# THE STRUCTURE OF MAH MERI ADJECTIVE PHRASES

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## FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
## UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
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# ABSTRACT

Recent developments of linguistic theory has provided the researcher with many concrete frameworks for an analysis of adjective phrases in the Mah Meri language, an Aslian Mon Khmer Austroasiatic language family. This research intends to provide an overview of the theoretical assumptions in the studies of adjective phrases and a summary of prior work on the endangered Aslian languages namely Mah Meri. In this dissertation, the morphosyntactic properties of Mah Meri language are described by adopting the framework by Thorne (1993) and Chomsky (1993). It demonstrates that the adjective has grades and occurs as pre- and post- nominal modifiers of a noun phrase and becomes predicative to any subject in a sentence. Adjective phrases can merge above and below the head of noun. The multiple adjectives orderings in Mah Meri is investigated by looking into framework by Quirk et al (1985) which is build up from the semantic groupings of adjectives by Dixon (2004). By adopting Minimalist Framework, the placement of noun and adjectives in a sentence is investigated to find out the nominal word order of Mah Meri which is based on the proposed nominal word order of the Southeast Asia. The Minimalist approach is adopted by the researcher as it provides a framework to develop a syntactic theory that uses a few basic principles as possible.

# ABSTRAK

Perkembangan terkini teori linguistik dalam Program Minimalis telah menyediakan banyak kerangka asas yang kukuh untuk menganalisis frasa adjektif dalam bahasa Mah Meri, sejenis bahasa masyarakat orang asli dari keluarga bahasa Mon Khmer dan Austroasiatik. Kajian ini bertujuan memberi gambaran tentang teori-teori dalam kajian frasa adjektif dan ringkasan kepada penyelidikan-penyelidikan terdahulu yang dijalankan kepada bahasa-bahasa terancam masyarakat orang asli contohnya bahasa Mah Meri. Dalam kajian ini, aspek morfosintaktik digambarkan dengan menggunakan kerangka asas Thorne (1993) dan Chomsky (1993). Ia menunjukkan bahawa kata adjektif mempunyai darjah dan wujud sebagai pengubah di posisi sebelum dan selepas frasa nama dan menjadi predikatif untuk mana-mana subjek dalam ayat. Frasa adjektif boleh bergabung di bahagian atas dan di bawah kata nama. Susunan multi-adjektif di dalam bahasa Mah Meri juga dikaji dengan menggunakan kerangka asas oleh Quirk et al (1985) yang dijana dari kerangka asas pengumpulan adjektif dari aspek semantik oleh Dixon (2004). Menggunakan kerangka Minimalis, kedudukan kata nama dan kata adjektif di dalam ayat dikaji untuk mencari susunan perkataan asas bahasa Mah Meri berdasarkan susunan perkataan asas bahasa di Asia Tenggara. Kerangka Minimalis telah digunakan oleh penyelidik membekalkan satu kerangka untuk membangunkan teori sintaktik yang menggunakan beberapa prinsip asas.

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

# LIST OF FIGURES

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | : | Adjective |
| AdvP | : | Adverb Phrase |
| AP | : | Adjective Phrase |
| CL | : | Classifier |
| D | : | Determiner |
| DP | : | Determiner Phrase |
| G&B | : | Government and Binding |
| MP | : | Minimalist Program |
| N | : | Noun |
| Neg | : | Negative |
| NP | : | Noun Phrase |
| Num | : | Numeral |
| NumP | : | Numeral Phrase |
| Obj | : | Object |
| PL | : | Plural |
| P&P | : | Principles and Parameters |
| PP | : | Prepositional Phrase |
| Q | : | Quantifier |
| Ques | : | Question |
| QP | : | Quantifier Phrase |
| RC | : | Relative Clause |
| REDUP | : | Reduplicative |
| SG | : | Singular |

Spec    :    Specifier

Subj    :    Subject

TNS    :    Tense

TP    :    Tense Phrase

XP    :    X Phrase

# LIST OF APPENDICES

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Every language has its own unique characteristics that maybe parallel or contrary to the other languages. The adjective phrase (AP) is one of the elements in the internal structure of the noun phrase (NP). Its distribution in the NP clause varies distinctively across languages. The Mah Meri AP has not been explored in any great detail in the syntactic literature. The differences and similarities of the structure of the Mah Meri language with other languages of the Southeast Asia will be analyzed through the Mah Meri morphosyntactic properties, the Mah Meri multiple adjectives orderings and the Mah Meri nominal word order as proposed by Tuong Hung Nguyen (2004, page 143).

## 1.1    Background to the Study

The Mah Meri language is one of Aslian groups in the Peninsular Malaysia. The term Aslian was first coined by Gerard Diffloth in the 1970's and it was brought up in the literature by two authors (Diffloth 1974; Benjamin 1976) after being previously known by many other names by a few authors (as cited in Benjamin, 2011, page 5). The term 'aborigine' is used to represent the Aslian people in the Peninsular Malaysia while the term 'indigenous' is used to describe the indigenous people of Sabah and Sarawak which belong to the Austronesian group.

The official language of Malaysia is the Malay language, an Austronesian language. Since there are many Malay varieties in all states in Malaysia, the official language is the standard variety of Malay, it is known as Standard Malay. It is used in formal settings and is regarded as the language of the media, government, administration and all levels of education.

18

However, due to the great contact of both languages, the syntactic characteristics of the Mah Meri language are found to be similar to the SVO simple structure of the Malay language (Choi, 2006, page 143). Thus, this research investigates the Mah Meri word order based on previous word order research across the language families in Southeast Asia.
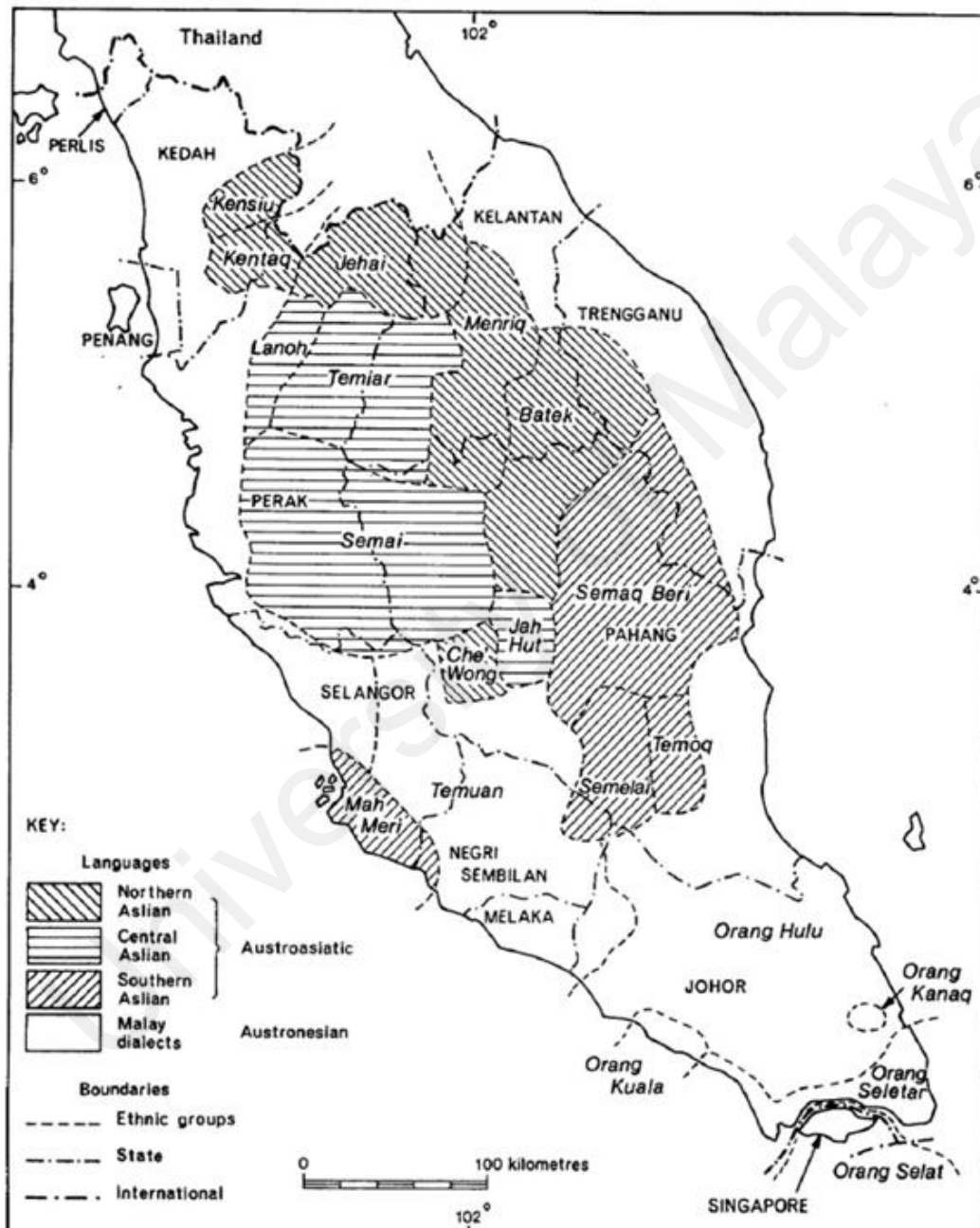


**Figure 1.1: Map of Aslian Groups in Malaysia**

(Source: Benjamin, 2011, page 9)

The Aslian languages involve approximately twenty Mon-Khmer Austroasiatic languages spoken in the Peninsular Malaysia and the Isthmian parts of Thailand, and are spoken across Southeast Asia and Eastern India (Stevens, Kruspe, Hajek, 2009). In Peninsular Malaysia, the Aslian languages fall broadly into three or four major subdivisions: the Northern Aslian, the Central Aslian and the Southern Aslian (See Figure 1.1). The Mah Meri language belongs to the Southern Aslian group or known as Senoi (Werner, 1974), one of the three major subdivisions which are classified by the lexical similarity in the 27 Aslian language varieties in the Peninsular Malaysia (Benjamin, 2011, page 10). Thus it is a Mon-Kmer type of Senoi (as cited in Asmah, 2006, page 5). The Mah Meri language is spoken by a group of 2200 indigenous people (JHEOA, 2009).

Studies on the Aslian languages have started in the early twentieth century by many researchers (Schmidt 1901, Blagden 1906, Pinnow 1959). Little has been done on the Aslian studies then. After 40 years, only right after Iskandar Carey produced a text-book of Temiar (Carey 1961) that many linguists started to produce and publish linguistics research on the Aslian languages. A few Malaysian linguists have produced short studies on the Aslian languages, namely Asmah Haji Omar (1963, 1976) and Nik Safiah and Ton (1979). Apart from a few undergraduate exercises and Master's theses on the Aslian languages, there were no researches on the Aslian language during 1980s and 1990s by the Malaysian linguists (as cited in Benjamin, 2011). In 2006, Asmah Haji Omar edited 20 short linguistics studies on the Mah Meri language. Yap Ngee Thai (2009) analysed the Temiar morphology and Norizan Razak researched the Semai and the Kensiu groups (as cited in Benjamin, 2011).

## 1.2     Basic Constituent Order

Asmah (2006: 7) stated that the Mah Meri language displays an open system that allows many elements from foreign languages to be incorporated in its language phonologically, morphologically, syntactically and also in its vocabulary. The most prominent indication would be through the vocabulary. At the lexical level, the vocabulary on numbers that exist in the Mah Meri language is only one to three. The rest were taken from the Malay language. According to Norafidah Tajuddin, Noor Aishah Salleh, Roshidah Hassan (2006) in their study on the adjectives found that there were many similarities in the adjectives of the Mah Meri people with the surrounding people of the Malay language and this was due to the language assimilation and borrowing.

Similarly, Umaiyah Haji Umar (2012: 115-116) in her journal stated that due to the influence by the dominant language of Malaysia which is the Standard Malay, the Mah Meri language has lost its words for colours as well as other adjectives at the lexical level.  In terms of morphology, the Mah Meri language is an isolating language with the SVO word order. As an isolating language, the Mah Meri language lacks the overt markings of case, number, gender, tense or finite/non-finite verb status.  The head noun in the Mah Meri language can appear at the right and left edge of the noun phrase. It can be preceded by the pre-nominal modifiers (quantifiers, numerals, classifiers, measure phrases) and in addition to the head noun; it can be followed by a number of post-nominal modifiers (adjectives, possessors, prepositional modifiers, relative clauses, and demonstratives).

According to Asmah (2014:77), the Mah Meri sentence structures are found to be more or less similar to simple sentence structures in spoken Malay. As a result of contact between Mah Meri and Malay, the SVO structure is often used but on the whole the structures of sentences remain fluid.

**(1)** **/siti    kabe kədʒaʔ nake/**

Siti    do    work    that

S    V    O

*'Siti does the work'.*


**(2)** **/əʔəd       pet    mak   ŋki/**

I        beat   man    him

S pron    V      O      pron

*'I beat them'.*


**(3) /uri            ke    mak   ke    kateik/**

Placenta        that   person that   cut

O            S         V

*'The person cuts the placenta'.*


**(4)** **/ŋki  kənon       əʔəd/**

He   child        I

*'He is my child'.*

(Asmah, 2014, page 77-78)


According to Nguyen (2004:143) and Simpson (2005:1), there are four main nominal word orders for languages in Southeast Asia. The nominal word orders for Malay and Mah Meri are the following:

(a) Malay                    : Num CL N A Dem

(b) Aslian/ Mon Khmer        : N A Num CL Dem

However, sentence (5) and (6) show that Mah Meri word order is similar with Malay word order.

(5)    Malay

**/dua  həlai  kəmeja      puteh        ini/**
two    CL     N-shirt      Adj-white    Dem-this
'*these two white shirts*'.

(Jones, 1970: 1)

(6)    Mah Meri

**/mui  həlai  badʒuʔ      putih        nake/**
One    CL     N-shirt      Adj-white    Dem-this
'*this one white shirt*'.

(Asmah, 2014: 106)

The nominal word orders proposed by Nguyen (2004:143) and Simpson (2005:1) show significant differences for both languages but since there were similarities in sentence (5) and sentence (6), the researcher would like to investigate further on the nominal word order for Mah Meri language. The similarities might be due to close contact between both languages and borrowing of words from Malay language into Mah Meri language.

## 1.3    Statement of the Problem

According to Benjamin (1976), the aborigines' languages which are from the larger group of the Austroasiatics languages were in the danger of extinction since the number of speakers of the languages is small (as cited in Fazal Mohamed, 2009). Currently, there are approximately 1200 Mah Meri people in five villages on the island (Reita Rahim, 2007). Based on the UNESCO Interactive Atlas 2011, the language of the Mah Meri people has been

identified as one of the severely endangered languages in Malaysia. According to Coluzzi (2005:7), the Mah Meri people are a close-knit community where the heritage language dominates all low and medium domains. Nevertheless, among the Mah Meri people who have moved permanently out of their communities, language maintenance is affected and the second generation tend to speak Malay or in some cases English rather than their heritage language.

There are a few factors that have become the catalyst to language shift or loss in Mah Meri language. First, according to Kamila Ghazali (2005:12) is the close distance of their community to the city center which is located only 103 kilometers away from the city. Thus, increase their contacts with the mainstream community (in this case, Malays) in their daily activities. And it becomes even more difficult, if not impossible, when people speaking one minority language get married to partners speaking other languages, as this normally results in the adoption of the national language or, in some cases, English as the language of the home.

Second, aspirations of better economic status. Most Mah Meri are farmers, working in their own orchards or in the palm oil plantations that have replaced the original mangrove forests. Some of those who have decided to give up agriculture and to find a job elsewhere, particularly young people, are able to commute from their home villages to the towns in Selangor (Mah Meri) where more jobs are available. Some Mah Meri have shifted to salaried jobs outside their homeland, but there are still a few fishermen even though pollution has interfered with the source of their living. If people leave their original territory where the local language dominates, or if they migrate to places where other languages are predominant, it becomes very difficult to maintain the ethnic language (Coluzzi, 2016, page 45).

Third, awareness of the importance of education. The level of education increases with each new generation. According to the Malaysian Department of Orang Asli Development (Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli, JAKOA) officials, the opportunities for education are similar for both Aslian people and non-Aslian people. Until 2010, the JAKOA was known as the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli, JHEOA). Here JAKOA and JHEOA are used interchangeably, as appropriate. All children of the Aslian people have access to compulsory primary education and at Sungai Ruil for example, a hostel is provided for the children of the families living in the interior. All these bring impact of the Malay language into their native language. The Mah Meri language is currently spoken by the parents and the elder generations of the Mah Meri people (JHEOA, 2006). While the children may understand the language, the parents do not speak the language with them because the language used in education and other official setting is the standard Malay. The Mah Meri community is considered to be the most progressive of all the Aslian groups and a number of Mah Meri people have graduated from the institutions of higher learning (Asmah Haji Omar, 2014, page 23). The Mah Meri people are aware with the importance of education for the future of their young generation. Thus, speaking in the standard Malay with their children at home has become a priority.

There were a few linguistics researches done on the Mah Meri language at Kg Bukit Bangkong, Sepang. One is the research on the Mah Meri language by a group of researchers from the University of Malaya in 2006 with the guidance of Asmah Haji Omar, researching on the overall linguistics aspects of the Mah Meri language. Another was done by Mary Stevens, Nicole Kruspe and John Hajek (2009: 271) who did the research on the phonetic analysis of the language and Kruspe (2009) has published a dictionary on the Mah Meri language. However, no research is done at the Mah Meri settlement at Pulau Carey where this

study takes place. In addition, this study concerns with the lack of syntactical analysis documentation in the Mah Meri language.

## 1.4 Research Scope

This study is aimed to provide an analysis of the properties of Mah Meri adjective phrase for Mah Meri language use and to find out the nominal word order of the Mah Meri language since there is no study on the nominal word order of Mah Meri language that offers the insight yet.

## 1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are the following:

1.5.1    To analyse the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri adjectives.

1.5.2    To analyse the multiple adjective orderings of the Mah Meri language

1.5.3    To analyze the nominal word order/s based on the Mah Meri Adjective Phrase (AP) structures using the proposed nominal word orders of Southeast Asian language.

## 1.6 Research Questions

a)    What are the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri adjectives?

b)    What are the orderings of the multiple adjectives of the Mah Meri language?

c)    Based on the proposed nominal word order of the Southeast Asian language, what

is/are nominal word order/s of the Mah Meri language?

## 1.7    Significance of Study

This paper aims to understand the Mah Meri language and learn about the range of variation within human language using the Chomskyan theory of linguistics universal. The research intended to improve the Mah Meri language documentation by morphological, syntactical and semantical studies by using the framework of Quirk (1985), Thorne (1993), Chomsky (1993), and Dixon (2004) and contribute to the study of Austroasiatics linguistics particularly in the fields of syntax, morphology, semantic and typology.

There is significant difference between Malay and Aslian Mon-Khmer nominal word orders based on the proposed word orders by Nguyen (2004:145):

(i)  Malay            : Num CL N A Dem
(ii) Aslian Mon-Khmer: N A Num CL Dem

Thus this provides the significance of this study as researcher wants to investigate if this difference  as mentioned by Nguyen (2004:145) is maintained in Mah Meri language of Peninsular Malaysia or has the nominal word order of the Mah Meri language been influenced by the Malay word structure.

The findings of the research could be used to better understand language family trees and fill the gaps in the Austroasiatics language family trees. The findings from this research might help to contribute to the preservation of the endangered language and offer assistance in creating the writing system of the endangered language for the betterment of the new generations of linguist and the Mah Meri generation.

## 1.8    Limitations of Study

The limitation of this study is that it is a primary research, not an in-depth research. The size of the data is small unlike the corpus data which is bigger. This is because the data must be gathered through interview sessions to get perfectly structured sentences as advised by Chomsky (1993). Unlike corpus data which is big in size but not perfectly structured since it is taken in the natural settings.

## 1.9    Key Concepts

### 1.9.1    The Minimalist Program

A syntactic theory that uses as few principal notions as possible developed by Chomsky (Radford, 2009, page 393).

### 1.9.2    Universal Grammar

The universal part of grammar assumed by Chomsky that a child is born with an innate knowledge of grammar (Radford, 2009, page 408).

### 1.9.3    Morphosyntactic

A morphosyntactic property is a grammatical property which affects (or is affected by) relevant aspects of morphology and syntax (Radford, 2009, page 394).

### 1.9.4    Lexical/ Substantive Categories

A substantive is a category which includes noun (N) , verb (V), adjective (ADJ), adverb (ADV) and preposition  (P) (Radford, 2009, page 392).

### 1.9.5    Prenominal /Postnominal

Prenominal adjectives modify the noun thus placed in front of the noun. While, postnominal adjectives is one which is positioned after a noun (Radford, 2009, page 399).

### 1.9.6    Attributive/Predicative

Adjectives in Mah Meri have two primary functions which are attributive and predicative. Adjectives function as an attributive when they modify nominals as signified by its [+N] categorial feature (Nik Safiah Karim 1995:104-105).   In the sentential construction, adjectives function as predicative as signified by its [+V] categorial feature. The predicative adjective is in complementary distribution with the verb when it takes the place of the non-existent verb in any given sentence (Jubilado, 2010, page 101).

### 1.9.7    Representation

A syntactic structure represented using tree diagram (Radford, 2009, page 402).

# CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores the important aspects of the research which are distributed in several parts. The first part involves the pertinent history of generative linguistics and the theoretical framework and literature related to the Minimalist Program (MP). The second part discusses the adjective classification history and theories. The last part of the chapter explains on the word order of the Austroasiatic and the Austronesian languages which belong to the larger group of the Southeast Asian languages. Each part in the chapter will unravel the previous researches done on the topic and put forward the important aspects that are related to this research.

## 2.1 Minimalist Program (MP)

One of the frameworks that will be used in the analysis of this research is the Minimalist Program. There are many basic concepts used in this programme. Many of those are from the previous major theory of the generative linguistics but have been revised to suit the Minimalist Program. The objective of the Minimalist Program is that a syntactic theory should use as few principal notions as possible.

## 2.2 Organisation of the Thesis

The dissertation contains five chapters and is organized as follows. The first chapter presents background material on Mah Meri. It sketches some basic characteristics of the Mah Meri language and then provides a detailed description of nominal word order facts in Mah Meri. It will be argued that although Mah Meri people still maintain the use of native words for adjective, there are considerably high degree of Malay adjectives loanwords. Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework adopted in this dissertation. The review discusses several

major analyses that have focused on the structure of the Adjective Phrase (AP). This chapter also gives a historical overview on the literature of adjective classes. Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in the research. Chapter 4 presents an analysis of the Adjective phrase. It also extends the proposed analysis for Mah Meri to account for word order possibilities across various language groups of the Southeast Asia. It will be demonstrated that the four attested nominal word orders in those language groups can be derived from a single underlying structure. Chapter 5 summarizes the findings and set directions for future research.

## 2.2.1    History of Generative Linguistics: EST TO MP

Chomsky introduced the theory of Generative Grammar by his publication of 'Syntactic Structures' in 1957. Generative Grammar refers to a particular approach to the study of syntax. According to Radford (2009: 406), Generative Grammar aims at describing the native speaker's tacit grammatical knowledge, which reflects his infinite productive capacity, by a system of rules specify all of the well-formed or grammatical, sentences of a language. The hypothesis of generative grammar is that language is a structure of the human mind. The properties of generative grammar arise from an innate universal grammar which ultimately can be used to describe all human language. According to Waria (2012: 1), Chomsky believed that there would be considerable similarities between languages' deep structures, and these structures would reveal properties, common to all languages, which were concealed by their surface structures. Generative Grammar since its inception in 1950s, has been constantly and dynamically developing and it has undergone numerous revisions.

**Table 2.1 : The Development Generative Linguistics**

| Years of Onset | Major Theory | Primary Literature |
|---|---|---|
| 1957 | Transformational Generative Grammar | Syntactic Structures |
| 1965 | Standard Theory | Aspects of Theory of Syntax |
| 1970 | Extended Standard Theory | Remarks on Nominalization |
| 1981 | Government and Binding Theory | Lectures on Government and Binding |
| 1993 | Minimalist Program | A Minimalist Program for Linguistics Theory |

(Source: Jubilado, 2009, p.66)

Table 2.1 traces the development of Chomskyan or generative linguistics. In 1957, Noam Chomsky published 'Syntactic Structures' (SS) for Transformational Grammar (TG) theoretical framework in which he developed the idea of Kernel sentences. According to Wu (2011: 396), kernel sentence is a basic irreducible set of simple structure produced by the Phrase Structure Rules of a grammar. The output of these rules is a Kernel string. 'Kernel' is a key term in this model just as kernel sentences were the most basic structural elements in the early works of Chomsky. They are the basic elements in deep structure. This involves the four types of functional class in transformational-generative grammar. All languages can be transferred in their deep structures because they share the 'kernels'.

The (SS) model shows the Kernel sentence with a series of transformational rules. For example, compound sentences in which two clauses are coordinated.

Simple sentence 1 :    The student borrowed the book.

Simple sentence 2 :    The student went home.

Kernel string      :    The student borrowed the book and went home.

                                                    (Waria, 2012, page 2).

The stages continued with the development of The Standard Theory. In 1965 Chomsky published his 'Aspects of the theory of Syntax' in which he summarizes the development of TG theory from its beginning to 1965 and formalizes the version of the theory which is generally referred to as the Standard Theory. According to Wu (2011:397) the main difference between **SS** model and Aspect Model is the insertion of (semantic component) into the theoretical framework of TG grammar. Deep structure is an abstract level of structural organization in which all the elements determining structural and semantic interpretation are represented.

