



PAPER – OPEN ACCESS

Ergative Construction in Pakpak Dairi Language

Author : Rachmad Fadillah Maha, dkk
DOI : 10.32734/lwsa.v8i3.2519
Electronic ISSN : 2654-7066
Print ISSN : 2654-7058

Volume 8 Issue 3 – 2022 TALENTA Conference Series: Local Wisdom, Social, and Arts (LWSA)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/).
Published under licence by TALENTA Publisher, Universitas Sumatera Utara



Ergative Construction in Pakpak Dairi Language

Rachmad Fadillah Maha, Dwi Widayati, Dardanila, Emma Marsella

Program Studi Sastra Indonesia, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

rachmadfadillahmaha@usu.ac.id dwiwidayati@usu.ac.id, dardanila@usu.ac.id, emma.marsella@usu.ac.id

Abstract

This article discusses ergative construction of Pakpak Dairi Language. The ergative of a language can be seen when the patient (P) position of the transitive verb is treated equally to the subject (S) of the intransitive verbs and is different from the intransitive agent (A) verb. The purpose of this study is to describe ergative construction in the Pakpak Dairi language. The collection of data in this writing is done with technically capable of directing informants to obtain data as full as much as data type desired. Data is then analyzed using syntactic approaches using GB theory (Chomsky 1981). Based on the results of the study can be inferred, although pivoted S/A, Pakpak Dairi language has an ergative type that is FN (N) equal to FN (O) and is different from FN (A) with pivot S/O. in other words, the ergative type in Pakpak Dairi language uses its speakers to put forward the subject function as the one worn (patient).

Keywords: Folklore; Pakpak; Dairi Language; Ergative; Government Binding

1. Introduction

Ergative studies focus on the nature of sentences that include transitive sentence subjects which behave differently from intransitive subjects. The nature of absoluteness (transitive objects and intransitive subjects behave the same), as well as the nature of structural arguments (subjects of intransitive verbs behaves differently from transitive verbs and transitive verbs). Indonesian is classified as an accusative language (see, Keraf, 1984, 1989; Alwi, et al., 2000; (Maha et al., 2024; Widayati et al., 2024). Even Sudaryanto (1983) claims that Indonesian does not have ergative constructions.

Like Indonesian, typologically the Pakpak Dairi (PD) language has an S relation in the base clause which always acts as A (Basaria, 2019). However, Verhaar (1989) actually has a different opinion. According to Verhaar, Indonesian typologically has two types, namely the accusative and ergative types. The accusative type can be found in official Indonesian, while the ergative type is found in unofficial Indonesian. This kind of assumption opens up the opportunity that PD actually also has an ergative construction, especially in folklore.

All languages in the world have syntactic construction in the process of forming a sentence (Abbas et al., 2022; Harahap et al., 2023; Jufriзал et al., 2024; Refnita, 2021, Maha et al., 2024; Widayati et al, 2024). The construction is basically formed by three basic core relationships (core argument), namely the subject (S) of the intransitive clause, agent (A) or the logical subject of the transitive clause, and patient (P/O) or the object of the transitive clause (Dixon, 1989). Song (2001) further stated that these three core relations are useful for determining whether a language is classified as accusative or ergative. According to Basaria (2013, 2019), typologically PD has an S/A pivot. One of the characteristics of accusative language is that it has an S/A pivot. Even though it is concluded that PD is of the accusative type, speech of the ergative type is still found, such as:

- (1) *Ali manun i lae.* (PD)
Ali was swept away in the river
- (2) *Mate senap daging Puhun* (PD)
Uncle had a stroke.
- (3) *Tangan Ali terseat raut.* (PD)
Ali's hand was cut by a knife

Sentences 1—3 include ergative characteristics. In sentence 1) the subject 'Ali' is treated as a patient; in sentence 2) 'Puhun' is also treated the same as the patient; and in sentence 3) 'Ali's hand' is also treated as a patient. All three sentences treat the subject (S) of an intransitive verb in the same way as the patient (P) of a transitive verb, and differently from the agent complement (A) of a transitive verb. Accusative type languages treat S in the clause as the same as A and different from O, which is more dominant than treating S as the same as A and different from O. Meanwhile, the opposite is true for the ergative type.

