SUBJECT TEST IN BANUA LANGUAGE CLAUSE CONSTRUCTIONS: A TYPOLOGICAL APPROACH

Iva Ani Wijiati¹, Muhammad Ilham², Achmad Dicky Romadhan³) ^{1,2,3} Universitas Borneo Tarakan Jalan Amal Lama No 1, Kecamatan Tarakan Timur, Kota Tarakan, Provinsi Kalimantan Utara ¹E-mail: wijiatiivaani@gmail.com ²E-mail: ilhammuhammad@borneo.ac.id ³E-mail: dickyromadhan@borneo.ac.id

Abstrak

Bahasa banua merupakan salah satu bahasa yang berasal dari Provinsi Kalimantan Timur. Bahasa Banua merupakan salah satu keluarga bahasa Austronesia. Penelitian bahasa Banua ini menggunakan pendekatan tipologi sintaksis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan perilaku subjek saat membangun klausa dalam Bahasa Banua. Sebagai bahasa daerah di Kalimantan Timur, bahasa Banua memiliki struktur sintaksis yang unik. Tidak banyak penelitian vang dilakukan mengenai fungsi dan tempat subjek dalam bahasa ini. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini memeriksa kesubjekan melalui posisi kanonis, perelatifan, dan kontrol, tiga alat utama menurut Keenan dan Comrie (1983). Metode agih digunakan untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpulkan dari penutur asli melalui teknik elisitasi dan simak bebas libat cakap. Studi menunjukkan bahwa subjek dalam Bahasa Banua selalu berada di posisi sebelum verba baik dalam klausa intransitif maupun transitif. Selain itu, subjek dapat direlatifkan secara eksklusif hanya dengan menggunakan bentuk "anu". Selain itu, subjek dapat dikontrol dalam konstruksi verba serial, tetapi argumen tanpa subjek tidak memiliki karakteristik yang sama. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa Bahasa Banua memiliki sifat kesubjekan yang sesuai dengan prinsip sintaksis universal dan membantu dalam pemetaan tipologis bahasa-bahasa Indonesia. Implikasi teoritis dari penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memperkuat teori kesubjekan dalam sudut pandang tipologi sintaksis dan memberikan basis data linguistik global. Selain itu, impilkasi praktis yang diharapkan pada penelitian ini ialah menjadi salah satu sarana pelestarian bahasa daerah dan pondasi dalam penyusunan tata bahasa Banua.

Kata Kunci: klausa, subject, bahasa banua, tipologi

Abstract

Banua Language is one of the languages originating from the province of East Kalimantan. Banua Language is part of the Austronesian language family. This research on Banua Language uses a syntactic typology approach. The aim of this study is to explain the behavior of subjects in clause construction within Banua Language. As a regional language in East Kalimantan, Banua Language has a unique syntactic structure. Not much research has been done on the function and position of subjects in this language. Therefore, this study examines subjecthood through canonical position, relativization, and control, the three main tools according to Keenan and Comrie (1983). The distributional method was used to analyze data collected from native speakers through elicitation and uninvolved observation techniques. The study shows that in Banua Language, the subject always precedes the verb in both intransitive and transitive clauses. Additionally, the subject can be relativized exclusively using the form "anu". Furthermore, the subject can be controlled in serial verb constructions, but arguments without subjects do not exhibit the same characteristics. The findings indicate that Banua Language has subjecthood properties that align with universal syntactic principles and contribute to the typological mapping of Indonesian languages. The theoretical implication of this research is expected to strengthen the theory of subjecthood from a syntactic typology perspective and provide a global linguistic database. In addition, the practical implication expected from this research is to serve as a means for preserving the regional language and a foundation for developing the Banua Language grammar.

Keywords: Clause, Subject, Banua language, Typology

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the Austronesian family languages is Berau or Banua, which is spoken in East Kalimantan. Because of its existence, Indonesia has a very rich linguistic diversity. However, like many other regional languages, the Banua language faces the same problem. Indonesian is excellent in both formal and informal contexts, which is why this is the case. Due to this circumstance, the linguistic study of Banua languages, especially the syntactic part, is very important. The subject matter in clause construction is an important component of grammar that has not been studied much.