By 1972 more revisions in the model took place and this led to a renaming of the Standard Theory to The Extended Standard Theory.This new insight generative grammar was presented by Ray Jackendoff (1972). He proposed that (transformations should be applied without having to mention semantic information such as referentiality within a table of coreference, the use of index markers, etc (Boskovic and Lasnik, 2007). This could be done, by changing the kind of information allowed in the deep structure in the Standard Theory. This introduction of abstract elements into the deep structure of sentences marked an important turning point in linguistic theory. It led to the emergence of Government and Binding (GB) Theory.

Government and binding is a theory of syntax developed by Chomsky in 1981. According to Radford (2009: 395), 'Government' is an abstract syntactic relation. The main application of the government relation concerns the assignment of case. 'Binding', deals with the referents of anaphors, pronouns, and referential expressions. In his paper 'Lectures on Government and Binding', Chomsky presented The Principles and Parameters (P &P) approach. According to this theory the syntax of a language is described in accordance with general principles (i.e. abstract rules or grammars) and specific parameters (i.e. markers, switches). This theory stresses on the point that the grammatical principles underlying languages are innate and fixed, and the differences among the languages are characterized in terms of parameter settings in the brain. This indicates the fact that a child learning a language needs only acquire the necessary lexical items (words, grammatical morphemes, and idioms), and (the appropriate parameter settings). According to Waria (2012: 2), within this framework, the goal of linguistics is to identify all of the principles and parameters that are universal to human language (Universal Grammar). As such, any attempt to explain the syntax of a particular language using a principle or parameter is cross-examined with the evidence available in other languages.

The most recent version of the generative enterprise is The Minimalist Program. Through this new platform of research, he inspires the generative linguist to find better data, arguments, and analyses (Boskovic and Lasnik, 2007). The new platform has already protracted discussions among practitioners of generative linguistics and has developed further since its inception in 1993. The Minimalist Program (MP) is considered as another version of Government and Binding (G&B) or The Principles and Parameters Approach (P&P). Some basic concepts in G&B are either totally eliminated or revised such as X-Bar Theory, Case Theory and others.

**2.2.2    MP Theoretical Framework**

**2.2.2.1   X- Bar Theory**

The X- Bar Theory constrains every phrasal structure available in any language. This theory holds the idea that for every phrase there is a head X. This head projects to and has the maximal projection of XP (X-phrase). It has the intermediate phrase known as X-Bar. The optional specifier Y has the status of sisterhood towards X', the intermediate structure which dominates both the head and the complement. The phrasal C is the complement and has the structural relation of sisterhood towards the head x. To clarify, observe in (7), (8) and the tree diagram in (9) as follow:

(7) **XP $\longrightarrow$ Y, X'**

(8)  **X' $\longrightarrow$ X, C**

(9)
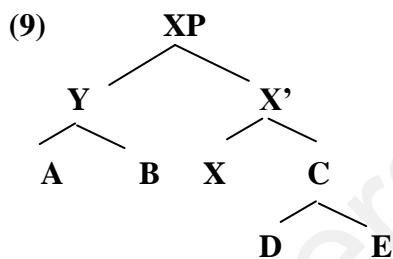


The tree diagram shown in (9) shows that the terminal nodes D and E are immediate constituents of C, a non-terminal node which also contains immediately the sisters D and E, Going higher up the tree, the non-terminal node C is the sister of the terminal node X. The immediate constituents X and C are sisters which are immediately contained by their mother X'. X' is the sister of Y whose daughters are the terminal nodes A and B. The immediate constituents and sisters Y and X' are immediately contained by their mother, XP (Radford, 2009: 502).

Generally speaking, there is a one on one correspondence between lexical categories and phrasal categories. The lexical serve as the head of the phrasal categories. These heads determine the properties of the phrasal categories. Regulating the representation of the phrasal categories is handled by the X-Bar Principles. All types of phrases either headed lexically or functionally make use of X-Bar Theory for the representation of structures. All the lexical categories such as noun (N), verb(V), adjective (A) and preposition (P) are called substantives which bear morphosyntactic features which serves as the building blocks in the computation. Like other natural language, Mah Meri exhibits phrasal categories headed by the substantives functors. The feature values of lexical and functional categories are specified as shown on Table 2.2:

**Table 2.2 : Feature Values of Lexical and Functional Categories**

| Lexical Category | Functional Category |
|---|---|
| Noun (N) | Pronoun (PRN) |
| Verb (V) | Auxiliary (AUX) |
| Adjective (A) | Determiner (D) |
| Preposition (P) | Comp, I, Particle |

(Jubilado, 2009, p.53)

The representation of the phrase structures involves the use of labelled-tree diagrams, bar notations, categories, and levels of projections. Phrases and sentences are built out of constituents by the binary operation called Merge. Constituents possess syntactic relations to each other in the structure. To show these syntactic relations, tree diagrams are used to

36

represent the structure of constituency. Such tree diagrams are called phrase markers. At the bottom of the tree are terminal nodes which refer to the categorical constituents such as Noun (N), Verb (V), Adjective (Adj), Preposition (P), Determiner (D), etc. These terminal nodes have single lexical item (LI) under them. In terms of containment relations, these terminal nodes are immediately contained by the non-terminal nodes such as Noun Phrase (NP), Verb Phrase (VP), Adjective Phrase (AP), Prepositional Phrase (PP), Determiner Phrase (DP), etc.

In the current parlance of MP, the cartography of the sentential structure consists of three layers. The first layer, called the predicational layer, is thought to be concerned with the argument and thematic relations as presented by the VP which deals entirely on the lexical semantics of the event or state in accordance to the verb. The second layer, called the tense layer, presents the temporal context of the predication. This layer is related to the Tense Phrase (TP) which is also closely related to the notion of subject hood. The third layer is that of the informational layer which is the outermost layer and concerns itself with the notions beyond TP, hence the left periphery of the clause. It is this layer that the notions of finiteness, negation, mood, focus, topic and illocution inter alia are given the weight of attention in relation to the real world. The three layers of the syntactic structure correspond to the tripartite structure of the clause (Carnie 2008:221-222).

In the MP parlance, the concept of phrasal headedness follows the Head Hypothesis as expounded in Haegeman (2006:102) which states that the category of a constituent is determined by the category of its head. The hypothesis means that the constituent formed by merging two Lis is determined by the most prominent member in the merging. It follows the idea that the head has its maximal projection which carries its property. Encapsulating the

notions head and maximal projection, Lasnik, Oriagereka and Boeckx (2005:47) state that if X is the head of maximal projection XP, the property of XP is the property of X. XP is also called a phrasal category wherein it does not project any further. Phrasal categories are usually represented using tree diagrams which follow binary branching as stated in Binary Composition Hypothesis by Haegeman (2006:105) that all syntactic structure is binary. Considering the statements, all phrasal categories are given representation using the X-Bar format. The succeeding paragraphs discuss the instantiation of the Adjective Phrase category in Mah Meri.

### 2.2.2.2 The grammar model

The idea of the minimalist program is to develop a theoretical mechanism that uses as few basic principles as possible in its approach. The grammar in the minimalist program is represented by the language faculty which is related to the human mind. Chomsky stated that here are two categories of a language. One is competence, another is performance. A native speaker has grammatical competence in his native language. He also believes that the language of a native speaker can be varied based on performance, which is what a person says on a given context. The language can be imperfect based on the performance errors such as occasional slips of the tongue, drunkenness or misinterpretation of what others say. Such errors definitely cannot measure the language competence of a native speaker. Therefore, syntax analysis is the study of grammatical competence of a speaker and the nature of grammatical competence lies in the native speaker's intuitions about the grammaticality of his native language even though he did not know specifically the formulae to form those sentences (Radford, 2002, page 2-3).

Lexicon

↓

Numeration

↓

Computational System

↙  ↘

Logical Form  (C-I system)          Phonological Form (A-P system)
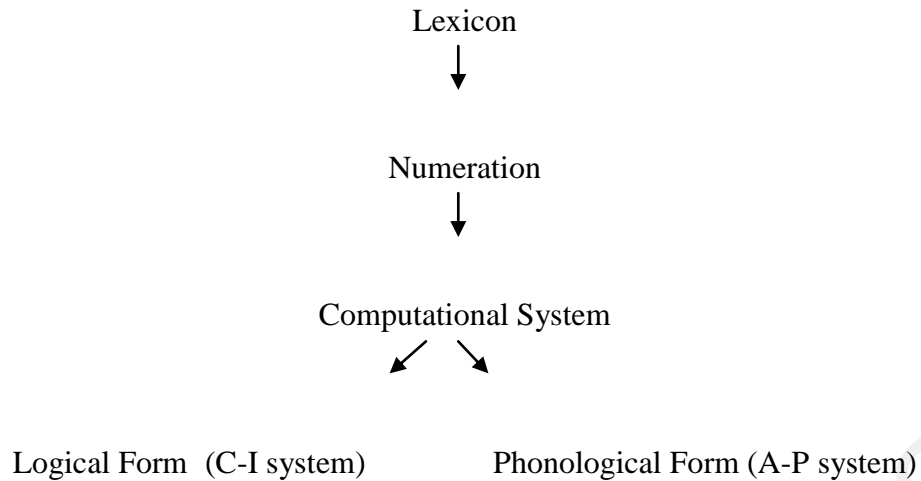
**Figure 2.1: The Basic Representation of the Minimalist Model of Grammar**

The lexicon is composed of substantive categories. Numeration draws lexical items from the Lexcon. From this point, the operation Select applies to the drawn lexical items in the Numeration to enter into the computational system where the syntactic operation Merge, Copy and Move apply producing syntactic objects, As stated above, Merge is the syntactic operation that combines lexical items to form a syntactic object. By combining the syntactic operation Copy and Merge, this results to the syntactic object which is in return merged with other objects in the structure. The syntactic operation Move leaves a trace behind. All the products of these syntactic operations are all syntactic objects. The Logical Form (LF) is where the syntactic object interfaces with the computational- Intentional (C-I) systems. The Phonological Form (PF) is where the syntactic object interfaces with the Computational-Intentional (C-I) systems. The Phonological Forms (PF) is where the syntactic object interfaces with the Articulatory-Perceptual (A-P) systems. The derivational is successful if it converges. If not, it crashes. (Adger, 2003 as cited in Jubilado, 2010, page 8).

### 2.2.3 Studies on Minimalist Program in Malaysian and Other Austroasiatics Languages

Many studies and researches on various Austroasiatics and Austronesian languages have employed Minimalist Program in its analyses. According to Fazal Mohamed Sultan (2009), in his syntactic research on the structure of Noun Phrase (NP) of the Austroasiatic Aslian group, Bateq, he found out what were the modifiers existed in the language and their positions in the NP of Bateq language. He analysed the language using the Minimalist Program and applied the X-Bar theory. In (2010: 411) Fazal Mohamed Sultan had researched on another Austroasiatic Aslian language, Mendriq. Using the syntactic analyses, he found that the Mendriq language's property possesses present tense feature as its foundation in every sentence as it has no auxiliary lexical aspect before its verb.

Fazal Mohamed Mohamed Sultan (2011) continued with another research entitled, The Syntactic Structure of a Noun Phrase (Austroasiatic vs. Austronesia). His research analysed the differences on the word order by the Aslian group of Kensiu (Austroasiatics) and Malay (Austronesian) since both have come into direct contact as Malay language is the national language of Malaysia and the language used by native children in school. Due to this, it is vital for us to be aware of the differences of word order between the two stocks, especially at the phrasal and sentential levels. The analysis of the two languages reveals that there are differences in the words that follow and precede nouns. Other than that, there are also differences in the classifiers and the type of classifiers which are used in both languages. There are words similar to those in Malay even though they are from a different language. Finally, a syntactic structure that can accommodate the differences between the languages has been proposed to solve the distinguishing characteristics of the two languages undertaken in this study.

Rogayah A. Razak (1995) in her book, The Syntax and Semantics of Quantification in Malay had introduced the linguistics studies on Malay Syntax by using the Government and Binding Theory in her writings. She argued that there exist the verb /ada/ 'is' and /ia/ 'is' + focus marker /lah/ = /adalah/ 'is', /ialah/ 'is' in the D-structures of the sentences with AP predicated. She presented the distribution of the verbs in the following sentences.

> **(10)  Amin   kaya**
>    Amin   rich
>    **'Amin is rich'**
>
> **(11)  Adakah Amin kaya?**
>    Is      Amin  rich?
>    **'Is Amin rich?'**

Jubilado (2009: 54), had presented an in depth research on the MP as well as the Malay syntactic structures by incorporating the Phase-based Theory and Feature Checking Theory. He also compared the Malay language to another Austronesian language, which was the Phillipine and found that both were different in terms of their morphosyntactic properties.

## 2.3      Adjective Classes

### 2.3.1      The Universality of Adjectival Category

Dixon (2004) suggests that adjective class be used for a word class that is grammatically distinct from noun class and verb class. In some languages the class has only one of these functions. According to Hajek (2004), the adjectives in European languages usually are noun-like, while other languages tend to have verb-like behaviour. It has sometimes been suggested that having an adjective class is not a universal property of human languages. In an earlier study (Dixon 1977, 1982) opined that some languages have no adjective class at all. Dixon (2004) pointed out that adjectives had been said to be absent from Totonac languages but, applying the principles of adjective classess outlined in the book, he provides a few of criteria

for distinguishing adjectives as a separate class. Kruspe (1999) did not mention adjectives in her Ph.D. dissertation on Semelai. Rather, she recognizes adjectives as a well-defined sub-class of verbs. Some reputable scholars have stated that adjectives cannot be distinguished from verbs in Korean; the indisputable status of an adjective class in this language is demonstrated by Sohn (2001). There had been a tradition of saying that Chinese has no adjective class; clear and unequivocal criteria are now apparent for the recognition of 'adjective' as a major word class in Mandarin (as cited in Dixon, 2004, 180).

In a classic study, Alpher (1991) investigates the basis for recognising a class of adjectives in *Yir-Yoront*, an Australian language which lacks noun classes/genders. There is no obvious clear-cut criterion to distinguish adjectives from nouns, the two types of word having virtually the same morphological and syntactic properties. Alpher is, however, able to suggest five fairly subtle properties in which nouns and adjectives differ. One he labels grading: 'Both "nouns" and "adjectives" occur with postposed *morr* "real, actual, very". With common nouns, *morr* has the sense "actual present-day", as in *kay morr* "the present-day (steel) axe", or "real and not imaginary", as in *warrchuwrr morr* "a real woman (not one in a dream)". With "adjectives" susceptible of grading, however, *morr* means "very": *karntl morr* "very big", *wil morr* "very bitter". Such adjectives, moreover, can be quantified with adpositions like *mangl* "a little", as in *mangl-karnti* "a little bit big", *wil+mangl* "a little bit bitter"; common nouns lack this possibility' (as cited in Dixon, 2004, 62 ).

The modern discipline of linguistics has been centred on the study of European languages, and is generally undertaken by speakers of European languages. As a consequence, if a language has an adjective class, then it should be similar to the adjective class in European languages; that is, functioning directly as the modifier of a noun, and showing morphological categories similar to those of nouns (number, case, etc.), quite different from the categories

applying to verbs (tense, aspect, mood, etc.). This has undoubtedly played a role in the failure to recognize an adjective class. Oceanic languages typically have an adjective class similar in grammatical properties to the verb class. There is an oft-repeated tradition of saying that in Chinese 'all adjectives are verbs' (see, among many others, Hockett 1958, Lyons 1968, Li and Thompson 1981, Schachter 1985). Even when a linguist does provide criteria for distinguishing adjectives from verbs (in a language where adjectives can function as intransitive predicate), there is often an unwillingness to use the label 'adjectives', simply because these adjectives are so different in grammatical properties from the familiar kind of adjective occurring in European languages.

### 2.3.2    Identifying the Adjective Classes

The adjective category across different languages is a subject which continues to generate lively debate among linguists. Dixon and Aikhenvald (2006) and Baker (2003) produced major works which argued against the suggestion in traditional linguistics that not all languages have a distinct word class 'adjective'. Languages including Chinese (Li and Thompson 1981), Tagalog (Gil 1991), Northern Sotho (Van Wyk 1979) and Korean (Yu 1998) have all been suggested to have no such grammatical category. There are, however, strong arguments against this claim in each of these languages, with Sohn (2006, 1999) particularly determined about the existence of a large, distinct adjective class in Korean (as cited in Flanagan, 2014).

There have been countless attempts to account for the ordering restrictions of adjectives in English, with many theorists focussing on the semantic content of adjectives (Dixon 1982, Scott 2002 among others). The work of Bache (1978) is particularly important as he examined not only on semantic-based ordering, but also on the function of each adjective. I

use the term function to refer to the use of an adjective to specify, classify or simply describe a noun (after Bache, 1978) (as cited in Flanagan, 2014, page ).

As for adjectives classification by Malay linguists, Za'ba (1940, 1958), Mees (1969), Arbak Othman (1981) dan Nik Safiah Karim (1995) have categorised adjectives as a word class on its own since it has its own criteria and is different from other word classes. Marsden (1812) categorised it under noun class as adjectives always turn up with the noun phrase, meanwhile Abdullah Hassan (1986) dan Asmah Haji Omar (1993) categorised it under verb class because it has predicative function (as cited in Norliza Haji Jamaluddin, 2011).

The adjective class differs from noun and verb classes in many ways. Noun and verb classes are almost always large and open but the adjective class shows considerable variation in size. Many languages have an open class of adjectives but others have a small, closed class. The smallest classes may have just three or four members. Typically, there may be 10-20 monomorphemic adjectives. Other languages have larger classes but they are closed; that is, no new lexemes, in the form of loans, may be added to them (Flanagan, 2014).

### 2.3.3    Morphosyntactic variation in classifying adjectives

According to Boleda, Badia dan Battle (2004), "morphology alone is not sufficient for a reliable classification because it is by no means a one-to-one relationship". Thus concerning the adjectives classification, structural linguists have given importance on the use of syntactical analysis in analyzing the class (as cited in Norliza Haji Jamaluddin, 2011)

Much of the work done on the adjective class concerns the variability of the lexical category in terms of morphosyntactic aspect (morphology and syntax). They suggested four basic criteria 'commonly considered to be characteristic of adjectives'. These are morphosyntactic in nature and involve: intensification by 'very' ; taking suffixes to indicate

comparison; the ability to appear in attributive function (modifying a noun); and in predicative function (as complement in a predicate). Strang (1969: 133) considers these final two properties to be 'the criterion of adjectives in the most central sense that they have these functions and not others', and suggests the other two criteria less intrinsic as many adjectives are not gradable (as cited in Flanagan 2014).

Katamba (1993: 111) defined reduplication of adjectives as 'a process whereby an affix is realised by phonological material borrowed from the base' and Sapir (1921: 22) defined it as 'the repetition of all or part of the radical element'. This means that in some language, morphemes or lexemes are repeated, or doubled in order to denote a change in grammatical or semantic properties. Alexiadou (2010) recognizes reduplicaion in the form of 'adjectives doubling' as in example 'a top top player' which Rastall (2004) labelled as 'playful Engllish'. The most common fuction of reduplication is to intensify (Kruspe, 2006) or reduce meaning, denote superlation or attenuation, and even change a meaning (as cited in Flanagan, 2014). Reduplication is a widespread process with a variety of different functions. In Ambae, an Oceanic language, reduplication of verbs is a lot more common than of either nouns or adjectives. Reduplication can mark intensity for active verbs and adjetives, whether they are functioning predicatively or attributively (Dixon, 2006).

Flanagan (2014: 203) stated that while English adjectives appear almost exclusively before the noun, adjectives in Northern Sotho and Welsh are predominantly postnominal. In Welsh, as in many languages with postnominal adjectives, there is a small subset of adjectives which are commonly preposed, while in Northern Sotho all modification follows the head (Greenberg, 1966). The Polish adjective class is in many ways a mirror-image of that of Welsh, with most adjectives appearing prenominally and a small number of adjectives coming after the noun. The motivations for postposition in Polish are semantic rather than

lexical, but syntactically this still represents some similarity to the pattern in Welsh. In Chinese, the order is the opposite of that in Northern Sotho, with all modification coming before the noun, while in Tagalog both prenominal and postnominal modification are possible and common.

This syntactic variation is also complemented by morphological variation. Adjectives in Northern Sotho take a concordial prefix which reflects the noun class of the modified head, and are separated from the noun they modify by a monosyllabic particle, the function of which is debated by theorists. In Chinese, adjectives can function as intransitive predicates and are often followed by a monosyllabic particle de, which as in Northern Sotho, has a function which is contested by theorists. In Tagalog, adjectives are combined with nouns through the use of the ligatures na and –ng, depending upon the phonology of their final syllable, while in Polish, adjectives take case, number and gender inflections (Flanagan, 2014).

Dixon (2004) has categorized adjective classes in terms of their grammatical properties. The primary division is between adjectives that can fill an intransitive predicate slot and those that fill a copula complement slot, as in:

(I) Adjectives as intransitive predicate. These take some or all of the morphological processes and/or syntactic modifiers which can apply to a verb when it functions as intransitive predicate. They can be called 'verb-like adjectives'.

(II) Adjectives which may fill the copula complement slot. They can be called 'non-verb-like adjectives'.

(Dixon, 2004: 14)

Members of very nearly all adjective classes whether of type I or type II may in some way modify a noun within an NP. In some languages this involves just apposition of adjective and noun, in others a relative clause marker maybe required. Dixon (2004) suggested that a fair number of languages an adjective has the possibility of making up an entire NP, without any stated noun. Adjectives can roughly be categorized into two further classes in respect of their morphological possibilities when they occur within an NP:

(A)     When it functions within an NP, an adjective may have all of the morphological processes that apply to a noun. They can be called 'noun-like adjectives.

(B)     In a language where nouns show a number of morphological processes, none of these apply to adjectives. They can be called 'non-noun-like adjectives'.

(Dixon, 2004: 14)


In languages with an isolating profile, there may be no morphological processes applying to nouns, so that the (A/B) parameter is not relevant. There is a degree of correlation between the parameters. Dixon (2004) found:

• A large number of languages whose adjectives are (I) verb-like, and (B) non-noun- like.

• A large number whose adjectives are (II) non-verb-like, and (A) noun-like.

• Some languages whose adjectives are both (I) verb-like and (A) noun-like.

• Some languages whose adjectives are (II) non-verb-like and (B) non-noun-like.

(Dixon, 2004: 15 )

Quirk et al (1985) suggested four criteria for adjective which are attributive, predicative, intensification and comparison. If the adjective fulfils all four criteria, it is named 'central adjective'. On the other hand, if the adjective only fulfil some of the criteria, it is called 'peripheral adjective'. Refer to the example in the table below:

**Table 2.3 : Central and Peripheral Adjectives**

| Type       Adjective<br><br>Criteria | Central | Peripheral |
|---|---|---|
| | Soft | Utter |
| Attributive | The *soft* pillow | The *utter* devastation |
| Predicative | The pillow was *soft* | *The devastation was *utter* |
| Intensification | The *very soft* pillow | *The *very utter* devastation |
| Comparison | The *softer* pillow | The *more utter/ utterer* devastation |

(Flanagan, 2014, page 20)

### 2.3.4     Multiple Adjective Ordering

Many theorists agree that the structure of the multiple adjective strings have some constraints on the number of adjectives that can exist on the strings and how they are structured. Halliday (1985) analysed that everything that is said or written connects with some context of use (as cited in Flanagan, 2014). Example is the use of adjective 'little' in the phrase 'the little stupid man' and 'the stupid little man'. It is clear that the adjective plays a different role when its position is changed. Quirk (1985) suggested that it is unusual to find adjectives in a string more than three or four but the orderings of the adjectives can be determined by their semantic properties (as cited in Flanagan, 2014). Flanagan (2014) conducted a typological research on adjectives orderings in a few languages and found that the permissible arrangements of adjectives orderings in a string vary from language to language.

Wuff (2003) acknowledges that there are many factors affecting the order of multiple adjectives ordering, citing phonological, semantic, syntactic, pragmatic and psycholinguistics. Based on his investigation, the semantic criteria are the most important when it comes to explaining the ordering of a sequence of adjectives (as cited in Flanagan, 2014). Vendler (1968) considered the semantic properties of adjectives as being almost completely determinant of their relative order within a string. Example includes 'beautiful white wooden house', 'comfortable red chair' and 'big rectangular green Chinese carpet'. Many theorists agreed with this and have shared their taxonomies, but not all can be considered linguistics universal. Among them are Vendler (1968), Goyvaerts (1968), Bowers (1971), Quirk and Greenbaum (1973), Dixon (1982), Alexander (1990), and Scott (2002).

Dixon (1982) classified the adjectives into seven types on semantic, syntactic and morphological criteria. The seven semantic subclasses proposed are:

**Table 2.4 : Semantic subclasses**

| No | Semantic | Criteria |
|----|----------|----------|
| 1 | Dimension | Big, small, long, short, wide, narrow, fat, thin |
| 2 | Physical Property | Hard, soft, heavy, light, rough, smooth, hot, cold, sweet, sour |
| 3 | Colour | Blue, red |
| 4 | Human Propensity | kind, clever |
| 5 | Age | young, old |
| 6 | Value | Good, bad, |
| 7 | Speed | Fast, slow |

(Adapted from Dixon, 1982, page 5)

The order which these subclasses are placed according to Dixon (1982) is:

*value> dimension > physical property > speed > human propensity > age > colour*

Quirk et al's (1985) terms 'permanent' and 'temporary' to refer to adjectives according to how transient or fixed the property they represent. Quirk proposed the scalar notions rather than binary distinction. In this sense, the adjectives can be placed accordingly along the continuum.