Research on ergative sentences is still a concern for linguists, especially in the study of language typology. Zaenal Arifin (2006) through his research entitled "New Ergative Constructions in Indonesian Languages" discusses ergative verbs in Indonesian languages which morphologically have ergative characteristics. In his writings, he said that languages in the world can have accusative and ergative syntactic characteristics. The syntactic characteristic of accusative means treating the intransitive subject (S) with the transitive subject (A) in the same way (unmarked), while the transitive object (O) is treated differently (marked). Meanwhile, for ergatives, that is by treating S and O in the same way (not marked) and A is treated in a different way (marked). Then, ergativity can also occur in languages that have constructions where S, O and A are all marked, but the S and O have the same marking, while the A has a different marking.

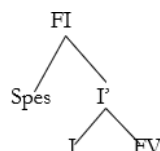
Another research related to language ergativity was written by Sry Satriya Tjatur Wisnu Sasangka (2016) with the title "Peripheral Passive: Ergative Structure in Indonesian". Sasangka suggests that the ergative form is a peripheral passive form. The passive is a marked construction, while the ergative is not. Passive construction marking appears in the verb. Original passive construction verbs are marked *Of-*, while the ergative construction verbs are not marked *passively Of-*. In terms of agents, passive and ergative are also different. The presence of an agent in a passive construction is not mandatory. This means that the agent may or may not be present because it is not so important, whereas in the ergative construction, the agent's presence is mandatory. The agent in a passive construction can be a noun or nominal phrase, while the agent in an ergative construction can only be a personal pronoun, either first, second or third person. If the sentence structure uses a kinship word which is used as a greeting word and acts as a second person pronoun agent, the structure can be grouped into an ergative construction, but if the greeting word does not act as a second person pronoun agent, the structure is not classified as ergative. Meanwhile, the similarity between passive and ergative is that the subjects in both constructions both act as patients.

Another article related to ergativity was written by Handoko (2015) with the title "Analysis of Ergative Sentences in Detik.com News Headlines". In this article, it is concluded that ergative sentences can be characterized morphologically, lexically and syntactically. Morphological markers can include the addition of the affix *ke-an* or the prefix *ter-*. Lexical markers can be the use of ergative verbs. However, by using the theory of government and binding, it appears that ergativity is not the addition of affixes or certain lexical usage, but is the treatment of S noun phrases the same as O noun phrases and different from A noun phrases with S/O pivots. The use of the ergative form in news headlines is a newsmaker's strategy to attract readers' attention by prioritizing the victim as the core of the sentence.

Another article related to BPD types was written by Ida Basaria (2013; 2018). In his research he concluded that BPD pivots S/A. One of the characteristics of accusative languages in general is having an S/A pivot. These two studies strengthen the evidence that BPD can be classified as a language with an accusative typology.

However, as stated previously, ergative type speech is still found in BPD. This research was conducted to find the ergative type of BPD. Then the ergative type is analyzed using GB theory. The assignment and binding (GB) theory development model is;

GB theory recognizes the existence of an inner structure (D-Structure) and an outer structure (S-Structure). However, for the explanation of GB, we no longer use the theory of phrase structure rules, but use the X-bar theory. Unlike phrase structure theory, X-bar theory contains a more detailed and comprehensive explanation. In the X-bar theory, constituents are differentiated based on their levels using bars or marks on their categories. In X-bar theory there are two levels and two projections which are represented at the sentence level. If a lexical category is formed by complements, adverbs, and specifiers, the complement combined with X will form an X-bar projection; captions combined with X-bar will form a higher X-bar projection; The specifier combined with a higher X-bar will form an implexional phrase as a maximum projection. So, the bar category is a projection of



X with the highest bar phrase being the maximum projection of category X (Mulyadi, 2010:4). The projection hierarchical relationship can be depicted with the diagram below:

The coordination of the verb phrase (FV) with the inflection (I) forms the bar inflection (I'). Next I' and *specifier* forms the highest level of inflected phrase (FI) at the sentence level. This can also be seen in the general format below:

FI → SPES; I'

I' → I; FV

Selain menjelaskan hirarki struktur kalimat, GB juga menyinggung aspek semantik kalimat yang dijelaskan dengan teori Teta (O-Theory). Teta teori menjelaskan hubungan antara argumen dengan predikat, khususnya hubungan verba seperti agen, pasien, penerima, mengalami, dan beberapa pecan lainnya (Handoko, 2015:139). Apart from explaining the hierarchy of sentence structures, GB also touches on the semantic aspects of sentences which are explained by theta theory (O-Theory). Theta theory explains the relationship between arguments and predicates, especially verb relationships such as agent, patient, recipients, experiencers, and several other people (Handoko, 2015:139, Novita et al., 2019).

(4) a. *Mendea tarutung (P) bapa (A)*

'Father (A) sells durian (P).

b. *Menengen inang (P) bapa (A).*

'Father (A) saw mother (P).

In the sentence (4a), pronoun father is the agent of the verb *mendea* semantically acts as an agent. Noun *tarutung* the argument used verb, which semantically plays a role as a patient. In sentence (4b), *Bapa* as an agent, *inang* act as patient. In GB, there is also a concept of transformation called alpha movement (α-movement). Alpha shifting allows any argument to move within the sentence structure.

pronomina *ayah* merupakan pelaku verba *mendea* yang secara semantik berperan sebagai agen.

(5) a. *the lawyer was amended the contract*

b. *the contract was amended by the lawyer*

Like the passive sentence above, an argument in the D-structure occupies a different position in the S-structure, that argument is considered to have undergone a transfer.

2. Methodology

This research is a qualitative research. The data of this research is an ergative sentence that comes from Pakpak Dairi folklore. In data collection, the face-to-face technique was used (Sudaryanto, 2015) by technically instructing the informant to acquire as much complete data as the desired data type. In the data mining process, both the researcher and the informant are fished together as a unit that can be seen as a tool. The data were then analyzed using GB theory.

3. Result and Discussion

Typologically, there is not a single language in the world that only has one particular typology. Even though BPD is categorized as an accusative language (Basaria, (2013; 2018); because this construction is more dominant than ergative constructions, this does not mean that BPD does not have ergative constructions. In this section, a discussion of ergative sentence structure using GB theory is presented. This discussion aims to describes the relationship between predicate and argument, subject, and transitivity. Below is presented data on BPD ergative sentences.

Table 1. BPD ergative sentence markers

No	Morphology			Lexical	
1	<i>ter-</i> :	{ <i>tertunduh</i> }	'sleepy'	<i>Endabuh</i>	'fall'
2		{ <i>terdeger</i> }	'swayed'	<i>Manun</i>	'drift'
3		{ <i>terjemak</i> }	'stuck'	<i>tangis</i>	'crying'
4		{ <i>tereluh</i> }	'crying'	<i>Matte</i>	'dead'
5		{ <i>terakap</i> }	'feels'	<i>Bessur</i>	'full'
6		{ <i>tertenjo</i> }	'punched'	<i>Ciboni</i>	'hiding'
7		{ <i>terdedoh</i> }	'stepped on'	<i>Kom</i>	'stop'
8		{ <i>terpedem</i> }	'asleep'	<i>Cender</i>	'stand'
9		{ <i>terseat</i> }	'cut'	<i>Ndungo</i>	'wake up'
10		{ <i>terbunuh</i> }	'killed'	<i>Sengget</i>	'shocked'

11		{tereme}	'submerged'	<i>Lupa</i>	'land'
12		{teroge}	'open'	<i>Kundul</i>	'sit down'
13		{terpukpuk}	'hit'	<i>Sumasel</i>	'regret'
14		{terlempar}	'thrown'		
15	<i>mer- :</i>	{mersirang}	'separate'		
16		{merjanji}	'promise'		
17		{bertemu}	'see you'		
18		{merubat}	'fight'		
19		{mellui}	'sad'		
20		{merlari}	'run'		
21	<i>ci-:</i>	{cerem}	'smile'		
22	<i>i-:</i>	{ipekpek}	'subject to beatings'		
23		{itangkup}	'subject to arrest'		
24		{ikeret}	'subject to cutting actions'		
25		{Ibakar}	'subject to action burn'		
26		{ipijak}	'subject to action step'		
27	<i>En-:</i>	{melehen}	'more hungry'		
28		{remen}	'soaked'		
29		{tutun}	'punched'		
30	<i>Men-i:</i>	{mengkusoi}	'ask'		
31	<i>Ke-en:</i>	{kedabuhen}	'the fall'		