The selection of the title "Subject Test in Banua Language Clause Construction: A Typological Approach" is based on the research's focus on analyzing syntactic structures that are comparative again in depth. By using a syntactic typology approach, a researcher can describe linguistic constructions and compare the syntactic characteristics of Berau or Banua language with other languages. Thus, this research not only contributes to visualizing the universality of the subject test, but also contributes to visualizing the specificity of the subject test from a crosslinguistic point of view.

Previous research on Banua language has focused on phonology and lexicon. At the same time, research on syntax is still very rare. These studies are still very limited, especially for those using a typological framework. To improve the understanding and documentation of the Banua language, there is a need to elaborate on aspects of its sentence structure. Therefore, the aim of this study is to complement the lack of studies in the field of syntax regarding subject functions and characteristics.

The subject test tool in clause construction is an essential aspect of syntax because it serves as a controller of predication and is often the main focus of sentence structure. In many languages, subjects have certain features such as fixed https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/konfiks

position and morphological equivalence to predicates. Subjects participate in ergative or nominative-accusative constructions. However, in Banua, whether this phenomenon also applies is still an unanswered scientific question.

Analytical tools are offered by syntactic typology to enable researchers to classify test subjects based on common patterns and exceptions in the language. With this approach, the position of Banua language in the typological map of the world can be determined and its syntactic tendencies in clause construction can be identified. This facilitates a dialog between global linguistic theories and local data.

This research is very important because of the following two fundamental considerations. From an academic perspective, first, this research plays a role in enriching data on languages lacking documentation, especially in the development of the field of typological linguistics. Secondly, from the aspect of language preservation, Banua language revitalization efforts are strengthened through this research by presenting a deep structural understanding, which is useful in the preparation of teaching materials and language documentation.

Moreover, this kind of structural linguistic study is all the more crucial because of the increasing rarity of teak speakers and the shrinking sphere of Banua language use. Welldocumented information on the syntactic behavior of subjects in Banua can be a valuable asset. This asset becomes very useful in language conservation efforts. Good syntactic documentation can be a reference in the revitalization process. This is essential as in mother tongue teaching in schools or local communities.

The implications of this research go beyond the scope of academic boundaries. The development of a local language-based curriculum, the compilation of a grammar dictionary, along with the creation of teaching materials based on the original structure of the



language can be based on the findings. This will strengthen the position of Berau language in education as well as local culture as a language that should be used. Thus, strengthening the linguistic identity of the Berau community will be directly affected by the results of this research.

In the academic sphere, this study plays a role in enriching global typological databases, such as the World Atlas of Language Structures (WALS), whose data is still limited to Indonesian regional languages. This study integrates Banua language data into a global typological map, which facilitates in-depth discussions for linguists. The discussion is about variation in subject structure and its contribution to the theory of universal syntax.

This research is also expected to initiate ongoing collaboration between language documentation, syntactic typology, and descriptive linguistics. This is essential in the development of interdisciplinary linguistic studies. This study becomes not only theoretical, but also applicative. Furthermore, this may trigger similar studies to emerge on other local languages in Kalimantan or other areas in Indonesia.

This article seeks to answer the scientific question regarding the subject test in Banua clause construction, as well as to emphasize the urgency of strengthening local language studies through a systematic and theoretical crosslinguistic approach. The added value of this research is the combination of practical interest and theoretical interest.

It is hoped that this research will broaden the readers' horizons. In addition, it is anticipated that this research will widen the perspectives of other scholars on the study of syntax in minority languages. Banua language is one of the many Indonesian regional languages that still needs further study. This study opens the world's eyes to the richness and diversity of the Nusantara language syntax.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many opinions of linguists about the nature of subjects. According to experts, discussions about subjects are interesting, but also complicated. One of the causes of such complexity is the grammatical behavior and typology of a language. The different behaviors and typologies of languages cause the notion and determination of the subject to be constantly debated.