*PERMANENT*                                                                    *TEMPORARY*

*Brown*          *Big*                                                          *Yawning*

*Naughty*

*Sleepy*
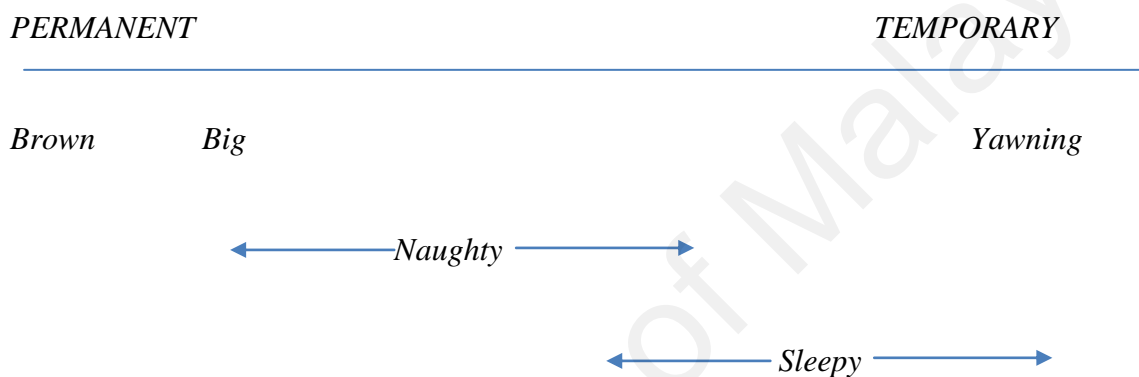
**Figure 2.2** : **The Scale of Permanence of Adjectival Concepts**

Flanagan (2014) believes that most functional accounts of ordering do not contradict semantic-based explanations of adjective ordering. Therefore, it could be join together in order to study the structure of adjectives in the strings of various languages.

## 2.4      Word Order in Southeast Asia

### 2.4.1      General Characteristics of Word Order Typology

Greenberg (1966, 1978, among others) did considerable work towards the genetic classification of languages, and built on Chomsky's work by proposing a number of linguistic universals; observations of structures and patterns which appeared to be common to all languages (based on a representative sample of around 200 languages). Greenberg's universals 17 to 22 all include observations on patterns of nominal syntax and how these

relate to adjective placement. Many researches has been done upon the spirit of comparative syntactic investigation inspired by Greenberg's work, as well as similar work in the area of linguistic typology by theorists such as Dryer et al (2013) Croft (1981) Comrie (1990) and Dixon (2010) (as cited in Flanagan, 2014, page 41).

The general characteristics of the word order typology of a number of languages in SEA were included in the often cited pioneering work of Greenberg (1966) in which he related the position of the verb (V) in relation to subject (S) and object (O) with other aspects of word order, drawing from these a number of supposed universals of word order. Thai, Khmer, Viatnamese and Malay were cited as examples of SVO languages which have prepositions and noun-adjectives (N-A) word order (Savetamalya & Reid, 1994, page 4).

According to Tuong Hung Nguyen (2004: 142) Southeast Asia is typically a Sprachbund, a linguistic area where various language families share some typological features because of close geographical proximity. It is, therefore, not surprising that many of the language families in the area exhibit similar nominal structures. Table 2.3 shows the four nominal word order patterns attested in Southeast Asia:

**Table 2.5 : Nominal Word Order of Southeast Asia**

| Type | Word Order | Language |
|---|---|---|
| Type 1 | Dem Num CL N A | Yao |
| Type 2 | Dem N A Num CL | Burmese, Lolo, Maru, Lahu, Rawang, Ancient Chinese |
| Type 3 | Num CL N A Dem | Vietnamese, Malay, Indonesian, Nung, Miao (also called Hmong or Meo), White Tai, Black Tai, Sedang, Sre, Katu, Cham, Brôu |
| Type 4 | N A Num CL Dem | Thai, Khmer, Lao, Javanese, Khmu, Shan, Palaung, Karen |

(Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004, page 144)

Based on the table, Tuong Hung Nguyen (2004) continued by stating that although not every permutation of the nominal elements is attested in these linguistic area, the attested word orders in allow the researcher to make the following generalizations:

(a) N and its postnominal A are always adjacent.

(b) Num always precedes CL.

(c) Dem is always either first or last in the noun phrase (Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004, page 144).

## 2.4.2 Linguistics studies on Austroasiatics and Austronesian Word Order

The Austroasiatic family as described by Parkin (1991) consists of over 150 languages, scattered in a considerable sweep of tropical and subtropical Asia, from Nimar (southwestern Madhya Pradesh) in the west to the Vietnamese shore of the South China Sea in the east and from Yunnan in the north to the Endau river in the south. Austroasiatic speakers are represented in every nation state of continental Southeast Asia (Burma, Thailand, West Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia) as well as in southern China, India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh (as cited in Savetamalya & Reid, 1994, page 1).

It was Wilhelm Schmidt (1974) who established the existence of Austroasiatic, and his achievement still stands, despite having been criticized by later writers. The main argument concerns the nature of the relationship between the two main branches of Austroasiatic brought together by Schmidt - Munda, consisting of languages spoken chiefly in eastern India, and Mon-Khmer, consisting of languages scattered throughout continental Southeast Asia. Having established his Austroasiatic language family, Schmidt went on to link it with Austronesian in a super-family called 'Austric', though this was, and still is, much more problematic. This breakdown is based mainly on Diffloth (1974), though he included Aslian in with Mon-Khmer (as cited in Savetamalya & Reid, 1994, page 2).

Schmidt (1974) included in where the Chamic languages of south-central Vietnam (Rhad, Jarai, Cham etc.) and the Proto-Malay languages of the Malay peninsula in Austroasiatic, though both groups are now recognized to be Austronesian. Aceh has been a more persistent problem, with suggestions of an Austroasiatic substratum, and even that it is, in fact, an Austroasiatic language. More likely, though, it is simply an Austronesian language that has come under some Austroasiatic influence, a factor which might also explain Schmidt's confusion over Cham and Proto-Malay.

There are many general works on the Aslian, (Skeat and Blagden 1906, Wilkinson 1910, 1923, Schebesta 1929, 1952, Evans 1923, 1937, Cole 1945, Williams-Hunt 1952, Diffloth 1974, 1975, Carey 1976a, 1976b, Benjamin 1976a, 1980, and Parkin 1991). These should all be consulted for data on the Aslian groups, though even the more recent ones vary considerably in comprehensiveness and quality. Evans (1962) also wrote many articles in, and sometimes entire issues of the Journal of the Federated Malay States Museums, of which he was editor; many of these he utilized in his later books. Freeman 1968, Endicott 1979 and Needham 1964 use early material on the Negrito groups for comparative purposes (see also Robarchek 1987).
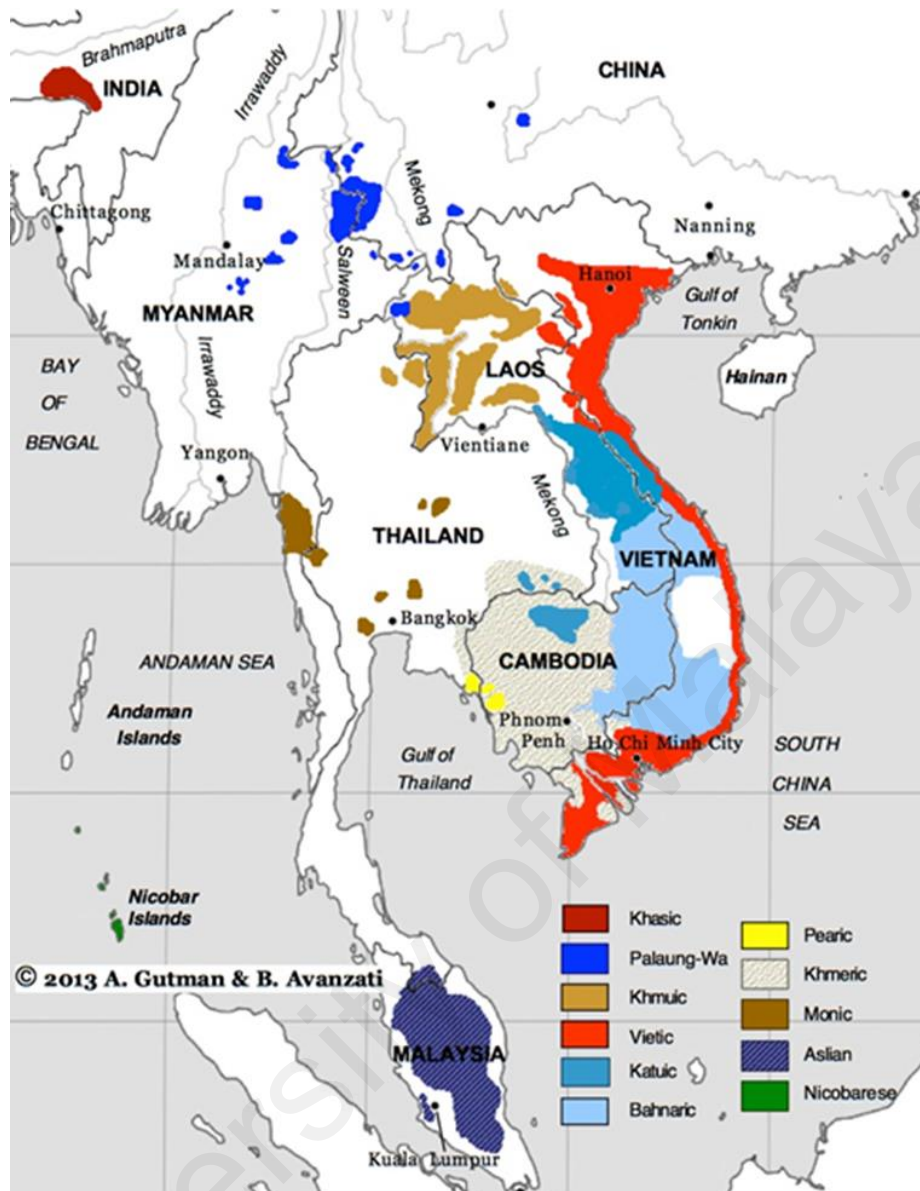
**Figure 2.3 : Map of The Austroasiatic Languages branches**

(Alejandro Gutman and Beatriz Avanzati, 2013, page 51)

Donohue (2007) researched on the word order of the Austronesian language in the Southeast Asia (Figure 2.3). He argued that the order of the Noun-Adjective, common across all of the Austronesian languages. The original order of adjectives and nouns in Austronesian languages was unknown. It might be that originally, as in modern Tagalog, there was no fixed

order, and the N-Adj order became solidified as a result of contact between the southern Austronesian languages and their new-found Southeast Asian neighbours. Alternatively, it might be that the variability in order arose as a result of a group of Adj-N languages coming into contact with N-Adj languages.
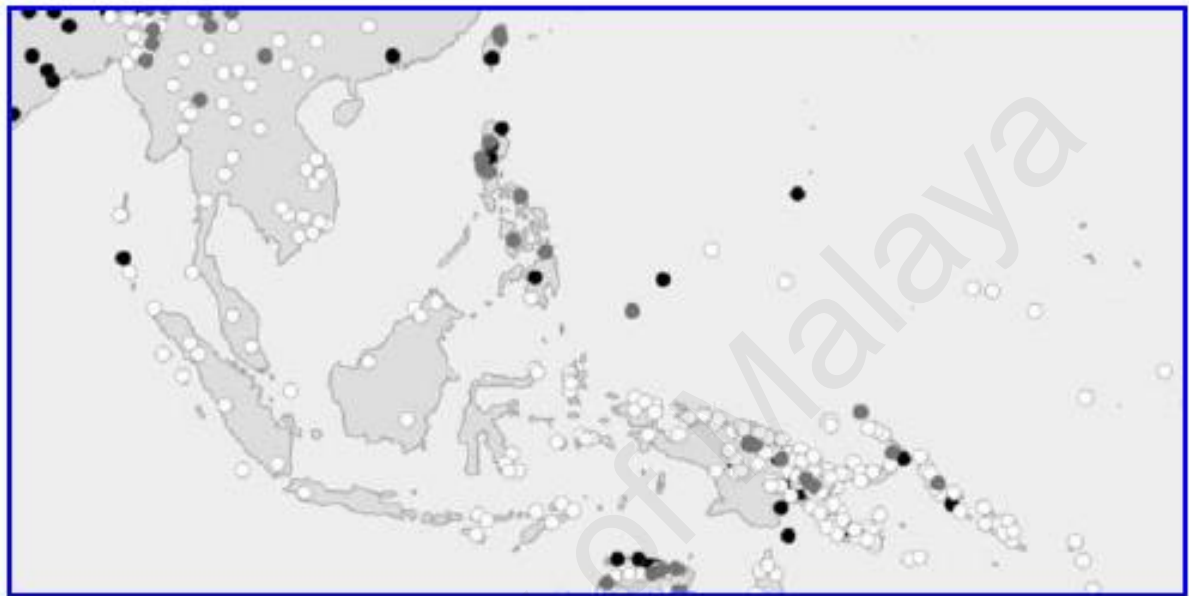


(Mark Donohue, 2007, page 350)

Key: white dots - adj follows the noun
black dots - adj precedes the noun
grey dots - noun and adj don't have fixed order

**Figure 2.4 : The Word Order of Adjective and Noun**

The following Table 2.4 explains the typological differences between Austronesian languages and the Austroasiatics languages. The differences can be seen from the aspects of morphology, word, phrase, clause and sentence. Both groups are SVO thus enables the languages to assimilate even though there are many differences.

**Table 2.6 : Types of Grammatical Units**

| Grammatical Units | Austronesian Languages | Austroasiatic Languages |
|---|---|---|
| Morphology | • Agglutinative; affixes (prefix, infix, suffix)<br>• Reduplication: first syllable of root word, root of complex word, whole word | • Isolative<br>• Reduplication: whole word |
| Word | • Full Words<br>• Particles | • Full Words |
| Phrase | • Head-Modifier (H-M)<br>• Prepositional | • Head-Modifier (H-M) |
| Clause | • Independent<br>• Dependent | • Independent |
| Sentence | • Subject-Verb–Object (SVO) | • Subject-Verb –Object (SVO) |
| Complex Sentence | • Paratactic (With & without conjunction)<br>• Hypotactic (With conjunctions) | • Paratactic (With & without conjunction) |

(Asmah Omar, 2014, page 84)

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

## 3.1     Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology chosen by the researcher for this study in terms of data collection, research location, research participant, research design, methodology, analysis of data, ethical consideration in the research and challenges in carrying out the research.

## 3.2     Data Collection

This study is a descriptive research. According to Chelliah and Reuse (2011), descriptive linguistic fieldwork can be done by collecting primary data through the interaction with native speakers. This is certainly the only way the Mah Meri language can be documented since the language is not written and currently in the brink of extinction. However, a few authors have been debating on the definition of descriptive research. Everett (2001), Foley (2002) and Aikhenvald (2007) highlight that the fieldworker must live like and with the native speakers of the language that s/he studies. Aikhenvald (2007) later distinguishes between "immersion fieldwork", which has been defined above, and "interview fieldwork", where the relationship between fieldworker and speaker is general and perhaps shorter, in that it is limited to interactions during fieldwork sessions. However, the success of the fieldwork is not based on whether fieldwork is of the "immersion" or "interview" style, but on whether it is intelligently or poorly conducted. For this study the data was collected through the interview fieldwork.

### 3.2.1    Location

Mah Meri speakers live near the shore along Sungei Pelek in Sepang to Pulau Carey in Kuala Selangor. There are two main Mah Meri settlements. One is in Bukit Bangkong situated in Sepang district and another is at Pulau Carey in Hulu Langat district. This study has been carried out in Kg Sg Bumbun, Pulau Carey. Since it took only 45 minutes to arrive to the location, there was no need for the researcher to spend the night. The researcher could just commute and come again the next day or any day which is agreeable by both researcher and informant, if there were still issues to be solved with the data collection.

There are five villages on the island. They are Kg Sungai Bumbun, Kg Sungai Judah, Kg Kepau Laut, Kg Sungai Rambai dan Kg Sungai Kurau (Haliza, 2010). However, only one village is chosen for this study, Kampung Sungai Bumbun. This village is chosen since it is famous for its cultural heritage; the skills in wood carving and handmade pieces, as well as its customs.  It has welcomed many outsiders admiring the Mah Meri cultural arts at the RM 3 million cultural village which has been officiated by Dato' Seri Utama Dr. Rais Yatim in July 2011 (The Star, 2012). Eleven animistic wooden sculptures which have earned the international Unesco Seal of Excellence could be found there. The price of the sculptures can reach to RM1, 500.00 to RM2, 000.00 each and can be as high as USD1000 each.

Most Mah Meri speakers including those living in Kg Sg Bumbun at Pulau Carey work as fishermen and farmers in the palm estate, coconut and fruit orchards (Haliza, 2010). Nevertheless, many of them now work outside the village at the nearby town which are currently developing and provide them with many jobs opportunities. Mah Meri people in Pulau Carey have been adapting to modernisation from time to time. Some of the houses in the village have been equipped with electricity. There is also primary school and other facilities built. The roads also have been tarred in some parts of the village.

### 3.2.2    Informant

According to Rice (2006), the classic book 'Field Linguistics' by Samarin (1967) explains that the qualifications of informants include age, sex, cultural and psychological qualities and language skills.  According to Yule (2008), in the twentieth century, the informants tended to be NORMS or 'non-mobile, older, rural, male speakers'. As it was believed, they were less likely to have been influenced from outside the region and retained traditional speech. In the tradition of the Chomskyan linguistics, the grammatical judgement or linguistics intuition of the native speaker is of primordial importance. Technically speaking, the linguistic intuition is the judgement value of the native speaker over the validity, grammaticality and acceptability of every utterance of the speaker-hearer that carries weight.

In this study, the informant is a native speaker of Mah Meri on the grounds that he is born to Mah Meri parents and speaks the Mah Meri language. The data is gathered by making use of personal communication with the informant and direct questions are asked for exemplification of sentential expressions. According to Asmah Haji Omar (2008), there is no necessity for a large number of informants for an introductory study of a language in the area of pure linguistics. For instance phonology, morphology and syntax. One or two informants would be necessary. With small number of informants for such research, it is completely significant. Therefore, in this study, the researcher chooses only 1 informant. He is the head of the village known as Tok Batin Sidin.

Tok Batin Sidin is the perfect informant for this study because he is 65 years old, a right age for someone who knows the language very well. He also could speak Mah Meri and Malay language very fluently. He can also read the written form of Malay. There are a few Mah Meri people who are above the age of 60 years old but they could not speak in Malay and some could not entertain visitors since they are sick. He was born at Kg Sg Bumbun and

now lives with his wife, children, and grandchildren. He is a Muslim. There are only 5 Muslim families in the village while the rest embrace animism. He used to work in the city as a lorry driver when he was younger. Then he returned to live in the village where he worked as a farmer. He has a fruit orchard behind his house where he works every day. He was elected by the villagers although there were many candidates running for that post.

### 3.2.3    Research Design Chart

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│           Proposal presentation at Faculty level         │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                           │
                           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Send a permission letter to do research with Orang Asli  │
│                   community to JKOA                      │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                           │
                           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Get permission letter from JKOA for the data collection  │
│              at Kg Sg Bumbun, Pulau Carey                │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                           │
                           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│             Library research and interview with          │
│            Head of the Museum of Orang Asli              │
│    Place: Museum and Library of the Orang Asli in Gombak │
│                                                          │
│   • Meet the Head of the Museum of Orang Asli, En Mohd   │
│       Jiwa for initial information on Mah Meri people.    │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                           │
                           ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              Interview fieldwork (First session)         │
│  Place: Tok Batin's house at Kg Sg Bumbun, Pulau Carey.  │
│                                                          │
│   • Ask permission from Tok Batin to carry out the study │
│          • Find suitable informant for the study         │
│  • Find out the lifestyles of Mah Meri people and their  │
│                      daily activities.                   │
│           • Record sentences in Mah Meri                 │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

```
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Interview fieldwork (Second session)      │
│  Place: Tok Batin's house at Kg Sg Bumbun, Pulau Carey. │
│                                                   │
│    • Find out the Mah Meri language simple sentence │
│                      structure                    │
│    • Find out adjectives in Mah Meri (Word level) according │
│                  to several domains               │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Transcribe the recording before the meeting in the next session

Categorise the adjectives into different categories

```
          │
          ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Interview fieldwork (Third session)       │
│  Place: Tok Batin's house at Kg Sg Bumbun, Pulau Carey. │
│                                                   │
│    • Find out position of Mah Meri adjectives in sentences │
│                   (Sentence level)                │
│    • Find out the word order of Mah Meri language │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

**Figure 3.1: Data Collection Flow Chart**

Figure 3.1 explains the flow for the data collection for this study. The initial step that was taken by the researcher was presenting the research proposal at the faculty level. After the research proposal was approved, the researcher sent a permission letter to JAKOA to do research with the Mah Meri community at Kg Sg Bumbun, Pulau Carey, Selangor. In a week, the permission letter was granted. Then the researcher went to the JAKOA office to collect the letter. The JAKOA officer suggested the researcher to find out more about the Mah Meri community at the Museum of Orang Asli in Gombak. Next, the researcher met the Head of the Museum of Orang Asli, En Mohd Jiwa bin Zulkifli. He explained on the dos and the don'ts when dealing with the Mah Meri community. The researcher also visited it's library to gain more information about the Aslian people in Malaysia.

The next few steps were data collections at Kg Sg Bumbun. The method of collecting data was interview session. In total, there were 3 interview sessions with the informant and the length of each session was not more than 3 hours, starting from 10.30am to 1.30pm. The researcher went to the site with a group of researchers studying Mah Meri language.

In the first interview session, the number of researchers was more since there were other researchers who went along to observe the session and might continue with the next session if they could find some useful data for their areas. Once arrived to Kg Sg Bumbun, the group of researchers went to Tok Batin's house. The JAKOA staff has advised all the researchers to do so in order to show respect to the head of the community and to get his permission to carry out the research. The researchers explained to Tok Batin about the study and the criteria of informants who would be suitable for the study. The researchers went around the village to find the candidates, unfortunately all the suggested candidates were not available because of sickness, inability to speak Malay, reluctant to be involved in the study, etc. Only Tok Batin remained the candidate for the study. Tok Batin agreed to participate as the informant for the study.

The second interview session was more focused. Tok Batin translated the Mah Meri sentences and the group of researchers asked him about the Mah Meri sentence structure. For this study, the researcher asked on adjectives (word level) according to several domains. Some adjectives in Malay were similar with adjectives in Mah Meri language. Thus explained that they were not originated in Mah Meri language but loaned from Malay language. For the third interview session, the interview questions and list of sentences were constructed carefully before the interview session as to make sure that all the data needed were gathered in the interview session. Any possible questions and queries were asked during the interview sessions

### 3.2.4    Methodology

The main instrument for the data collection for this study is the interview questions. In total, there were 3 interview sessions with the informant and the length of each session was not more than 3 hours. Each interview session was equipped with a set of questionnaire. The researcher was the one who filled in the answers for the questionnaire. The questions were read aloud and the responses from the informant were jotted down and recorded. The questionnaires were constructed to ensure that the interview session was on the right track and the researcher could acquire all the data needed in the specified time since the time spent with the informant was short.  Most of the questions were open ended type of questions as they could prompt many responses from the informant.

In the first session of data collection in Kg Sg Bumbun, the questionnaire was constructed in a few sections. The first section was greetings and acquiring consent from the informant to do the interview. The second section was preliminary information of the informant. Included in this section were questions about his education and family. The last section in the questionnaire was the general overview of the use of Mah Meri language among the Mah Meri community. Tok Batin was asked to speak in Mah Meri language. The sentences in Mah Meri were transcribed at home and would be translated in the next session by Tok Batin.

The questionnaire for the second session of data collection at Kg Sg Bumbun was created in three parts. The first part was to ask Tok Batin to translate the previous recorded speech in Mah Meri language into Malay language. The second part was to find out the structure of the Mah Meri sentence and what was the basic constituent order of the language. Next, the third part of the questionnaire was to find out the types of adjectives according to several domains.

The questionnaire for the last session of data collection consisted of a list of sentences with various types of adjective structure in Malay. The researcher had to come out with the list of the sentence since the researcher could only find a few adjectives in the sentences which were uttered naturally in Mah Meri language. The reason for this might be because adjectives usually exist in written form compared to oral language (Norliza, 2011, 42). The researcher read out the sentences in the list and Tok Batin translated the sentences into Mah Meri language. The structures were changed accordingly to suit the structure of Mah Meri language. Tok Batin also explained about the right sentence structures and the wrong sentence structures in Mah Meri language.

## 3.3     Data Analysis

Before the researcher embarked on the research site for data gathering, the researcher has analysed Austronesian and Austroasiatics languages to get an idea of how the structure of the Mah Meri language would be like before the researcher constructed the research questions for this study. A book entitled 'Mah Meri' year 2006, a compilation of linguistic research on Mah Meri language from Bukit Bangkong, Sepang is the main reference on the phonology, morphology, syntax and culture of Mah Meri. The researcher constructed research questions for this study based on the previous linguistics research on Aslian, Austronesian and Austroasiatics languages done by former researchers. Mah Meri language is Austroasiatic while Malay language is Austronesian. The Mah Meri speakers have been using Malay language a great deal in their daily lives since Malay language is the national language of Malaysia.