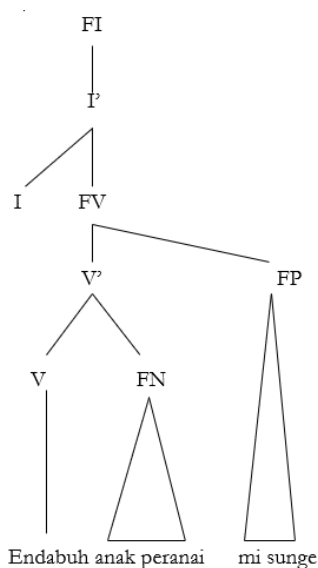
Further explanation of the findings above will be discussed in the form of a detailed analysis. From the data above, several data were selected at the sentence level. The selected data was then analyzed using GB theory. The data analysis is as follows:]

Data 1

Anak peranai endabuh mi sunge. (PD)

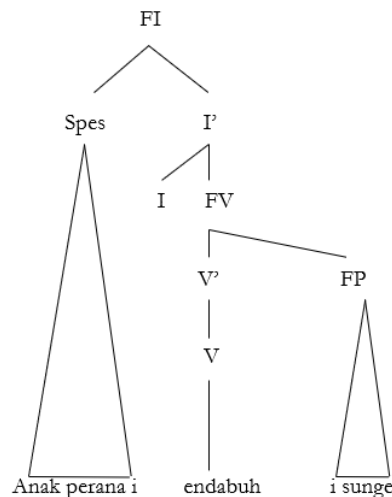
The woman fell in the river.

The sentence above is ergative because the subject is treated as a patient. FN The son of a genius in data 1 the basic function of S is as the argument of the intransitive verb (V) *endabuh*, but semantically FN *anak peranai* an FN that is influenced by the verb, therefore it also acts as an O of an intransitive verb (V) *endabuh*. In other words, semantically, the subject (S) behaves the same



as the object (O), namely as an argument subjected to the verb so that it acts as a patient. Prepositional Phrase (PP) call me is optional so its behavior does not affect other arguments. Thus, the inner structure of the sentence above can be described as follows:

In the diagram above, you can see FN *anak perantai* control V'. This is because FN is an argument affected by a verb *endabuh*. Semantically (O) the role of FN *anak endabuh* a patient. However, functionally the FN functions as a subject. Therefore, to achieve the birth structure, the FN experiences an argument shift (a-movement) and occupies a position directly under the power of the inflectional phrase (FI). The inner structure of the sentence above then gives rise to the outer structure as follows:

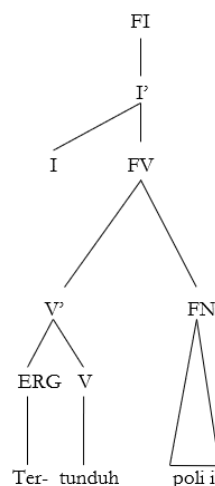


Data 2

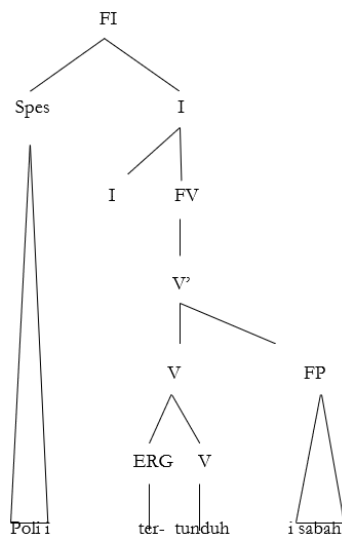
Poli i tertunduh. (PD)

Grandpa was sleepy.