Before moving on to the characteristics of subjects in Banua Language, the following outlines the conception and characteristics of subjects according to several linguists. The subject is the part of a clause or sentence indicated by a noun or nominal phrase by the speaker, according to Kridalaksana (2014). Often, the concept of subject is confused with pragmatic and semantic functions (Aritonang, 2018; Basaria, 2018; Budiarta, 2016; Prismayanti & Mulyadi, 2022). Actually, the subject is part of syntax. The subject in every sentence or clause has a very important role in making the sentence or clause perfect or (Palmer, 2016; Romadhan et al., 2023; Romadhan & Sari, 2021; Selia & Romadhan, 2023).

According to Verhaar (2017)expressed his opinion on the next topic. He states that the subject is what the verb describes in the predicate position or what happens in the predicate position of the verb. According to Sugono's (1991) opinion then discusses opinions about the concept of the subject. He says that in syntactic analysis there are four concepts of subject: grammatical concept, word category concept, semantic concept, and pragmatic concept, or organization of information presentation.

According to Sugono (1991), the pragmatic concept refers to the function of the subject in terms of information presentation organization, the word category concept refers to the function of the subject in terms of word category, the semantic concept refers to the function of the subject in terms of semantic role, and the grammatical concept refers to the function of the subject in terms of syntactic structure (Basaria, 2013; Fathonah & Romadhan, 2021; Harahap, 2019; Romadhan, 2021).

According to Comrie (1988), the nature of subject origin is the relationship between agent and topic. In other words, the subject is both agent and topic cross-linguistically. Subjects can be called agents because they have semantic functions, while subjects can be called topics or themes because they have pragmatic functions.

According to Kisseberth & Abasheikh (1977) also expressed additional opinions about the behavioral characteristics of basic subjects. In situations where every nominal phrase (FN) in the language is unmarked, intransitive subjects are generally unmarked, and case-marking properties include (1) autonomy properties, (2) casemarking properties, (3) semantic role, and (4) direct dominance. Two things are included in the autonomy behavior of the base subject, namely free existence (free existence), nondisturbance/indispensability (non-disturbance existence), and self-reference.

Subjects based on their semantic roles can be predicted from the main form of the verb (Brahmana, 2022; Romadhan, 2022; Said, Artawa, & Satyawati, 2016). Some examples of predictable semantic roles include: (a) the subject usually expresses the agent (of the action) if there is only one argument; (b) the subject usually expresses the goal phrase (addressse) of the imperative form; and (c) the subject usually expresses the position, case marker, and concordance of the verb with the causative FN in causative sentence forms that p The properties of the subject that are directly dominated by the base node of the sentence are referred to as direct dominance properties (Comrie & Keenan, 1983). The four behaviors exhibited by the subject are not absolute values. It is possible that these actions do not correspond to specific language actions.

To test SUBJ, it must be syntactically rather than semantically preceded (Arka, 2017, 2019; Artawa, 2013; Wechsler & Arka, 1998). The properties of SUBJ are different in each language. But transitive and intransitive verb arguments have the same properties (Selia & Romadhan, 2024). Since subject is a grammatical relation, the determination of subject should be based on grammatical behavior.

3. METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative type with the aim of being able to analyze the subject's behavior in Banua or Banua language. The data for this study came from ten interviewees who speak Banua language. The speakers live in the Berau Regency area. Purity of language, fluency in speaking, and frequency of language use were considered in the purposive selection of the interviewees. The researchers did not account for dialectal variation. The data collected represented a variety of language commonly used by the speaking community.

Elicitation technique was used in this study. The recording method of free listening technique was also used. The elicitation technique uses a list of questions or linguistic stimuli to elicit utterances containing subjects and other core arguments. The free listening technique is to record a natural conversation of the interviewee to collect original data of colloquial language in the context without direct involvement of the researcher.

In analyzing the data, this research uses an agih analysis method, which is an analysis method that relies on language as an analytical tool. The research centered on the element of sound. This component changes only under certain conditions. The direct element technique, lesap technique, replace technique, and change technique are included in the advanced techniques in this method.



4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research related to subject test tools in this study uses the opinion presented by Keenan and Comrie (1983). Keenan and Comrie (1983) stated that there are three main test tools that can be used to see the behavior of a subject in a language. They are canonical position, relativization and control. The three test tools will be applied to the Banua language. The description of the three test tools on the subject of Banua language can be seen as follows.