During the interview session, the researcher recorded the data using the digital voice recorder. The researcher asked questions to the informant based on the questionnaire and jotted down notes while listening to the answers given by the informant. When asking questions on adjectives and the Mah Meri word structures, the researcher quickly analysed the data and constantly asking question to validate the data that was analysed. Hence, avoiding any confusion which would come later if the researcher did not dealt with it sooner. Active involvement during the interview also help the researcher to think of more relevant questions that were not in the questionnaire before.

After the field work, the researcher continued to transcribe the recordings into the APA transcriptons symbols and added the translation of the English language into the transcription. Then, the researcher analysed the transcription based on the frameworks which were chosen to answer the research questions on the morphosyntactic properties of adjectives, the orderings of multiple adjectives and the word order of the Mah Meri adjective phrase. The morphosyntactic properties of Mah Meri language were analysed by adopting the framework by Thorne (1993) and Chomsky (1993). The multiple adjectives orderings in Mah Meri were investigated by looking into framework by Quirk et al (1985) and Dixon (2004). As for the nominal word order of Mah Meri, the placement of noun and adjectives in a sentence is investigated by adopting the Minimalist approach, a syntactic theory that uses a few basic principles as possible.

## 3.4 Ethical Consideration of Research

The researcher applied for the permission letter to do a group research from the Department of Orang Asli Development (JHEOA) and upon acquiring the clearance, the group of researchers were advised by the JHEOA officer on the do's and the don'ts when gathering data at the site. One of the don'ts was not to pay the respondent in money but with other things such as the grocery items as a token of appreciation for their help. Surprisingly, the best gift was rice. At Kg Sg Bumbun, the group of researchers met the head of the Mah Meri community, Tok Batin Sidin, to get his permission and acceptance on the activity. He explained that outsiders who come to the village without asking permission from him were usually people who have bad intentions such as salesman, con man, etc. They will be chased out of the village, sometimes with the use of *'parang'*, the big knife that people use in the field.

**CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

In any language, all grammatical operations are based on grammatical categories which are deemed universal. This chapter attempts to present the analysis on the configuration and the typological description of adjective in Mah Meri language. This chapter composes of three major parts. The first part answers the first research question on the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri adjectives. The second part deals with the orderings of the multiple adjectives in Mah Meri and answers research question 2. Lastly the chapter investigates the word order based on the Mah Meri AP structures using the proposed nominal word order of Southeast Asian language. Thus, this chapter establishes the adjectival category of Mah Meri and presents its structures.

**4.1     Research Question 1: Analyze the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri adjectives**

Adjective analysis is morphosyntactic in nature and involves taking suffixes to indicate intensification and comparison; the ability to appear in attributive functions (modifying a noun); and in predicative functions (as complement in a predicate) (Flanagan, 2014). A morphosyntactic property is a grammatical property which affects (or is affected by) relevant aspects of morphology and syntax (Radford, 2009). Thus, the study shall look at the morphological and syntactical aspects to find out the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri language.

### 4.1.1  Morphology

Mah Meri language reveals a number of lexical and phrases of the adjective category which are not as abundant and nor as complex as in the Malay language. Many lexical borrowings from the Malay language and phrases are mostly a combination of words in Mah Meri and Malay. The morphological properties of Mah Meri can be seen in its ability to have grades. Adjectives in Mah Meri have grades or what is traditionally called degrees of comparative or superlative.

### 4.1.1.1  Gradability

Gradability is often taken to be a prototypical property of adjectives which is the degree expressions of the type of "too" or "very" combine with adjectives but not with other categories. According to Thorne (1993), the degrees of comparison in adjectives exist in four level; absolutive, equative, comparative and superlative (as cited in Flanagan 2014). As shown in Table 4.1, absolutive is the root form to which inflections are added to create the other three graded forms.

**Table 4.1 : Graded Adjectives in Mah Meri**

| Degrees of Comparison | Mah Meri | Gloss | The structure | Gloss |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Absolutive | /elok/ | *beautiful, handsome, good* | /ADJ/ | /ADJ/ |
| Equative | /sǝelok/ | *equally beautiful* | /sǝ + ADJ / | /sǝ + ADJ / |
|  | /elok macam/ | *beautiful like* | /ADJ + **macam**/ | /ADJ + *like*/ |
| Comparative | /elok ŋah / | *more beautiful than* | /ADJ + ŋah / | ADJ + *than* |
|  | /elok berbanding/ | *more beautiful than* | /ADJ + **berbanding**/ | ADJ + *than* |
|  | /elok daripada/ | *more beautiful than* | /ADJ + **daripada**/ | ADJ + *than* |
|  | /lǝbih elok daripada/ | *More beautiful than* | /lǝbih + ADJ + **daripada**/ | /*more* + ADJ + *than*/ |
| Superlative | /elok/ | *beautiful* | / **saŋat** + ADJ/ | /*the most* + ADJ/ |
|  | /elok/ | *beautiful* | / **paliŋ**+ ADJ/ | /*the most* + ADJ/ |

(Adapted from Thorne, 1993)

a.  Absolutive

As    LI 1 **/elok/** *'beautiful'*, *'handsome'* is a description of a property belonging to nominal of abstract or concrete nouns.

**(12)  /mak nake      elok/**
that person      handsome/beautiful
***'That person is handsome/beautiful.'***


(13)  **/mukak elok/\***
Face      pretty
***'Pretty face'.***

(14) /e'el    ma'    nake   elok/
     Manner that person    well
     '*That person is well- mannered*'


(15) /do    milo nohok    elok/
     Drink milo    this    tasty
     '*This milo drink is tasty.*'


(16) /kertas    ni    elok/
     Paper        this    good
     '*This paper is in good condition*'.


Sentence (12) shows the adjective **/elok/** *'beautiful'*, *'handsome'*. It refers to pleasing appearance of an entity either man or woman in the natural world.  Other than referring to appearance*,* it could also refer to attitude. This could mean that the entity has pleasing attitude **/elok/** '*good', 'nice', 'well mannered'*.  By lexical relation, the antonym of **/elok**/ is **/badzau/ 'ugly'**, *'bad mannered'*.


Sentence (13) shows the adjective **/elok/** *'beautiful', 'handsome'* which describes the concrete nominal **/mukak/** *'face'*.  On the other hand, sentence (14) shows the adjective **/elok/** *'well mannered*' that describes the behaviour of an entity in the natural world. In both sentences the antonym **badzau/** *'ugly', 'bad mannered'* can substitute the adjective **/elok/,** *'beautiful'*, *'handsome', 'well mannered'*.


Sentence (15) shows the adjective */elok/* *'good'* that describes the quality of a nominal property. Here the adjective */elok/ 'good'* describes the good taste of other concrete entities such as food, drinks. The antonym /**badzau/** '*bad'* can be substituted here to describe bad taste of the nominal property.

Sentence (16) shows the adjective **/elok/** *'good'* that describes the property and characteristics possessed by a concrete entity. Here it can both describe the good condition of the paper and the good hand writing on the paper. The antonym /**badzau**/ *'bad'* can be substituted here.

b. Equative

(17) /pəle nənas      nake   ɲit macam   gula/
Fruit pineapple      that   as sweet as   sugar
*'The pineapple is as sweet as sugar.'*

**(18)** /pəle nənas      nake   seɲit-ɲit    gula/
Fruit pineapple      that   as sweet as   sugar
*'The pineapple is as sweet as sugar.'*

Sentence (17) shows the adjective /**ɲit**/ *'sweet'* and the word /**macam**/ *'as'* which comes together and becomes simile /**ɲit macam**/ *'as sweet as'.* Meanwhile, sentence (18) shows another simile by a derived adjective /**seɲit-ɲit**/' *as sweet as'* which is derived from base adjective /**ɲit**/ *'sweet'* with the combination of the affixation of the prefix /**se-/** *'as'* and a reduplicated adjective /**-ɲit-ɲit**/ *'manis'.* This particular prefix carries the meaning '**of the same X'** where X is refers to the property of the base.

c. Comparative

Mah Meri adjectives show that there is grade or certain degree of comparative in adjectives. There are a few words which are usually used in comparing the adjectives. The words that are used together with the adjectives in order to show degree are /**lebih/** or /**hel**/ which mean *'more'*, '*very'*. These are followed by /**ŋah**/ or /**berbanding/** or /**daripada**/ which means '*than'*. They are structured as followings:

(i)  /ADJ + **ŋah** /          'ADJ + **than**'

(ii) /ADJ + **berbanding**/  'ADJ + **than**'

(iii)/ADJ + **daripada**/    'ADJ + **than**'

(20)   /mak nake ləbih səghaŋ ŋah mak nake/
       Man  that  more  high   than man this
       *'That man is higher than this man.'*

**(21)   /ngki' ke     beduh səghan berbanding dəngan ma'/**
       He   builds house high    than          with    others
       *'He builds a house that is higher than others'*.

**(22)   /kədo nohok lawa    həl   daripada kedo  nake/**
       Woman this  beautiful very than      woman that
       *'This woman is more beautiful than that woman.'*

Sentence (20) shows an adjective with degree of comparative. By adding the grade /**lebih**/ '*more*' to the adjective /**səghaŋ**/ '*high*' is now a comparative adjective **/lebih seghan/** '**higher**' is formed**.** The adjective **/lebih seghan/** '**higher**' refers to the nominal property of a concrete entity /**mak nake**/ *'that man'*.

Sentence (21) shows an adjective of comparative that exists without grade. Observe the adjective /**səghaŋ**/ *'**high**'* that stands on its own but still can be a comparative adjective with the existence of word **/berbanding/** *'than'* which comes after it. The adjective /**səghaŋ**/ '**high**' refers to a quality of a concrete entity /**beduh**/ '**house'.**

Sentence (22) shows an adjective with a degree of comparative /**lawa hel**/ '*more beautiful'* which refers to the quality of the nominal property /**kedo nohok**/ '*this woman'.* It is followed by the word /**daripada**/ *'than'* which is usually used in comparing two qualities of an entity.

d.   Superlative

(23) /ɲkiʔ  leh   pəladʒa  yang      pinta **haʔ**   **sekolah**/
     He    is    student  who is   clever at      school
     *'He is the cleverest student at the school.'*

(24) /ɲkiʔ  leh   pəladʒa **tərpinta**   **haʔ**   **sekolah**/
     He    is    student clever at       school
     *'He is the cleverest student at the school.'*

(25) /həgak baraŋ kədai nake mahal neneh/
     Price   goods shop  that expensive too
     *'The price of goods in the shop is too expensive.'*

(26) /əʔəd  ghasə hiju' hel  ai         gəma ləbat/
     I     feel   cold too water      rain  heavy
     *'I feel so cold because of the heavy rain'.*

(27) /təkoh nake pəle    ləbat nom     həl/
     Tree   that fruit    a lot of fruits   too
     *'That tree is harvesting a lot of fruits'.*

Sentence (23) shows adjective /**pinta**/ '*clever*' in its base form which refer to the nominal property of a concrete entity /**pəladʒa**/ '*student*'. Although the adjective exist in its base form, it can still be regarded as superlative form. Therefore, superlative form may exist in base form adjective /**pinta**/ '*cleverest*'. Observe adjective in sentence (24) /**tərpinta**/ '*cleverest*' which exist with prefix /**tər-**/ '*-est*' and base form /**pinta**/ '*clever*'.

Sentence (25) shows adjective /**mahal**/ '*expensive*' that become superlative with the existence of the following word /**neneh**/ '*too*'. Sentence (26) shows adjective /**hijuk**/ '*cold*' that become superlative with the following word /**hel**/ '*too*'. As for sentence (27) the adjective /**ləbat**/ '*a lot*' refers to the nominal property of a concrete entity /**pəle**/ '*fruit*' and then followed the superlative words /**nom həl**/ '*so much*'.

**4.1.1.2    Negation**

There are several words to show negation or denial for adjectives such as **/not*/** *'no'*, *'not'*, /e'et/ *'no'*, *'not'*.

(28)    /buŋak        nake    loʔop/
        Flower        that    fragrant
        *'That flower is fragrant.'*

(29)    /buŋak nake loʔop ngot*/
        Flowers that not fragrant
        *'The flowers are not fragrant.'*

Sentence (28) shows that the adjective **/loʔop/** *'fragrant'* which describes the nominal property of a concrete entity **/buŋak/** *'flower'* can turn into opposite meaning by just adding the negation word **/not/** *'not'* together with the adjective and become **/loʔop ngot*/** *'not fragrant'* as shown in sentence (29). Observe that the negative word comes after the adjective in the sentence. In another instance, the antonym of the adjective /**loʔop**/ *'fragrant'* which is **/hu'ut/** *'smelly'* can be substituted here.

(30)    /nake  hayam  əʔəd  e'et/
        That   chicken me    not
        *'That is not my chicken.'*

(31)    /əʔəd  e'et    mak    lajin/
        I      not     person hardworking
        *'I am not a hardworking person.'*

Sentence (30) and (31) show the negative word /e'et/ **'not'** that comes after the pronoun /əʔəd/ '*I', 'me', 'my'*. Observe that the negative word in sentence (30) is projecting towards the possessive pronouns /əʔəd/ **'my'** of the noun */hayam/ 'chicken'*. Meanwhile sentence (31) shows the negative word is projecting towards the adjective **/lajin/ *'hardworking'*** of the

74

concrete entity **/mak/ '*person*'**. In another instance, the antonym of the adjective **/lajin/** '*hardworking*' which is /**malas/** *'lazy'* can be substituted here.

### 4.1.1.3    Reduplication

One of the morphological processes that occur in Mah Meri is reduplication. Reduplication is a process by which a morpheme or part of a morpheme is repeated to create a new word with a different meaning or a member of a different category. Partial reduplication repeats only part of the morpheme, while full reduplication repeats the entire morpheme (Asmah 1993: 222). The process of reduplication may indicate plurality, prominence or emphasis, or continuity or recurrence of action.

### (i)    Full Reduplication - Intensity

(32)    /nom          buŋak          nake      loʔop-loʔop/
        Many          flowers        that      fragrant
        *'Those flowers are fragrant.'*

(33)    /nom          buŋak-buŋak          nake      loʔop-loʔop/
        Many          flowers              that      fragrant
        *'Those flowers are fragrant.'*

(34)    /buŋak-buŋak      nake      loʔop-loʔop/
        Flowers          that      fragrant
        *'That flowers are fragrant.'*

Full reduplication means that a word is repeated twice, one full word not only parts of it. Sentence (32), (33) and (34) shows adjective **/ loʔop-loʔop /** '*fragrant*' which is reduplicated from the root adjective **/ loʔop/** '*fragrant*'**.

(35)    /ani səelok-elok    mimi
        Ani as beautiful as        Mimi
        *'Ani is as beautiful as Mimi.'*

**(36)   */amin sepandai-pandai ali/**
          Amin as clever as  Ali
          '*Amin is as clever as Ali.'*

In sentence (35) the root adjective **/elok/ '*beautiful'*** is fully reduplicated with the presence of inflection **/sə/** in the beginning of the words which implies the equative gradability**.** However, for sentence (36) the root adjective cannot be reduplicated as /**sepandai-pandai/** and must remain a single word with the inflection to indicate the equative gradability as /**sepandai/.**

**(ii)  Full Reduplication- Adjectives become Adverbs**

Reduplication may change the adjectives into other word class which is adverbs in this language. The following illustrates how some adjectives that have been reduplicated can act as adverbs in adverbial expressions. The following examples show that in Mah Meri, the reduplicated adjectives (which is now an adverb) exist without any additional marking in the Mah Meri language but when translated to English language, the meaning is the same with adding the adverbial marker 'very' before the adverb.

**(37)   /ngki'        tibak   hadu' 'ə'ə'   kətuk pintu  kuat kuat/**
          He           comes house  my    knocks door  hard
          '*He comes to my house and knocks very hard on the door'*.

**(38)   /chok laju laju /**
          Walk fast
          '*Walking very fast'*

**(39)** /dutə suwoh hik hepoi hepoi bernapas/
 Doctor asks him    slowly    breath
 ***'Doctor asks him    to    breathe very slowly'***

**(40)** /napah nakek hik muntet muntet/
 Breath that    his    slowly
 '***He breathes very slowly'.***


Reduplication in the examples above shows prominence in the adverb which describes the actions. In all the example given, the meaning of the reduplicated form in Mah Meri can be describe in English by adding the adverbial marker 'very' to all the adverbs.


**(iii) Partial Reduplication (Rhythmic) – Intensity**


**(41)   /muka dia hitam legam/**
 Face  her  dark    dark
 ***'Her face is so dark.'***


Sentence (41) shows reduplicated adjective /**hitam legam**/ '***dark***' which combines two adjective with the same meaning but only the last morpheme of both adjectives are the same. Both root adjectives /**hitam**/ '***dark***' and /**legam**/ '***dark***' carry the same meaning thus this reduplication  shows the intensity of the darkness .

**4.1.2     Syntax/ Function**

**4.1.2.1     Prenominal and Postnominal**

Adjective in a sentence can precede noun as pre-nominal modifier and it also can follow noun as post-nominal modifier by adjective phrase, relative clauses and possessives. The following are the examples on how an adjective becomes a prenominal or postnominal modifier.

**(i)    Prenominal modifier**

> **(42)    /ɲkiʔ      nogok             kadəi    lok/**
>      He    cuts down             ADJ-big  N-tree
>      ***'He cuts down a big tree.'***

In sentence (42) the adjective /**kadəi**/ ***'big'*** precedes the noun /**lok**/ ***'tree'*** and this shows that the adjective here is a prenominal modifier.

(43)



/**ɲkiʔ**/           /**nogok**/ /**kadəi**/   /**lok**/
He                cuts down  ADJ-big   N-tree
***'He cuts down a big tree.'***
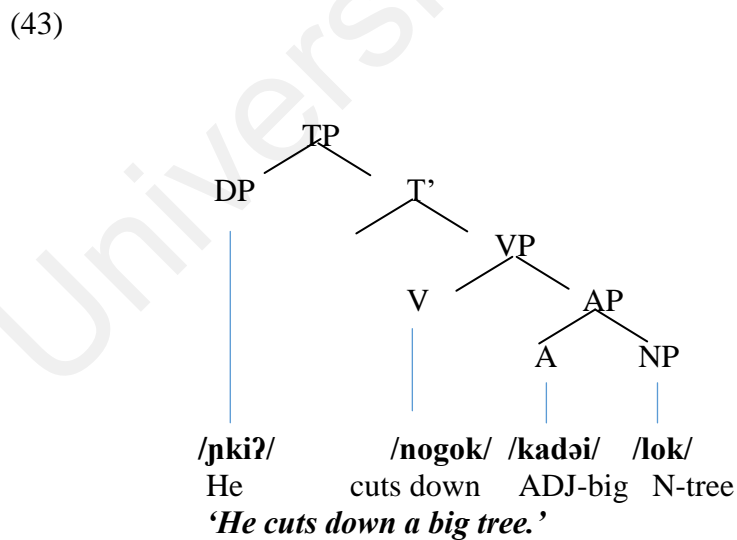
**Figure 4.1 : Prenominal Modifier Tree Structure**

**(ii) Postnominal modifier**

(44) /ɲkiʔ        nogok        təkoh   kadəi/
     He   cuts down   N-tree  ADJ-big
     *'He cuts down a big tree.'*

In sentence (44) the adjective /**kadəi**/ *'big'* appears after the noun /**təkoh**/ *'tree'* and thus

show that the adjective here is a postnominal modifier.

(45)



/ɲkiʔ/       /nogok/  /təkoh/  /kadəi/
He       cuts down  N-tree    ADJ-big
*'He cuts down a big tree.'*
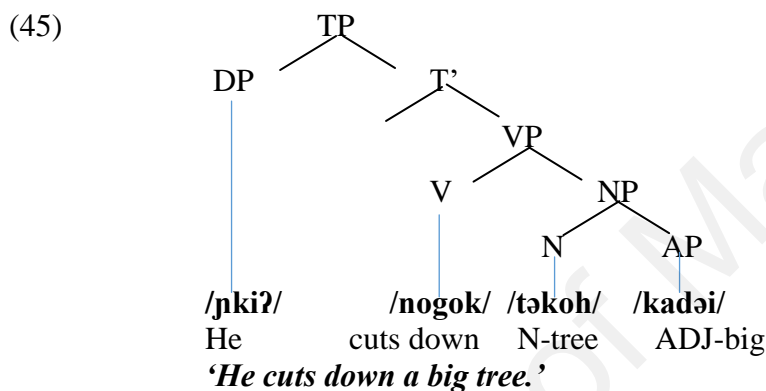
**Figure 4.2 : Postnominal Modifier Tree Structure**

(iii) Prenominal modifier and postnominal modifier

(46) /**nom**        pəle   haʔ    kəbun         əʔəd/
     Cl-Many   N-fruit from  N-orchard      Poss-me
     *'Many fruits from my orchard.'*

In sentence (46) both prenominal and postnominal modifier can be seen. The classifier

/**nom**/ *'many'* precedes the noun /**pəle**/ *'fruit'* and this shows the function of prenominal

modifier. The second one shows the possessive noun /**əʔəd**/ **my** appears after the noun

/**kəbun**/ *'orchard'* and this shows the function of a postnominal modifier.

(47)

```
                         NP
                ┌─────────┴─────────┐
               QP                   PP
           ┌────┴────┐          ┌────┴────┐
          Q          NP         P         NP
          │          │          │      ┌───┴───┐
          │          │          │      N      Poss
          │          │          │      │       │
       /nom         pəle       haʔ   kəbun    əʔəd/
       Cl-Many      N-fruit    from  N-orchard Poss-me
```

*'Many fruits from my orchard.'*
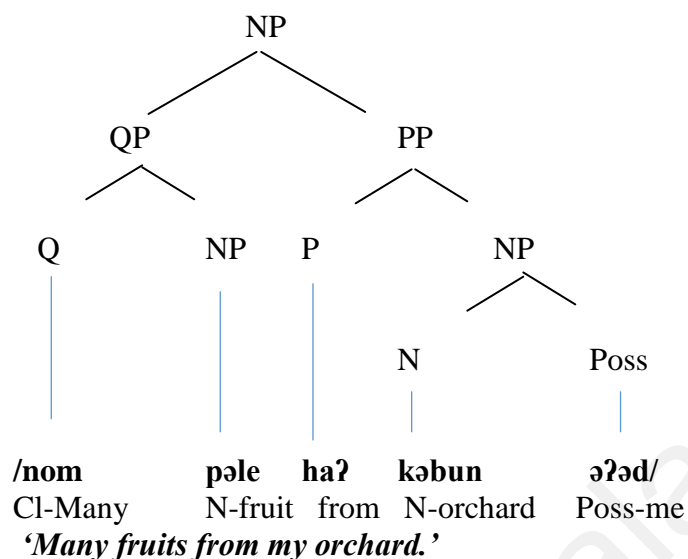
**Figure 4.3 : Prenominal and Postnominal Modifier Tree Structure**

### 4.1.2.2    Attributive and Predicative

Adjectives in Mah Meri have two primary functions which are attributive and predicative. Adjectives function as an attributive when they modify nominals as signified by its [+N] categorial feature (Nik Safiah Karim 1995:104-105, 117).    In the sentential construction, adjectives function as predicative as signified by its [+V] categorial feature. The predicative adjective is in complementary distribution with the verb when it takes the place of the non-existent verb in any given sentence (Jubilado, 2010, page 101). Consider the following sample sentences (48) and (49) below:

(i)    Attributive

**(48)**  **/ pəle    ɲit/**
         fruit    sweet
         *'Sweet fruits.'*

Sentence (48) shows the adjective /**nyit/ '*sweet*'** which functions as modifier and shows attributive function. It modifies the concrete nominal /**pəle/ '*fruit*'**.

```
              NP
            /    \
           N      AP
           |      |
         /pəle/  /ɲit/
         fruit   sweet
         'Sweet fruit.'
```
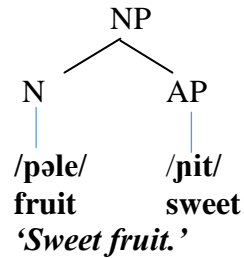
**Figure 4.4 : Attributive Adjective Tree Structure**

(ii)  Predicative

(49)  /**pəle    nake   ɲit/**
      Fruit    the     sweet
      '*The   fruit is sweet*'

Sentence (49) shows the predicative function of the adjective /**nyit/ '*sweet*'** when there is no verb in the sentence. It functions as a predicate in this sentence where the NP is the concrete /**pəle/ '*fruit*'**.

(50)
```
                    NP
                  /    \
                NP      AP
               /  \      |
              N    Det   |
              |    |     |
           /pəle/ /nake/ /ɲit/
           Fruit  the    sweet
           'The   fruit is sweet'
```
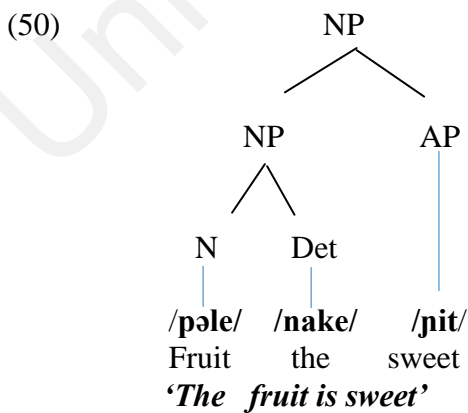
**Figure 4.5 : Predicative Adjective Tree Structure**

### 4.1.2.3    Attributives Adjectives [+N] (Modify noun)

An attributive adjective modifies noun and occurs in the boundaries of NP. It can appear at the right and left edge of the noun phrase. It can precede noun as a pre-nominal modifier and it also can follow noun as post-nominal modifier by adjective phrase, relative clauses and possessives. All these can be done in direct or indirect adjectival modification.