FN *poli i* the sentence above it functions as the subject of an intransitive verb (V) *tertunduh*. However, the semantic role of FN *poli i* as a patient because it is an argument that has direct influence from the verb. Therefore, FN *poli i* also acts as the O of intransitive verbs (V) *tertunduh*. In other words, semantically the subject (S) behaves the same as the object (O), namely as an argument subjected to the verb so that it acts as a patient. Meanwhile, no prepositional phrases were found acts as a locative. The absence of FP does not affect the position of the core argument. Thus, the inner structure of the sentence above can be described as follows:



The diagram shows FN *poli i* is under the control of V. Hal This is because FN is directly affected *tertunduh*. FN *poli i* in the sentence above it functions as a subject, but has a theta role (O) or the semantic role of patient. This is because words *tunduh* has experienced a decrease in transitive form due to the addition of prefix *ter-*. FN experiences argument transfer (a-movement) and occupies a position directly under the power of the inflectional phrase (FI). The inner structure of the sentence above then gives rise to the outer structure as follows:

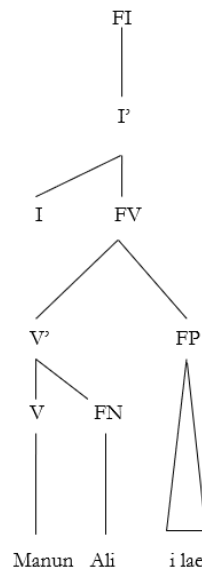


Data 3

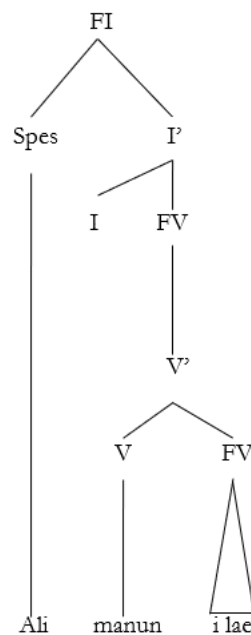
Ali manun i lae. (PD)

Ali drowned in the flood

FN *Ali* the sentence above it functions as the subject of an intransitive verb (V) *manun*. However, the semantic role of FN *Ali* a patient because it is an argument that has direct influence from the verb. Therefore, FN *Ali* acts as the O of intransitive verbs (V) *manun*. In other words, semantically the subject (S) behaves the same as the object (O), namely as an argument subjected to a verb so that it acts as a patient. Meanwhile, FP *i lae* tentative. Thus, the inner structure of the sentence above can be described as follows:



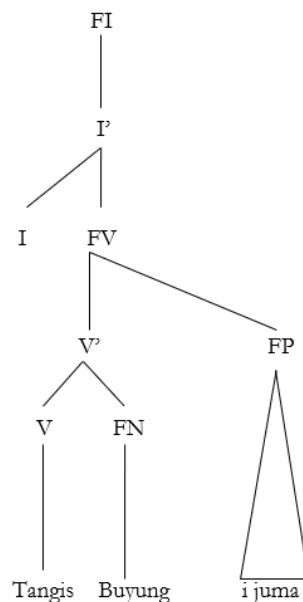
The diagram shows FN *Ali* under the control of V'. Matter This is because FN is directly affected words *manun*. FN *Ali* the sentence above it functions as a subject, but has a theta role (O) or the semantic role of patient. FN experiences argument displacement (a-movement) and occupies a position directly under the power of the inflectional phrase (FI). The inner structure of the sentence above then gives rise to the outer structure as follows:

**Data 4**

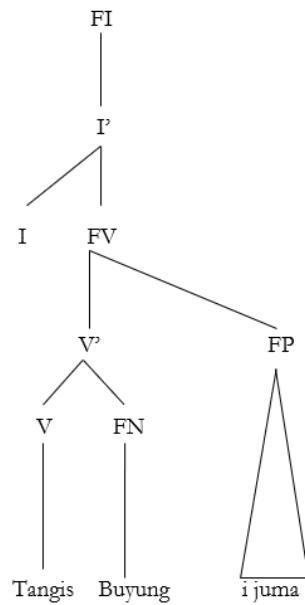
Buyung tangis i juma. (PD)

Buyung cried in the field.