Canonical Position Structure

Banua language has an S-V-O ururt pattern. The canonical structure shows that SUBJ in Banua language is at the beginning of the clause or preverbal. Examples of clauses that show that the Banua language canonical structure is at the beginning of the clause or preverbal are as follows.

- (1) Amma tatawa Father laugh 'Father Laughs'
- (2) Inda tidur Mother sleep 'Mother sleeps'
- (3) Ading pargi Brother leave 'Brother left'

The clause example above is an intransitive verb clause construction which confirms that the SUBJ in intransitive verb construction is at the beginning of the clause or preverbal. In clause (1) the SUBJ argument amma 'father' is to the left of the PRED which is an intransitive verb. namely tatawa 'laugh'. In clause (2) the SUBJ argument of inda 'mother' is to the left of PRED which is an intransitive verb. i.e. *tidur* 'sleep'. In clause (3) the SUBJ argument ading 'younger brother' is to the left of the PRED which is an intransitive verb. i.e. pargi 'go'.

In the Banua language, there is a type of noun clause formed by predicates in the form of nouns. Based on their grammatical behavior, nouns have

a primary function as the argument of the predicate and have a secondary function as the predicate. In addition, nouns have grammatical behaviors that can be followed by modifiers in the form of adjectives and demonstratives. Nouns can also be followed by other word classes such as numeralia and verbs. Banua nouns can also be followed by pronominal clitics such as -ku, -mu, -ta and -nva.

(4). *Amma* nalayan attu Father DEM fisherman 'That father is fisherman

The example clause above is an example of a noun clause (4). The SUBJ argument in the noun clause is occupied by the constituent amma 'father'. In addition to the SUBJ argument, clause (4) is filled with the demonstrative element attu 'that' and PRED which is a noun, nalayan 'fisherman'. The location of the demonstrative is between the PRED argument and the PRED because it functions to show the PRED argument.

Adjective clauses are clauses whose predicates are occupied by adjective categories or adjectives. Based on the grammatical behaviors possessed by adjectives, the category can be distinguished from other word categories, namely adjectives are word categories that have the feature to form comparative and superlative constructions. Syntactically, adjectives also have

a function to explain nouns in nominal phrases (FN). According to Givon (1994), it also states that adjectives have a function in giving more specific information to the noun in a clause.

Unjai attu bassar (5). DEM big Cat 'That cat is big'

The example clause above is an example of an adjective clause (5). The SUBJ argument of the adjective clause is occupied by the constituent unjai 'cat'. In addition to the SUBJ argument, clause (5) is filled with the demonstrative element attu 'that' and the PRED which is an adjective,

bassar 'big'. The location of the demonstrative element is behind after the PRED argument because it states that the predicate argument has a large nature as stated by the PRED.

According to Dixon (2010), one of the distinguishing features to distinguish adjectives from other word categories is that adjectives can function in comparative structures. The comparative structure in Banua language uses the lexicon *labbi* 'more'. Apart from being used to express a level of comparison, Banua language adjectives can also be used to express a level of quality. One lexicon used to express quality level is *paling* 'most'.

The next clause type is clauses that have prepositional phrase predicates in Banua language expressed in the lexical forms *di* 'at', *andai* 'if', and *untuk* 'for'. Examples of data on clauses with prepositional phrase predicates in Banua language are as follows.

(6). *Kuyuk attu di samping pintu* Dog DEM PREP door 'That dog next to door'

The example clause above is an example of a prepositional phrase-predicated clause (6). The SUBJ argument in the prepositional phrase-predicated clause is occupied by the constituent *kuyuk* 'dog'. In addition to the SUBJ argument, clause (6) is filled by the demonstrative element *attu* and the prepositional phrase *di samping pintu*. The canonical structure shows that the single argument in intransitive clauses and nonverb clauses such as nouns, adjectives, and prepositional phrase-predicated clauses is always included in the SUBJ relation category.