### 4.1.2.4    Direct Adjectival Modification

The adjective in the direct adjectival modification can be seen clearly with the adjectives as the modifier for the noun in either prenominal or postnominal position.

(51)  **/ka      elok/**
  fish    fresh
  *'Fresh fish.'*

Here in sentence (51), the adjective is postnominal modifier as the adjective **/elok/** *'fresh'* follows the noun **/ka/** *'fish'* .

(52)     NP

    N   AP

   **/ka/**   **/elok/**
   fish   fresh
   *'Fresh fish.'*
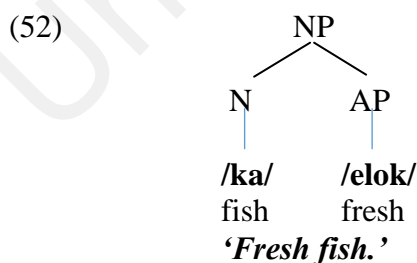
**Figure 4.6 : Direct Adjectival Modification- Postnominal modifier**

**(53)** /ɲkiʔ   nogok       təkoh   kadəi/
　　　　he    cuts down    tree    big
　　　　*'He cuts down a big tree.'*

The example in sentence (53) the adjective is also postnominal modifier because the adjective /**kadəi**/ '**big**' follows the noun /**təkoh**/ *'tree'*.

(54)
```
                    TP
                 ╱      ╲
              DP          T'
              │         ╱    ╲
              │              VP
              │           ╱     ╲
              │          V        NP
              │          │      ╱    ╲
              │          │     N      AP
              │          │     │      │
           /ɲkiʔ/      nogok  təkoh  kadəi/
            he       cuts down  tree   big
```
　　　　　　*'He cuts down a big tree.'*
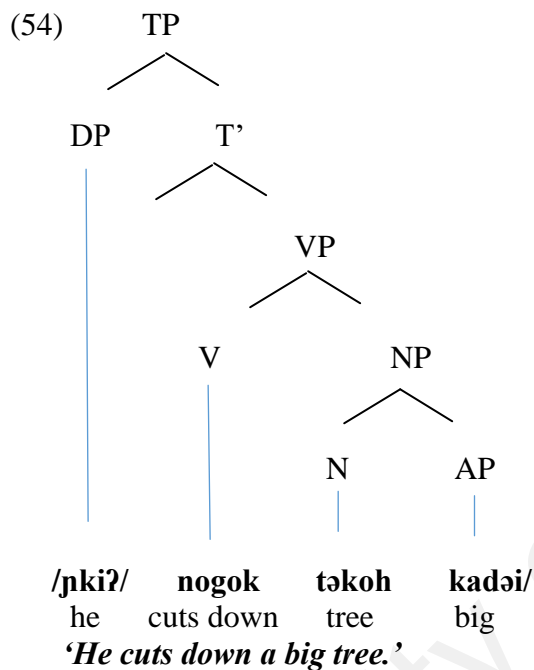
**Figure 4.7 : Direct Adjectival Modification- Postnominal modifier**

### 4.1.2.5   Indirect Adjectival Modification

The indirect adjectival modification means that the adjective that modifies the noun is in a form of a relative clause which is link to the sentence with the use of linkers like *who*, *what*, *which*, *that*, *whom*, etc. It can modify the subject as well as the object in the sentence.

i.   Subject Adjective Clauses

**(55)** /**ləmol nom   naca   nake kghek ngkit   gemok**/
　　　/man a lot   eat    the   body his    fat
　　　*'The man (who eats a lot) has a fat body.' / his body is fat'.*

83

Sentence (55) shows the relative clause which is an indirect adjective clause follows the noun /ləmol/ '*man*'.

(56)



'*The man (who eats a lot) has a fat body.*'
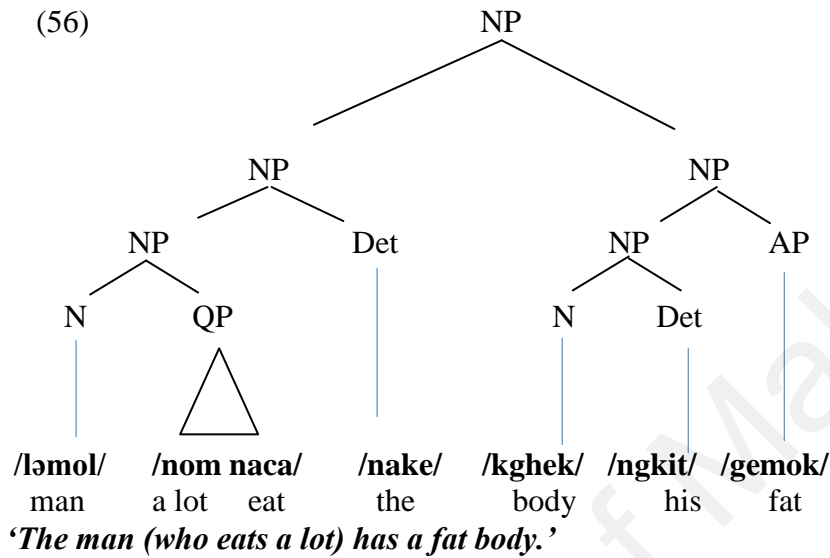
**Figure 4.8 : Indirect Adjectival Modification- Subject Adjective Clause**

(57) **/mak    mahe  uki patuŋ    nake kagha?  ha?  hok/**
    Person  skillful carve sculpture that  lives   at   here
    '*The man (who is skillful in carving sculpture) lives nearby.*'

Sentence (57) shows the relative clause which is an indirect adjective clause follows the noun /mak/ '**man**'.

(58)

TP
- NP
  - NP
    - N — **/mak/** person
    - AP (triangle) — **/mahe uki patuŋ/** skillful carve sculpture
  - Det — **/nake/** that
- T
  - VP
    - V — **/kaghaʔ/** lives
    - PP
      - P — **/haʔ/** at
      - Adv — **/hok/** here

*'The man (who is skillful in carving sculpture) lives nearby.'*
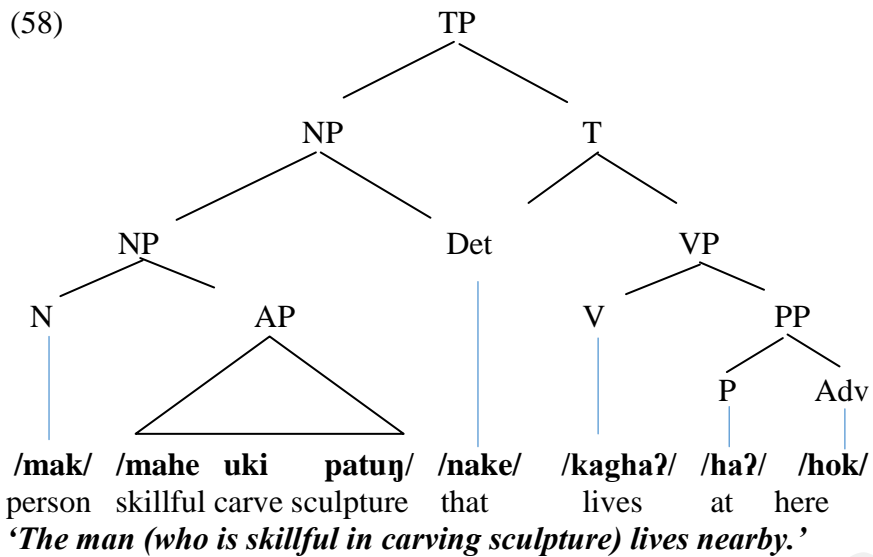
**Figure 4.9 : Indirect Adjectival Modification- Subject Adjective Clause**

ii. Object Adjective Clauses

**(59)** / əʔəd kənal mak dʒual ka nake/
I know person sell fish that
*'I know the man (who sells fish).'*

(60)

TP
- Det — **/əʔəd/** I
- T'
  - T — **/kənal/** know
  - VP
    - V — **/mak/** person
    - NP
      - NP
        - N — **/mak/** person
        - VP (triangle) — **/dʒual ka/** sell fish
      - Det — **/nake/** that

*'I know the man (who sells fish).'*

**Figure 4.10 : Indirect Adjectival Modification- Object Adjective Clause**

(61) **/ka    ke    ɲkiʔ    dʒual həgak mughah/**
    Fish   that   he      sells  price cheap
    *'The fish (that he sells) is cheap.'*

(62)

```
                        NP
            ┌────────────┴────────────┐
           NP                        NP
        ┌───┴───┐                 ┌───┴───┐
        N       CP                N       AP
        │    ┌───┴───┐            │       │
```
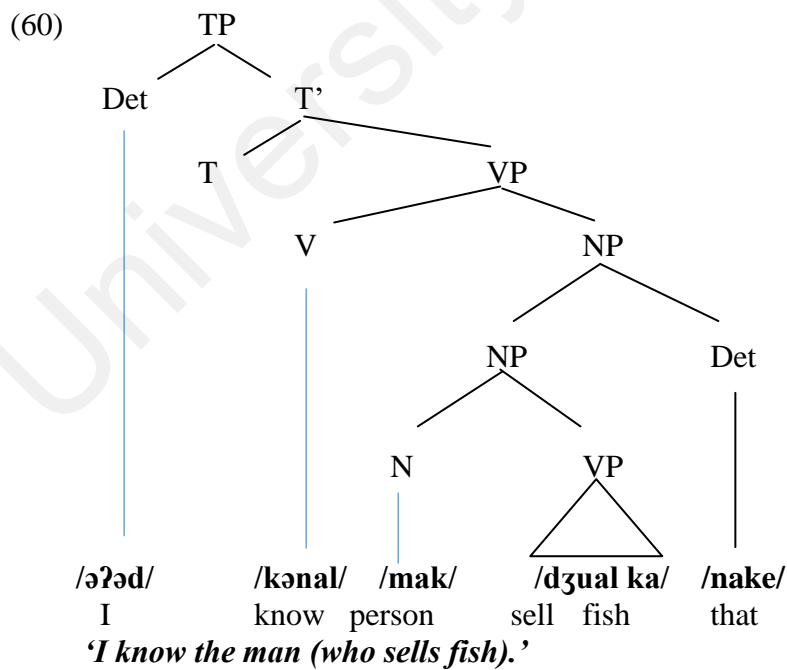
**/ka/**   **/ke   ɲkiʔ   dʒual/**      **/həgak/**   **/mughah/**
Fish    that   he     sells          price        cheap
*'The fish (that he sells) is cheap.'*
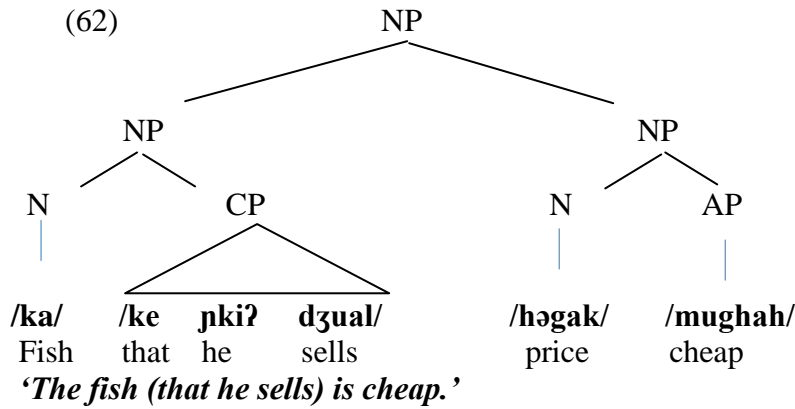
**Figure 4.11 : Indirect Adjectival Modification- Object Adjective Clause**

(63) **/hayam      əʔəd nom  bəli  səməlih  dah/**
    Chicken me many      bought slaughtered     already
    *'The chickens (that I bought just now) have been slaughtered
    already.'*

(64)

```
                        TP
            ┌────────────┴────────────┐
           NP                        T'
        ┌───┴───┐                 ┌───┴───┐
        N       DP                T       VP
        │    ┌───┴───┐            │    ┌───┴───┐
                                       V      Adv
```

**/hayam/**   **/əʔəd  nom bəli/**    **/səməlih/**    **/dah/**
Chicken     me many bought        slaughtered       already
*'The chickens (that I bought just now) have been slaughtered already.'*
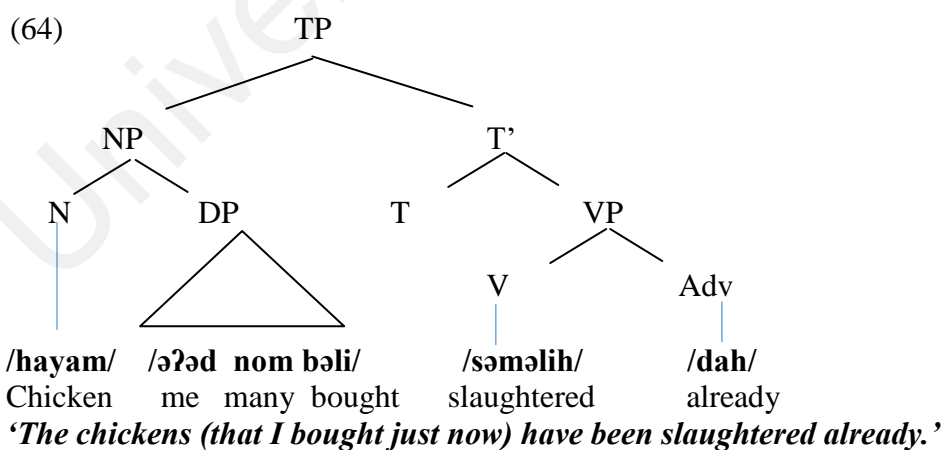
**Figure 4.12 : Indirect Adjectival Modification- Object Adjective Clause**

**(65)** /pəle    haʔ     kəbun əʔəd ɲit/
     Fruit   from   orchard me sweet
     *'The fruit (from my orchard) is sweet.'*

(66)

```
                        DP
                       /  \
                    NP      AP
                   /  \      |
                NP     PP    |
                |     /_\     |
            /pəle   haʔ kəbun əʔəd   ɲit/
            Fruit   from orchard me    sweet
```

*'The fruit (from my orchard) is sweet.'*
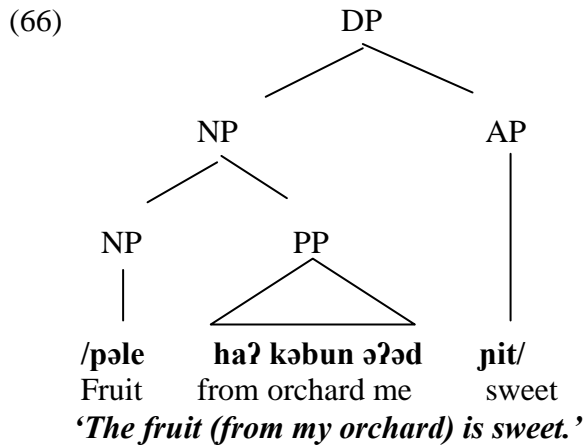
**Figure 4.13 : Indirect Adjectival Modification- Object Adjective Clause**

(67)

```
              TP
             /  \
          Det     T'
           |     /  \
           |    T     VP
           |    |    /  \
           |    |   V     NP
           |    |   |    /  \
           |    |   |   NP     Det
           |    |   |  /  \     |
           |    |   | N    VP   |
           |    |   | |   /_\   |
        /əʔəd/ /kənal/ /mak/ /dʒual ka/ /nake/
          I    know  person  sell fish   that
```

*'I know the man (who sells fish).'*
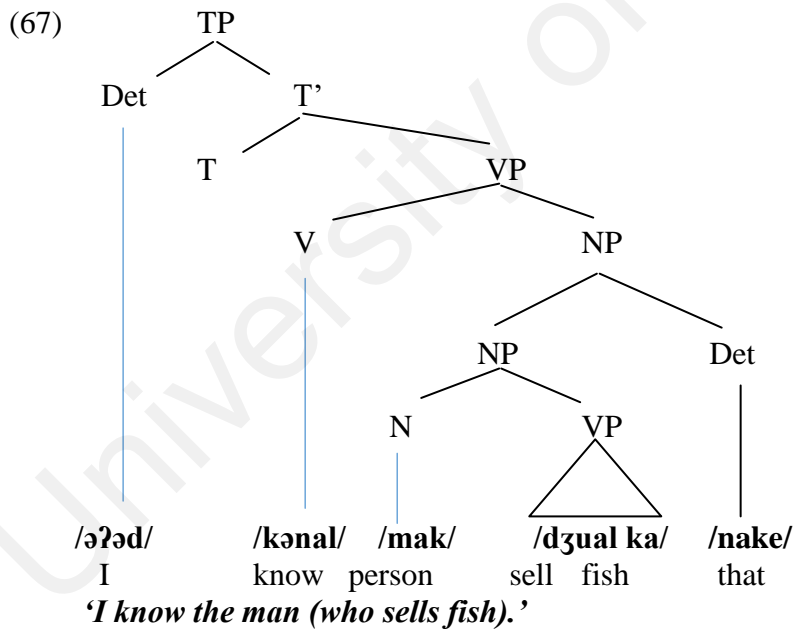
**Figure 4.14 : Indirect Adjectival Modification- Object Adjective Clause**

The examples given above show that the indirect adjectives modifying the objects are in the postnominal modifier positions.

### 4.1.2.6 Predicatives Adjectives [+V](complementary distribution)

The predicatives adjectives head an adjectival phrase external to the DP. It serves as a predicate to the subject NP and takes the place of the verb in the sentence.

(68) **/təkoh nake kadəi/**
Tree that big
***'That tree is big.'***

(69)

NP
  NP          AP
 N   Det
**/təkoh   nake   kadəi/**
Tree      that      big
***'That tree is big.'***
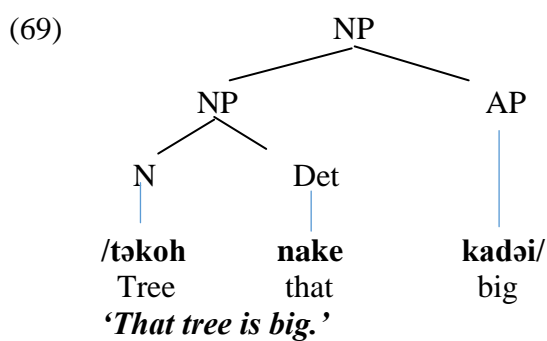
**Figure 4.15 : Predicative Adjective**

(70) **/kasut nohoʔ murah/**
Shoes those cheap
***'Those shoes are cheap.'***

(71)

NP
  NP          AP
 N   Det
**kasut   nohoʔ   murah/**
Shoes    those    cheap
***'Those shoes are cheap.'***
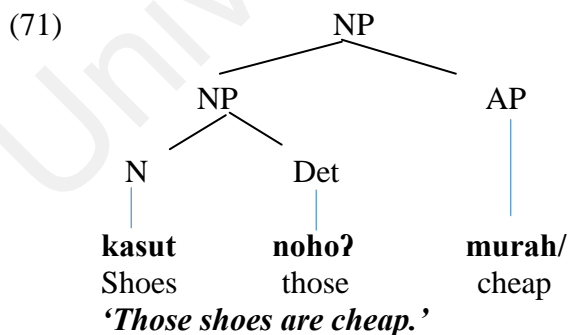
**Figure 4.16 : Predicative Adjective**

The adjectives in (68) and (70) are predicative because they modify the subject NP and become the predicate. The adjectives also take the place of the verb.

88

## 4.1.3    Syntactic Presentation

The head of the adjective phrase (AP) is an adjectival substantive category. The AP template is composed of a specifier, the adjectival head and the complement. The specifiers of AP are called degrees. In Malay the degree (Deg) words are exemplified by the words /terlalu/ 'very', /paling/ 'most', /lebih/ 'more', sangat 'very', sungguh 'very', amat 'very', among a few, which all preced adjective (Rogayah 2003:56). With the adjectival head being obligatory, the specifier and complement are generally optional. Observe the samples of Mah Meri AP in (71) below.

(71) a.          AP                                    b.              AP

    Deg        A                  A        Deg
    |         |                  |        |

  *terlalu*    *sibuk*            *sibuk*    *sangat*
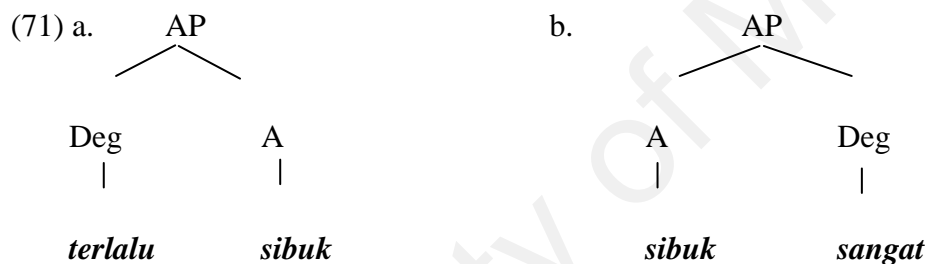
**Figure 4.17 : Specifiers of Adjectives in Preadjectival and Postadjectival Position**

In (71a) the maximal projection AP is composed of the merged constituents Deg /**terlalu**/ '***very***' and A /**sibuk**/ '***busy***'. The sample in (71b) the maximal projection AP is composed of merged constituents A /sibuk/ '***busy***' and the Deg /**sangat**/ '***very***'. In normal speech, the syntactic position of the degrees /**sangat**/, /**sungguh**/ and /**amat**/ is flexible which is either preadjectival or postadjectival [Spec, AP]. However, in the case of the degrees /***terlalu/***, /***paling/*** and /***lebih/***, these degrees have fixed syntactic position preadjectival [Spec, AP].

(72) a. **/apak     ə'ət   dak   ma   tuka/**

    Father      my    has   two   cars

    *'My father has two cars.'*

   b. has:V:<agent, theme>

(73)

  a.    Numeration= { Apa', ə'ət, dak,  ma,  tuka }

  b.    Select **ma**

  c.    Select **tuka**

  d.

```
              QP
             /  \
            Q    NP
            |     |
           ma    tuka
```
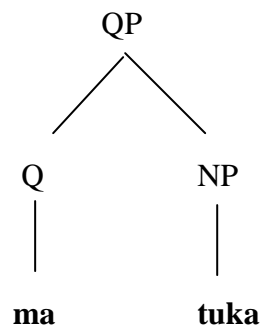
  e.  Select **dak**

  f. Merge (**dak, ma tuka**)

```
              VP
             /  \
            V    DP
            |    /  \
           dak  D    NP
                |     |
               ma    tuka
```

g. Select **Apa' ə'ət**

NP
├── N
│   └── **Apa'**
└── DP
    └── **ə'ət**

h. Merge (**Apa' ə'ət,** VP)

i.

TP
├── NP
│   ├── N
│   │   └── **Apa'**
│   └── DP
│       └── **ə'ət**
└── VP
    ├── V
    │   └── **dak**
    └── DP
        ├── D
        │   └── **ma**
        └── NP
            └── **tuka**

**Apa'**   **ə'ət**   **dak**   **ma**   **tuka**
Father      my         has      two       cars
*'My father has two cars.'*
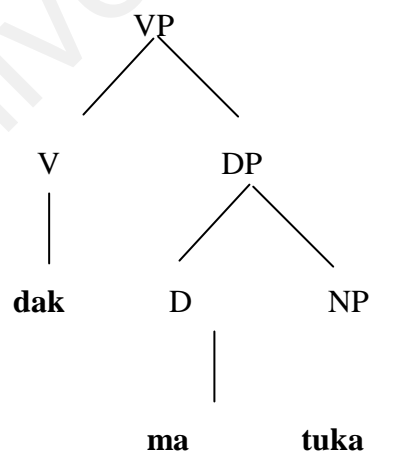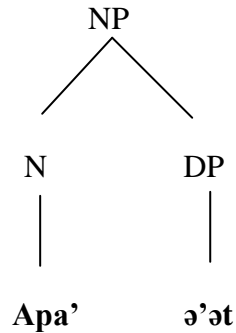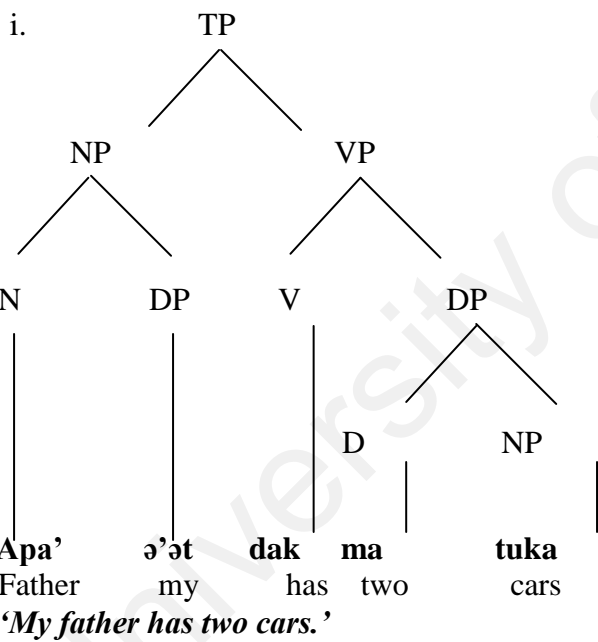
In the Minimalist Program, deriving a structure is done in bottom up fashion which means that the lower structures are computed first before the higher structures. The derivation process shown in (73) is simplified which is devoid of the complex representation of feature checking. This derivation starts with the lexical array or numeration in (73a) and ends with the TP structure in (73i). The first merger is with the LI **ma** 'two' in (73b) followed by LI **tuka** 'cars' in (73c). The first syntactic object is built by merging the two Lis **ma** 'two' and

**tuka** 'cars' as indicated in (73d). This merger is called a quantifier phrase (QP) since the head of the phrase is the quantifier **ma** 'two' with the nominal complement **tuka** 'cars'. This two Lis enter into the sisterhood relationship which is immediately dominated by the maximal projection QP. This QP is treated as an instantiation of DP where quantifiers are also categorized as D (Adger 2003).