FN *Buyung* in the sentence above it functions as the subject of the intransitive verb (V;) *tangis*. However, the semantic role of FN *Buyung* as a patient is an argument that is directly influenced by the verb. Therefore, FN *Buyung* also acts as the O of intransitive verbs (V;) *tangis*. In other words, semantically the subject (S) behaves the same as the object (O), namely as an argument subjected to the verb so that it acts as a patient. Meanwhile, F.P *i juma* tentative. Thus, the inner structure of the sentence above can be described as follows:



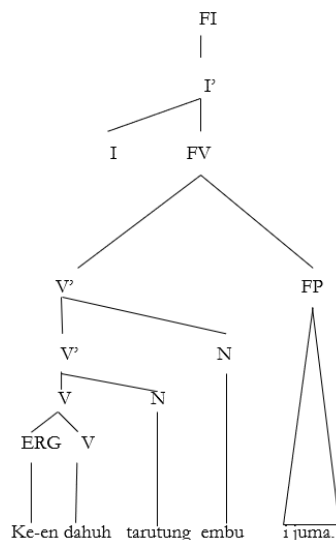
The diagram shows FN *Buyung* is under the control of V'. Matter This is because FN is directly affected by the verbcry. FN *Buyung* in the sentence above it functions as a subject, but has a theta role (O) or the semantic role of patient. FN experiences argument transfer (a-movement) and occupies a position directly under the power of the inflectional phrase (FI). The inner structure of the sentence above then gives rise to the outer structure as follows:

**Data 5**

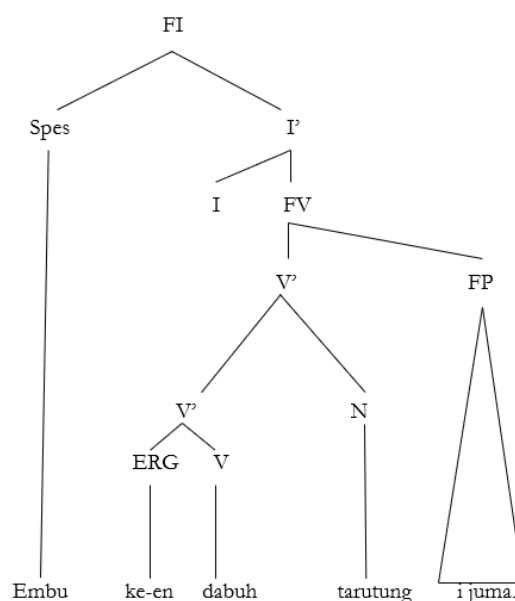
Embu kedabuh tarutung i juma. (PD)

Aunt durian fall

FN *Embu* in the sentence above it functions as the subject of an intransitive verb (V) *kedabuh*. However, the semantic role of FN *Embu* as a patient is an argument that is directly influenced by the verb. Therefore, FN *Embu* also acts as the O of intransitive verbs (V) *kedabuh*. In other words, semantically the subject (S) behaves the same as the object (O), namely as an argument subjected to the verb so that it acts as a patient. Meanwhile, FP *i juma* tentative. Thus, the inner structure of the sentence above can be described as follows:



The diagram shows FN *Embu* under the control of V'. Matter This is because FN is directly affected words *kedabuh*. Tarutung FN binds V to form a V' projection. FN *Embu* in the sentence above it functions as a subject, but has theta (0) role or the semantic role of patient. This is because words *dabuh* experienced a decrease in transitivity due to the addition of confix *ke-en*. FN experiences argument displacement (a-movement) and occupies a position directly under the power of the inflectional phrase (FI). The inner structure of the sentence above then gives rise to the outer structure as follows:



4. Conclusion

Even though it is of the accusative type, Pakpak Dairi language has speech with ergative characteristics. From data analysis, BPD ergative sentence markers come from morphological, lexical and syntactic processes. Morphological markers can include the addition of prefixes *ter-*, *mer-*, *ci-*, *-i*, suffix *-en*, and confiks *men-* dan *ke-en*. Lexical markers can be the use of ergative verbs, such as *endabuh*, *manun*, *tangis*, *matte*, *bessur*, *ciboni*, *kom*, *cender*, *ndungo*, *sengett*, *lupa*, *kundul*, and *sumasel*. However, by using the theory of mastery and binding (government and binding) It appears that the ergativity parameter of BPD is not the addition of affixes or certain lexical usage, but the treatment of FN (S)) the same as FN (O) and different from FN (A) with the S/O pivot. In other words, BPD also has an ergative construction in its speech.

References

- [1] Abbas, A., Kaharuddin, Jerniati, Musayyedah, Ratnawati, Aminah, Yulianti, A. I., Syamsurijal, & Thaba, A. (2022). Morphosyntactic Construction of Affixes and Clitics in Passive Sentences in Makassar Language. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(3), 13–31. <https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.803002>
- [2] Alwi, Hasan et.al. (1993). *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
- [3] Basaria, I. (2013). TIPOLOGI GRAMATIKAL DAN SISTEM PIVOT BAHASA PAKPAK-DAIRI. *LITERA*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.21831/ltr.v12i01.1327>
- [4] Basaria, I. (2019). Pakpak Dairi Language: Typology Study. In *Proceeding of The 4th International Seminar on Linguistics (ISOL-4)* (pp. 111–121). <https://doi.org/10.2478/9783110680027-016>
- [5] Dixon, R.M.W. (1979). *Basic Linguistic Theory Volume I*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [6] Handoko. (2015). “Analisis Kalimat Ergatif dalam Tajuk Berita Detik.com” *Jurnal Arbitrer*. Volume 2. Nomor 2 Oktober 2015: 135-153.
- [7] Harahap, A., Cristy, S., Chunliu, L., & Mulyadi. (2023). *Kalimat Subordinasi Bahasa Batak Toba: Kajian Tipologi Sintaksis Subordination Sentences in Batak Toba Language: Syntactic Typology Studies*. 6, 816–825. <https://doi.org/10.34007/jehss.v6i2.1945>
- [8] Jufriyal, J., Lely Refnita, & M. Affandi Arianto. (2024). Ergative and Antipassive Construction in Minangkabaunese: Are There? *Linguistik Indonesia*, 42(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.26499/li.v42i1.585>
- [9] Keraf, G. (1984). *Tata Bahasa Indonesia*. Ende: Nusa Indah.
- [10] Maha, R., Widayati, D., Ila, D., & Lubis, R. (2024). *Realization of Euphemism in Discourse of Environment about the Movement of the State's Capital: Critical Ecolinguistics Realization of Euphemism in Discourse of Environment about the Movement of the State's Capital: Critical Ecolinguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.32734/lwsa.v7i2.2063>
- [11] Mulyadi. (2000). “Struktur Semantis Verba Bahasa Indonesia”. *Linguistika*, 3: 40-52.
- [12] Mulyadi. (2010). Frasa Preposisi Bahasa Indonesia : Analisis X-Bar. *Jurnal Kajian Sastra*, Volume 3 Nomor 1: 1–12.
- [13] Novita, Shrerly dan Mulyadi. (2019). “Pembentukan Verba Ergatif dalam Bahasa Hokkien: Kajian Morfosintaksis” *Jurnal Linguistik*. Volume 50 Nomor 26: 8-17.
- [14] Refnita, L. (2021). *Passive and Ergative Constructions in Minangkabaunese: How are They Similar and Different?*
- [15] Song, J. J. (2001). *Linguistic Typology*. England: Pearson Education Limited.
- [16] Sudaryanto. (2015). *Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa. Pengantar Penelitian Wahana Kebudayaan Secara Linguistik*. Yogyakarta: Sanata Dharma University Press.
- [17] Verhaar, J. (2006). *Dasar-Dasar Linguistik Umum*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University.

- [18] Widayati, D., Lubis, R., Harahap, N., & Maha, R. F. (2024). Ecosophy in Pakpak Dairi community folklore. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.58256/ds5b0e15>