In addition to the construction of intransitive clauses that have verb and non-verb predicates, the canonical structure can be used to test the authenticity of the SUBJ argument in the construction of transitive verb clauses which are divided into equatranstive clauses that have two arguments and bitransitive clauses that have more than two arguments. The following are examples of bitransitive clause constructions seen based on the canonical structure in Banua language.

(7) Ia mambarrikan aku ampik 3S give 1S sarong 'He gave me a sarong'

The example above shows that the canonical structure can also be applied to the construction of bitransitive clauses. The example of clause (7) which has a SUBJ argument *ia* 'he' that also comes before the predicate that binds three arguments, namely *mambarrikan* 'to give' in Banua language. The arguments involved in the construction above are *ia* as the subject, *aku* as the object and *ampik* as the indirect object.

Examination of the canonical structure above shows that the argument in the construction of transitive verb clauses in Banua language that functions as SUBJ is always categorized as the SUBJ of the transitive clause (A) and the next argument that is not included in the SUBJ relation of the transitive clause (A) then the argument must be included in the OBJ relation (O).

Relativization

Besides the canonical position, there is another way to determine the SUBJ argument and check the level of subjugation in a language, namely by relativization. SUBJ arguments in Banua language can also be relativized like the following example.

(8) a. Urang attu badiri di mija
 Person DEM stand Prep table
 'That person is standing at the table'

b. *Urang attu anu badiri di mija* Person DEM REL stand Prep table 'That person stood at the table'

The two example clauses above show that the example clause (8) above is a relativizing clause. The result of relativizing clause (8a) is shown in example clause (8b). The relativized SUBJ argument in the first clause example is *urang* 'person'. The form of the second clause shows that

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the relativization in Banua is marked by the form *anu* 'which' before the predicate verb *badiri*.

In Banua language, the relativization test tool characterizes the determination of SUBJ because only SUBJ can be relativized. In other words, arguments other than SUBJ cannot be relativized in Banua language. The proof that relativization is a property of SUBJ in Banua language is explained as follows.

(9) a. Inniku mamappak siri

Grandmother-1S chew betel leaf 'My grandmother is chewing betel leaf' b. *Inniku anu mamappak siri* Grandmother-1S REL chew betel leaf 'My grandmother who chews betel leaf' c. * *inniku mamappak anu siri* Grandmother-1S chew REL betel leaf 'Mygrandmother chews who betel leaf

The three clauses above show that relativization is one of the SUBJ properties in Banua language. Clause (9b) shows that relativization can be done on SUBJ arguments but clause (9c) shows that relativization on arguments other than SUBJ is not justified or ungrammatical.

Sentence (9a) is the basic clause before the relativization process. In the sentence, the subject argument is filled by *inniku*, the predicate is occupied by the constituent *mamappak* and the object argument is filled by *siri*. In clause (9b), there is a relativization process that occurs with the presence of the constituent *anu* in the sentence. The presence of *anu* in Banua language can only relativize the subject because relativization that occurs on other than the subject argument is not acceptable in Banua language. This can be seen in sentence (9c).

Control

At this stage it contains explanations, differences and new findings from the results of the research conducted and is the most important aspect of the entire research section. The next subjugation test used against Banua language is the control test. The following is an example in Banua language of a grammatical control test mechanism used to test subjugation.



The example above shows that the argument *aku* 'I' in clause (10a) is controllable. It shows that the SUBJ in the embedded verb can be controlled. However, control of arguments other than SUBJ is not grammatical in the Banua language. It is shown in the example of clause (10b). Besides clause (10), the same thing is also exemplified in clause (11). Clause (11a) shows that the argument *ia* 'he' in clause (11a) can be controlled. It shows that the SUBJ in the embedded verb can be controlled. However, control of arguments other than SUBJ is not grammatical in Banua language in the example of clause (11b).

Clauses (10a) and (11a) are examples of serial verb constructions. In serial verb constructions, there is a requirement that a construction can be called a serial verb construction if it has sharing arguments or the same arguments. Clauses (10a) and (11a) have the same argument, namely the subject aku in sentence (10a) and the subject ia in sentence (11a).