After forming the first DP, the computation proceeds further with the selection of the Lis **dak** 'has'. The second merger produces the second syntactic object in the computation which is the [VP [V **dak**] [DP **ma tuka**] as shown in (73f). In this structure, the lexical verb **dak** 'has' has sister precedence with the DP **ma tuka** 'two cars'. In this particular configuration, the verb **dak** 'has' formally theta marks its argument DP **ma tuka** 'two cars' and assigns it the theme theta role via c-command.

To complete the first phase, the computation continues with the selection of the nominal **Apa' ə'ət** as shown in (73k). The DP **Apa' ə'ət** occupies the [Spec, VP] and is formally theta-marked and assigned the agent theta role by VP through the merger with the intermediate structure VP. Completing the derivation of this expression, the syntactic object thereby forming a TP, a phase by itself, as shown in (73i). The computation here supports the idea that the DP which immediately dominated by VP is interpreted as an agent (Adger 2003). Where there is convergence, in the computation toward LF, the derivation does not crash and therefore judged as grammatical by the native speakers.

(74) a. **/ɲkiʔ    nogok    təkoh  kadəi/**

He         cuts down    tree    big

*'He cuts down that big tree.'*

b. /**nogok**/:  V:<agent, theme>

(75)

a. Numeration= { **ɲkiʔ,  nogok,  təkoh, kadəi**}

b.    Select **təkoh**

c. Select **kadəi**

d.
```
                NP
               /  \
              N    AP
              |    |
           təkoh  kadəi
```
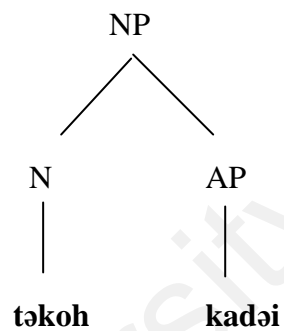
e. Select **nogok**

f. Merge (**nogok,  təkoh kadəi**)
```
               VP
              /  \
             V    NP
             |    /  \
          nogok  N    AP
                 |    |
              təkoh  kadəi
```
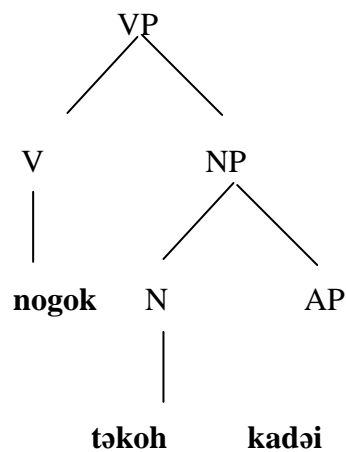
g.  Select **ɲkiʔ**

h.  Merge (**ɲkiʔ,** VP)

i.

```
                        TP
                       /  \
                     DP    VP
                     |    /  \
                     |   V    NP
                     |   |   /  \
                     |   N  AP
                     |   |  |    |
                     |   |  |    |
                 /ɲkiʔ  nogok  təkoh   kadəi/
                  He   cuts down tree    big
              'He cuts down that big tree.'
```
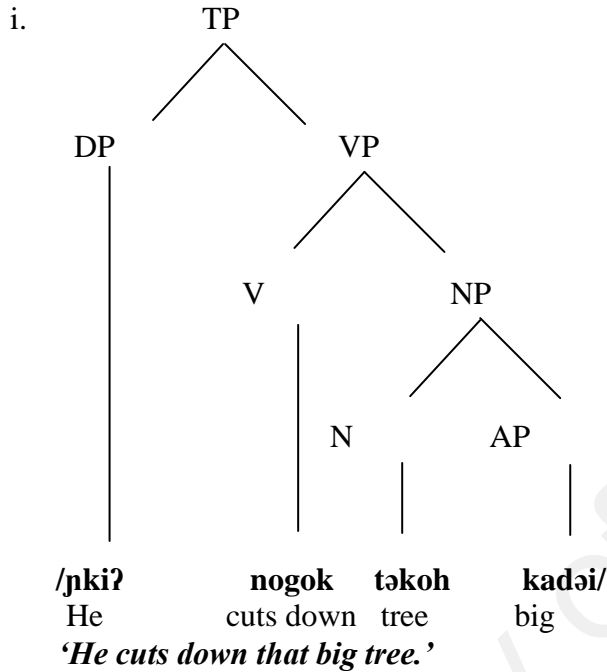
The derivation process shown in (75) is simplified which is devoid of the complex representation of feature checking. This derivation starts with the lexical array or numeration in (75a) and ends with the TP structure in (75i). The first merger is with the LI **təkoh** 'tree' in (75b) followed by LI **kadəi** 'big' in (75c). The first syntactic object is built by merging the two Lis **təkoh** 'tree' and **kadəi** 'big' as indicated in (75d). This merger is called a noun phrase (NP) since the head of the phrase is the noun **təkoh** 'tree' with the nominal complement **kadəi** 'big'. This two Lis enter into the sisterhood relationship which is immediately dominated by the maximal projection NP.

After forming the first NP, the computation proceeds further with the selection of the Lis **nogok** 'cuts'. The second merger produces the second syntactic object in the computation which is the [VP [V **nogok**] [DP **təkoh kadəi**] as shown in (75e). In this structure, the lexical verb **nogok** 'cuts' has sister precedence with the NP **təkoh kadəi** 'big tree'. In this particular configuration, the verb **nogok** 'cuts' formally theta marks its argument NP **təkoh kadəi 'big tree'** and assigns it the theme theta role via c-command.

To complete the first phase, the computation continues with the selection of the nominal **ɲkiʔ** as shown in (75g). The DP **ɲkiʔ** occupies the [Spec, VP] and is formally theta-marked and assigned the agent theta role by VP through the merger with the intermediate structure VP. Completing the derivation of this expression, the syntactic object thereby forming a TP, a phase by itself, as shown in (75i). The computation here supports the idea that the NP which immediately dominated by VP is interpreted as an agent (Adger 2003). Where there is convergence, in the computation toward LF, the derivation does not crash and therefore judged as grammatical by the native speakers.

## 4.2 Research Question 2: Analyze the multiple adjectives ordering of the Mah Meri language

### 4.2.1 Semantics

Raskin and Nirenburg (2007) stated that adjective differs from other class syntactically. The difference can be explained clearly with the semantic explanation (Norliza Jamaluddin, 2011). Semantic is the linguistics study of meaning.

**4.2.1.1    Semantic Sets**

Adjectives in many languages have been arranged according to their meanings into a few semantic types. The types are always referred to concrete reference, for example FEMALE (e.g. 'beautiful', 'slender') and HUMAN EMOTION (e.g. 'love', 'hate').  The adjective class in Mah Meri includes the thirteen semantic types identified by Dixon (2004). The semantic types are dimension, age, value, colour, physical property, human propensity, speed, difficulty, similarity, qualification, quantification, position and cardinal numbers. By lexical semantics, its descriptive content is visible in terms of lexical relations of antonym and synonymy.

Appendix C shows four core semantic groups in a language which are dimension, age, color and value. The lists of words are by data collected on several domains in the second interview session. The researcher categorised the data into the table using the proposed semantic types by Dixon (2004, page 3-5).  The first core semantic type in the table is dimension which comprises of a few smaller groups (Height, weight, size). Lexical items on height and size groups have adjectives from both the Mah Meri language and loanwords from the Malay language. Lexical items on weight were from Malay language. As for the other core semantic types, all have balance adjectives from Mah Meri language and loanwords from Malay except one core semantic type which is colour. All the adjectives in this semantic type are loanwords from Malay language only.

Adjectives in Mah Meri reflected an open class. According to Loga Mahesan Baskaran (2005), open class means that adjectives in this language remain open to new additions which have grammatical features and structural possibilities similar to theirs. It could be simple word that contains one morpheme only or complex word that contains more than one morpheme as long as it has vocabulary content or lexical import.  It is evident by the element

of loans incorporated into the class. Borrowings mainly come from Malay which is the country's official language and is being used by Mah Meri people in most of their daily interactions.

Other than the core semantic groups, there are a number of peripheral semantic types that are associated with medium sized and large adjective classes as found in the proposed semantic types by Dixon (2004, page 3-5). The researcher categorised the data that has been collected into the table in Appendix D using semantic types framework by (Dixon, 2004, page 3-5). Most adjectives from Mah Meri language are only a few, simple and easy to pronounce than adjectives from Malay language which appear to be more and complex.

### 4.2.2      Orderings of Multiple adjectives-Semantics

Two or more adjectives can modify a noun in Mah Meri, but such occasions are very rare. When there are two adjectives as modifier, they can be compound adjectives. The function of compound adjectives may be as an intensification of one particular adjective, or the combination of two different adjectives with two individual meanings, or two adjectives with the meaning of one adjective.

**Table 4.2 : Compound Adjectives**

| LI No | Root Adjectives | Gloss | Compound Adjectives | Gloss | Function |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | /merah/ | *red* | /merah təŋek/ | *dark red* | Intensity |
| 2 | /təŋek/ | *dark* | | | |
| 3 | /masam/ | *sour* | /masam manis/ | *sweet sour* | Combination of two different adjectives with two individual meanings. |
| 4 | /manis/ | *sweet* | | | |
| 5 | /lemah/ | *weak* | /lemah lemot/ | *gentle* | Two adjectives with the meaning of one adjectives. |
| 6 | /lemot/ | *gentle* | | | |
| 7 | /mudʒur/ | *oval* | /mudʒur sireh/ | *oval* | Two adjectives with the meaning of one adjectives. |
| 8 | /sireh/ | *leaf* | | | |

The compound adjectives of **/merah təŋek/** *'dark red'* show the function of intensity. Therefore, they also can be written with the marker **/hel/** *'very'* as **/merah həl/** *'dark red'.* Meanwhile, **/masam manis/** *'sweet sour'* do not have the function of intensity but merely the combination of two adjectives with two individual meanings. Usually the combination of two or more adjectives with individual meaning (if they are from different semantic groups), shall need certain orderings in a phrase and this varies from one language to another. As for the compound adjectives **/lemah lemot/** *'gentle'* and **/mudʒur sireh/** *'oval'*, the combination of adjectives has the meaning of one adjective which is the root adjectives **/lemot/** 'gentle' and **/mudʒur/** 'oval' but with the presence of another adjective, the phrase has specific meaning, for example, **/lemah lemot/** *'gentle'* shows the person's characteristics as a gentle person and **/mudʒur sireh/** *'oval'* means that the person has an oval face. They are among a few expressions that have been borrowed from Malay language. The orderings of the compound adjectives as given in the example are fixed.

The orderings of two or more adjectives in Mah Meri language that are from a few different semantic groups are analysed using The Scale of Permanence Continuum by Quirk et al(1985) which suggested that the orderings of multiple adjectives will be according to the permanent characteristics towards the temporary characteristics. Mah Meri adjectives can precede noun as pre-nominal modifier and they also can follow noun as post-nominal modifier. The examples are as follows:

**Prenominal Strings**

(76) /hitam      kilat      suk      ŋkit/
ADJ-black    ADJ-shiny    N-hair   POSS-his
*'His black shiny hair.'*

(77) / botak     liu      koi      ɲkiʔ/
ADJ- bald   ADJ-smooth  N-head     POSS-him
*'His bald smooth head.'*

(78) /səghaŋ    putih    aŋkeh    ma'       nake  /
ADJ-tall    ADJ- white  ADJ- slim  N-person    DEM-that
*'That tall fair slim person.'*

**Postnominal Strings**

(79) /suk  ŋkit       hitam     kilat/
N-hair  POSS-his   ADJ-black   ADJ-shiny
*'His black shiny hair.'*

(80) /koi      ɲkiʔ     botak    liu/
N-Head   POSS-his   ADJ-bald   ADJ-smooth
*'His bald smooth head.'*

(81) /ma'      nake      səghaŋ     putih     aŋkeh /
N-Person  DEM-that   ADJ-tall     ADJ- white ADJ- slim
*'That tall fair slim person.'*

The orderings of the multiple adjectives has shown similarity with The Scale of Permanence Continuum by Quirk et al(1985) that suggested that the orderings of the multiple adjectives will be according to the permanent characteristics towards the temporary characteristics. In sentence (76) and (79), the adjectives **/hitam kilat/** '*black shiny'* are definitely following this continuum as **/hitam/** '*black*' is a permanent characteristic while /kilat/ '*shiny*' is a temporary state.  In sentence (77) and (80), the orderings of adjectives **/botak liu/** '*bald smooth'* are following the continuum as well because **/botak/** '*bald'* is a longer state than  /liu/ '*smooth'* which is a temporary one*.* The orderings of adjectives in sentence (78) and (81) also are following the continuum since the three adjectives /**səghaŋ putih aŋkeh /** '*tall fair slim'* start with the permanent characteristics of /**səghaŋ/** '*tall*' and /**putih/** '*fair'* and move to **/aŋkeh/** '*slim*' which is a temporary state from all the three. The respondent said that another adjectives orderings which is accepted for this is /**səghaŋ aŋkeh putih /** '*tall slim fair'.* A person surely can't change the characteristics of being tall but the other two characteristics may or may not change but do reflects temporariness. As for the orderings of the adjectives when they are in the manner of a pre-nominal modifier or as a post-nominal modifier, all the orderings given in the samples exist in the same order whether they are a pre-nominal modifier or a post-nominal modifier.

## 4.3    Research Question 3: Analyze the Mah Meri word order based on the proposed nominal word order of Southeast Asian language

### 4.3.1    Nominal word order facts in other Southeast Asian languages

There are many language families in Southeast Asia. Many of the language families portray similar typological features and nominal word order structures due to their close geographical features and contacts with each other. Mah Meri language is from the Mon-Khmer Austroasiatic language family while the official language of Malaysia which is Malay

language is from the Austronesian language family. The following table exhibits the nominal word order for four types of language groups.

**Table 4.3** : **Nominal Word Order of Southeast Asia**

| Type | Language Group | Nominal Word Order |
|------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Yao. | Dem  Num  CL  N  A |
| 2 | Burmese, Lolo, Maru, Lahu, Rawang and Ancient Chinese. | Dem  N  A  Num  CL |
| 3 | Vietnamese, Malay, Indonesian, Nung, Miao (also called Hmong or Meo), White Tai, Black Tai, Sedang, Sre, Katu, Cham and Brou. | Num  CL  N  A  Dem |
| 4 | Thai, Khmer, Lao, Javanese, Khmu, Shan, Palaung and Karen. | N  A  Num  CL  Dem |

(Jones 1970, as cited in Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004)

Based on the table 4.3, Type 1 represents Yao language. Word order Type 2 is found in Burmese, Lolo, Maru, Lahu, Rawang and Ancient Chinese. Word order Type 3 is for Vietnamese, Malay, Indonesian, Nung, Miao (also called Hmong or Meo), White Tai, Black Tai, Sedang, Sre, Katu, Cham and Brou. Type 4 language groups are Thai, Khmer, Lao, Javanese, Khmu, Shan, Palaung and Karen.  According to the nominal word orders, Tuong Hung Nguyen (2004) has made generalization on the followings:

a) N and its postnominal A are always adjacent.

b) Num always precedes CL.

c) Dem is always either first or last in the noun phrase.

By using the Minimalist Framework, Tuong Hung Nguyen (2004) suggested the construction of the four group nominal word order in the following table:

Table 4.4 : The Underlying Word Order Structure

| Type | The Underlying Word Order Structure. | The Same Underlying Word Order Structure. |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Dem [Num CL [NP]] | Dem [Num [CL NP]] |
| 2 | Dem [[NP] Num CL] | |
| 3 | [Num CL [NP]] Dem | |
| 4 | [[NP] Num CL] Dem | |

(Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004)

Table 4.6 shows the underlying word order structure for four groups of language families. Mah Meri language falls into Type 4 and the word order for Mah Meri is '[[NP] Num CL] Dem' while Malay language falls into Type 3 with the underlying word order of '[Num CL [NP]] Dem'. The difference between these two word order structures is the position of NP.

**(82)**
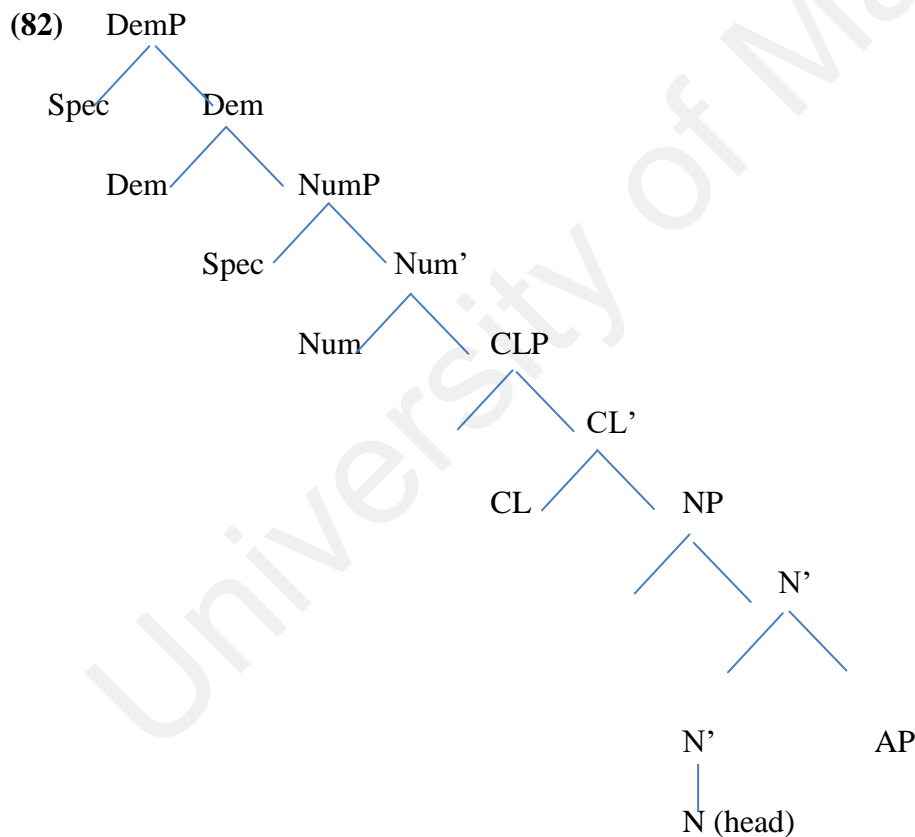


(Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004)

**Figure 4.18 : The Underlying Nominal Structure of the Southeast Asian Languages.**

102

On the basis of the surface structure proposed in Figure 4.1 the analysis of the XP movement present four possibilities which are based on the two movement occurrence:

**Table 4.5 : The Movement Occurrence Rule**

| Two movement occurrence rule | Language Type | Movement Occurence |
|---|---|---|
| Rule 1 - NP to Spec, NUmP<br><br>Rule 2 - NumP to Spec, DemP | 1 | No movement. |
| | 2 | Rule 1 |
| | 3 | Rule 2 |
| | 4 | Both Rule 1 and 2 |

(Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004)

In order to analyse Mah Meri sentence structures using the proposed nominal word orders, The sentences must have the presence of Numerals (Num), Demonstratives (Dem), Classifier (CL), Noun (N) and Adjective (Adj). The followings are a few sentences from Mah Meri language which can be used to find the underlying nominal word orders:

**(83)** **/kenon** **nomboh** **mui**/
N- child   CL-number   NUM- one
'*First child'*

**(84)**

```
                        NP
                      /    \
                    /        \
                  N          NumP
                  |         /    \
                  |       /        \
                  |     Spec       Num'
                  |               /    \
                  |             /        \
                  |           Num         CLP
                  |            |            \
                  |            |            CL'
                  |            |             |
                  |            |            CL
                  |            |             |
                  |            |             |
              /kenon/      /nomboh/        /mui/
              N- child    CL-number      NUM- one
              'First child'
```

**Figure 4.19 : Tree Structure of Word Order Sequence**

Sentence structure in (84) is for the sentence in (83). Here the nominal phrases in Mah Meri language follow the word order sequence of Rule 1 [NP to Spec, NUmP].

**(85)** **/mui          mak          ladʒin/**
      NUM-one    N-person    ADJ-hardworking
      *'A hardworking woman.'*

**(86)**

```
                    DemP
                   /    \
               Spec      Dem
                        /    \
                    Dem      NumP
                            /    \
                        Spec      Num'
                                 /    \
                             Num       CLP
                                      /
                                   CL'
                                  /   \
                                CL     NP
                                        \
                                         N'
                                        /  \
                                     N'     AP
                                     |      /\
                                 N (head)  /__\
```

**/ mui /**                 **/ mak /**     **/ ladʒin/ /**
NUM-one             N-person    ADJ-hardworking
***'A hardworking woman.'***

**Figure 4.20 : Tree Structure of Word Order Sequence**

Structure in (86) which is for the sentence in (85) shows that the nominal phrases in Mah

Meri language which follow the word order sequence of Rule 2.

**(87) /mui       tandan       hentok/**
      NUM-one     CL- big bunch N-bananas
    ***'One big bunch of bananas'***

**(88)**

```
                    DemP
                   /    \
               Spec      Dem
                        /    \
                     Dem      NumP
                             /    \
                         Spec      Num'
                                  /    \
                               Num      CLP
                                          \
                                           CL'
                                          /   \
                                        CL     NP
                                                 \
                                                  N'
                                                  |
                                                  N (head)
                                                  |
        / mui /        /tandan /          / hentok /
        NUM-one        CL- big bunch      N-bananas
                'One big bunch of bananas'
```
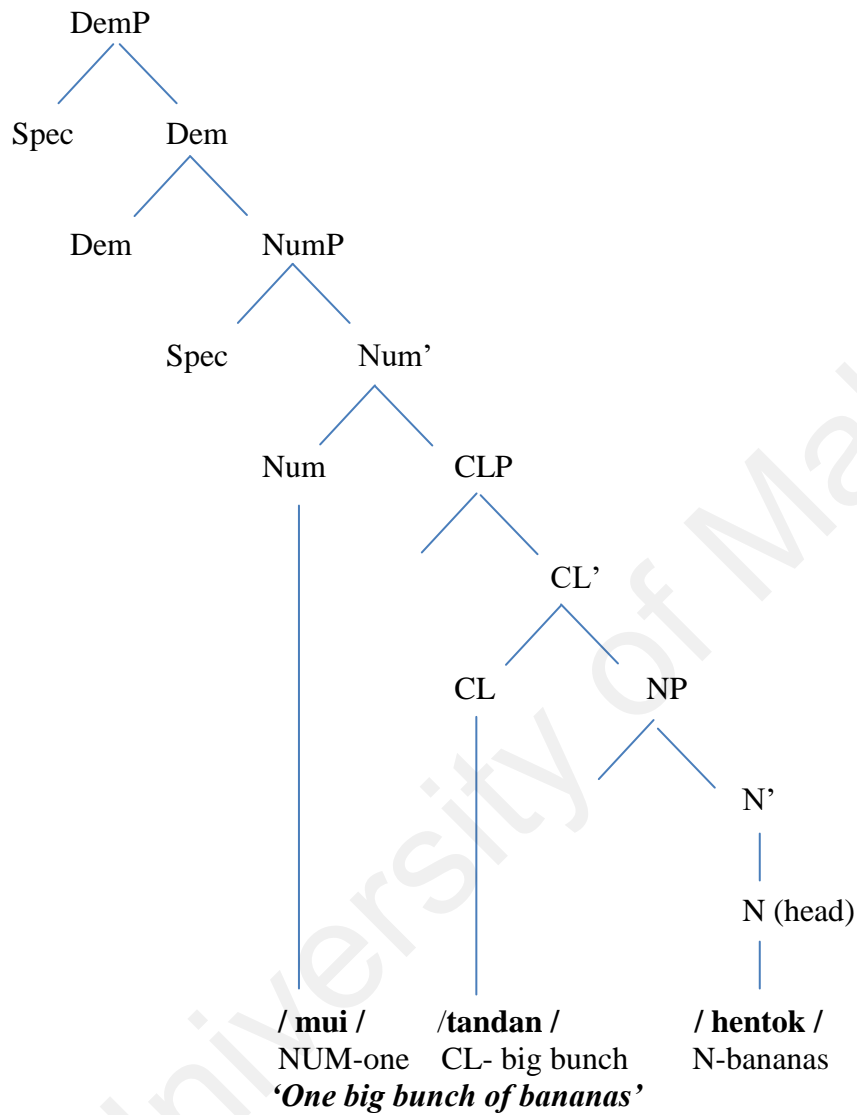
**Figure 4.21 : Tree Structure of Word Order Sequence**

Structure in (88) which is for the sentence in (87) shows that the nominal phrases in Mah Meri language which follow the word order sequence of Rule 2.

