 2012; Jufrizal et.al., 2013, 2014). Based on the studies, it is argued that there are three patterns of constituent orders of grammatical construction at syntactical level which may be regarded as word-order typology of Minangkabaunese. The three patterns of word-order typology are: (i) SVO; (ii) VOS; and (iii) OSV. The followings are the data of grammatical constructions indicating that Minangkabaunese has SVO word-order typology.

- (4) *Gampo kareh ma- oyak kota Padang baliak.*
earth-quake hard ACT-destroy city Padang again
‘Hard earth-quake destroyed Padang again’
- (5) *Ancin man- jua ikan tabek di kampuang.*
name ACT-sell fish pool in kampong
‘Ancin sells the pool-fish in kampong’

- (6) *Ambo lah mam-mulai usao baru kini ko.*
 PRO1SG PERF ACT-begin garden new now this
 'I have been beginning a new business recently'
- (7) *Urang kampung ka mam-buek jalan baru sasudah rayo ko.*
 people kampung FUT ACT-make road new after holiday this
 'Villagers will make new road after this holiday'

The verbal clauses above are morphologically marked by affix *ma-* to indicate active voice. In the data, the basic clause constructions have SVO word-order in which *gampo kareh*, *Ancin*, *ambo*, and *urang kampung* are S; *ma-oyak*, *man-jua*, *ma-mulai*, and *mam-buek* are V; and *kota Padang*, *ikan tabek*, *usao baru*, and *jalan baru* are O. In this study, there were 280 respondents who gave responds to questionnaire distributed in fourteen linguistic areas in West-Sumatera. There were 221 respondents saying that the SVO clause constructions are very common and 59 respondents (most in old age) said that such kind of grammatical construction are common. Based on the respondents' responses, it may be argued that the acceptability of SVO clause constructions is high. It means that most young speakers of Minangkabaunese agree and determine that SVO clause constructions as in (4) – (7) are very common.

The following constructions, indicating VOS word-order, are also common in Minangkabaunese.

- (8) *Mam-bali tanah urang cino tu di kampung kito mah.*
 ACT-buy land man Chinese ART in kampung POS2PL PART
 'The Chinese bought the land in our kampung'
- (9) *Ba- rambuih angin kencang sejak malam tadi.*
 INT-blow wind fast since night last
 'The storm has been blowing since last night'
- (10) *Man-cari masalah waang kutiko itu.*
 ACT-look for problem PRO2SG time that
 'You were looking for a problem at that time'
- (11) *Ma-ninggaan kampung inyo jo ibo ati.*
 leave kampung PRO3SG with sad heart
 'He left his kampung sadly'
- (12) *Ma-ubah janji urang tu mungkin.*
 change agreement man ART probably
 'The man probably changed the agreement'

In addition to SVO, clause constructions with VOS word-order as in (8) – (12) are also grammatically accepted. Such constructions are commonly used by Minangkabaunese in daily communication and in stylistic uses. The responses given by respondents through questionnaire distributed were 166 respondents (59%), most of them are above 50 years old, said that such kind of grammatical constructions are very common and 20 respondents (7%) said that the constructions are common. Then 74 respondents (26%), most of them are younger speakers, determined that such constructions are less common.

The different "degree" (percentage) of the acceptability of such grammatical construction with VOS word-order can be caused by the fact that the constructions are dominant in folk-stories and in oral expressions of cultural-stylistic style. Cross-linguistically, it can be said that VOS word-order is basic for most languages of Malay family. It was found that VOS word-order is common in the old Minangkabaunese and in cultural-stylistic style. That is why few young-educated speakers (26%) think that such construction is less common as they have been much influenced by formal-academic style and nominative-accusative construction in SVO word-order.

The third type of word-order in Minangkabaunese is OSV, as in the following data.

- (13) *Aia lah kami minum; nasi lah kami makan.*
 water ASP PRO1PL drink; rice ASP PRO1PL eat
 'We have just drunk the water; we have just eaten the rice'
- (14) *Aturan kito patuh- i basamo.*
 regulation PRO1PL follow-APL together
 'We follow the regulation together'
- (15) *Utang lamo alah inyo baia.*
 debt old ASP PRO3SG pay
 'He has paid the old debt'
- (16) *Ganti rugi tanah ko alun kami tarimo lai.*
 compensation land ART ASP PROPL receive yet
 'We have not received the land compensation yet'

The OSV constructions, as in (13) – (16) above are frequently used in oral-communicative interactions in Minangkabaunese. The acceptability of this type construction is relatively high. The claim is supported by native speakers where 219 respondents (78%) accept that such OSV constructions are very common; 6 respondents (2,1%) said that the constructions are common; and 3 respondents (1,06%) mentioned that such constructions are less common.

Typological analyses toward the OSV constructions in Minangkabaunese, however, prove that they cannot be grammatically assigned as the basic clause constructions; they are topicalization constructions, in nature. The linguistic facts tell that Minangkabaunese belongs to languages with flexible word-order typology in which pragmatic function and contextual constraint relatively influence the grammatical constructions. Based on the data it is stated that word-order typology of modern Minangkabaunese is SVO with two variations, namely VOS and OSV. The first two types, SVO and VOS, can be assigned as the basic ones in which SVO (nominative-accusative construction) is the basic word-order typology influenced by modern-immigrant language, while the VOS type is originally derived from old-original word-order of Malay family languages. Then, the third type, OSV is additional variation, which is relatively influenced by pragmatic functions; thus it is not a basic one.

CONCLUSION

Minangkabaunese belongs to the flexible order languages; it has more than one word-order typology; (i) SVO, the highest degree of acceptability, is the basic one with two variations: (ii) VOS which is more classical-old one; and (iii) OSV which is much influenced by pragmatic constraints and communicative events. The last type (OSV) is the topicalization construction and it is not a basic clause construction. As the result, there should be flexibility and dynamic uses of grammatical constructions in Minangkabaunese which are possibly varied in communication. The flexibility and dynamic uses of the grammatical constructions may come to a lot of stylistic and/or creative uses of language in real communicative events. The native speakers may possibly choose what grammatical constructions are suitable with. It seems that linguistic and non-linguistic factors lead Minangkabaunese people to speak flexibly.

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