DISCUSSION

Based on the theory of subjugation test presented by Keenan and Comrie (1983)which states that there are three test tools that can prove the language of a constituent in a sentence or clause can be used and function as a subject. The test tools presented by Keenan and Comrie (1983) are canonical position structure, relativization and control. The three test tools have been applied and tested on Banua language which is one of the Austronesian language families.

The first test tool which is canonical structure has been applied to Banua language. The result of applying canonical structure to Banua language can be seen in sentence (1) to sentence (6). In these sentences, it is proven that the application of canonical structure as the first test tool can be done on several types of sentences or clauses in Banua language.

Subject testing through the canonical position structure has been applied to Banua sentences or clauses in several types of predicates, namely noun-predicated sentences, adjective-predicated sentences, preposition-predicated sentences and sentences that have intransitive verb and transitive verb predicates.

The test results strengthen the evidence that the subject in Banua language has a canonical position, which is at the beginning of the sentence or in front of predicates that have noun, adjective, preposition and verb word categories. All constituents in front of noun predicates in Banua generally constitute the subject of the sentence.

The second test tool applied to Banua language to test the subject is relativization. In the application of this test tool, a sentence or clause in Banua language that has a verb predicate is inserted a relativizing marker constituent in its construction. The marker serves to test a grammatical function that can be relativized. In Banua language, the anu marker, which is a relativizing marker, has been tested against two core arguments in Banua language sentence construction, namely subject and object functions. Based on the test results, it can be seen that the relativization in Banua language only works and succeeds when applied to the subject grammatical function while the same thing does not work when applied to the object grammatical function.

This further strengthens that in Banua language, the relativization test tool is only successful when applied to the subject grammatical function. It also makes the relativization test tool a test tool that can determine that a relativized constituent in Banua language is a subject grammatical function.

The last subject test applied to Banua language is control. This control test is applied to Banua sentences or clauses that function to test subjects that have verb predicates. In this control test, the sentence used is a sentence with a serial verb type. Serial verb construction is used in testing subjects because the control test as one of the subject tests in Banua language requires multiple predicates or multiple verbs in a construction.

Serial verb construction helps to clarify the control test used in subject determination in Banua language. In Banua, control tests are only successful when applied to subjects. The control tests conducted provide evidence that serial verb constructions in Banua have the same subject despite having two verbs in the construction.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, it can be concluded that the subjects' behavior when they create clauses in Banua shows significant structural consistency, especially in terms of control, relativization, and canonical position. In the canonical structure of Banua, subjects are consistently in the preverbal position in both intransitive and transitive



clauses. In addition, like prepositionals, adjectives, and nouns, topics seem to have an important role in non-verbal predicated clauses. Typologically, Banua languages show the use of SVO structures with the subject as an important syntactic component in sentence construction.

In addition, testing through relativization shows something. In Banua, "anu" is the only word that can be relativized. When relativization is applied to non-subject arguments, ungrammaticality occurs. These results show that the relativization feature is a strong sign of the existence and function of the subject in Banua clause structure. The principles of syntactic typology state that the ability of arguments to be made relative is a subject-specific characteristic in many languages, in line with these findings.

In serial verb constructions, only the subject of the main verb can be controlled in the embedded verb, according to the final test and control. Non-subject arguments cannot function as controllers. This confirms the position of the subject as the center of control in sentence structure. The results of this study provide empirical evidence that the Banua language exhibits the universal subject characteristics found in modern syntactic theory. Therefore, this study explains the syntactic nature of the Banua language. Additionally, this study contributes to the typological mapping of regional languages in Indonesia.

There are still limitations and shortcomings in this study. The limitations and shortcomings in this study are the lack of subject tests used to test the grammatical function of the subject in the Banua language. In further research, the researcher hopes to apply subject tests from several linguistic experts' perspectives from a syntactic typology point of view to strengthen the grammatical function of the subject in a Banua language clause.

The expected contribution of this study is that it can serve as a foundation for efforts to preserve regional languages, one of which is the Banua language. Furthermore, another expected contribution of this study is that it can serve as a basis for the development of grammar and local content in school curriculum that examine subjects in the Banua language.

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