**(89)  /ma          kuntum        buŋak        loʔop-loʔop/**
      NUM-two      CL            N-flowers    ADJ-fragrant
      ***'Two fragrant flowers.'***

**(90)**

```
                    DemP
                   /    \
              Spec      Dem
                       /    \
                    Dem      NumP
                            /    \
                        Spec      Num'
                                 /    \
                             Num      CLP
                                        \
                                        CL'
                                       /    \
                                     CL      NP
                                              \
                                              N'
                                             /    \
                                           N'      AP
                                            |      /\
                                    N (head)      /  \
                                            |    /____\
```

/ma/          /kuntum/        /buŋak/        /loʔop-loʔop/
NUM-two      CL              N-flowers      ADJ-fragrant
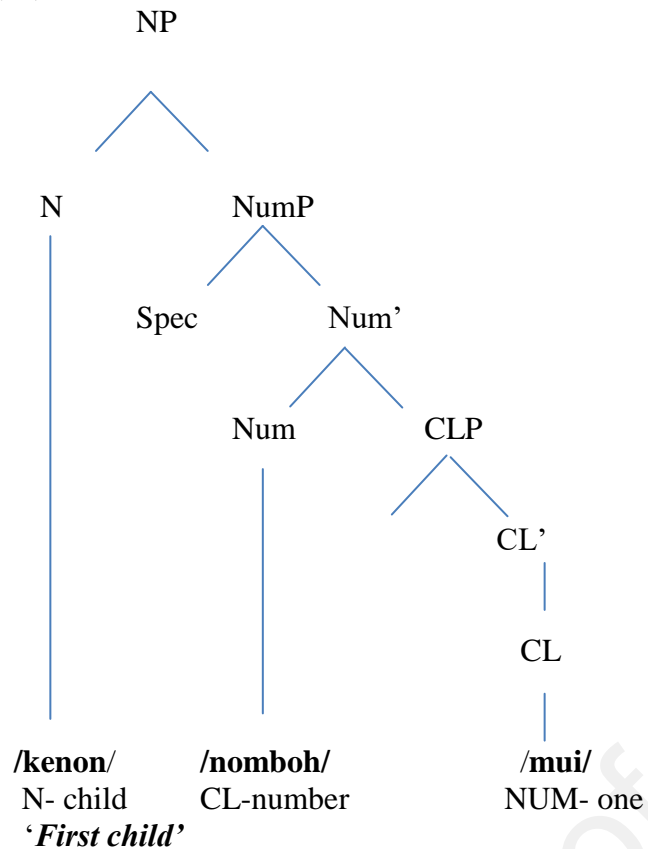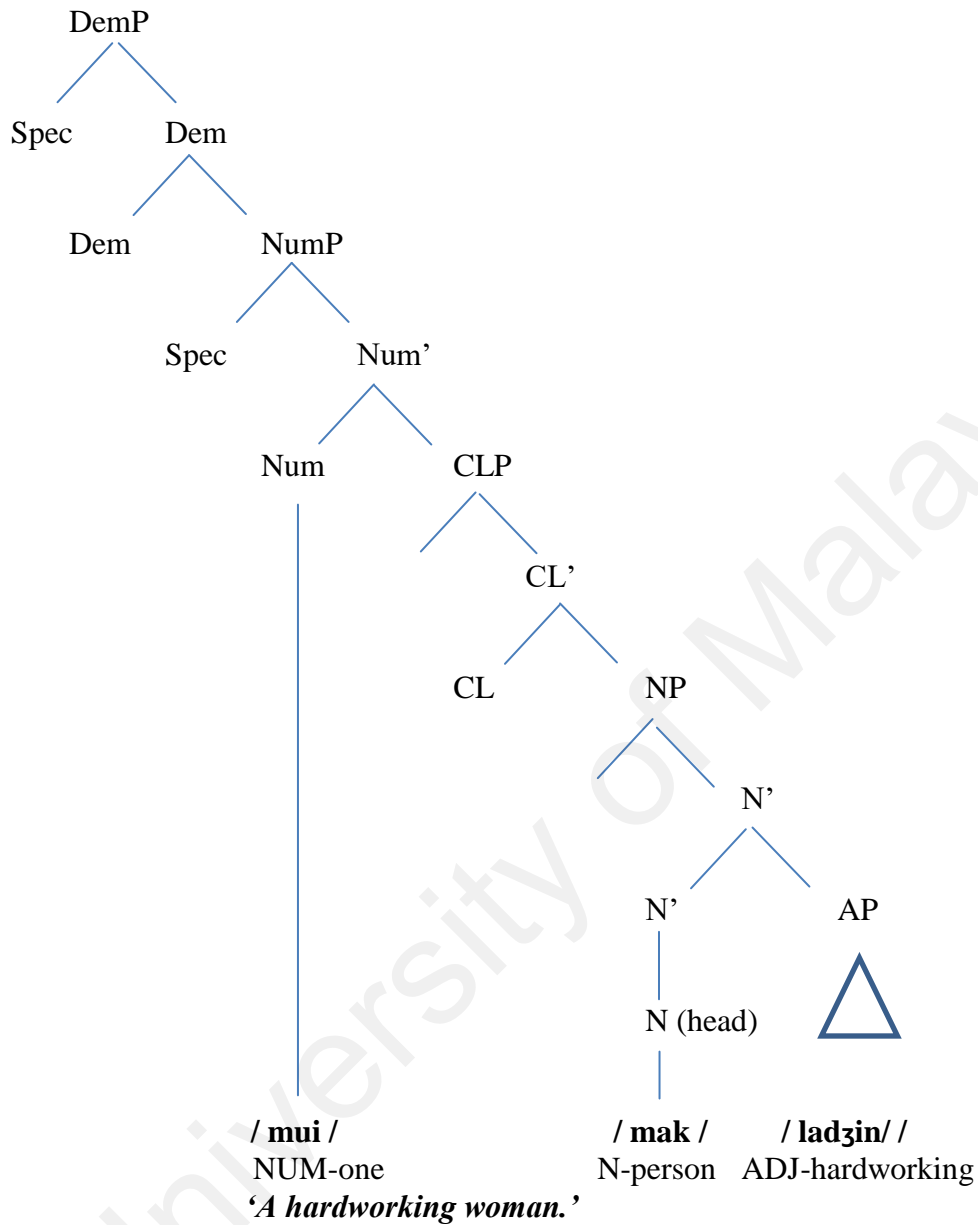***'Two fragrant flowers.'***
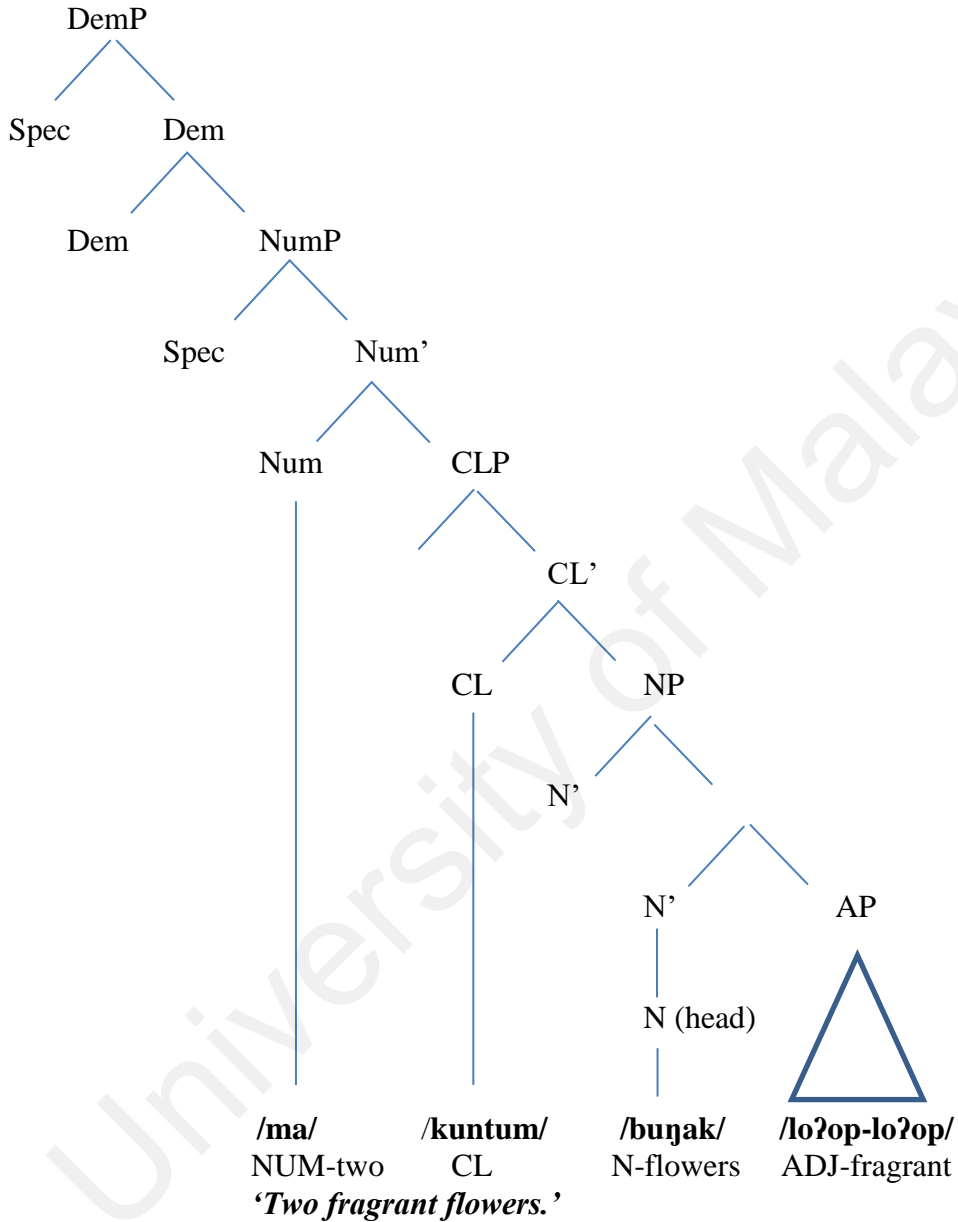
**Figure 4.22 : Tree Structure of Word Order Sequence**

Structure in (90)  which is for the sentence in (89) shows that the nominal phrases in Mah

Meri language which follow the word order sequence of Rule 2.

107

Mah Meri language is from the Austroasiatic family along with language Type 4 which are Thai, Khmer, Lao, Javanese, Khmu, Shan, Palaung and Karen, it can follow Rule 1 and Rule 2. That is why the Mah Meri language can have similar word order with the Malay language (follow Rule 2 only) and this explains why the Mah Meri language has borrowed a lot of words and expressions from Malay language. Sadly, this might also be the reason why the words in Mah Meri language are easily replaced with Malay word.

**CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

**5.1     Aim**

The objective of this study is to provide an analysis of the Mah Meri adjective phrase from the Minimalist perspective. This study intends to investigate the syntactic structure of the Mah Meri Adjective Phrase at Kg Sg Bumbun, Pulau Carey, Selangor. Apart from that, this study intends to:

a)    analyze the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri adjectives;

b)    analyze the multiple adjectives ordering of the Mah Meri language; and

c)     analyze the Mah Meri word order based on the proposed nominal word order of

      Southeast Asian language

The data of the study was collected qualitatively by having a few series of interview sessions with the respondent. The data which was audio-recorded, was then translated into Malay and English language, then continued to be transcribed and analyzed in order to provide answers for the research questions.

**5.2     Summary of Findings**

The research attempts to present the analysis on the configuration and the typological description of adjective in Mah Meri language. This findings are based on the research questions and are divided into three major parts. The first part explicates the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri adjectives and also answers the first research question. The second part is concerned with the multiple adjectives ordering of the Mah Meri language.

Lastly the findings discuss the word order based on the Mah Meri AP structures using the proposed nominal word order of Southeast Asian language. Thus, this research establishes the adjectival category of Mah Meri and presents its structures.

### 5.2.1 Research Question 1: Analyze the morphosyntactic properties of the Mah Meri adjectives

A morphosyntactic property is a grammatical property which affects (or is affected by) relevant aspects of morphology and syntax (Radford, 2009). Thus, to answer the research question 1, both morphological and syntactical aspects of Mah Meri adjectives are analysed. The morphological properties of Mah Meri can be seen in its ability to have grades, and reduplication. As for the syntactical properties, the Mah Meri adjectives can precede noun as pre-nominal modifier and it also can follow noun as post-nominal modifier. Adjectives in Mah Meri have two primary functions which are attributive and predicative. Adjectives function as an attributive when they modify nominals as signified by its [+N] categorial feature (Nik Safiah Karim 1995:104-105, 117). In the sentential construction, adjectives function as predicative as signified by its [+V] categorial feature. The predicative adjective is in complementary distribution with the verb when it takes the place of the non-existent verb in any given sentence (Jubilado, 2010, page 101).

### 5.2.2 Research Question 2: Analyze the multiple adjectives ordering of the Mah Meri language

Multiple adjectives ordering are based on the ordering of the thirteen semantic types identified by Dixon (2004). The semantic types are dimension, age, value, colour, physical property, human propensity, speed, difficulty, similarity, qualification, quantification, position and cardinal numbers. Semantic is the linguistics study of meaning. The orderings of

two or more adjectives in Mah Meri language that are from a few different semantic groups are analysed using The Scale of Permanence Continuum by Quirk et al (1985) which suggested that the orderings of multiple adjectives will be according to the permanent characteristics towards the temporary characteristics. Based on the analysis, the Mah Meri adjectives follow the proposed Scale of Permanence Continuum by Quirk et al(1985). Mah Meri adjectives can precede noun as pre-nominal modifier and they also can follow noun as post-nominal modifier.

### 5.2.3 Research Question 3: Analyze the Mah Meri word order based on the proposed nominal word order of Southeast Asian language

The Mah Meri word order is analyzed based on the proposed nominal word order of the Southeast Asian language. By using the Minimalist Framework, the syntactic tree presentation is drawn to find out the nominal word order of the Mah Meri language and if it has similar structure with the Malay language. The Mah Meri language is from the Austroasiatic family along with language Type 4 which are Thai, Khmer, Lao, Javanese, Khmu, Shan, Palaung and Karen. It can follow Rule 1 and Rule 2 (Table 5.1 & Table 5.2). That is why the Mah Meri language can have similar word order with the Malay language (follow Rule 2) and this explains why the Mah Meri language has borrowed a lot of words and expressions from the Malay language. Sadly, this might also be the reason why the word in Mah Meri language is easily replaced with a Malay word.

111

**Table 5.1 : Nominal Word Order of Southeast Asia**

| Type | Language Group | Nominal Word Order |
|------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Yao. | Dem  Num  CL  N  A |
| 2 | Burmese, Lolo, Maru, Lahu, Rawang and Ancient Chinese. | Dem  N  A  Num  CL |
| 3 | Vietnamese, Malay, Indonesian, Nung, Miao (also called Hmong or Meo), White Tai, Black Tai, Sedang, Sre, Katu, Cham and Brou. | Num  CL  N  A  Dem |
| 4 | Thai, Khmer, Lao, Javanese, Khmu, Shan, Palaung and Karen. | N  A  Num  CL  Dem |

(Jones 1970, as cited in Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004)

**Table 5.2 : The Movement Occurrence Rule**

| Two movement occurrence rule | Language Type | Movement Occurence |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Rule 1  -  NP to Spec, NUmP

Rule 2  -  NumP to Spec, DemP | 1 | No movement. |
| | 2 | Rule 1 |
| | 3 | Rule 2 |
| | 4 | Both Rule 1 and 2 |

(Tuong Hung Nguyen, 2004)

## 5.3     Limitation of Study

The data for this study is only being gathered through the audio-recording using digital voice recorder. If the data could be collected using the triangulation method which involved the use of video-recorder and also questionnaires, perhaps more research areas could be explored in the future. Data collected could be used to analyse other research/ linguistic areas.

## 5.4 Future Directions and Recommendations

Future study with a larger sample could be carried out to provide better results. This could be done by extending the number of respondents and/or by using corpus data. The number of languages being researched can be increased as well to be a typological study (e.g. other Aslian austroasiatics language in Malaysia). These days there has been numerous research done to compare the characteristics of the Austroasiatic (Aslian) language with the Austronesian (Malay) language. If the number of languages that are being compared is big, other than representing a broad typological range, these languages are from different language families and hence offer a wide sample in terms of language genealogy.

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# APPENDIX A

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
## MAH MERI ADJECTIVE PHRASE

**CONTENT**

INSTRUCTIONS

FIRST SESSION
1. GREETINGS
2. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION OF RESPONDENT
3. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LANGUAGE

SECOND SESSION
1. TRANSLATING THE PREVIOUS RECORDED MAH MERI SPEECH INTO MALAY  LANGUAGE
2. BASIC CONSTITUENT ORDER
3. ADJECTIVE (BASED ON MAH MERI BOOK)

THIRD SESSION
1. WORD ORDER TYPOLOGY –ADJECTIVE

**INSTRUCTIONS**

The following questionnaire is to be filled out by a linguist who is either a native speaker of the language in question or in collaboration with a native speaker.

**FIRST SESSION**

| **GREETINGS** | |
|---|---|
| *Kami adalah pelajar dan pensyarah dari Universiti Malaya. Kami ingin membuat sesi temuramah bagi kajian tentang Bahasa Mah Meri. Temuramah akan mengambil lebih kurang dua jam. Semua maklumat yang kami perolehi akan dirahsiakan dan kami hanya mendedahkan apa yang dipersetujui oleh pihak tuan.* <br><br> We are students and lecturers from University of Malaya. We are conducting an interview on the study of Mah Meri language. The interview will take about 2 hours. All the information we obtain will remain strictly confidential. We will only share information that are agreed/endorsed by you. | ☐ No, permission is not given <br><br> ☐ Yes, permission is given |
| *Boleh saya mula?* <br><br> May I start now? | Record the time and then begin the interview. <br><br> Hour and  minutes __: __ __ |

**RELIMINARY INFORMATION OF RESPONDENT**

1. *Siapakah nama anda?*
   What is your name?

2. *Pada tahun berapakah anda dilahirkan?*
   In what year were you born?

3. *Berapakah umur anda?*
   How old are you?

4. *Where were you born at?*
   Di manakah anda dilahirkan?

5. *Di manakah anda tinggal? Berapa lama?*
   Where do you live? How long?

6. *Apakah bahasa pertuturan anda?*
   What are your spoken languages?

7. *Adakah anda boleh membaca dan menulis?*
   Can you read and write?

8. *Apakah latar belakang pendidikan anda?*
   What is your educational background?

9. *Apakah pekerjaan anda?*
   What is your profession?

10. *Adakah anda sudah beristeri?*
    Are you married?

11. *Adakah anda mempunyai anak? Berapa orang? Berapakah umur mereka?*
    Do you have children? How many? How old are they?

**GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE USE OF THE LANGUAGE**

1. *Apakah nama bahasa bagi orang Mah Meri?*
   What is the name of Mah Meri language?

2. *Di mana bahasa ini dituturkan?*
   Where is this language spoken at?

3. *Berapa orang penutur bahasa Mah Meri*?
   How many Mah Meri speakers?

4. *Apakah jenis tradisi pertuturan bahasa Mah Meri?*
   What are the genre of Mah Meri oral traditions?

5.  *Berapa ramai penutur bahasa Mah Meri yang pandai berbahasa Melayu dan juga penutur yang mahir berbahasa lain?*
    How many Mah Meri speakers who are competent in Malay and how many who know other language?

6.  *Adakah orang luar mempelajari bahasa Mah Meri atau mereka menggunakan bahasa lain untuk berkomunikasi?*
    Do outsiders learn their language or do they use lingua franca?

7.  *Apakah agama penutur bahasa Mah Meri?*
    What is the religious affiliation of the people who speak the language?

8.  *Apakah Bahasa yang digunakan di*
    What is the language spoken

    *-rumah?*
    at home?

    *-antara dua orang dewasa masyarakat Mah Meri?*
    between two Mah Meri adult?

    *-kedai runcit semasa membeli barang?*
    when shopping at the local shop?

    *-dalam kelas antara guru dan pelajar?*
    in class between teacher and student?

    *-luar sekolah antara guru dan pelajar?*
    outside school between teacher and student?

    *-majlis rasmi semasa majlis perkahwinan oleh juru acara?*
    during wedding ceremony by the wedding instructor?

    *-majlis rasmi semasa majlis perkahwinan antara tetamu?*
    During wedding ceremony between guests?

    *-acara keagamaan?*
    during religious activities?

**TRANSLATING THE PREVIOUS RECORDED SPEECH IN MAH MERI LANGUAGE**

**BASIC CONSTITUENT ORDER**

a) Find out the structure of the language and meaning of the words.

b) Find out the word order of constituents in the Mah Meri sentences.

**ADJECTIVE**

Types of adjectives according to several domains.

1. Family (Daily activities, characteristics, physical traits)
2. Food and drinks
3. Job (Job of informant and people of Mah Meri)
4. Transportation
5. Fruit orchard - Fruits
6. Market
7. Cultural centre
8. Jungle – Animal and plants
9. School

What to look out for:

a) From Nicole Krispe Journal
1. Dimension (Size, Length, Height, Thickness)
2. Colour
3. Physical Property
4. Value (be good, be ugly, be beautiful)
5. Age (old person, old things, be new)
6. Distance (jauh, dekat)
7. Quantification (ramai, banyak)
8. Qualification (usual, normal, unusual, different)
9. Speed (be swift, be slow)
10. Human propensity ( be insane, be clever)

b) Synonymy (*sama maksud i.e. cantik, lawa*)

c) Antonymy (*sifat berlawanan*)

d) Hyponymy (another words for comparative, superlative )

e) Compound Adjectives (i.e. *hitam legam*)

f) Ordering of adjectives (if *ada 2 atau lebih adj-mybe tmbah 'yang', 'dan*

**THIRD SESSION**

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**WORD ORDER TYPOLOGY –ADJECTIVE**

    A. Berikan ayat Mah Meri yang lengkap menggunakan ayat-ayat di bawah.
    B. Berikan ayat-ayat lain dalam versi Mah Meri.
    C. Sila nyatakan struktur ayat yang tepat dalam Bahasa Mah Meri.


1. Attributive [+N] (Modify noun)
  a. Base form
    *1. Buah manis itu dari kebun saya./ Buah-buahan manis itu dari kebun saya.*
    *2. *Wangi bunga yang awak petik itu. (*pre-nominal adj)*
    *3. Dia menebang pokok besar itu/ Besar pokok yang dia tebang itu.*
    4. *Ayah saya memiliki 2 *buah kereta.( *Penjodoh bil-find out more)*
    5. *Itu *bukan anak saya.(*-ve)*

  b. Subject adjective clauses
    *1. Saya kenal orang [yang menjual ikan] itu.*
    *2. Orang [yang mahir mengukir patung] itu tinggal di sini.*
    *3. Lelaki [yang makan banyak] itu abang saya.*

  c. Object adjective clauses
    *1. Ikan [yang segar/*segar-segar] itu dijual dengan murah.(*reduplication)*
    *2. Ayam [yang saya beli tadi] sudah disembelih.*
    *3. Saya nampak harimau[yang ditangkap ] itu./*
       *Harimau [yang ditangkap] itu sangat garang.*
    *4. Perempuan [yang mak saya suka] itu seorang yang rajin.*

  d. Derived form (i.e. terpanjang, sepandai,kecinaan) *find out if ada other form
    *1. Dia ialah pelajar terpintar di sekolah itu.*
    *2. Rumah saya ialah rumah terbesar di kampong ini.*
    *3. Ani secantik Mimi/ Amin sepintar Ali.*
    *4. Buah nanas itu semanis gula.*
    *5. Dia mempunyai rupa kemelayuan/wajahnya kemelayuan.*

  e. Grades (Degrees of comparative  and superlative)
    *sangat, sungguh, amat –pre & postadjectival*
    *terlalu, paling, lebih-preadjectival only*
    *1. Sangat laju kuda itu berlari*
    *2. Sangat murah harga buah betik itu.*

  f. Compound adjectives  (i.e. hitam legam)

  g. Ordering of adjectives  (*if ada 2 or lbh adj*) *ble tambah yang, dan, juga, etc.
    1. *.Putih bersih kasut dia.*

2. Predicative [+V](complementary distribution)
  a. Base form
    *1. Buah rambutan itu manis/ buah-buahan itu *manis-manis (*reduplication)*
    *2. Bunga itu wangi/ Bunga-bungaan itu *wangi-wangi. (*reduplication)*
    *3. Pokok itu besar/ pokok itu *besar-besar.  (*reduplication)*
    *4. Motosikal itu *tidak laju. (*-ve)*

5. *Saya* bukan seorang pekebun. (*-ve)
6. *Saya ialah seorang guru.*
7. *Kasut ini mahal harganya.*

b. Grades (Degrees of comparative and superlative)
   *sangat, sungguh, amat –pre & postadjectival*
   *terlalu paling lebih-preadjectival only*
   1. *Lelaki itu sangat gembira*
   2. *Harga barang di kedai itu terlalu mahal*
   3. *Buah ini terlalu masak*
   4. *Telaga/lubang itu sangat dalam.*
   5. *Orang itu lebih tinggi daripada orang ini.*
   6. *Kereta lebih mahal dari motosikal*

c. Compound adjectives (i.e. hitam legam)
   1. *Mukanya bujur sirih*

d. Ordering of adjectives (if ada 2 or lbh adj)
   1. *Rambutnya hitam berkilat.*

*Check sentence structure- can rearrange or not.

*Check penjodoh bil – sekuntum, sepasang, sebiji, sebuah,*

*Jenis Frasa Kata Sifat (Pls check page 120, Mah Meri book.)*

1. *Frasa sifat selapis*
2. *Frasa perbandingan*
   a. *Tingkat ketiadaan*
   b. *Tingkat kekurangan*
   c. *Tingkat neutral*
   d. *Tingkat kelebihan*
   e. *Tingkat kesangatan*
3. *Frasa kiasan langsung*
4. *Frasa sifat perbuatan*
5. *Frasa sifat simpulan bahasa*
6. *Frasa sifat kompleks x*

## DATA COLLECTED: ADJECTIVES ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT DOMAINS

**Family, Human Traits, Interaction, Conflict**

| No | Adjective | Gloss |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 1 | **/sugul/** | *sincere* |
| 2 | **/senoit/** | *Quiet, calm* |
| 3 | **/mui greh/** | *Harmony (between husband and wife/* |
| 4 | **/len/** | *Fair, pretty* |
| 5 | **/elok/** | *Pretty* |
| 6 | **/pinta/** | *clever* |
| 7 | **/pandai/** | *clever* |
| 8 | **/tenteram/** | *peaceful* |
| 9 | **/tenan/** | *calm* |
| 10 | **/gembira/** | *happy* |
| 11 | **/suke/** | *to like* |
| 12 | **/telop/** | *to like* |
| 13 | **/elok/** | *Kind hearted, nice, pretty* |
| 14 | **/murah hati/** | *generous* |
| 15 | **/lajid/** | *hardworking* |
| 16 | **/lawa/** | *beautiful* |
| 17 | **/cantik/** | *beautiful* |
| 18 | **/lemah lemot/** | *gentle* |
| 19 | **/siju/** | *Infuriate, angry* |
| 20 | **/seʔeh/** | *Jealous, envy* |
| 21 | **/henkak/** | *Angry, furious* |
| 22 | **/badzau/** | *Ugly, bad manners* |
| 23 | **/ekon/** | *having airs, show off* |
| 24 | **/singok greh/** | *offended* |
| 25 | **/mohoʔ/** | *Lie, bluff* |

| 26 | /sombon/ | *conceited* |
|----|----------|-------------|
| 27 | /bahaya/ | *dangerous* |
| 28 | /malu/ | *shameful* |
| 29 | /belot/ | *betray* |
| 30 | /denki/ | *begrudge* |

**Fruit Orchard, Plants**

| No | Adjective | Gloss |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 1 | /ɲit/ | *sweet* |
| 2 | /loʔop/ | *fragrant* |
| 3 | /huroʔ/ | *Old* |
| 4 | /huruʔ/ | *old* |
| 5 | /kənon/ | *Young* |
| 6 | /nom/ | *Ripe* |
| 7 | / nup/ | *ripe* |
| 8 | /leu/ | *unripe* |
| 9 | /kəboəih/ | *dead* |
| 10 | /əmpai/ | *New, fresh* |
| 11 | /tuə/ | *Old* |
| 12 | /mudə/ | *Young* |
| 13 | /sərək/ | *Tall* |
| 14 | / səghaŋ/ | *High, Tall* |
| 15 | /hatək/ | *Short, low, small* |
| 16 | /kənin/ | *small* |
| 17 | /dʒɛlɛt/ | *low* |
| 18 | /tiŋgi/ | *Tall, high* |
| 19 | /rəndah/ | *Short, low* |
| 20 | /pɛndɛk/ | *short* |
| 21 | /riŋan/ | *Light* |
| 22 | /bərat/ | *Heavy* |
| 23 | /hatək/ | *Small* |

| 24 | /hɛdɛt/ | *Small* |
|----|---------|---------|
| 25 | /kadəi/ | *Big* |
| 26 | /kadam/ | *Big* |
| 27 | /iŋkai/ | *Thin* |
| 28 | /dzʒɛlɛn/ | *Long* |
| 29 | /dzʒɛlɛk/ | *Long* |
| 30 | /luwɛk/ | *Wide* |
| 31 | /lɛba/ | *Wide* |
| 32 | /səmpit/ | *narrow* |

**Weather**

| No | Adjective | Gloss |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 1 | /apɛt/ | *To feel cold* |
| 2 | /panɛh/ | *Hot* |
| 3 | /haŋat/ | *Hot* |
| 4 | /sidʒuk/ | *Cold* |
| 5 | /idʒuk/ | *Cold* |
| 6 | /hidʒuk/ | *Cold* |

**Transportation, Things**

| No | Adjective | Gloss |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 1 | /ladʒu/ | *Fast* |
| 2 | /mahal/ | *Expensive* |
| 3 | /mughah/ | *Cheap* |
| 4 | /dʒolot/ | *Oval* |
| 5 | /dʒonot/ | *Oval* |
| 6 | /kəput/ | *Flattened* |
| 7 | /leper/ | *Flat* |
| 8 | /mudʒur/ | *Oval* |
| 9 | /səgi tiga/ | *triangular* |
| 10 | /sɛi/ | *Thin* |

| 11 | /sɛ/ | *Thin* |
|----|------|--------|
| 12 | /sə/ | *Thick* |
| 13 | **/nipis/** | *Thin* |
| 14 | /təbal/ | *thick* |
| 15 | /səliu/ | *Smooth* |
| 16 | **/lətʃɛ/** | *Smooth* |
| 17 | /gɛhɛk/ | *Hard* |
| 18 | /ləmɔt/ | *Soft* |
| 19 | **/litʃin/** | *Smooth* |
| 20 | /kasar/ | *Rough* |
| 21 | /haluih/ | *Fine* |
| 22 | /hek/ | *Watery* |
| 23 | /kətəl/ | *Thick* |
| 24 | /lidak/ | *Thick with a consistency of gum* |
| 25 | /tʃair/ | *Diluted, watery* |
| 26 | /pəkat/ | *thick* |
| 27 | /apɛt/ | *To feel cold* |
| 28 | /panɛh/ | *Hot* |
| 29 | /haŋat/ | *Hot* |
| 30 | /sidʒuk/ | *Cold* |
| 31 | /idʒuk/ | *Cold* |
| 32 | /hidʒuk/ | *Cold* |

## Numbers/ Numerals

| No | Adjective | Gloss |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 1 | **/mui/** | *One* |
| 2 | **/ma/** | *Two* |
| 3 | **/peʔ/** | *Three* |
| 4 | **/əmpat/** | *Four* |
| 5 | **/limaʔ/** | *Five* |
| 6 | **/ənam/** | *Six* |

| 7 | /tudʒuh/ | *Seven* |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | **/lapan/** | *Eight* |
| 9 | **/səmbilan/** | *Nine* |
| 10 | **/səpuloh/** | *Ten* |
| 11 | **/mui bəlah/** | *Eleven* |
| 12 | **/ma puloh/** | *Twenty* |

**Colour**

| No | Adjective | Gloss |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | **/mɛrah/** | *Red* |
| 2 | **/biru/** | *Blue* |
| 3 | **/hitəm/** | *Black* |
| 4 | **/putih/** | *White* |
| 5 | **/hidzʒau/** | *Green* |
| 6 | **/orɛn/** | *Orange* |
| 7 | **/kuneŋ/** | *Yellow* |

**Core Semantic Sets of Adjectives in Mah Meri**

| LI No | Adjective (Lexical root) | Gloss | Language | | Core Semantic Types |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | /sərək/ | *Tall* | Mah Meri | Height | Dimension |
| 2 | /hatək/ | *Short, low, small* | | | |
| 3 | /dʒɛlɛt/ | *low* | | | |
| 4 | /tiŋgi/ | *Tall, high* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 5 | /rəndah/ | *Short, low* | | | |
| 6 | /pɛndɛk/ | *short* | | | |
| 7 | /riŋan/ | *Light* | Malay loanwords | Weight | |
| 8 | /bərat/ | *Heavy* | | | |
| 9 | /hatək/ | *Small* | Mah Meri | Size | |
| 10 | /hɛdɛt/ | *Small* | | | |
| 11 | /kadəi/ | *Big* | | | |
| 12 | /kadam/ | *Big* | | | |
| 13 | /iŋkai/ | *Thin* | | | |
| 14 | /dzʒɛlɛn/ | *Long* | | | |
| 15 | /dzʒɛlɛk/ | *Long* | | | |
| 16 | /luwɛk/ | *Wide* | | | |
| 17 | /lɛba/ | *Wide* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 18 | /səmpit/ | *narrow* | | | |

| 19 | /sugul/ | *sincere* | Mah Meri | Positive | Value |
|----|---------|-----------|----------|----------|-------|
| 20 | /senoit/ | *Quiet, calm* | | | |
| 21 | /mui greh/ | *Harmony (between husband and wife/* | | | |
| 22 | /len/ | *Fair, pretty* | | | |
| 23 | /tenteram/ | *peaceful* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 24 | /tenan/ | *calm* | | | |
| 25 | /gembira/ | *happy* | | | |
| 26 | /suke/ | *to like* | | | |
| 27 | /elok/ | *Kind hearted, nice, pretty* | | | |
| 28 | /murah hati/ | *generous* | | | |
| 29 | /lawa/ | *beautiful* | | | |
| 30 | /lemah lemot/ | *gentle* | | | |
| 31 | /siju/ | *Infuriate, angry* | Mah Meri | Negative | |
| 32 | /se?eh/ | *Jealous, envy* | | | |
| 33 | /henkak/ | *Angry, furious* | | | |
| 34 | /badzau/ | *Ugly, bad manners* | | | |
| 35 | /ekon/ | *having airs, show off* | | | |
| 36 | /singok greh/ | *offended* | | | |
| 37 | /moho?/ | *Lie, bluff* | | | |
| 38 | /sombon/ | *conceited* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 39 | /bahaya/ | *dangerous* | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | /malu/ | *shameful* | | | |
| 41 | /belot/ | *betray* | | | |
| 42 | /denki/ | *begrudge* | | | |
| 43 | /huroʔ/ | *Old* | Mah Meri | | Age |
| 44 | /huruʔ/ | *old* | | | |
| 45 | /kənon/ | *Young* | | | |
| 46 | /nom/ | *Ripe* | | | |
| 47 | /leu/ | *unripe* | | | |
| 48 | /kəboəih/ | *dead* | | | |
| 49 | /əmpai/ | *New, fresh* | | | |
| 50 | /tuə/ | *Old* | Malay | | |
| 51 | /mudə/ | *Young* | loanwords | | |
| 52 | /baru/ | *new* | | | |
| 53 | /mɛrah/ | *Red* | Malay | | Color |
| 54 | /biru/ | *Blue* | loanwords | | |
| 55 | /hitəm/ | *Black* | | | |
| 56 | /putih/ | *White* | | | |
| 57 | /hidzʒau/ | *Green* | | | |
| 58 | /orɛn/ | *Orange* | | | |
| 59 | /kuneŋ/ | *Yellow* | | | |

**Semantic Sets of Peripheral Adjectives in Mah Meri**

| LI No | Adjective (Lexical root) | Gloss | Language | | Semantic Types |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | /dʒolot/ | *Oval* | Mah Meri | Shape | Physical property |
| 2 | /dʒonot/ | *Oval* | | | |
| 3 | /kəput/ | *Flattened* | | | |
| 4 | /leper/ | *Flat* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 5 | /mudʒur/ | *Oval* | | | |
| 6 | /səgi tiga/ | *triangular* | | | |
| 7 | /sɛi/ | *Thin* | Mah Meri | Thickness | |
| 8 | /sɛ/ | *Thin* | | | |
| 9 | /sə/ | *Thick* | | | |
| 10 | /nipis/ | *Thin* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 11 | /təbal/ | *thick* | | | |
| 12 | /səliu/ | *Smooth* | Mah Meri | Texture | |
| 13 | /lətʃɛ/ | *Smooth* | | | |
| 14 | /gɛhɛk/ | *Hard* | | | |
| 15 | /ləmɔt/ | *Soft* | | | |
| 16 | /litʃin/ | *Smooth* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 17 | /kasar/ | *Rough* | | | |
| 18 | /haluih/ | *Fine* | | | |
| 19 | /hek/ | *Watery* | Mah Meri | Viscosity | |
| 20 | /kətəl/ | *Thick* | | | |
| 21 | /lidak/ | *Thick with a* | | | |

| | | consistency of gum | | | |
|----|------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------|---|
| 22 | /tʃair/ | *Diluted, watery* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 23 | /pəkat/ | *thick* | | | |
| 24 | /apɛt/ | *To feel cold* | Mah Meri | Temperature | |
| 25 | /panɛh/ | *Hot* | Malay loanwords | | |
| 26 | /haŋat/ | *Hot* | | | |
| 27 | /sidʒuk/ | *Cold* | | | |
| 28 | /idʒuk/ | *Cold* | | | |
| 29 | /hidʒuk/ | *Cold* | | | |

## DATA COLLECTED: SENTENCES IN MAH MERI

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01  **/pəle  ɲit        haʔ  kəbun əʔəd/**
    Fruit  sweet  that  from  orchard me
    *'That sweet fruit is from my orchard.'*

02  **/nom  pəle  naŋ ɲit ke    haʔ    kəbun əʔəd/**
    Many  fruit  sweet        from  orchard  me
    *'Many sweet fruits is from my orchard.'*

03  **/pəle  buah              nake  ɲit/**
    Fruit  rambutan      that  sweet
    *'That rambutan fruit is sweet.'*

04  **/pəle  buah          nake  manik/**
    Fruit  rambutan    that  where
    *'Where is that rambutan fruit.'*

05  **/pəle  nake  ɲit ɲit/**
    Fruit  that  sweet
    *'That fruit is sweet'*

06  **/nom  pəle  ɲit ɲit/**
    Many        fruit  sweet
    *'Many sweet fruits.'*

07  **/nom  pəle  *nake  ɲit ɲit/** X
    Many        fruit  that  sweet
    *'The fruits are sweet.'*

08  **/loʔop  buŋak hik    pətek ke/**
    Fragrant flower you  pick that
    *'The flower that you pick is fragrant.'*

09  **/loʔop  buŋak        yaŋ  awak  petek ke/**
    Flower fragrant      that  you  pick
    *'The flower that you pick is fragrant.'*

10  **/buŋak        nake  loʔop/**
    Flower that    fragrant
    *'That flower is fragrant.'*

11  **/buŋak-buŋak      nake  loʔop-loʔop/**
    Flowers            that  fragrant
    *'That flowers are fragrant.'*

12 **/nom buŋak nake loʔop-loʔop/**
Many flowers that fragrant
*'Those flowers are fragrant.'*

13 **/nom buŋak-buŋak nake loʔop-loʔop/**
Many flowers that fragrant
*'Those flowers are fragrant.'*

14 **/ɲkiʔ nogok təkoh kadəi/**
He cuts down tree big that
*'He cuts down that big tree.'*

15 **/ɲkiʔ nogok tekoh naŋ kadei-kadei/**
He cuts down tree that big
*'He cuts down that big tree.'*

16 **/ɲkiʔ nogok nom tekoh kadəi-kadəi/**
He cuts down many tree big
*'He cuts down many trees.'*

17 **/kadəi ŋkit nogok lok/**
Big tree cuts down tree
*'The tree that he cuts down is big.'*

18 **/ɲkiʔ nogok kadəi lok/**
He cuts down big tree
*'He cuts down a big tree.'*

19 **/ɲkiʔ nogok lok kadəi-kadəi/**
He cuts down tree big
*'He cuts down big trees.'*

20 **/təkoh nake kadəi/**
Tree that big
*'That tree is big.'*

21 **/təkoh nake kadəi-kadəi/**
Tree that big
*'Those trees are big.'*

22 **/nom təkoh kadəi-kadəi/**
Many tree big
*'Many big trees.'*

23 **/apaʔ əʔəd dak ma tuka/**
Father me has two car
*'My father has two cars.'*

24 **/apaʔ əʔəd dak ma buah tuka/**
Father me has two car
*'My father has two cars.'*

25  **/ɲkiʔ  pətet  ma  kuntum  buŋa/**
He  picks  two  flowers
*'He picks two flowers.'*

26  **/motosikal  ladʒu  ŋot  dah/**
Motorcyle  fast  not
*'That motorcycle is not fast.'*

27  **/motosikal  nake  ladʒu  ŋot  dah/**
Motorcyle  that  fast  not
*'That motorcycle is not fast.'*

28  **/nake  kənon  əʔəd  e'et/**
That  son  me  not
*'That is not my son.'*

29  **/əʔəd  e'et  mak  bekebun/**
I  not  a  gardener
*'I am not a gardener.'*

30  **/əʔəd  mak  bekebun/**
I  a  gardener
*' I am a gardener.'*

31  **/əʔəd  mak  nebe  kebun/**
I  person  make  garden
*'I am a gardener.'*

32  **/ əʔəd  mui  cikgu/**
I  one  teacher
*'I am a teacher.'*

33  **/əʔəd  mak  cikgu/**
I  person  teacher
*' I am a teacher.'*

34  **/kasut  nohok  mahal  həgak/**
Shoes  this  expensive  price
'This shoes are expensive.'

35  **/kasut  nohoʔ  murah/**
Shoes  this  cheap
*'Those shoes are cheap.'*

36  **/kasut  nohok  murah  həgak  nohoʔ/**

37  **/ əʔəd  kənal  mak  dʒual  ka  nake/**
I  know  person  sell  fish  that
*'I know that fisherman.'*

38  **/mak mahe uki patuŋ nake kaghaʔ haʔ hok/**
Person skilful carver sculpture that lives     at     here
*'The skilful sculptor carver lives nearby.'*

39  **/ləmol nake nom naca yek   əʔəd/**
Man   that   a lot  eat   brother me
*'The man who eats a lot is my brother.'*

40  **/ləmol nom naca nake yek   əʔəd/**
Man   a lot  eat   that   brother me
*'The man who eats a lot is my brother.'*

41  **/ka elok ke   ɲkiʔ dʒual həgak mughah/**
Fish  fresh  that  he   sells  price  cheap
*'The fresh fish is sold by him with cheap price.'*

    **/Ka empai     ɲkiʔ dʒual həgak       mughah/**
Fish  new   that  he   sells  price       cheap
*'The newly arrived/fresh fish is sold cheap.'*

42  **/ka empai-empai/**
Fish fresh
*'Fresh fishes.'*

43  **/nom ka empai-empai/**
Many  fish    new
*'Many newly arrived fishes/ fresh fishes.'*

44  **/nom ka segar-segar/**
Many  fish   fresh
*'Many fresh fishes.'*

45  **/ka elok dʒual hegak mughah/**
Fish fresh sold  price cheap
*'The fresh fish is sold with cheap price.'*

46  **/hayam     əʔəd nom bəli səməlih        dah/**
Chicken me many   bought slaughtered    already
*'The chickens that I bought just now have been slaughtered already.'*

47  **/hayam-hayam /**
Chickens

48  **/nom hayam/**
Many chickens

49  **/əʔəd kaye     nom       a'ak kenak igap/**
I     saw       many      tigers  got caught
*'I saw many tigers got caught.'*

50    **/əʔd kaye    a'ak    nom kenak igap/**
    I    saw    tiger    many got    caught
    *'I saw many tigers got caught.'*

51    **/kədo    mak    əʔd telop ke    mui    mak ladʒin/**
    Women    mother me    likes that    one    person hardworking
    *'The women whom my mother likes is a hardworking woman.'*

52    **/ɲkiʔ leh pəladʒa pinta haʔ    sekolah/** yaŋ pinta haʔ sekolah/
    He    is    student clever at    school
    *'He is a clever student at the school.'*

53    **/ɲkiʔ leh pəladʒa tərpinta    haʔ    sekolah/** yang pinta haʔ sekolah/
    He    is    student clever at    school
    *'He is the cleverest student at the school.'*

54    **/ɲkiʔ leh pəladʒa    yaŋ paliŋ pinta    haʔ    sekolah/**
    He    is    student that    cleverest    at    school
    *'He is the cleverest student at the school.'*

55    **/haduk    əʔd kadəi haʔ    kampoŋ/**
    House me    big    at    village
    'My house is the largest in the village.'

56    **/ani səelok-elok    mimi/** səelok mimi/
    Ani as beautiful as    Mimi
    *'Ani is as beautiful as Mimi.'*

57    **/ani səcantik-cantik    mimi/**
    Ani as beautiful as    Mimi
    *'Ani is as beautiful as Mimi.'*

58    **/amin pandai haʔ    ali /amin pandai macam ali/**
    Amin as clever as    Ali
    *'Amin is as clever as Ali.'*

59    **/amin sepandai-pandai ali/** X
    Amin as clever as    Ali
    '*Amin is as clever as Ali.'*

60    **/pəle nənas    nake    ɲit macam    gula/**
    Fruit pineapple    that    as sweet as    sugar
    *'The pineapple is as sweet as sugar.'*

61    **/pəle nənas    nake    seɲit-ɲit    gula/**
    Fruit pineapple    that    as sweet as    sugar
    *'The pineapple is as sweet as sugar.'*

62    **/ɲkiʔdak rupə dʒobok/**
    He has look    malay
    *'He looks like Malay.'*

63 **/ɲkiʔ dak rupə cinə/**
He looks like Chinese.'
*'He has a Chinese look.'*

64 **/wajah ɲkiʔmacam dʒobok/**
His look   malay
*'His face looks like Malay.'*

65 **/ləmol nake saŋat suka/gəmbira/**
Man   that so   happy
*'That man is so happy.'*

66 **/həgak baraŋ kədai nake mahal neneh/**
Price  goods shop   that expensive too
*'The price of goods in the shop is too expensive.'*

67 **/ləmol nake suka neneh/** X
Man   that happy   too
*'That man is so happy.'*

68 **/pəle nake ləbe nup dah/**
Fruit this too  ripe
*'This fruit is too ripe.'*

69 **/pəle nake nup dah neneh/**
Fruit that many ripe  too
*'The fruit is too ripe.'*

70 **/hoŋ nake dʒəg haʔ/**
Hole   that too  deep
*'The hole is so/too deep.'*

71 **/hoŋ nake dʒəg haʔ neneh/saŋat dʒəg haʔ/**
Hole  that too   deep
*'The hole is so/too deep.'*

72 **/mak nake ləbih səghaŋ ŋah mak nake/**
Man   that higher    than   man this
*'That man is higher than this man.'*

73 **/mak nake ləbih səghaŋ dəŋan mak nake/**
man that  higher    than man     this
*'That man is higher than this man.'*

74 **/tukah ləbih mahal   daghik moto/**
Car    more expensive than   motorcycle
*'Car is more expensive than motorcycle.'*

75 **/muŋkak     ɲkiʔ   mojo/**
Face       her   oval
*'Her face is oval.'*

76 **/muŋkak ɲkiʔ mojo sighih/ mojo camai/**
Face her oval
*'Her face is oval.'*

77 **/muka dia hitam legam/**
Face her dark
*'Her face is so dark.'*

78 **/suk ŋkit hitam kilat/**
His hair black shiny
*'His hair is shiny black.'*

79 **/koi ɲkiʔbotak licin/botak liu/**
Head him bald smooth
*'His head is bald and smooth.'*

**80** **/kuda nake ladʒu/**
Horse that fast
*'The horse is fast.'*

81 **/ladʒu kuda nake/** X
Fast horse that
*'The horse is running so fast.'*

82 **/mughah həl pəle bətet nake/**
Cheap too fruit papaya that
*'The papaya is so cheap.'*

83 **/mughah həl həgak pəle bətet/**
Too cheap price fruit papaya
*'The price of the papaya is so cheap.'*

84 **/ma' nake səghaŋ aŋkeh putih/**
He tall slim white
*'He is tall white slim.'*

85 **/əʔəd dak montet duit/**
I have a few money
*'I have a little money.'*

86 **/əʔəd dak duit montet/saya ada duit montet/**
I have money a few
*'I have a little money.'*

87 **/saya masak nasik muntet/**
I cook rice a bit
*'I cook a little rice.'*

88 **/saya masak lauk muntet/**
I cook dishes afew
*'I cook a few dishes.'*

89    /əʔəd nagak nasik muntet/
      I     cook rice a bit
      *'I cook a little rice.'*

90     /əʔəd nagak muntet nasik /
      I     cook rice a bit
      *'I cook a little rice.'*

91     /əʔəd naca aik pədi/
      I     eat   day noon
      *'I eat at noon.'*

92    /elok/cantik/lawa/
      Cantik
      *Beautiful*

93    /elok ngot/cantik ngot/lawa ngot/dak hodoh/
      Not pretty

94    /muntet mak kədai nake/
      A few person in shop that
      *'A few people in the shop.'*

95    /buŋak nake loʔop ngot/
      Flowers that not fragrant
      *'The flowers are not fragrant.'*

96    /ɲkiʔnogok tekoh kadəi ngot/
      He doesn't cut down tree big
      *'He doesn't cut down the big tree.'*

97    /ɲkiʔnogok ngot tekoh kadəi/
      He don't cut down tree big
      *'He doesn't cut down the big tree.'*

98    /loʔop ngot buŋak   hik    pətek ke/
      Not fragrant flower that you pick that
      *'Is the flower that you pick fragrant?*